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### *Ceremonies of public authority in a colonial capital. The king's processions and the hierarchies of power in seventeenth century Salvador*

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CEREMONIES OF PUBLIC AUTHORITY  
IN A COLONIAL CAPITAL.  
THE KING'S PROCESSIONS AND THE HIERARCHIES  
OF POWER IN SEVENTEENTH CENTURY SALVADOR

por

STUART B. SCHWARTZ

It was said that Salvador, the capital of colonial Brazil, was born in a procession. The first Governor, Tomé de Sousa, had organized a procession in 1549 when the city was founded, and from that point forward public ceremonies often sacralized by their association with the religious calendar became part of the city's life and its public function\*. The Governor's expedition had also included six Jesuits who had accompanied him in order to begin a missionary effort among the indigenous peoples of the coast, and they also had soon found in religious processions a technique to attract and interest converts. The purpose of these public displays was sometimes celebratory and sometimes penitential, but in either case, the processions proved to be a successful way of conveying the messages of the Church and the State. At times, the processions could have an immediate purpose such as ending an epidemic, a drought, or a flood, often by a display of penitence, and at times they might be celebratory, to mark a royal birth, a marriage, or a victory. Then too there were the processions of the Catholic calendar that, while religious in nature, might also have political implications and uses<sup>1</sup>.

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\* The author wishes to express his gratitude for the research suggestions and help provided by Neusa Esteves, director of the archive of the Santa Casa da Misericórdia of Salvador, Bahia.

<sup>1</sup> João da Silva CAMPOS, *Procissões tradicionais da Bahia*, Salvador, 1941, pp. 1-2. My analysis has been guided by the general discussion of Edward MUIR, *Ritual in Early Modern Europe*, Cambridge, 1997, and in the case of Portugal by Diogo Ramada CURTO, «Ritos e cerimónias da monarquia em Portugal (séculos XVI a XVIII)», in F. BETHENCOURT and Diogo Ramada CURTO (eds.), *Memória da nação*, Lisbon, 1991, pp. 201-65; and by José Pedro PAIVA, «Etiqueta e cerimónias públicas na esfera da igreja (séculos XVII-XVIII)», in Istvan IANCSO and Iris KANTOR

Salvador had been established to announce conquest and settlement rather than to consummate it. Its foundation had proclaimed to foreign rivals and to the existing small groups of settlers that Portuguese royal authority was now present in the person of the Governor, the royal treasurer, and a crown magistrate. A city was the appropriate context for that authority to be housed, but cities also implied community and a conjunction of legal, social, political, and ideological spaces that defined who was part of that community. In cities across Catholic Europe and in its overseas offshoots, the creation of the urban community was reinforced and ritualized in a number of ways, by the devotion to patron saints and by civic festivals and processions<sup>2</sup>. This was true in all the cities of the Portuguese empire, but especially in those like Goa, Salvador, or later, Rio de Janeiro that were the seats of royal authority<sup>3</sup>. To understand how that authority was symbolized and recognized, and the role that municipal government played in supporting that authority it is necessary to examine the role of civic ritual in daily life and to see how religious and secular pageantry could be joined for a common political purpose. In Salvador, as in other cities, that pageantry served a dual and contradictory purpose, demonstrating and reaffirming the loyalty and fealty of the community to the crown, but at the same time emphasizing local power and the freedom of action of the municipal corporate entity<sup>4</sup>. The role in these demonstrations of the social order played by the *Senado da Câmara*, the town council composed of propertied residents, was complex because the Câmara not only represented the presence of the

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(eds.), *Festa*, São Paulo, 2001. Jaime Valenzuela MÁRQUEZ, *Las liturgias del poder*, Santiago, Chile, 2001, presents a model study of public ceremonies in another colonial context. I have not been able to consult Diogo Ramada CURTO, «A cultura política em Portugal (1578-1642). Comportamentos, ritos e negócios», Tese de doutoramento, Universidade Nova de Lisboa, 1994, or Luís Ramalhosa GUERREIRO, «La représentation du pouvoir royal à l'âge baroque portugaise (1687-1753)», Tese de doutoramento, École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, Paris, 1995. Fundamental for this subject in Brazil is István JANCSÓ and Iris KANTOR, *Festa. Cultura e Sociedade na América Portuguesa*, 2 vols., São Paulo, 2001.

<sup>2</sup> Edward MUIR, *Ritual in Early Modern Europe*, Cambridge, 1997, p. 233.

<sup>3</sup> I have not considered here the many celebrations of the religious calendar, the funeral processions and saint's days in which various lay confraternities took a leading role. See the classic study of A. J. R. RUSSELL-WOOD, *Fidalgos and Philanthropists*, Berkeley, 1968, on the Santa Casa da Misericórdia brotherhood and its role in Salvador's urban life. For an interesting anthropological analysis of popular religion in modern Portugal see Pierre SANCHIS, *Arraial. La fête d'un peuple*, Paris, 1997.

<sup>4</sup> While references to public ceremonies do appear scattered throughout the minutes or *Actas* of the municipal Council of Salvador, *Documentos históricos do Arquivo Municipal. Actas da Câmara*, 10 vols. to date (Salvador, 1949-) and its correspondence [*Cartas do Senado*] there is relatively little discussion of these events given their importance in the city's life. The explanation for this relative absence may lie in the continual dependence on Portuguese traditional models and practices.

king, it also symbolized the presence of the nobility and the «people», the traditional component parts of the juridical society of orders <sup>5</sup>.

Salvador was, in its origins, a Portuguese city. While in its early years there were indigenous peoples who lived within the city as slaves, servants, or auxiliaries, they were a small part of the population. Black slaves began to arrive in the 1550s, but their numbers were few until the mid-Seventeenth Century. Estimates for the early population of the city of Salvador and the captaincy or province of Bahia that it headed are very tenuous, but by 1600 the city may have had 15,000 and a century later, the population was probably between 20,000 and 25,000 inhabitants <sup>6</sup>.

By 1600, however, Salvador was already the colony's administrative and bureaucratic centre and was on its way to becoming the major port for a growing sugar industry; its docks crowded with crates of sugar brought in from the surrounding Recôncavo or from other captaincies along the coast. Although commerce was restricted to Portugal, ships from Holland carried much of the trade under Portuguese license, and ships from as far away as Danzig and Ragusa sometimes called at the port as well. The agricultural basis of the city's life in the surrounding sugar-producing region and the active commerce in the port gave the city its economic foundation, and it also naturally privileged the sugar planters and merchants who became the city's elites.

The religious institutions that eventually enriched the city's life of devotion and spectacle developed slowly. Brazil was originally under the jurisdiction of the Bishop of Funchal but by 1552 a bishop resided in Salvador, and after 1676, the city was the seat of an archbishop. The monasteries of the religious orders dated from the Sixteenth Century, the Jesuit College (1549), the Carmelites (1580), Benedictines (1581) and Franciscans (1594) but the first female foundation, the convent of the discalced Carmelites at Desterro came a century later (1677), and other did not follow until the mid- Eighteenth Century (Lapa, 1744) and Mercês (1745). Salvador was said to have a church for every day of the year, but their construction came in spurts, and many were built in the last century of the colony.

