

‘LONGING FOR
ONESELF’: HYBRIDISM
AND MISCEGENATION IN
COLONIAL AND
POSTCOLONIAL
PORTUGAL ¹

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This essay acknowledges that hybridism, in a troubling reminiscence of the 19th century debate on race and the hybrids is a central issue of debate in the social sciences today. The Portuguese case is one of the most complex and intriguing: if Brazil has been systematically praised as the example of the humanistic and miscegenating characteristic of Portuguese expansion, it has also been used as an argument for the legitimization of later colonialism in Africa, as well as for the construction of a self-representation of Portuguese as non-racists. The Portuguese nation, however, has seldom been described as a miscigenated nation and *mestiça* itself. Contemporary rhetoric on hybridity – as part of globalization, transnationality, postcolonial diasporas, and multiculturalism – clashes with the reality of the return of ‘race’ within a cultural fundamentalism. This paper focuses on discourses and modes of classification as the starting point for discussing specific practices and processes of identity dispute in the ‘Lusophone’ space.

This is an essay – not a research paper – that acknowledges that, in a troubling reminiscence of the 19th century debate on race and the hybrids, hybridism is a central issue of debate in the social sciences today. The term ‘hybrid’ was applied from botany to anthropology and was associated with both political and scientific speculations on ‘races’ as species or subspecies. The acknowledgment of the common humanity of all ‘races’ strengthened the separation between culture and nature as part and parcel of the project of Modernity (cf. Latour 1994); but it also diverted attention from hybridism to the field of miscegenation and *mestiçagem* – i.e., ‘racial’ and cultural mixing. Hybridism – and mixing in general – was condemned by some for its impurity and praised by others for its humanism. The result of the century-long debate is, however, much more hybrid itself than a clear opposition. Discourses on miscegenation and *mestiçagem* tended to be used as ideological masks for relations of power and domination. They were also used as central elements in national, colonial and imperial narratives. The Brazilian case is well known. The Portuguese case is one of the most complex and intriguing: if Brazil has been systematically praised as the example of the humanistic and miscegenating characteristic of Portuguese expansion, it has also been used as an argument for the legitimization of later colonialism in Africa, as well as for the construction of a self-representation of the Portuguese as

¹ This is the English version of a chapter published in Vale de Almeida 2000, *Um Mar da Cor da Terra: ‘Raça’, Cultura e Política da Identidade*, Oeiras: Celta.

non-racists. The Portuguese nation, however, has seldom been described as a miscigenated nation and *mestiça* itself. In the discourses of national identity, emphasis has been placed upon what the Portuguese have given *to* the others – a gift of ‘blood’ and culture – and not on what they have received *from* the others. Present rhetoric on hybridity – as part of globalization, transnationality, postcolonial diasporas, and multiculturalism – clashes with the reality of the return of ‘race’ in cultural fundamentalism, policies of nationality and citizenship, and in the politics of representation. This paper will focus on discourses and modes of classification as the starting point for discussing specific practices and processes of identity dispute in the ‘Lusophone’ space. Three periods in the Portuguese production around miscegenation and hybridism will be analysed: a period marked by racist theories; a period marked by luso-tropicalism; and the present period marked by discussions of multiculturalism. Finally, the acknowledgment of creolized social formations as both the outcome of colonialism and the possible examples for thinking of new, less racist societies, closes this exploratory essay.

Hybris and monsters

The *Dicionário Moraes* of 1891 refers to *hibrido* as originating in the Greek *hybris*, defined as ‘an animal generated by two species. Irregular, anomalous, monstrous’. *Hybridização* is the ‘production of hybrid plants or animals’ and *hibridez* is the ‘quality (...) of that which is composed of two different species’; in grammar it is used to refer to ‘words compounded from two different languages’. The same dictionary does not have an entry for *miscigenação*, but it does for *mestiço*, from the Latin *mixtus*, defined as ‘that which proceeds from parents of different race or species: e.g. among men (sic) the mulato, the cafusa, etc.; among animals, the mule etc. It is also used to refer to some grafted plants, e.g. *rosas mestiças*’.

In the *Dicionário Etimológico da Língua Portuguesa* (1977 [1952]), we learn that the Greek root *hybris* defines ‘excess, all that exceeds measure; pride, insolence; excessive ardor, impetuosity, exaltation; outrage, insult, offence; violence over woman or child; via the Latin *hybrida* to designate the product of the crossing between the sow and the wild boar; the child of parents from different regions or conditions, probably via the French *hybride*.’ In the same dictionary one can already find an entry for *miscigenação*, ‘from the English miscegenation, which came from the Latin *miscere*, ‘to mix’ + genus, ‘race’. After 1960 *miscigenar* is said to mean simultaneously ‘to procreate hybrids’ and ‘to procreate *mestiços*’. *Mestiço* is said to come from the Castilian *mistizo*, which comes from the Late Latin *mixticiu*. As a complement to this list of definitions, we can also find that the word *mulato* comes from ‘...mulo (male

mule) + -ato (as in cervato, lobato)'. According to literary examples used in the entry, one can infer (although not prove) that it is in the 1500s – the 'Age of Discoveries' – that the animal reference is replaced by a human one.

If one uses the several entries in the *Dicionário de Sinónimos* from Porto Editora, a constellation of meanings connecting these different expressions can be traced:

Híbrido: ambíguo, anómalo, irregular, mestiço, monstruoso (...) Mestiçagem: hibridismo, mestiçamento, miscigenação (...) Mestiço: bode, caboclo, cabra, carafuzo, cariboca, híbrido, mesclado, misto, mulato (...) Mulato: bode, cabra, cabranaz, cabrito, cabrocha, caporro, escuro, fulo, mestiço, moreno, mu, mulo, pardo, trigueiro (...) Mulata: cabrita, china, mestiça, mista, morocha, mula, trigueira (Dicionário de Sinónimos).

