Specification of the madeiran land system

Slave’s owners, sugar plantations and mills

Sugar and slaves evolution

Work for slaves and freemen

"The slaves are the hands and feet of the skill’s master" (Antonil, Cultura e Opulencia do Brazil por suas drogas e minas..., Lisbon, 1711, chapter XI, page 22)

1. For the European and American history the presence of the slave in the expansion process of the sugar harvest in the Atlantic is taken for granted. Antonil launched the motto in 1711, and since then he has been followed by our century's history. The origin of this marriage took place in the Mediterranean plantations, but it was in the Atlantic that it became secure. All the above mentioned authors agree on the subject of this binomial in the eastern Mediterranean through Madeira. So, in the understanding of I.
Wallerstein "the slave trade followed the sugar track". This link of the slave trade to the sugar would have been the invention of the European crusaders in the Jerusalem colonies, and it was through the Christian world that this idea was spread, as in the Arab world the slaves rarely are associated to the sugar culture and industry. This way, the Italian colonies of the Eastern Mediterranean worked as a trial for the new socio-economic dynamics that afterwards spread to the West right down to Madeira: from there they would have got to Madeira.

It is current opinion that the perfect symbiosis between slavery and agriculture, in relief for the sugar cane culture, only started taking shape in the fifteenth century with the Madeiran experience. Even the few references about the use of the slave in such works (Mesopotamia, Zanzibar, Sudan and Sicily) do not point for dominance able to justify the system. In fact, in the understanding of W.D. Phillips Jr, the connection slave/sugar only has place in the Atlantic with the Madeiran case, being the situations in the Islamic and Christian world sporadic. It's a case to ask: where has the author (or his information sources) gone to find elements for such an affirmation? All the referred authors took us into confusion and deceit. To us, the situation in Madeira is individual and not far from the one in the Mediterranean. The presence of the slave in the sugar harvest is not as dominant as it might seem at first. It's certain that he is linked to the process, but never acted isolated and, was never the greater number. Beside him was a large group of free men that worked for a salary or rented the produce, better positioned for that matter. The conditions defined by the island oreography and the system of property implanted drove to this peculiar reality.

The European and American historiography insist in the fact that the Madeiran land structure, in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries was a result of that. However, we were faced with a false presupposition, when it was stated that among the sugar culture only slave workers were admitted. With this it was pretended to establish a limited vision of the society and work force in the island. At the same time, there was the pretension of considering the case in Madeira identical to the one in America but in miniature. But there was nothing that approached the Madeiran plantations to those on the other side of the Atlantic.

The idea fascinated some of the Madeiran historiographers. It was, according to this false idea that the slave area coincided with the ones of the bigger sugar plantations, even without facts to prove it. We were before an indubitable association that not even the documented facts could disprove. With this, the historical reality was ignored but also the archipelago's own specifications. Everybody thought that this supposition was interesting, and nobody dared to analyze with precision the Madeiran land structure, searching for its fundament in the available documentation.

From this situation attributed to Madeira by history, it was our intention to analyze the particular case of Madeira and see which is the possible framing in the general slavery panorama and the callings of the Madeiran case in the affirmation of the phenomenon. In this sense, the studies of Sidney M. Greenfield that dedicate special attention to the particular situation in Madeira were not forgotten. For them, the island was an
institutional and economic model, as well as social. Adjacent to this idea there isn't any investigation to establish it. However it looks like they are all absolute: we are before a clear fact. Nobody has bothered to verify if there was possible proof of the facts given by the various studies that fall upon this matter.

This is the problem that has worried us from the beginning. Impossible was to guide the investigation in that way to find the desirable answers. The way was traced: to establish an analysis comparing the slavery situation in the Mediterranean (Sicily, Cyprus...) and the Antilles as in Madeira, in the way of resuming the system thread. But the obstacles were constant. The bibliographical availability did not permit such an approach to the matter: in the most significant studies it is obvious a varied thematic and chronological incidence, a fact that would not serve our purpose of answering questions and fill in gaps of an investigation. Of this, we are left with the intention and the promise, of, at the next opportunity, establishing the so much wanted compared analysis. Here and now, we are only interested in establishing what happened in Madeira and which are the possible connections between the slave and the sugar.

2. To ascribe to the socio-economic characteristics of Madeira in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries the binomial slave/sugar, it is necessary to take into account the importance assumed by slavery on one side, and the sugar culture with the correspondent land structure that supported it on the other. This, nobody has dared to do up to this moment, and it is this that we will try to present here. Our objective would nearly fall through at the start, seeing that the possibilities we have with the Madeiran documentation do not facilitate the analysis: for the period of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, when the sugar industry dominated, we miss references about the slaves; and, when these start showing up in the documents, the facts about the sugar are few, once we are in the phase of decadence and of total abandon. This dissonance is responsible for the hesitations in our research. Thus the matter will still stay in the open, seeing that for some of the main questions we did not find answers. We thought even that this is a problem without a definite and wished answer.