Like all cities in the Portuguese empire, Salvador's annual urban cycle was marked by a series of public events, ceremonies and processions sponsored by both religious and civil authorities. While a division of powers between those two spheres was recognized, any distinction between «religious» and other activities would have had slight meaning to the members of that society. Thus, they saw no contradiction in the fact that the Senado

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<sup>5</sup> Pedro CARDIM, «Ceremonial Political Allegiance and Religious Constraints in Seventeenth-Century Portugal», *Religious ceremonials and images*, pp. 351-68, emphasizes the bond between crown and people in the ceremonies inaugurating a reign.

<sup>6</sup> A. J. R. RUSSELL-WOOD, «Ports of Colonial Brazil», discusses the inconsistent information on Salvador's population.

da Câmara was expected to promote and to finance with the appropriate display and ceremony a certain number of processions each year, most of which were part of the annual religious calendar round. Originally there had been only three or four of these celebrations, the Feast of Corpus Christi, the Visitation of Our Lady (Santa Isabel), the Procession of the Guardian Angel, and the day of San Juan Baptista, but over time others were added<sup>7</sup>. By the end of the Seventeenth century the municipal council also sponsored the procession of St. Francis Xavier, and those of São Sebastião, São Felipe and Santiago, and Santo António de Arguim. This last was held in the convent of São Francisco<sup>8</sup> to honour an image of that saint which had been stolen from a Church in North Africa by French Huguenot corsairs, and that had miraculously survived their mistreatment, and eventually protected the city from attack<sup>9</sup>. Santo António, in fact, took on a particular role as a military protector of the city. In 1645, the municipal council pledged to honour him on a regular basis with a procession, sermon, and mass if he would intercede on behalf of the king, his representative, the governor, and the people of Salvador who asked to be granted «peace, the defeat of our enemies... and to be free of the sickness and troubles that plague us daily»<sup>10</sup>. Chief among the Câmara's desiderata was the restoration of Portuguese dominion in Pernambuco, and the councilmen promised to hold an annual celebration to commemorate the day that Recife was recovered from the Dutch<sup>11</sup>. In other words, it would be added to the feasts sponsored by royal or by municipal authorities as *festas de graças*, organized to commemorate particular historical moments when God's favour had been made manifest. For example, the Câmara itself created the annual celebration of the feast of São Felipe and Santiago, in 1627 to commemorate the recovery of Salvador from the Dutch

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<sup>7</sup> In the Manueline Ordinances (1514-1621) liv. 1, tít. LXXVII, processions were ordered for the Visitation (2 July) and for the Guardian Angel (3d Sunday of July). In 1663, the Câmara-sponsored processions were listed as those of São Sebastião, São Vicente, Saúde, Santo António, Corpo de Deus, Anjo Custódio, Nossa Senhora das Neves, the transfer of São Vicente, Aljubarrota, the Holy Martyrs, São Crispim, and the Acclamation of D. João IV, see AHU, caixa 17, doc. 1945 (22 August 1663).

<sup>8</sup> Affonso RUY, *História da Câmara Municipal da Cidade do Salvador*, Salvador, 1953, p. 167; C. R. BOXER, *Portuguese Society in the Tropics*, Madison, 1968, p. 90; *Actas da Câmara*, 10, p. 151. An excellent overview of the political and economic dimensions of the municipal councils in Portugal is provided by Nuno Gonçalves MONTEIRO, «Os concelhos e as comunidades», in José MATTOSO (general editor), *História de Portugal*, Lisbon, 1993-date, 4, pp. 303-331.

<sup>9</sup> Antonio de Santa Maria JABOATAM, *Novo orbe serafico brasilico ou chronica dos frades menores da provincia do Brasil*, 2 vols., Rio de Janeiro, 1858, II.

<sup>10</sup> Ronaldo VAINFAS, «Saint Anthony in Portuguese America: Saint of the Restoration», in A. GREER and J. BILINIKOFF (eds.), *Colonial Saints*, Nova Iorque, 2003, pp. 99-111; Luiz MOTT, «Santo António. O divino capitão-do-mato», in J. J. REIS and F. GOMES (eds.), *Liberdade por um fio*, São Paulo, 1997.

<sup>11</sup> RUY, Affonso, *História da Câmara*, 162, reprints the act of the Câmara in which the pledge was made. The question of the city's patron saint is confused. A number of saints were assigned that honour at different moments of the city's history.

in May, 1625<sup>12</sup>. In a similar fashion, after the restoration of the Bragança dynasty with the acclamation of Dom João IV on 1 December 1640 that date was also celebrated each year with a procession. Toward the end of the century, the city had chosen St Francis Xavier as a patron of Salvador during a yellow fever epidemic in 1686, and he was honoured by a procession and a mass in the Jesuit College beginning in 1689, «with all the grandeur and demonstrations of joy» for his deliverance of the city<sup>13</sup>. Together, all these processions were referred to as the «royal processions» (*festas d'El rey*) or as those of the Câmara. In them, the presence of a far distant monarch was compensated by the representation of his presence in the person of the royal governor (later viceroy) or by the royal judges of the High Court (*Relação*) who were entrusted with the royal seal, but these symbolic elements of royal authority were reinforced by the presence of the Câmara, itself representative of the «nobility and people», of the city<sup>14</sup>.

As a group, these processions signaled the union of local and royal authority and of civil and religious life. In the procession of São João, for example, a solemn march with the standard of the Câmara and an image of Christ, was held in June, the public action then followed by a mass and a sermon attended by the Câmara's members<sup>15</sup>. The Câmara usually took seriously the responsibilities inherent in these processions. Because of the celebrations staged in 1641 after the acclamation of the new monarch, João IV, the Câmara found itself without funds for the procession of Santo António that year. The councilmen voted to sell the silver service and inkwells of the Câmara in order to pay for the celebration rather than forgo the festival. On the other hand, the Câmara sometimes made commitments it failed to honour. In 1685 during a terrible drought that devastated the captaincy of Bahia, the Câmara asked the Archbishop Dom João de Madre de Deus to use the good offices of the Church to intervene on the city's behalf,

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<sup>12</sup> This celebration, held on 1 May, was created during the Hapsburg rule of Portugal to mark the recapture of the city. The feast of San Felipe and Santiago was already widely celebrated with processions in Castile since Santiago was the patron saint of that kingdom. In New Castile, an obligatory visit to local shrines was part of the processions of late April and early May that implored protection for the crops in the fields. See William A. CHRISTIAN, Jr., *Local Religion in Sixteenth-Century Spain*, Princeton, 1981, p. 115.

<sup>13</sup> *Actas da Câmara*, 6, pp. 125-26. That the festival of São Francisco Xavier was celebrated in the Jesuit College is confirmed in a minute from 30 April 1760. See *Actas da Câmara*, 10, p. 237.

<sup>14</sup> Alejandra OSORIO, «The King in Lima: Simulacra, Ritual and Rule in Seventeenth-Century Peru», *Hispanic American Historical Review*, 84, 2002, p. 3, pp. 447-474, emphasizes the integrative function of the king's symbolic presence in a colonial society.

