

ACCOMMODATION AND RESISTANCE:
SLAVES IN BRAZIL, 1780-1850

Aceptación y resistencia: esclavos en Brasil, 1780-1850

Dick GEARY

Institute for the Study of Slavery. University of Nottingham
dick.geary@nottingham.ac.uk

Fecha de recepción: 24-05-07

Fecha de aceptación definitiva: 17-07-07

BIBLID [0213-2052(2007)25;577-594]

RESUMEN: Este artículo examina las diferentes estrategias de supervivencia adoptadas por esclavos en Brasil entre 1780 y 1850. Plantea que las estrategias adoptadas variaron según la circunstancia y la oportunidad, y que éstas fueron complejas, implicando a veces simultáneamente los elementos tanto de la «aceptación» como de la «resistencia». Algunas de estas estrategias fueron individuales, pasando desde la compra de la libertad y del pleito, por la insubordinación menor hasta la lucha, el delito de incendio y el asesinato. Otras fueron colectivas (la formación de comunidades cimarronas y la rebelión), pero testigos del conflicto significativo entre los nacidos africanos y los esclavos criollos.

Palabras clave: Brasil, esclavitud, aceptación, resistencia.

ABSTRACT: This paper examines the various survival strategies adopted by slaves in Brazil between 1780 and 1850. It argues that the strategies adopted varied according to circumstance and opportunity, and that they were complex, involving sometimes simultaneously elements of both «accommodation» and «resistance». Some of these strategies were individual, ranging from the purchase of freedom and litigation, through petty insubordination to flight, arson and murder. Others were collective (the formation of maroon communities and rebellion) but witnessed significant conflict between African-born and creole slaves.

Keywords: Brazil, slavery, accommodation, resistance.

1. INTRODUCTION

This paper examines the various survival strategies adopted by slaves in Brazil between 1780 and 1850. Although the title carries the descriptors of «accommodation» and «resistance», it does so for reasons of brevity and convenience; and in fact what follows is deeply suspicious of these descriptors, not least because many forms of slave behaviour combined both elements. I am even more suspicious of the deployment of a terminology of «submission» and «internalisation», not least because it is virtually impossible to reconstruct what slaves themselves were thinking at any one point in time and because the same slaves could appear «submissive» at one point in time but engage in acts of overt resistance soon (and sometimes immediately) afterwards. Essentially the paper argues that the adoption of one survival strategy rather than another on the part of the slave reflected a realistic assessment of chances of success at a particular point in time rather than a permanent identity or state of mind. In this context, therefore, conjuncture and opportunity were all important.

This interpretation of slave behaviour is informed by almost thirty years of research on my part into the militancy of some groups of European workers and the *apparent* quiescence of others in the period from 1780 to 1914. Labour historians in general have become aware of the fragility and transience of ascribed identities. Together with others, I discovered that in normal circumstances it was workers with expectations, bargaining power and traditions of collective organization, who formed the bulk of those who went on strike, joined unions and formed labour or socialist parties. Workers without resources –the low-paid, those who worked the longest hours, women and agricultural workers– were usually absent from the ranks of labour protest. This, however, was not a consequence of any degree of satisfaction with the existing order; for when the forces of social control disintegrated at the end of the First World War, these «invisible» workers suddenly entered the ranks of often quite violent and volatile protest in their millions. Even «loyal» workers, who had previously belonged to company unions and had previously celebrated their firm's achievements and the birthdays of their bosses, i.e. who had seemingly «internalised» the ideology of the successful business, participated in this process of radicalization. Their earlier «internalisation» of the firm's values, therefore, is better understood as a rational choice in a particular circumstance (where confronted by a powerful, paternalistic employer and the threat of instant dismissal for disloyalty); for when the circumstances changed between 1917 and 1921, these «loyal workers» often took up arms against their former employers. Again, therefore, conjuncture and opportunity were extremely important in determining the identity assumed by workers; and hence my conjecture that the behaviour of slaves was no more fixed and immutable¹.

1. GEARY, Dick: *European Labour Protest, 1848-1939* (London, 1981); Dick GEARY (ed.): *Labour and Socialist Movements in Europe before the First World War* (Oxford, 1989); GEARY, Dick: *European*

2. SLAVERY IN BRAZIL

Between 1550 and 1850 at least eleven million Africans were forcibly transported to the New World to work as slaves. Almost 40% of these arrived in Portuguese America (i.e. Brazil), which in 1888 was also the last of the New World territories to abolish slavery. The absence of natural slave reproduction and the early mortality of slaves in Brazil guaranteed the continued importation of Africans into the country until 1850, when pressure from the British finally put an end to the international slave trade. Between 1800 and 1850, however, nearly two million slaves were transported from Africa to Brazil. As a result African culture in Brazil was constantly rejuvenated until the late 19th century and can still be observed to this day in the language, music (particularly drumming rhythms), cuisine (especially in Bahia) and some of the Afro-Brazilian religions (*candomblé*, *macumba*, *umbanda*) of the country. The slave legacy remains visible in cities such as Salvador, Recife and Rio de Janeiro².

Traditionally the history of slavery in Brazil (as elsewhere) has been written as a narrative of domination and cruelty, in which slaves appear as the victims

Labour Politics from 1900 to the Depression (London, 1991); GEARY, Dick: «Strikes and Protest» in Klaus TENFELDE (ed.): *Arbeiter und Arbeiterbewegung im Vergleich* (Munich, 1986), pp. 363-87; GEARY, Dick: «Labour in Western Europe from c. 1800» in Jan Lucassen (ed.): *Global Labour History. A State of the Art* (Bern, 2006), pp. 227-88. Specifically on multiple and shifting identities see Dick Geary, «Working-Class Identities in Europe» in *Australian Journal of Politics and History* 45 (1999), 1. pp. 20-34.