The presence of the slaves in Madeira conditioned in an obvious way the regulating mechanisms of society at a political, institutional and religious level. The slaves, because strangers to the European society ramified in the island, they implied the establishment of defined norms in their social relations. It is necessary to refer that in Madeira, opposed to what happens in the slave societies on the other side of the Atlantic, the different social realities crossed each other resulting in a peculiar social ambience. There is no place for settlements. In Madeira, the slave is part of the daily routine of the master, and to him he must be united: there was no separation between the world of the slave and the free man. On the contrary, they tried to prevent it. This way, with the norms, in the way of posture, it was tried to perpetuate this situation, once that all contrary to this could endanger the established order. The fugitives, or the slaves found isolated or in group constituted a problem for society. They were, nearly always a source of social conflict. That is exactly what the postures fought against, in forbidding a space for slave social contact. Thus, this space was reduced and subject to numerous limitations.
SPECIFICATIONS OF THE MADEIRAN LAND SYSTEM

3. Madeira, due to the geographic configuration, was defined by a specific rural landscape, different from the great continental spaces. The excessive fragmentation of the farming areas (poios), the only form of useful arable soil available, and its ample dissemination in the north and south slopes, conditioned the clearing system and the ownership of the ground. The great and initial land concessions were divided according to the progress of the population and the agricultural experiences. The first extensive exploration gave way to the intensive use of the soil, based on the numerous "poios" formed by the owners and landowners. This way, it is difficult, if not impossible, to talk of the big ownership of cane-plantations, if we situate ourselves on the same level of the American world. Only someone that does not know the island can affirm the contrary.

In the American case, usually, one cane-plantation finds itself linked to an industrial complex - the engine - for its transformation, which does not happen in Madeira. Here, the owners of sugar-plantation are many, but few of the engine or mill. Another peculiarity of Madeira is the concentration of the engines in areas of easier access to the exterior, that is, in Funchal, which does not always correspond to the most important areas of sugar-plantations. This structure of the sugar labor conditioned the positioning of the slave.

Still in the Madeiran agricultural exploration it is necessary to distinguish two groups of owners: the ones that had handed over the lands to people who paid quitrent or rent, and the full owners. This way of double possession marked in an evident way the farming activity and favored the appearing and affirmation of farmer's contracts from the end of the sixteenth century. On the other hand, the reduced extension of the sugar-plantations did not compel the existence of a mill for the transformation of the cane, even less the existence of a large number of slaves. In the beginning, the engines to grind the cane were a privilege of the donee's captains, and only much later the private mills started appearing.

The slaves' position in the Madeiran agricultural structure should be equated according to this evolutive dynamics of the property system in the island. If it is correct that in the direct exploration or the renting it is established a clear position for the slave, the same cannot be said in relation to the colony contract.

Just as we said, and it's never too much repeating it, the oreographic conditions of the island conditioned a diverse affirmation of the property system in the sugar culture. Let's look at the land situation. In Madeira, it is compulsory to differentiate the number of cane plantations from the owners and the engines. The ownership of this heavy structure only has place with the most important landlords of the island, in its majority living of the rents and quit-rents.
Having confronted the production facts and the owners of cane plantations in the period from 1509 to 1537, with those of the slaves in this period, we are faced with an asymmetry between the main sugar production areas (Ribeira Brava, Ponta do Sol e Calheta) and the number of slaves. Funchal, with only 32% of cane plantation owners and 26% of the sugar production, is the area with most number of owners and slaves. In analysis of the different judicial districts and captaincies of Funchal (Funchal, Ribeira Brava, Ponta do Sol e Calheta) and of Machico, this asymmetry becomes more evident. The only concordance possible is the comparison between both these captaincies: in Funchal, the main sugar production area, with more than two thirds of it, it also has the greater number of slaves and of families that profited from their work.

For the fifteenth century the slaves' references are only from Funchal and Ponta do Sol, when the greater sugar production, according to 1494 figures, emerges in the area defined by Ribeira Brava, Ponta do Sol e Calheta. Still, in this era it is possible to establish a parallel among the four judicial districts of Funchal. The city area and its suburbs continue to affirm themselves as the main detainees of slaves (81%). Here, you could find the greater number of mills that processed 26% of the sugar produced in the island, which might be an indication of a strong link to the slave. Calheta's judicial district was the main sugar producing area (28%), showing in its perimeter a reasonable number of engines (22%). On the other side, it was reduced the number of cane plantations owners (10%) and slaves (7%).

