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## Exploring Parish Registers in Colonial Minas Gerais, Brazil: Ethnicity in São José do Rio das Mortes, 1780-1810

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*Rol dos Confessados desta  
Freguezia de S. Antonio da Villa  
do Sr. Comarca do Rio das Mortes  
deste presente anno de 1795*

<i>Foyes</i>	<i>Parocho</i>	<i>Applicação da Matéria</i>	<i>Supp. Mensal</i>	<i>Christão</i>		
1		1.º <i>Supp. do Sr. do Prncipal do Parocho de S. Antonio de 1795</i>	10	cho		
		2.º <i>do Sr. do Prncipal</i>	10	cho		
		3.º <i>do Sr. do Prncipal</i>	10	cho		
		4.º <i>do Sr. do Prncipal</i>	10	cho		
		5.º <i>do Sr. do Prncipal</i>	10	cho		
2		6.º <i>do Sr. do Prncipal</i>	10	cho		
		7.º <i>do Sr. do Prncipal</i>	10	cho		
		8.º <i>do Sr. do Prncipal</i>	10	cho		
		9.º <i>do Sr. do Prncipal</i>	10	cho		
		10.º <i>do Sr. do Prncipal</i>	10	cho		
		11.º <i>do Sr. do Prncipal</i>	10	cho		
		12.º <i>do Sr. do Prncipal</i>	10	cho		
		13.º <i>do Sr. do Prncipal</i>	10	cho		
		14.º <i>do Sr. do Prncipal</i>	10	cho		
		15.º <i>do Sr. do Prncipal</i>	10	cho		
		16.º <i>do Sr. do Prncipal</i>	10	cho		
		17.º <i>do Sr. do Prncipal</i>	10	cho		
		18.º <i>do Sr. do Prncipal</i>	10	cho		
		19.º <i>do Sr. do Prncipal</i>	10	cho		
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		22.º <i>do Sr. do Prncipal</i>	10	cho		
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		24.º <i>do Sr. do Prncipal</i>	10	cho		
		25.º <i>do Sr. do Prncipal</i>	10	cho		
		3		26.º <i>do Sr. do Prncipal</i>	10	cho
				27.º <i>do Sr. do Prncipal</i>	10	cho
				28.º <i>do Sr. do Prncipal</i>	10	cho
				29.º <i>do Sr. do Prncipal</i>	10	cho
				30.º <i>do Sr. do Prncipal</i>	10	cho
31.º <i>do Sr. do Prncipal</i>	10			cho		
32.º <i>do Sr. do Prncipal</i>	10			cho		
33.º <i>do Sr. do Prncipal</i>	10			cho		
34.º <i>do Sr. do Prncipal</i>	10			cho		
35.º <i>do Sr. do Prncipal</i>	10			cho		
4		36.º <i>do Sr. do Prncipal</i>	10	cho		
		37.º <i>do Sr. do Prncipal</i>	10	cho		
		38.º <i>do Sr. do Prncipal</i>	10	cho		
		39.º <i>do Sr. do Prncipal</i>	10	cho		
		40.º <i>do Sr. do Prncipal</i>	10	cho		
		41.º <i>do Sr. do Prncipal</i>	10	cho		
		42.º <i>do Sr. do Prncipal</i>	10	cho		
		43.º <i>do Sr. do Prncipal</i>	10	cho		
		44.º <i>do Sr. do Prncipal</i>	10	cho		
		45.º <i>do Sr. do Prncipal</i>	10	cho		
5		46.º <i>do Sr. do Prncipal</i>	10	cho		
		47.º <i>do Sr. do Prncipal</i>	10	cho		
		48.º <i>do Sr. do Prncipal</i>	10	cho		
		49.º <i>do Sr. do Prncipal</i>	10	cho		
		50.º <i>do Sr. do Prncipal</i>	10	cho		
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		54.º <i>do Sr. do Prncipal</i>	10	cho		
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6		56.º <i>do Sr. do Prncipal</i>	10	cho		
		57.º <i>do Sr. do Prncipal</i>	10	cho		
		58.º <i>do Sr. do Prncipal</i>	10	cho		
7		59.º <i>do Sr. do Prncipal</i>	10	cho		
		60.º <i>do Sr. do Prncipal</i>	10	cho		
8		61.º <i>do Sr. do Prncipal</i>	10	cho		
		62.º <i>do Sr. do Prncipal</i>	10	cho		

First page of the *Rol dos Confessados desta Freguezia de S. Antonio da Villa de S. Joze, Comarca do Rio das Mortes, deste presente anno de 1795*. Courtesy of Instituto Histórico e Geográfico de Tiradentes, Tiradentes, Minas Gerais.

# Exploring Parish Registers in Colonial Minas Gerais, Brazil: Ethnicity in São José do Rio das Mortes, 1780-1810

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DOUGLAS LIBBY and ZEPHYR FRANK

Ethnicity and social categories are notoriously complex subjects in Brazilian history. The use of multiple large databases derived from independent contemporary sources make possible the creation of an integrated portrait of this complexity as it evolved in Minas Gerais. In this way, ethnic and social categories are illuminated and the logic of their operation begins to emerge through the process of intersecting names and attributes across baptismal, census, and marriage records. A detailed case study of the Parish of São José, Minas Gerais, at the turn of the eighteenth century provides preliminary answers to questions about motherhood and marriage practices and how ethnicity was knit together over several generations.

In colonial Brazil, ethnicity was bound up in questions of national origin interlaced with social standing. Ethnicity could be a source of cohesion and community (witness patterns of endogamous marriage), as well as social differentiation and mobility. Social structures also rested on distinctions of civil status—slave, freed, free—and these distinctions themselves intersected with ethnicity in complex ways that have yet to be fully understood. Although there is an extensive historical literature on ethnicity and civil status, any progress in resolving many of the remaining puzzles depends on efforts to correlate parish registers with other contemporary sources.<sup>1</sup> By filling

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<sup>1</sup> See, among many others, Charles R. Boxer, *Race Relations in the Portuguese Colonial Empire, 1415-1825* (London: Oxford University Press, 1963); João José Reis, "Identidade e diversidade étnicas nas irmandades negras no tempo da escravidão," *Tempo 3* (1997):6-32; Mary Karash, *Slave Life in Rio de Janeiro* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987); Mary Karash, "Minha nação: identidades escravas no fim do Brasil colonial," in *Brasil: colonização e escravidão*, ed. Maria Beatriz Nizza da Silva (Rio de Janeiro: Nova Fronteira, 2000), 127-35; Reginaldo Prandi, "De africano a afro-brasileiro: etnia, identidade, religião," *Revista USP* 46 (2000):52-65; Robert Slenes, "The Great Porpoise-Skull Strike: Central African Water Spirits and Slave Identity in Early Nineteenth-Century Rio de Janeiro," in *Central Africans and Cultural Transformations in the American Diaspora*, ed. Linda M. Heywood (Cambridge:

in the many blank spaces in these records, the research presented herein can help illuminate how ethnic and racial labeling played out over time. For instance, rather than assume that blank spaces in the parish records connote "whiteness," the results of this study show that many of the men and women for whom no racial designation was lodged in the parish records were, in fact, people of color. Additionally, this approach reveals the extent to which freed status sometimes extended through more than one generation or disappeared in a single lifetime. Finally, by filling in the gaps in the parish records, patterns of marriage among and across ethnic and legal categories begin to emerge.

The problems inherent in using parish registers as stand-alone sources are addressed by drawing on data found in a contemporary ecclesiastical nominal list for the parish of São José do Rio das Mortes. The aim is not merely to confront one source with the other, but, to the extent possible, combine information regarding specific individuals as recorded in the registers and the nominal list. This process serves the critical task of confirming or completing data relating to individual ethnic origins and legal "conditions" (freeborn, manumitted, or slave). The intersection of data from multiple sources also provides a powerful tool in reconstructing individual life histories. The result is a new window through which to view the complex history of ethnicity in colonial Brazil.

The Parish of Santo Antônio de São José do Rio das Mortes encompassed the urban center of the Vila de São José<sup>2</sup> itself and nine chapels attached to the Mother Church of Santo Antônio. While gold strikes played an essential role in the initial settlement of the Vila and a certain level of mining activity would continue into the early decades of the nineteenth century, most of the region was originally occupied on the basis of agriculture and ranching.<sup>3</sup> The parish was located just

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Cambridge University Press, 2002), 183-208; Alberto da Costa e Silva, *Um rio chamado Atlântico: a África no Brasil e o Brasil na África* (Rio de Janeiro: Nova Fronteira 2003); and Juliana B. Farias, Flávio S. Gomes, and Carlos E. Líbano Soares, eds., *No labirinto das nações: africanos e identidades no Rio de Janeiro, século XIX* (Rio de Janeiro: Arquivo Nacional, 2005).

<sup>2</sup> Present-day Tiradentes. While some nineteenth-century documents refer to São José del Rey, the vast majority of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century sources use the term São José do Rio das Mortes, which will be employed throughout the text. Likewise, although references to the parish occasionally included the name of the Mother Church—Santo Antônio—most spoke simply of the Freguesia de São José.