2. On the slave trade see Robin BLACKBURN, *The Making of New World Slavery* (London, 1997); Hugh THOMAS, *The Slave Trade* (London, 1997); WALVIN, J.: *The Slave Trade* (Stroud, 1999); Barbara L. SOLOW (ed.): *Slavery and the Rise of the Atlantic System* (Cambridge, Mass., 1991), in particular Solow's «Introduction» and the articles by KNIGHT, EMMER, ELTIS and MILLER in this collection; LISS, Peggy K.: *Atlantic Empires: The Network of Trade and Revolution, 1713-1826* (Baltimore, 1983); CURTIN, Philip D.: *The Atlantic Slave Trade* (Madison, 1989); LOVEJOY, P.: «The Volume of the Atlantic Slave Trade» in *Journal of African History* 23 (1982), 4, pp. 473-501; VILA VILAR, Enriqueta: *Hispano-américa y el comercio de esclavos* (Seville, 1977); Douglas COLE LIBBY & FRANÇA PAIVA, Eduarda: *A escravidão no Brasil* (São Paulo, 2000), pp. 15-19; GARCIA FLORENTINO, Manolo: *Em Costas Negras* (Rio de Janeiro, 1993); PALMER, Colin A.: *Human Cargoes* (Urbana, 1981); RAWLEY, James A.: *The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade* (New York, 1981); MILLER, Joseph: *Way of Death* (Madison, 1988); Pierre VERGER, *Flux et reflux de la traite entre le golfe de Bénin et Babia* (Paris, 1968); KLEIN, Herbert S. *The Middle Passage* (Princeton, 1978); FERREIRA DE ASSIS, Marcelo: «A influência do tráfico de africanos sobre a taxa de mortalidade escrava» in Tarcísio RODRIGUES BOTELHO *et al.*, *História quantitativa e serial no Brasil* (Belo Horizonte, 2001), pp. 91-114; RODRIGUES, Jaime: *O infame comércio* (Campinas, 2000); DE CARVALHO, Marcus J. M.: «Estimativa do tráfico ilegal de escravos para Pernambuco» in *Clio* 12 (1989), pp. 43-54; CONRAD, Robert E.: *Tumbeiros: o tráfico escravista para o Brasil* (São Paulo, 1985); GONÇALVES, Salvador José: *Os magnatos de tráfico negreiro* (São Paulo, 1981). On the persistence of African customs and dress in Brazil see QURINO, Manuel: *Costumes africanos no Brasil* (Rio de Janeiro, 1938). On African and Afro-Brazilian religions see Roger Bastide, *Les religions africaines du Brésil* (Paris, 1960); *Ibid.*, *Estudos afro-brasileiros* (São Paulo, 1973); and SMITH OMARI-TUNKARA, Mikelle: *Manipulating the Sacred. Yorùbá Art, Ritual, and Resistance in Brazilian «Candomblé»* (Detroit, 2005). Also MIDLO HALL, Gwendolyn: *Slavery and African Ethnicities in the Americas* (Chapel Hill, 2005).

of sadistic owners, as the *objects* of the system of slavery. The institution of slavery was without doubt brutally and often murderously inhuman. That is not in question here; and older images of a «benign» slavery in Brazil simply do not hold water³. Subject to such brutality, it was once believed that slaves had their African cultures and identities knocked out of them by the ripping apart of families and social networks, and by the trauma of transportation to and their experience in the alien environment of the New World. This process of atomization was also accelerated by the deliberate policies of some slave traders and subsequent owners to disperse slaves of the same origin, in order to reduce the risk of collective resistance⁴.

Here I should repeat that there can be no doubt that slavery was and is an inhuman and violent form of degradation. However, the recent historiography of slavery has increasingly turned its attention to slave agency, to the active role of slaves in shaping history. Moreover, it has become increasingly clear that the actions of Brazilian slaves were informed by a culture, which owed much to African traditions and experience. In order to understand these actions, however, and in particular how the actions of African slaves differed from those of Brazilian-born slaves (described below as creoles), it is first necessary to understand the structure of this particular slave society.

3. THE COMPLEXITY OF SOCIAL RELATIONS IN BRAZILIAN SLAVE SOCIETY

Relations between owners and slaves were infinitely more complex than a polar model of dominance and submission would suggest. Firstly the profile of slave employment in Brazil (as elsewhere in the New World but to a much greater degree) was considerably more diverse than that implied by a dichotomous plantation model of great plantation owners on the one hand and field labourers on the other. Even on sugar plantations some slaves and manumitted slaves were employed in specialised occupations and in some cases slaves were entrusted with the management of entire estates, though these were

3. On the brutality of the system see CONRAD, Robert E.: *World of Sorrow: the African Slave Trade to Brazil* (Baton Rouge, 1986); Paul E. LOVEJOY (ed.), *Africans in Bondage* (Madison, 1986); GOULART, José Alípio: *Da palmatória ao patíbulo (castigos de escravos no Brasil)* (Rio de Janeiro, 1971); Stuart B. SCHWARTZ, *Slaves, Peasants and Rebels* (Urbana, 1996), pp. 41, 45f and 56; HUNOLD LARA, Sílvia: *Campos da violência* (São Paulo, 1988), pp. 57-113; MOTT, Luiz R. B.: «Terror na Casa da Torre» in João José Reis (ed.): *Escravidão e invenção de liberdade* (São Paulo, 1988), pp. 17-32; LIBBY & PAIVA, *Escravidão*, p. 7; SCHWARTZ, Stuart B.: *Sugar Plantations in the Formation of Brazilian Society* (Cambridge, 1985), pp. 133-36 & 142-5; CONRAD, Robert E.: «Nineteenth-Century Brazilian Slavery» in Robert BRENT TOPLIN (ed.): *Slavery and Race Relations in Latin America* (Westport, 1974), pp. 150 and 159-61.

4. PATTERSON, Orlando: *Slavery and Social Death* (Cambridge Mass., 1982); RIBEIRO, Darcy: *O povo brasileiro* (São Paulo, 1995).

rarely African-born slaves. On many plantations slaves worked together with freed men. As Stuart Schwartz writes of the sugar plantations in Bahia,

field hands were almost always slaves; senhores de engenho [owners] were invariably free and white; but in the intermediate positions of management, technical skill and artisan craft were found free men, freedmen and slaves; whites, browns and blacks.

The realities of economic life in Brazil thus created varieties of interaction between slaves and non-slaves⁵.

Secondly, relations between the races worked against a simple, polar model of social stratification. The very small number of European women in Brazil led from the start to widespread miscegenation between slave owners and female slaves (Indian, African and mulatta). These owners did not always relegate the offspring of such unions to the category of «black» and forever slave, unlike their counterparts in the USA. In Brazil the children of these liaisons were sometimes manumitted, though this appears to have applied more to the female than the male offspring, and there thus arose that spectrum of colour that has made mobilisation along racial lines extremely difficult in Brazilian society. Blacks could be slaves or freed or (less commonly) free, as could (more commonly) mulattos. This situation gave rise to what has become known as the «mulatto escape hatch»; and from the 17th century onwards it is possible to identify mulattos as well as whites in the middling ranks of Brazilian society. They, together with those of other mixed origins (there are a host of names in Portuguese), formed the bulk of the individuals, who were used to control and subdue African-born slaves. It was they who tracked down fugitives, destroyed the religious meeting places of the Africans and quelled slave rebellions (white Brazilians could never have done this entirely on their own). It was also they, who were the policemen and slave hunters: people of colour, born in Brazil and speaking Portuguese. It was claimed at the time, and with good reason, that Brazilian-born slaves were far less likely to engage in rebellions or collective flight than their African-born counterparts. However, they did develop a repertoire of daily resistance, often involving individual insubordination, work slowdowns, feigned illness and temporary flight (sometimes described rather condescendingly as «creole rascality»). Some mulattos also became prominent in various forms of urban unrest and later the abolitionist movement⁶.

