

Luso-tropicalism Debunked, Again

Race, Racism, and Racialism in Three Portuguese-Speaking Societies

Cristiana Bastos

Luso-tropicalism's Afterlife and the Need for Further Research

The term Luso-tropicalism was crafted in the 1950s by the Brazilian anthropologist and cultural historian Gilberto Freyre.¹ In his earlier works on colonial Brazil, Freyre suggested that the Portuguese colonizers had a special ability to adapt to the tropics by easily intermingling, intermarrying, and interchanging cultural elements with different peoples, given that they were themselves the result of multiple mixtures.² Two decades later, he expanded the idea into a concept suitable to all societies sharing Portuguese influence, whether colonial plantations, settler societies, or conquest territories.³

Before Luso-tropicalism could mature—or expire—as a theory, it was borrowed for political purposes by the Portuguese government and pasted into the official doctrine of the regime. The new doctrine, a combination of old imperial tropes and Freyre's novel ideas, was propagated in the 1960s and early 1970s. At its core was the assertion of a benign, humanistic, and nonracist distinctive Portuguese character as best shown in the tropics. From that assumption followed the claims about empire not being an empire but a unique multiracial nation across the continents, and colonies not being colonies but parts of a singular nation that extended from Minho in Northern Portugal to distant Timor in Southeast Asia. Those rhetorical devices were meant to dismiss the challenges to the Portuguese colonial rule that came from three fronts: internal political opponents, African nationalist movements, and the United Nations. Hardly convincing to the outside world, the ideas were internally imposed via propaganda and censorship. It is debatable whether

Freyre subscribed to the apologetic, indoctrinating, and nationalist tones of Luso-tropicalism's later version.

As the Portuguese authoritarian regime ended in 1974 and its colonial rule in Africa dissolved in 1975, one would expect Luso-tropicalism to be now a curiosity of the past. Yet, it keeps reappearing: in 2017, during an official visit to the island of Gorée, Senegal, a place where world leaders had formally apologized for the past involvement of their nations and institutions in the Atlantic slave trade, the president of Portugal evoked Luso-exceptionalism.⁴ Back home, the episode ignited a public debate on the politics of reparation, the Portuguese role on the slave trade, and the effects of that involvement on the racialized inequalities of contemporary society.⁵ Other examples illustrate the vitality of Luso-tropicalism's afterlife: in 2016 and 2017, when a mainstream newspaper published the double series "Racism in Portuguese" and "Racism, the Portuguese Way," which gave voice to the experience of nonwhite subjects living in Portugal, many accused the initiative of "reverse racism."⁶ In 2017, when the European Social Survey revealed a high score of the subtle racism variable among the Portuguese, many in the public dismissed the conclusion because "everyone knew that the Portuguese were not racist."⁷ And when activists and scholars suggested that the next population census, in 2020, should include ethnic/racial categories in order to better assess the social inequalities related to racial discrimination, they were blamed for opening a Pandora's box that would lead to racist havoc.⁸

The current debates in Portugal recall earlier episodes in Brazil. We know now that perhaps over half the Brazilian population descends from Africans forcedly brought into the plantations, before and after Brazil's independence from Portugal. Yet until recently that number was hard to estimate due to the reluctance to address race and to the strength of the belief in the advantages of national color blindness as an antidote to racism. In the 1950s, Florestan Fernandes and Roger Bastide were accused of creating a problem by candidly addressing racial relations in Brazil.⁹ Decades later, Lilia Schwarcz would receive similar criticism for her work on racialist conceptions in historical Brazil.¹⁰ In the 2000s, when anti-racist activists set the tone for affirmative action and some universities adopted quotas for student enrollment, they were accused of promoting racism by introducing foreign categories like "black" or "Afro-descendent."

Time and again, the tension between the political use of racial categories and the ideal of a society freed of racial categories—both of them presented as the best response against racist practices—emerges in Portuguese-speaking societies; then along come claims of color blindness, exceptionalism, and other tropes of Luso-tropicalism. Despite much debunking, and despite having lost their original function of supporting an anachronistic empire, Luso-tropicalist ideas persist and remain attached to claims of exceptionalism in racial matters.

And while exceptionalism is a common assertion of nations and empires, the use of miscegenation as a keyword to obfuscate racist practices and racialist beliefs is peculiar. It deserves further analysis, and hence this chapter: one more attempt to debunk Luso-tropicalism, to understand why it is there in the first place, and why it has persisted for so long.

My analysis diverges from existing scholarship on Luso-tropicalism in empirical references and in approach. I will briefly review the genealogy of the concept and correlated doctrine, but I will not engage directly with Freyre's writings or with the social contexts from where he drew his data—his origins in the Brazilian Northeast, and the places he visited in Africa and Asia. Nor will I look for signs of proto- or para-Luso-tropicalism in other writers. Instead, I will analyze practices and theorizations in Portuguese-speaking contexts that go in the opposite direction. I will examine three cases of racialized lives and racialist theorizations in Portuguese overseas communities external to Freyre's references: the community of early Portuguese settlers and their descendants in the southern Angola plateau, as seen by the physical anthropologist Alberto C. Germano da Silva Correia, who developed his own version of Luso-exceptionalism in the tropics;¹¹ the Portuguese in New England, as analyzed by the sociologist Donald Taft and as embodied in the local protests against him;¹² and the Portuguese in Hawai'i, as depicted in a variety of sources and ongoing research.¹³

From Concept to Doctrine: Rebranding Empire as Moral Miscegenation

Freyre was already famous for his books *Casa-grande & senzala* and *Sobrados e Mucambos* when he was invited to visit and write about the Portuguese colonies in Africa and Asia.¹⁴ His earlier books had been innovative against the prevailing commonsense and the existing scholarship about colonial Brazil. Whereas the Portuguese were generally viewed in Brazil as predators and malign colonizers who should be blamed for the country's backwardness, or as parasitic and greedy shopkeepers, or yet as the fools in ethnic jokes, Freyre depicted them as imaginative, creative, even sexy colonizers who engaged in intimate relations with the Indigenous South Americans and displaced Africans. From that process had resulted the unique, beautiful, and cheerfully miscegenated Brazil.¹⁵

