

Making One out of Many: The Brazilian Experience

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Brazil, land of miscegenation (*métisse*). An indisputable fact and an unending process. But how should we understand its genesis and how should we, while respecting the requirements of a historiography worth the name, interpret it in terms of our hopes for the future? This is the horizon binding these reflections, which is to be put in perspective in the studies published in this issue of *Diogenes*.

Foregrounding miscegenation, and understanding its origins, has been one of the constant themes among the most distinguished practitioners of Brazilian thought since the 1930s, and has been accepted, indeed demanded, since the 1920s by the artistic and literary movement known as 'modernism', of which one of the major figures was the São Paulo writer, Mário de Andrade.¹ Gilberto Freyre (1900–1987), who would now have been a hundred years old, comes particularly to mind, as does Sergio Buarque de Holanda (1902–1982). Freyre made history with the publication of his two first works, *Casa Grande & senzala* [*Masters and Slaves*] of 1933 and *Sobrados e mucambos* of 1936. The same year Buarque de Holanda published his *Raízes de Brasil* [*Roots of Brasil*]. Motivated by the desire to understand their country, its shaping and – with some kind of concern as to identity – their own origins, both had been led to pave the way for what might be called an 'open' sociology, which immediately acquired a strongly anthropological character with Freyre and quickly incorporated increasingly historical aspects with Buarque de Holanda.

It should undoubtedly be stressed that in both writers the search for a better understanding of Brazil and its identity followed on from their studies abroad: of sociology and anthropology in the United States by Freyre and of sociology in Germany for Buarque de Holanda, in a context, therefore, where sociology was manifestly close to historical epistemology.²

Their times spent abroad were in fact decisive for the direction and subsequent investigations of Freyre and Buarque de Holanda. We could even say that the work of each carries within it the mark of the country in which they pursued their studies. How could Freyre, who was a university student in the United States at the time of full racial segregation, not have asked questions about his own world, a world so different from that which he had discovered in North America? How could Buarque de Holanda, for his part, not have been struck by the contrast presented by the Brazilians to a people with respect for law and order? And from there, how could he not have attempted to understand, through its 'roots', the disfunctioning of Brazilian society, where family and personal bonds had primacy over all other considerations, to the detriment of law and the general interest?

The fact is that on their return to Brazil, Freyre (from Pernambuco) and Buarque de Holanda (from São Paulo) embarked on a quest in their own country, as if to confirm the

poet Hölderlin's intuition, that appropriation of one's own occurs through that of the foreign. Although with different aims and emphases, they had then to ask themselves how, on the basis of the colonization of a country that was already inhabited and to which were added African slave populations transported by force, this Portuguese colony in the Americas had become what it is, a miscegenated nation.

Our aim, in this issue, is not to provide an outline or a balance-sheet of the work of Freyre and Buarque de Holanda, notwithstanding their value as points of reference. Space should be made for contemporary questions, born of a situation very different, both internally and externally, from that which they experienced. Internally, one must think of the transformations experienced by Brazil since the 1930s and its cultural vitality; externally, of the constitutional changes which have guaranteed the rights of black Americans and of the important offices which some of them hold in the political life of their country, something which was virtually inconceivable only a short while ago.

Surely these changes have had an effect on the way in which the racial question is now envisaged in Brazil, as the Brazilianist Thomas E. Skidmore has stressed in his study, 'Race and Class in Brazil: Historical Perspectives'.³ No longer able to contrast American segregation with the absence of segregation and 'tolerance' in Brazil, some sociologists have turned towards what might be called the persistence of more or less disguised forms of racial discrimination in Brazil, in any case racial prejudice (*preconceito*) towards the blacks and, indeed, the mulattoes. Suddenly, it has even become the rule to criticize the 'optimistic thesis' imputed to Freyre, summarized in his expression, 'racial democracy', which was taken up in part by the American sociologist, Donald Pierson, in the course of researches he undertook in Brazil in the 1940s.

Taken out of context and reduced to a simple slogan, it is not surprising that this 'thesis' can be challenged. Its weakness was all the greater because of the cursory consideration of what was taken for granted: is Brazil truly a 'democracy'? A question which cannot be answered without defining the criteria of what should be understood by democracy but which, if social criteria alone are taken into account, should undoubtedly be answered in the negative. But that is not only true of Brazil.

To understand properly what Freyre intended to mean, the expression 'racial democracy' must not be separated from the constant which underpins it and of which it forms part, namely the profound *miscigenação*, the profound miscegenation, of the Brazilian people; quite apart from taking into account the fact that one should not lose sight of the period in which his first books were written. For although today, at least in France, racial miscegenation is no longer considered degenerating or shameful, and it even appears to prefigure tomorrow's world, this is a very recent change in attitude. Need one recall that, at the time of the publication of works such as *Casa Grande & Senzala* and *Sobrados e mucambos*, which conferred a kind of 'legitimacy' on Brazilian miscegenation, as a fact there was no need to be ashamed of, others in Brazil actually wanted to attribute the country's economic backwardness to its ethnic 'composition'⁴ and, what is more, at a time when the ideology of racial purity was reaching its zenith in Nazi Germany? On the other hand, the works of Freyre stimulated resistance which stood in the way of the Brazilian intelligentsia's better acceptance of the character of national identity, while also acknowledging the debt to the Portuguese heritage, without which there would have been no Brazil.

Nor should we forget that belief in the superiority of the white race and civilization had become the rule in Europe, especially since the nineteenth century, when there had been

attempts to base this on pseudo-scientific criteria and when it served as a key concept in the ideological justification of colonial imperialism. How, finally, can we imagine that it was possible for Brazil, a very newly formed nation that had to assert itself in relation to Europe and the United States, to have been independent of the foreign perspective which tended to accord it an inferior status, and attribute its backwardness to the mixed blood of its population? These considerations should be taken into account when the 'myth' of 'racial democracy' comes under attack today, when it is readily denounced by challenging anything 'erroneous' or 'wilfully misleading' that can be detected in it, and without sufficient attention to what it might have meant in the face of the forms of racism which flourished at that time. The critics snap their fingers at the positive and constructive face of what is called a myth, but still forget what it could have meant, and continues to mean, as a key point in the construction of Brazilian identity.

In reality, two pitfalls surround the interpretation of the racial question in Brazil. The first is wanting to believe that in Brazil there has not been, and is no longer, any racial prejudice. This is an untenable and misleading position, moreover delaying the necessary awareness of the absurdity of racial prejudice in itself, above all in a country like Brazil. However, to believe that things could have been different were it not for the fact of miscegenation alone is to run up against what is as much a sociological as a historical (or perhaps even anthropological) impossibility, when the strength of racial prejudice (even if it remains concealed) and the pro-slavery past are taken into account. The other pitfall is to adopt the opposite position, namely not acknowledging Brazil's distinctiveness as far as the racial question is concerned, as if recognizing this position should *ipso facto* result in the negation of profound social injustices still rampant in the country. This would amount to virtually denying the incontestable fact that, whether one likes it or not, Brazil is not simply a multi-ethnic country, as others are, but a profoundly miscegenated country, if not the most miscegenated in the world.

Here, we should make a further distinction between the interbreeding of whites with natives ('Indians'), and that of whites (often already interbred with Indians) with blacks. The dilution of Indian blood in what are viewed as whites in Brazil has occurred in such a way that it has remained virtually unconscious, certainly unproblematic. The fact is often overlooked that when the Portuguese (the great majority of them men) began to settle on the Brazilian coasts, many and by no means the least of them, like the noble Jerônimo de Albuquerque, concluded alliances with Indian chiefs, whose daughters they received in marriage and whose enemies in opposing Indian tribes they inherited at the same time. As Bartolomé Bennassar has written, "there is no question that the first generation of inhabitants was composed of men who had arrived without women and who married free or slave Indian women".⁵ In reality, although the first inhabitants – and here we should recall the unsophisticated condition of the natives of Brazil (where there was no gold or other precious metals), which was to give rise to the myth of the 'noble savage' in Europe – were not slow to be viewed as competitors for land, they were at first considered as people to be converted, to be led to the true religion. This is why, when the question of labour for the plantations was raised, some missionaries, Jesuits chief among them, did battle on behalf of the Indians against the land holders who were quite ready to reduce them to slavery.⁶ In order to protect and evangelize them, the missionaries made them live in *aldeamentos*, that is, in villages where they were protected against attempts at capture by the new masters of the land.

Admittedly, this did not prevent there being constant tensions, and an unequal and sometimes brutal struggle between the colonizers and the native populations, given the divergent interests of the two parties. But as far as enslavement is concerned, it was the new occupants, the land owners, who had, taking all in all, to give ground. Whence the alternative solution started in 1540: the appalling trade in black Africans to provide manpower where the Indians had proved inadequate and because the latter – all the more easily because of their familiarity with the lie of the land – could escape, go farther into the interior, and, as was often subsequently stated, thus serve as allies of the colonizers against fugitive slaves.