Postcolonial hybrids

The above-mentioned words are ominous. Accusations of impurity, monstrosity and illegitimacy are embedded in the semantics and remain so until today; mixed categories are presented as negative (or, at best, ambiguous) consequences of sex and procreation outside the hierarchical and classificatory order. One can sense their construction during the colonial confrontation and encounter. Robert Young begins his argument with the contention that class, gender and 'race' are promiscuously related to one another, and have become mutually defining metaphors. Colonial desire would be like a hidden but insistent obsession with inter-racial, transgressive sex, as well as obsessed with hybridism and miscegenation (Young 1995: 5). Both language and sex have produced hybrid forms (creoles, pidgins, mixed children etc.). The word 'hybrid' itself, which in the 19th century was used to refer to a physiological phenomenon, is reactivated in the 20th century to describe a cultural one. The 1828 Webster defined a hybrid as 'a mongrel or mule; an animal or plant produced from the mixture of two species'. It is only in the 1861 edition of the Oxford English Dictionary (OED) that it is first used to denote the crossing of people of different 'races', thus marking the acceptance of the possibility of human hybrids. The 1890 OED actually makes explicit the link between the linguistic (and cultural) and the racial: 'The Aryan languages present such indications of hybridity as would correspond with... racial intermixture' (in Young 1995).

Moving from etymology to theory, the problem becomes even more explicit in the entry for hybridity in the dictionary of postcolonial studies by Ashcroft et al. (1998). Seen as one of the most used and disputed terms in the field of postcolonial studies, hybridity is usually used to refer to the creation

of new transcultural forms in the colonial contact zone. Retracing the use of the expression, Young shows that Bakhtin used it to indicate the potential for transfiguration in multivocal linguistic situations. Today's use of the term, however, is associated with Homi Bhabha, whose analysis of the colonizer/colonized relationship stresses the interdependence and mutual construction of their subjectivities. Cultural identity would always emerge in a 'third space of enunciation' (Bhabha 1994: 37), a contradictory and ambivalent space that makes obsolete notions about the purity of cultures and their hierarchy. Instead of the exoticism of cultural diversity, the focus should be on acknowledging an empowering hybridism (Ashcroft 1998: 118).

This clearly goes beyond the current use of hybridism to describe mere cultural exchange and mixture without taking into account the power inequality in the two parties in a relationship; it also overcomes the use of the term to describe expressions of syncretism, cultural synergy and transculturation. Ashcroft wisely stresses this point: 'The assertion of a shared postcolonial condition such as hybridity has been seen as part of the tendency of discourse analysis to de-historicize and de-locate cultures from their (...) contexts...' (1998: 119). Other reservations can be made: the term hybridism was influential in imperial and colonial discourses when the union of different 'races' was referred to in negative terms (Young 1995). Hybridism became part of the colonial discourse of racism in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Although the term's ancestry can hardly be considered noble, there is nonetheless a difference between unconscious processes of hybrid mixing (or creolization) and a conscious, politically motivated concern with the deliberate challenging of homogeneity. Young reminds us that for authors such as Bakhtin, hybridism (or, more exactly, 'hybridization') was seen as politicized and contestatory. Bakhtin's hybridism 'sets different points of view against each other in a conflictual structure, which retains 'a certain elemental, organic energy and openendedness' (Young 1995: 21-22). This is precisely the notion that Bhabha reclaims: that of the colonized who challenges the authenticity claimed by the colonizer.

Young confirms what I said above: hybridism is becoming a key-subject in the cultural debates of the late 20th century (and early 21st century), similarly to what happened in the late 19th century. The discussion, then, was focused on the political and cultural consequences of the scientific theory of the differences between species for humankind. The generally accepted test was that of the infertility of the offspring of sexual unions between different species. But infertility was not sufficient as a criterion: although the unions between 'blacks' and 'whites' produced fertile offspring, that fertility was supposed to dwindle as generations went by (therefore the bizarre genealogy that links the term *mula* (mule) and *mulato*). The question of whether humans were one or several species (and, therefore, the impor-

tance of hybridism) was for a long time answered by the notion of the unity of the species – a thesis which the 'race'/culture separation and the relativism of classical anthropology helped to establish.

Now that hybridism has again become an issue, one should note that it could be (and was) summoned to mean counter-fusion and disjunction as much as fusion and assimilation (Young 1995: 18). Young outlines several standpoints in the early 20th century discussions on hybridism: 1) The polygenist argument, denying that different peoples could mix, since the outcome would be infertile; 2) the amalgamation thesis, stating that all could cross, generating a new 'race'; 3) the decomposition thesis, stating that mixed products die fast or revert to one of the two permanent types; 4) the argument that hybridism varies between close and distant species, being fertile among close 'races' and infertile among distant ones; 5) the negative version of the amalgamation thesis, stating that miscegenation produces a mongrel group, a chaos without 'race'. Let us keep in mind these hypotheses, for I think that they come back, in analogical form, in the debates on cultural hybridism.

According to Young, notions about 'races' and their mixture revolve around an ambivalent axis of desire and aversion: a structure of attraction, in which peoples and cultures mix and fuse, thus transforming themselves, and a structure of aversion, in which the different elements remain distinct and are dialogically opposed. The notion of 'race' only works when it is defined in opposition to potential mixing. Ann Laura Stoler (1997), for instance, examined how the colonial authorities and the racial distinctions were structured fundamentally in terms of gender. The very categories of colonizer and colonized were maintained by forms of sexual control. Inclusion or exclusion ultimately demanded the regulation of the sexual, conjugal and domestic lives of colonizers and colonized. That is probably why, according to her, in the early 20th century concubinage was denounced for undermining precisely that which decades before it was thought to consolidate. Local women, who had previously been seen as protectors of the men's well-being, were portrayed as bearers of sinister diseases and influences.