SLAVES' OWNERS, SUGAR-PLANTATIONS AND MILLS

4. It is the owner who defines the slave's way of intervention in the society and island's economy, and, as such, acquires a key position in the definition and expression of slavery. In the parochial registers, the slave's name and race is always associated to the name of its owner. Only a reduced number (11%), for reasons unknown to us, was possible to identify. For the fifteenth and seventeenth centuries we got together 2.232 slave owners in the entire archipelago. Their distribution was irregular in these three centuries: Only 1% in the sixteenth century, 34% in the following and 65% for the seventeenth. The geographic distribution fits the archipelago's slavery expression spot. So, Funchal's captaincy has the supremacy, with 86% of the owners and 87% of the slaves, acquiring greater expression in the sixteenth century. In the whole of the circumscription defined by Funchal's captaincy, we have, once more Funchal's site in the front position with 74% of the total owner's number. On top of it, the city, with the two main parishes from which we have documentation - Sé and S. Pedro - present 64% of the number of owners, being the rest distributed by the other parishes of Funchal's captaincy (23%), Machico (11%) and Porto Santo (2%).

This high slave concentration in the urban space reveals, once more, that we are faced with slavery of a domestic nature, with little or no relation with rural life. This presence is witnessed by the parishes' registers. All this means that the slave resides with the master and that all of its daily life unrolls around the city. Very rarely we have signs of his
relation with the rural life as guardians and workers in the lands of the owners, here given to settlers.

It is not easy to establish a relation between the owner, the slave and the socio-professional activities. For the owner, rarely is associated a profession or social statute: of the total only 23% come up in these conditions. In this group we can stand out the ones that were connected to the church (25, 2%) and military structures, followed by the multiple activities dedicated to commerce (20%). For each one of these areas there is a dominant category. So, in the first, the situation is assumed by the clergyman (68%), in the second by the captain (83%) and in the third, by the merchant (69%). Once more it is possible to witness the patriarchal dimension assumed by slavery in the island. This too, gives signs of the little scruples of the clergymen towards this social group.

When we establish a comparison between the number of slave and cane-plantation owners, we verify that in all areas the first group is superior to the second. This fact can be a secure indication that not all slave owners were dedicated to the sugar harvest, and that not all the slaves existed for that. The difference between both groups is more accentuated in Funchal, where the number of slave owners is three times superior to those that owned cane-plantations. In Ribeira Brava, Ponta do Sol and Calheta this figure does not go over double, in the sixteenth century, and in the judicial districts of Calheta, Ponta do Sol e Machico's captaincy, showed even a smaller figure. If we compare the number of slaves to the number of cane-plantations and mill’s owners, we are faced with the same situation. While in the fifteenth century this proportion is small, in the following century, except in Ponta do Sol and Machico, it reaches high figures, being the average in Funchal, ten slaves per owner, four in Ribeira Brava and three in Calheta.

Having in mind the sugar locked up, in the sixteenth century, to each slave it would correspond the following number of weights: Funchal...........13, 5

Ribeira Brava.....92

Ponta do Sol.....400,5

Calheta...........223, 5

Machico...........159, 4

These figures are very far from the averages established in the Antilles and Brazil. Will this be demonstrative that in Madeira the relation between the sugar and the slave is not so evident?

We can come to the same conclusion when we compare the number of slaves to the number of mills in the island. While in the Antilles and South America the number per mill varies between one hundred and eight hundred, here, in total, it would not go over thirty, being the highest average found in Funchal (with 77 slaves) and Ribeira Brava.
It should also be pointed out the fact that out of 46 mill owners, sixteen are from Funchal.

The facts available by the research done, lead us to the following conclusion: in the total of five hundred and two sugar producers, only seventy eight (15,5%) possessed slaves. In the seventeenth century this number increases (39%), and therefore the number of cane-plantation owners with slaves is greater, but it increases without existing a cause or effect relation with the reality. So, for example, Maria Gonçalves, the widower of António de Almeida, is the one coming up with the greater number of slaves, being her sugar production very small.

The comparison of the number of slaves that one has with the number of sugar weights that he produces, shows, equally, very different values, which means that we are faced with an evident intervention of free workers: the average in the sixteenth century varies between 10 and 1329,5 weights per slave. On the other hand, landlords with a greater number of slaves, like Francisco Betencor, Pedro Goncalves e António Correia, are not, in any way, the bigger sugar producers. Only João Esmeraldo, Simão Acioli e João Rodrigues Castelhano show up as an exception. To note, still, that Pedro Gonçalves, from Funchal, with 17 slaves, declared, in 1509 a production of only 140 weights. On the contrary, Gonçalo Fernandes da Calheta, who in 1494 produced 1611 weights and in 1534, 3707, had 10 slaves.