5. SCHWARTZ, *Sugar Plantations*, p. 313.

6. On tensions between Brazilian- and African-born slaves see LIBBY and PAIVA, *A escravidão*, p. 56; REIS, João José: *Slave Rebellion in Brazil* (Baltimore, 1993), pp. 14 & 54; SCHWARTZ, Stuart B.: *Sugar Plantations* (Cambridge, 1985), pp. 474-79.

This conflict between African and creole slaves was not peculiar to Portuguese America. The creole leadership of the revolt in Haiti, influenced by the values of the French enlightenment, often despised the African slaves and their culture, which they regarded as primitive superstition; and John Thornton writes, «the post revolutionary period [in Haiti] was a partially successful creole (and mulatto) counterrevolution directed at African culture as well as against the former African slaves»⁷. In a Jamaican conspiracy of 1692 creole slaves planned to kill the island's Europeans and leave the African-born in their servitude⁸. To return to Brazil, in numerous slave revolts in Bahia between 1807 to 1835 the leaders and the led were African. To quote Stuart Schwartz, the war against slavery in North-Eastern Brazil, was a war «led almost exclusively by African slaves and by those freed persons of African birth for whom ethnicity was more vital than juridical status»⁹. This is significant.

The permeation of African structures in Brazilian uprisings (and, as we will see later, in «maroon communities», i.e. communities of runaway slaves), suggests that, even in New World societies, the African roots and kinship ties of slaves were far from completely destroyed. Though some slave traders and plantation owners tried to separate Africans of the same ethnic group from one another in order to undermine the possibility of collective understanding and action, they were not always able to do so. The economics of shipment from ports with specific hinterlands and the desire to deploy labour as quickly as possible, given the infrequent arrival of ships, militated against the systematic implementation of any such policy. Recent research has also stressed the clustering of slaves from particular areas and related ethnic/linguistic groups in particular New World destinations. In any case, the fact that many Africans of differing ethnic origin spoke several (often related) languages and/or were able to learn new ones on the lengthy Atlantic crossing undermines the view of those, who imagine a world in which slaves were isolated individuals. Additionally the religions and cosmologies of Africans over wide areas of their native continent often had a similar core of foundation myths and beliefs, which, in the words of Assunção and Zeuske, «played a crucial role in the development of neo-African identities in Brazil...». Even where traditional African roots had been destroyed, slaves showed great ingenuity and creativity in building substitute solidarities, in creating fictive kinship communities. Thus African slaves in Bahia in the 1830s extended the concept of «relative» (*parente*) to include all those of the same African ethnic group. So, even if a slave could not be buried in the presence of his real family, he or she could still «die in a ritual family»¹⁰.

7. THORNTON, John: *Africa and Africans in the Making of the Modern World* (Cambridge, 1998), p. 33 and p. 326.

8. THORNTON, p. 302.

9. SCHWARTZ, Stuart B.: *Sugar Plantations*, p. 479.

10. REIS, João José: *A morte é uma festa* (São Paulo, 1999), pp. 55, 160 and 198; RÖHRIG ASSUNÇÃO Matthias & ZEUSKE, Michael: «Race», Ethnicity and Social Structure in 19th Century Brazil and

Interestingly the creation of substitute bonds for slaves, crossing traditional tribal divisions, began as early as the middle passage across the Atlantic; and in Jamaica the term «shipmate» became synonymous with «brother and sister». In Brazil the solidarity of transportees could even form the basis of a maroon society, as in the case of the *quilombo* of Catucá near Recife; for this was also known as *Malunguinbo* - *malungo* meaning «shipmate» (and *malunguinbo* «little shipmate») on a slave voyage in Portuguese. This means, of course, that the African «nations» described by contemporaries in Brazil did not correspond precisely to historical ethnic groups in Africa itself (though this is a subject of debate); but their very existence again reinforces the point that the African slave in Brazil was not bereft of communal loyalties and identities. The work of Robert Slenes has also emphasized the cohesion of the *senzala* [slave quarters]¹¹.

Some recent research has raised questions about this supposed creole/African dichotomy, but in a way that also indicates the persistence of Africa in Brazil. Whereas revolts in the Brazilian Northeast, especially in Bahia, were primarily the work of Africans and did witness conflicts between African and creole slaves, Bob Slenes, Flávio Gomes, Marcos Andrade and Ricardo Pirola have identified an 1838 *quilombo* in Vassouras, a rising in Minas Gerais in 1831, an 1832 conspiracy in Campinas and a plan for revolt in the Paraíba valley in 1848, in which there was joint creole and African participation. The explanation of this difference may reside in the fact that the Africans imported into Salvador (Bahia) in the first half of the nineteenth century were from the gulf of Benin, often Muslim, and had little in common with earlier generations of slaves from Central Africa. On the other hand, in the risings further south newly imported Congolese-Angolan slaves shared kinship and tribal solidarities with their elders. Slenes specifically identifies the survival of African culture amongst these groups and sees a Kongo cultural matrix as the backbone of the revolts in Vassouras and elsewhere in the Paraíba valley¹².

Cuba» in *Ibero-Amerikanisches Archiv* 24 (1998), 1, pp. 418f. For Slenes see note (11). Also CABREIRA, Lydia: *Vocabulário Congo* (Miami, 1984); Robert FARRIS THOMPSON, *The Four Moments of the Sun: Kongo Art in the Two Worlds* (Washington, 1981); *Ibid.*, *Flash of the Spirit: African and Afro-American Art and Philosophy* (New York, 1984); *Ibid.*, *Face of the Gods: Art and Alters of Africa and the African Americas* (New York, 1993); THORNTON, John: «On the Trail of Voodoo: African Christianity in Africa and the Americas», in *The Americas* 55 (1988), pp. 261-78; SWEET, James: *Recreating Africa: Culture, Kinship and Religion in the African-Portuguese World, 1441-1770* (Chapel Hill, 2003); Hall, *African Ethnicities*.

11. CRATON, Michael: *Testing the Chains. Resistance to Slavery in the British West Indies* (Ithaca, 1982), p. 23; THORNTON, *Africa*, pp. 153-62 & 192-205; Carvalho in João José REIS & Flávio SANTOS GOMES (eds.): *Liberdade por um fio* (São Paulo, 1996), pp. 407-22. For Slenes see the next note.