These developments established some recurring patterns: colonial sexual prohibitions were racially asymmetrical and gender specific; the interdictions of inter-racial unions seldom were a primary impulse in strategies of domination; inter-racial unions (not so marriage) between European men and colonized women helped the long-term settling of men, at the same time that they guaranteed that property remained in the hands of a few. 'Mixture' was systematically tolerated and even supported in the early colonial times (in India, Indochina and South Africa). Miscegenation was neither a sign of absence nor presence of racial prejudice. The hierarchies of privilege and power were inscribed in the support of and in the condemnation of inter-racial unions (Stoler 1997: 336). Miscegenation *per se* does not have a social

meaning: one needs to determine the type of miscegenation, how it occurred, between whom it occurred, and so on, before embarking in any positive (or negative) value judgment.

Transposing hybridism on to the cultural arena, it is common today to accept the idea – systematically presented by Stuart Hall (1997 [1992]) – that modern nations are all cultural hybrids. Some of the new identities turn around ‘tradition’ while others accept impurity, turning around what Bhabha calls ‘translation’, i.e., formations of identity that cross borders and include people who have been dispersed from their home land. These people supposedly negotiate with the new cultures they encounter, but are not assimilated. They will never, however, unify in the old sense – they are hybrid cultures, lived by people who are irrevocably translated. The hybridism resulting from postcolonial Diasporas would have its reverse in the new nationalisms/fundamentalisms (the two being part of the same system). Hall uses the example of the shift in Black cultural politics. In a first moment the term black referred to the common experience of marginalization, thus denoting a politics of resistance. Today, this is superimposed by a politics of representation that includes the notion of black experience as an experience of Diaspora. Is it possible, then, to say that hybridism takes for granted (as was the case with 19th century racial theories) the previous existence of pure, fixed and separate antecedents? Young proposes a tentative answer:

The question is whether the old essentializing categories of cultural identity, or of race, were really so essentialized, or have been retrospectively constructed as more fixed than they were... Today it is common to claim that we have moved from biologism and scientism to the safety of culturalism, safety in the critique of essentialism: but that shift has not been so absolute, for the racial was always cultural, the essential never unequivocal... Culture and race developed together, imbricated within each other (Young 1995: 27).

In fact, we have been witnessing a public censoring of the notion of ‘race’: the term has gone underground under the cloak of ‘culture’ (cf. Stolcke 1995). Instead of a simpler situation, we find ourselves in a more complicated one...

A short tropical note

One of the classical locations for discussions of hybridism and *miscigenação* or *mestiçagem* (and its relation with the idea of nation) is Latin America, especially in those national contexts in which there is a strong presence of African descendants. Peter Wade (1993a) has conducted one of the best analyses of the interaction between discrimination and *mestiçagem* (*mestizaje* in the Hispanic case). This interaction between patterns of discrimination and tolerance happens within the identity project of the national elites, who set

forth the notion of an essentially mixed, mestiza, nation. Although it is generally accepted that 'races' are social constructions or categorical identifications based on a discourse on physical aspects and ancestry, Wade notes, however, that what passes for physical difference and ancestry is not at all obvious. Apparently there is a 'natural fact' of phenotypic variation on the basis of which culture constructs categorical identifications. But the act of defining a nature/culture relation mediated by this productionistic logic (Haraway 1989: 13) obscures the fact that there is no such thing as a pre-discursive and universal encounter with 'nature' and, therefore, with phenotypic variation. (Wade 1993: 3). Therefore, racial categories are doubly processual: firstly as a result of the variable perceptions of the nature/culture division that they mediate; secondly, as a result of the play between claims and attributions of identity in the context of relations of power (1993: 4).

The emergence of nationalism in Latin America did not involve the national incorporation of the lower classes in the European fashion. It was mediated by Creole elites (in the Hispanic sense: Europeans born in the Americas) who had been excluded from political control during the colonial period (Anderson 1983: 50). One central problem was the contradiction between the mixed nature of the population and the 'white' connotations of progress and modernity. The problem was 'solved' with a compromise: to celebrate *mestiçagem* as the core of Latin American originality. On the other hand, Blacks and Indians were romanticized as part of a glorious past and it was foreseen that they would be integrated in the future – in a process that would involve further racial mixing, preferably with whitening consequences (Wade 1993: 10). This compromise is obvious in the way racial theories of the time were received. They tended to classify Blacks and Indians as inferior, and hybrids were thought to be negatively influenced by these 'races'. But the elites tended to downplay the negative implications by downplaying biological determinism, emphasizing instead environmental and educational factors (as did, for instance, Gilberto Freyre in Brazil, with the use of neo-Lamarckianism). However, underneath the democratic discourse on *mestiçagem* and *mestiçagem*, lay the hierarchical discourses on whitening.

In Brazil, and according to Seyferth (1991), both those who supported whitening and those who were against African or Asian immigration (as well as those who privileged European immigration), believed that the Brazilian people or 'race' needed yet to be formed through a melting pot process that would result in homogeneity. But they all imagined European immigrants as representatives of superior 'races' destined to whiten a *mestiço* and black population. Paradoxically, the latter were supposed to 'Brazilianize' the European immigrants (Seyferth 1991: 179). The belief that Brazil has no racial question because there is no prejudice – a common feature in both everyday and social science theories – has paradoxically served to legitimize the em-

phasis in the miscegenation of 'races' seen as unequal – thus presupposing the 'triumph' (genetic but also civilizational) of the white 'race'.

First period: 'an unfortunate experiment of the Portuguese'

I would like to focus on the Portuguese case, while keeping in mind the Brazilian one, since Brazil has been an object of transfer and projection in the construction of Portuguese national representations. Once Brazil became independent, the focus of Portuguese governments shifted direction towards the African colonies. The new colonization of Africa was slow and did not amount to much in the way of practical results (see Alexandre e Dias 1998). But the notion of Empire and the national utopia of building 'New Brazils' were part of the boosting and maintenance of national pride. Nevertheless, academic and elite discourses, such as anthropology, focused mainly on the definition of Portugal and the Portuguese. A consistent and lasting colonial anthropology was practically non-existent. This does not, however, preclude that self-representations were also based on representations of the colonial Other, even if there was no miscegenation with those Others. Miscegenation had been useful in the construction of Brazil as a neo-European nation in the Americas, but would be contradictory with a notion of Empire in Africa.