However, interbreeding with the Indians was so common, even though it might be undetected several centuries later, that a recent genetic study, although based on sampling of only a few hundred individuals, revealed the presence of Indian blood in a considerable percentage of the Brazilian population.

Moreover, throughout the seventeenth century and into the first decades of the following century, in some parts of Brazil, such as the province of São Paulo, the language most commonly spoken, the *língua franca*, was Tupi, especially at home, and therefore among women, children and servants, while the men (the *bandeirantes*) went off on long expeditions to conquer new lands. In tackling this question in *Roots of Brazil*, Sergio Buarque de Holanda cites the following passage from the Jesuit father, Antonio Vieira:

It is true that the families of the Portuguese and the Indians of São Paulo are so interconnected that the women and children progress spiritually and domestically, and the language that is spoken in these families is that of the Indians, and Portuguese has to be learnt by the young boys at school . . .⁷

It was undoubtedly a misunderstanding of all these facts which explains how – on the basis of a few militant articles on the part of movements for the protection of the native populations that appeared in Brazilian newspapers at the time of the celebrations of the 'discovery' – the European press in its turn could quote figures indicating that virtually the whole of the Amerindian population of Brazil had been deliberately exterminated.⁸ In view of this, one is wary of saying more than not only were many Amerindians, upon contact with whites, decimated by illnesses against which they had no immune defence system,⁹ but also that both before and after the arrival of the Portuguese and other Europeans the Indians, divided into distinct groups (Tupinikin, Tamoio, Aimoré, Goitacá, etc.), frequently fought among themselves. Whence the cannibalistic practices that so vividly struck, and continued to feed, the European imagination.¹⁰ 'Cannibalism' was to continue to serve as a mirror of, and metaphor for, what the Europeans themselves were, in their inhumanity and massacres, engaged in acting out amongst themselves in the religious wars. It is undoubtedly this with which chapter XXXI ('Concerning Cannibals') in Book I of Montaigne's *Essays* is concerned, presenting remarkable evidence of the impact upon the consciousness of a man of the Renaissance of the accounts of Jean de Léry, André Thévet and perhaps also Hans Staden, as well as the way in which one can make use of the customs of the New World when 'reading' the customs of the inhabitants of the Old World, which were in no way less perverse.

If we omit any reference to Indian blood, we are not in a position to understand how much possession of this blood was ideologically claimed at the time of Independence, for,

by legitimating the desire for the new nation's autonomy, it justified the existence of a political entity separate from Portugal. Is it widely known that after Independence some people even wanted to change their names in order to highlight their 'Brazilian-ness', that is, their origins that were at least partly Indian? Or that the earliest Brazilian romanticism,¹¹ as Lilia Moritz Schwarcz has observed, "achieved a true cultural policy" in making Brazilian identity inseparable from that of the Indians? None of this seems to be taken into account by today's 'politically correct' thought. Hence the damning figures published in the major French daily newspapers as well as in the reports of the development aid organizations: more than 4, indeed 5 million Indians in Brazil at the time of the discoveries, reduced to some 300,000 now.

The misinterpretation of statistics is a common problem. Whether it is done hurriedly by journalists, who have no time to reflect on the trustworthiness of their sources, or by humanitarian and charitable organizations wanting, with the best of intentions, to focus public opinion on very real injustices, it is still none the less a distortion. Those who are reckoned as 'Indians' today are those who, having remained isolated for a long time, still live in independent communities, trying, after a fashion, to preserve their culture, their customs and, consequently, the lands which make their way of life practicable. Of course, everything has to be brought into play to guarantee them this often-threatened constitutional right. However, one cannot resort to naïve constructions amounting to a denial of the very fact of historical encounter, with all the drama and destruction that entailed, together with the transformation of the two worlds and the creation of a new reality which did not exist prior to the encounter.

Without denying the destruction and the massacres of the past, and the duty of vigilance which this imposes on the present and the future for the preservation of the rights of those Indians who have kept their ancient way of life – and, besides, through their respect for nature they are of real exemplary value for a civilization like our own – we should certainly not delude ourselves. The 'Indians' who feature in the abstract in the statistical assessments projected back onto the era of discovery have not all been annihilated, as people would have us believe and as the inflated figures appear to insinuate; many of these men and women living in what was to become Brazil at the time of the discoveries are the ancestors of the Brazilians of today. Their blood and their genes, as well as numerous cultural practices (the hammock, frequent bathing) and dietary practices (such as manioc flour), as well as their know-how concerning plants and part of their vocabulary, are an integral part of the cross-bred nation that is Brazil, itself with very marked regional variations. Add, too, the fact that 'Brazil' did not exist as a unified identity, for the land corresponding to its vast present-day territory did not constitute an empire but was inhabited by a great number of native groups, speaking a wide variety of languages and existing in a state of endemic warfare.

Thus, taking a stand against embroidered and biased perspectives (however justified the latter may sometimes be from the viewpoint of political action), the historian Ronaldo Vainfas has observed that the 'Indians', divided into very many ethnic groups and not 'seeing' themselves unified under this label, quickly realized that they could profit from the conflicts which they witnessed between the different white groups, such as, for example, between the Portuguese and French when the French attempted to settle in Rio Bay in the sixteenth century, or in the seventeenth at Maranhão. "They took part in the thousand-odd battles of the period, sometimes on one side, sometimes on the

other, thus seeking to reinforce their own camp within the framework of their traditional wars."¹²

In sum, as was the case with many other nations, though often in a more distant past, the nation of Brazil today has been formed through the collision of peoples and cultures or, to put it differently, through conflicts and exchanges between populations of diverse provenance who occupied the same land from the first years of the sixteenth century onwards. It is none the less true that there is a limit to the comparison between the formation of the nations of Europe at an earlier date and the formation of a more recent nation like Brazil, born out of European expansion, in that, in Brazil, the populations involved in constituting the nation each came from different continents and races.

For it should once more be stressed that Brazil is not simply a product of white and Amerindian interbreeding. As Gilberto Freyre wrote, fundamentally, the Brazilian, 'is a Euro-Afro-Amerindian'.¹³ In fact, some decades after the arrival of the Portuguese in Brazil, a third 'race' had been added on a massive scale to the two others, who had already begun to mix to a certain extent. But while Europeans and Indians had encountered one another – and even though this unequally balanced encounter subsequently gave rise to numerous exactions, plunder and bloody conflicts (for, when it was a question of farming these new lands,¹⁴ the situation did not remain as peaceable and almost idyllic as at the time of the arrival of Cabral and his fleet's brief stay on the coast south of Bahia) – the arrival of black Africans on the American continent was not an encounter of remotely the same order. It was a forced arrival, in chains. By means of an (in)human trade,¹⁵ which inflicted several centuries of countless sufferings on millions of individuals reduced to the status of slaves. After a dramatic sea voyage, these black men and women were disembarked as merchandise at the ports of the New World: they had no choice. Living tools, these uprooted individuals had to serve as manpower for the colonizers, of whom the most powerful were land owners. This being the case, the category of 'masters' expanded, for even manumitted slaves, or their descendants, could have slaves in their service.

The institution of slavery was, in short, a magnifying mirror and was pushed to the furthest limit of social functioning, which demands analysis in terms of relations of force, as Simone Weil saw so clearly when she wrote that "the concept of *force* is far from simple, and it is none the less the first to clarify in understanding social problems".¹⁶

As was to be expected, throughout the four centuries of the slave trade,¹⁷ which was only abolished by law in Brazil in 1850 (though once that was suppressed, slavery continued until 1888), and reflecting the increase in the population of African origin, there was no lack of revolts. Although they were of very different ethnic origins, the slaves sometimes banded together to escape from the plantations and create separate villages, centres of refuge and of resistance to slavery which were known by the name of *quilombos*. Sometimes, too, they allied themselves in the hope of weakening by means of uprisings the power exercised by the dominant groups.¹⁸

But, in parallel with the strikingly inferior status of the slaves which could spark off rebellion and revolt was the continued 'interbreeding' between the colonizing 'white' population (often, as has been observed, already mixed with Indian blood) and the black population of African origin, as Freyre's researches indicated.

It is in fact miscegenation of this kind (that is, with the different populations of African origin, whose contribution was decisive for the make-up of Brazil and its culture) which lends itself to analysis in racial terms.¹⁹ Furthermore, in regard to the black element, it is

difficult to avoid the temptation to compare the Brazilian situation with what has happened in other countries that have emerged from European colonialism and which also had a slave-owning past and a population of African origin, such as the United States, or, again, with South Africa, with a black majority population and, until very recently, governed only by representatives of its white minority population, within the frame of the apartheid system.