<sup>15</sup> *Actas da Câmara*, 4, p. 72. In 1697, the Câmara complained that it lacked funds to stage this procession and it asked for a royal subsidy to enable it to continue to celebrate the day without causing the «scandal» that would result from its suspension. In 1703 a dispute arose between the Carmelites and the Câmara over this procession when the municipal council tried to shift the ceremony to the Benedictine convent.

promising to hold a devout procession to help in the seeking of divine relief. The Archbishop responded with a certain irony that he recognized the problem and had organized a procession to take the image of St. Escolástica from the convent of São Bento through the city streets since in similar situations, she had proven an effective intercessor. But he noted that the Câmara in the past had promised to honour her with an annual procession for her intervention and then had failed to live up to that commitment. He chided the councilmen that they had to assume past obligations of the Senado and that the «saints expected our punctuality and resented our ingratitude»<sup>16</sup>. Saintry intervention could not be bought cheaply.

These public displays of religiosity and political order demonstrated the loyalty of the municipality. By the Eighteenth Century, Câmara expressed its willingness to stage these celebrations «to make exterior demonstrations of the interior pleasure felt by the People of this city», of which, of course, the Senado was its representative institution<sup>17</sup>. Attendance was required by all inhabitants of the city and for a radius of one league on pain of a fine for non-compliance, but in truth, various groups sought exemptions from time to time in order to avoid costs or inconvenience. The nature of the processions and associated celebrations also changed over time. The members of the artisan brotherhoods were required «to accompany their standard on the days of the royal processions or be fined 6 *mil réis*»<sup>18</sup>. Surely, the foundation of the various religious orders at the end of the Sixteenth Century and their subsequent participation in the processions altered the nature and the quality of the events. By the Eighteenth Century, in addition to the processions themselves, there were activities both before and after that added to their meaning and impact on public life. Not only were major religious processions preceded by novenas or capped by a solemn mass, they were also often accompanied not only by fireworks, but by dances, bullfights in the *terreiro de Jesus* in front of the Jesuit college, and even open-air performances of theatrical pieces and operas<sup>19</sup>. Then too, the popularity of particular celebrations was a matter of style and changing taste as processions sometimes went in and out of favor, even though the ideology of the processions sought to convey permanence and tradition and they acquired their political force by maintaining the «fiction of unchangeability»<sup>20</sup>. This fiction may have been particularly important in a colonial setting where the need to empha-

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<sup>16</sup> This exchange between the Archbishop and the Câmara was discussed by Marieta ALVES in «Terra das procissões», *Journal A Tarde*.

<sup>17</sup> *Actas da Câmara*, 10, 24 Sept 1760, p. 246.

<sup>18</sup> This municipal regulation (*postura*) was repeated regularly throughout the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries. See FLEXOR, *Ofícios Mecânicos na Cidade do Salvador*, Salvador, 1974, p. 21.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.* The Câmara commissioned three operas for the celebrations of the marriage of the Princess of Brazil in 1760 (1 Oct 1760).

<sup>20</sup> MUIR, *Ritual*, p. 237.

size continuities with the metrópole and the extension of cultural practices and political loyalties served as a basis of social distinctions and identities.

The processions also helped to mark and promote a collective historical memory. In Portugal, a procession celebrating the Portuguese victory over the Castilians at Aljubarrota that had insured the country's independence in 1385 had fallen into disuse, and in 1700 the municipal council of Salvador sought advice on whether it should continue the tradition<sup>21</sup>. As a means of emphasizing the kingdom's independence it was no longer necessary. In reality, the celebration of the Acclamation of Dom João IV had created alternative ways of maintaining the historical memory of separation from Spain. Other important imperial events were also marked with public celebrations by the city. The birth of children to the royal family, treaties of peace such as that signed by Portugal and Spain in 1668 bringing the War of the Restoration to a close, the marriage of Catherine of Bragança to Charles II of England and other such events were celebrated in Bahia. But also noticeable was the development of a round of celebrations and ceremonial processions related to local events and circumstances. There were, of course, the ceremonies that marked the arrival and oath-taking (*posse*) of each new Governor, or the *entradas* of the bishops or, after 1676, the archbishops of Salvador. These were moments of the transition and regeneration of authority for colonial society. In the case of the Governors-General and later Viceroy, for example, the outgoing official would meet his successor on board the vessel that brought him and take him to the Jesuit college. There, after three or four days, they were accompanied by the Câmara to the Cathedral where a ritual blessing took place and from where the incumbent was then accompanied by the archbishop under a pallio to the palace of government where there was a military formation for review<sup>22</sup>. In addition to such repeated transitions of authority, there were also commemorations. We have already noted the marking of the reconquest of the city from the Dutch in 1625 with the procession of São Felipe and Santiago and the annual procession after 1689 celebrating the end of a yellow fever epidemic, purportedly due to the intervention of St Francis Xavier. To this could be added the celebration of the defeat of Palmares in 1694. In February of that year, the Governor, António Luís da Câmara Coutinho ordered firework displays to celebrate the victory gained over the large escaped slave settlement of

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<sup>21</sup> *Cartas do senado*, 5, p. 13.

<sup>22</sup> We know about the details of the transition of governors because in 1714, the newly appointed viceroy complained that the usual ceremony was inappropriate and did not equal what was done for a newly-arriving viceroy in India. He was especially offended that there was no *Te Deum laudamus* sung in the Church as was done in India, for no other reason that it was uncommon in Brazil to thank God for anything [não acho outra razão, mais que a commum de no Brasil se não louvar a Deos por cousa alguma]. See Affonso Ruy, *História Política e Administrativa da Cidade do Salvador*, Salvador, 1949, pp. 176-77.

Palmares located to the north in Pernambuco where the inhabitants of that region had lived under the threat of «the insolences, insults, deaths and robberies», of the escaped slaves. The Governor, also noted that runaways from Bahia had been attracted to Palmares and had become killers and highwaymen. He, therefore, required that the members of the Câmara join him and the «nobility» of the city in a mass in the Sé Cathedral to celebrate the relief that the victory represented to the residents of Pernambuco and Bahia <sup>23</sup>. Although such public ceremonies brought the symbols of royal government and local power together, they also began to create a colonial sense of distinctiveness that was celebrated and remembered. Certainly, on this issue the municipal council of Salvador, usually controlled by the local sugar planters had traditionally been hardliners in the suppression of escaped slave communities. In 1640, the Câmara had rejected a governor's plan to negotiate with a *mocambo* of runaways and recognize their freedom in return for a promise to return all future fugitive slaves. Instead, the Senado had argued that the only appropriate policy was to destroy and conquer them <sup>24</sup>. Thus, the victory of 1694 against the greatest of all runaway communities must have been particularly sweet.