<sup>3</sup> Douglas Cole Libby and Clotilde Andrade Paiva, "Manumission Practices in a Late-Eighteenth-Century Brazilian Slave Parish: São José d'El Rey in 1795," *Slavery and Abolition* 21:1 (2000):96-127; and Douglas Cole Libby and Afonso de Alencastro

below the southern limits of the core mining districts of Minas Gerais, and, during the first half of the eighteenth century, urban centers there were important markets for the diversified production of the São José region. By mid-century, cattle, cheese, salt, pork, and grains from São José had penetrated the market at Rio de Janeiro and from there were redistributed to smaller markets, especially those along the coast.<sup>4</sup> The trade to Rio and beyond increased enormously during the second half of the eighteenth century, further diversified with the arrival of the Portuguese Court in 1808, and would remain active throughout the nineteenth century. Indeed, in the long run this provisioning of the domestic market served as a foundation for the regional economy. Although the Vila of São José may have waned as a result of the emergence of neighboring São João del Rei as a major commercial center, it is clear that the region was marked by prosperity.<sup>5</sup>

In Minas Gerais, miscegenation was certainly one of the principal legacies of the so-called mining cycle of the eighteenth century. During the first half of the century, a chronic shortage of women led to numerous liaisons and unions between white men and slave women from Africa or of African descent. Such unions frequently, but not always, resulted in the manumission of slave partners and of their children. Thus, as the century wore on, a very substantial segment of the legally free population was characterized by varying degrees of African descent, while more than a few slaves were labeled as *pardos* and *cabras*, mostly mulattos and persons of "three-quarter" African descent. By the end of the century, the imbalance between the sexes had all but disappeared among the free and the

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Graça Filho, "Reconstruindo a liberdade: alforrias e forros na freguesia de São José do Rio das Mortes, 1750-1850," *Varia Historia* 30 (2003):112-51. For the economy, see Maria Lúcia Resende Chaves Teixeira, *Família escrava e riqueza na comarca do Rio das Mortes: o distrito da Lage e o quarteirão do Mosquito* (São Paulo: Annablume, 2007).

<sup>4</sup> Caio Prado Júnior, *Formação do Brasil contemporâneo: colônia* (São Paulo: Editora Brasiliense, 1976), 197-203; Alcir Lenharo, *As tropas da moderação: o abastecimento da corte na formação política do Brasil, 1808-1842* (São Paulo: Edições Símbolo, 1979); and João Luís Ribeiro Fragoso, *Homens de grossa aventura: acumulação e hierarquia na praça mercantil do Rio de Janeiro, 1790-1830* (Rio de Janeiro: Arquivo Nacional, 1992), especially chapter 3.

<sup>5</sup> Afonso de Alencastro Graça Filho, *A princesa do oeste e o mito da decadência de Minas Gerais: São João del Rei, 1831-1888* (São Paulo: Annablume, 2002). See also Maria Augusta do Amaral Campos, "A marcha da civilização: as vilas oitocentistas de São João del Rei e São José do Rio das Mortes" (master's thesis, Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais, 1999).

manumitted. Conversely, owing to a preference for males in the international slave trade, men continued to outnumber women in the slave population until well into the nineteenth century.<sup>6</sup>

Because ethnicity, however, cannot stand alone as a distinguishing historical characteristic, whenever possible the analysis takes into account the legal status—free, freed, and slave—of individuals and groups. The main primary source for this study is a set of 11,937 entries in the São José baptismal registers dating from 1780 to 1810.<sup>7</sup> This data set is composed of all available registers for the thirty-year period spanning the elaboration of a second primary source—the *Rol de Confessados desta Freguezia de S. Antonio da Villa de S. Joze* (1795),<sup>8</sup> which serves as an essential backdrop to the baptismal records and provides information regarding specific individuals that is missing in the former. Although the *Rol dos Confessados* does not include children under the age of seven, since they did not make a confession, the ethnicity or origin of almost all of the 10,929 individuals listed was carefully recorded by the clerics responsible for its elaboration. Finally, 1,143 marriage registers dating from 1784 to 1810 were also used in checking and completing information relating to ethnic designations.<sup>9</sup> Baptismal and marriage records, as well as Church censuses such as the 1795 *Rol*, present

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<sup>6</sup> Clotilde Andrade Paiva, "População e economia nas Minas Gerais do século XIX" (Ph.D. diss., Universidade de São Paulo, 1996), 210.

<sup>7</sup> Centro de Documentação, Diocese de São João del Rei, Arquivo Paroquial de Santo Antônio de São José do Rio das Mortes (hereinafter cited as APSASJRM), Livros de Batismo 8, 9, 10, 11, Livro de Batismo, Óbito e Casamento 20, manuscript.

<sup>8</sup> *Rol de Confessados desta Freguezia de S. Antonio da Villa de S. Joze, Comarca do Rio das Mortes, deste presente anno de 1795*, Instituto Histórico e Geográfico de Tiradentes, Tiradentes, Minas Gerais, Brazil, manuscript. In principle, confessional rolls (*róis de confessados*) were elaborated annually during Lent. Although not many *róis* have survived, those studied thus far vary considerably in their form. The 1795 São José *Rol dos Confessados* is an unpaginated, bound compilation of nominal lists drawn up for the *Vila/Matriz* and for each of the parish's nine chapels. Individuals are listed within the *fogos* (households) in which they resided, and the *fogos* are organized according to a very approximate alphabetical order of the Christian names of household heads. Since the pages or *folhas* are unnumbered, and given its organization, it is virtually impossible to provide specific references to cases or examples found in the *Rol*.

<sup>9</sup> APSASJRM, Livros de Casamentos 24, 25, and 26, manuscript.

scholars with a number of challenges when attempting to interpret them, whether in qualitative or quantitative terms.<sup>10</sup>

The meanings of the ethnic and origin labels used in Minas Gerais during the late eighteenth century and the first half of the nineteenth century are varied and complex. Most scholars of Brazil during the colonial period and the early decades of the nineteenth century accept the notion that a lack of information regarding an individual's skin color or legal status can be interpreted as signifying that he/she was white and free or, more precisely, freeborn.<sup>11</sup> Such an assumption is not always correct, however, since clerics, notaries, and other record keepers were not always concerned with designating individual ethnic backgrounds or legal status, perhaps because such information was not necessarily deemed of any importance in given circumstances or because it was considered general knowledge within the immediate community. Care should therefore be taken to avoid over-estimating the white and freeborn segments of the Brazilian population, even after the abolition of slavery.

Regardless of the possible ambiguities of such blank spaces in the documents, in Minas the terminology used to designate the native-born of African descent most definitely referred to skin tonalities. The term *pardo/parda*, generally, corresponded to mulatto, although it could also be used to classify those of lighter or slightly darker skin than the "pure" mulatto. Although the term may have represented "a type of social condition," as some would insist,<sup>12</sup> its principal reference in Minas was to the miscegenation of African and European origins.

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<sup>10</sup> Issues raised by the sources will be dealt with as they present themselves in the discussions that follow. The ecclesiastical sources used herein are part of a broader research project aimed at collecting data from a diverse set of documents produced by notary offices, the courts, and various levels of colonial and provincial public administration. Owing to the ongoing nature of the project, it is possible that some new data will turn up for the period under examination, even though the parish registers currently being transcribed into data bases all ostensibly date from 1820 onward.

<sup>11</sup> The *Rol de Confessados* is a truly remarkable document since it carefully designates whites as *brancos* or *brancas*.

<sup>12</sup> Sheila de Castro Faria, *A colônia em movimento: fortuna e família no cotidiano colonial* (Rio de Janeiro: Nova Fronteira, 1998), 307; and Sheila de Castro Faria, "Damas mercadoras: as pretas minas no Rio de Janeiro, século XVIII-1850," in *Rotas atlânticas da diáspora africana: da Baía do Benim ao Rio de Janeiro*, ed. Mariza de Carvalho Soares (Niterói: Editora da Universidade Fluminense, 2007), 101-34. See also Hêba Maria Mattos, "A escravidão moderna nos quadros do Império Português: o Antigo Regime em perspectiva atlântica," in *O antigo regime nos trópicos: a dinâmica*

At some point before 1750, for example, the ex-slave Rosa, a West African *mina*,<sup>13</sup> began to give birth to seven children, all of whom were fathered by Antônio Moreira de Carvalho, a white man of considerable wealth and likely born in Portugal. Antônio never married Rosa, but he acknowledged paternity of their children. Rosa assumed his family names and, more importantly for present purposes, all of their children were referred to as *pardos* when they appeared in various capacities in the parish registers, the *Rol de Confessados*, and other documents, including the last will and testament of their only son, Francisco Moreira de Carvalho, registered in 1810.<sup>14</sup> One of their daughters, Theodora, married Antônio da Silva Abreu. Both were listed in the *Rol dos Confessados* as *pardos*, as were their five children.

As suggested above, *pardo* could also refer to those of lighter skin color. The oldest daughter of Antônio and Rosa, Vitoriana Moreira Rosa, married a white man named Manoel Fernandes dos Santos. Their five children also appear as *pardos* in the *Rol*. Designations referring to racial mixtures thus passed from parents to children, and this practice, repeated dozens and dozens of times in the *Rol*, carried over into the first half of the nineteenth century.<sup>15</sup>

While historians agree that the children of African slaves were designated as *crioulos*, disagreement arises as to the classification of those of African descent beyond that second generation.<sup>16</sup> Once again,

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*imperial portuguesa, séculos XVI-XVIII*, ed. João Fragoso, Maria Fernanda Bicalho, and Maria de Fátima Gouvêa (Rio de Janeiro: Civilização Brasileira, 2001), 141-62.

<sup>13</sup> By the period under examination here, *mina* had become a generic term for almost all West Africans.

<sup>14</sup> Libby and Graça Filho, "Reconstruindo a liberdade," 141.

<sup>15</sup> Clotilde Andrade Paiva, "População e economia nas Minas Gerais do século XIX" (Ph.D. diss., Universidade de São Paulo, 1996), 98-99.