12. SLENES, Robert W.: «*Malungo, Ngoma vem!*»: Africa encoberta e descoberta do Brasil' in *Revista USP* 12 (1991/2), pp. 48-67; and SLENES, Robert W.: «A Árvore de *Nsanda* transplatanda: cultos *kongo* de aflição e identidade escrava no Sudeste brasileiro (século XIX)» in Douglas COLE LIBBY & Júnia FERREIRA FURTADO (eds.): *Trabalho livre, trabalho escravo – Brasil e Europa, séculos XVIII e XIX*

To return to the basic point about the complexity of social relations in Brazil: even on the sugar plantations we are dealing with a social structure that was more variegated than the slave-owner/slave dichotomy would suggest. Moreover, Brazilian plantation owners could not run their concerns profitably without some degree of cooperation on the part of the labour force. Hence the offer of various incentives (increases in the rum ration, more time for the slaves to work for themselves and –most important of all–manumission, which was significantly more common than in the French or British Caribbean, though paralleled in Cuba) Now I do not wish to romanticize manumission in Brazil as a way out of slavery. Firstly, though much more common than in the USA or the Caribbean, it was still very rare. Secondly, most slaves had to purchase their freedom or have their freedom purchased for them: it was no simple gift. Accumulating this capital was often a lengthy and arduous journey; and the slave-owner was under no obligation to free a slave, even if sufficient funds were forthcoming, until the last few years of Brazilian slavery. Furthermore, most manumissions were conditional, requiring the slave to continue to work for their previous owner (or owner's offspring) for some –and sometimes very lengthy– time. The status of the freed, both legal and social, was not that of the free: in the whole of the colonial period in Brazil (i.e. until 1822) those blacks and mulattoes, who were free or freed, had no separate judicial status from that of slaves. Although some forms of discrimination and violence against slaves and the manumitted were relaxed by legislation in the 1824 Constitution and the Penal Code of 1831, in reality blacks and manumitted slaves were still treated like slaves by local and regional authorities. Their freedom of movement was restricted and they could be subjected to physical punishment. Moreover in both colonial and post-independence Brazil the freedom of non-whites was always very precarious. If a former slave could not produce papers of manumission, as a negro or mulatto/a, he or she would be at constant risk of re-enslavement. Towards the end of slavery there were increasing numbers of court cases, in which (usually female) slaves sought to establish that they or their offspring had been granted *cartas de alforria* (letters of manumission). Yet, much as these qualifications are true, there can be no doubt that Brazilian slaves themselves recognized that the *carta de alforria* constituted a very real difference in life chances for themselves or members of their family. Hence the massive investment in time, energy and capital expended by slaves on

(São Paulo, 2006), pp. 273-316. DOS SANTOS GOMES, Also Flávio: *Histórias de Quilombolas* (Rio de Janeiro, 1995), ch 2; FERREIRA ANDRADE, Marcus: «Rebelião escrava na Comarca do Rio dos Mortos, Minas Gerais» in *Revista Afros-Ásia* (1998/9), 21-22, pp. 45-82. Information on Pirola's research in progress provided by Robert Slenes. The survival of African cultures in Brazil is further detailed in Matthias RÖHRIG ASSUNÇÃO & Michael ZEUSKE, «Race», Ethnicity and Social Structure in 19th Century Brazil and Cuba' in *Ibero-Amerikanisches Archiv* 24 (1998), 3-4, pp. 418-22; Hall, *African Ethnicities*; and Omari-Tenkara, *Manipulating the Social*.

obtaining manumitted status. However, most male slaves, who were manumitted, were Brazilian-born and light-skinned (*mulatto* or *pardo*), Christianised and spoke Portuguese. Some African women were also granted freedom, for reasons discussed later; but male African slaves were granted freedom only very rarely¹³. It is tempting to see manumission simply as a form of social control and an institution, which stabilized slavery and enabled it to survive for so long in Brazil. Certainly it was seen in this way by the white elite. But for slaves, as Eduardo Paiva stresses, it was something very different: it was a route to freedom and a way out of bondage. I am not sure that I would accept his description of the slave's struggle for manumission as «pragmatic resistance»; but in most cases it was a struggle and cannot simply be seen as an acceptance of the prevailing system. For certain slaves (especially skilled *pardos*) it was the easiest route to freedom. For black Africans, however, the fact that this route was not available made other forms of action –flight, life in a *quilombo*, rebellion– necessary and attractive¹⁴.

13. On patterns of manumission see LIBBY and PAIVA, *A escravidão*, pp. 44-46; BERGAD, Laird A.: *Slavery and the Demographic History of Minas Gerais* (Cambridge, 1999); RODRIGUES BOTELHO, Tarcísio *et al.*, *História quantitativa e serial no Brasil* (Belo Horizonte, 2001); RODRIGUES BOTELHO, Tarcísio: «Família e escravidão em uma perspectiva demográfica: Minas Gerais (Brasil), século XVIII» in LIBBY & FURTADO (eds.), pp. 195-222; Mary C. KARASCH, *Slave Life in Rio de Janeiro* (Princeton, 1987); FRANÇA PAIVA, Eduardo: *Escravos e libertos nas Minas Gerais* (São Paulo, 2000); RUSSELL-WOOD, A. J. R.: *The Black Man in Slavery and Freedom in Colonial Brazil* (Oxford, 2002); Sydney CHALHOUB, «Slavery, Freedmen and the Politics of Freedom in Brazil» in *Slavery and Abolition* 10 (1989), no. 3, pp. 64-84; Douglas COLE LIBBY & Clotilde ANDRADE PAIVA: «Manumission Practices in a Late Eighteenth-Century Brazilian Slave Parish» in *Slavery and Abolition* 21 (2000), no. 1, pp. 96-127; SCHWARTZ, Stuart B.: «The Manumission of Slaves in Colonial Brazil» in *Hispanic American Historical Review* 54 (1974), pp. 603-35; DANTAS, Mariana: «Inheritance Practices among Individuals of African Origin and Descent in Eighteenth-century Minas Gerais, Brazil» in Marc KLEIJWEGT (ed.): *The Faces of Freedom. The Manumission and Emancipation in Old World Slavery* (Leiden, 2006); QUIRÓS MATTOSO, Kátia M. de: *Testamentos de escravos libertos na Bahia no século XIX* (Salvador, 1979). As a result of this, and of natural reproduction, Brazil had the largest free coloured population of any slave society in the Americas. See H. S. KLEIN & F. V. LUNA, «Free Colored in a Slave Society: São Paulo and Minas Gerais in the Early Nineteenth Century» in *The Hispanic American Historical Review* 80 (2000), 4, pp. 913-41; H. S. KLEIN & C. A. PAIVA, «Freed Men in A Slave Economy: Minas Gerais in 1831» in *Journal of Social History* 29 (1996), 4, pp. 933-62; KLEIN, H. S.: «The Colored Freemen in Brazilian Slave Society», *Journal of Social History* 3 (1969), 1, pp. 30-52; FRANCO, M. S. C.: *Homens livres na ordem escravocrata* (São Paulo, 1969); KOWARICK, L.: *Trabalho e vadiagem: a origem do trabalho livre no Brasil* (São Paulo, 1987); OLIVEIRA, M. C. de: *O liberto: Salvador, 1790-1890* (São Paulo, 1988); David W. COHEN & Jack P. GREENE, *Neither Slave nor Free* (Baltimore, 1972); SILVA, Eduardo: *Prince of the People: the Life and Times of a Brazilian Free Man of Colour* (London, 1993). On the precariousness of freedom and how that actually increased in the years after 1831 see CHALHOUB, Sidney: «Costumes senhoriais: escravização ilegal e precarização da liberdade no Brasil Império» (extended version of a paper given at a conference on *Slavery, Citizenship and the State*, held at the University of Nottingham in September 2006).

