THE FORMATION OF THE ATLANTIC WORLD: "ALL THE COLORS OF THE EARTH'S CLIMATES"

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SUMMARY

The purpose of this article is to reconstruct narratively the historical formation of the Atlantic world. For this purpose, the transnational, transatlantic, national, and regional perspectives of the contemporary Atlanticist debate were combined, with emphasis on trade and exchanges of ideas, religions, and cultural practices; on migratory flows; on ecological transfers and on imperial expansion on a global scale. This approach, derived from the historiographical review in the Atlanticist field, favors the analysis of a given Oceanic conjuncture based on analytical categories capable of encompassing, in an integrated way the terrestrial spaces, displacements, flows and movements of the "maritime space", here considered preferably as the result of a diversified and integrated network of several Atlantic coastal regions, by the action of multiple actors.

Keywords: Atlantic history, Atlanticism, South Atlantic

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ABOUT "ALL THE COLORS"...

The subtitle of this article refers to the conception of the historian Fernand Braudel, formulated in the emblematic year 1949, on the occasion of the signing of the Atlantic pact between the United States, Canada and ten other Western European countries, which further intended the political and ideological disputes of the beginning of the Cold War. In this context, F. Braudel aimed to respond not so much to the ideological controversies of these power disputes in international politics and, more narrowly, in the Atlantic world itself, but predominantly to the historiographical debate about the various "Mediterranean" that author in the same area indicated as going beyond their then "classical" interpretation[2]. The famous French historian noted, at the time, that the Atlantic was also a "human plurality and the most potent in the contemporary world". For F. Braudel, the Atlantic was also a "encounter" and a"connection".

However, in the approach of the same author, the ocean could not aspire to become a kind of" wider Mediterranean" because it lacked the climatic unity, proper to the monochromatic heart of the world of identical light that shone in the center of that ancient"inland sea". F. Braudel identified in the Atlantic, however, an ocean that offered, from one end of the globe's icy poles to the other, *"all the colors of the Earth's climates"*. This intervention was closely examined, later by Jacques Rancière who was not convinced by the arguments of the consecrated colleague. The climate was, indeed, a condition of Mediterranean unity, but it did not seem sufficient to ground all its unity. J. Rancière recalled that F. Braudel chose, at other times in his study, to base the unity of the Mediterranean, more on exchanges as activities that constituted a unitary space, placing its separate parts in reciprocal relations. But actually for J. Rancière nor the criterion of exchanges was also sufficient to assign unity to the Atlantic analogous to the Mediterranean. In his reading, "the Mediterranean was the sea of recognition, of the journey that reverberated. the material clues [...], the journey on the clues of the book, the journey that rediscovered the exact places of what had been written " Rancière, 2014, p. 119). For this author, without the narrative of Homer's Odyssey and, it may be added, without the narrative of the Bible, the Mediterranean could not

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2 Fernand Braudel's "classic" interpretation of the Mediterranean world consists of the work of this author published in the first edition in the same year of 1949, La Mediterranée et le monde mediterranéen à l'époque de Philippe, in Paris by Armand Colin (Braudel, 1949). The historiographical debate alluded to the criticism that there was also a "northern Mediterranean" which included commercial traffic in the North and Baltic seas as a northern replica of the Mediterranean.

acquire the unity it has obtained. This is what the commercial and winning Atlantic lacked in the now " traditional contemporary history"[3] if this great sea of exchanges that dethroned the Mediterranean from the government of the world has not inherited its historical strength, it is because no written text has explored it in advance, attributing to it the truth of the world. mythos who must always walk beside the truth of logo" (Rancière, 2014, p.126). The ships that traveled the varied Atlantic routes in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries can be counted and become the object of a statistical representation[4], but its density was very weak for a long time, because apart from the commercial system, there was nothing that produced a civilization. The Atlantic was revealed in its immensity by the navigations but, it was not recreated by its navigators as a cultural internalization.

J. Rancière also aimed to references of unity, identity, for this ocean through great cultural narratives and does not locate them in the history of the Atlantic whose "encounters" and "connections" were more marked by human plurality, as perceived and proposed by F. Braudel (1949, p. 263). The geography of the ocean should be considered flexible and the production of mythical representations as recurrent as in the history of a continent such as Europe. It must be recognized, however, that the Atlantic was a European invention that diversified through the countless waves of navigation, exploration, colonization, administration, and imagination (Armitage, 2014, P.12). It must be considered too that the Atlantic did not appear formed at first, either in the consciousness of its European inventors, or in the consciousness of its navigators, of the continental inhabitants of its four shores. The awareness of its contours, of its extreme limits, of the places where this ocean touched, of its connections with other seas and of its total extent have been fluid for centuries (Armitage, 2014, P.12). The history of the Atlantic has, possibly forever, a fluid chronology. The proposals for periodization in Atlantic history are and will be even more diverse. There is the genealogy of Atlantic history that seeks its origins in the anti-isolationist currents of American history in the twentieth century (Baylin, 2007, p.16). This origins of international engagement in Atlantic history would have had their roots in the Great War of 1914 to 1918 and intensified a certain political-ideological dispute during and after World War II. Bernard Bailyn evaluates the convergence of journalists such as Walter Lippmann and Forrest Davis with certain historians who sought to identify an "Atlantic civilization", threatened in several of these historical contexts of

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3 In the "new contemporary history", which has as a reference for its retrospective periodization the international transformations of the present early Twenty-First Century, there is a theoretical debate about the displacement of the global center of gravity, from the Atlantic to the Pacific (Garcia, 2019).

4 This is a critical reference to the research of Huguette and Pierre Chaunu (Chaunu, 1980).

conflict: by communism from 1917, by fascisms in Europe between the 1930s and 1940s and, again, by communism in the Cold War. The authors proposed the idea that since the Enlightenment of the eighteenth century, "a common 'civilization' had formed in the North Atlantic that linked North American societies (the United States, in particular) to Europe through a set of pluralistic, democratic, and liberal values" (Armitage, 2014, P.12). Such values would have an even deeper genealogy in a common religious heritage, identified in US academic circles in the 1940s as, Judeo-Christian heritage (Skil, 1984, pp. 65-85). The development of this representation had been appropriated by the journalist Walter Lippmann as a community resulting from the "extension of Latin and Western Christianity, from the western Mediterranean to the entire Atlantic basin" (Lippmann, 1944, p.81). The height of such a political proposition was the design of the Atlantic Ocean as a new "Inner Sea," a "mare nostrum contemporary" around which Western civilization would develop between Europe and North America. It was more about the origins of a project like NATO than the historical origins of the Atlantic in its different dimensions and latitudes that included not only commercial, political, cultural, religious relations but also the themes of conquests, wars, violence, dominions, diplomatic and military alliances, migrations, diasporas, above and below the equatorial line. As David Armitage noted about this approach,

> "The history of the slave trade and slavery, and the history of Africa and Africans, and more generally of the races, have played little or no part in this current of Atlantic history. This

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> version of the "western civilization" was the history of the North Atlantic rather than the South Atlantic, anglo-American rather than Latin American history, and that of the connections between America and Europe rather than those between the Americas and Africa. It was a racially, or ethnically, homogeneous story" (Armitage, 2014, p.13).