Another one of the defining aspects of slavery results from the number of slaves available for each landlord. Also in this aspect, Madeira distances itself from the New World. We did not find landlords with two hundred or more slaves. The highest number did not go over fourteen, the ones of João Esmeraldo in his Lombada da Ponta do Sol farm. In its majority (63%) the numbers don't go over five. Taking into account the minimum number of work force needed to make the mill work, we will be forced to affirm that the great work force in these mills was not made up of slaves, but of free men. It is necessary to keep in mind that the number of slaves referenced here for João Esmeraldo has as a base the testamentary dispositions of 1522. This information does not agree with the one given by Gaspar Frutuoso, who speaks of the possession of eighty slaves in a farm that produced twenty thousand weights of sugar, which would give an average of two hundred and fifty per slave. They would be the testimony of the golden era of its harvest, in the beginning of the fifteenth century. In truth, they are consentaneous with the average of slaves needed for the mill's activity. The maximum that we were able to gather were twenty slaves belonging to Ayres de Ornelas e Vasconcelos (1556-1587), but for father and son. In Madeira, the tendency was for the existence of a reduced number of slaves per landlord. With one or two slaves we have 58%, and with more than five, the percentage does not go over 11%. The group of those with more than ten slaves does not go over 2%. These outstanding landlords, come up, once more, in Funchal, understood as the combination of all its two parishes and judicial district.

The profile of the Madeiran slave owner is defined by the it’s reduced number, as 89% had between one and five slaves. There was no place for an excessive valorization of his work force, in the city and in the rural areas. The dimension of the offices and the
grounds did not permit it. This becomes more evident when we establish a relation between the slave and the patrimony of the landlord. According to the available facts, it was only possible to establish it with 10 landlords. They were, in its majority from the seventeenth century, and its farms were denominated vineyards. Only with João Rodrigues Mondragão is expressed the Madeiran rural trilogy. In his land it was possible to see cane plantations, vineyards and corn-fields.

To all this, we add the fact of the rural landlord having little will for increasing the investment in the slave work force. He never exceeds 5% of the total of his capital. This situation, once more in contrast with what happens on the other side of the Atlantic, where this investment goes up to 28%, the same happening in Azores. If there was a direct relation between the presence of the slave and the rural work it would be natural for the landlord to try and use some of his capital in their acquisition. Also in the percentage of capital used in slavery by the Madeiran landlord there is a difference in relation to what happens in the American continent. In Madeira, the values varied from 2% to 5%, while on the other side of the Atlantic this percentage could reach 28%.

Alike this, if we frame the slaves in the landlords' property, we will conclude that it has little to do with the sugar culture: in 104 owners of slaves and property, only 9% have cane-plantations. The rest, in its majority, have corn-fields and vineyards. Then, in the signatories of cane-plantations, only one deserves a reference: Bartolomeu Machado, in Funchal, with ten slaves.

Once more, it is important to put in evidence that with these facts, it is not easy to establish the so much wanted closeness of the slave to the sugar in Madeira. Will this reality only be the result of the chronological differences between the incidence of the facts about slavery and the evolution of the sugar production in the island? To find a reasonable answer a more profound study is necessary, on the land structure, and more documentation on this matter.

It is necessary to remember, still, that the conditions of slavery and sugar assertion in the Mediterranean islands, Antilles and Brazil were different, so the comparison, for us, is seeing only as an academic exercise.

At last, in Madeira it is evident a strong slave incidence in the urban areas, related with services and crafts, which conditions the low level in the relation between slave and sugar weights. For all this it won't be out of place to say that the situation evidenced by Madeiran slavery, at this time, did not result only from the sugar cane that influenced the island's economic structure in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

SUGAR AND SLAVES EVOLUTION

5. The presence of the slave in the constitution of Madeiran society, since the fifteenth century, is not an isolated phenomenon, in the socio-economic context in which the
archipelago emerged: the lack of work force for its lands and the greater necessity for
cultures such as the sugar one, caused a search for it; the discovery initiatives throughout
the Atlantic, in which the Madeira’s played an active part, created means to fulfill these
needs. It was in agreement with this conjuncture that slavery gained importance in the
Madeiran society, and attributed it a particular situation. And it is right here that we must
find an explanation for the position assumed in the island.

The evolution of the internal socio-economic process, associated to the new conditions
created by the Atlantic market, contributed, although slowly, for the depreciation of the
slave component in the social structure of the archipelago. The little utility of the slave in
the productive sector and the greater need by other markets and societies conditioned the
traffic of slave work force. The burnings were finished, the soil was divided into
productive squares, and the sugar cane was no longer a main activity in the Madeiran
rural areas. Before this, there was no more place for the slave in the country, and its
potential owners had lost its buying power, facing the more attractive deals offered by the
American space. The few that perpetuated the situation, for one more century, increased
the lord's serving staff in the city and started feeding the indigent and criminal class.