Among the numerous recent works attempting to shed new light on the racial question in Brazil, we should highlight the important work of Anthony W. Marx: *Making Race and Nation: A Comparison of South Africa, the United States and Brazil*.²⁰ As the sub-title indicates, this is a comparative study, aiming to situate the racial question, as it arises in each of these countries, in its political context: the author wanted to demonstrate its role in the construction of these three 'modern' nations. Despite their differences, they share the fact of having all three tackled the 'black' question. But, while the first two had to resolve a major conflict within the white community at the very beginning of their national state – the United States with the war between the liberal North and the slave-owning South, South Africa with the conflict between the Afrikaners from Holland and the British, which produced the Boer War – the third, Brazil, has been spared dissent of this kind, for since the colonial period it had been much more unified.

One of the author's main tenets is that the inevitable but difficult reconciliation was conceived in racial terms just as much in the case of the North Americans as in that of the white groups of South Africa. With the reconstruction and safeguarding of the fragile and threatened unity of the state as their goal, the white adversaries sought reconciliation among themselves, to the disadvantage of the third, black, element. There followed not only the maintenance but also the worsening of racial discrimination, in consequence of which, even after emancipation, that is, after slavery was abolished, this took the form of legal segregation. Anthony Marx's analyses are very convincing on this point and substantial extracts from the fundamentally racist white discourse could be reproduced to give some idea of the evidence which he brings to support his thesis. A few examples must suffice.

After the Boer War, Jan Smuts, one of the leaders of the Afrikaners against the British, although he had had a British education, proposed reconciliation between the two white camps. Quoting him, Marx comments: "As he saw it, the destiny of these two peoples was closely bound together and their prosperity would depend upon their ability to co-operate . . .". His position was supported by General Botha, who advocated the reconciliation of the white people as "one nation . . . one solid, united and strong race".²¹ They did in fact anticipate "a fusion of beliefs, goals and blood between British stock and Boer stock".²²

The same preference accorded to racial difference over ideological differences and interests had already prevailed in the United States of America after the Civil War and the victory of the North over the South. In short, to quote Marx again, "racial segregation was used to unify whites".

However well founded the established facts or pertinent the analysis, should we be content with such a functional²³ political interpretation of racial segregation? Does the case of Brazil not require us to step outside a framework which overlooks other variables, admittedly more contingent but which have had considerable importance in the different or 'exceptional' Brazilian case? What interpretation does Anthony Marx give to Brazil?

Let us say at once that the seriousness with which he has pondered over the case of Brazil is not in dispute: his work is substantial. But it is only too clear that he is less

familiar with Brazilian history and the concrete situation in Brazil than with those of the two other countries under consideration. In addition to the works consulted, copious but lacking the principal contemporary Brazilian historians, his main source of information and reference remains the statistical studies carried out by Brazilian and foreign sociologists aiming to show how, in the areas of employment, education, etc., blacks and mulattoes still remain markedly less advantaged than whites in Brazil, and should thus serve to support the fight against insidious forms of discrimination.²⁴ But do they not by that very fact tend to make racism the dominant variable, by eliminating on principle examination of the other criteria and leaving out any more social and historical analysis of Brazilian society? How then do we view the problem of the arid lives (*vidas secas*) of the *sertão* (the remote lands of the interior of north-east Brazil), to use the title of the novel by Gaciliano Ramos, precisely where the black population was statistically insignificant but where, none the less, the greatest deprivation was rife? What about the question of the 'landless' peasants, like those of the Northern Amazon or those of the extreme South, where the same thing is experienced, although the situation cannot be attributed to the racial factor?

To put it differently, do these statistical sociological researches, categorizing the population according to a tripartite division into whites, blacks and mulattoes, make it possible to construct an overall view of Brazilian society as constituted in the course of its five centuries of formation and the subtle way in which it has been forged through the very fact of its miscegenation, although without this miscegenation signifying any victory over social inequalities? More generally, should one not ask whether it is possible to study a society without regard for the concrete, the lived experience of social relations characterized by huge diversity, including, in the case of Brazil, great regional variation?

Although he places the question of the Indians and of interbreeding with them outside his field of enquiry, which at once distorts any analysis of the racial question in Brazil, Anthony Marx is led to insist on the opposition between the threefold racial division of the Brazilians (whites, mulattoes and blacks) and the clear-cut bipartite division of the North Americans and the South Africans. More experience of Brazil, and of longer duration, would have made him realize that even this threefold division which is used for statistical classification is in reality constantly checked by the extraordinary elision between one category and another and the social 'subtleties' of Brazilian society. Has he asked, when does one cease to be mulatto, or even black, in Brazil, and become white? However, the question of unstable and porous boundaries between such racial categorizations is decisive, above all in regions where the black population has been and remains numerous, by contrast, moreover, with regions in the south of Brazil, where the white element has largely become the majority, especially after the arrival of European immigrants in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Thus, in her analysis of the question of manumission which, together with miscegenation, was characteristic of slavery in Brazil, Katia de Queirós Mattoso, without concealing all the obstacles in the path of the 'manumittable' or even the 'manumitted' individual, observes that "at Bahia, once the emancipated generation had passed, colour was no longer a factor in individual ascent, nor in the forms of collusion to be found among the powerful as a group".²⁵

Since Anthony Marx readily avails himself of the criterion that applied in the United States for classification of the population in terms of race, namely that of "one drop of blood",²⁶ he had at his disposal a *major contrast* with what occurred, and still does, in Brazil. He does not really take this decisive difference into account in his book. If he had

addressed this question somewhat more attentively, he would have realized that 'white' is the most equivocal term in Brazil in analysis of this kind.

While in the countries with which Brazil is compared, a few drops of black blood are sufficient for classification as black, with all that may imply in terms of discrimination, such a criterion is meaningless for Brazilians. Thus, the *Courier international* ran the headline 'Land of the white negresses' above an account of recent work in genetics, and stated: "A team of researchers has just outlined the genetic map of the Brazilian population. And made some discoveries which put an end to the myth of the white majority."²⁷ To that statement, I will simply add that this does not constitute a true discovery. It is simply confirmation, by means of scientific analyses, of what was already there to be known. Of course, at the individual level, that will give some the opportunity of discovering that they are not as white as they seem and that they are themselves the product of this long process of miscegenation from which the Brazilian people in their entirety are born. Having established this much, why should one use a classification which, conforming to imported models, takes no proper account of miscegenation?

In fact, the end of the alleged 'myth' is doubly advantageous. That of enabling Brazilians, whatever the colour of their skin, to feel themselves more the brothers of their black fellow countrymen and thus more acutely aware of the absurdity of maintaining more or less subtle and disguised forms of prejudice, indeed of discrimination, upon the basis of skin colour. For, in fact, there is more point in saying "skin colour" than "race", in relation to Brazil. But that should also put those who want to interpret social injustices in Brazil in strictly racial terms on their guard. Their 'myth', too, is smashed to pieces. Did we not read in April 2000, at the time of the celebrations marking the arrival of the fleet of Pedro Álvares Cabral in Brazil, that only whites were to join in the festivities? What whites? And what is to be understood by such an assertion in a country like Brazil? If that were the case, taking 'white' as a term indicative of some kind of 'racial purity', the most important people in the land, starting with the President of the Republic, or Roberto Marinho, the powerful boss of the telecommunications network, *Globo*, one of the most powerful men in the country, or Cardinal D. Lucas Neves de Salvador de Bahia and many others, could not have made up the party. If we adopt the racial criterion that long operated in the United States, and which is still the backdrop for some 'ethnic' demands, they would have been excluded from the celebration. I stress once more that it is wrong to believe that the racial criterion, taken in isolation, can in itself and by itself suffice to explicate the considerable social differences in Brazil. I shall return to this point.

These observations lead me to examine other key points which are obstacles in the way of Anthony Marx's potential understanding of the racial question in Brazil, in the absence of better historical contextualization. The first of these points bears on the role of the Portuguese. The second concerns his choice to take into consideration only the post-abolitionist phase, thus depriving himself of the opportunity of more detailed examination of the role of the mulattoes and of some slaves manumitted during the empire, that is to say, during the period extending from the country's independence (1822) until the Republic (1889), proclaimed one year after Abolition (1888).