We can identify three 'periods' in the debates on hybridism and miscegenation. Both Tamagnini and Mendes Correia can personify the first period – which was one of concern with the racial definition of the Portuguese and of opposition to miscegenation. A second, more culturalist period, is personified by Jorge Dias and the influence of Freyre in his work; it is a period of concern with the plural ethnic origins of the Portuguese and with the resolution of the 'colonial problem' in the light of the Brazilian experience. Finally, a third period would correspond to the post-1974 era and can only be outlined in terms of the contemporary multiculturalist debates.

Eusébio Tamagnini and Mendes Correia were the leaders of the two schools of anthropology, respectively in Coimbra and Oporto. Their work influenced a period that encompasses the Constitutional Monarchy, the First Republic and the dictatorship of the Estado Novo. I will focus mainly on Tamagnini, since Mendes Correia will be the object of further research.² In

² References to Tamagnini were taken from Santos 1996. Since these are indirect references, I list them here, not in the final list of references: Tamagnini, E., 1902, *Dissertação para a Cadeira de Antropologia e Arqueologia Pré-Histórica*, Coimbra, FCUC; 1904, *Psychologia Feminina*, Coimbra, IAUC; 1934a, "Lição Inaugural do Ano Lectivo de 1934-35", *Revista da Faculdade de Ciências da Universidade de Coimbra*, 5; 1934b, "Problemas de Mestiçagem", Porto, *Edições da Primeira Exposição Colonial Portuguesa*; 1936b, "A Pigmentação dos Portugueses", *Contribuições para o Estudo da Antropologia Portuguesa*, I (3), Coimbra, IAUC; 1940, "Os Grupos Sanguíneos dos Portugueses", *Revista da Faculdade de Ciências da Universidade de Coimbra*, 8; e 1944b, "O Índice Nasal dos Portugueses", *Contribuições para o Estudo da Antropologia Portuguesa*, V (1), Coimbra, IAUC.

1902, in a paper on the population of São Tomé, composed of early settlers and indentured labour migration, Tamagnini asked: “The crossing between colonizing and colonized races: what is the worth of its products?” (Tamagnini 1902: 11). His answer was: “(...) the dialect of São Tomé, being a Creole that belongs to the second group, must be seen as a degenerate version of Continental Portuguese” (Tamagnini 1902: 13). Further on he says that

easiness in relationships among the natives resulted necessarily in unfaithfulness and jealousy, which are obviously the causes for most crimes committed in creole societies: prostitution, indecent behavior, and its repugnant varieties, such as pederasty, lesbianism, rape and so on, which are practiced in a terrifying way in creole societies, and which are the most obvious evidence of the shameful way in which the European peoples have been civilizing and colonizing the other peoples that they call savages (Tamagnini 1902: 39-40 in Santos 1996: 49).

Language, gender, sexuality, national identity, and colonialism: Robert Young could have based his work on Tamagnini alone. Besides being an indication of how the concept of gender was conceived as analogous to that of ‘race’ (see Stepan 1986 and the first section of this paper) – in a process in which scientists used racial difference to explain gender difference and vice versa –, what we witness here is also a moral and political discourse on colonialism and its implication in the construction of national identity. Throughout his career, Tamagnini was to publish several studies from 1916 to 1949. Influenced by Broca’s and Topinard’s work, he was looking for anthropometric statistical averages of the Portuguese and their coincidence with those of the Europeans. In 1936 he concluded that “we can define the studied population as: dolicocephalic, ... of medium height, with brownish or pale white skin, brown or black hair, dark eyes” (1936: 195 in Santos 1996: 108). Therefore, he concludes, “the Portuguese can ... be considered members of the Mediterranean race” (1936: 195). Neither did the nasal index of the Portuguese “reveal any quantitatively relevant sign of *mestiçagem* with platirhine Negroid elements” (1944: 22).

Although after the 1920s he had to take into consideration the developments in genetics, he did so within a Malthusian framework in connection with colonial issues. In the First National Congress of Colonial Anthropology in 1934 in Oporto (one year after the legislation of the Colonial Act), he alerted to the dangers of *mestiçagem*: “when two peoples or two races have reached different cultural levels and have organized completely different social systems, the consequences of *mestiçagem* are necessarily disastrous” (1934a: 26 in Santos 1996: 137). In a panel on population in the Congress on the Portuguese World (at the occasion of the Portuguese World Expo), he presented a study about the blood groups of the Portuguese (1940) and concluded that the Portuguese population had

been able to maintain relative ethnic purity and although the origins in a Nordic type have to be found within the mutations in a brown dolicocephalic past, we, the Portuguese, as representatives of that common ancestor can not be accused of having spoiled [literally 'made bastards of'] the family (1940: 22 in Santos 1996: 145).

However, in 1944 he had to acknowledge – albeit with one important safeguard – that:

... it would be foolish to pretend denying the existence of *mestiçagem* between the Portuguese and the elements of the so-called colored races. The fact that they are a colonizing people makes it impossible to avoid ethnic contamination. What one cannot accept is the raising of such *mestiçagem* to the category of a sufficient factor of ethnic degeneration to such a point that anthropologists would have to place the Portuguese outside the white races or classify them as negroid *mestiços*... (1944 in Santos 1996: 12).

One year before his appointment as Minister of Education (he held the post from 1934 to 1936), he suggested the creation of a Society of Eugenic Studies. In 1938 psychiatrist Barahona Fernandes was supporting eugenics against the “false behaviorist idea” (influenced by Lamarck’s transformationism) of the human being as a reflection of the environment (Pimentel 1998: 18). In the year following the 1926 coup that established dictatorship, Mendes Correia (head of the Institute of Anthropology and Ethnology in Oporto³) had called for the segregation of relapsing criminals, for the sterilization of degenerates, and for the regulation of immigration and the banning of marriage for professional beggars. In 1932 Mendes Correia invited Renato Kehl, president of the Brazilian Eugenics organization to give a conference in Oporto. On the occasion, the Brazilian scientist proposed the introduction of both positive and negative eugenic measures, publicized the advantages of marriage within the same class or race and condemned *mestiçagem* for being ‘dissolving, dissuasive, demoralizing and degrading’.