Despite the frequency of public ceremonies and rituals, we have few descriptions of them for Brazil in general and Salvador in particular. This lack of description was due to a large extent to the absence of a printing press in Brazil until the Nineteenth Century. Thus the commemorative reports of public ceremonies that became a genre of some importance in Early Modern Europe and in Spanish America remained relatively scarce for Brazil, and the few that were produced date almost entirely from the Eighteenth Century. In that sense we are fortunate to have an eye-witness account of two different public ceremonies written in the 1670s by João Lopes Serra, a Spaniard who had long resided in Salvador and who penned a biography and funeral panegyric of the Governor of Brazil. In 1672, that Governor, Afonso Furtado do Castro do Rio de Mendonça, the Viscount of Barbacena, in order to open the *sertão* along the Paraguaçu River and to stop raids against the ranches and farms of settlers, had contacted a troop of frontiersmen and Indian-fighters from São Paulo and then brought them to Bahia. Their forces were joined by a number of local commanders and their indigenous auxiliaries, and the joint force was then sent into the backlands. The expedition was relatively successful and six hundred Indians were brought back to Salvador. Lopes Serra in his panegyric biography described the arrival of the expedition and its captives in August, 1672, and then described their entry into the city and their reception at the Governor's palace. This amounted to a triumphal entry not to commemorate a past victory, but to

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<sup>23</sup> *Actas da Câmara*, 6, pp. 239-40.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, 1 pp. 477-478.

recognize the expedition's success. Lopes Serra emphasized the jubilant attitude of the population that turned out to see the parade which had entered the city at the Carmelite monastery and then proceeded to march up to the square before the Jesuit church, then passing in front of the Cathedral and the Church of the Misericórdia before arriving in the square before the Câmara and the governor's palace<sup>25</sup>.

The procession was led in military fashion by the commander who bore the title, Governor of the Conquest, accompanied by the white men of the vanguard armed with firearms, symbols of European power, but with their helmets «brazilianized», by being adorned with parrot and macaw plumes. The Governor of the Conquest's page then followed mounted on horseback bearing the escutcheon and staff of command, both symbolic of the authority granted to the commander. The military units then followed, each with its own captains and officers, but in between these companies marched the native allies, armed with their bows and quivers of arrows. What impressed Lopes Serra most about the captives was their bodies and physical appearance. The captive Indian men were, «like Adam, some with their bodies painted blue, others covered with white feathers», and some had lip-plugs. They played instruments. The women were bare-breasted and carried their children and baskets (*panicu*) with their household goods and implements. Many had their faces painted blue, and «as some were not ugly, they appeared to be wearing masks». As in many processions, sound played a powerful role, but in this case rather than church bells and martial music, the march was enlivened by the Indians who played their own instruments whose music, while seeming happy to the spectators, was actually sad.

The procession entered the square before the Câmara and the Governor's palace where the Governor descended to the doorway, a ceremonial sign of the concession of privilege in the Portuguese world, to receive the commander who arrived accompanied by the principal Indian chief who was symbolic of the triumph of Portuguese arms<sup>26</sup>. There, we are told, Afonso Furtado, Governor of Brazil, embraced the commander of the expedition, but when the Indian chieftain saw that he was not included in the greeting, he asked for and received a similar embrace. In this way, the integration of captives into colonial society and into the Catholic faith was affirmed.

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<sup>25</sup> Stuart B. SCHWARTZ and Alcir PÉCORÁ (eds.), *As excelências do governador. O panegírico fúnebre a D. Afonso Furtado de Juan Lopes Serra (Bahia, 1676)*, São Paulo, Companhia das Letras, 2002, pp. 144-149.

<sup>26</sup> On the ceremonial significance of the place of reception in the Portuguese tradition see Mafalda Soares da CUNHA, *A Casa de Bragança, 1560-1640*, Lisbon, 200, pp. 149-84. On the general question of ceremony and its nuances see José Pedro PAIVA, «Etiqueta e cerimónias públicas na esfera da igreja (séculos XVII-XVIII)», in *Festa*, I, pp. 75-96; Pedro CARDIM, «Ceremonial. Political Allegiance and Religious Constraints in Seventeenth-Century Portugal», in José Pedro PAIVA (ed.), *Religious Ceremonials and Images. Power and Social Meaning (1400-1700)*, Coimbra, 2002, pp. 351-68.

The whole entourage was then housed at the Church of Nossa Senhora da Vitória, just beyond the city's walls at the opposite side of the city from where the procession had entered. Thus, the captives had been displayed throughout the entire city in an affirmation of the triumph of Portuguese arms, the inclusion of new souls into the Church, and the union of civic and royal power.

Extraordinary processions like this triumphal entry into the city were far less frequent than the annual round of processions organized by the Câmara. Although we have no detailed accounts of the usual processions of *El Rey*, the model for their practice and order seems to have been the *Corpo de Deus* or *corpus christi* processions that were held throughout the Catholic world, those in Brazil modeled upon those of Portugal<sup>27</sup>. This festival usually fell from late May to mid-June and so in Bahia came at the end of the sugar *safra* or harvest. This was a time when the city would have been full of merchants, buying and warehousing sugar crates and arranging consignments, and of the sugar planter elite coming in from their *engenhos* to reside in their urban houses and to transact business in the city. Originally created to affirm the doctrine of the transubstantiation of the host, after a decree of the Council of Trent in 1551, the procession was defined as a «triumph over heresy» and thus became a festive celebration of the victory of God over sin and of the Church over heresy. Participation by everyone in society was required either as participants or observers. In the Iberian world the Corpus Christi had been celebrated since the Thirteenth century and it had become generalized as the outstanding event of the annual Catholic ceremonial calendar<sup>28</sup>. Its celebration was also a measure of a city's status.

How the procession was organized in Salvador remains something of a mystery, but evidence from the Eighteenth Century indicates that it surely included the Câmara, the Bishop and his capitular council, the secular representatives of royal authority, probably the Religious Orders, lay sodalities, the corporations of artisans, and a large military contingent. A reference to dragons and other such images in the minutes of the Senado da Câmara in 1673 indicates that in Salvador as elsewhere in the Iberian world a representation of the «dragon» of sin that was to be overcome by the sacrifice of the Eucharist played a role in the procession<sup>29</sup>. Whether Moors, Turks, Indians, devils or other figures were represented in the procession as was

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<sup>27</sup> See Beatriz Catão Cruz Santos, «Unidade e Diversidade Através da Festa de *Corpus Christi*», in *Festa*, I, pp. 521-42. On these processions in general see Carolyn Dean, *Inka Bodies and the Bodies of Christ*, Durham, 1999.

<sup>28</sup> Carolyn Dean, *Inka Bodies...*, cit., p. 9; Marion Reder Gadow, «Tradición e innovación en la procesión del *corpus Christi* malagueña en la época de los borbones», in Margarita Torrión (ed.), *España festejante. El siglo XVIII*, Málaga, 2000, pp. 63-73. See especially, Vicente Lleó Cañal, *Fiesta grande. El Corpus Christi en la historia de Sevilla*, Sevilla, 1980.