Keen to dismiss the erroneous idea that the situation in Brazil could be explained at least in part by the fact that the Portuguese were demonstrably less harsh, indeed, more 'human' to the slave than the English-speaking world or the Dutch, while they are known to have been the instigators of the slave trade and the greatest suppliers of slaves to the

New World, Marx ends by failing to appreciate what did in fact distinguish encounters by the Portuguese with other human groups, and in particular those of different races. His failure to distinguish between the two issues can only be regretted. The position would have been different if he had been aware of some Portuguese accounts from the time of the discoveries (in Asia, for instance) and if he had known something of the extremely significant aspects of the coming of the Portuguese to Africa, an event which entailed the subsequent arrival in Portugal of large numbers of black Africans from the fifteenth century onwards, in other words, before the discovery of Brazil.

In *Raízes do Brasil*, Sergio Buarque de Holanda, moreover, observes that “mixing with coloured people had begun fully in the mother country”.²⁸ What better testimony than that of Father Antonio Vieira, passionate defender of the Indians, and the greatest Portuguese orator of the seventeenth century, whom the poet Fernando Pessoa did not hesitate to call “the emperor of our tongue”? In fact, all the indications, including the portrait we have of him, suggest that the great Antonio Vieira was of mixed ethnicity.²⁹ And it was the Inquisition itself which discovered this, maintaining that most probably his maternal grandmother had been black. Making inquiries into the origins of the Jesuit father who gave them such trouble – for his defence of the New Christians and his apologia for the return of the Jews to Portugal had made them suspect “impurity of blood” – the members of the Inquisition Tribunal had been unable to find any “suspect” blood in him, apart from black blood, which cleared him of the suspicion of being “interested” in his unfailing defence of the “people of the nation” (that is, the Jews) and caused his family to be considered of *sangue limpo* (‘pure blood’).

Moreover, should we not also take into account the importance of the New Christians in the constitution of the Brazilian people – which did not, it should be mentioned in passing, prevent the dictator Getulio Vargas from planning to adopt anti-semitic measures, including the attempt to draw up a register of Brazilians who might have Jewish blood, something he had quickly to renounce, for the result of such an inquiry would undoubtedly have been surprising and quite different from that anticipated, not permitting the isolation of a defined group. We can see in this how Brazil experienced periods when it was vulnerable to the lure of racism, despite everything that opposed it in the very composition of its population. By the very formation of its people, however, Brazil should have been immunized against an ideology like that of Aryanism.

But let us go back in time – before even Father Vieira whom we have already located in the seventeenth century – and let us recall the heroine of a drama by Gil Vicente (1465–1536), the *Auto de Maria Parda* which, as its title indicates, presents a woman of mixed race (*parda*) from Lisbon, a victim of the difficult times which affected the kingdom: times of poor harvests and high costs of living. This play is all the more significant in that it lets us perceive what we can learn from numerous documents, namely that at this time there was already a considerable number of blacks and mulattoes among the ordinary people of Lisbon. In fact, since the very first contacts with the African populations, the slave trade had begun and many blacks were brought out of Africa to occupy servile positions, as was the case elsewhere in the Maghreb. And yet that did not prevent exchanges between nations or, better still, between kings in their due and rightful form. As that part of the Five Hundred Years’ Exhibition (‘Mostra do Redescobrimento’: see below) concerned with Afro-Brazilian art, which was shown in the year 2000 in São Paulo and then toured other large towns in Brazil, demonstrated to a wide public, just a few decades after the arrival of the

Portuguese in the ancient Congo kingdom, "the first ambassadors of the Congo king were received with great pomp in Europe, especially at Rome, where in 1518 Dom Henrique, son of the Congo king, was consecrated first bishop of black Africa".³⁰

It would have been sufficient to have borne in mind a historical backdrop of this kind, much more complex than that of the current representations, adding to it the reality of a miscegenation that became increasingly widespread with the passing of the centuries, to realize that some debates on the status of the blacks (and those of mixed race) that may have taken place in the United States in the nineteenth century would necessarily have been more nuanced in the Portuguese-Brazilian world. For all kinds of cultural reasons, including religious, when the colonial administration in Brazil attempted, with greater or less intensity according to time and place, to institutionalize discrimination in relation to mulattoes and manumitted slaves, it often went quite unheeded. How could segregation have come about, once slavery had been completely abolished? In contrast with what Anthony Marx maintains, the absence of segregation in Brazil in the years that followed Abolition was neither solely nor primarily imputable to its legal prohibition.³¹ As some of the authors whom he cites have clearly perceived,³² in particular Carl Degler and Marvin Harris, but from whose views he differs, not only would it have been impossible to put into practice because of the very fact of miscegenation, but because it would have been a slap in the face for the political legacy of the nineteenth century.

I shall linger on this last point, since it has to do with the political dimension which Anthony Marx particularly seeks to highlight. Does his thesis amount to more than postulating that the determining factor of Brazil's 'exceptional' character was the legal prohibition of segregation, a decision taken, in his view, as a deliberate³³ ploy on the part of the Brazilian state, in order to avoid still greater conflict? And to more than an opinion that, if such a political will had not been written into the Constitution, things would have happened differently. He writes:

No doubt the higher level of miscegenation in Brazil would have made a biracial order more difficult to impose than elsewhere, though the Brazilian state was certainly capable of such an imposition, given its evident ability to manage social change. Biracialism would not have been impossible given sufficient will. Miscegenation by itself did not preclude an official racial order, which in the United States and South Africa was constructed biracially despite physical variation, and in Brazil was constructed as a more fluid triracial divide.³⁴

But after what we have seen, the hypothesis advanced by Anthony Marx, according to which the Brazilian state could – had it wished to, even at the risk of being extremely maladroit – have imposed a form of discrimination, or indeed legal segregation, is not plausible. Without denying the political dimension of the legal ban on discrimination, bi-racialism would have been a real social impossibility in Brazil, quite regardless of social considerations. A thousand and one social facts, such as, for instance, a clergy with a good number of priests of mixed race, or the close ties binding some black men and women to their 'patrons' would bear out my assertion. And how could one fail to take account of the number of children of mixed race born out of wedlock who were acknowledged by their fathers, even, indeed, by their father's legitimate wife?

But since, in comparing the role of the three nation-states in the imposition or prohibition (the case with Brazil) of segregationist laws, Marx focuses his attention above all on the

period that followed Abolition, it seems to me that consideration of the role played by some mulattoes in the period before Abolition could make a substantial contribution to this debate.

From the arrival of Dom João VI at Rio de Janeiro in 1808, fleeing from the invasion of Portugal by Napoleonic troops, everything which counted for anything as far as cultural life was concerned (fairly modest, in fact) was called upon to make a contribution to the extension of what was now not just the capital of the colony but henceforth of the united kingdom (*Reino Unido*) of Brazil, Portugal and Algarve. Among the famous Brazilians some, and by no means an insignificant number, were of mixed race. This was true of Canon José Maurício Nunes Garcia, one of the first great Brazilian composers. Seized with enthusiasm after hearing his works performed, Dom João VI, a great lover of music who had brought the court musicians with him to Brazil, honoured him in 1810 with one of the most prestigious decorations of the kingdom, the order of Christ. On another occasion, Nunes Garcia was applauded by the Portuguese composer, Marcos Portugal, who hailed him as his brother the "mulatto genius", as Neukomm, a disciple of Haydn who had come to Brazil for the unveiling of a statue of Gutenberg, had referred to him.³⁵

After the return of the king to Lisbon, and the proclamation of Independence in 1821 by the son he had left in Brazil, the latter became first emperor of the independent country under the name of Pedro I. However, since the departure, with José Bonifácio de Andrada e Silva, the founding father of Independence, the question of Abolition was the order of the day. And yet the power of the parliamentary oligarchy, representing above all the interests of the great owners, was such that only partial legislation could be achieved, gradually setting limits on slavery. This being the case, throughout the empire period, and especially in the reign of Pedro II, the situation of freed slaves and their descendants, but more particularly that of the mulattoes, began to improve. If the mulattoes were well educated (which was of course the case only with a tiny minority, for education was still rare for the majority of the population), they could become figures of the first importance in the economic, cultural and political life of the country, and that before Abolition. Among the most noteworthy instances, I shall outline those of two great abolitionists, both of them mulattoes: José do Patrocínio and André Rebouças.

But before coming to them, I must mention the black poet from the Province of Santa Catarina, João de Cruz e Souza (1861–1898). Although manumission had existed since virtually the earliest days of slavery, numerous slaves had been able to be freed at the time of the War of the Triple Alliance with Paraguay (1864–9), so that they could be enrolled as soldiers. Others were freed at the time when their master left for the war. This was the case with the poet's father. He was manumitted by his master, the field marshal Guilherme Xavier de Souza before the latter's departure. Born in 1861, the boy, the son of a freed slave, was nevertheless brought up by the family of the 'lord', whose name he took. As the literary critic Nelson Ascher wrote at the time of the celebrations of the centenary of Cruz e Souza's death, "his education, for the period, could be described as aristocratic, and his friends remembered him as a veritable dandy. He studied the classics, foreign languages and had as his teacher a German naturalist, Fritz Müller, who corresponded with Darwin." This education notwithstanding, his colour was an obstacle in his professional life, but at the same time it drew the attention of critics and readers to his literary career.