Although Eugenics was not a successful approach in Portugal, the question of ‘racial improvement’ was much discussed in 1934, in relation to the colonial question and the issue of *mestiçagem*. Although some participants in the First Congress of Colonial Anthropology praised *mestiçagem*, Tamagnini was against it. Based on a study of somatology and aptitude tests done with 16 Cape Verdian and 6 Macaese *mestiços* who had come to the Colonial Expo of 1934 in Oporto, Mendes Correia concluded that miscegenation was a condemnable practice. In the plenary session Tamagnini reminded those in attendance that “the little repugnance that the Portuguese have regarding

³ He was also the mayor of Oporto from 1936 to 1942, a member of the Chamber of Corporations (a Corporativist assembly in the Estado Novo) in 1945, and the director of the Colonial School for a period.

sexual approaches to elements of other ethnic origins is often presented as evidence of their higher colonizing capacity”, and asserted that “it is necessary to change radically such an attitude” (Tamagnini 1934b: 26 in Castelo 1998: 111). He continues: “It is in the social arena that the fact of *mestiçagem* has graver consequences. The *mestiços*, because they do not adapt to either system, are rejected by both...” (in Castelo 1998: 111). Mendes Correia couldn't agree more:

being mulatto is longing for oneself [*o mulato é saudade de si mesmo*] just like the despised hermaphrodite outcries the conflict between the sexes ... the *mestiço* is thus an unexpected being in the plan of the world, an unfortunate experiment of the Portuguese (Mendes Correia 1940: 122 in Castelo 1998: 112).

Also in the Congress on the Portuguese World, ethnographer Pires de Lima countered Gilberto Freyre's thesis on the hybrid origin of the Portuguese. Lima said that there had only been three fundamental ethnic groups: Lusitanians, Romans, and Germanics. He saw Jews, Moors and Blacks as 'intruders' (Castelo 1998: 114), and he strongly objected to the promotion of miscegenation. His ideas could not be more in agreement with the representations of the national identity sponsored by the Estado Novo and they still present today in the common sense, that is, the collective amnesia regarding the latter three peoples who were either expelled or 'whitened'.

Second period: the luso-tropical fever

Gilberto Freyre's theses were to be adopted by Jorge Dias, the renovator of Portuguese anthropology after Mendes Correia (Dias' predecessor at the Oporto 'school').⁴ For Dias, the unity of the Portuguese is the outcome of a melting pot of different ethnic origins. Colonial situations, on the other hand, must be distinguished: the Brazilian and the Cape-Verdian contexts, on the one hand, are based on miscegenation; and the African contexts, on the other, are marked by weak colonization and a late white migration (after 1940 only). Dias showed his opposition to Tamagnini and Mendes Correia. In 1956 he said that the creation of the *mestiço* is positive for Man's genetic pool and that he believed that the luso-tropical *mestiço* was the man of the future (Castelo 1998:

⁴ Although he later published several books and papers on the specific theme of Luso-Tropicalism, his theses are already implicit in his seminal work on the formation of Brazil, *Casa Grande e Senzala: Formação da Família Brasileira sob o Regime da Economia Patriarcal* (Introdução à História da Sociedade Patriarcal no Brasil, vol. I), first published in 1933. First English edition: 1946, *The Masters and the Slaves (A Study on the Development of Brazilian Civilization)*, New York, Knopf. Jorge Dias' theses are explained in several publications. The following were used for the present paper: 1968, "O Carácter Nacional Português na Presente Conjuntura", *Boletim da Academia Internacional da Cultura Portuguesa*, 4; 1971, "Estudos do Carácter Nacional Português", *Estudos de Antropologia Cultural*, 7, Lisbon, IIU; 1990 (1950), "Os Elementos Fundamentais da Cultura Portuguesa", *Estudos de Antropologia*, vol. I, Lisbon, INCM; 1990 (1956), "Paralelismo no Processo da Formação das Nações", *Estudos de Antropologia*, vol. I, Lisbon, INCM.

120).

In the late 1950s and early 1960s, the legitimization (or the contestation) of colonialism could no longer be done with arguments of politico-economical interest and sovereignty claims, but increasingly with 'socio-anthropological' arguments, even when marked by a strong mythical character. According to Cláudia Castelo the reception of Gilberto Freyre's work was not uniform in Portugal. Right-wing intellectuals made a nationalistic interpretation of it, reducing Freyre's ideas to appraisal of Portuguese colonial exceptionalism. Those on the left were more critical and tended to compare the doctrine with the historical facts and political practice. The project of Imperial renaissance had been, up until then, on the antipodes of Freyre's ideas. Many supporters of the dictatorial regime assumed that the black 'race' was inferior and were against *mestiçagem*. Not until after WWII – with the re-christening of the colonies as 'Overseas Provinces' and the abolishment of the Colonial Act did the notion of a pluri-racial and pluri-continental nation come close to Freyre's interpretation. Freyre's famous journey to the Portuguese colonies started two months after the 1951 Constitutional Amendments that abolished the Act. Freyre's account of his journeys enabled the first in a series of appropriations of his ideas by the Portuguese government for purposes of international propaganda. Luso-tropicalist doctrine soon became Portugal's weapon against the international pressures for de-colonization.

Political scientist Adriano Moreira fully incorporated the doctrine into his analyses and political projects after the 1950s. It was not until the 1960s, once the Colonial wars had started, that he (as Overseas Minister, from 1960 to 1962) tried to narrow the gap between theory and practice. The Native Status Laws were abolished (they separated citizens from natives and prescribed forced labor) and relative autonomy was granted to colonial governments. But Moreira was to be ousted from power by the 'integrationist' sectors of the regime. His version of 'multiracialism' nonetheless became a staple in the regime's colonial and nationalistic vocabulary. In 1961 he had written:

we want to make it clear to the commonwealth of nations that it is our nation's resolve to pursue a policy of multi-racial integration, without which there will be neither peace nor civilization in Black Africa (...) a policy whose benefits are illustrated by the largest country of the future that is Brazil (Moreira 1961: 10-11).