14. FRANÇA PAIVA, Eduardo: *Escravos e libertos nas Minas Gerais do século XVIII* (São Paulo, 1995), p. 20.

Returning to the issue of social complexity, the model of plantation slavery found in Bahia and the North East was not reproduced in all parts of Brazil. Moreover as early as the second half of the 17th century a majority of Brazilian slaves was *not* working on sugar plantations. Some cultivated manioc, others ran mule-trains, fished and refined whale oil. In the towns slaves grew limes, lemons, mangoes and bananas, and raised chicken, goats, pigs and cows for sale as well as personal consumption. Slaves provided the labour force of iron foundaries, where they worked as woodcutters, charcoal burners and carriers of all kinds. By 1800 30,000 slaves worked in cotton production, whilst others mined gold and diamonds, side by side often with free or freed men, in the state of Minas Gerais. In the same state a domestic textile industry emerged, in which female slaves and their free mistresses worked side by side. By this time we have records of slaves working as shipwrights, carpenters, tailors, blacksmiths, bakers and barbers, i.e. in artisan trades, in which both masters and apprentices could be slaves. In some parishes 80% of Brazilian artisans were *pardo* (especially) or black. It is clear that such slaves had a concept of their own status and dignity, many had control of their own time and some even negotiated in the labour market on their own behalf. Slaves were further employed as musicians, painters and sculptors, as panellers, dustmen, porters, dockers and boatmen, as well as sailors –between one third and one half of the crews of slave ships were themselves slaves. Slaves and former slaves were shop assistants, delivery boys and girls, whilst some manumitted former slaves became slave-hunters (*capitão-do-mato*) and slave traders. Female slaves worked as registry officials, nurses, wet-nurses, cooks, street-vendors of all kinds, garment workers and milliners. In the cities many of these slaves were «*negros de ganho*», i.e. they worked on their own behalf and gave a fixed quantity, daily or weekly, to their masters. Such slaves, needless to say, were not subject to the same degree of supervision as their cousins on the plantations (indeed some lived away from their masters), and some of them were able to accumulate sufficient capital to buy their freedom, through monthly or yearly installments¹⁵.

15. On the multiplicity of slave occupations see COLE & LIBBY, *Escravidão*, pp. 25-33; BONNET, Marcia Cristina Leão: *Entre o artifício e a arte* (MA, UFRJ, 1996), pp. 119-48; SOUZA, Maria José de: *A mão de obra Escrava em Salvador* (São Paulo, 1988); COLE LIBBY, Douglas: «Proto-Industrialization in a Slave Society» in *Journal of Latin American Studies* 23 (1991), pp. 1-35; *Ibid.*, *Trabalho escrava e capital estrangeiro no Brasil* (Belo Horizonte, 1984); *Ibid.*, *Transformação e trabalho em uma economia escravista* (São Paulo, 1988); MEZAN ALGRANTI, Leila: *O feitor ausente* (São Paulo, 1988); KARASCH, Mary C.: *Slave Life in Rio de Janeiro* (Princeton, 1987); PARÁISO FERREIRA DE ALMEDA, Vilma: *Escravidão e trabalho* (Rio de Janeiro, 1984); LAUDERDALE GRAHAM, Sandra: *House and Street. The Domestic World of Servants and Masters in Nineteenth-Century Rio de Janeiro* (Cambridge, 1988). On slaves bringing African skills to Brazil see COLE LIBBY, Douglas: «Habilidades, artifices e ofícios na sociedade escravista do Brasil colonial» in LIBBY & FURTADO (eds.), pp. 57-74.

So far we have seen that a dichotomous model of owner-slave relations is inadequate to describe even the quite complex hierarchy of plantation society, let alone the multiple forms of slave employment in pre- and post-colonial Brazil, especially in urban environments. Furthermore, some former slaves became slave-owners (an act of social assertion on their part, if ever there was one): in 19th-century Bahia, of 259 wills of former slaves, 76.3% left at least one slave amongst their property, whilst in Minas Gerais between 1743 and 1811 *libertos* numbered between 3.3 and 14.6% of all slave-holders. The work of Júnia Ferreira Furtado identifies a group of freed mulatta women in the diamond district of Minas Gerais in the 18th and early 19th century, who became heads of households and accumulated significant material possessions; whilst Sheila Faria de Castro has found extremely wealthy manumitted African women in Rio de Janeiro¹⁶. The fact that former slaves came to own slaves might be seen as the best example of the extent, to which slaves had internalized the values of the system of slavery. To some extent it does show this; but even here, however, it is not so simple. As already noted, the freedom of the freed slave was always precarious¹⁷. In this context the surest way to indicate your freed status was to own slaves. Moreover, any aspirant to upward social mobility in Brazilian society had to own slaves. Slave ownership on the part of former slaves, therefore, was scarcely surprising.

To return to the complexity of social relations in slave Brazil once more, it is important to recognise that relations between owners and their slaves were mediated by all kinds of explicit or implicit negotiations (however asymmetrical), from which both sides could derive advantages (however asymmetrically). Neither sugar plantations nor gold fields could operate on principles of coercion alone: it simply was not possible to intimidate all of the people all of the time, especially where there were large numbers of slaves gathered in one place or where many pursued economic activities away from their masters. This applied all the more where labour was in short supply or expensive; and African slaves were not cheap. On the Bahian sugar plantations in 1833, for example, the value of the slaves was calculated as almost equal to that of the land, forests, buildings, horses, oxen, steam engines and other assets combined. Hence mutual dependency dictated that there were conventions about what was acceptable and what was not. For example, slaves would sometimes call upon local Catholic priests to speak out against labour on Sundays and church holidays; and they expected to work on their own behalf for some

16. FERREIRA FURTADO, Júnia: «Pérolas negras» in Ibíd (ed.): *Diálogos Oceânicos* (Belo Horizonte, 2001), pp. 81-125; Ibíd., *Chica da Silva* (São Paulo, 2003); CASTRO FARIA, Sheila de: «Sinhás Pretas» in Francisco Carlos *Teixeira da Silva* et al. (eds.): *Escritos sobre História e Educação* (Rio de Janeiro, 2001); Faria, *A colônia em movimento: fortuna e família no cotidiano colonial* (Rio de Janeiro, 1998); Stuart Schwartz, *Sugar Plantations*, p. 458.