Freyre's style was too colorful for Salazar, the conservative, authoritarian, and austere prime minister of Portugal since 1932. Salazar promoted an ideal of modesty and religiosity that could not be further from Freyre's portrayal of the Portuguese as slick and sexy adventurers. Freyre's books were full of intercourse, romance, gestures, sounds, flavors, weaknesses, pleasures, interracial

encounters and transactions—in sum, everything that the stiff historians and ideologues of Portuguese empire were not inclined to mention or celebrate. Yet, the modernist-oriented Portuguese propaganda director António Ferro foresaw the potential interest in coopting Freyre for modernizing the official discourse of the Portuguese state.¹⁶ New symbols and a general rebranding were needed to replace the old imperial display and bold endorsement of racial hierarchies patent in the 1934 Portuguese Colonial Exhibition in Porto and the 1940 Exhibition of the “Portuguese World” in Lisbon.¹⁷ Such need was proportional to the anachronism of Salazar’s project.¹⁸

Ferro invited Freyre for a tour of the empire, but his schedule did not allow it. A new invitation was met with the same impossibility. A third attempt, now from the Head of the Overseas Ministry Morais Sarmiento, was finally successful. Meanwhile, Salazar had to be persuaded into reading Freyre; we do not know if he actually did, but we know the two met in Lisbon in 1951. Freyre’s charm and genuine Lusophilia convinced Salazar. Freyre reported the meeting with some esthetic distance. He also claimed not to accept constraints, and to write freely about what he observed.¹⁹

Freyre’s reflective notes are compiled in the travelogue *Aventura e Rotina*. It allows us to follow the ways he processed his encounters. One deceptive moment occurred in Cape Verde, an archipelago whose population had grown from multiple unions of people of diverse African and European backgrounds. Cape Verdean intellectuals had found *Casa-grande & senzala* a most inspiring book to interpret their own society. Cape Verde could provide ground for further elaborations of Freyre’s accounts and theories—or so they expected. But Freyre was not too impressed with the place or its people; he did not celebrate it as the epitome of miscegenation or show any particular interest for it—frustrating Cape Verdean colleagues’ expectations. Also, he got to know Angola and Mozambique only superficially. He exulted, however, in Goa, which he found much similar to his homeland Brazil and where he first formulated the basis of Luso-tropicalism before an audience.²⁰

The Luso-tropicalism doctrine was gradually adopted, and adapted, by the Portuguese regime. It was used in official documents and taught to colonial administrators, who learned to use the new vocabulary and repeat the mantra of nonracism, while also learning how to implement colonial authority and to represent the state in heavily racialized societies. In 1961, the government sponsored the publication of the institutional volume *The Portuguese and the Tropics* in several languages, which became the source and matrix for many supporting outlets—from textbooks to films and radio programs, from official memos to interventions in the UN.²¹

With no disavowal available, for the regime had a strong apparatus of censorship, many in Portugal and its colonies were fed the soothing idea that they were involved not in an anachronistic and racist imperial rule in Africa but

in a *sui generis* civilizational mission of bringing together different peoples of the world under one nation and language. “Empire” and “colonial” were edited out of the official language and replaced with an imagery of a pluricontinental and multiracial nation cemented by benign interactions.²² The fact that those ideas coexisted with daily racist practices speaks of the power of ideology to filter the perception of practices and make possible the persistence of the double-bind notion of a nonracist colonial rule.

Defeated Tales of Empire: The Racialism of Germano Correia

When Freyre was on the tour of Portuguese colonies that led to his Luso-tropicalist epiphany in Goa, another author, ironically a son of Goa, was finishing his six-volume racialist elegy, *The History of Portuguese Colonization in India*.²³ That author was Alberto Germano da Silva Correia, who in many instances stands for a symmetrical counterpart to Freyre.²⁴ Like Freyre, Correia claimed that the Portuguese had a special vocation to adapt, survive, and make a living in the tropics. But unlike Freyre, he believed that racial purity and strict endogamy were key to the success of the Portuguese in southern lands. Like Freyre, Correia wrote extensively, most often about the Portuguese in the tropics. Unlike Freyre, he never achieved notoriety beyond a small circle. The racialism that had guided him became obsolete and infamous after World War II. Yet, his work deserves analysis in what it reveals about miscegenation anxieties in Portuguese-speaking contexts.

Correia was born in 1888 as a *descendente*—the caste-like group of those born in India who traced their lineage exclusively to Portuguese ancestors. With the declining Portuguese influence in Goa in the nineteenth century, the past privilege and power of the *descendentes* were also in decline. They held to their prestige and dreaded being taken as mixed race—as did the other influential groups of Christian Brahmins and *Chardós*, whose ancestors had converted to Catholicism, accommodated to the Portuguese structures of power, and held aristocratic Portuguese names, but did not praise intermarrying.²⁵

Correia transported his obsession about lineage purity to his writings, which combine empirical-based research with a constant appraisal of the Portuguese and a racialist framework. Although he worked on a variety of topics, much of his energy went into assessing the racial purity of the Portuguese descendants in India and Africa.²⁶ When serving in Angola as a physician in the 1920s, he met a group of descendants of Portuguese settlers from Madeira living in Huíla. Contrary to other Portuguese who had come to Angola, those settlers had not dissolved into the local population, disappeared from the sight of the state, or contributed massively to miscegenation. They had created, in

Correia's words, a successful Eurafrikan population of Luso-Angolans. Based on that case, he argued that the Portuguese adaptation to the tropics resulted on an improvement of their race—not by mixing with the locals but by following strict endogamic practices.²⁷ He could not imagine that when, decades later, the government promoted a massive white settlement in Angola, the group he described would be racialized by the newcomers into a subaltern position (“chicoronhos,” “second-class whites,” “Madeirans,” etc.) in a hierarchy that combined geographies, labor positions, and collective identifications.