Even if the case of Cruz e Souza is somewhat exceptional, especially for the south of Brazil, it nevertheless demonstrates how white families might 'adopt' a child, the son of a former slave, to the extent of agreeing to provide an elite education, while there was a

more general tendency for the children of masters and domestic slaves to play together to a certain age but not to have the same educational opportunities afterwards.

A very different case, which is also, but more directly, linked to the war with Paraguay, is that of the black Cândido da Fonseca Galvão (to cite his baptismal register), who was and still is more commonly known by the name of Dom Obá II d'África (*Obá* meaning 'king' in Yoruba³⁶). This freed black from Bahia, very probably the grandson of Aláàfin Abiodun, the last king to keep the great Yoruba empire of Oyo united, went as a volunteer to the War of the Triple Alliance. Having distinguished himself in combat, he left as an honorary Brazilian officer. On his return, he settled at Rio where, extremely tall and exquisitely dressed, he acted as the prince of blacks, slaves and freed. He happened, moreover, to be received at the palace by Dom Pedro II in person. Now Dom Obá, whose character was the theme of the *École de Samba de Manguiera* in 2000, defended the place and the value of the blacks. In his verses published by the *Jornal do Commercio* of 6 March 1886, two years before Abolition, he wrote:

Não é defeito preta ser a cor
É triste, pela inveja roubar-se o valor.
[It is not a fault to be black in colour
It would be sad to want to wash away its worth.]

According to Eduardo Silva, we can see in such a verse an anticipation of the slogan, 'Black is beautiful', which was only to appear in the United States in the 1960s. But let us return to the two major characters of the abolitionist period, José do Patrocínio – and André Rebouças.

The son of a canon and a slave girl who came from Africa at a very early age, José do Patrocínio (1853–1905) had received a diploma in pharmacy from the Faculty of Medicine, after successful studies during which he did not lack for protectors and sizeable benefactors. Not, however, having the means to acquire a pharmacy, José do Patrocínio was obliged to accept the hospitality offered him by the family of one of his colleagues, in exchange for which he gave instruction to the children of the house. He married the family's oldest daughter and subsequently directed his talents towards journalism. He embarked then on the career which was to make him famous. In c.1880, having bought the *Gazeta da Tarde* with the aid of his father-in-law, he was extremely active in its pages on behalf of the slaves, which made it possible for him to become the main Abolition leader.³⁷

Three years before the Golden Law (*Lei Aurea*), the law finally abolishing slavery, José do Patrocínio's mother Justina Maria died. She was known to have become a vegetable-seller at Campos, a sugar town in the Province of Rio de Janeiro, after having been abandoned by the canon, the father of our hero. Now who, apart from her son, carried the coffin of the former slave to the door of the house where the hearse which was to take her to the cemetery was waiting? None other than one of the most important people of the empire, Rodolfo Dantas, and two of the future presidents of the Republic, Prudente de Moraes and Campos Sales. The great lawyer Rui Barbosa was also present, the man who was later known as the 'Eagle of The Hague' on account of his participation at the International Congress which took place there.

Taking the customs of Brazilian society into account, independently of the continued existence of slavery, and without even alluding to the widespread miscegenation, would

it then have been possible to institute racial discrimination, legal segregation? What legislator would have dared to do so, once Abolition had been achieved? The prejudice of only considering the 'post-abolitionist' situation of the three countries comparable made a more sophisticated understanding of Brazil quite out of the question. That would have amounted to tearing up the very fabric of Brazilian society that was already constituted, at least in part, at the time of Abolition.

Our second figure is the engineer and businessman André Rebouças (1838–1898), whose name was given to the great tunnel constructed in the '60s which crosses the Corcovado mountain and links the regions to the north and south of the town of Rio de Janeiro. Maria Alice Rezende de Carvalho has written a book about this great figure of the empire, *O quinto século: André Rebouças e a construção do Brasil*.³⁸ This remarkable work is the source of my reflections prompted by the case of Rebouças.

André Pinto Rebouças from Bahia was also a mulatto but, unlike José de Patrocínio, not in the least poor. His father, the councillor Antonio Rebouças, whom Dom Pedro I had made a knight of the Imperial Order of the Cruzeiro in 1823, was the son of a Portuguese tailor and merchant and a former slave woman who had been manumitted. Like his brothers, he had been able to have an excellent education. From his own resources, the older brother of the councillor Rebouças had been able to pursue his studies in Europe, graduating from the Bologna Conservatoire. He played the violin on a Stradivarius he acquired during his stay in Italy. On his return to Salvador de Bahia, José Rebouças became the conductor of the town's theatre orchestra and was called to play the violin at celebrations at the imperial court on many occasions. Another of André's uncles, Manuel Rebouças, had completed his studies in arts and sciences at Paris, where he ended by training in medicine. On his return to Salvador in 1832 he became Professor of Zoology and Botany at the School of Medicine. In recompense for his work during the yellow fever and cholera epidemics he was made knight of the Imperial Order of the Cruzeiro with the honorary office of councillor of the Empire.

André Rebouças thus grew up in an affluent and educated family milieu. But rather than going in for arts, medicine or law, he chose to go to the École Polytechnique (at Rio) and left as a military engineer. Later, his gifts as an engineer and businessman were recognized to such an extent that the viscount of Itaboraí (José Joaquim Rodrigues Torres), who was head of the Cabinet of Ministers and Minister of Finance, saw him as the successor to Mauá – referring here to the title of Irineu Evangelista de Souza (baron of Mauá), the man who had started railway-building in Brazil. It was while he was a student engineer that he first met Alfredo Taunay, the future viscount of Taunay, to whom ties of unswerving friendship were later to bind him. The abolitionist struggle in fact made André Rebouças, Alfredo Taunay and a third man, the statesman Joaquim Nabuco – all three of them monarchists – inseparable friends. As Rebouças put it in a letter to Taunay, they made up a triangle in which each of them was a summit. Like the most aware Brazilians today, these men wanted to construct another Brazil. But while Nabuco and Taunay turned to European models, Joaquim Nabuco to England, where he had completed his education, and Alfredo Taunay to France, the land of his ancestors, André Rebouças, who had in fact also studied in Europe, looked instead in the direction of the United States. There he had been able to admire "science and morality applied to the service of social development".³⁹ He had observed there the spirit of freedom and enterprise, the source of a technological progress which contrasted starkly with the backwardness of Brazil. A backwardness due in the main

to the retention of the slave-owning social structure and the limited reach of education. Of the 'band of three', Rebouças was the Yankee. We can appreciate the objectivity of his assessment of the United States all the more since, as a mulatto, he had experienced racial segregation there. He had had the greatest difficulty in finding a hotel in New York and the son of the Brazilian consul had had to intervene to find him somewhere to stay.

This man of unquestionable talent had become very close to the Emperor Dom Pedro II, to such an extent that once the Golden Law had been proclaimed he had moved to Petrópolis in order to be closer to the monarch and, no doubt, to play the role of (unofficial) councillor. In the afternoons the emperor and he would meet to take the walks Rebouças called their "constitutionals". It was there that news of the proclamation of the Republic reached him, at first incredulous. Less than one and a half years after Abolition, which had prompted a great outburst of joy in the country and given rise to popular celebrations lasting several days, the Republic was born without any celebrations (still less any popular celebration⁴⁰) and appeared in Rebouças's eyes as "a military conspiracy of 'republicanist' slave owners".⁴¹

Overnight, with virtually no luggage, the engineer André Rebouças embarked in the *Alagoas*. He accompanied the imperial family in their exile and never returned to Brazil. After being the Lisbon correspondent for the *London Times*, Rebouças attempted to become an active engineer once more in Angola, and ended by committing suicide in Madeira. Thanks to the upsurge in historiography in Brazil, the ideas of this engineer who dreamed of building a democratic and less unjust Brazil are now better known. His diagnosis of the slave-owning structure of society with its consequences as much for workers' conditions as for a monopoly of land ownership are still relevant in Brazil today. In this light, should we not also question the role played by the republican government instituted in Brazil in 1889 in the perpetuation of the social division which was its continuing legacy from the slave-owning government, as if the Abolition of institutional slavery had done no more than mask the absence of social emancipation?