Madeira, for it's proximity to the African continent and involved in its recognizing
process, occupation and defense of the Portuguese controlled areas, had all doors opened
to this trade full of advantages. This way, the island and the islanders mark the first
centuries by the interest in the acquisition of such promising merchandise in the Atlantic
space. In the island, arrived the first guanches, Moroccans and Africans, which
contributed for the economic launching of the archipelago.

Trading between the island and the main supplying markets was a reality in the beginning
of the occupation of the archipelago, being at moments, fulgerant. Impossible, is to
establish exactly, the quantity of slaves involved. The little documented availability, for
the fifteenth and seventeenth centuries, does not permit it. We lack the registers of the
entrance at the customs in Funchal, and the contracts registered in the notary minutes.

The slaves that emerge in the Madeiran market, are, nearly always of African origins,
being much reduced or non-existent the number of slaves from Brazil, Central America
and India. This, might be a result, on one hand, of the distance or difficulties in the
traffic, and, on the other hand, of the common limitative or forbidding rules, has it
happened in Brazil and India. Only the African market, dominated by the extensive west
coast, under Portuguese control, was not target for any prohibitions. There, the only
measures taken were in the way of controlling the traffic, as it happened with the renting
contracts.

The Atlantic coast of the African continent, defined, first, by the Canary Islands and
Morocco, and then, by the coast of the Guineas Golf, Angola, was the main slave source.
And there, Madeira went to get the necessary labor to open and organize the land squares
and then, to work on the cane-plantations. First, were the white slaves from the Canary
Islands and Morocco. Then, the Negros from Guinea and Angola.
The particular conditions of the Portuguese presence in the North of Africa defined a peculiar way of acquisition. Slaves were synonymous to war prisoners, resulting of the multiple battles, in which were involved Portuguese and Moorish. For the Madeira’s, that defended with bravery the Portuguese sovereignty in these lands, the Moorish slaves come up at the same time as a prize and as a testimony of its war achievements. They were few the ones that could boast their war triumphs. Another form of acquisition was the sea corsair, a revenge practiced by both parts. An identical situation occurred in India where some Madeira’s also stood out in the various military campaigns, as it happened with Tristão Vaz da Veiga.

On the African coast, beyond the Bojador cape, the means for the supply of slaves were different: first, we had the assaults and destruction, then, the pacific approach towards the indigenous populations. All this implied a different dynamic for the transport and trading circuits. Here, the cavaliers and corsairs are substituted by the merchants.

The presence of the guanches in Madeira is a natural fact. For that, contributed the proximity of Madeira and their diligence in the Infant's initiative. In the short time of twenty six years after the beginning of Madeira's colonization, the islanders got themselves involved in the complex dispute for the Canary Islands, servicing the master, the Infant Henry. Such conditions defined the Madeiran presence in this slave market, emerging, in the first half of the fifteenth century, some incursions which resulted in the imprisonment of slaves. Of these, three are referred as having left from Madeira (1425, 1427, 1434). Later, with the expedition to the African coast in 1445, the Madeiran Alvaro de Ornelas went off course to the island of La Palma where he took some indigenous to bring to Madeira. In the numerous trips organized by the Portuguese between 1424 and 1446, slaves come, that are later sold in Madeira or in Lagos. From the middle of the fifteenth century, the references to canarian slaves in Madeira as shepherds and mill workers are frequent. Their presence in the island should have been important in the last decades of the fifteenth century. The documents claiming for precautionary measures against rebel attitudes prove that. Many of them stayed in Madeira faithful to the tradition of keeping herds, or, on the other hand became masters of the mills.

The Madeira’s compromise with the exploration voyages and the trading along the African coast, and the importance of the port in Funchal on the routes, defined for the island a preferential position in the slave trade with the negroes from Guinea. In this way it would not be difficult to say, although we miss some facts, that the first negroes of the West African coast came to Madeira long before they become a curiosity target to the peoples of Lagos or Lisbon.

The situation of Madeira and of the islanders in the above mentioned voyages, together with the extreme lack of labor in the lands of the first colonizers, created, inevitably, a detour in the slave rote, emerging Funchal, in the middle of the fifteenth century, as one of the main receiving markets. And nowhere else was the slave as important as he was in Madeira.
There are many signs that the slave trade was active and that Madeira was a gyroratory plate for this business in Europe. In 1492, the king exempted the Madeira’s from the slave tax for the slaves that they would bring to Lisbon. This situation, resulting from a petition signed Fernando Po, reveals that in the island there were already a large number of slaves, and that many of them were taken to the kingdom.