<sup>29</sup> Boxer, *Portuguese Society*.

done in many places in Spain and Spanish America remains unknown, but such figures were often present. Since the Corpus Christi was a triumph, the presence of a vanquished «other» fit the purpose of the celebration<sup>30</sup>. In the early years at least, Indian converts under Jesuit direction took an active part in the procession as singers and musicians and as members of religious brotherhoods, and the first Corpus Christi procession in 1549 was accompanied by «dances and inventions in the manner of Portugal»<sup>31</sup>. To what extent these extravagances developed in Brazil we do not know, but Corpus Christi processions in Portugal often included dances of Moors, Jews, or Gypsies, women dressed as saints, gigantic figures made by the guilds, representations of biblical and classical figures and other fantastic elements. At times and in some places these elements had become carnivalesque. In Goa legislation was required to keep indigenous dancing girls from participating and thus eroticizing the event<sup>32</sup>. There was enough of this in Bahia to cause the French observer Froger to complain of the masks, music and lascivious movements of the dancers when he observed the Corpus Christi in 1696<sup>33</sup>. We do not know if in Salvador and elsewhere in Brazil in this period there was the use of carts serving as the basis for floats (*charolas*) as was done subsequently. It is also unclear if the city constructed ephemeral arches filled with symbolic images under which the celebrants passed as was often done in Portugal and in Spain, but as in Europe the streets where the marchers were to pass were strewn with leaves or decorated with leafy branches and the houses were often hung with flags or decorative cloths. Elsewhere in the Hispanic world the Corpus Christi often started with musicians and masqueraders followed by the guilds and confraternities, the parishes in order of antiquity, religious orders and dignitaries and then the highest religious authority accompanying the host, followed by the civic authorities<sup>34</sup>.

Beginning in the Seventeenth Century both the crown and local bishops attempted to regulate the most outrageous elements in the processions. The use of dances and masquerades in the Corpo de Deus processions came under attack during the reign of Dom João V when, inspired by the model of the religious processions of the Eucharistic Triumph, these elements were

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<sup>30</sup> Carolyn DEAN, *Inka Bodies and the Body of Christ*, Durham, 1999, p. 49.

<sup>31</sup> Manuel da Nóbrega to Simão Rodrigues (9 Aug 1549) as cited in Silva CAMPOS, *Procissões Tradicionais*, p. 216. The Jesuits made particularly good use of processions, incorporating Indian singers and musicians along with the colonists and even giving Indian leaders a position of authority allowing them to carry *varas* to indicate their status. See the letter of António Blázquez to Diego Mirón (Bahia, 13 Sept 1564), *Monumenta brasiliae*, IV pp. 71-95.

<sup>32</sup> C. R. BOXER, «Fidalgos portugueses e Baliladeiras indianas (séculos XVII e XVIII)», in Diogo Ramada CURTO (ed.), *Opera Minora*, 3 vols., Lisbon, 2002, 3, pp. 323-31.

<sup>33</sup> Cruz SANTOS, «Unidade e diversidade», p. 533.

<sup>34</sup> DEAN, *Inka Bodies*, p. 44. See António Camões GOUVEIA, «Sensibilidades e representações religiosas. Procissões», in *História religiosa de Portugal*, 3 vols., Lisbon, Círculo dos Leitores, 2000, 2, pp. 334-345.

eliminated in 1719<sup>35</sup>. That prohibition was then extended to other processions in the Portuguese world in 1752, although these controls seem to have taken effect slowly in Brazil where such secular elements had figured prominently in the celebrations. Evidence from the Seventeenth Century does not reveal much information about the participation of Afro-Brazilians, slave or free, in the *festas reais*. Many of the most important black sodalities were not formed until the Eighteenth century, but Afro-Brazilians probably took part as members of the corporations of artisans. Nevertheless, in Seventeenth-Century Bahia, the processions seemed to follow closely the models of Portugal<sup>36</sup>.

The procession did make the hierarchal order of society and corporate and individual place within that order highly visible. Because we have no extensive description of a Bahian corpus de Deus procession before the late Eighteenth century, it is difficult to establish exactly how that social order and hierarchy was represented. To derive some idea of that order we can turn again to a description provided by João Lopes Serra who described the funeral ceremonies and procession for Governor Afonso Furtado in 1676, an event with many of the same symbolic objectives found in the *festas reais*. Lopes Serra first described the various military units each with their distinctive livery and banners, emphasizing the profusion of colours and impression made by the numerous unfurled flags. These troops were then followed by the Cathedral chapter and the musicians of the chapel. The procession included a hundred confraternities, the various religious orders, the Brotherhood of the Misericórdia, the ministers of the Relação, and other high government officials. The symbols of royal power were manifestly present to all observers and participants<sup>37</sup>.

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<sup>35</sup> Inácio BARBOSA MACHADO, *História crítico-cronológica da festa, procissão, e officio do Corpo do Santíssimo de Cristo no Veneravel Sacramento da Eucharistia*, Lisbon, 1759. On the considerable efforts of Dom João V to control and reorder the form and content of public religious life, see Ana Cristina ARAÚJO, «Ritual and Power in the Court of King João V. The symbolic genesis of political regalism», *Religious ceremonials and images*, pp. 323-350.

<sup>36</sup> A rather negative anti-Catholic description of religious processions in Portugal in the mid-Eighteenth century is provided by John WHITEFIELD, *A brief account of some Lent and other extraordinary processions and ecclesiastical entertainments seen last year in Lisbon*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., London, 1755.

<sup>37</sup> The English visitor Thomas Lindley who witnessed the Corpus Christi of Salvador in the early Nineteenth Century stated that the «Inquisition with its banner» also marched in the procession. Silva CAMPOS, *Procissões tradicionais*, pp. 109-123 believed that he had confused the Charitable Brotherhood of the Misericórdia with the Inquisition but this is unclear. While there was no permanent tribunal of the Holy Office in Salvador, there were *familiares* or agents of the Inquisition in the city.

### The Conflict of Authority and of Symbols

By the first decade of the Seventeenth Century, Salvador had become the public setting and space for alternate types of authority, each with its own defined and appropriated spheres, but with the hierarchy of power between them left undefined. The governor-general was the immediate representative of the king and of royal authority. He exercised executive authority, commanded the military forces, and theoretically stood above all other powers in secular matters. The Governor-general also presided over the High Court of Appeals (*Relação da Bahia*) that had been created in Salvador in 1609 in order to serve as both a political council to the Governor-general as a court of appeal. Its professional magistrates (*desembargadores*), headed by a Chancellor both represented and symbolized the judicial attributes of the crown. This was crucial since in the ideology of the Portuguese monarchy, the king's role as justicer had always been given a primary position. Alongside, these representatives of secular political and judicial authority, the Bishop and later, Archbishop of Salvador stood at the apex of the ecclesiastical hierarchy. In matters of faith he exercised broad powers over the secular clergy in the parishes and the population of the colony as a whole, but also over the various religious missionary orders and their indigenous charges as well. In addition, the Bishop exercised judicial authority through his Episcopal court in matters that touched on the faith. Finally, the municipality of Salvador through its city council (*Senado da Câmara*) represented the local or municipal authority which had its own claims to legitimacy as a representative of royal power.