17. On the precariousness of liberty see note (13) above.

period in the week, as the demands of some slave protests indicate. (It was during the time they could work on their own behalf that slave miners in Minas Gerais discovered the richest new seams of gold!) In fact it was when traditional expectations were disregarded or treatment was exceptionally brutal that individual or collective acts of resistance and rebellion took place. Furthermore, slave owners lived in constant fear of individual acts of violence or arson, as well as of collective rebellion. So there were good reasons to avoid strategies of control that were exclusively coercive. Additionally the fact that some individual slaves could achieve skills and recognition, and a few could buy freedom and subsequently even become slave owners, constituted perhaps the most crucial safety-valve of all in Brazilian slave society¹⁸. However, that valve blew with remarkable frequency.

4. SLAVES AS HISTORICAL AGENTS

Resistance constitutes the most obvious form of slave assertion; and historians of slavery have identified various kinds of both individual and collective resistance on the part of Brazilian slaves, in which, significantly, the behaviour of creoles and African-born slaves often differed.

Individual Strategies included a mixture of accommodation and resistance. In the first case slaves would seek to avoid trouble, aspire to specialised employment and aim to accumulate sufficient capital to buy their freedom. (Sometimes, however, the purchase of manumission was a result of the collective action of slaves in fraternities, kinship groups or families.) Such a strategy, with freedom as its goal, was open to Brazilian-born slaves, who spoke some Portuguese, possessed skills and were not infrequently mulatto. (African women were also significantly represented amongst the manumitted, possibly because those who worked as street vendors were able to accumulate sufficient capital to buy their freedom. Here women reproduced the same dominance in the retail trade that they enjoyed in Africa. Only a few gained their freedom as a direct result of liaisons with their white masters, contrary to popular myths.) On the other hand African-born males were almost completely absent from the ranks of the *libertos*, which may explain their predominance in slave rebellions. The strategy of eventual manumission was never reliable, depended upon the whim of owners and could be cut short by early mortality. Alternatively individual acts of resistance or attempts at manipulation often followed breaches with convention on the owner's part or especially brutal acts by their agents. They assumed multiple forms: from feigned illness and weeping to suicide,

18. The combination of resistance with various forms of «negotiation» is a central theme of João José REIS & Eduardo SILVA: *Negociação e conflito* (São Paulo, 1999). See also SCHWARTZ, *Slaves and Peasants*, pp. 42-46; and LIBBY & PAIVA: *Escravidão*, pp. 7-9.

abortion and the infanticide of boys. Here we enter the world of what has been termed «gynaecological resistance»¹⁹.

Other forms of action on the part of slaves included pilferage, which was common. Physical attacks on or the poisoning of owners and their agents, as well as individual acts of disobedience and arson, were not unusual, though they were much more effective where they were collective. Individual flight was also relatively common, though often it involved only short absences and

19. For individual strategies see LIBBY & PAIVA: *Escravidão*, pp. 45-56; and REIS & SILVA, *passim*. Also SCHWARTZ: *Sugar Plantations*, p. 138; GOULART, José Alípio: *Da fuga ao suicídio* (Rio de Janeiro, 1971). On manumission see note (12). On female resistance there has been quite a lot of work in the case of the Carribean: McD BECKLES, Hilary: *Natural Rebels* (London, 1989); *Ibid.*, *Centering Women* (Kingston, 1999); Verene SHEPHERD et al., *Engendering History* (Kingston, 1995); Barry GASPARD et al.: *More than Chattel* (Bloomington, 1996); MATHURIN, Lucille: *The Rebel Woman in the West Indies during Slavery* (Kingston, 1975); BUSH, Barbara: *Slave Women in Caribbean Society* (London, 1990). Work on the subject in Brazil is in its infancy. There is, however, a not insubstantial body of work on women slaves and on slave families in Brazil. See GIACOMINI, Sonia Maria: *Mulher e escrava* (Petrópolis, 1988); Maria Odila LEITE DA SILVA DIAS, *Power and Everyday Life: The Lives of Working Women in Nineteenth-Century Brazil* (Cambridge, 1995); *Ibid.* et al., *A mulher no Rio de Janeiro no século XIX* (São Paulo, 1982); DAMATTA, Roberto: *A casa e a rua. Espaço, cidadania, mulher e morte no Brasil* (São Paulo, 1985); MENDONÇA, Joseli: *Entre a mão e os anéis* (Campinas, 1999); LÍBANO SOARES, Carlos Eugênio: «Comércio, nação e gênero: as negras minas quitadeiras no Rio de Janeiro, 1835-1900» in Teixeira et al. (eds.): *Escritos*; LAUDERDALE GRAHAM, Sandra: «Slavery's Impasse: Slave Prostitutes, Small-Time Mistresses and the Brazilian Law of 1871» in *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 33 (1991), pp. 670ff; KITTLESON, Roger: «Women and Notions of Womanhood in Brazilian Abolitionism» in Pamela SCULLY & Diana PATON (eds.): *Gender and Emancipation in the Atlantic World* (Durham, 2005), pp. 99-120; ABREU, Martha: «Slave Mothers and Freed Children» in *Journal of Latin American Studies* 28 (1996), 3, pp. 567-80; HIGGINS, Kathleen J.: *Licentious Liberty* (University Park, 1999); Mary del Priore, *A mulher na história do Brasil* (São Paulo, 1989); *Ibid.*, *Ao sul do corpo* (Rio de Janeiro, 1993); *Ibid.*, *História das mulheres no Brasil* (São Paulo, 1997); DE BARROS MOTT, Maria Lucia: *Submissão e resistência: a mulher na luta contra escravidão* (São Paulo, 1988); HAHNER, June: *A mulher brasileira e as lutas sociais e políticas: 1850-1937* (São Paulo, 1981); DE QUEIRÓS MATTOSO, Kátia M.: *Família e sociedade na Bahia do século XIX* (São Paulo, 1988); DE CASTRO FARIA, Sheila: *A colônia*; CORRÊA, Mariza: *Colcha de retalhos-estudos sobre a família no Brasil* (São Paulo, 1982); FERREIRA FURTADO, Júnia: *Chica*; *Ibid.*, «Considerações sobre estratégias e formas de resistência da mulher escrava no setecentos» in *Caderno de Filosofia e Ciências Humanas* 9 (1997), pp. 104-9; LEWKOWICZ, Ida: «Herança e relações familiares: os pretos forros nas Minas Gerais do século XVIII» in *Revista Brasileira de História* 17 (1989), pp. 101-14; METCALF, Alida: «Mulheres e propriedades» in *Revista da sociedade brasileira de pesquisa histórica*, vol. 5 (São Paulo, 1989); *Ibid.*, «A vida familiar dos escravos em São Paulo no século XVIII» in *Estudos Econômicos* 17 (1987), pp. 229-44; NAZZARI, Muriel: «Concubinage in Colonial Brazil» in *Journal of Family History* 21 (1996), pp. 107-23; *Ibid.*, *O desparrecimento do dote: mulheres, famílias e mudança social em São Paulo, 1600-1900* (São Paulo, 2000); RAMOS, Donald: «Marriage and Family in Colonial Vila Rica», *Hispanic American Review* 55 (1975), pp. 200-25; RUSSELL-WOOD, A. J. R.: «Women and Society in Colonial Brazil» in *Latin American Studies* 9 (1977), pp. 1-34; NASCIMENTO SILVA, Fernando (ed.): *História da família no Brasil colonial* (Rio de Janeiro, 1998); GARCIA ALANIZ, Anna Gicelle: *Ingênuos e libertos: estratégias de sobrevivência familiar* (Campinas, 1997); SLENES, Robert W.: *Na senzala uma flor* (Rio de Janeiro, 1999); M. G. FLORENTINO & J. R. GÓES: *A paz das senzalas: famílias escravos e tráfico atlântica, Rio de Janeiro 1790-1850* (Rio de Janeiro, 1997).