The proof of the existence of this active slave trade between Madeira and Cabo Verde, we have it in 1562 and 1567. During this decade, the difficulties felt in the sugar culture took the farmers to solicit from the crown, facilities for the acquisition of slaves from Guinea, by sending a vessel just for that effect. The king gave in to the fair request of the Madeiran farmers and ordered that, after the terminus of the rental contract with Antonio Goncalves and Duarte Le o - that is, in 1562, those who were able, could send every year, a vessel to fetch slaves. In 1567 it was necessary to regulate, again, the privilege attributed to the Madeira’s, having conceded the right to import directly and every year, for a five year period, from Cabo Verde and Rios de Guinea, one hundred and fifty pieces of slaves, of which one hundred would stay in Funchal and fifty in Calheta.

Here too, the greater incidence lies in the parish of Se with(68%), amounting to 82% in all the parish that complete Funchal's area. This way, it could be possible to say that Funchal's port kept busy in the negro traffic, in the periods between 1591 and 1640 and afterwards between 1670 and 1679. The first period coincides with the reaffirmation of the sugar cane industry in the island, due to the Dutch invasion of the north eastern part of Brazil. The brake in the twenties might be understood as the result of the assault and Dutch pressure on the market of African slaves, with the take of S. Jorge de Mina in 1622.

The average price for a slave in Madeira, established in the inventories, varied according to new supplying markets of the product, and is related in the conjuncture of the destinations. In Lisbon, in the forties decade of the sixteenth century, the price varied from ten to twelve thousand reis, and in the beginning of the sixteenth century came down to four to six thousand reis. In the sixties decade the price went up to twenty thousand reis and even more, having doubled in the thirties of the seventeenth century. In the case of Madeira we only have the price of slaves from 1561, not knowing what was before that. Of this available information up to 1700, we find a tendency for higher values for the periods 1591 to 1610, from 1650 and 1691 to 1700. Certainly, these tendencies are the result of the conjuncture subsequent to the lost of Portuguese sovereignty in favor of the Spanish crown. This fact conditioned in an evident way the slave market which was then controlled by the English, French and Dutch.

To note still, that the second period takes places at a time when the sugar cane plantation rises again in the island, taking up the price o slave labor. On the other hand, the period after the Restoration of the Portuguese sovereignty was marked by wars in three areas (Portugal, Brazil and Angola), which forced the departure of labor from the island to combat in the front line.
In an attempt to establish the real price value of the slave, we compared it with some of the prices of products and movables referred in the testaments. In this way, it is evident, in the first quarter of the sixteenth century and during the forties and sixties of the following century, a high valorization of the slave in the Madeiran market.

EVOLUTION OF THE SLAVES AND THE SUGAR

6. The curve of slaves' births is defined by two different courses: first, a tendency for a huge rise up to the thirties of the sixteenth century, with some downfalls between 1551-70, 1581-90, 1601-10, 1621-30, periods followed by an increase, with the exception of the seventies in the seventeenth century. This phase of affirmation of the slave birth-rate coincides with the sugar cane return period in the island, while the second moment is related with the crisis that affected the second half of the seventeenth century, marked also by the competition of the Brazilian sugar and the difficulties in the internal market. We just need to find out if this conjuncture is the cause for this increase in the number of slaves. Here is a question that the existing documents cannot help find an answer for. This high conjuncture is warranted by the adult slaves christened, a fact that denounces a out of place search for slaves, which is repercussive in their birth-rate.

The geographical expression of the slaves' birth-rate lies in a south sea side area defined by the parishes of Sé, São Pedro and Camara de Lobos. On the north coast of the island the representatively is little. Still in relation to the first area, if we take into account all of Funchal's parishes in and out of town, we come to the conclusion that they have, nearly the total of the slaves christened in Madeira, during the centuries in question. So, we are faced with a strong expression of urban slavery in Madeira. To note, that it was also there that we found the greater part of the island's population.

Then, it is important to know what the implication that this fact might assume in the agricultural calendar in the evolution of the two acts. In case of a compromise with agricultural labor it would be natural that the marriages took place during a calm period rather than during a time of intense activity. The betrothed prefer the months before seed-time (January/March) and sugar harvest time (May/June), cereals (July/August) and wine (September) for their weddings. There is only one coincidence with the sugar harvest, seeing that it covers a marriage month (June) or, the situation might mean the little importance that this culture assumed in the island in the period between 1538 and 1700.