The story of a black Atlantic was outside the traditional white story of NATO's origins. The first dealt with topics such as the dynamics of the slave trade and abolitionism, the racialized liberal revolution of slaves in the Americas such as Haiti, the relations between slavery and industrialism, the transformation of

the Atlantic into a British sea during the nineteenth century when the United Kingdom combined a policy of increasing commercial influence for the Americas with imperial expansionism and territorial domination on the African continent from the 1870s, undoing the previous bilateral relations between the last two continents (Silva, 2011, p.53-83). Authors such as Du Bois (Du Bois, 1896, P.335), James (James, C. L. R. 1938, P. 328) and Willians (Willians E, 1944, p. 285) who wrote the history of the Black Atlantic before the end of the Second War of the last century were not even recognized as members of the common historiographical current of Atlanticism, especially emerging in the first decade of the post - Cold War. The history of a more multiethnic, multicultural, transnational and International Atlantic has already been rewritten in this early Twenty-First Century and, in today's academic debate, the ocean has become an observatory of approaches and concepts of the most varied (Greene, J. P. and Morgan, P. D. 2009). The aim of this study is to present a narrative proposal of the first historical period that formed the Atlantic world through the combination of transnational, transatlantic, national and regional perspectives of the contemporary Atlanticist debate (Armitage, 2002, p.14) that articulates trade exchanges, exchanges of ideas, religions and cultural practices; migrations and movement of people, navigators who crossed the ocean; disease transmissions, colonization of coastlines and coastal regions, territorial conquests and wars, diasporas genocide of native populations. Below, we will begin the narrative, delimited at this stage of the research to the initial construction of the Atlantic world (between the thirteenth and sixteenth centuries) with the certainly, excessive pretension to connect such a network of stories[5]. The intention of this article is also to demonstrate the character, at the same time, diverse and Integrated of the insertions of the various Atlantic coastal regions in the multiplicity of actors and themes highlighted. Perhaps this is the opportunity and the advantages of the Atlanticist approach as a relatively recent method of investigation into a certain Oceanic reality that needs to be understood and explained in an interconnected and interdependent way with categories, concepts not only in connections with terrestrial spaces, but also applied to displacements, flows, encounters, and movements proper to maritime space.

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5 This article is the initial result (the first phase) of a more ambitious research project (scientific initiation/FAPERJ) that aims to extend the present perspective of interdependent analysis and, at the same time, differentiating the multiple national, transnational and regional insertions in the history of the Atlantic to the hordierno world.

ABOUT THE ROOTS OF THE MULTI-COLORED ATLANTIC WORLD...

The origins of the European invention of the Atlantic go back to the first journeys of its navigators/protagonists already in the phase prior to the development of the ocean system from Columbus, after all, even before linking the Eastern Hemisphere to the Western, The Atlantic United southern Europe to northern Europe or the "ancient" Mediterranean to the North Sea. This connection was crucial for the " discovery of an Atlantic area" in the sense of a historical process that entailed new and pioneering definitions of this area since the thirteenth century. An originally European, pre-state and fragmented Atlantic was crossed, explored, mapped, and consequently defined by sailors and navigators who formed the first nucleus of an emerging maritime community associated with the northern eastern part of the vast ocean. Attracted not only by advantageous commercial and political motivations, but also by a series of narratives, images and perceptions of fantastic fishing grounds and mythical islands, as well as an increasingly accessible western sea, such sailors were pathfinders of the winds, currents, and knowledge about the physical nature of the then considered new "ocean realm".

The voyage of Columbus did not represented

both the beginning of an era, but the point of arrival of a process wider than part of the commercial formation of a European Atlantic

—On the Baltic-Mediterranean coalition

—, passing through the developments of cartography and navigation and reaching the conquest and colonization of the archipelagos of the eastern Atlantic, an essential stage for European expansion on the West African coast and for the conquest of the Americas.

In the Atlanticist approach research (Morelli, 2013), there is the identification of three phases of intense navigation and Atlantic exploration, prior to the voyages of Columbus. The first would have begun in 1277 when Genoese ships bypassed the columns of Hercules and reached the western sea. The aim of the Genoese was to exploit and risk trade with the emerging markets of the North Sea as an alternative to the eastern Mediterranean and the Black Sea increasingly dominated by competition with the navies of Venice and the growing threats of the Ottomans. This alternative trade targeted fabrics from the Flemish cities of Bruges and Ghent in exchange for spices such as silk and other luxury goods from Asia and the Mediterranean. Genoese sailors were the protagonists of this sea route and carried with them considerable nautical experience and financial capital, which had become the "international" specializations of their polis italics.

The second phase of exploration of the mysterious "western sea" before Columbus was characterized by the discovery and colonization of the most important archipelagos of the eastern Atlantic: The Canaries between 1312 and 1335; Madeira between 1339 and 1425 and the Azores from 1427. The initiatives and the financing of these maritime enterprises were also originally of the Genoese, involving increasingly the efforts of Italian, Iberian, French and Flemish sailors. The discovery of The Canary Islands occurred, for example, accidentally by a Genoese merchant named Lanzarotto Malocello who was making trade voyages between the French city of Cherbourg to the north of Gibraltar and Ceuta in Morocco to the south of the same arc. The discovery and conquest of these archipelagos triggered two fundamental processes: the development of an Atlantic community of European sailors and the integration of a navigation and trade area between the north of the Azores, the south of The Canary Islands and the African and Iberian coasts, linked by the cultivation of sugar cane in a land-maritime displacement from East to West. The delimited area was called by Fernand Braudel and Pierre Chaunu the "Atlantic Mediterranean" and, in the 14th and 15th centuries, by the sailors who explored it, mainly Portuguese, from "western beach" ("From the western beach of Lusitania", Camões).

The third phase of maritime explorations before Columbus was linked both from a commercial and cultural point of view to the two previous moments and coincides with the British expeditions of the fifteenth century in the North Atlantic. The sailors of the two English coasts

— the western and eastern — were involved in the trade of British fabrics that passed through the Irish port of Galway, to be exchanged for cod from Iceland, fruit, wine, salt and sugar from Portugal and France. These English exchanges configured a regular and triangular trade between Bristol, Lisbon, and Iceland, making converge, still in the fifteenth century, the North Atlantic with the South Atlantic.