<sup>16</sup> Mariza de Carvalho Soares, *Devotos da cor: identidade étnica, religiosidade e escravidão no Rio de Janeiro, século XVII* (Rio de Janeiro: Civilização Brasileira, 2000), 100. According to the author: "Born in the colony, a *crioulo* is the slave child of an African mother. The term thus corresponds to the first generation born [in Rio de Janeiro] and which supposedly, at least during infancy, remains tied to the mother and, consequently to maternal culture and language. Perhaps that is why the *crioulo* is identified simultaneously in terms of birth on colonial soil and his [African] ancestry. Madalena Costa, a *crioula forra*, is the daughter of Josepha da Costa, a *mina*, and the mother of Custódio, a slave infant baptized in 1745. This brief genealogy allows us to perceive that being a *crioulo* is a provisional condition affecting only a single generation of [African] descent, which may explain why *crioulos* do not constitute a stable group with common interests" (unless otherwise stated, all translations are by the authors). There is no reason to question the author's judgment in this particular instance, but it is also clear that such interpretations are not entirely valid for Minas

in Minas the definition of *crioulo* was quite clear, at least during the period under study here: it referred to native-born blacks whatever the origin of the parents—African, native or both—and irrespective of legal condition. The *Rol dos Confessados* provides many examples of this. Among José Gomes Pinheiro's slaves were found Sebastião, *angola*,<sup>17</sup> and his *benguela*<sup>18</sup> wife Rosa. Their son, Manoel, was listed as a *crioulo*.<sup>19</sup> Manoel Joaquim Martins and his wife Antônia Moreira da Silva were listed as manumitted *crioulos*; their three children were considered freeborn *crioulos*. Hilário Alvares Batista and Inácia de Oliveira were freeborn *crioulos*, a classification that passed on to their six children. Clearly, at least in Minas, *crioulo* was not a classification applicable only to a single generation of individuals born of African parents. Again, the term essentially constitutes a reference to African ancestry and appears to have carried through several generations spanning the turn of the eighteenth century.

The term *cabra* constituted a third designation of African descent used with a certain frequency in Minas at the turn of the eighteenth century. It referred to the offspring of mixed parents: one *mulato/pardo*, the other either *crioulo* or African. According to the *Rol*, for example, Antônio Ramassa do Sacramento was a *pardo*, while his wife Maria Antônia de Jesus was a *crioula*. Their son Manoel was listed as a *cabra*. The relative flexibility of the term *pardo* once again comes into play when observing that the three children of *cabra* Manoel Dias Cruz and his *parda* wife Francisca Maria de Jesus appear listed as *pardos*. It is curious to observe that there are no known uses of the terms *quarterão* or *oitavão* (quadroon or octoroon) in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Minas documents. Indeed, it appears that the terms were virtually unknown throughout Brazil during that period. That seems to suggest that lighter-skinned individuals of mixed race were either referred to as *pardos/pardas* or were simply not subject to racial description, implying that they could have been considered as whites.

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Gerais. Clearly, there is an urgent need for comparative studies on terms of ethnic designations/origin used in the various regions of Portuguese America, especially Rio de Janeiro, Bahia, Pernambuco, and Minas Gerais.

<sup>17</sup> Generally speaking, *angola* referred to Africans embarked at the port of Luanda.

<sup>18</sup> *Benguela* was a generic term for slaves exported from the southern Angolan port of Benguela.

<sup>19</sup> This classical example of an African slave couple having a *crioulo* child is one of the very few instances in which the *Rol dos Confessados* not only clearly identified slave spouses, but also indicated their son's status.

In reflecting on the flexibility of ethnic terminology, one final and irresistible example comes to the fore. The *crioula* Francisca Moreira was a 55-year-old manumitted widow in 1795. Her apparently freeborn children were listed as follows: Juliana, 32, *parda*; João, 26, and Roque, 24, *cabras*; and José, 14, and Joaquina, 11, *crioulos* (for added measure a *parda* granddaughter—whose mother was not identified—also resided with Francisca Moreira). The designations used to identify the native-born of African descent were characterized by some flexibility, but followed discernible patterns in Minas. Labeling Africans was a more complex and less precise business.

Almost by their very nature, the designations attributed to enslaved Africans—in Portuguese often referred to as *nações*—were ambivalent.<sup>20</sup> They were, after all, coined on both sides of the Atlantic and could take on distinct meanings in certain regions or universal meanings throughout all of the Portuguese South Atlantic involved in one way or another with the slave trade. Some designations referred to linguistic groupings, some to political entities or specific geographical locations, and others to specific African ethnic groups. Gwendolyn Midlo Hall cautions that:

Ethnicities exported from the various African coasts defined and named by Atlantic slave traders changed. The same ethnicities were exported from one or more of these coasts at the same time. The coastal origins of transatlantic slave trade voyages can give contrasting results with ethnic descriptions of Africans derived from documents generated in the Americas.

The author goes on to argue, however, that:

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<sup>20</sup> As Soares puts it: "Although they had an ethnic and also a cultural component, the *nações*—here understood as a classificatory system which emerged from the universe of the Atlantic slave trade—redefined frontiers between ethnic groups by forming more inclusive units which I define as groups of origin (*proveniência*).... In this way, the so-called *nações*, initially attributed identities, become incorporated and serve as points of reference in reinforcing former ethnic frontiers or in establishing new configurations of identity." Mariza de Carvalho Soares, "Histórias cruzadas: os mahi setecentistas no Brasil e no Daomé," in *Tráfico, cativo e liberdade: Rio de Janeiro, séculos XVII-XIX*, ed. Manolo Florentino (Rio de Janeiro: Civilização Brasileira, 2005), 134. For African identities in Minas Gerais, see Rodrigo Castro Rezende, "As nossas Áfricas: população escrava e identidades africanas nas Minas Setecentistas" (master's thesis, Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais, 2006).

...our best evidence for the distribution of Africans at their final destination in the Americas is in the documents containing "nation" descriptions of enslaved Africans, despite the fact that these ethnic designations are sometimes unclear and equivocal.<sup>21</sup>

Recent studies in African history have facilitated the understanding of a number of specific and more generic labels referring to origin.<sup>22</sup> For present purposes, however, it will be necessary to limit the examination to those terms found in the Minas sources. When, as was frequently the case, the terms used merely indicated the port of embarkation, little in the way of the actual origin of the slave can be inferred. Such was the case for the better part of the Africans who figured as parents or godparents in the baptismal registry sample. *Angola*, for example, was the label attributed to slaves leaving for the Americas from the port of Luanda and whose ethnic identities traced back to numerous groups in the vast interior of West Central Africa. The same can be said for the *benguelas* and *cabindas*; the former had been loaded onto slavers in the southern Angolan port of Benguela, where slave traders based in Rio de Janeiro were firmly entrenched from at least the mid-eighteenth century,<sup>23</sup> whereas the latter had embarked in the northern port of Cabinda. In principle, the term *mina* referred to slaves shipped out of the port at São Jorge da Mina in West Africa, but, as previously stated, by the second half of the eighteenth century in Minas Gerais, *mina* had come to refer generically to nearly

<sup>21</sup> Gwendolyn Midlo Hall, *Slavery and African Ethnicities in the Americas: Restoring the Links* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005), 26. Herbert Klein concurs with Hall: "If determining the supply of foreign imported goods to this market was difficult, equally complex was estimating the supply of African slaves. Their origin and the manner in which they were obtained are among the most difficult areas to detail." Herbert S. Klein, *The Atlantic Slave Trade* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 115.

<sup>22</sup> Paul E. Lovejoy and David V. Trotman, eds., *Trans-Atlantic Dimensions of Ethnicity in the African Diaspora* (London: Continuum, 2003); Joseph C. Curto and Paul E. Lovejoy, eds., *Enslaving Connections: Changing Cultures of Africa and Brazil during the Era of Slavery* (Amherst, NY: Humanity Books, 2004); and Jan Vansina, "Ambaca Society and the Slave Trade c. 1760-1845," *Journal of African History* 46 (2005):1-27.

<sup>23</sup> Rosa da Cruz e Silva, "Benguela e o Brasil no final do século XVIII: relações comerciais e políticas," in *Angola e Brasil nas rotas do Atlântico Sul*, ed. Selma Pantoja and José Flávio Sombra Saraiva (Rio de Janeiro: Bertrand Brasil, 1999), 127-42.

all West African individuals. The term *congo* was equally imprecise since it referred to slaves captured in the interior embraced by the Congo River and its many tributaries.

Only fifteen other African designations turned up in the analysis of the baptismal registers, ten of which refer to ethnic or regional groups from the hinterlands of West Central Africa: *cabundás*, *cassanges*, *ganguelas*, *muhumbés*, *reboas*, *loangos*, *quissamás*, *bambas*, *monjolos*, and *songos*. An additional three West African groupings were represented: *cabo verdes*, *couranos*, and *saburús*. A single East African *moçambique* appears in the registers. The obvious predominance of West Central Africans in Minas at the turn of the eighteenth century may suggest the early stages of formation of what Robert Slenes termed a *bantu* proto-nation in the Brazilian Southeast of the nineteenth century.<sup>24</sup> Finally, occasional references are made to *pretos(as)*, a generic term for Africans that was apparently employed when the ethnic designations/origins were unknown. The lone *Gentio de Guiné* listed in the baptismal records can be thought of as a *preto* since, by the late eighteenth century, the term had also become generic for African.

In examining the female population of the Parish of São José, what stands out most clearly is the almost overwhelming predominance of the native-born whites, *pardos*, *crioulas*, and *cabras* who, when taken together, accounted for no less than 87 percent of the total (see Table 1). This native predominance resulted from nearly a century of demographic tendencies, peculiar to societies that depended on the international slave trade. It is well known that the trade to Portuguese America and to the rest of the slave regions of the New World was biased in favor of males. The consensus is that, on average, slaver cargoes were made up of two to three men for each woman on board, while the number of children was minimal or even negligible.<sup>25</sup>

In Minas the differences appear to have been greater still. The 1795 São José figures yield sex ratios, reflecting the number of men for every 100 women in a given population, ranging from 263 for the *minas* to 1,225 for the *congós* (among the major African groups the

<sup>24</sup> Robert W. Slenes, "'Malungu, Ngoma Vem!': África encoberta e redescoberta no Brasil," *Cadernos do Museu da Escravatura* 1 (1995):7-8.