The obstacles put in the way of true social development by the slave-owning mentality, even if it did not relate to the blacks, can moreover also be divined through several episodes connected with the arrival in the nineteenth century of immigrants, first from Europe, then from Japan. They all fell within the category which Rebouças had already labelled 'white slavery'.⁴²

Envisaging a better future for themselves and their families, the new European immigrants saw themselves assigned to the cultivation of land, in particular of coffee, where, after the halt in the slave trade and then the abolition of slavery, they were expected to replace slave labour.⁴³ Kátia de Queirós Mattoso observes that "in the nineteenth century, free European colonists were even tied to tree trunks on coffee plantations",⁴⁴ in other words, subjected to the punishments reserved for slaves.

To give some insight into the type of social relation between master and servant that might be established between the (Brazilian) land owner and the European immigrant turned 'colonist', and bearing in mind the personality and ideas of the narrator of this episode, I believe it is interesting to cite a passage from the official correspondence of Arthur de Gobineau, who was France's ambassador to Brazil, an office which he occupied between 20 March 1869 and 23 April 1870.

In a letter of 20 January 1870 to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Gobineau gives an account of the success of his attempts to ensure that the contract (at first assumed to be a

dead letter by the interested Brazilian parties) agreed between the Brazilian government and a group of French immigrants was respected. He starts by commenting:

Moreover, the condition of emigrants to Brazil will always be very precarious, sent far away from the centre, to regions administered by agents whose conduct, in the absence of communications, it is impossible to supervise, they are subject to an arbitrary power and their contracts with the government are never executed.

Thus in the last few days a large number of Irish immigrants have had to be repatriated at the expense of the British government on a steam boat sent for the purpose. The same has just happened with emigrants from the United States.⁴⁵

As a counterbalance to these observations one should set Gobineau's very positive assessment of the development achieved in the German colony of Santa Anna, in the south of Minas. He had visited it in the course of a railway journey that he had made in the company of the emperor and his entourage a few months after his arrival in Rio de Janeiro. He undoubtedly viewed 'whitening' as one of the remedies for the situation in Brazil, which could in his view be ascribed to a population which carried the marks of the 'degeneration' of interbreeding as well as bad habits which were the result of slavery. Gobineau, let me add, was a convinced supporter of the necessity of Abolition. Questioned by his ministry as to the progress on this question in Brazil, he wrote with striking perspicacity on 22 September 1869, almost nineteen years before the final abolition of slavery, that

In theory, one might think that there is no longer any obstacle in the way of finding a solution to this difficulty. The emperor declares himself most emphatically opposed to slavery; the liberal party scarcely speaks with less clarity; the conservative party makes no attempt to support a system that is so condemned. Yet nothing is done to destroy it . . .⁴⁶

The "Yet nothing is done . . .", that is, to find a solution for an evident problem of social injustice, has lost none of its relevance, despite the great transformation of Brazil since that date. There is still an inertia and a slowness when a solution is proposed to issues challenging the privileges or the powers of the dominant oligarchies, who still continue to be very well represented in the Parliament.

But to return to the question of European and Japanese immigration. Despite the initial difficulties for a very large number of immigrants from Europe⁴⁷ and undoubtedly more for those from Japan,⁴⁸ their motives for changing their country of domicile, their will to succeed and lead a more comfortable life than that which they had left behind, as well as their know-how, enabled the majority of those who were not tempted to return home to get the better of a situation which the blacks only encountered with difficulty. What was done to teach them, to facilitate another form of integration for them after Abolition? Virtually nothing.

The composition of the population of São Paulo (both town and state), which benefited so much from the arrival of immigrants from Europe, the Near East (Syria, Lebanon) and Japan, was to witness such an increase in the proportion of whites that the blacks (in the Brazilian sense, of those with dark skin) tended, until very recently, to be marginalized. The town had become too 'white' and the 'Brazilian-ness' of its population too recent. Thus in 1924, the journal *O Clarim da Alvorada* (1924–40) appeared, edited by José Correia

Leite, who in 1956 was one of the founder members of the Associação Cultural do Negro de São Paulo, which continued until his death in 1989. He was a militant activist working for the recognition of the rights of the black population and the struggle against racial prejudice, prejudice that has not been abolished, despite its denial.⁴⁹

None the less, José Correia Leite was not deceived. At the end of his life he was contemptuous of the importation of foreign concepts or visions that had little to do with Brazil and tended, shall we say, in the final analysis, to favour multi-ethnicity and closed communitarianism at the expense of miscegenation, and thus to advance division and separation over unity.

But one of Brazil's characteristics is the ability to integrate and to mix, the creative way in which it absorbs differences or, as the 'modernists' would put it, by 'recovering' one of the characteristics associated with the country's first inhabitants: its 'cannibalism'. The open-mindedness of the majority of Brazilians ultimately overcame ethnic withdrawal. It proved contagious. Hence the continuation of miscegenation, thanks to 'mixed' marriages, including those, such as of Brazilians of Japanese descent, whose ethnic origins would lead one to believe that they would not mix which was finally given the lie by the continuation of their Brazilian experience. Exogamy then became frequent among the descendants of immigrants.

As the remarkable synthesis of the history of Brazil by Bartolomé Bennassar and Richard Marin makes clear, the composition of the people of Brazil has been such that miscegenation can be assumed not just as a reality but as a true vocation.⁵⁰ There, they confirm what the sociologist Roger Bastide had already written in his book, *Brésil, pays des contrastes*, published in 1957. In his conclusion he referred to Brazil's mediating role. By means of the increasingly strong affirmation of its identity, Brazilian culture today supplies an effective and irrefutable denial of any ideological concept seeking to make miscegenation a form of corruption or a sign of degeneration.

And yet, to become this country of 'reference'⁵¹ in a world in profound mutation, where changes, including population change, are intensifying, Brazil still has many obstacles to overcome to free itself from its slave-owning mentality, which always finds the means to perpetuate the privileges of the powerful to the detriment of the majority of the population, or (though increasingly challenged) persists in maintaining in an underhand manner a racial prejudice which the very reality of miscegenation renders ridiculous and derisory. Finally, to these urgent tasks, we must add, last but by no means least, the ecological concern to make Brazil not "a country for the future", but a nation for today and a "land for the future".⁵²

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(translated from the French by Juliet Vale)

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At the Rediscoveries Exhibition

All those who attempt to understand Brazil can only be pleased about the work involved in the preparation for the 'Mostra do redescobrimento' [The Rediscovery Exhibition], which

is most appropriately named. It in fact presented – first and foremost to the Brazilians themselves – an opportunity to rediscover themselves, in other words to acquire a better knowledge of who they are. Thanks to the Associação Brasil 500 Aos Artes Visuais, with its president Edemar Cid Ferreira, the funds necessary for a wide-ranging exhibition were collected from businesses and private groups. At the instigation of the commissioner-general Nelson Aguilar, who had previously played the same role for the Biennale of São Paulo, a team of commissioner-researchers, supported by a large number of assistants, set about the task of assembling the pieces and the documentation for each of the exhibition's twelve modules. Or rather, in fact, a collection of thematic exhibitions linked to the component parts of the reality that comprises the country. The initial aim was even bypassed by more recent developments, especially in the fields of archaeology and indigenous art. New archaeological excavations on Brazilian lands seemed to be evidence of a human presence well before the most ancient Asian migrations which produced the populations called 'Indians' by the Europeans. This all gave rise to new hypotheses about the physiognomy and the peopling of the land in more distant periods. As for American-Indian art, i.e. the indigenous arts, which are still very much alive, their very presentation at the exhibition attests to the quality of anthropological research and the understanding it has brought to the thought underlying this work.

Taking account of our theme, I shall confine myself to observing the great richness of the display, 'Negro de corpo e alma' [Black in body and soul], commissioned by the sculptor Emmanuel de Araújo, director of the Pinoteca Paulista [São Paulo Art Gallery]. He was not content to confine himself to what had strictly to do with art. Besides representations of blacks in the arts, there were displays of photos, jewels and even instruments of torture connected with slavery, which were evidence of the blacks' life and its difficulties – evidence, too, of their importance at the very heart of Brazilian life. In this context one might also recall the display, 'O olhar distante' [The distant gaze], which revealed the way foreign artists have represented Brazil. In the seventeenth century, the Dutch Franz Post was the first to paint this New World landscape; Albert Eckhout, who also came with Maurice of Nassau, was happy to paint the portrait of a *mameluca* (a woman of mixed white and Indian descent); then finally, the European artists of the nineteenth century recorded many images of the marked presence of all three races.

The exhibition's organizers believed that all pupils in publicly funded schools in São Paulo should be able to visit the Ibirapuera Park, where the three pavilions housing the exhibitions were located from April to September. In so doing, they contributed hugely to an increase in the Brazilians' awareness of their culture: born out of the fusion of various contributions, it is a supremely miscegenated culture.