The racialized reality of Huíla depicted by the racist Correia was almost the opposite of Freyre's Luso-tropical dream of nonracialized interactions. Even though Freyre and Correia claimed to know of each other, it is unlikely that they truly read each other's works. Their work and lives went into opposite directions. Freyre's studies became famous; Correia's themes became infamous. He finished his life in obscurity and passed away in Lisbon in 1967, a few years after Goa became part of the Indian.



Figure 10.1. Portuguese settlers from Madeira at Chibia, Huíla Plateau, Angola, circa 1890. Lithography over original photograph by J. Cunha Moraes. Source: *As colónias portuguesas*, March 1891. Kindly reproduced from the journal by Fernando Ladeira, Lisbon Geographic Society.

Contested Whiteness: The Racialized Reception to Taft's Racialist *Two Portuguese Communities in New England*

The 1920s were a time of renewal in anthropology. And while Germano Correia was in Angola measuring the offspring of white settlers in order to expand his racialist theories, Freyre was in New York starting a journey into the opposite direction. Contrary to popular belief, he was not a doctoral student of Franz Boas at Columbia University. Freyre was there working on his Masters degree, and not under Boas supervision. The two met informally, however, and Boas's concepts visibly influenced Freyre's later works. Freyre would join the number of those who, like Boas and his celebrity students Ruth Benedict, Margaret Mead, and Alfred Kroeber, contributed to the shift from the centrality of biological race to that of culture in anthropology. The discipline was changing altogether, its social and cultural branch splitting from the physical-biological one. Whether endorsing the *Volksgeist*-inspired notion of culture as popularized in the United States, the structure-and-function approach to society used in Britain, or the attention to the mechanisms of solidarity and exchange proposed by Durkheim and Mauss in France, social scientists in the 1920s were ready to discard race and racialism.

Yet, some remained attached to the old paradigm, from Correia and his anthropometrics in Goa and Angola to many of the scholars at Columbia University. One example is Donald Taft and his 1923 doctoral dissertation, *Two Portuguese Communities in New England*. There is no evidence that the Massachusetts-born-and-bred Taft, then a mature doctoral student teaching elsewhere, met the young Brazilian graduate student Freyre—even though they might have been the only two on campus with an interest on things Portuguese. Their routes were very different, and Taft's take on the Portuguese is eloquent about that.

Taft studied with meticulous detail two communities of Portuguese migrant laborers in southern New England: one in industrial Fall River, Massachusetts, and the other in rural Portsmouth, Rhode Island. Those were the empirical settings for his investigation on the social determinants of the high infant mortality rates in communities with many Portuguese migrants. His methods were state of the art: he used sophisticated statistical analysis, consulted multiple sources, engaged in local observation, interviewed with an interpreter, and analyzed the data with comments on the social and economic factors of distress behind poor health indicators. His account matched the purposes of social science. Yet, his conclusion blamed it all on race: the high infant mortality among the Portuguese was closer to that of black communities than of white communities because the Portuguese were mixed raced to begin with, their African blood bringing them closer to African Americans than to their white



Figure 10.2. Portuguese boys in Fall River, Massachusetts, circa 1910. Photograph by Lewis Wickes Hine. Courtesy of Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division / LC-USZ62-108765.

counterparts. As the conclusion contradicts the analysis of the data provided in other chapters, one may speculate whether the racist comments were endorsed in full by the author or imposed by his supervisor, Frank Giddings.²⁸

The Portuguese who read or heard about the book rejected its racialized tone. Letters and articles against it appeared in the Portuguese press of Fall River, followed by that of New Bedford. Different from Fall River's homogeneous community of recent Azorean migrants working the cotton mills' entry positions, New Bedford's was a diverse mix of Portuguese laborers, fishers, artisans, tailors, professionals, businesspeople, musicians, and more; together they kept several associations, clubs, and newspapers. They called for a meeting meant to prepare a written protest and were met with much success. The enthusiasm was such that the meeting became a demonstration of no less than six thousand people.²⁹ Six thousand people demonstrating in the streets against a book that hardly any of them had read was not about literary disapproval or academic disagreement, but about how they took offense. The demonstrators could not take lightly the epithet of miscegenation. In support of their point, they evoked history, ancestry, nobility, poets, warriors, genealogy—in sum, variations on racial purity. Like the author they so much repudiated, they endorsed racialism and disliked miscegenation, the core of Luso-tropicalism.

Taft left the subject of the Portuguese of New England and their health patterns behind and moved into other research interests like criminology and international migration.³⁰ Yet his book remained one of the few, if not the only one, about the Portuguese in America; despite the historical importance of the Portuguese in areas like New England, California, Hawai'i, and New Jersey, they remained a relatively unstudied and invisible community in the US.³¹ When in the 1960s the *New York Times* published a series about the different ethnic groups and nationalities that made the United States, it was *Two Portuguese Communities* that was chosen to represent the group that had so disliked it decades before.