Sugar entered a crisis period in the first half of the sixteenth century, a date preceding the first parochial registers. Maybe this explains the reason for the fact that in the sixteenth century the weddings that took place were fewer than in the following century. The situation is different in relation to copulation, which gives place to procreation, affirmed in a clearer way in the sixteenth century. However, it must be taken into account that the greater slave activity in the sugar harvest might have the opposite effect, in the sense that
it offered the possibility of a more intense social contact able to proportion a sexual relationship, justified by marriage.

It is necessary not to forget that the first half of the seventeenth century was marked by the re-affirmation of the sugar cane culture, but that did not alter at all the conjuncture of marriages and christenings: 60% of weddings and 49% of conceptions took place in the first half of the century. If we consider the main sugar production areas, defined by the epithet of Ribeira Brava, Ponta do Sol e Calheta, we find an identical frequency of marriages and conceptions. Note too, that also in this case the first half of the seventeenth century is marked by a high number of conceptions (59%) and of marriages (30%).

From here, the reasonable explanation for the incompatibility of information’s could be that the presence of slave labor in the sugar culture, in the period between 1538 and 1700, was not as important as it might seem, or, otherwise, it results from the new conjuncture mentioned above. The oreographic conditions of the island did not favor a frequent social contact amongst the various groups in the country, for the most outstanding moments of the labor were, sometimes, reason for this social contact. One must not loose sight of the fact, that for example, in relation to the wine harvest, the situation is different. The number of weddings (5%) and of conceptions (8%) that took place is reduced.

Another possible association might be in the evaluative curve of the sugar production and of the slave liberation. Here, there is a perfect consonance. The number of liberated slaves evolved in agreement with the Madeiran sugar economy. The crisis in the production and trading of sugar, from the last quarter of the sixteenth century, meets the increase in the number of exemptions, that has an ascendant curve from the twenties decade, reaching a peak at the end of the century. The inverse movement, during the first half of the seventeenth century, can be associated too, to the new increment of the sugar cane culture. All this provoked by the Dutch occupation of the state of Pernambuco. This moment of cane-plantation assertion had repercussions in the exemptions' curve during the second half of the century.

On the contrary, the geographical expression of exemptions is dissonant with the main plantation spots. So, it is more evident in Funchal, Camara de Lobos and Caniço, areas which are far from being the more assertive ones in respect to cane-plantations.

WORK FOR SLAVES AND FREEMEN

7. The slave comes up as being connected to the cane plantations, but without reaching the same proportion as in São Tome or in Brazil: in 1496 the crown became aware of this symbiosis, by establishing the selling prohibition, by debts, of the goods, animals or mill pieces permitting only a transaction in the locked up "novelties". In another document dated back to 1502, about irrigation waters, the monarch refers that it used to be a habit for the landlords to send the slaves to manage their cane-plantations.
The connection of the slave to the cultivation phase and tilling of the plantation is attested in the various jobs linked to the functioning of the mill. The surveyors' regiment of 1501 refer the specialized service, and there it says that the experts and the surveyors that broke the sugar would be subject to heavy fines and, in a clear allusion of their presence, it is ordered that, in case they were captive, the fine would be given to its owner.

The slave duties could assume two different situations: helper of the harvest officials, or specialized workers. In 1482, in a lawsuit about the quality of the "seasoned" sugar, the experts Vaz and Andre Afonso testify before Funchal's Town Council: the first, referred that, because of his absence in the Canary islands, a man, his slave, had seasoned the sugar, while the second, also absent from the island, had handed over the same duty to a boy paying him a wage.

To these denouncing testimonies involving slaves, as servants, in the culture and making of the sugar, one can add others showing that they acted in the quality of officials of the mill: first, we had the canarian slaves real sugar experts, as it can be verified by the caution in 1490 and 1505, in relation to their expulsion. Of this time, we only have news of two slaves that were mill experts, and we don't know if they were guanches or not: in 1486, Rodrigo Anes, the "cripple" from Ponta do Sol, established in a testament the exemption of Fernando, mill expert, and in 1500, in the testament of Joao Vaz, squire, a slave of his, Gomes Jesus, is referred as a sugar expert.

Later, in 1605, Jorge Rodrigues, dull man, free, claims from Pedro Agrela de Ornelas, three thousand reis from duties he had done on his mill in 1604. In 1601, Jean Moquet becomes aware that the slaves had an active role in labor of the mills, once he saw a "great number of slaves that worked on the sugar outside town".

It is necessary to take into account that these facts are loose, and, for that same reason, not very clear relating to the dimensions that they assumed in the Madeiran sugar economy. Certainly, the only particularity of the duties of the slaves on the Madeiran mills resided in the fact that they worked together with freemen that earned wages: in 1578, António Rodrigues, worker, declares in a testament that had worked under the orders of Manuel Rodrigues, overseer of D.Maria's mill.