The regime's propaganda stated that Portuguese Africa would one day be like Brazil, i.e., a 'racial democracy'. Consequently, he had to explain that the Native Status Laws had been misunderstood, saying that it was

just because of our concern with authenticity that our... Native Status Laws

deny the natives the political rights related to such institutions [of sovereignty; he is referring to the right to vote, among others], many accused us of denying them nationality [citizenship] (1961: 12).⁵

Moreira uses, then, the argument of authenticity and preservation of ethnic particularism as a justification. To different cultures (and 'races' accrue), different rights, in order to respect identities – that seems to be the rationale. This sort of 'right-wing multiculturalism' remains alive today in many sectors. That is why a more liberal and emancipatory multiculturalism can only be successful if cultural essentialism and particularism are put aside.

'Assimilation' was a central concept in the colonial administration. It was often juxtaposed to Freyre's and Dias' notions of *miscibilidade*. These are common themes in the historiography of Portuguese Expansion, Discoveries and Colonialism, as well as in the so-called 'sociology of the formation of Brazil' (of which Freyre's work is an example), and also in the wider debates on Portuguese national identity and ethnogenesis. Moreira said that "cultures, not races, can be eternal" (1963 (1958): 20). It is on the basis of this presupposition that he was in favor of inter-racial marriages, allegedly because the family was the best instrument for the creation of multi-racial societies. Nevertheless he said that miscegenation could cause a problem: "we have less mixed families today than in the past ... because the deficit of white women has diminished. *Mestiços* now tend to close up as a group, which is not beneficial for integration" (Moreira 1963, 1958: 154). The source of concern is clear: in the colonial context of Portuguese Africa, a *mestiço* group could become a specific social and professional group, tied to the administrative hierarchy, living in the cities, playing the role of mediators and thus potentially generating nationalist and anti-colonial feelings. The ambiguous discourse on miscegenation in the late colonial period was, therefore, the very negation of hybridism.

Freyre's influence is a fascinating case. If, in Brazil, his ideas can be interpreted as either left wing or right wing depending on context, in Portugal the dictatorial and colonial atmosphere increased their ambiguity. Freyre's ideas can undoubtedly be appropriated as humanistic and anti-racist; the problem lies in the veracity of his argument about Portuguese colonization, allowing for political arguments which underplay racist practices because of the expected utopia of full miscegenation Brazilian style (which is, anyway, a mystification of the Brazilian racial formation). I have said elsewhere (Vale de Almeida 2000) that I believe that Freyre condensed a diffuse argument – somewhere between common sense and hegemony – that links the theories

⁵ The population of the Portuguese colonies in Africa was divided into three legal status groups: colonials/nationals, assimilated, and natives. This form of classification, contrary in essence to miscegenation, did not apply in those territories where 'local civilization' was acknowledged (for instance, India) or that were the result of 'hybrid' colonization (white colonials and black slaves in unpopulated land), such as Cape Verde.

of national identity and formation in both Brazil and Portugal (as well as the modern Portuguese colonial project in Africa). It is a mythical discourse with scientific pretensions. Freyre's argument focuses on the supposed disposition of the Portuguese to engage in 'hybrid and slave-based' colonization of the Tropical lands. This disposition is supposedly explained by the Portuguese ethnic and cultural past as an 'undefined' people (1992: 5). This lack of definition (i.e. 'racial' and cultural purity) amounts to a 'balance of antagonisms' (1992: 6), and Portuguese 'plasticity' – based on *aclimatibilidade*, *mobilidade e miscibilidade* (adaptation to different climates, mobility, and the ability to mingle/miscegenate) – was the strategy for compensating demographic weakness, thus building a colonial system based on the "patriarchal and slave-owning family, with a *sui generis* version of Catholicism and sexual mores".

Freyre's narrative occupied center stage in the construction of Brazilian self-representations. But it is a development of discourses on Portuguese exceptionalism that are prior to Freyre's; and which were made systematic, as doctrine, after his intellectual production and in the context of colonialism in Africa. The central problem is: interpretations of Brazilian and Portuguese ethnogenesis were both done through a positive reinterpretation of historical processes of extreme inequality, thanks to the neutral presentation of the notion of miscegenation, forcefully separated from racialized social and economic relations. This became a central problem in the national definitions in both countries, among the Black movement in Brazil, and in the identity redefinitions in postcolonial Portugal.

In Portugal, Jorge Dias dealt with the set of psychological qualities that supposedly defined the specificity of Portuguese culture. Geographical conditions and miscegenation take center stage in his theory. It also focuses on the 'expansionistic character' and in 'plasticity'. However, before he was to write on ethnic psychology in the American Culture and Personality sense, Dias made a point of closing the debate on the Lusitanians that had been paramount in the 19th century. Then, anthropologists, historians and archaeologists concerned with finding the Portuguese originality had constructed the Lusitanians as the ancestors of the Portuguese. Jorge Dias presented an alternative ethnogenealogy, in which pluralism became the explanatory factor for Portuguese singularity (although, of course, the notion of originality remained, instead of the assumption that all peoples have plural ethnic genealogies...). João Leal says that this narrative allowed for the construction of a gallery of ethnic ancestors more in tune with the sort of Difusionism that had influenced Dias (Leal 1999: 18). But it allowed most for the supposed originality of Portugal: the unique capacity for mixing cultures.