In and Out of the Plantation: The Portuguese in Hawai'i

There was, however, one place—a former Indigenous kingdom transformed into a US insular territory—where the Portuguese were quite visible and included in numerous social studies: Hawai'i.³² From 1878, a Hawaiian kingdom–government-sponsored migration of Portuguese islanders began from the intersection of the Hawaiian government's putative interest to reverse population decline and sugar planters' interest in additional working hands.³³ Prior to that, a few hundred Portuguese, mainly single men, had already arrived in the islands as whalers and sailors who jumped ship and married native Hawaiians. That situation changed with the massive arrival of around twenty thousand Portuguese contract laborers between 1878 and 1913, who came mostly as families and married among themselves.³⁴ Many went to the plantations and established micro-communities, side by side with other groups of laborers: native Hawaiians, Chinese, and, later, Japanese, Filipinos, and others. Many also went to the city and worked in masonry, commerce, and services. Many in the sugar fields moved up to the position of *lunas*, the horse-riding intermediaries who supervised the work gang—although the head supervisors were mainly of Northern European descent.³⁵ Others became *paniolas* (ranch cowboys). Many moved out of the plantation and established businesses. Some moved to California. Many had residence and businesses in Punchbowl, a neighborhood of Honolulu that still holds some names of Portuguese resonance, like Madeira, Azores, or Lusitana streets.³⁶ In the year 1911, the Portuguese were 11.6 percent of the population in Hawai'i.³⁷

Often considered the “last of the magic islands,” society in Hawai'i contrasted with the continental United States in its race-based divisions; mainland visitors tended to see there a paradise of color blindness. This perception was reinforced by the existence of substantial intermarriage between native Hawaiian elites (*ali'i*) and *haole* (white, foreign) traders, missionaries, and planters from Great Britain and New England. Intergroup marriages also occurred



Figure 10.3. Portuguese girls and a boy working in a sugar field, Lahaina, Maui, Hawai‘i, circa 1911. Photograph by Ray Jerome Baker. Courtesy of the Bishop Museum, Honolulu, Hawai‘i, www.bishopmuseum.org.

among the laboring classes, except when they came in organized, sponsored contingents of families. That was the case with the Portuguese, whom, contrary to the stereotypes proposed by Freyre, stayed mostly within their group during their first few decades in Hawai‘i.³⁸

One can only speculate what Freyre would do—or not do, just like for Cape Verde—with the ubiquity of intermarriage and references to color blindness in Hawai‘i, or with the fact that the English, not the Portuguese, married local. Perhaps he would find his stereotypical Portuguese in the whalers and sailors who had come earlier as single men and married locally, but so did all the others in those circumstances. In plantation life, however, most groups practiced endogamy. Later, and just like other groups, the Portuguese intermarried and contributed to the melting pot of Hawai‘i; nowadays Hawai‘i celebrates the multiple descents of most people, and descent is validated by genealogical research and, increasingly, by genetic testing.³⁹

Up to their merging into mainstream whiteness in the 1940 census—a process fully implemented in the aftermath of World War II—the Portuguese were a distinct, racialized group in Hawaiian society. They appeared as a separate category in the census, among “other Caucasians.” Although “race” was an ambiguous term, they were treated as a separate racial group in the team of the pioneering sociologist of racial relations in Hawai‘i, Romanzo Adams. Adams

came from Chicago in 1920 to begin the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, followed by Andrew Lind shortly after. They trained students along the lines of their mentor Robert Park, who also came to Hawai'i as a visiting professor from 1931 to 1932.⁴⁰ For decades, the group mobilized students and community members into social research, much of it dedicated to racial issues. The archives of the Romanzo Adams Social Research Laboratory, stored at the University of Hawai'i's archival collections in Hamilton Library, keep many of the students' papers from the 1920s to 1950s on topics of race, hybrid families, interracial friendships, racial experiences at work, and so forth—revealing the involvement and the excitement of applying cutting-edge sociological concepts to one's own society, group, family, personal network.⁴¹ In 1935, they began the publication of the yearly reference journal *Social Process in Hawai'i*.

Hawai'i was particularly attractive as a field to explore the sociological concepts of the day because its multiethnic society had been formed in a compressed historical time and was still in the process of change. The sugar economy developed rapidly in the second half of the nineteenth century and quickly attracted migrants from different nationalities—particularly Chinese, Portuguese, and Japanese, with Koreans, Puerto Ricans and Filipinos added to the mix in the early twentieth century—who intermingled and later intermarried with native Hawaiians, the haole class of missionaries and planters, and each other. Although none of those groups corresponded to a precise “race” in the terminology of the time, they were treated as racial categories for analytical purposes, with due distance from the biological definitions of race. Adams's classic 1937 *Interracial Marriage in Hawai'i* is punctuated with photographs of students of diverse backgrounds (“Native Hawaiian,” “Korean-Hawaiian ancestry,” “Portuguese ancestry,” “English-Japanese-Hawaiian ancestry,” etc.) that resemble those used by physical anthropologists to illustrate racial types—although, Adams notes, “they were selected to represent a social type rather than a racial type.”⁴²

Like their mentor Robert Park, Adams and colleagues used the dyad “accommodation” and “amalgamation” to study the interactions of the racialized groups. Still following Park's terminology, successful amalgamation would lead to assimilation. Along those lines also came “Social Placement of the Portuguese in Hawai'i as Indicated by Factors of Assimilation,” Gerald Estep's master's thesis in sociology at the University of Southern California.⁴³ Estep addressed the Portuguese as one group among others, who came as laborers and followed the social processes of amalgamation. Although “racialized” into a social group, there was nothing exceptional about the Portuguese—not along the lines proposed by Freyre.

The sociologists James A. Geschwender, Rita Carroll-Seguin, and Howard Brill suggest that the Portuguese in Hawai'i provide a case to demonstrate the



Figure 10.4. Picture illustrating “Portuguese ancestry” in Romanzo Adams’s *Interracial Marriage in Hawaii* (Macmillan, 1937). Photographer and model unknown. Someone has written *Pocho*—slang for Portuguese—in pencil.

universal dynamics of ethnicity—a classificatory “anomaly” in that they were of European extraction but considered local, not haole, because, contrary to the haole, who constituted a capitalist core, the Portuguese had come as labor.⁴⁴ And, like other groups of laborers, they were ethnically stereotyped—racialized as *portegee*, *pocho*, *poregee*, and so on. More recently, Moon-Kie Jung has suggested that “conceptualizing Portuguese, Japanese, Filipino and other migrants in racially disparate ways” was a way of keeping haole power and influence. The Portuguese in particular were left in “analytical ambiguity.”⁴⁵