<sup>25</sup> Herbert S. Klein, *The Middle Passage: Comparative Studies in the Atlantic Slave Trade* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978), 100, 243-47.

Table 1  
 Female Population of the Parish of São José,  
 by Ethnic Designation/Origin and Legal Condition, 1795

Ethnic designation/origin	Freeborn	Percentage	Manumitted	Percentage	Slave	Percentage	Totals	Percentage
White	1075	53.7	-	-	-	-	1075	26.1
Pardo	718	35.9	387	50.5	122	8.3	1227	29.8
Crioula	120	6.0	230	30.0	794	54.1	1144	27.8
Cabra	30	1.5	37	4.8	69	4.7	136	3.3
Angola	-	-	21	2.7	140	9.5	161	3.9
Benguela	-	-	9	1.2	199	13.6	208	5.0
Mina	-	-	57	7.8	60	4.1	117	2.8
Congo	-	-	2	0.3	20	1.4	22	0.5
Rebola	-	-	5	0.7	35	2.4	40	1.0
Others	58*	2.9	19**	1.5	28***	1.9	47	1.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>767</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1467</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>4117</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: *Rol de Confessados desta Freguezia de S. Antonio da Villa de S. Joze, Comarca do Rio das Mortes, deste prezenze anno de 1795*, Instituto Histórico e Geográfico de Tiradentes, Tiradentes, Minas Gerais, Brazil, manuscript.

\*Includes *mesitica*, *bastarda*, and individuals whose ethnic designation could not be determined.

\*\*Includes *preta*, *cabinda*, and *ganguela*.

\*\*\*Includes *ganguela*, *muhumbé*, *cassange*, *nagó*, and *preta*.

corresponding ratios for the *angolas*, *benguelas* and *reboas* were 689, 427, and 417, respectively).<sup>26</sup> Despite the fact that among newly arrived slaves, women were greatly outnumbered by men, at least until the final decades of the eighteenth century, a stream of African women flowed into the captaincy of Minas.<sup>27</sup> When these *minas*, *angolas*, and *benguelas*, and so forth, bore children, however, they did not reproduce as Africans, since their offspring were labeled according to skin tones produced by varying genetic combinations and thus were called *crioulos*, *pardos*, or *cabras*. In this sense, it comes as no surprise that even at the end of the eighteenth century, when the *Rol de Confessados* was elaborated, African women comprised slightly less than a third of the female slave population and accounted for a mere 13.2 percent of manumitted women in São José.

Manumission practices also influenced demographic configurations since freedom was more frequently granted to the native born and because women, both native and African, tended to benefit in greater numbers (and, among Africans, in much greater proportions) than men. Moreover, as Table 1 demonstrates, over time, miscegenation and white ancestry greatly contributed to the chances of freedom, thus rendering *pardas* the largest ethnic group among legally free women. Indeed, they made up the largest group in the overall female population.<sup>28</sup> Native *crioulas* constituted the second largest ethnic segment among women, closely followed by white women who accounted for just over a quarter of all females. The expectation would

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<sup>26</sup> Libby and Paiva, "Manumission Patterns," 104.

<sup>27</sup> There is a vague consensus that, owing to declining gold yields, the pace of the slave traffic into Minas Gerais slowed considerably toward the end of the eighteenth century. See, for example, Laird W. Bergad, *Slavery and the Demographic and Economic History of Minas Gerais, Brazil, 1720-1888* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999); Roberto Borges Martins, "Minas Gerais e o tráfico de escravos no século XIX, outra vez," in *História econômica da independência e do império: coletânea de textos apresentados no I Congresso Brasileiro de História Econômica, Campus da USP, setembro de 1993*, ed. Tamás Szmrecsányi and José Roberto do Amaral Lapa (São Paulo: Hucitec/Fundação de Ampara à Pesquisa do Estado de São Paulo, 1996), 99-130; and Douglas Cole Libby, "O tráfico negreiro e as populações escravas de Minas Gerais c. 1720-c. 1850" (paper presented at the Latin American Studies Association, XXVI International Congress: Decentering Latin American Studies, San Juan, Puerto Rico, 15-18 March 2006).

<sup>28</sup> For manumission practices in Minas, see Eduardo França Paiva, *Escravos e libertos nas Minas Gerais do século XVIII: estratégias de resistência através dos testamentos* (São Paulo: Annablume, 1995); Libby and Paiva, "Manumission Practices;" and Libby and Graça Filho, "Reconstruindo a liberdade."

be that the 1780-1810 sample of baptisms should result in these same proportions in terms of the ethnic designation/origin of mothers.

As can be seen in Table 2, presumed whites appear to have comprised just over half of all mothers, a finding which requires some reflection on the nature and quality of the baptismal registers as primary sources.<sup>29</sup> Parish priests (*vigários*) were nominally responsible for maintaining the baptismal, marriage, and burial registers, but, given that some parish seats had relatively large populations and many colonial parishes were far flung, they often relied upon their numerous assistants in keeping the records. The erratic chronology (and "geography") of registry entries strongly suggests that it was common for events to be recorded several years after the fact. A reasonable explanation is that clerics from outlying chapels and other assistants kept notes that later served in elaborating the registers themselves. Such practices would have been subject to the involuntary, unconscious, or deliberate omission of certain information. It is possible to speculate that the extreme care taken in identifying individual ethnic designation/origins when drawing up the *Rol de Confessados* may have been a reaction of the São José parish priest, Manoel Gomes de Souza, to the sloppy record keeping of his predecessors and assistants. If that was the case, however, this data set constitutes a vivid indication that carelessness continued unabated at the turn of the century.

Baptismal registers were potentially elaborate affairs. Aside from essential information regarding the sacrament and the baptized themselves (date, name, legitimacy/illegitimacy/abandonment), they could include annotations as to the legal condition and ethnic designation/origin of an extensive cast of actors.<sup>30</sup> This list included the mother and the father and their respective owners if slaves, the head of household in which an abandoned child was sheltered, the godparents and their respective owners if slaves, the husband or father of

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<sup>29</sup> The sources for Table 2 are Centro de Documentação, Diocese de São João del Rei, Arquivo Paroquial de Santo Antônio de São José do Rio das Mortes, Livros de Batismo 8, 9, 10, 11, Livro de Batismo, Óbito e Casamento 20; Bispado de São João del Rei, Arquivo Paroquial de Santo Antônio de São José do Rio das Mortes, Livros de Casamentos 24, 25, and 26; and *Rol de Confessados*.

<sup>30</sup> The date refers to the day on which the sacrament of baptism was celebrated. For the period in focus, only a very few registers include the actual date of birth. References to the ethnic designation/origin of the baptized were quite rare and generally restricted to the *pardo/parda* children of *crioula* or African "single" mothers.

Table 2  
 Mothers of Baptized Children, by Ethnic Designation/Origin  
 and Legal Condition, Parish of São José, 1780-1810

Ethnic designation/origin	Freeborn	Percentage	Manumitted	Percentage	Slave	Percentage	Totals	Percentage
Undesignated (presumed white)	5717	95.7	-	-	-	-	5717	51.3
Undesignated (non-white)	-	-	87	9.8	249	5.8	336	3.0
<i>Parda</i>	220	3.7	271	30.5	439	10.3	930	8.4
<i>Crioula</i>	25	0.4	445	50.1	2024	47.4	2494	22.4
<i>Cabra</i>	13	0.2	33	3.7	207	4.8	253	2.3
<i>Angola</i>	-	-	7	0.6	420	9.8	427	3.8
<i>Benguela</i>	-	-	14	1.6	590	13.8	604	5.4
<i>Mina</i>	-	-	9	1.0	107	2.5	116	1.0
<i>Congo</i>	-	-	1	0.1	38	0.9	39	0.4
<i>Rebola</i>	-	-	1	0.1	152	3.6	153	1.4
<i>Cassange</i>	-	-	-	-	13	0.3	13	0.2
<i>Muhumbé</i>	-	-	-	-	8	0.2	8	0.1
Others*	-	-	20	2.3	27	0.6	47	0.4
<b>Total**</b>	<b>5975</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>888</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>4274</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>11137</b>	<b>100</b>

See note 29 for the sources.

\*Includes thirty-one *pretas* or Africans of unknown origin, four *ganguelas*, two *cabundas*, two *cabinda*, one *cabo verde*, one *saburú*, one *songo*, and one *moçambique*.

\*\*Excludes the baptisms of 704 abandoned infants (*expostos*) and 96 adult African slaves.

godmothers and their owners if slaves, as well as the occasional witnesses. In certain cases involving parents or godparents born in Portugal, the registers resemble family trees, for they include the names and place of baptism of grandparents and even great-grandparents.