In the course of the years to come, museums abroad will, in their turn, exhibit one of these displays, or several of them. Then they will be seen in other towns in Brazil.

M. V.-P.

Notes

1. Concerning Mário de Andrade, poet, novelist and critic, the determining figure in the *Semana de arte moderna de São Paulo* (1922), and who was, moreover, mulatto, Lévi-Strauss said in a recent interview with the newspaper *O Estado de São Paulo* 22 April 2000, caderno 2, that "only today are we registering the extent to which Mário's work was avant-garde, once it is compared with what was being written in Europe [in

- the 1920s and 1930s]". We should note that in his 'fable', *Macunaíma*, Mário de Andrade was also inspired by the work of a German ethnographer, Theodor Koch-Grünberg, who had worked in Amazonia and especially Venezuela. It was also a phrase of Mário de Andrade ("sou um tupi tangendo un alaúde . . ." ["I am a Tupi who plays the lute . . ."]) which Serge Gruzinski used in his highly illuminating 1999 work *La pensée métisse* (Paris: Fayard) as an epigraph to the first chapter, entitled 'Amazonias', which opens with the statement: "This line from Mário de Andrade has resonated for a long while in my mind. As if it ought to help me disentangle the sentiments which some countries of America inspired in me."
2. See the observations of the historian, Evaldo Cabral de Mello, in his afterword, 'Raízes de Brasil e depois', to the 1995 edition of S. Buarque de Holanda's work (published in 1998 in French by Gallimard as *Racines de Brésil*, in the series, 'Collection UNESCO d'oeuvres représentatives').
 3. See Thomas E. Skidmore (1985), *Race and Class in Brazil: Historical Perspectives*, in Pierre-Michel Fontaine (ed.), *Race, Class and Power in Brazil* (Los Angeles: Center for Afro-American Studies / University of California), third edition, 1995, 11–23. See also Thomas Skidmore (1976), *Preto no branco: raça e nacionalidade no pensamento brasileiro* (Rio de Janeiro: Paz e Terra).
 4. As the poet Manuel Bandeira put it in his poem on *Casa grande & senzala*: "A mania ariana/ Do Oliveira Viana/ Leva aqui a sua lambada/ Bem puxada . . . Que importa? É lá desgraça?/ Essa história de raça,/ Raças más, raças boas/ – Diz o Boas/ É coisa que passou/ Com o franciú Gobineau./ Pois o mal da mestiço/ Não está nisso./ Está em causas sociais,/ De higiene e outras que tais:/ Assim pensa, assim fala/ Casa Grande & Senzala . . ." ["The Aryan household/ Of Oliveira Viana/ Takes here its defeat/ Deeply felt . . . / Does it matter?/ Is it a disgrace?/ This story of race/ Bad races, good races/ – The anthropologist, Boas, says/ That this is something that happened/ With the 'Franciú' Gobineau/ For what is bad about interbreeding/ Does not lie in this/ But in the social causes/ Of sanitation and other things of that kind/ Thus thinks, thus speaks/ *Masters and Slaves*"].
 5. See Bartolomé Bennassar and Richard Marin (2000), *Histoire du Brésil, 1500–2000* (Paris: Fayard), pt 1, 'Le Brésil colonial', by Bartolomé Bennassar, p. 30.
 6. See B. Bennassar, op. cit., p. 63: "The return to the offensive (against the land owners), very influential at court, ended with the agreement of 1574, then the law of 22 August 1587, which particularly authorized the Indians to leave of their own free will the plantations where they worked. The legislative apparatus was reinforced in theory by the law of 11 November 1595, which submitted the definition of the 'just war' to the decision of the kings, then by the laws of 1605 and 1609, which reaffirmed the freedom of the Indians and entrusted their education and protection to the Jesuits, and finally by that of 1611." See also below. Bennassar here draws on the work of Frédéric Mauro (1960), *Le Portugal et l'Atlantique, 1570–1670* (SEVPEN).
 7. S. Buarque de Holanda (1995), *Raízes do Brasil*, preface by Antonio Candido and afterword by Evaldo Cabral de Mello (São Paulo: Companhia das Letras), pp. 122–3, n. 40, referring to the works of Father Antonio Vieira (1856), *Obras várias*, volume I (Lisbon), p. 249.
 8. It is true that in 1908 the German, von Ilhering, who was at that time director of the museum in São Paulo, published an article in the newspaper *O Estado de São Paulo*, in which he advocated the extermination of the Kaingang Indians who, in his view, constituted an obstacle to civilization. It was in the wake of the polemic to which this article gave rise that the Department for the Protection of Indians was born, under the army officer, Candido Mariano da Silva Rondon. This great idealist, who ended up as field marshal, aware of his own 'Indian blood', wanted there to be progressive and peaceful integration. See Lilia Moritz Schwarcz (1993), *O espetáculo das raças, cientistas, instituições e questão racial no Brasil (1870–1930)* (São Paulo: Companhia das Letras), p. 83.
 9. This is always a very real question, for there are still isolated communities who, when they come into (even friendly) contact with 'whites', risk succumbing to illnesses which the latter tend to communicate to them. These populations are also threatened by those seeking wealth who invade their lands.
 10. See Jean-Paul Duviols (1998), 'Les "sauvages brésiliens" dans le miroir européen (XVIe siècle)', and Denis Courzet (1998), À propos de quelques regards français sur le Brésil (vers 1610–vers 1720): entre espérance, malédiction et dégénérescence, both in Katia de Queirós Mattoso, Idelette Muzart-Fonseca dos Santos and Denis Rolland (eds.), *Naissance du Brésil moderne 1500–1808*, Collection Centre d'Études sur le Brésil (Presses de l'Université de Paris-Sorbonne).
 11. Among representatives of this romantic literature, see especially José de Alencar, subject of an article by José Mauricio Gomes de Almeida in this issue.

12. See Ronaldo Vainfas (2000), 'Un descobrimento suspeito', *Jornal de Brasil*, 'Idéias Especial' supplement, 20 April. See also his (1995), *A heresia dos Índios: catolicismo e rebeldia no Brasil colonial* (São Paulo: Companhia das Letras).
13. Gilberto Freyre (1973), *Além do apenas moderno, sugestões em torno dos possíveis futuros do homem em geral, e do homem brasileiro, em particular* (Rio de Janeiro: Livraria José Olympio Editora), p. 228. Of course, Freyre was careful to add that more than a century of immigrants from Europe, the Near East (Syria, Lebanon) and Japan were grafted onto these 'Euro-Afro-Amerindian' foundations.
14. See the famous letter of the expedition's recorder, Pero Vaz Caminha, recounting the discovery and first contacts. For a French translation, see Andrée Crabbé Rocha Torga (1978), *Poésie*, 7: 4 (journal edited by Michel Déguay). The translator renders these words of Caminha to the king of Portugal most tellingly: "On that day, all the time they remained, they danced with our men to the sound of one of our drums, so that they demonstrated most effectively that they were much more our friends than we were theirs."
15. As Katia de Queirós Mattoso has put it, "Well-populated black Africa was too empty to populate the Americas. Black Africa, with its relatively stable institutions and cultures, was to lose that stability and those cultures to assuage the slave-trader's hunger", in her (1979) *Être esclave au Brésil (XVI–XIXème siècle)*, 'Le temps et les hommes' (Paris: Hachette), p. 110. In this book, de Q. Mattoso, Director of the Centre of Research on Brazil at the Sorbonne, gives what is undoubtedly the best overview of both the constant features and the incredible diversity of the slave condition in Brazil.
16. Simone Weil (1991), 'Les causes de la liberté et de l'oppression sociale', in *Oeuvres complètes, II. Écrits historiques et politiques* (Paris: Gallimard), volume II, p. 53.
17. On the trade in African slaves at first with Europe and then, very soon, with the American continent, a remarkable general survey is now available: Hugh Thomas (1997), *The Slave Trade: The History of the Atlantic Slave Trade (1440–1870)* (Paris: Picador). As Thomas has written in his concluding 'Reflection' (p. 793), after referring to some slave hunts made by the Portuguese directly in Angola: "But most slaves carried from Africa between 1440 and 1870 were procured as a result of the Africans' interest in selling their neighbours, usually distant but sometimes close, and, more rarely, their own people. 'Man-stealing' accounted for the majority of the slaves taken to the New World, and it was usually the responsibility of the Africans . . . But then there was no sense of Africa: a Dahomeyan did not feel that he had anything in common with an Oyo." It should be added that, as far as the state of war or domination between communities was concerned, the situation was the same on all continents, where the communities viewed each other as 'inferiors' or 'enemies'. On this point reference must inevitably be made to Claude Lévi-Strauss's incisive reflections in his (1973) 'Race et histoire', in *Anthropologie structurale, II* (Paris: Plon).
18. See Katia de Q. Matoso, op. cit., pp. 180 ff.
19. See, among recent works, that on the 'representation' of the blacks in the press of the province of São Paulo in the second half of the nineteenth century by Lilia Moritz Schwarcz (1987), *Retrato em branco e negro: jornais, escravos e cidadãos em São Paulo no final do século XIX* (Companhia das Letras).
20. Anthony W. Marx (1998), *Making Race and Nation: A Comparison of South Africa, the United States and Brazil* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press). The author is Associate Professor of Political Science at the University of Columbia and is the author of an earlier work on South Africa.
21. Ibid. p. 90 and n. 30.
22. Ibid. p. 93.
23. It could, moreover, be questioned whether demographic factors should not be taken more into account.
24. See Pierre-Michel Fontaine (ed.) (1995), *Race, Class and Power in Brazil* (Los Angeles: Center for Afro-American Studies, University of California), proceedings of a symposium of 1980, first published in 1985.
25. See Katia de Queirós Mattoso, op. cit. p. 255. See also the same author's (1997) 'Être affranchi au Brésil: xviii–xixe siècles' ['The Manumission of Slaves in Brazil in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries'], *Diogenes*, 179, 'Routes et traces des esclaves' ['The Routes and Traces of Slaves'].
26. A. Marx, op. cit., p. 69.
27. See *Courier international*, 494, 20–26 (April 2000), for a translation of an article by Eduardo Junqueira which appeared in the weekly *Epoca de São Paulo*.
28. S. Buarque de Holanda, op. cit., p. 58.
29. It is tempting to compare the case of Antonio Vieira with that of Pushkin. The great Russian poet was also of black descent. His mother was the granddaughter of Abram Hannibal, an Abyssinian of noble origin