All of these sources of authority were present in some form or another in all of the Brazilian towns and cities, but in Salvador, the colonial capital, these various lines of authority were usually represented by the highest ranking official in each chain of command and thus there may have been a particularly acute sensitivity to infringement of what were considered the prerogatives and attributes of authority and of the public manifestation of them. Thus the city's public spaces became a stage on which those prerogatives could be ordered, and where loyalty and fealty could be demonstrated.

The potential for conflict became a reality in 1623 when during the Corpus Christi procession in June, there was a rupture in the agreed upon hierarchy of precedence. The Câmara of Salvador insisted that the city's banner be placed before the cross in the procession. Moreover, there seems to have been a dispute between the Governor and the Bishop about their relative position in the procession's order. The Bishop, Dom Marcos Teixeira strenuously objected to this affront to the Church and to his authority. A scuffle took place, and the Bishop then appealed the case to royal justice, that is, to the *Relação*. The judges, however, decided in favour of the Câmara and ruled that the city's banner should precede the pallio, the awning under which the Eucharist was displayed, and under which the Bishop also was carried. The Bishop appealed the decision and then lost a second time.

He was unsatisfied. Perhaps he felt unfairly treated since there had already been a struggle of authority and jurisdiction between the judges of the High Court and the *vigário geral* who presided over the Episcopal tribunal<sup>38</sup>. In 1612, the *Ouvidor geral* and other *desembargadores* had actually freed a number of people being held in the ecclesiastical prison for breaches of morality, a man not living with his wife, two women accused of sorcery and pandering, and a certain Francisco da Fonseca, a municipal judge (*juiz ordinario*) arrested for criticizing the Bishop. The Bishop had complained that such interference had weakened his authority and thus had undercut public morality. In the public theatre of the city, however, the worst affront had been the High Court's order that the *Vigário geral* not be permitted to carry the *vara*, or staff of justice, the symbol of judicial authority, despite the fact that it had been the custom of the Church's judicial officer to do so for the last sixty years<sup>39</sup>.

Dom Marcos, frustrated by his failure in the local tribunal, appealed his case to Portugal, not to the civil authority of the Desembargo do Paço, the chancery council of the Court, but to the Mesa da Consciência e Ordens, the special council that handled ecclesiastical and spiritual affairs. He apparently also struck back at the court by excommunicating one of the judges for which he was later reprimanded<sup>40</sup>.

The issue was a delicate matter of balancing the relative order of royal, municipal, and ecclesiastical authority. The Mesa turned for advice to a legal specialist, the former desembargador of the Bahian High Court, Afonso Garcia Tinoco, a man «who was many years in those parts»<sup>41</sup>. Tinoco confirmed that the dispute was a common one and that in a similar case in Faro in the Algarve, a royal decision had been made in favour of the municipality. The Mesa da Consciência followed his counsel but it ordered that while the white dove on the banner of the city should precede the crosses, the *vereadores* or town councilors should walk behind the pallio. This was a matter of some importance since the pallio was symbolic of the highest respect and was thus appropriate for the Eucharist or for the king himself, although the privilege of using it had sometimes been assumed by high ecclesiastical authorities. It was considered a privilege and honour to carry the poles or standards that supported the pallio, and local elites paid considerable attention to who received this distinction. On the question of precedence between the Governor and the Bishop, Tinoco noted that the king had

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<sup>38</sup> The Governor had been admonished to warn the *desembargadores* to proceed with great caution and justification (*tento e justificação*) in dealing with ecclesiastical officials. See AGS, Sec. Prov. 1511, fls. 358v.-359, Burgos, 3 Oct 1613.

<sup>39</sup> BI, King to Gaspar de Sousa, Lisbon, 31 July 1612, fl. 67-67v., fl. 75; AGS, Sec. Prov. 1511, Burgos, 3 Oct. 1615.

<sup>40</sup> *Corpo chronologico*, III, 121 (Carta régia, 7 May 1624).

<sup>41</sup> Consulta (23 Nov 1623), ANTT, Mesa da Con. Liv. 28, fls. 231v.-232v.

already ruled on that issue. Governor-General Diogo Botelho had received a royal order that the Bishop should precede him on such occasions. The Bishop continued to object, but the Dutch capture of the city in 1624 made the issue irrelevant for a year. Finally, in 1627 a royal *alvará* settled the matter by ordering that the flag of the Câmara should always precede the crosses in all the processions<sup>42</sup>. This dispute had involved the four principal sources of authority, the Governor, the Bishop, the High Court, and the Municipal Council, each of which had sought to demonstrate its authority and its dignity through its claims to precedence within public view within the context of urban space.

These disputes of precedence were characteristic of the municipal celebrations and they were always just beneath the surface of political and social relations. In 1643, a dispute between the Bishop, Dom Pedro da Silva and the Governor led to the unedifying spectacle of the Bishop leaving the shade of the pallio and shouting and pushing the councilman carrying the Câmara's banner and threatening him with excommunication. The standard bearer was forced to place the banner along with those of the tradesmen's corporations causing a general scandal. The problem continued to plague the decorum of the public festivals. In 1659, the Câmara requested another royal order clarifying once and for all that the municipal flag should precede the crosses in the processions<sup>43</sup>. The issue continued to provoke conflicts. In 1663, the Cabido da Sé (Cathedral chapter) refused to participate in the Corpo de Deus of that year because the Governor, Francisco Barreto, had insisted on the participation of the Câmara without their flag since the presence of the king was already represented. This decision had apparently disrupted the usual order of march in which the flag of the municipality followed the pallio which was then followed by the citizens, with the Câmara marking the end of the procession. This alteration in practice caused a general uproar, especially when according to the ecclesiastics, Barreto had responded by punishing and humiliating the members of the ecclesiastical order and their families<sup>44</sup>.

Honor and rank certainly remained a primary consideration in these disputes, but not the only one. The costs of these processions weighed heavily on the economy of administration. In 1661, the municipal council reported it was spending at least 40\$000 a year on the processions and was seeking relief in the form of subsidies and relief from tax obligations because of its recurring expenses with the royal processions<sup>45</sup>. In 1694, the crown intervened to moderate a dispute between the Câmara and the Cathedral

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<sup>42</sup> ANTT, Chan, Filipe III, liv. 16, fls. 110v-111.

<sup>43</sup> AHU, Bahia, caixa 17, doc. 1945 (22 Sept. 1659) Projeto Resgate (ser. Luiza da Fonseca).

<sup>44</sup> AHU, Bahia, caixa 17, doc. 1945 (22 August 1663), Projeto Resgate (Luiza da Fonseca).

<sup>45</sup> AHU, Bahia, caixa 15, doc. 1798 (2 June 1661), Projecto Resgate (Luiza da Fonseca).

chapter (*cabido*) because the municipal council had only extended an oral invitation to the clerics to participate in the procession of St. Francis Xavier, and then had not reserved seating for them in the church for that procession or for that of the other patron of the city, Santo António de Arguim<sup>46</sup>.