Third period: national identity and 'new cultural classes'

Fifty years of dictatorship, colonial wars until the 1970s, and the tutelage of

the Brazilian myth have marked heavily the self-representations of the Portuguese in the democratic and postcolonial period. In 1974, democracy was re-established and in the following two years the colonies became independent. In 1986 Portugal joined the European Union and this golden period closed with the commemorations of the 500th anniversary of the Discoveries, and the opening of Expo 98. It was in the 1980s that a public debate on 'racism' started in Portugal, as well as the anti-racist movement and the cultural salience of the growing African migrant communities, mainly in Lisbon.

The luso-tropicalist discourse has for long become common sense, an everyday theory and an integral part of Portuguese representations of nationality. It is a dense and pervasive discourse because it contains the very promises that political correction could subscribe to, namely the notion of miscegenation and hybridization, provided that unequal power relations are elided. The effect of racial hegemony that Hanchard (1994) reports for Brazil (culturalism as a factor that precludes ethno-political mobilization) works similarly in Portugal. But it is strengthened here by the historical amnesia about some ethnogenetic contributions (Jews, Africans, Arabs), slavery, colonialism and the colonial wars. These issues are now being raised in Portuguese society at the same time that a redefinition of national identity vis-à-vis the European Union is being done. Notions related to the 'Portuguese Diaspora' and 'Lusophony' are also being invented. Jorge Vala *et al.* (1999), in a recent study on racism in Portugal, say that

... it is common to think that the specificity of our culture and of our colonial history, the easy miscegenation of the Portuguese with other peoples, the fact that many blacks residing in Portugal are national citizens, or the fact that most African immigrants come from the ex-colonies, have all contributed to the specificity of a possible sort of racism in Portugal. In the end, this idea is still a consequence of the 'luso-tropicalist' ideology and political actors from different areas sponsor it. However, the results of our study demonstrate that racist social beliefs in Portugal are organized in ways similar to other European countries, that the factors are not significantly different from those underlying subtle or flagrant racism in other countries, and that in Portugal, as in other European countries, the anti-racist norm applies to flagrant racism, not to subtle racism... (Vala *et al.* 1999: 194, my translation).

As a matter of fact, at the same time that there is public censorship of flagrant racism (allowing for the reproduction of the subtle kind), a paradoxical process is happening. Teresa Fradique, in her study on rap says that it is "...[the definition of] a product through the outlining of its difference (cultural, social, racial) vis-à-vis the society in which it emerges; it is then presented as a national product..." (Fradique 1998: 110). I have observed a similar process going on in Brazil, in my study of the Black movement and the politics of cultural representation. Fradique, after defining an association

between ethnic group, social inequality and culture, sees ethnic minorities as “a kind of ‘new cultural class’, made homogeneous due precisely to a fuzzy mixing of those three categories, and politically and sociologically created in order to manage the new configurations which are inherent to postcolonial societies” (1998: 123). This process, which involves an anti-racist discourse that objectifies cultures, is similar to new racisms, not only in Stolcke’s terms (culture instead of race), but also in Gilroy’s: the capacity to associate discourses on patriotism, nationalism, xenophobia, militarism and sexual difference in a complex system that gives race its contemporary meaning, constituted around two central concepts: identity and culture (Gilroy 1987: 43).

Parallel to this, multiculturalism has been one of the rhetorical devices most used by the politics of identity (Comaroff 1996, Hobsbawm 1996) in postcolonial contexts. The dominant ideas in multiculturalism presuppose always an authoritative center of cultural reference which ends up functioning with the logic of assimilation. Its main keywords are tolerance and integration. Vertovec (1996) points to the correspondence between multicultural initiatives and some arguments of the new cultural racisms. Both use culturalist perspectives: the multicultural society is divided into several unicultural subunits, and culture is seen as a human characteristic that is virtually embedded in the genes of individuals (1996: 51, cf. Stolcke 1995). Segal and Handler talk of a culturalization of races, in which difference is objectified in an ensemble of multiple singular cultures (Segal and Handler 1995: 391-9).

Issues such as luso-tropical specificity, historical miscegenation, racial democracy or the non-racism of the Portuguese and the Brazilians, have been faced in diverse ways: as ideologies that mask a harsher reality; as an outcome of racial hegemony; as a form of naïve wishful thinking that compensates for the structural weaknesses of both countries; or as having some validity and an unaccomplished potential that can become a political project for the future. Miscegenation, *mestiçagem* and hybridism remain discursive knots that contaminate emancipatory practices with ambiguity.⁶

Angela Gilliam called attention to Fry’s critique of Hanchard. Peter Fry claims that the multiple mode of racial classification in Brazil allows individuals to be classified in varied ways, thus de-racializing individual identity. The Black movement’s contestation of this model supposedly led to the

⁶ João Pina-Cabral, in an analysis of the different meanings of racism for the man on the street and anthropologists, suggests a third way, beyond the neo-Freyrian vs anti-Freyrian divide: “I do not refute Charles Boxer’s contention that there was discrimination, prejudice and ethnic violence in the Portuguese colonial empire, as certain hasty nationalists are again denying. It is just that we cannot deny the evidence of the fact that interethnic barriers based on color were not constructed and maintained in the same way in the British and Portuguese colonial empires” (Pina-Cabral 1998: 3, my translation). I subscribe to this position because, otherwise, the perceptions of color differences by common people in Portugal would have to be dismissed by the anthropologists as ‘false consciousness’. Also, because denying *exceptionalism* is not tantamount to denying *specificity*.

denial of any sort of Brazilian specificity. The bipolar mode – typical of the USA and the Black militants – endorses the racist notion of the One Drop Rule (Fry 1995-6).⁷ Gilliam, however, says that the One Drop Rule has been changed by blacks themselves, from the concept of pollution to that of inclusion (1997: 89). Sansone, who supports Fry, accuses certain researchers of lusophobia, scholars (especially Skidmore 1994) whose major concern seems to be to criticize the 'ambiguity' of Brazilian racial relations and who are fascinated by a hypothetical bipolarization (Sansone 1996: 215). Hanchard classifies Fry and Sansone as neo-Freyrians, since the multipolar model supports Freyre's view that miscegenation and hybridism would lead to the democratization of racial relations (Hanchard 1997). However, he says, multipolar analysis does not confront the miscegenation factor, and the role of the black woman in the formation of national culture is not acknowledged in any place in the multipolar ambiguity.