visits to friends and neighbours, which most owners learned to tolerate. Sometimes, though, flight might have longer-term ambitions –to find a new master, to pass oneself off as free in a new environment, to join a *quilombo* or even to board ship to Africa. In general slaves adopted a variety of survival strategies, which were usually based on a realistic assessment of the opportunities open to them²⁰.

What all of these acts involved, however small or apparently insignificant, was the slave's refusal to be treated as an object. They were acts of self-assertion against the world, which sought to humiliate them and deny them their humanity; and for the slave the purchase of manumission was about his or her freedom, rather than stabilizing the system of exploitation. Moreover, some slaves (normally Brazilian born and light-skinned, and in particular those with skills and some degree of mobility) inhabited a kind of half-world on the way to independence. They would travel to different parts of town, adopt a new name, pretend they were freed, and not only seek out work but also –sometimes– new masters. In this world they were able to build networks of communication, which were often the prologue to flight or a route to (illegal) freedom. Such networks could also constitute the basis for subsequent collective forms of action and resistance on the part of slaves²¹.

Forms of collective action on the part of slaves were equally varied. Sometimes they mirrored those of manufacturing workers in Europe: laming animals and damaging tools served the same purpose as did Luddite actions, for example, and were a form of «bargaining by riot» (Eric Hobsbawm). Sometimes creole slaves placed pressure on their owners by deserting the plantations and offering to come back only when certain concessions had been made. Such concessions included (on the demand of the striking creole slaves) giving the most menial tasks to Africans! After 1870 slaves also sought to exploit legal changes, in particular the Law of the Free Womb, to their advantage. This was especially true of female slaves. Collective slow-downs and strikes were not unknown, though these obviously required solidarity to make punishment difficult. Such acts were rarely knee-jerk reactions to misfortune but required a degree of prior communication and informal organisation. The same applied to the most distinctive form of slave resistance: collective flight to or the formation of settlements of runaway slaves, known as *quilombos* or *mocambos*. Most of these, in the hills, mountains, forests and swamps around Brazil's large cities,

20. For a discussion of and references for such action see GEARY, Dick: «Europe and Slave Protests in the Americas» in *Mitteilungsblatt des Instituts für soziale Bewegungen* 31 (2004), pp. 9-23. Also articles by ASSUNÇÃO, LARA, VILLALTA, MATTOS DE CASTRO and CARVALHO in LIBBY & FURTADO (eds.): pp. 335-464.

21. CHALHOUB, Sidney: *Visões da liberdade* (São Paulo, 1990), pp. 212-215 & 235-39; de CARVALHO, Marcus J. M.: *Liberdade* (Recife, 2001), pp. 37, p. 177, pp. 261-88.

were of short duration and they were usually repressed with vicious force. Such communities were endemic in both colonial and post-colonial Brazil. Some were mobile, living off raids, in which, incidentally, they themselves took slaves, though many of the longer surviving *quilombos* also engaged in cultivation of the land and exchange with local merchants. The very existence of these maroon communities testifies once again to the ability of slaves to create social networks of solidarity and either reproduce African structures or (more often) forge new, fictive kinship relations within African «nations». To many fugitive communities African religious practices were central; and in some political and social organization followed African precedents, including the election of «Kings». For Roger Bastide and R K Kent, maroon societies constituted African resistance to acculturation in the New World. Slaves in such communities utilized the skills they had learnt in their African homeland; and, to quote John Thornton, «*the most important contributions of the African heritage were the military training that slaves had, mostly from having served in African armies*». He maintains that their African background did «*help shape the direction of revolts, influenced timing and tactics, and validated leadership*»²². Here, however, we must be careful. Even as early as the 16th and 17th centuries, economic and social organization mirrored that of no single African tribe but was rather an amalgamation of different tribal traditions, forged on the slave ships or in the new American homeland; whilst archeological research has identified a considerable Amerindian presence in maroon communities. There were even *quilombos* in the state of Matto Grosso, in which Indians constituted the majority of inhabitants and which were led by Indians. So it is dangerous to identify these forms of resistance simply as an attempt to recreate Africa in the New

22. For a summary of collective action see GEARY, Dick: «Slave Protests», pp. 11-19. For an account of the exploitation of the law and how this contributed to the ultimate decline of Brazilian slavery see Hebe Maria MATTOS DE CASTRO, *Das cores do silêncio* (Rio de Janeiro, 1995); CHALHOUB, Sidney: *Visões da liberdade* (São Paulo, 1990); MENDONÇA, Joseli: *Entre a mão*; ABRAHÃO, F. A.: *As ações de liberdade de escravos do Tribunal de Campinas* (Campinas, 1992); SPILLER PENA, Eduardo: *Pajens da Casa Imperial* (Campinas, 2001); GRINBERG, Keila: *Liberata* (Rio de Janeiro, 1994); *Ibid.*, «Freedom Suits and Civil Law in Brazil and the United States» in *Slavery and Abolition* 22 (2001), 3, pp. 66-82. The standard work on maroon societies is Richard PRICE (ed.), *Maroon Societies*, (Baltimore, 1996). On Brazil see articles by Bastide, Kent in this collection. Also João José REIS and Flávio SANTOS GOMES (eds.): *Liberdade por um fio* (São Paulo, 1996); and in particular the articles in this collection by Funari, Carvalho, Gomes, Karasch, Schwartz, Assunção and Ramos. DÉCIO FREITAS, Further: *Palmares* (Porto Alegre, 1973); CARNEIRO, Edison: *O quilombo de Palmares* (Rio de Janeiro, 1966); ALVES FILHO, Ivan: *Memorial dos Palmares* (Rio de Janeiro, 1988); Clóvis MOURA, *Quilombos e a rebelião negra* (São Paulo, 1981); MAESTRI FILHO, Mário José: *Quilombos e quilombolas em terras gaúchas* (Porto Alegre, 1979); ALMEIDA BARBOSA, Waldemar de: *Negras e quilombos em Minas Gerais* (Belo Horizonte, 1972); Eliane CANTARINO O'DWYER (ed.): *Quilombos* (Rio de Janeiro, 2002). For the African-ness of maroon societies see BASTIDE, Roger: «The Other Quilombos» in Price (ed.), pp. 191-201; KENT, R. K.: «Palmares» in Price (ed.), pp. 170-190; KENT, R. K.: «African Revolt in Bahia» in *Journal of Social History*, 3 (1969/70), pp. 334-56; THORNTON, John: *Africa*, pp. 280f.