The tensions over the protocol and responsibilities of the Câmara in relation to the order and symbols of the processions continued throughout the following century. Disputes over the cost and size of the wax tapers that were to be carried in the processions extended over the whole century<sup>47</sup>. The Câmara was responsible for supplying the wax for the large tapers (*torchas*) that were to be carried in the royal processions. This was a considerable expense. The size of the candles was a marker of relative status and therein lay the problem. In 1695, the cathedral chapter had asked the king to insist that the cathedral chapter and the priests who were to say mass after the procession be supplied with wax tapers. The Câmara then complained that the Archbishop had given the large tapers not only to the members of the chapter, but to other members of the church, and even the choir, which had meant added expense for the municipal council. In 1775, the Câmara wrote to the crown to complain of yet another dispute with the Archbishop and the cathedral chapter over this matter. Other corporate bodies in the society were also involved in the issue. The Câmara had provided tapers of three lbs. to the *desembargadores* (high court judges) of the *Relação*. The knights of the military orders had traditionally carried candles of one lb. and they were offended, asking to be treated with equal respect. In 1772, the *Mesa da Consciência e Ordens* had ordered that knights of the military orders, all of whom were required to march, were to carry tapers of three lbs. as well and it insisted that the *desembargadores*, who were usually also members of the military orders, wear the gowns of their orders and march with the corporate body of the knights. But the Archbishop now insisted that the chapter members and other clergy also carry the three lb. candles and they had caused a scandal by publicly refusing to accept the smaller tapers. In 1775 the Câmara turned to the crown again complaining that the Governor of Bahia had to intervene in order to «pacify» the Archbishop who while holding the Holy Sacrament in his hands during the *Corpo de Deus* procession had been shouting and gesturing while demanding that the Câmara hand out the larger tapers to the chapter members. All of this had scandalized the «people (*povo*)» who were, after all, not only participants, but also the intended audience for these actions of a theatre state.

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<sup>46</sup> Silva CAMPOS, *Procissões tradicionais*, 230; RUY, Affonso, *História da Câmara*, pp. 158-159.

<sup>47</sup> Arquivo Histórico Ultramarino, Bahia, docs. 8772, 8773 of the series catalogued by Castro e Almeida. In 1648 the members of the Overseas Council petitioned and received the right to receive large wax tapers like those of the members of other royal councils so that they could participate in the public processions. See AHU, Conselho Ultramarino, caixa 1, doc. 20 (1648).

### The Câmara, Nobility and People

Recent historiography has emphasized the importance of local power that the municipal councils of continental and overseas Portugal represented<sup>48</sup>. The «principal persons» of the community staffed the councils and service in them as a *vereador* (councilman) or a *juiz ordinário* (municipal judge) qualified them as a kind of local «nobility» of service, hierarchically between the *fidalgos* and the common folk. In Salvador (and elsewhere in Brazil), those positions were consistently held by an interlocking group of extended families of the sugar planter elite for the most part until the end of the Seventeenth Century when merchants also began to acquire these distinctions. In the case of Salvador where so many of the *vereadores* were sugar planters or cane farmers, these men believed that they constituted a «nobreza da terra», not simply by the fact of their municipal functions, but because their life-style, authority, and local status and command of subordinates and slaves entitled them to be considered noble. Their hope was to acquire the attributes of *fidalgia* such as membership in an order of knighthood or an entailed estate as evidence of that nobility. In any case, those who served in the principal municipal offices became a political class or patriciate of «honored» citizens for whom their appearance in the *festas reais* carrying the staff of office or supporting the poles of the pallio made clear their status in the community.

But despite the rank of «local nobility» gained by grant or by such municipal service, the Câmara also stood as the representative organ of the «povo», as the formulaic phrase, «câmara, nobreza e povo», indicated, and thus the Câmara joined both attributes of nobility and the popular classes in its function and image. This meant in general, that it also spoke for the corporations of artisan crafts and, by extension, the lay brotherhoods and guild organizations of the community<sup>49</sup>. While the Câmara exercised a number of vital economic functions such as local taxation, food supply, public health, market regulation, and even setting the fair price for sugar, it also had important symbolic functions that were made manifest in its organization of public ceremonies. These took on an added importance in the colonial context of Brazil, for whereas in Portugal the third estate or

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<sup>48</sup> See for example, Joaquim Romero MAGALHÃES, «Reflexões sobre a estrutura municipal portuguesa e a sociedade colonial brasileira», *Revista de História Económica e Social*, 16 (1985); «Os nobres da governança das terras» (typescript); Nuno Gonçalo MONTEIRO, «Os concelhos e as comunidades», in J. MATTOSO (ed.), *História de Portugal*, Lisbon, 1992, 4, pp. 303-331; Maria Fernanda BICALHO, *A cidade e o império. O Rio de Janeiro no século XVIII*, Rio de Janeiro, 2000, and her «As câmaras ultramarinas e o governo do império», in J. FRAGOSO, M. BICALHO, and M. GOUVÊA (eds.), *O antigo regime nos trópicos*, Rio de Janeiro, 2001, pp. 189-222, and her «As câmaras municipais no império português: o exemplo do Rio de Janeiro», *Revista Brasileira de História*, 18, pp. 251-280.

<sup>49</sup> See A. J. R. RUSSELL-WOOD, «Prestige, Power and Piety in Colonial Brazil: The Third Orders of Salvador», *Hispanic American Historical Review*, 1989, 69, 1, pp. 61-89.

«povo» was politically and symbolically represented by the leading municipal councils of the country in the assembly of the kingdom or Cortes, colonial populations usually enjoyed no such representation<sup>50</sup>. The *festas reais*, therefore, were perhaps the most important moments when the reciprocal support of the «republic» and the king was reaffirmed<sup>51</sup>. As Joaquim Romero Magalhães has stated, «in ancient regime Portugal there were only two political authorities, the king and the Câmaras»<sup>52</sup>.

In the creation of a theatrical rendering of the social order and the demonstration of the hierarchy of authority that the royal processions represented, the Câmara played an important role of sponsorship in which it was able to demonstrate its loyalty and adherence to that order. Traditionally, the municipal council represented the presence of both the «nobreza» (nobility) and the «povo» (people,) within the body politic, and thus its function was to reinforce the integration of those elements of society. Its participation and sponsorship of an act that united royal and ecclesiastical authority brought together symbolically the three estates of the society of orders and the presence of the king.

The role of the Câmara in sponsoring and staging the *festas reais* was complicated. Its authority and power was expressed in its ability to organize and police the urban space of the city in events at which attendance was required by law. Its loyalty and its importance was also emphasized by its assumption of the costs of mounting these public ceremonies, but in the case of Salvador and other municipal councils, these financial burdens in the payments for wax candles, decorations, and other expenses were often more than the Câmara's could handle and the costs revealed the limitations of municipal power<sup>53</sup>. When the Câmara of Salvador was forced to sell its silver inkwells to finance a procession because it could not suffer the scandal that would result if it failed to stage the event, it revealed the inherent contradiction in its position.

Within the context of a colonial, multiracial society, the significance of the terminology of rule and authority took on different meanings over time, and the Senado da Câmara's relationship with the working classes of Salvador was ambiguous. After the Portuguese restoration of 1640, Dom João IV offered to various Brazilian cities and to both Rio de Janeiro (1642) and to Salvador (1646) certain municipal privileges – the so-called liberties of the citizens of Oporto – as a way of emphasizing a somewhat «populist» approach to rule, but also to sweeten the pill of increased financial burdens

<sup>50</sup> See Pedro CARDIM, *Cortes e cultura política no Portugal do antigo regime* (Lisbon, 1998), 65-79. BICALHO, *A cidade e o império*, 367-395 discusses the action of colonial representatives to the Cortes in the Restoration period after 1640.