Thus, Southern and Northern Europeans began to share a common vision of western maritime and territorial boundaries. Several sources indicate the perception of an ambiguous and fluid direction because, during the medieval period, European travelers and merchants were effectively attracted by the wonders of the East: The Holy Land, the Muslim enemy, the sources of material wealth in India and China. The so-called "ocean realm" that began to appear on geographical charts in the fourteenth century as, for example, the Catalan Atlantic of 1375 seemed very indefinite: if, on the one hand, it gave the impression of a protective barrier, on the other, it suggested a desolate and infinite extension.

Catalan Atlantean of 1375: a manual of coastal and Port navigation with reference to the real and imaginary islands of the "Ocean Kingdom" in the third table.

The examination of Atlantean allows the identification of a number of real and imaginary islands in the "western sea" that appear in the literary genre of utopian and fantastic narratives of the medieval period. According to Morelli's research (Morelli, 2013), the literary genre, the Isolarii it constituted one of the most emblematic examples of travel literature that combined mythical, historical and geographical information about islands with texts, images and maps based on detailed coastal and port navigation manuals. In that period, on the European side, the islands played a central role in the discovery and definition of the Atlantic area, either as elusive symbols of the Western Hemisphere like the Antilles, or as real and tangible territories like those of The Canary Islands. The discoveries of a series of Atlantic archipelagos between the Fourteenth and fifteenth centuries seemed to confirm the existence of land passages towards Asia. The conquest of the Canaries marked the first tangible demarcation of the European Atlantic and, because they were inhabited lands, they also became a kind of previous experience of the long processes of intervention, colonization and exploration that would take place after Columbus's travels; a first "new world" for Europeans from the point of view of the encounter with the "Indigenous" and the impact of the conquerors. The conquests of these archipelagos of passage not only implied a process of more than a century and many travels, but also involved an expressive number of navigators from the Mediterranean and other Atlantic regions of Europe. Regular exchanges with the Canaries led to the discoveries of the other two Atlantic archipelagos: Madeira between 1339 and 1425 and, the Azores from 1427. Both discoveries contributed to expand and define the initial configuration of the Atlantic as a new western sea.

In the maps and maritime charts of the period, however, there was no distinction between real islands and fantastic islands, and the indications were found side by side. The cartography was the result of two distinct tendencies: on the one hand, the desire to produce maps that reflected the new discoveries of the time; on the other, the maintenance of links with myth and traditions. Like the discoveries of the Atlantic archipelagos, the depictions of legendary

islands served as a stimulus for future exploration. Among these representations the most recurrent were the Antilles, São Brandão and the Brazil Island The Antilles, also known as the islands of the seven cities, derived from the culture of the Reconquista and the narrative about exile: legend has it that, because of the invasion of the moors, the last Visigothic King of Spain and seven Christian bishops left Iberian territory to take refuge on an island in the Atlantic where their descendants would live. As these explorations and Atlantic discoveries developed and the islands did not materialize, the Antilles became synonymous with a place that could be perceived but never found.

São Brandão and Brazil Island were the northern counterparts of the Antilles. The first to become famous due to the circulation still in the tenth century of the "journey of the Abbot São Brandão". It is a text that narrates the miraculous deeds and travels of the Irish priest, Brendan De Clonfert and his followers who set out in the North Atlantic until they accidentally discovered an island known as the island of the Blessed. Brazil island was part of the culture and imagination of English sailors. There are two representations: L'hy-Brasil in the tradition of Celtic culture and the floating Brazil in the Mediterranean. While the representation of L'hy-Brasil often coincided with the island of São Brandão, the floating Brazil was located anywhere in the Mediterranean Atlantic (Chaunu, 1980, pp 53-54 and Godinho, 1963)[6].

In addition to Island Legends, exotic travel literature and sailor's beliefs, another important cultural legacy between the maritime traditions of the North and south of the European continent was the geographical and cartographic revolution of the so-called late medieval period. In the history of cartography, the period has been classified as transitional based on the coexistence of three elements: the ancient nautical charts dating back to the thirteenth century, the revival of Ptolemy's geography in the first decade of the 1400s and the explorations of the Atlantic islands and the African coasts. Ptolemy's rediscovery stimulated both trade and a revision of his work, as well as the exploration of seas and lands, since the world of the Greek astronomer had no well-defined geographical boundaries and the ancient nautical charts combined with the Atlantic discoveries were perfectly reconciled with the geographical tradition of antiquity. The Imago Mundi of Pierre d'ailly represented another important legacy among the maritime cultures of northern and southern Europe, both for its significant dissemination at the time, and for the themes it faced: the circumference of the Earth, the extension

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6 The confusion between Brazil Island and São Brandão Island was inherent in the very name "Brazil" that derived from the Gaelic term bre-asil (in English, blessed).

of the continents and the width of the ocean between the western and eastern ends. At the height of the Ptolemaic tradition, Pierre d'aily underestimated the circumference of the earth by a third and overestimated the extent of Eurasia: consequently, this conception inaugurated the concept of the "Atlantic strait". In this way, the vast realm of the ocean was limited and reduced to a navigable space in which Crossing was made easier by the existence of islands of passage. In a few centuries, the European perception of the body of water that constituted the western border was reconfigured, from an infinite space into a delimited sea.

The development of an integrated maritime culture and economy along the Atlantic coastline from 1300 onwards was therefore the result of Forces, internal or external. If the route towards the East Indies was considered more tortuous by the expansion of the Ottomans, the interest in the East created, at the same time, a promising re-export trade between maritime cities of the Italian peninsula and various regions of Europe. The expansion of such trade occurred simultaneously with the significant growth of the European population after the twelfth century, the development of the Hanseatic League and the emergence of Bruges as one of the main centers of the bipolar economy, and these changes together contributed to increased trade contacts between Northern and southern Europe. If, at the beginning, such contacts took place by land, from the end of the thirteenth century with the Maritime Voyages of the Genoese towards Flanders, the Atlantic was, increasingly, the route or space that most united the two regions of the continent. The travels involved not only commercial practices such as exchanges of goods, but also the diffusion of naval engineering and navigation techniques, the expansion of geographical and cartographic knowledge, favoring the creation of a European maritime economy based on these pillars of connection between the Atlantic and the Mediterranean.

The movement toward the west did not, however, result solely from commercial impulses, but was seen as part of a broader process of acculturation. The origins of this process date from the middle centuries of the medieval period, when there were consistent migratory movements not only eastwards and out of Europe thanks to the crusades and German expansion in the Baltic region, but also westwards and into the interior of Europe with the Anglo-Norman colonization of Ireland and the Castilian colonization of Andalusia. These two examples were closely linked to Atlantic exploration because the English assimilated the Celtic maritime tradition while the Castilians assimilated the Andalusian tradition. Moreover, given that these migrations implied processes of conquest and colonization were very relevant to the transformation of Europeans into colonizers. The European Christians who sailed to the coasts of the Americas,

Asia, and Africa in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries came from a society that had already been colonized in its interior. This process had implied not only the displacement of the warrior, literary, merchant, and religious elite, but also of entire families of peasants and manual workers based on true and proper voluntary settlement policies. The very Europe that had begun this extensive process of conquest, colonization and cultural transformation was thus, in part also, the result of previous dynamics of submission of some foreign populations and cultures. The movements of Europeans towards the Baltic and the northern Atlantic and towards the Mediterranean and the Atlantic islands can therefore be considered the precedents of the colonizations in the New World and some areas such as the Iberian Peninsula and Ireland, as Frontier societies of medieval times.