Posterity, however, was doubtless not much of a concern in the vast majority of cases. If it was common knowledge in the immediate community that, for example, a certain Maria da Silva was a *parda forra* (manumitted woman), why bother to note down such trivial information? It seems that, at least for the period under examination here, such careless attitudes were responsible for the omission of information in the parish registers, rather than any deliberate silencing on matters relating to racial or ethnic identities.<sup>31</sup>

The problem is that a lack of information regarding an individual's skin color or legal condition is often erroneously interpreted as indicating definitively that he/she was both white and freeborn. Given what is known about the composition of the female population tallied in the *Rol dos Confessados*, however, the figures which appear in Table 2, indicating that white freeborn women accounted for slightly over half of all births in the parish of São José from 1799 to 1808, cannot be taken at face value. The lax record-keeping of clerics resulted in a serious undercounting of the manumitted and of those of African descent. It would not be at all unreasonable to assume that at least half of the 5,717 women whose ethnic designation/origin and legal condition did not appear in the baptismal registers were either freeborn individuals of African descent or manumitted and, therefore, necessarily of at least partial African descent.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> The frequency with which authorities noted the color/origins of slave children in the baptismal records also varied considerably from one church to another. For instance, in the Matriz of São José in the years 1780-1790, 48 percent of slave children were listed with a designation such as *crioulo* or *pardo*, whereas in the Capela do Cláudio, 77 percent of the baptized slaves were listed with such designations. APSASJRM, livro 8. Some registers are simply more complete than others. "Silencing" here refers to the notion that, particularly during the second half of the nineteenth century, official Brazilian discourse began omitting references to skin color as it became progressively clearer that slaves and Afro-Brazilians would have to be accepted as citizens in the near future. Hebe Maria de Mattos, *Das cores do silêncio: os significados da liberdade no sudeste escravista, Brasil, século XIX* (Rio de Janeiro: Arquivo Nacional, 1995). Libby and Graça Filho, "Reconstruindo a liberdade," 119-20, note that in Minas there are signs that this process was already under way in the 1830s.

<sup>32</sup> It must be born in mind that the baptisms of abandoned infants are not included in Table 2.

That assumption would reduce the participation of whites to approximately one quarter of registered mothers—certainly an acceptable figure under the circumstances. To speculate further as to the ethnic breakdown of free and freed women of color, much less of undesignated slave mothers, however, would be to venture onto rather thin ice. On the other hand, Table 2 shows that some 36 percent of all baptized children had slave mothers, a proportion which almost certainly reflects historical reality. The various impositions of slavery in Brazil systematically kept slave birth rates below those of the legally free, which would explain why slave participation in São José baptisms was below the proportion of slaves in the overall parish population.

Table 2 demonstrates that just under 95 percent of slave mothers were identified according to their ethnic designation/origin. The breakdown among ethnic groupings appears to correspond fairly well with the respective proportions of the total slave population, since, for example, the native *crioulas* and the African *benguelas* formed the two largest categories of mothers.<sup>33</sup> Aside from the fact that they comprised by far the largest segment of female slaves, the predominance of the *crioulas* among mothers was doubtless enhanced by their ability to attract both African and native husbands and partners. The same can be said for the native *pardas* and *cabras*. Beyond this, the numbers are simply too limited to allow for a more in-depth analysis.

It bears noting that, owing to the problems encountered in the parish registers, some experimental matching was undertaken in order to increase the identification of ethnic designation/origin among slave women. By rearranging the baptismal data base to follow the alphabetical order of slave owners, it became possible to locate a fair number of undesignated slave mothers (and, when married, their slave spouses) using the *Rol dos Confessados*, where they were invariably identified according to ethnicity/origin. Similar matching in the smaller database of marriage registers also allowed for the identification of racial labeling applied to both slave husbands and wives.<sup>34</sup> These procedures are both painstaking and time consuming, but, since their results greatly improve the quality of the parish register data, it may

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<sup>33</sup> It is interesting to note that, when taking into account both sexes, the *benguelas* were the second largest group of Africans in São José, behind the *angolas*. Among the latter, however, men outnumbered women by nearly seven to one, whereas among the former the difference was just over four to one.

<sup>34</sup> APSASJRM, Livros de Casamentos 24, 25, and 26, manuscript.

prove worthwhile applying them to broader sets of registry data—including the freeborn and the manumitted—and using not only the *Rol*, but also census material from the 1830s, as well as complete sets of marriage and burial registers. Indeed, in terms of research focusing on ethnicity and social condition, *mineiro* baptismal records are not especially fecund sources, and a certain degree of intersecting with other records may well be the only way for scholars to take fuller advantage of them.

Notwithstanding the problems presented by undercounting, the São José baptismal registers yield important results when looking at legitimacy rates according to the legal condition of mothers.<sup>35</sup> Among the freeborn (beyond a doubt including undesigned freedwomen and other mothers of African descent), the rate of legitimacy stood at a very respectable 87.9 percent, comparable to Iberian rates at the beginning of the nineteenth century.<sup>36</sup> It has to be borne in mind, however, that nearly all abandoned infants—*expostos*—were white or light-skinned since slaveholders generally kept a careful watch on pregnant slaves in order to avoid abandonment, a condition that theoretically freed all children involved. In addition, the local *Câmaras*, in principle responsible for the care of *expostos*, were quick to return abandoned slave children and often rejected dark-skinned infants, auctioning them off as slaves and thus avoiding payment to wet nurse guardians.<sup>37</sup>

By adding the baptisms of abandoned infants to the illegitimate freeborn segment, the freeborn legitimacy rate falls to just over 75 percent, a figure that may better represent reality at this turn-of-the-

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<sup>35</sup> Baptized infants were considered legitimate whenever the names of both parents appeared in the register except for those few cases in which they were labeled as *natural*, meaning that the mother and father were not married. The term *natural* covered virtually all cases of non-legitimacy in the sample. In using the term, clerics extended an opportunity for parents to marry in the future, legitimizing their *natural* children. It is possible that in some cases the registering of an infant as *natural* may have been used to cover up the fruit of adulterous relations (*adulterinos*), the offspring of members of the clergy (*sacrilegos*), or children born of incestuous relationships (*espúrios, incestuosos*). For an excellent overview of these matters, see Linda Lewin, "Natural and Spurious Children in Brazilian Inheritance Law from Colony to Empire: A Methodological Essay," *The Americas* 48:3 (1992):351-96.

<sup>36</sup> Ana Sílvia Volpi Scott, "O pecado na margem de lá: a fecundidade ilegítima na metrópole portuguesa, séculos XVIII-XIX," *População e Família* 3 (2000):41-70.

<sup>37</sup> Maria Beatriz Nizza da Silva, *História da família no Brasil colonial* (Rio de Janeiro: Nova Fronteira, 1998), 212-13; and Renato Júnio Franco, "Desassistidas minas—a exposição de crianças em Vila Rica, século XVIII" (master's thesis, Universidade Federal Fluminense, 2006).

century conjuncture.<sup>38</sup> Among mothers listed as manumitted, the legitimacy rate stood at 41.8 percent, a result that corroborates earlier studies suggesting a steady increase in legitimacy among freedwomen in the course of the eighteenth century. It is impossible to say what effects the undercounting of manumitted mothers may have had, but the São José manumitted legitimacy rate appears to have been in line with those found for the neighboring parish of São João (44.5 percent) or for one of the parishes comprising the colonial capital of Minas, Vila Rica (approximately 45 percent), during approximately the same period.<sup>39</sup> Viewed over time, the data suggest that among the freeborn, legitimacy rates were in ascension after 1800.

<sup>38</sup> Note that even this lower figure lays to rest the notion that illegitimacy was the norm for all segments of eighteenth-century *mineiro* society. See Laura de Mello e Souza, *Desclassificados do ouro: a pobreza mineira no século XVIII* (Rio de Janeiro: Graal, 1982), 143-44. For a discussion of abandoned children in colonial Minas Gerais, see Franco, "Desassistidas minas;" Renato Pinto Venâncio, "Nos limites da sagrada família: ilegitimidade e casamento no Brasil colonial," in *História e sexualidade no Brasil*, ed. Ronaldo Vainfas (Rio de Janeiro: Graal, 1986); and Renato Pinto Venâncio, *Famílias abandonadas: assistência à criança das camadas populares no Rio de Janeiro e em Salvador: séculos XVIII e XIX* (Campinas: Papyrus, 1999). For São Paulo, see Carlos de Almeida Prado Bacellar, *Viver e sobreviver em uma vila colonial: Sorocaba, séculos XVIII e XIX* (São Paulo: Fundação de Ampara à Pesquisa do Estado de São Paulo/Annablume, 2001), especially chapters 7 and 8. For reasons which are still not clear, in all of Portuguese America the incidence of child abandonment increased considerably at the end of the eighteenth century and during the first decade of the nineteenth century.

<sup>39</sup> Sílvia Jardim Brügger, "Legitimidade, casamento e relações ditas ilícitas em São João del Rei, 1730-1850," *Anais do 9º Seminário sobre a Economia Mineira* (Diamantina: Centro de Desenvolvimento e Planejamento Regional, Faculdade de Administração e Ciências Humanas, Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais, 2000), 37-64; and Douglas Cole Libby and Tarcísio Rodrigues Botelho, "Filhos de Deus: batismos de crianças legítimas e naturais na Paróquia de Nossa Senhora do Pilar de Ouro Preto," *Varia Historia* 31 (2004):69-96. For earlier studies on the family in colonial Minas, see Donald Ramos, "Marriage and the Family in Colonial Vila Rica," *Hispanic American Historical Review* 55:2 (1975):200-25; and Donald Ramos, "Single and Married Women in Vila Rica, Brazil, 1754-1838," *Journal of Family History* 16:3 (1991):261-82. In chronological terms, the most relevant comparison based on evidence from outside Minas would be with Castro Faria's data for the parish of São Salvador dos Campos dos Goitacases from 1748 to 1798. Among the freeborn the author found legitimacy rates of better than 92 percent, while legitimacy among the manumitted stood at an impressive two-thirds of all births. Castro Faria, *A colônia em movimento*, 337. For Sorocaba and São Paulo, Bacellar, *Viver e sobreviver*, 187, found a legitimacy rate among the legally free of 88.5 percent between 1791 and 1810 (the calculations include *expostos*).