<sup>51</sup> António Manuel HESPAÑHA, «As cortes e o reino. Da união à restauração», *Cuadernos de História Moderna*, 11, 1991, pp. 21-56.

<sup>52</sup> Romero MAGALHÃES, «Reflexões», 19.

<sup>53</sup> This point is nicely made by Maria de Fátima Silva GOUVÊA, «Poder, autoridade e o senado da câmara do Rio de Janeiro, ca. 1780-1820», *Tempo*, 13 July, 2002, pp. 111-155.

during the war of the Restoration. In Salvador, representatives of the artisan guilds called the *juiz do povo* (People's judge) and two *procuradores de mestres* (people's advocates) were permitted to serve on the municipal council after the council itself had asked for them «as was the custom in the notable cities and towns of Portugal»<sup>54</sup>. These artisan representatives served on the Câmara from 1641-1714 supposedly to better inform the Senado da Câmara of the popular will and to represent the interests of the popular classes. The representatives themselves became a kind of labour aristocracy, but the relationship between the aldermen and these direct representatives of the artisans and tradesmen were not always smooth<sup>55</sup>. The artisan representatives were subjected to discrimination in the council meetings, and eventually because of their agitation of popular opinion against an unpopular salt-contractor and in forcing the Câmara to send relief to beleaguered Rio de Janeiro after the French attacked it in 1710, they were removed from the Senado. Symbolic representation of the «people», was one thing, actually serving in their interests was another for the «nobreza da terra» that held municipal office<sup>56</sup>. Still, there were those who objected to their removal, but although the Câmara actually complained that «the capital city of Brazil had been reduced to the status of the meanest town», and that the *juiz do povo* and *mesteres* were essential for understanding the general will.

To some extent this growing discomfort in the Câmara's role as spokesman for the popular classes may have been due to an increasing perception of those classes not as the «povo», the third estate of the traditional juridical order of medieval society, but rather as a «plebe», composed of a disorderly and truculent population of free blacks, mulattos, and the poor, to say nothing of the mass of slaves from which it had developed. This attitude was continually reflected in a discourse that referred to the common people in deprecating terms as a *ralé* or as the *vulgo*, and that eventually saw them simply as a «congregation of the poor», in the words of Luís dos Santos Vilhena<sup>57</sup>. Various observers of the Brazilian scene, almost all of them representing the attitudes of the political and social elites, commented on the racial composition of the Brazilians. Whereas beginning in the Sixteenth Century, the inhabitants of Brazil had been negatively characterized as New Christians of Jewish origin, by the Eighteenth Century, they were also seen as the products of a miscegenation with potentially disruptive social

<sup>54</sup> *Actas da Câmara*, 2, pp. 189-190.

<sup>55</sup> Maria Helena FLEXOR, *Oficiais mecânicos na cidade do Salvador*, Salvador, 1974, pp. 9-13.

<sup>56</sup> BOXER, *Portuguese Society*, pp. 76-77. See also, João FRAGOSO, Maria de Fátima Silva GOUVÊA, Maria Fernanda Baptista BICALHO, «Uma leitura do Brasil Colonial. Bases da materialidade e da governabilidade no Império», *Penélope*, 23, 2000, pp. 67-88.

<sup>57</sup> I have developed this argument more fully in Stuart B. SCHWARTZ, «Gente da terra brasileira da nação. Pensando o Brasil: a construção de um povo», in Carlos Guilherme MOTA (ed.), *Viagem incompleta*, 2 vols., São Paulo, 2000, 1, pp. 105-25. A somewhat modified version also appears in Stuart B. SCHWARTZ, «O povo: Ausente e presente na história da Bahia e do Brasil», *Anais. IV Congresso de História da Bahia*, 4 vols., Salvador, 2001, 1, pp. 263-281.

consequences. The Carmelite, Domingos de Loreto Couto wrote in his *Desagravos do Brasil e glórias de Pernambuco* in 1757 that every white person believed that they were not part of the plebe because to be white was to be noble, even if they were tradesmen or artisans. He added, «the commoners of colour with an immoderate desire for honours, which are denied to them not so much by their condition as by their substance, accommodate poorly to their different status. The Blacks, as soon as they are free, think there is nothing lacking to make them like the whites». The Marquês de Lavradio, Governor of Bahia and later Viceroy of Brazil noted in 1768, that «it was a great effort to find a White, that is someone who really was white, because there [Bahia] they call Whites those who among us we would only with great license call mulattos»<sup>58</sup>.

These perceptions of colour and racial difference influenced the response to civic display.

In 1765, for example, the Governor of Bahia sought to prohibit the brotherhood of the Holy Spirit (Espírito Santo) founded by Azoreans, but followed by blacks and mulattos, what he called, an «ínfima plebe», from parading on the streets in costume, singing and dancing under the direction of their «Emperor» in order to raise money for the festival of the Holy Spirit<sup>59</sup>. He reminded the Colonial Office that while in Portugal «the plebe is made up of white men raised to fear and respect the Law and Christianity», this was not the case in Salvador where it was composed of «insolent mulattos and ignorant blacks». The decision by the master craftsmen of Salvador in the Eighteenth-century to parade in the civic processions as brothers of the Misericórdia rather than walk in the ranks with the flags of their trades along with the poor and ill-dressed journeymen was a sign of growing social division and awareness of it in Bahian society<sup>60</sup>. Despite this growing rift between the Câmara's symbolic role as representative of both the republic and the king, and of the former's loyalty to the latter manifest in its celebration of the *festas reais*, and its political function as the organ of popular expression, the Câmara continued to perform its traditional civic ceremonial duties as the population it represented turned increasingly into a plebe, the result of the natural development of a slave society.

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<sup>58</sup> Domingos Loreto COUTO, in José Antônio Gonsalves de MELLO (ed.), *Desagravos do Brasil e glórias de Pernambuco*, Recife, 1986, pp. 226-27. [O vulgo da cor parda com o imoderado desejo de honras de que o priva não tanto o acidente, como a substância, mal se acomoda com as diferenças. O da cor preta tanto que se vê com a liberdade, cuida que nada mais lhe falta para ser como os brancos]; Marquês de LAVRADIO, *Cartas da Bahia, 1768-69*, Rio de Janeiro, 1972, p. 34.

<sup>59</sup> OTT, *Formação...*, cit., 2, pp. 111-114. On the importance of the Divino Espírito Santo see Martha ABREU, *O império do divino. Festas religiosas e cultura popular no Rio de Janeiro, 1830-1900*, São Paulo, 1999.

<sup>60</sup> BOXER, *Portuguese Society*, 91, citing Carlos OTT, *Formação e evolução étnica da Cidade do Salvador*, 2 vols., Salvador, 1955-1957, 2, pp. 32-33.