The conquest and colonization of the Canaries was the transition between the process of internal expansion of Europe and that of the Atlantic. The archipelago served as a base for further activities along the African coast and also towards the distant and uninhabited islands such as Madeira Island and the Azores. It was not by chance that Columbus undertook his journey towards the New World from the Canaries and that the archipelago, thanks to its marine currents, propelled the Portuguese towards the South African coasts and the Indian Ocean. However, the Canaries represented something more than a kind of simple launching platform: the archipelago was the first European foreign colony and constituted the first meeting of Europeans with an unknown population: the native guanches. After this encounter, perhaps we can understand that imaginary monsters of the unknown world, such as the ancient Antipodes, were gradually acquiring another image in iconographic representations. Because they were inhabited islands and rich in raw materials, the Canaries constituted the matrix from which the two branches of European expansion derived: the African branch, characterized by the search for products from the mainland, such as slaves and gold, and the Atlantic branch aimed at the search for unexplored lands, not necessarily inhabited, where the cultivation of agricultural products, particularly demanded in Europe, could begin. If in a first phase the islands were exploited for commercial purposes, in a second moment they were colonized with the interest of increasing agricultural expansion. After the archipelago was accidentally discovered by a Genoese merchant and Navigator around the middle of the fourteenth century (L. Malocello), the islands became the object of different expeditions of Portuguese and Catalans who practiced the robbery of local products such as leather, dyes, woods and even slaves for trade purposes with a Europe of still medieval characteristics. The first attempts to colonize these lands were oriented towards the construction of commercial spaces and security forts

due to slave attacks since the most definitive productive facilities had not been built either. The kingdom of Castile promoted, at the beginning of the fifteenth century, the first permanent colonization of the archipelago. However, two norman nobles, Gadifer dela Salle and Jean de Betencourt were in the organization and realization of such an enterprise. The inhabitants of The Canary Islands were not employed in the collection of dyes, but the Normans took settlers from their region and promoted the division of the lands. Even if the forecast for the export of crops on the islands was long-term, from 1520 the archipelago already produced sugar, wine and products derived from cattle, goat, and pork farming. The conquest and colonization of the Canaries was therefore an undertaking of an international character as was, in fact, the process of European expansion in the Atlantic. Even though many of these expeditions were within the scope of companies financed by the Iberian crowns, those who undertook these trips gathered human and material resources from the most varied regions and places possible. The pioneering of the Iberians was partly in the speed with which these monarchies claimed sovereignty over the territories that the Europeans thought they had "discovered" in the Americas, in the East and, in the negotiations to establish the premises in the international politics of the time.

Henrique, the navigator, leader of the Portuguese in Atlantic expansion, distinguished itself by this ability. The Portuguese sovereign promoted the expedition to overcome Cape Bojador which, initially was conceived to achieve two other essential objectives: a crusade against Morocco that ends up failing; and the colonization of the Atlantic islands. After the Spanish conquest of The Canary Islands, the Portuguese colonized the archipelago of the Madeiras and the Azores thanks to a system of feudal concessions, seignorial monopolies and temporary tax privileges inspired by the model of Reconquer. The island of Madeira was rapidly colonized in the early 1420s, and within a few decades the island's fertile lands had begun to produce flour, wine, and sugar (Thornton, 2004, p.54). The navigator Bartolomeo Perestrello, partner of Columbus, was one of the protagonists since process. The Azores were colonized more gradually thanks to the participation of flemish settlers. The Portuguese learned to sail in the Atlantic and became very skilled in this experience, mastering the currents and winds and, building vessels suitable to the conditions of the ocean. These early explorations of the Atlantic on the part of the Iberian kingdoms were largely based on the nautical skills they themselves developed in the Mediterranean between the twelfth and fourteenth centuries. The Moroccan Jews who dominated Catalan cartography maintained close relations with the port cities of North Africa where they heard, for the first time, stories about "the land of the blacks of Guinea".

Another component of the early construction of the Atlantic world that had its origins in the European medieval period was the slave trade. Contrary to what was still conveyed in the relatively recent past, the practice of the slave trade was not interrupted with the end of antiquity (Thornton, 2004). Although slave society declined in Europe because it no longer constituted the economic foundation of the societies that made up this continental region, such a displacement did not prevent the maintenance and reproduction of some forms of slavery. During the economic recovery in the twelfth century linked to demographic resumption, urban expansion and the reopening of long-distance trades, the slave trade was relaunched and carried out in numerous Mediterranean cities. Genoa and Venice were the first to manage such trade and practice it to the detriment of the Slavic populations on account of their expansions towards the Balkans, the Black Sea, Palestine and Syria. Among the main centers of trade of these cities of the Italian peninsula were Crete and Cyprus as colonies of Venice and Caffa (today, Theodosia, in Crimea) on the Black Sea, at that time under the control of the Genoese. Lisbon, Seville, Barcelona, Marseille and Naples were also emerging slave markets in the same context. In several European regions there was the refusal of slave labor in agriculture and mines (Klein, 1999). The routes ran from Catalonia to Naples and Sicily via the city of Tripoli and the region of Tunisia, originating from internal traffic on the African continent. In Europe, most of this Labor was employed in domestic and craft activities.

At the end of the medieval period, before the beginning of the Atlantic traffic in Mediterranean Europe, the slave trade from different regions integrated the flows of trade on the shores of this ocean: black, North African, Turkish, Tatar, Greek and Balkan slaves. However, what stimulated the beginning of the use of slave labor and trafficking in the Atlantic, it was the displacement of the plantation system, especially of sugar cane, from East to West in the Mediterranean-Atlantic. The production of sugar cane demanded the presence of a large workforce with the foresight not only of agricultural work, but also of the manufacturing process. Sugarcane was initially cultivated by Europeans in the Christian States of Palestine, after the crusades between the eleventh and thirteenth centuries, with techniques introduced and used by Muslims (Klein, 1999). After the Arab conquest of these territories from the end of the thirteenth century, cane production began to move progressively to Cyprus, Crete and Sicily, to be transferred later to eastern Spain (Valencia and Malaga) and Portugal (Algarve). Around the middle of the 15th century, sugarcane planting and production reached the Atlantic islands off the West African coast around the Gulf of Guinea and São Tomé and Príncipe (Klein, 1999). The plantation system of sugar cane, constituted the best example

of colonial "Europeanization", that is, of transplanting plant and animal species from the Old World to an environment in which such species could thrive and generate high profits. The connections between the Atlantic archipelagos and The New World were clear: The Canary Islands, Madeira and the Azores were the laboratory of European expansion and the experience seized in these lands significantly influenced later Atlantic history. However, the value and importance of the Atlantic islands should not only be seen as prototypes for the future, but also from the perspective of their roles in shaping and defining the space of the Atlantic world. These imbrications were both strategic, at the beginning of the fifteenth century, and in 1492 the premises for the Portuguese to venture south in search of gold, slaves, spices, and a trade route to the East Indies. A colonial system of production probably would not have established itself on these Atlantic islands if there had not previously been an integrated market in Europe.