Gilliam agrees, saying that the extension of the narrative of *mestiçagem* to the 20th century annihilates the chances of power and authority of women over their lives and elides the predatory sexuality that has affected the lives of Indian and black women (1997: 93). Acknowledging that neither model is problem free, she appeals to Gilroy, who would say that blacks are caught between both. Gilroy rejects even creolization and other theories on Caribbean identity – *métissage*, *mestizaje* and hybridism – since they all are as inadequate as the Manichean dynamics of black and white in the definition of black identity (Balutansky 1997: 242 in Gilliam 1997: 93). It is therefore hard to deny blacks the manipulation of hipo-descendence and one must show how false is the notion that racial mixture means absence of racism.

In Portugal, while the production of black cultural specificities is arising, and while subtle racism persists under the condemnation of flagrant racism, two factors are occurring: on one hand (and I shall not deal with it in depth here) the way that discourses about commemoration (Discoveries, Expo etc), are permeated by the rhetoric of multiculturalism, tolerance and culture contact. On the other, there is a redefinition of nationality. Schiller and Fouron (1997) say that the political leaders of countries such as Portugal have been redefining their respective nation-states as transnational ones so as to include their populations in the Diaspora. The authors claim that underlying this are concepts of national identity marked by the issue of 'race', presupposing a line of descendence and blood ties. States that export emigrants define nationality along the line of descendence, not through the shared language, history, culture or territory.

This raises a problem: Lusophony – for instance – as a global geostra-

⁷ North-American folk theory according to which one is 'black' if one has at least one 'black' ancestor, no matter how remote, and even when phenotypic 'evidence' counters the classification.

tegric concept would serve to define 'culture'. Culture would be something given to others by Portugal. Nationality, however, would be only for those who belong in the genealogy. In this sense miscegenation and *mestiçagem* are discursively constructed as the passing of Portuguese blood to the others – in the past –, and rarely the other way around. And when the others are among us the definition of their cultural authenticity places them outside nationality, although they are allowed to enjoy multiculturalism.

Schiller and Fouron show how European nations in the late 19th century considered national history according to specific lineages – the Arians, the Celts, etc. The same happened in Portugal with the debate on the Lusitanians (cf. Leal 1999). But the semi-peripheral specificity of Portugal, her Empire and post-Brazilian colonialism in Africa, led to an accentuation of the notion of *mestiçagem*, although the abolition of contrary laws came late, with the end of the Native Status Laws. Referring to Wade (1993a), Schiller and Fouron say that even when miscegenation is exalted, it is often implicitly defined as in opposition to the color black, and the latter is not mentioned or acknowledged in the narrative of racial mixture. The language of the color white is the one adopted even when the nation defines itself as a product of miscegenation. This process went further in Portugal, since it is not a neo-European nation in the Americas, but a colonizing center (albeit a weak and semi-peripheral one).

It is no longer a question of 'measuring' whether miscegenation is good or bad for the future of the 'races'. It is no longer a question of discussing the difference between 'race' and 'culture'. It is no longer a question of evaluating those debates in terms of the construction or maintenance of either nation-states or colonial empires. Nowadays the terms describing situations of hybridism in postcolonial contexts and increasing globalization present them as accomplished facts or as expressions of political correction or wishful thinking. The present discourse on hybridism seems to be challenged by emancipatory movements such as the Black movement, with its refusal of syncretism; by neo-nationalist movements that are eager for ethnic cleansing; and by deconstructionism and the criticism of post-modern anthropologists. While in the practices of social life people seem to go on reproducing a covert horror toward mixture – and social barriers that perpetuate 'races' are reproduced –, the praising of cultural mixture (one in which each contribution is clearly defined) emerges in the field of cultural consumption products. During a brief visit to Portugal, Bahian musician Carlinhos Brown said:

This is an album and a show that celebrate miscegenation in Brazil ... That remixing is a feeling that only the miscigenated knows. It is like having loved a woman for the first time: the orgasm is different... The miscigenated one

is... the man of the third millennium ... and in the end of the millennium there is no people like the Portuguese people who can rightfully celebrate. I do not know if Portugal is aware of that. Because Portugal conquered miscegenation: to unite peoples through the easiest way, through taste, through sight, through acceptance. Portugal may have been a great good for the black culture (*Público*, 05.08.99: 21).

This is, of course, more than wishful thinking – it is the reproduction of ideology, and an effect of hegemony. But it also indicates a utopian aspiration, albeit misplaced. Hybridism, miscegenation, and correlate terms, have a tense history behind them. Any cultural, social, or political project that intends to promote mixture for the promotion of new social realities will necessarily also have to be a critical project, one that evaluates and learns from that tense history of practices and knowledges. Anthropologists could contribute to this with the critical and comparative analysis of those social formations, namely the so-called Creole ones, which may constitute a glimpse of the desired future. Even if they are the by-products of the conflict of the colonial encounter.

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Miguel Vale de Almeida

'SAUDADE DE SI MESMO': HIBRIDISMO
E MISCIGENAÇÃO NO PORTUGAL COLONIAL
E PÓS-COLONIAL

Este ensaio parte da constatação de um debate contemporâneo sobre o hibridismo, o qual tem reminiscências do debate do século XIX sobre raça e híbridos. O caso Português é um dos mais complexos e intrigantes: se a construção do Brasil foi apresentada como exemplo da propensão miscigenadora, também foi usada para legitimar o colonialismo em África e para as representações dos portugueses como não-racistas. Mas a nação portuguesa raramente foi representada como sendo miscigenada e os projectos de creolização não têm lugar político. A retórica contemporânea do hibridismo choca com o regresso da 'raça' sob a capa do fundamentalismo cultural. Este ensaio versa os discursos e modos de classificação na base de discussões sobre processos de formação identitária no espaço 'Lusófono'.

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