- bought as a slave in Constantinople and adopted by Peter the Great, whose companion in arms he became. (See also Dieudonné Gnamankou's 1997 article, 'Entre la Russie et l'Afrique: Pouchkine, symbole de l'âme russe' ['Pushkin between Russia and Africa'], *Diogenes*, 179, op. cit. Nor should we forget that the great Brazilian writer, Machado de Assis, who was the first president of the Brazilian Academy of Letters, founded in 1896, also had black ancestors.
30. On the Christian Congo of this period, see Hugh Thomas, op. cit., Book 1, chapter 6.
 31. Anthony Marx's hypothesis might perhaps be plausible if the region of the South (from São Paulo to Rio Grande do Sul) alone was considered, where the blacks, for economic and historical reasons, were a tiny minority at the time of Abolition and became an even smaller proportion as a result of European immigration. There, segregation might perhaps have been possible (if still improbable) in the absence of a legal pronouncement forbidding it. But nowhere else in Brazil. Which leads us to say that law in itself is no great matter.
 32. See the chapter, 'The Uncertain Legacy of Miscegenation', where theories are discussed, in C. Degler (1971), *Neither Black nor White* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press); M. Harris (1964), *Patterns of Race in the Americas* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood), pp. 72–4 and n. 46 at p. 300.
 33. The idea that the absence of legal discrimination stemmed from a deliberate and political manoeuvre haunts Marx's discourse: witness the use he makes of the adjective 'purposeful' or the adverb 'purposefully'.
 34. A. Marx, op. cit., p. 74.
 35. For comparison, one has only to remember that in 1939, as a result of the segregation laws, the sublime black (or mixed-race) contralto, Marion Anderson, was forbidden to perform in the Constitution Hall at Washington, and it was only thanks to the support of Eleanor Roosevelt, wife of the President, that she was ultimately able to give a concert at the Lincoln Memorial Center.
 36. See Eduardo Silva (1995), 'O Príncipe Obá, um voluntário da pátria', in *Guerra do Paraguai-130 anos depois* (Rio de Janeiro: Relume-Dumará), pp. 67–76. See also the same author's (1998) *Dom Obá II d'Africa, o príncipe do povo: vida, tempo e pensamento de um homem livre de cor* (Companhia das Letras). Hugh Thomas, *The SlaveTrade*, recounts still more extraordinary cases, such as that of Ayuba Suleiman Diallo, known to Europeans as Job Ben Salomon, who was a slave in North America and returned to Africa, but first stayed in England where he was received by the great nobles and Queen Caroline. There is still in Africa a community of the descendants of slaves who returned to their native land after living in Brazil and were keen to continue Brazilian traditions.
 37. The data presented here concerning José do Patrocínio are printed in Sérgio Buarque de Holanda (1970), 'Grandes personagens da nossa história' series (São Paulo: Abril Cultural Limitada).
 38. Maria Alice Rezende de Carvalho (1998), *O quinto século, André Rebouças e a construção do Brasil* (Revan / Instituto Universitário de Pesquisas do Rio de Janeiro-IUPERJ, Cândido Mendes University).
 39. *Ibid.*, p. 172.
 40. The tragic episode occurred some time later when the disinherited of Nordeste, roused by the preaching of a sort of popular prophet, Antonio Conselheiro, took refuge in an old farm in the *sertão* of Bahia, known as Canudos. After failing on several occasions in their attempts to dislodge them and to put an end to their rebellion, the republican army launched a formidable operation against them and accused them, totally improbably, of being the agents of an international plot to restore the monarchy. There was an appalling massacre. A witness to the determined resistance of the rebels, since he was the correspondent for the newspaper *O Estado de São Paulo* covering the war, was Euclides da Cunha, a committed republican. He was to render them justice by writing the famous *Os sertões* [*The Uplands*].
 41. Cavalho, op. cit., p. 225. Note Rebouças's use of the pejorative term *republicanistas* or *republicuistas* to designate the supporters of the republican regime, rather than 'republicans'.
 42. *Ibid.*, p. 227.
 43. See R. Marin, 'Le XXème siècle brésilien', in B. Bennisar and R. Marin, op. cit., Part III, especially pp. 285–94 ('Le temps des immigrés').
 44. See Kátia de Queirós Mattoso, op. cit., p. 178.
 45. See (1990) *Arthur de Gobineau et le Brésil: correspondance diplomatique du Ministre de France á Rio de Janeiro, 1869–1870*, annotated edition by Jean-François de Raymond (Presses Universitaires de Grenoble), p. 163. The excellence of this edition of the correspondence should be emphasized.
 46. *Ibid.*, p. 143.

47. My thanks here to Professor José Sebastião Witter, of the University of São Paulo, director of the Musée Paulista, who has kindly drawn my attention to the case of Thomas Davatz, schoolmaster, who came to Brazil to write a report on the living conditions of German and Swiss immigrants on the coffee plantations. This is a summary of Davatz's 'case'. Being himself sent to live as an immigrant at Ibicaba, a farm considered a model for *parceria* (a sort of share-cropping), he was involved in 1857 in disputes between the overseers and the immigrants, which led to the start of a revolt in the plantation. On his return to Europe, Davatz published a book which made such an impact that to thwart it the Brazilian government had to have another immigrant reply to it. Davatz's book is available in a 1980 edition, *Memórias de un colono no Brasil: 1850* (São Paulo: Edusp).
48. See the article by Arlinda Rocha Nogueira in this issue.
49. See the interesting article by Ligia Ferreira (1996), '<Négritude>, <Negridae>, <Negrícia>: enquête sémantique et historique sur trois concepts-voyageurs', in Kátia de Queirós Mattoso (ed.), *Mémoires et identités au Brésil* (Paris: L'Harmattan), pp. 77–99.
50. One of those who understood this best was the painter Lasar Segall, in his quest for the human universal. Born in Lithuania, this "Russian Jew", as he called himself, after participating in the German artistic movements (with Feininger, Kandinsky, etc.), decided in 1923 to emigrate to Brazil, where he was on friendly terms with the modernists (Mário de Andrade). In his painting *Encounter*, of 1924, contrasting with the whiteness of his wife, he paints himself as a mulatto, as if to identify with these Brazilians whom he acknowledged as 'brothers'. See Stéphanie d'Alessandro (2000), *Lasar Segall: nouveaux mondes*, exhibition catalogue (Paris: Adam Biro).
51. See also the 'Conclusion' to B. Bennassar and R. Marin, *Histoire du Brésil*.
52. 'Brasilien, ein Land der Zukunft' is the title of an essay written by Stephan Zweig in 1941, shortly before he committed suicide in 1942 at Petrópolis in Brazil. For a French translation see (1998), *Le Brésil, terre d'avenir*, trans. Jean Longeville, with a new preface by Alain Mangin (Éditions de l'Aube).