In one rare novel about the life of the early Portuguese settlers in the Hawaiian plantations, the Portuguese-American writer Elvira Osorio Roll establishes a narrative tension in which the protagonist, who is always distancing herself from the illiterate and backward *poregee* who work in the cane fields, explaining that she descends from Portuguese aristocracy and her father owns a business, ends up being stigmatized as *poregee* herself by the haole who disapprove of her romantic involvement with a young haole man. The way she finds to respond to the haole ladies who deprecate her Portugueseness is to exhibit tales of historical grandeur of her people.⁴⁶ The poetry of Manuel Coito, known as “the poet of Punchbowl,” also often suggests topics of imperial grandeur as an ethnic pride motif.⁴⁷

By the mid-twentieth century, the Portuguese were no longer racialized but were acknowledged for their heritage, culture, and contribution to the making of modern Hawai‘i. They were associated with iconic local foods like *mala-sadas* and Portuguese sausage, and the quintessential Hawaiian ukulele, ingeniously developed by Manuel Nunes, Augusto Dias, and José do Espírito Santo from their own *braguinha*.⁴⁸ On the 1978 centennial of the arrival of the *Priscilla*, the bark that first brought sponsored Madeiran islanders, a local committee of distinguished Portuguese marked the event with several celebrations and the construction of a marble *padrão* and Portuguese cobblestone pavement downtown.⁴⁹ A plaque in the monument pays homage to the Portuguese pioneers and notes their origin and dynamics of growth and upward mobility—their full integration in the island community. To this day, the number of Portuguese family names in Hawai‘i is impressive, and although hardly anyone knows the language, there are festivals and associations that celebrate heritage and keep the flame of genealogy alight.⁵⁰

Race, Anxieties, and Double-Bind Responses: How Luso-tropicalism Became Handy and Persisted amid Racism

The three cases stand for different responses to racialized anxieties: the language of racial purity, as in Germano Correia; the idiom of racial pride, as in the response of Portuguese New Englanders to Taft; and the varying attitudes

about ethnicized hierarchies, as in Hawai'i. Contrary to the main thesis of Luso-tropicalism, there is no evidence of more propensity toward miscegenation among these Portuguese groups than among other groups. Miscegenation/segregation, like amalgamation/accommodation for the Chicago sociologists, depend on a variety of circumstances and not on a presumed inner constitution, be it presented as biology or as culture.

The Madeiran settlers in Huíla had migrated in families and remained bounded within the community—separated from the local Africans and from the neighbor Boers, with the occasional crossover for romance, sex, or marriage, but largely self-contained, subject to a racialized life as a group. Their racial purity was acclaimed by anthropologist Germano Correia—only to be later discounted by the white newcomers from Portugal who arrived in the twentieth century. The Portuguese in New England were at odds with how they were described in the racial hierarchies of the moment. In order to claim a higher position in the hierarchy, they used the iconography of imperial pride. In Hawai'i, the Portuguese were one group among many on a complex social mosaic, separated from the haole whites, enduring racial prejudice associated with their labor positions, and eventually assimilating into the mainstream, occasionally having recourse to the language of imperial endeavor as a proxy for racial/national pride. On no occasion were the tropes of Luso-tropicalism ever evoked as distinctly Portuguese traits. In the often-precarious existences in fragile, racialized social positions, Portuguese would rather use a repertory of bravery and grandeur as identifiers. Thus, exceptionalism appears in very different terms from the miscegenation later celebrated by Luso-tropicalism and evoked by some Portuguese speakers today.

Given that the positive use of miscegenation as a Portuguese trait is not ubiquitous and can be traced to one source—Freyre and its use by the Portuguese government—the question of its pervasive afterlife remains. My attempt at an answer is that Luso-tropicalism's appraisal of miscegenation should be read less for what it says than for what it opposes. Miscegenation can be seen as an oppositional identity that stands as an inversion of the derogatory visions of Portuguese expressed by others—others who are also competitors. Freyre transformed the negative mixed-race, half-caste stereotypes about the Portuguese into something positive; where others saw vice, he proved virtue, as an *avant la lettre* mixed-race pride device against prejudice and abuse from competitors, rivals, and overseers.⁵¹

To support his views, Freyre selected examples of relationships, intercourse, and offspring between colonizers and colonized or enslaved individuals in the context of Portuguese colonial history. By treating them as distinctively Portuguese, he did not account for the fact that practices of violent or consensual interracial sex, romantic arrangements, and domestic partnerships had existed in other colonial empires, later removed from visibility by the adop-

tion of stricter rules of segregation. Freyre wrote as a Brazilian shocked by the extreme segregation he found in the Southern United States. He framed the differences as contrasting, generic cultural patterns: agonistically racialized in the Anglophone world, mixed into nuances in the Iberian worlds.

It was as a major propaganda operation promoted by Salazar's regime that older imperial themes of grandeur—the pioneering colonial conquest, bravery in battles, conversion of the heathen—became combined with Freyre's glamorous miscegenation, which erased or obscured histories of colonial conquest, plantation violence, and slavery. The result of that combination was an oxymoron of sorts, a distorting mirror that provided the viewer a positive image while eclipsing from sight and cognition the harsh realities of racism and colonialism. One reason this cognitive duplicity was successful is that the two contrasting tropes could merge against a common adversary. Freyre had uplifted the Portuguese culture of mixing and mingling in opposition to an Anglophone culture of separating and accommodating. For Salazar's Portugal, the Anglophone world was the elephant in the room—figured as memories of the British competition for territories and commerce, the abolitionists criticizing labor practices in the Portuguese colonies, the UN challenging Portuguese rule in the 1960s, or in more diluted memories like the voice of English writers deprecating Portuguese “mongrelism.”