European navigation of the Atlantic was not the result of an ambitious visionary scheme, or the exploitation of commercial dammed-up energies, or the effect of new technologies. Contrary to these factors, this expansion represented a cautious advance of a frontier that used or slightly modified existing knowledge and technologies and that relied on the predominance of a small amount of private capital. It would be necessary to wait for the last spectacular trips made to circumnavigate Africa or cross the Atlantic so that the royal patronage, substantial capital and geopolitical interests begin to guide and govern the various activities. It was only when the Portuguese navigators who explored Benin, referring to the possibility of contact with Father John in Ethiopia, that the Portuguese Crown decided to finance Diogo Cão's attempts to circumnavigate Africa. Similarly, only the conquest of the last Canary archipelago and Columbus ' travels received funding from the Spanish crown (Klein, 1999).

The papal bulls that offered the Iberian monarchies the legal instrument to negotiate the monopoly of trade and the colonization of infidel territories, played a key role in convincing the sovereigns to invest in the enterprises of discovery and conquest. The bull granted by Pope Nicholas V to the Portuguese sovereign in 1455 left no doubt as to the merit: it stated that all the lands and peoples of Guinea (West Africa) would pass into the jurisdiction of the Portuguese King and that the claims of the Spanish crown on these lands were implicitly illegitimate. Evangelization therefore becomes an indispensable obligation. This was not only a pretext for plundering or conquering the lands of the infidels: conversion to Christianity also offered the possibility of contacting the African kingdoms and dealing with their courts, important diplomatic exchanges. The millenarian atmosphere of the 15th century, strongly influenced by the Ottoman threat on the

Holy Roman Empire of the East, made war against the infidels one of its highest goals. In such a context, the inherent contradictions between religious missions and violence did not emerge. Columbus himself offers a significant example of how Europeans could combine dogmatic religious ideology with economic calculations and technical knowledge. Not only was his trip determined by a kind of providential mission that had as its ultimate goal the financing of the Christian reconquest of Jerusalem, but his narrative of the encounter with the Taíno – Indigenous people of the Bahamas – went from describing a simple population, devoid of religion and therefore could easily be converted to Christianity, to the idea that these same natives who did not know European weapons could easily be subjugated and turned into slaves.

At the end of the 1480s, all the conditions that allowed an effective crossing of the Atlantic and a conquest of New Lands had been achieved: a greater knowledge of the seas; technical naval and cartographic innovations; the construction of an international network of merchants willing to invest in maritime adventures, the use of a legal model like those of papal bulls that allowed European monarchies to claim a monopoly on conquest and trade in certain regions; the experience of methods of economic exploitation that provided for both a model of selective colonization and a model of peaceful trade.

Atlantic Africa was the last coastal region of the continent to establish regular contacts with the overseas. The populations of the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean had maintained commercial and cultural relations for at least fifteen centuries before the arrival of the Portuguese on the western coasts (Northrup, 2002). However, relations between North Africa and the Mediterranean were older, and after the domestication of the camel and the development of Islam, North Africans intensified trade and cultural relations with sub-Saharan areas. The empires of Mali and Songhai (Songhai) ensured stability and wealth to the Arab and Berber traders of the North, and as a consequence, numerous Sudanese populations adhered to Islam in the centuries succeeding the Year One Thousand, learning to speak and write the Arabic language. In addition to gold, Sudanese traders shipped hides and textiles and traded slaves for horses. After the defeat of the Songhai Empire by Morocco by the end of the sixteenth century, the "Trans-Saharan" trade shifted east of the Niger River, into the territory of present-day Nigeria, just as new trade centers were opening on the Atlantic Coast.

Like trans-Saharan relations, Atlantic trade was built on an existing network of trade and exchanges. The familiarity of the African Atlantic coasts with regional and long-distance trading systems is quite evident if we observe how quickly these societies established trade relations with Europeans. The first

regions that came into contact with the Portuguese: Upper Guinea, the Gold Coast and the Niger delta, were already involved in the Trans-Saharan trade. And the new relations between Europeans and Africans in the Atlantic area showed some similarities with the exchanges that took place through the Sahara: a fruitful reciprocal commercial exchange involving slaves and gold; a strengthening of local African authorities; openness to cultural influences such as Christianity and European languages. In the mid-seventeenth century, the relations of Atlantic Africa began to compete commercially and culturally with those connecting the continent with the Mediterranean.

The first European navigators who reached the African coasts in the fifteenth century soon realized that, unlike the inhabitants of The Canary Islands who did not own boats, the West Africans had developed a specialized maritime culture and were able to defend their own coastal coasts. In 1446, A Portuguese ship intending to land a military expedition in the Senegambia region was attacked and its fleet wiped out by an African vessel. In the succeeding year 1447, Vallater, a Danish navigator in the service of Portugal, was killed along with most of his naval equipment in an attack by a local vessel on the outskirts of the island of Gorea (Gorée) off the coast of Senegal opposite the present-day city of Dakar. Although African vessels were not designed for navigation on the high seas, they were capable of repelling attacks on their shores. They had special hulls, designed for the problems of navigation along the coasts of West Africa and related river systems: carved with a single tree trunk they were long and very low, powered by oars and therefore maneuverable independent of the wind. These vessels were small, fast and became difficult targets for European weapons (Thornton, 2004, p.57). On the other hand, the Europeans could not attack the mainland from the sea. The Portuguese had to abandon the practice of raids adopted by Europeans in the Canary Islands and replace these approaches with relations based on peaceful trade. They soon discovered a fairly developed economy in the West African nations of the Atlantic and that maritime trade could be conducted without hostilities.