The activities or duties developed by freed men were not very different from the ones executed when they were slaves: in the rural areas, the eternal relation with the soil and, in the city, the link to the office jobs or housekeeping, carried on leaving marks on his daily routines.

The majority of freed men lived from his daily work for someone else. This favored the existence of strong solidarity ties between them and the free workers, a fact that never pleased the authorities. Together with that, the exemption duties express the obligation of these being paid with the earned wage. Amongst the various referenced cases, there is one that deserves our attention: Pedro, was the slave of Isabel Dinis, saleswoman, who will, for a five year period be wage linked "to who will pay more for him", being the
money used for the ransom of a Moorish prisoner. Another way of knowing the occupations of the slaves, and afterwards of the freed men, is by investigating the landlords' activities. It should be pointed out that they are situated mainly in the services area (82%), at the service of clergymen (24%), in the military ordinances (19%) and of civil servants (16%) of the different local and royal institutions. In reality, the majority of the slaves were found to be bound more to the house than to the fields, as it usual to have a large number of servants, mainly in the urban areas.

The slave in many societies, apart from the economic function, also affirmed himself by his sumptuary value, being in many of them, a form of social distinction. In Madeira, just like in other European areas, this is evident, as it can be observed in the work of Gaspar Frutuoso. In says with respect to Machico: "there were many colored women and very well treated, and of beautiful voices, which is a sign of nobility of their masters, because in all big and rich houses, there is this multiplication of the ones that serve." However, in the Lombada of Arco da Calheta, lived Mrs Isabel de Abreu, the widower of João Rodrigues de Noronha, of the captain of Funchal, with two farm "very thick", having at her service, one "private" Moorish girl. From the sugar cane crisis, the excess of slave labor available provoked a change in the activity sector and an increase in exemptions. The slave moves from the countryside to the city, increasing the number of home workers for the masters and in the offices. But it is necessary to take into consideration that besides the slaves, in the home duties there were the freemen, referenced as servants. The housekeeping jobs were, as a norm, given to the female slaves, and the males would work on the soil or on hand crafts, or still, were men that earned wages working for someone else. For the woman were also reserved other jobs, such as the selling of fruit or washing.

The selling of farm produce in the local market was subject to many rules to limit fraudulent exercises. They were tempted to practice theft in relation to the master and to buyer, saving up sometimes enough to get the exemption.

The male slaves worked in the various sectors of activity. They could either be hand craftsmen or country workers, mule-drivers or wage men. Their presence is constant in the account books of the construction industry like the one of Funchal's customs. The landlords also used them in the construction of fortifications, where each citizen had to participate with one day's work.

These activities did not have any weight in the initial necessities for the slave labor, once their arrival in the island is related more to rural activities. The sugar harvest, on one side, the rural living of the canarians on the other, made the first slaves in the island stand out as shepherds, farm workers and technicians at the mills. The documentation, as we saw is full of references on this multiple intervention of slaves in the Madeiran economy. Apart from the ones already referenced here, on the sugar harvest, only five come up with an employment craft, two being mule-drivers, one a tailor, one a courier and one saleswoman. The activities declared for the freed men might give us a light on what they used to do as slaves, in case the change in social statute did not alter the activity. Here, apart from the group involved in the sugar harvest, there is a crowd
without a specific activity, living, in its majority under domestic conditions, assuming a special importance, the females. The freed men with a craft come more in Funchal, being nearly non-existent in the rural areas.

For the males, the relationship through marriage with the craft men, might be a sign of their socio-economic characteristics. In this case the preferential acquaintance is with the works, a fact already witnessed by the postures: of the total of seventy seven marriages, 32 were with works, nine with navy men, seven with mule-drivers, four with road menders and shoe repairers and three with farm workers.

Another fact that might, still, point in the direction of a possible socio-economic identification of the slave is the occupation of his owner, as according to A. Franco Silva, through him, one knows the slave. Here is, once more, evident the sumptuary character of the slave, seeing that the majority of the owners worked in the services' areas (82%). The only possible conclusion is that in Madeira, alike the Canary islands, the labor used in the mills was mixed, being made up of slaves, liberated slaves and citizens, executing different duties, being paid in money or in sugar. In this group of slaves are included the ones that belonged to the mill's owner, but also others that received a wage. Also in Brazil, there was a mixed labor, but there the slaves were majority. They could either be property of the plantation mill's owner, or rented by someone. Here lies the main difference between the slave's relationship to sugar in Madeira and on the other side of the Atlantic. In concrete terms, the sugar industry would have survived in Madeira without the slaves. It is therefore anachronic to refer here that symbiosis between slaves and cane-plantations. Madeira might be considered the beginning of that connection but never a miniature situation of what will happen at a later stage in the African continent.