Through Freyre, the stereotypes of the lowly, racially, and culturally mongrel *poregee*, *portygee*, or *portagee* were transformed into the imaginary Luso-trope of a mixed-race, ideal figure. The 1950s and 1960s ideological maneuver that grafted Freyre's appraisal of Portuguese miscegenation onto a residually racist ideology of empire was an extraordinary success, in that its effects can be traced still now in the unsettled matters of racism in Portuguese-speaking contexts. Luso-tropicalism added an extra layer of exceptionalism to the theme of great early empire; it provided a positive image of glamorized miscegenation while eclipsing actual racist practices and formations. Furthermore, Luso-tropicalism not only has masked the harsh and bitter reality—past and present—it also continues to provide a language, an appealing evasion, that makes the speaker feel good and special.

CRISTIANA BASTOS is an anthropologist who also works in history, history of science, public health, colonialism, and migrations. She is currently leading the multitrack project “The Colour of Labour: The Racialized Lives of Migrants,” funded by the European Research Council, with empirical research in New England mill towns, Hawaiian plantations, and Angolan settlements, among others. She is based at the Institute of Social Sciences at the University of Lisbon, where she heads the Identities, Cultures, Vulnerabilities research group, and has participated in a variety of programs and projects in Portugal,

Brazil, the United States, the United Kingdom, India, Mozambique, Germany, Spain, and Italy.

Notes

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1. Gilberto Freyre, *Aventura e rotina: Sugestões de uma viagem à procura das constantes portuguesas de caráter e ação* (Rio de Janeiro, 1953).
2. Gilberto Freyre, *Casa-grande & senzala: Formação da família brasileira sob o regime de economia patriarcal* (Rio de Janeiro, 1933); Gilberto Freyre, *Sobrados e Mucambos* (Rio de Janeiro, 1936).
3. Gilberto Freyre, *Integração portuguesa nos trópicos* (Lisbon, 1958); Gilberto Freyre, *O luso e o trópico: Sugestões em torno dos métodos portugueses de integração dos povos autóctones e de culturas diferentes da europeia num complexo novo de civilização, o luso tropical* (Lisbon, 1961).
4. The president referred to the pioneering act of outlawing slave ownership in Portugal in 1761. “Portugal reconheceu injustiça da escravatura quando a aboliu em 1761, diz Marcelo,” *Público*, 13 April 2017, <https://www.publico.pt/2017/04/13/politica/noticia/portugal-reconheceu-injustica-da-escravatura-quando-a-aboliu-em-1761-diz-marcelo-1768680>. This is a much-repeated mantra, the problem with it being that slavery was outlawed in mainland Portugal and Goa to avoid competition with the colonies, and complete abolition in all territories only came in 1869; plus, the dual legal system separating “citizens” from “natives/Indigenous” made possible the existence of forced labor in Africa until 1961.
5. After social media buzz, the daily *Público* and others published op-eds on the politics of reparation and contemporary racism by historians, social scientists, activists, and critical theorists, with the conservative historians João Pedro Marques, Rui Ramos, João Paulo Oliveira e Costa, and others against apologizing for the past, and Paulo Pinto, Pedro Schacht, Elísio Macamo, Marta Araújo, Mamadou Ba, Joacyne Katar Moreira, and others arguing the need to address it in order to understand and act on the present.
6. Joana Gorjão Henriques, *Racismo em português* (Lisbon, 2016), and “Racismo à portuguesa,” *Público*, 2017.
7. For a synthesis, see Joana Gorjão Henriques, “Portugal é dos países da Europa que mais manifestam racismo,” interview with Jorge Vala, *Público*, 2 September 2017, <https://www.publico.pt/2017/09/02/sociedade/noticia/portugal-e-dos-paises-da-europa-que-mais-manifesta-racismo-1783934/amp>.

8. Rui Pena Pires, “Racismo e estatísticas: Não é possível combater o racismo e, em simultâneo, institucionalizar a classificação racial de todos os cidadãos,” *Público*, 9 September 2017.
9. Roger Bastide and Florestan Fernandes, *Relações raciais entre negros e brancos em São Paulo* (São Paulo, 1955). See also Marcos Chor Maio, “Tempo controverso: Gilberto Freyre e o Projeto UNESCO,” *Tempo Social* 11, no. 1 (1999): 111–36; Elide Rugai Bastos, “Um debate sobre a questão do negro no Brasil,” *São Paulo em Perspectiva* 2, no. 2 (1988): 20–26; Marcos Chor Maio and Ricardo Ventura Santos, eds., *Raça como questão: História, ciência e identidades no Brasil* (Rio de Janeiro, 2010).
10. Lília Moritz Schwarcz, *O espetáculo das raças: Cientistas, instituições e pensamento racial no Brasil—1870–1930* (São Paulo, 1993).
11. Alberto C. Germano da Silva Correia, *Os eurafrikanos de Angola: Estudo antropológico* (Lisbon, 1925); Cristiana Bastos, “Race, Medicine and the Late Portuguese Empire,” *Journal of Romance Studies* 5, no. 1 (2005): 23–35.
12. Donald R. Taft, *Two Portuguese Communities in New England* (New York, 1923); Cristiana Bastos, “Migrants, Inequalities and Social Research in the 1920s: The Story of *Two Portuguese Communities in New England*,” *History and Anthropology* 29, no. 2 (2018): 163–83.
13. E.g., Romanzo Adams, *Interracial Marriage in Hawaii: A Study of the Mutually Conditioned Processes of Acculturation and Amalgamation* (New York, 1937); Andrew Lind, *An Island Community: Ecological Succession in Hawaii* (Chicago, 1938); Gerald Estep, “Social Placement of the Portuguese in Hawaii as Indicated by Factors in Assimilation” (MA thesis, University of Southern California, 1941); Edgar Knowlton Jr., “Portuguese in Hawaii,” *Kentucky Foreign Language Quarterly* 7, no. 4 (1960): 212–18; Edgar Knowlton Jr., “The Portuguese Language Press of Hawaii,” *Social Process in Hawaii* 24 (1960); Genevieve B. Correa and Edgar Knowlton Jr., “The Portuguese in Hawaii,” *Social Process in Hawaii* 29 (1982), 55–61; Susana Caldeira, *Da Madeira para o Hawai’i: A emigração e o contributo cultural madeirense* (Funchal, 2010).
14. Freyre, *Aventura e rotina*.
15. Freyre, *Casa-grande & senzala*.
16. Cláudia Castelo, “O modo português de estar no mundo”: *O Luso-tropicalismo e a ideologia colonial portuguesa (1933–1961)* (Porto, 1999); Cristiana Bastos, “Tristes trópicos e alegres Luso-tropicalismos: Das notas de viagem em Levi-Strauss e Gilberto Freyre,” *Análise Social* 33, nos. 146–147 (1998): 415–32.
17. Patricia Ferraz de Matos, “Power and Identity: The Exhibition of Human Beings in the Portuguese Great Exhibitions,” *Identities* 21, no. 2 (2013): 202–18.
18. Portuguese imperial biopolitics had a delayed start, and just when the former British and French colonies in Africa were on their path to become new nations, in the 1950s and 1960s, Angola and Mozambique were about to receive waves of Portuguese settlers and massive investment on infrastructures. Cláudia Castelo, *Passagens para África: O povoamento de Angola e Moçambique com naturais da metrópole (1920–1974)* (Porto, 2006).
19. Castelo, *O modo português*; Freyre, *Aventura e rotina*; Bastos, “Tristes.”
20. Freyre, *Aventura e rotina*; Bastos, “Tristes.”
21. Freyre, *O luso e o trópico*. 1961 was a threshold year for Portuguese colonialism: Goa was annexed to the Indian Union, anticolonial insurrection in Angola started, and so did governmental armed response.
22. The oxymoron of the sexy colonizers—sometimes in the sexist and chauvinistic reference to how Portuguese “contributed to the world by creating the beautiful mulattas”—appears often and spontaneously from otherwise progressive speakers, as was