Despite some initial suspicions on the part of the relation to the Portuguese, due to the conflicts of the Muslims with the Europeans in North Africa, the two groups were able to establish regular political and commercial relations. Certain specific affinities in the way of conceiving government, the market and religion would have facilitated exchanges between the two cultures. After having established regular relations with the Africans of the lower Senegal and Gambia regions under the leadership of John II, the Portuguese initiated contacts with the Muslim rulers of the powerful Mali Empire in the interior of

the continent. To achieve this goal, they intervened in the struggle for the throne of the Senegalese Kingdom of Jolof, with which they also established frequent trade relations. The Senegalese sovereign Jaleen, threatened by his half-brother, decided to send his son to Lisbon to beg the Portuguese king for the grant of horses, arms and soldiers. The Portuguese monarch consented to the sending of horses but linked the other forms of aid to Jaleen's conversion to Christianity. Expelled from his own kingdom by his enemies, Jaleen returned to Lisbon in 1488, asking again for help in exchange for his conversion. After an elaborate baptismal ceremony in the Portuguese capital, Jaleen returned to Senegal with military, material, and missionary support to promote the Christianization of his kingdom and build a Portuguese trading fortress. This company did not achieve a positive result due to the death of Jaleen that caused the bankruptcy of the mission of John II in Mali (Thornton, 2004). However, the fundamental aspect to be highlighted in the process is that of the intercession between political and religious objectives, considered natural on the part of both sovereigns, which also clarifies one of the strategies adopted by Europeans on the western Atlantic coast for the conquests of the African kingdoms.

Further south, in 1482, along the Gold Coast, the Portuguese negotiated with local leaders to open a trading outpost named São Jorge da Mina. In exchange for this permission, the Africans demanded and obtained that the Portuguese offer the king and other authorities akan[7] regular donations. In the first half of the 15th century three other outposts were opened by the Portuguese: Axim (present-day Western Region of Ghana), Shama (present-day district of Western Region of Ghana) and Accra (present-day capital city of Ghana) and were successively followed by English and Dutch who built five fortresses (Fort Apollonia, Sekondi, Dixcove and Kormantin for England and Mori for Holland). The Portuguese, English and Dutch had to pay the akan authorities an annual rent to maintain control of the outposts. These ports, strategic from a commercial point of view, were fortified at first to protect them from the attacks of the Africans. posteriori for the protection of European competition. One of the most important sets of fortifications was built between 1637 and 1642 by the Portuguese and Dutch with the objectives of gaining supremacy over the gold account: the Dutch had a better advantage over the Portuguese and conquered the forts of Axim, Shama and Mina. The Portuguese defeat was not only caused by the Portuguese difficulty in the dispute of naval power between the two states, but mainly since Africans

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7 West African population currently living in the states of Ghana and Ivory Coast. In the 15th and 16th centuries they had a predominant position in the extraction and trade of gold.

were not subject to Portuguese rule but free to negotiate with foreigners to obtain the best advantages.

Further south, the African kingdoms of Benin and the Congo established with the Europeans a commercial monopoly, avoiding, however, the political fragmentation that had marked the territories north of the western Atlantic Coast. Only the Portuguese met the populations of Benin in 1486. The Sovereign of Benin sent a delegate from his kingdom to Lisbon who was received with all the honors attributed to an ambassador. In exchange for this recognition and the gifts the delegate received to his family and to the Sovereign of Benin, the latter allowed the Portuguese to establish an outpost on the shores of his kingdom for the pepper trade. Many years later, in 1514 and in 1555, other delegates were sent from the kingdom of Benin to Lisbon to discuss trade relations and important matters, such as the conversion of African rulers to Christianity and the sale of arms (Ryder, 1969). To consolidate their respective monopolies, the sovereigns of Benin and Portugal decided to limit trade by granting individual licenses. The imposition of royal monopolies and the direct participation of the Crown should not induce the idea that Portugal had assumed total control of trade. In most cases, sovereigns chose to delegate trade, preferring the safe inflows of a rent paid in advance to the uncertainties of an activity that involved long navigations, the entrapments of pirates and Buccaneers, the transport of goods liable to deterioration. For this reason, the crown often granted monopoly power to large private traders, entrusting them with a portion of the monopoly in exchange for a fixed income.

In West Central Africa, the rulers of the Congo and Ndongo

they learned to master very well the senses of European diplomatic culture and this region was the one that became mostly subject to Portuguese hegemony. After the first contacts with the Portuguese in 1487, the Sovereign of the Congo sent some delegates to Lisbon. As in the case of the Benin missions, the delegates were received as ambassadors in the Portuguese capital and returned to their nations with various gifts and sporting luxury clothing. In return, the Congolese delegates learned Portuguese, converted to Christianity, and were soon followed by their sovereign. In the reign of Alfonso I (1509-1542), a second mission formed by his cousin and his son was sent to Lisbon. The son of Alfonso I, after having studied in the Portuguese capital was ordained a priest and became the first bishop of the Congo. Afonso also requested the Portuguese sovereign to send specialized technicians, teachers, and missionaries to the Congo. The African kingdom even maintained an ambassador in Lisbon during the 1540s and 1550s.

Following an attack on the Kingdom of the Congo by some African tribes from the interior of the territory and the decisive role of Portuguese soldiers in

repelling the offensives, the autonomy of the Congolese rulers sharply decreased from the 1560s. The Portuguese began to observe with interest the kingdom of Ndongo further south and in 1575 established a new headquarters in Luanda which, in a short time, became one of the most important ports in West Africa. To re-establish their supremacy in relations with Europeans, the Congolese authorities sent new delegations to several major cities of the continent, including Rome. Only in the first half of the 17th century on the Dutch occupation of Angolan and Brazilian ports, Portuguese influence was removed. In this context, the Congolese authorities decided to establish diplomatic relations with the Netherlands, but the Portuguese reconquest in 1648 resulted in a sharp decrease in the autonomy of the two African kingdoms (Heywood, L. and Thornton, J. 2007).

The bilateral diplomatic action of contacts in the fifteenth century continued Also in the succeeding century. If, on the one hand, the African authorities had to share power with the Portuguese beyond the coastal enclave of Angola and its smaller counterparts on the Gold Coast, political power remained in the hands of Africans. In the small kingdoms of Upper Guinea, as well as in the large state of Benin and its neighbors in the Niger Delta regions, Africans continued to control both politics and trade. The commercial exchanges of the period were no longer managed by groups of merchants who from Europe came to Africa to buy any product that the African market offered. From the earliest contacts, European and African states sought to manage trade and put it under state control with the aim of securing considerable incomes. European traders intending to enter the African market had to undergo a complex series of negotiations before they became effectively involved.

The most precious African exports before 1650 were gold, pepper sugar and slaves in addition to some manufactured goods and forest products. One of the first objectives of the Portuguese was to divert the Trans-Siberian trade circuits from gold to the Atlantic. Such a project did not achieve much success in Upper Guinea, but it was successful on the Gold Coast from where gold began to be exported in large quantities and increasingly from the beginning of Portuguese commercialization. The Portuguese were soon displaced by the English and the Dutch who, later, from the seventeenth century appropriated the totality of these activities. West Africa was between the end of the fifteenth century and during the sixteenth century the main source of gold for Europe and exports grew at an average of approximately 737 tons annually to 907 tons in the first half of the seventeenth century (Boogaart, 1992, p.372).