Furthermore, the data do not indicate any clear upward or downward tendency in slave legitimacy rates during the period.<sup>40</sup> At any rate, just under two-fifths of the children of slave mothers were registered as legitimate at the time of baptism. These findings lend credence to the notion that legitimacy among slaves in Minas rose slowly during the 1700s. At 39 percent, the rate in São José for 1780-1810 almost equaled that of São João for 1808-1810 at 40.6 percent.<sup>41</sup> The corresponding rate for Vila Rica, however, stood at slightly less than 20 percent, almost certainly indicating that slave families enjoyed greater stability in the São José/São João region, perhaps thanks to an economy that, by the turn of the century, had shrugged off any negative effects emanating from the decline in gold yields. What is obvious is that a number of issues related to legitimacy and family formation beg for further study.<sup>42</sup>

Before turning to ethnicity among slave single mothers and married couples, an apparently small detail about the condition at the time of baptism of the children of slave mothers proves both revealing and deserving of some reflection. In the set of 4,274 slave baptisms, a mere fifty-six children received their freedom as part of the sacramental ceremony, in Portuguese, "alforriado na pia batismal." In five of these cases, the fathers are listed with their surnames, almost certainly signifying that they were either freeborn or manumitted and most probably indicating that they had purchased the freedom of their offspring. Surprisingly, only eight of the manumitted were legitimate,

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<sup>40</sup> In order to calculate legitimacy rates among slaves it was necessary to remove cases of adult baptism. These cases, though limited in number, show a decline in adult African slave baptisms, pointing to a turn-of-the-century hiatus in the transatlantic slave trade to Minas.

<sup>41</sup> Brügger's study, "Legitimidade, casamento e relações ditas ilícitas," 48, shows that the legitimacy rate among slaves in São João fell from 1810 through to mid-century.

<sup>42</sup> Once again, Castro Faria's findings serve for comparison here. Slave legitimacy in Campos dos Goitacases in the 1748-1798 period amounted to 21.5 percent, while in the urban parish of Santa Rita (Rio de Janeiro) it stood at a mere 6.8 percent in 1817. During the year 1814, in the rural parish of Jacarepaguá (outside the city of Rio), 29.3 percent of slave baptisms were legitimate. Castro Faria, *A colônia em movimento*, 337, 342. In her study of the slave population of Franca, São Paulo, Maísa Faleiros da Cunha points to a rate of legitimacy of some 45 percent during the first half of the nineteenth century. Maísa Faleiros da Cunha, "A legitimidade entre os cativos da Paróquia Nossa Senhora da Conceição de Franca, século XIX" (paper presented at the XVI Encontro Nacional de Estudos Populacionais, Caxambu, Minas Gerais, 20-24 September 2004), 7.

among them three whose fathers were either freeborn or freedmen. The vast majority of these manumitted infants were registered as *natural*—indeed, at 15 percent, the legitimacy rate was much lower than for all slave infants—and the records provide no clues as to why they were so benefited.

What stands out here is that the turn-of-the-century São José infant manumission rate stood at a paltry 1.3 percent. In stark contrast, the corresponding rate for Vila Rica from 1712 to 1810 was 5.6 percent, although, by the end of the eighteenth century, manumission of the newborn appears to have been rapidly falling both in Vila Rica and São José.<sup>43</sup> Such results point to a specific turn-of-the-century conjuncture in which slaveholders were much less likely to liberate valuable slaves, whatever their age. Based on two recent studies,<sup>44</sup> it is tempting to hypothesize that slave imports into Minas fell steeply from the second half of the 1780s through to the years 1812-1813, when a spectacular, if relatively short-lived, comeback of the slave trade took place. It seems logical that slave owners who, for whatever the reasons, suddenly found it difficult to restock their holdings via the slave trade would tend to become more parsimonious in granting freedom, regardless of the conditions offered.

There is a healthy dose of irony in the strategies careful researchers are forced to adopt in examining ethnic designation/origin among freeborn, manumitted and slave couples, and single mothers. On the one hand, while the *Rol de Confessados* provides excellent data relating to freeborn and freed married couples, its systematic listing of slaves in alphabetical order is typical of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century forms of nominal lists and renders identifying couples or families extremely difficult, if not impossible.<sup>45</sup> On the other hand, as already discussed, the baptismal registers offer only sparse information as to ethnicity and legal condition among the legally free. Thanks to the matching of individual couples found in the registers and the *Rol dos Confessados* or in the marriage registers, it was possible to determine

<sup>43</sup> Libby and Botelho, "Filhos de Deus," 78; and Libby and Graça Filho, "Reconstruindo a liberdade," 121.

<sup>44</sup> Angelo Alves Carrara, *Minas e currais: produção rural e mercado interno em Minas Gerais, 1674-1807* (Juiz de Fora: Editora UFJF, 2007), 133-34, 141, 336-46; and Libby, "O tráfico negreiro e as populações escravas," 6-9. Carrara's analysis is based on tax records of slave imports, Libby's on baptisms of adult African slaves.

<sup>45</sup> The use of alphabetical listing was quite unusual but equally effective in masking marriages and families as the more typical lists which first tallied slave men from the oldest to the youngest and then repeated the operation for women.

the ethnic designation/origin of at least one spouse among a total of 776 slave couples. Thus, Table 3 displays the ethnic designation/origin of freeborn and manumitted spouses as they appear in the *Rol dos Confessados*, while Table 4 repeats the same information, respectively, for slave couples (see Table 3 and Table 4).<sup>46</sup>

Despite an overall trend towards racial or ethnic endogamy among free and manumitted married couples, what truly stands out in Table 3 is how profoundly São José society had been marked by nearly a century of miscegenation. *Pardos* and *cabras* comprised just over a third of all married individuals, indicating a remarkable propensity for family formation since their share of the total parish population stood at slightly less than a quarter. In part, that propensity doubtless reflected the importance of marriage and family formation in the strategies employed by slaves in obtaining manumission. Indeed, manumitted individuals accounted for 39.6 percent of those with marital ties, while freedmen and freedwomen made up just 12.9 percent of the overall population.

What emerges from these findings is a strong tendency toward compliance with the perceived norms of free (white) society on the part of those who shared some degree of African ancestry and, above all, among those who had experienced slavery. The very impediments to marriage and family formation imposed by slavery probably go a long way toward explaining their importance to those who had escaped its yoke.

As Table 3 demonstrates, in 1795 racially-mixed marriages in São José were relatively few in number. Matrimony between individuals of different skin tonalities represented only 13.4 percent of all marriages identified in the *Rol dos Confessados*.<sup>47</sup> Emblematically, better than half of those mixed marriages involved white husbands and mulatto wives, while not a single case of a white man marrying a woman of pure African descent appeared. On the one hand, this suggests that white/*parda* unions were still acceptable in a society that had only recently emerged from a situation of chronic shortage of

<sup>46</sup> The data in Table 4 refer to individual slave couples (many of whom baptized more than one child) and not to the baptisms of all legitimate slave infants.

<sup>47</sup> One recent study of early nineteenth-century Vila Rica (later Ouro Preto), capital of the captaincy/province of Minas, found a truly miniscule rate of mixed marriages—less than one percent—among the free population. Mirian Moura Lott, "Casamento e família nas Minas Gerais: Vila Rica—1804-1839" (master's thesis, Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais, 2004).

Table 3

Ethnic Designation/Origin among Freeborn and Manumitted Spouses  
in the Parish of São José do Rio das Mortes, 1795

Husband/Wife	Freeborn	Manumitted	Totals	Percentage
White/White	293		293	46.1
White/Parda	45		45	7.1
Pardo/White	1	3	4	0.6
Pardo/Parda	38	132	170	26.8
Pardo/Crioula	1	9	10	1.6
Pardo/Cabra		6	6	0.9
Pardo/African		1	1	0.2
Crioulo/Parda		3	3	0.5
Crioulo/Crioula	5	57	62	9.8
Crioulo/Cabra		2	2	0.3
Crioulo/African		1	1	0.2
Cabra/Parda		3	3	0.5
Cabra/Crioula		3	3	0.5
African/Crioula		7	7	1.1
African/African		11	11	1.7
Others*		14	14	2.2
<b>Total</b>	383	252	635	100

Source: See Table 1. Since the *Rol dos Confessados* almost systematically omits information regarding the legal status of married women (the assumption apparently being that their status followed that of their husbands), couples' status is equated to that of the husbands.

\*"Others" refers to couples in which at least one of the spouses was listed as a *mestiço(a)* or *bastardo(a)*. It is not possible to determine exactly what the *mestiço* designation meant, although the reference was obviously to a mixture of races, perhaps such complicated mixtures that they defied any description the clerics could muster. It is quite probable that the term involved some degree of Indian ancestry. The *bastardos* were born of indigenous mothers and white fathers who refused to recognize their paternity. The paucity of references to those of indigenous origins is both baffling and disturbing. It almost seems as though the process of whitening of Afro-Brazilians was preceded by an almost virtual blotting out of the original indigenous inhabitants of Portuguese America and their descendants.

**Table 4**  
Ethnic Designation/Origin among Slave Spouses  
in the Parish of São José, 1780-1810

<b>Husband/Wife</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<i>Pardo/Parda</i>	10	0.9
<i>Pardo/Cabra</i>	1	0.1
<i>Pardo/Crioula</i>	2	0.2
<i>Pardo/African</i>	15	1.3
<i>Cabra/Parda</i>	3	0.3
<i>Cabra/Cabra</i>	3	0.3
<i>Cabra/Crioula</i>	6	0.5
<i>Crioulo/Parda</i>	5	0.4
<i>Crioula/Cabra</i>	5	0.4
<i>Crioulo/Crioula</i>	78	7.0
<i>Crioulo/African</i>	45	4.0
<i>African/Parda</i>	6	0.5
<i>African/Cabra</i>	16	1.4
<i>African/Crioula</i>	423	37.5
<i>African/African</i>	429	38.0
<i>Crioulo/Unidentified</i>	3	0.3
<i>African/Unidentified</i>	20	1.8
<i>Unidentified/Parda</i>	1	0.1
<i>Unidentified/Cabra</i>	2	0.2
<i>Unidentified/Crioula</i>	8	0.7
<i>Unidentified/African</i>	9	0.8
<i>Unidentified/Unidentified</i>	38	3.4
<b>Total</b>	1128	100

Source: See Table 2.

women.<sup>48</sup> On the other hand, it is quite clear that formal white/black unions were simply not allowed in the face of a racial hierarchy that dictated proper behavior for whites. Indeed, the four white women who married *pardo* men must have been quite courageous since such unions were surely frowned upon in "proper" society. The corollary is that, at least initially, *pardos* had to have been the fruit of illicit or unrecognized unions largely between white men and *crioula* or African women.