- the case in 2017, when a well-known biomedical scientist used those very words at a public event.
23. Alberto C. Germano da Silva Correia, *História da colonização portuguesa na Índia*, 6 vols. (Lisbon, 1948–1958).
 24. Cristiana Bastos, “Um Luso-tropicalismo às avessas: Colonialismo científico, aclimação e pureza racial em Germano Correia,” in *Fantasmas e fantasias imperiais no imaginário português contemporâneo*, ed. Margarida Calafate Ribeiro and Ana Paula Ferreira (Porto, 2003), 227–53.
 25. Epithets of mixed race were commonly attributed to the Portuguese by the British and were extended to the Indo-Portuguese, who like to point out that just because their culture combines traditional elements from India and from Portugal does not mean they were mixed biologically. When the Portuguese government adopted Luso-tropicalist themes, the 16th-century marriages between Portuguese soldiers and local women in India became an emblem of Portuguese colonialism—and one that many like to distance themselves from based on class and caste.
 26. Alberto C. Germano da Silva Correia, “Os ‘lusu-descendentes’ da Índia,” *Boletim eclesiástico da Arquidiocese de Goa* 2 (1945–1946): 60–71, 177–85, 235–43, 283–89; Correia, *Os eurafricanos*; Alberto C. Germano da Silva Correia, “Os lusu-descendentes de Angola: Contribuição para o seu estudo antropológico,” *III Congresso Nacional Colonial: Actas das sessões e teses* (Lisbon, 1934).
 27. Alberto C. Germano da Silva Correia, “Os eurafricanos,” in *Trabalhos do I Congresso Nacional de Antropologia Colonial* (Porto, 1934); Cristiana Bastos, “Migrants, Settlers and Colonists: The Biopolitics of Displaced Bodies,” *International Migration* 46, no. 5 (2008): 27–54.
 28. The idiosyncratic Giddings (whom Freyre casually refers to) came to Columbia University to start sociology and taught and supervised hundreds of students but was unable to create a department or make the discipline highly influential—not in the sense that was achieved at the time by Chicago sociologists. See Bastos, “Migrants, Inequalities.”
 29. “Portuguese Government Asked by 6,000 to Answer to Dr. Taft,” *New Bedford Evening Standard*, 24 March 1924; “6,000 Portuguesees,” *A Alvorada*, 24 March 1924; Bastos, “Inequalities.”
 30. Donald R. Taft, *Human Migration: A Study of International Movements* (New York, 1936); Donald R. Taft, *Criminology* (New York, 1942). From a teaching position held in Aurora, New York, Taft moved to the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, where he had a full academic career.
 31. Kimberly DaCosta Holton and Andrea Klimt, eds., *Community, Culture, and the Makings of Identity: Portuguese-Americans along the Eastern Seaboard* (North Dartmouth, 2009).
 32. Far from Portugal and from its imperial routes, the Kingdom of Hawai‘i—and later the US annexed territory—was a prime destination for Portuguese islanders in the late decades of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Hawai‘i’s population decline, the fear of being engulfed by Asians, and the labor needs of the sugar economy led the government and planters to look for labor in distant places. The Portuguese were white enough to compensate for the “yellow peril” fears but not white enough to compete with the haole plantation owners.
 33. Nicholas B. Miller, “Trading Sovereignty and Labour: Migration and the Consular Network of Nineteenth-Century Hawai‘i,” *International History Review* (forthcoming).
 34. For a good synthesis on the planters and politicians’ analysis of the advantages of the Portuguese as hardworking, peaceful laborers, and on the role played by William Hil-

lebrand in promoting Hawai'i in Madeira and the Portuguese in Hawai'i, see Ronald Takaki, *Pau Hana: Plantation Life and Labor in Hawaii 1835–1920* (Honolulu, 1983), 34–38. In a 1920s study of racial psychology in Hawai'i, the Portuguese deserve a chapter in which the authors synthesize the planters' choice as a result of knowing the disadvantages of having Oriental laborers while finding it difficult to attract Europeans, even the poorest, but a match was found in the islands of Madeira and Azores, "most part Portuguese but with a considerable mixture in some cases of negro or Morish blood." The authors also elaborate on that the Portuguese came out quite different than what the planters expected—higher salaries, larger families, the men bringing not only their wives but also their mothers and aunts—a fact that was mended with allowing children to work. Above all, they were not laborers to begin with, but often city artisans with other ambitions. Stanley David Porteus and Marjorie E. Babcock, *Temperament and Race* (Boston, 1926), 53, 54.