World. Stuart Schwartz sees the maroon societies of Brazil not as a return to African pastoral traditions but as the product of wild frontier conditions; whilst Richard Price, an authority on maroon societies, writes:

However «African» in character, no maroon social, political, religious or aesthetic system can be reliably traced back to a particular tribal provenience; they reveal, rather, their syncretistic composition, forged in the early meetings of peoples bearing diverse African, European and Amerindian cultures in the dynamic setting of the «New World».

The cultures to be found in such societies were usually «syncretistic», involving different African traditions, as well as European and Native American features. As Carolyn Flick has shown in the case of Haiti and Marcus de Carvalho in the case of Pernambuco in North-Eastern Brazil, the culture of African slaves was a syncretistic mix of Dahomean, Yoruban and West-Central African cultures²³. Yet these mixed cultures obviously possessed significant African dimensions. Africa had clearly not been knocked out of Brazilian slaves by their enslavement.

Slave Rebellions constituted the most feared and explosive form of resistance. As in the case of European insurrections, rebellions required changing expectations of success, bred by ruptures in the social and political fabric. They were likely to take place when there were wars, invasions or internecine warfare between the white elites and they involved considerable planning. Some were small and involved only one plantation, others encompassed much broader areas, requiring networks of communication over significant distances. Usually they were led by slaves of higher status, e.g. mulateers, and not by field-slaves. They were often timed to coincide with religious holidays and festivals, as in Bahia in 1816, and they were rarely random in their violence. Rather they targeted agents of the owners and the authorities. Sometimes women participated, as in the Urubu Quilombo Revolt of 1826. Often, again as in 1826, the revolts of African-born slaves were closely intertwined with *candomblé* (an Afro-Brazilian cult), just as the revolt of African slaves on the Northern plane of Haiti in 1791 was inspired by *voodoo*. In the increasing number of such revolts in the 1830s and 1840s African slaves and manumitted Africans turned on the Brazilian-born; and the Brazilian-born were usually absent from the ranks of rebellion, as, with some qualifications, we have already seen. The great 1835 Mâle rebellion in 1835 and some preceding Bahian rebellions found their collective solidarity in an Africanised Islam (imported from Nigeria and

23. PRICE (ed.), p. 29; SCHWARTZ, «The Mocambo», in PRICE (ed.), p. 211; GUIMARÃES, Carlos Magno: «Mineração, quilombos e Palmares-Minas Gerais no século XVII» in *Liberdade por um fio*, pp. 139-63; RICCI VOLPATO, Luiza Rios: «Quilombos em Mato Grosso» in *Ibid.*, pp. 213-39; DE CARVALHO, Marcus: «O quilombo de Malunguinho» in *Ibid.*, pp. 407-32; FLICK, Carolyn E.: *The Making of Haiti: The Saint Domingue Revolution from Below* (Knoxville, 1990).

Benin), which enabled it to cross tribal divisions but largely excluded women. It followed an increase in the importation of Yoruba, Hanas and Aja-Fon from Benin and Nigeria, who themselves had been the victims of armed conflicts in their homelands and had experience either of African militarism or of resistance to it. Furthermore, some of these slaves had been leaders of their communities in West Africa²⁴.

Brazilian-born slaves did participate in some forms of popular protest. *Negros de ganbo* (artisans and street vendors) were sometimes urban rebels, as in the so-called «Tailors' Revolt» of 1798 in Bahia, which derived some its inspiration from the French Revolution. Such slaves often participated in riots, together with freedmen and poor whites in the towns, in separatist disturbances, independence revolts, republican agitation or attacks on Portuguese merchants, as in Rio de Janeiro, Salvador and Pernambuco in the 1830s and 1840s. Later in the 19th century others became active in the cause of abolitionism. Such forms of resistance, however, were clearly different from those of the African slaves described above²⁵.

5. CONCLUSION

Oscar Patterson's model of the social death of slaves identifies some crucial aspects of the dehumanization that has characterized slavery; but it fails to recognize the active human agency of slaves in reproducing African traditions or newly creating kinship and other networks of solidarity in their new environment. In their own actions and self-understanding the slaves who came to Brazil from Africa were very much alive.

GLOSSARY

| | |
|------------------------|---|
| <i>candomblé</i> | an Afro-Brazilian religion |
| <i>capitão-do-mato</i> | literally «bush-captain» = slave hunter |

24. There is a massive literature on slave risings in Brazil. See Carlo Maria JUNHO ANASTASIA & Flavio MARCUS DA SILVA: «Levamentos secentistas mineiros» in Júnia FERREIRA FURTADO (ed.): *Diálogos oceânicos* (Belo Horizonte, 2001), pp. 307-35; DE CARVALHO, Marcus Joaquim M.: *Liberdade* (Recife, 2001); FREITAS, Décio: *Insurreições escravos* (Porto Alegre, 1976); Sílvia HUNOLD LARA, *Campus da violência* (Rio de Janeiro, 1988); MOURA, Clóvis: *Rebeliões na senzala* (Rio de Janeiro, 1972); Reis, *Slave Rebellion*; REIS & SILVA: *Negociação*; Stuart SCHWARTZ (ed.): *Slaves, Peasant and Rebels* (Chicago, 1997); MACHADO, Maria Helena: *O plano e o pânico* (Rio de Janeiro, 1994); MAESTRI FILHO, Mário José: *O escravo gaúcho: resistência e trabalho* (São Paulo, 1984); MARCOS DOS SANTOS, Ronaldo: *Resistência e superação do escravismo na provincial da São Paulo* (São Paulo, 1980); M. H. P. Machado, *Crime e escravidão* (São Paulo, 1987).

25. CARVALHO: *Liberdade*; GEARY: «Slave Protests», pp. 19-22.

| | | |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------|--|
| <i>creole</i> | (<i>crioulo</i>) | here used to mean a slave born in Brazil |
| <i>liberto</i> | | a freed slave |
| <i>negro de ganbo</i> | a slave | (usually artisan or street-vendor, who worked on his/her behalf and gave a fixed quantity to the master) |
| <i>pardo</i> | | a light-skinned mulatto |
| <i>quilombo</i> or <i>mocambo</i> | | «maroon society», a community of runaway slaves |