This brings to mind the story of Antônio Moreira Carvalho and Rosa *mina* with their seven *pardo* children. More common were the anonymous unions, which implicitly appear when clerics made a point of designating baptized infants as *pardos*. Such references to the ethnic designation/origin of the baptized were practically limited to these cases of *pardos* whose mothers were usually *crioula* or African and whose fathers were unknown and probably represent a subtle condemnation on the part of the clergy of unacceptable degrees of miscegenation.

The findings presented in Table 3 suggest that a certain distaste for miscegenation was becoming the norm in São José at the turn of the century. While mixed racial unions were still quite visible on the social horizon, a tendency toward endogamy appeared not only among whites, but also among freeborn and manumitted *pardos*, *crioulos*, and even Africans. While the nineteenth century may have been marked by the so-called "silencing of the colors," these findings suggest that scholars should pay attention to patterns of social norms in which endogamy increasingly became the rule for all legally free ethnic groupings.<sup>49</sup>

For slaves, endogamy was either a luxury they could ill afford or an object of little practical utility. In general, matrimony itself was no easy accomplishment for slaves in Brazil. In attempting to protect slave marriages, the Roman Catholic Church laid down a norm that, in fact, had the effect of deterring the formal union of very many slave couples over the years. The *Constituições Primeiras do Arcebispo da Bahia*, published and distributed throughout Portuguese America from the beginning of the eighteenth century, was meant to serve as an adaptation of Church doctrine to the realities of the colony.<sup>50</sup>

<sup>48</sup> A cursory examination of these white/mulatto marriages reveals that in many cases the white husbands were considerably older than their mulatto wives.

<sup>49</sup> De Mattos, *Das cores do silêncio*, especially 103-16.

<sup>50</sup> D. Sebastião Monteiro da Vide, *Constituições primeiras do Arcebispo da Bahia* (Brasília: Senado Federal, Conselho Editorial, 2007), 125.

According to the *Constituições*, slave owners remained responsible for maintaining the integrity of holy matrimony among their slaves. In other words, the owners of married slaves would be committing a serious sin if they allowed for or caused the separation of slave couples.<sup>51</sup> The separate sale of spouses, of course, became a clear violation of Church doctrine, a doctrine which thus stood in opposition to the right of disposing freely of private property—in this case, chattel. It is very probable that many potential marriages between slaves belonging to the same owners never took place because of Church influence. So-called "abroad marriages" celebrated between spouses held by different owners became extremely rare in the course of the eighteenth century and into the nineteenth century. Among the 776 married slave couples identified in the 1780-1810 São José baptismal registers, for example, the spouses in only eight cases belonged to distinct owners.<sup>52</sup>

Given these circumstances, it is obvious that the size of slave holdings played a major role in determining whether or not slave couples would marry: the smaller the holding, the more difficult for slaves to find a compatible spouse. That would have been especially true if slaves in Portuguese America shared the same taboo against marriage among cousins adhered to by slaves in the antebellum South.<sup>53</sup> Although as yet unstudied in Brazil, it would be hard to believe that a taboo of African origin, which held sway among southern slaves right up to emancipation, was not a part of tradition among Brazilian slaves. In which case, the formation of couples, particularly among slaves belonging to small- or medium-sized holdings, became even more difficult to achieve.

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<sup>51</sup> For further details on this Church policy, see Maria Beatriz Nizza da Silva, *História da família no Brasil colonial* (Rio de Janeiro: Nova Fronteira, 1998), 188-93; and Castro Faria, *A colônia em movimento*, 310.

<sup>52</sup> In at least three and probably four of these "abroad" marriages, the respective owners appear to have been close relatives—most likely brothers or widows and their children. This suggests that the "separation" of these couples could have resulted from inheritance settlements. If true, that would have rendered actual physical separation rather unlikely. In comparison, Castro Faria found that in the Campos dos Goitacases region, abroad marriages represented 2.9 percent of all slave marriages during the seventeenth century and 1.7 percent during the eighteenth century. Castro Faria, *A colônia em movimento*, 316-17.

<sup>53</sup> Herbert George Gutman, *The Black Family in Slavery and Freedom, 1750-1925* (New York: Vintage, 1976), especially chapter 2.

In Minas Gerais, large slave holdings were quite rare. Throughout the eighteenth century, the average size of holdings in Minas was generally in single figures, while owners of one to ten slaves accounted for slightly better than 40 percent of all chattel and the corresponding figure for owners of eleven to fifty slaves approached 50 percent.<sup>54</sup> In 1795, for example, nearly two-thirds (65.7 percent) of São José parish slaves resided on holdings of up to twenty slaves. Church-inspired restrictions, slaveholders' attempts to hold on to property rights, African taboos, and the size of holdings all appear to have conspired to make slave marriages difficult. Such limitations and obstacles must have influenced the composition of such marriages that did take place and clearly drove more than a few slaves into maintaining "illicit" unions with partners from beyond their owners' properties.

Although the difference is not especially significant, native *crioulas* turned up a bit more frequently as single mothers (51 percent) than as slave mothers in general (47.4 percent). The participation of *cabras* was similar in both groups, while *pardas* appear to have been somewhat less likely to give birth out of wedlock than other native slaves. Among African slaves the uniform tendency was for single mothers to represent proportionally less than their respective share of all slave mothers. That was particularly the case of the *benguelas* (single mothers—10 percent; all slave mothers—13.8 percent). Among *crioulas* and *cabras*, it is probable that the relatively modest size of Minas slaveholdings represented an obstacle to formal marriage. Thus, the large proportion of single slave mothers and the consequent high

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<sup>54</sup> Iraci del Nero da Costa, *Populações mineiras: sobre a estrutura populacional de alguns núcleos mineiros no alvorecer do século XIX* (São Paulo: Instituto de Pesquisas Econômicas, 1981), 332; Francisco Vidal Luna, *Minas Gerais: escravos e senhores: análise da estrutura populacional e econômica de alguns centros mineratórios, 1718-1804* (São Paulo: Instituto de Pesquisas Econômicas, 1981), 64, 87, 93, 98; Francisco Vidal Luna, "Estrutura e posse de escravos," in *Minas colonial: economia e sociedade*, by Francisco Vidal Luna and Iraci del Nero da Costa (São Paulo: Fundação Instituto de Pesquisas Econômicas, Livraria Pioneira Editora, 1982), 38-39; Bergad, *Slavery and the Demographic History*, 206-07; Tarcísio Rodrigues Botelho, "População e escravidão nas Minas Gerais, c. 1720," *Anais de XII Encontro da Associação Brasileira de Estudos de População* (2000), 5-9, at [www.abep.org.br](http://www.abep.org.br) (accessed 12 August 2006) [consult "Anais"]; Libby and Paiva, "Manumission Practices," 110; Zephyr Frank, "Wealth Holding in Southeastern Brazil, 1815-1860," *Hispanic American Historical Review* 85:2 (2005):223-57, especially 228-29; and Mariana Libânio Resende Dantas, "Black Townsmen: A Comparative Study of Persons of African Origin and Descent in Slavery and Freedom in Baltimore, Maryland, and Sabará, Minas Gerais, 1750-1810" (Ph.D. diss., The Johns Hopkins University, 2003), 130, 135.

rates of illegitimacy are almost certainly more indicative of the broad existence of informal unions between slaves belonging to different masters than of some innate slave quarter promiscuity. Effectively identifying such unions is almost impossible, creating a difficult challenge to scholarly researchers seeking a better understanding of this important aspect of Brazilian slave life.

Table 4 summarizes the data provided by the baptismal registers relating to nearly three hundred slave married couples (see note 46). As previously noted, in order to obtain more complete information on individual spouses, it was necessary to correlate baptismal and marriage register sources with the *Rol dos Confessados*. Despite these efforts, it was not possible to ascertain the ethnic designation/origin of one of the spouses in 4.4 percent of all cases, and, for a further 4.0 percent of cases, both spouses continued unidentified. In the baptismal registers themselves, the lack of information on mothers in general was more marked than it appears in Table 4, since the vast majority of "additional" information gleaned from the *Rol dos Confessados* and marriage registers referred to wives and single mothers. One possible explanation for this phenomenon is that practically all unidentified slave women were, in fact, *crioulas* or *cabras* and therefore so familiar within the various communities making up the parish (perhaps into which they had been born) that identification was deemed by the clergy to be unnecessary.

Among couples for whom information is available for both spouses, two features stand out in particular. First, in sharp contrast to the tendency among the legally free, endogamous unions among slaves—whether they involved *pardos*, *cabras*, *crioulos*, or Africans—accounted for 45.2 percent of all marriages. Slightly more than four-fifths of those endogamous unions were between African spouses, and yet, overall, Africans were equally likely to choose native slave spouses. Exogamy, then, played a major role among those São José slave couples whose ethnic designation/origin was indicated in the sources.