35. Jung, also referring to Lind, *An Island Community*, rightfully notes that *luna* was a "job category and inextricably racialized as Portuguese, although most Portuguese were not lunas and most lunas were not Portuguese." Moon-Kie Jung, *Reworking Race: The Making of Hawaii's Interracial Labor Movement* (New York, 2006), 76.
36. This important group was erased from the narrative of nation established later in Portugal. By the end of the nineteenth century, more Portuguese-born residents were in Hawai'i than in, for instance, Angola. The Lisbon Geographic Society bulletin published several articles on "Our Colony in Hawaii." But that "colony" of migrants was suppressed from collective memory through the selective twentieth-century self-image of the Portuguese Empire: while the African colonies were brought to the center, the Portuguese enclaves in other nations were eclipsed from the nation's official narrative. Hawai'i was not part of the traditional routes of empire, and the Portuguese who had sailed there were not discoverers and conquistadores but laborers. They went there not as navigators of Portuguese caravels but as passengers aboard English and German barks, schooners, clippers and steamers. They did not conquer the territories and subjugated the population but entered an economy and a society with a predefined role.
37. Lind, *An Island Community*, 47.
38. Adams, *Interracial Marriage*, 122.
39. For example, one must prove one-eighth native Hawaiian descent for Kamehame schools; for the Dolores Furtado scholarship at Punahou School, one must prove Portuguese descent.
40. The Department of Sociology at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa still refers to its beginnings as an extension of the Chicago School. "Our History," accessed 11 October 2018, <http://www.sociology.hawaii.edu/about/history.html>.
41. Examples of students papers with keyword "Portuguese": Anonymous, "My Role in the Family"; J. F. Pte., "Changing Times for a Plantation Family"; Margerie Fernandes, "Some Comments of the Stereotype of Racial Groups"; Margaret Fernandes, "My Experiences as a Hybrid" (Japanese-Portuguese); Mary Lou Gouveia, "Coffee Farmers in Kona"; "A Cultural Survival Among the Portuguese"; Bella Evans, "Successful Inter-marriages: A Portuguese Family Inter-marries"; Anne K. Kamau, "A Case of Racial Inter-marriage" (Negro-Portuguese); Roselyn Medeiros, "The Role Played by the Members of My Family."
42. Adams, *Interracial Marriage*, xvii.
43. Estep conducted research on-site, read the literature, interviewed scholars and key social actors, and attempted to test some sociological theories by using this understudied group as empirical reference. He eventually referred to Taft's *Two Portuguese Communities in New England* but did not use it as a model. For one, *Social Placement* has more

- modest ambitions and scope. Second, Estep tested sociological models recurring to a sociological terminology and avoided Taft's use of racialist terminology.
44. James A. Geschwender, Rita Carroll-Seguín, and Howard Brill, "The Portuguese and Haoles of Hawaii: Implications for the Origin of Ethnicity," *American Sociological Review* 53, no. 4 (1988): 515–27.
 45. Jung, *Reworking*, 61, 69.
 46. Elvira Osório Roll, *Hawaiian Kohala Breezes* (New York, 1964); Timothy Paul Freitas, "From Captivity to Liberation: Literature of Madeiran Migration to Hawai'i" (PhD diss., Harvard University, 1979); Reinaldo Silva, "From the Top of the Racial Pyramid in Hawai'i: Demonizing the Hawaiian Portuguese in Elvira Osorio Roll's Fiction," *Interdisciplinary Journal of Portuguese Diaspora Studies* 2 (2013): 7–31.
 47. Manuel de Jesus Coito, *Saudades das Ilhas: Madeirense*, bilingual ed., trans. Edgar C. Knowlton Jr., ed. Ana Isabel Spranger and Paul Chandler (Lisbon, forthcoming).
 48. Jim Tranquada and John King, *The 'Ukulele: A History* (Honolulu, 2012).
 49. John Henry Felix and Peter Senecal, eds., *The Portuguese in Hawaii* (Honolulu, 1978). Freitas, "From Captivity to Liberation," suggests that treating the *Priscilla* as the *Mayflower* of the Portuguese in Hawai'i implies a whitewashing of the migrants' suffering.
 50. In November 2017, the "Festa" was held at the Plantation Village in Waipahu, O'ahu, in cooperation with the Puerto Rican community and their feat. In Maui, the heritage center joined efforts with the Puerto Ricans to have a center. On other islands, there are committees and societies dedicated to promoting Portuguese heritage. In O'ahu, the Portuguese Genealogical and Historical Society of Hawai'i serves a broad net of descendants in Hawai'i, California, and elsewhere seeking to know their genealogies and the names of their ancestors.
 51. Maria Lúcia G. Pallares-Burke, *O triunfo do fracasso: Rüdiger Bilden, o amigo esquecido de Gilberto Freyre* (São Paulo, 2012). Pallares-Burke notes that, in his early works, Freyre shared much with his friend and classmate Bilden, who had explicitly depicted the Portuguese as mixed race; despite Freyre's assistance, Bilden never succeeded as a scholar, ending his life early and with a drinking problem. Freyre became a national star in Brazil, and Bilden's contribution was eventually edited out of Freyre's works.

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