The role of African merchants, traders and miners was strategic for the development of the Atlantic Gold Trade. As soon as gold production in the areas

surrounding the Sahara began to decline, in the early 15th century, the so-called Muslim merchants Dilas[8] from western Sudan they moved further south to link the mines of the Volta River Basin in the Gulf of Guinea to the Trans-Saharan trade. After the founding of São João da Mina, the diúlas and their akan allies collaborated to divert trade to the South since the Atlantic route was shorter and therefore more profitable. The akan thus established themselves in the territories around the ports and fortresses of the Gold Coast, developing the function of intermediaries in the Atlantic Gold Trade.

Sugar was another important African Export that would later become a distinctive element in the Atlantic world. The occupation of uninhabited islands gave the Portuguese the opportunity to introduce the plantation of sugar cane and the slave system according to the model derived from the Muslims in the Mediterranean. The center of sugar production in the sixteenth century was the island of São Tomé where settlers obtained permission to buy slaves on the mainland and cultivate sugar cane. By 1530, the island of São Tomé, already had about 10,000 slaves on approximately 70 plantations and had become the largest sugar producer in the world, surpassing the island of Madeira. In the beginning of 17th century, the number of slaves engaged in these plantations reached the number of 64,000, but in this period, Brazil's sugar production was already competing in quantity and quality with the African islands, redirecting the Atlantic traffic to the Americas (Thornton, 2004, p.73).

The slave trade and the numbers associated with this trade, especially after 1650, cast a significant shadow: in the two centuries prior to the seventeenth, the slave trade constituted a modest proportion of African exports in the Atlantic area with the exception of the central African area. Before 1650 Africans sold slaves through three distinct and at the same time interconnected Atlantic trading networks. The first supplied slaves to the Iberian Peninsula and gradually replaced the Trans-Saharan network: at the beginning of the sixteenth century from 500 to 750 slaves a year arrived in Lisbon from the African coasts. While around half of these slaves were re-exported and most to Spanish territories, many remained in the Portuguese capital: by the mid-sixteenth century Africans had made up 10% of the city's population. The Portuguese operated a second slave trade between various African regions, particularly from Upper Guinea to the islands of Cape Verde, Biafra and São Tomé and Principe on a route from the Niger delta to the Gold Coast. The dimensions of this trade are still uncertain, but it has

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8 The term Dioula was used to refer to Muslim itinerant traders who worked in sub-Saharan Africa.

been estimated that between 1490 and 1521 in Cape Verde arrived about

8,000 slaves per year, in São Tomé about 750 and on the Gold Coast about 300 (Elbl, 1997).

The third and final network of the slave trade was the best known: the one that crossed the Atlantic. Some African slaves already residing in the Iberian Peninsula accompanied the Europeans in the first phase of the conquest of the New World. And other slaves under the control of the Portuguese in the Atlantic islands were also engaged in the voyages of discovery. In 1525, the vessel Santa Maria Begona sailed from São Tomé with a cargo of 300 slaves towards the La Española (at the time, the first European colony in the New World founded by Christopher Columbus on his voyages of 1492 and 1493; today one of the largest islands in the Caribbean comprising Haiti and the Dominican Republic). In the following year two small vessels sailed from Cape Verde to Cuba with a total of 162 slaves. In 1532, three vessels sailed from São Tomé with a total of 692 slaves towards the Spanish Caribbean. The islands played a strategic role of selection or escalation of the captives in the early travels because most of the slaves were bought in small groups in the neighboring areas of the continent. The first voyage of the traffic from the mainland of the African continent towards the Americas that is known was that of the ship Conceição of 1534 from the Congo River to The Spanish and Jamaica (Eltis, Beherendt, Richardson, Florentine, www.slavevoyages.org). Senegambia was one of the first African regions to supply African slaves with a total of 200,000 individuals by 1650 bound for the Spanish Caribbean and Central America. After 1550 slaves came mainly from central Africa, and in the first half of the following century this proportion will reach 84% of the slave supply of the entire Atlantic trade.

The exceptional role developed by West central Africa in the slave trade, both in this first period of Atlantic construction, and in successive phases, was due to multiple factors. First, Congo and neighboring countries lacked alternative goods such as gold, pepper and Ivory for trade with Europeans. Secondly, the rulers of the Kingdom of the Congo, a younger Kingdom and therefore less centralized in relation to other states in the region, distributed European arms and goods as a strategy of strengthening political power, unlike the sovereigns of Benin who had greater internal control and could thus better control involvement in international trade, as demonstrated by the kingdom's 1516 decision to ban the export of slaves. Finally, the greater participation of this region in the slave trade was probably associated with its isolation from the long-distance internal trade that, on the contrary, characterized the connection of the rest of West Africa with the Atlantic world (Thornton, 2004, pp. 66-68).

Africans took part in the Atlantic trade with the aim of obtaining imports; if they had not received demanded goods in return, they would not have offered Europeans gold, slaves and other valuable products. The Europeans had, for their part, an active role in the development of Atlantic trade and did so on their own initiative, demanding a wide range of products that, however, did not affect, in this initial period of construction oceanic world, the African economy and manufacturing. Euro-African trade did not involve exclusively the exchange of essential goods for the sole purpose of satisfying the needs of an insufficient or less developed economy: Europe did not offer Africa anything more than Africa already produced. African demand of fabrics, metal objects and jewelry was fed largely for reasons such as, prestige, imagination, taste and desire for varieties (Thornton, 2004, p.73). The development of Atlantic trade was therefore also the consequence of the extension of the African internal market. Africans ordered a wide range of products, not only of European origin, but Asian, American and other regions of Africa itself. The Portuguese, for example when they arrived in the Gold Coast, traded with Africans, various types of goods, including fabrics from Morocco and Benin and slaves and pearls from Benin.

The acculturation of Atlantic Africa generally did not replace the already existing elements, but added others: the new languages did not extinguish the traditional ones; the new cultures integrated into the older elements; the new weapons were used alongside the original ones; and even Africans who converted to Christianity understood the new faith in terms of traditional cosmogonies. The slave trade extended the business of an afro-Atlantic culture to the outsized proportions of the trade with the Americas. However, what Africans assimilated from Europeans, they imported into their world on their own terms and not under the annihilating influence of slavery. The examination of the modality on the basis of which African culture has transformed and incorporated foreign influence has revealed the presence in Africa of a deep dynamism that in the successive period will be diffused overseas.

By the middle of the seventeenth century, Africans had created strong links with other areas of the Atlantic world without, however, being dominated by these connections. Unlike the Americas, in Africa there was neither a European conquest of vast proportions nor the decimation of the population, but only a weak subordination of certain natives to some foreign authorities. In their diplomatic relations, trade and cultural adaptations, Africans participated in the construction of the Atlantic world voluntarily and generally in positions of strength. Although the new interactions initially had rulers and merchants with advantages and already established, the Atlantic offered capable and ambitious

Africans new opportunities to become linguistic and cultural mediators, traders or Warlords. The rapid development of the export-intensive plantation economy in the Americas after 1650 largely overshadowed these effects, focusing attention on slave exports to the detriment of other components of Atlantic culture and history.