These findings contrast distinctly with those referring to the Bahian Recôncavo in the late eighteenth century, where African/native couples represented little more than 15 percent of all marriages, to the interior of Rio de Janeiro, where the frequency of mixed marriages fell from 23 percent in 1790 to 11 percent in 1830, or to turn-of-the-century Bananal, São Paulo, where African/native formal unions amounted to a

mere 14.6 percent of all slave marriages.<sup>55</sup> Such exogamous behavior certainly belies traditional historiographical interpretation which would have it that not only were Africans hopelessly divided among their diverse "tribal" groupings, but that they did not get along at all well with natives either.

Nevertheless, the patterns discerned here cannot simply be transposed upon all slave unions, including the consensual or the "hidden"<sup>56</sup> abroad relationships maintained by slaves held by different masters. It is plausible to suggest that a majority of the latter relationships involved native *pardo*, *crioulo*, and *cabra* slaves who had grown up together in the same community and who simply had no marital options within their own holdings. The second salient feature in Table 4 is the overwhelming predominance of African men among slave husbands in turn-of-the-century São José.

The indelible marks of a historic reliance on the international slave trade are easily discernible. In an overall slave population in which men outnumbered women by better than two and a half to one, just over 70 percent of all males were African while 67 percent of all females were native *crioulas*, *pardas*, and *cabras*.<sup>57</sup> Exogamy appears to have been virtually inevitable under such circumstances. At the same time, it is hard not to conclude that in the matrimonial market slave women held a clear advantage over their male companions. In any event, and once again given the restrictions imposed on the choice of partners by the relatively small size of most holdings and the probable adherence to African traditions, native females seem to have preferred the new blood embodied in African slaves over their native brethren. African women, on the other hand, demonstrated a preference for partners from their own continent, although some 12.3 percent in the sample chose native slaves as husbands. Much further study is called for here, especially on age differences between male and female slave

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<sup>55</sup> Stuart B. Schwartz, *Sugar Plantations in the Formation of Brazilian Society: Bahia, 1550-1835* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 391-92; Manolo Florentino and José Roberto Góes, *A paz das senzalas: famílias escravas e tráfico atlântico, Rio de Janeiro, c. 1790-c. 1850* (Rio de Janeiro: Civilização Brasileira, 1997), 147-52; and José Flávio Motta, *Corpos escravos, vontades livres: posse de cativos e família escrava em Bananal, 1801-1829* (São Paulo: Annablume, Fundação de Ampara à Pesquisa do Estado de São Paulo, 1999), 261-65.

<sup>56</sup> Hidden in the sense that these relationships almost never appear in the relevant sources.

<sup>57</sup> Libby and Paiva, "Manumission Patterns," 104.

marriage partners, differences which may reveal distinct gender and ethnic patterns.<sup>58</sup>

In examining couples in which one or both spouses were African, a more detailed picture emerges, one in which exogamy clearly tended to prevail. Table 5 (a and b) includes the specific ethnic designation/origin of African spouses. Admittedly, this analysis is based on reduced numbers, but the presence of *benguela* men was remarkable, all the more since they did not, at least not in the *Rol dos Confessados*, constitute the largest group of African males in the São José slave population. Indeed, *benguelas* comprised over two-fifths of all husbands making up this subset of slave couples. Some 45 percent of them had married native slave brides, a little more than a quarter tied the knot with *benguela* women, and the rest with African females from other groupings. Two-thirds of *benguela* women united with male *benguelas*, but they also married both native and other African slaves. By a small margin, *angola* males preferred native female slaves to those of their ethnic group and other Africans, while *congo* men were almost twice as likely to marry native women than their African companions. Meanwhile, São José's *crioulas* found partners among practically every one of the African groupings that appeared in the baptismal registers, whereas *crioulo* men predominantly took *benguela* and *angola* wives.

What is striking is that "pure" endogamous African couples amounted to only a quarter of all marriages listed in Table 5 (a and b). The sample is small and may well be representative of a very specific period, but the suggestion stands that slaves in Minas tended toward exogamous unions.<sup>59</sup>

It is important to reiterate that the parish registers of Minas Gerais by themselves do not constitute ideal sources for analyzing issues related to the ethnicity of the various segments of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century populations. In order to yield more complete

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<sup>58</sup> A plausible hypothesis is that slave women preferred older men as husbands because the latter were likely to have accumulated savings, which might serve for purchasing the freedom of wives or, posthumously, of widows. Professor Robert W. Slenes, Universidade Estadual de Campinas, conversation with the authors.

<sup>59</sup> A recent study based on couples identified in *inventários post mortem* points to a very similar tendency toward exogamy. Afonso de Alencastro Graça Filho and Fábio Carlos Vieira Pinto, "Famílias escravas em São José do Rio das Mortes, 1743-1850" (paper presented at the First International History Workshop on Population and Economy in Minas Gerais, Centro de Estudos Mineiros/Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais/Pontifícia Universidade Católica de Minas Gerais, December 2005).

Table 5a  
 Ethnic Designation/Origin among Couples Composed of One or Two African Spouses,  
 São José do Rio das Mortes, 1780-1810

Couples composed of a native and an African spouse			Couples composed of African spouses		
Husband/Wife	Number	Percentage	Husband/Wife	Number	Percentage
<i>Angola/Crioula</i>	107	30.7	<i>Angola/Angola</i>	71	24.4
<i>Angola/Cabra</i>	2	0.5	<i>Angola/Benguela</i>	14	4.8
<i>Angola/Parda</i>	1	0.3	<i>Angola/Congo</i>	3	1.0
<i>Benguela/Crioula</i>	112	32.1	<i>Angola/Mina</i>	10	3.4
<i>Benguela/Cabra</i>	5	1.4	<i>Angola/Rebola</i>	3	1.0
<i>Benguela/Parda</i>	3	0.9	<i>Benguela/Angola</i>	8	2.7
<i>Cabinda/Crioula</i>	5	1.4	<i>Benguela/Benguela</i>	93	32.0
<i>Cabo Verde/Crioula</i>	1	0.3	<i>Benguela/Cassange</i>	3	1.0
<i>Cabundá/Crioula</i>	9	2.6	<i>Benguela/Congo</i>	5	1.7
<i>Cassange/Crioula</i>	1	0.3	<i>Benguela/Ganguela</i>	1	0.3
<i>Congo/Crioula</i>	22	6.3	<i>Benguela/Mina</i>	14	4.8
<i>Congo/Parda</i>	1	0.3	<i>Benguela/Rebola</i>	22	7.5
<i>Ganguela/Crioula</i>	5	1.4	<i>Benguela/Saburú</i>	1	0.3
<i>Mina/Crioula</i>	12	3.4	<i>Cabinda/Cassange</i>	1	0.3
<i>Monjolo/Crioula</i>	1	0.3	<i>Cabinda/Mina</i>	1	0.3
<i>Muhumbé/Crioula</i>	1	0.3	<i>Cabinda/Rebola</i>	1	0.3
<i>Preto/Crioula</i>	1	0.3	<i>Cabundá/Angola</i>	3	1.0
<i>Preto/Parda</i>	1	0.3	<i>Cabundá/Benguela</i>	3	1.0

Table 5b  
 Ethnic Designation/Origin among Couples Composed of One or Two African Spouses,  
 São José do Rio das Mortes, 1780-1810

Couples composed of a native and an African spouse		Couples composed of African spouses			
<i>Rebola/Crioula</i>	17	4.9	<i>Cabundá/Cassange</i>	1	0.3
<i>Rebola/Parda</i>	1	0.3	<i>Cassange/Angola</i>	1	0.3
<i>Crioulo/Angola</i>	12	3.4	<i>Congo/Angola</i>	4	1.4
<i>Crioulo/Benguela</i>	14	4.0	<i>Congo/Benguela</i>	6	2.0
<i>Crioulo/Ganguela</i>	1	0.3	<i>Congo/Cabo Verde</i>	1	0.3
<i>Crioulo/Mina</i>	3	0.9	<i>Congo/Mina</i>	1	0.3
<i>Cabra/Angola</i>	1	0.3	<i>Congo/Rebola</i>	2	0.7
<i>Cabra/Rebola</i>	1	0.3	<i>Ganguela/Benguela</i>	2	0.7
<i>Pardo/Angola</i>	4	1.1	<i>Ganguela/Ganguela</i>	1	0.3
<i>Pardo/Benguela</i>	4	1.1	<i>Mina/Angola</i>	1	0.3
<i>Pardo/Mina</i>	1	0.3	<i>Mina/Mina</i>	1	0.3
			<i>Monjolo/Rebola</i>	1	0.3
			<i>Monjolo/Mina</i>	2	0.7
			<i>Preto/Benguela</i>	1	0.3
			<i>Quissama/Benguela</i>	1	0.3
			<i>Rebola/Angola</i>	5	1.7
			<i>Rebola/Ganguela</i>	1	0.3
			<i>Rebola/Rebola</i>	2	0.7
<b>Total</b>	349	100	<b>Total</b>	291	100

Source: See Table 2.

and consistent findings, parish register data need to be intersected with data from a number of other sources. When cross referencing is undertaken, such as in the experimental efforts reported herein, it is possible to identify important tendencies. During the period under examination, for example, legitimacy rates were quite high among the free born of all colors, while the data suggest that legitimacy was on the rise among both freedmen and slaves. While slaves continued to encounter difficulties in consecrating matrimony, marriage rates among the manumitted in São José were remarkably high. The sources also point to the considerable legacy of eighteenth-century miscegenation which was bequeathed to nineteenth-century Minas. By the turn of the eighteenth century, it is clear that among both the freeborn and the manumitted, endogamous marriage patterns prevailed, although the practice of miscegenation had far from disappeared. Among slaves, on the other hand, and notwithstanding certain nuances, exogamy was far more common in the formal matrimonial unions celebrated among both natives and Africans. What remains to be seen is whether or not these tendencies extended backward into the eighteenth century and forward into the rest of the nineteenth century.