In 1492, Columbus, in search of a sea route to Asia, landed in the Bahamas and proceeded to explore the Caribbean islands and their native populations on all four of his subsequent voyages to the Americas. It sailed under the auspices of the Castilians and financed by Aragonese courtiers and Genoese investors. His techniques of contact with the natives, which ranged from the trade in trinkets to the capture of hostages and deposits of prisoners on the beaches (those who survived could be transformed into interpreters), recalled the methods and practices used by the Portuguese on the African coasts. Christopher Columbus's life and career reflected well the continuity between the Mediterranean and the Atlantic and his intermediate and transitional position between the two worlds. The Navigator's experience in the eastern Mediterranean not only helped to develop his maritime skills, but brought him closer to a variety of practices, such as the possession of Trading Outposts that greatly influenced his way of dealing with the lands and with the American Indians. During his stay in Portugal and on the island of Madeira, Columbus visited the fortress of El Mina where slaves and gold came from, transported sugar from the Atlantic islands, supported the sugar and slave trade and agreements for the installation of captaincies, territories under the jurisdiction of a proprietary captain. Such experiences had enormous influence on their conceptions of authority, rights over lands, and powers over native populations.

In Portuguese America even if the actors have been

similar to Hispanic-American protagonists such as royal officials, merchants, colonists, military captains, and missionaries, the local conditions and native populations encountered determined diverse successes, crises, and chronologies. Due to the absence of dense indigenous populations or large states in the interior of South America, the Portuguese limited the exploration of the territory essentially to the Atlantic coast, where they initially established trading outposts on the model of those Africans. Here the main resource chosen was Brazil wood from which a red dye could be extracted. The Portuguese Crown grants a license to extract the dye to private traders. Trade with the Tupi-guarani also included slaves, animal skins, and wild animals. The Portuguese offered metal instruments, fabrics and other trinkets in exchange for the work of the indigenous people, which consisted, at first, of cutting and transporting to the

beach the coveted wood. From 1506 onwards, the Portuguese Crown began to become more directly involved in this trade thanks to the installation of some royal forts along the Atlantic Coast (Monteiro, 1994).

The decision to permanently occupy the American territory was a response to the threatening presence of the French who, since 1504, had begun to trade in Brazil Wood despite Portuguese claims to have agreed to a trade monopoly east of the Tordesillas Line, established by the papal Bull of 1493. In 1530, therefore, the Crown decided to change its orientation and implement a policy of permanent occupation of its American territory to prevent the French from trading with the coastal Tamoios. In this way, the system of hereditary captaincies was introduced, an instrument already used previously in the Atlantic islands, on the basis of which extensions of land were granted to Portuguese nobles in exchange for their effective occupation and exploitation. The territories assigned to the donataries encompassed about 50 leagues of coastal coastline and an imprecise territory inland; in exchange for the commitment to colonize at their own expense, the donataries obtained from the King rights and privileges such as, the government and administration of justice in the captaincy, direct rule over a significant part of the lands and the possibility of granting part of these lands to their own subjects.

This political transformation and the contemporary exhaustion of pau brasil, profoundly modified the relations of Europeans with the Tupi-Guarani. While before the Indians were considered a fundamental counterpart of the trade, with the new policy of occupation and cultivation of the lands, many natives were transformed into slaves, determining an increase in the attacks of the natives against the Europeans. However, the military weakness of the Portuguese and their dependence in many cases on alliances with the Tupi-Guarani against the incursions of the French did not allow a reaction of force on the part of the Europeans. The result was that of the ten captaincies established by the Portuguese between 1530 and 1550, only Pernambuco in the north of the territory and São Vicente in the South were relatively successful. Faced with such uncertainties, the Crown decided to assume direct administration of the colony, establishing a capital in the city of Salvador and sending royal officials of its own. This action was followed by the sending of military and Jesuit missionaries to carry out the pacification and evangelization of the Indians. However, violent exploitation and disease decimated the Amerindian population, contributing to the decision of the Portuguese to start the importation of African slaves, first as specialized labor for the sugar plantations and, successively, as simple labor force. By 1580, the Portuguese had settled definitively in their coastal colonies on the Atlantic south of the Amazon River, and the Indians had fled disease and slavery,

retreating to the regions in the interior of the territory. Diseases had also begun to affect the populations of Northern America before Europeans began establishing permanent colonies in the early seventeenth century. Already in the sixteenth century sporadic contacts had triggered strong epidemics. The first European fishermen arrived on the northern coasts just when the Iberians thought they had" discovered " lands to the south of the continent. The Spanish had tried many times to establish their own headquarters in the south of North America, either with Juan Ponce de León in Florida, or with other expeditions in the Mississippi area, but all without success. In the first decades of the 17th century the English, French and Dutch began to think of establishing their colonies in North America rather than threatening the Spanish and Portuguese colonies.

Even if in some contexts, Europeans were constrained to negotiate, ally with Africans or American Indians, the formation of the Atlantic world was characterized by the use of violence. The initial conquest of the Atlantic archipelagos (Canary Islands, The Spanish) involved massacres and the elimination of entire populations. Although diseases transmitted by Europeans played an important role, it cannot be forgotten that also other actions, in certain cases, close to genocide, led to a significant decline in the indigenous population. However, violence characterized not only the new world, but the entire Atlantic area of the sixteenth century.

While American societies suffered a devastating political and demographic collapse due to disease, wars, and European greed, the populations of West Africa were captured, sold by the Africans themselves to European traders who in turn sold them as slaves on the plantations of the Iberian Peninsula, in the Atlantic archipelagos, and in the American colonies. At the same time, civil wars, international wars and religious wars shook Europe, putting an end to the former Christian unity. The discovery of gunpowder and the consequent increase in the use of firearms radically changed the ways of waging war. The moderna era was therefore, a time of intolerance and massacres throughout the Old Continent. Thanks to the numerous Chronicles and images about the brutality and violence of the conquest that reached Europe at the end of the sixteenth century, Europeans became aware of their own barbarism, bequeathing their direct experiences to what was happening in the Atlantic world: the two processes began to be considered as pairs of the same continuum. Violence in Africa and America thus reflected European violence, and the existence of a boundary between civilized and savage peoples became less and less clear. The fear that the world would enter a new Dark Age was widely shared by the protagonists involved in the construction of the Atlantic world: not only the main victims of European brutalities and activities,

but also the Europeans themselves, whether they were settlers, sailors, merchants, judges or missionaries (Schaub, J. F, 2008, p. 74-98).

The existence of a blurred boundary between civilization and barbarism was expressed, both within Europe itself and in the Atlantic world, in the numerous processes of conquest and colonization that took place between the end of the medieval period and the beginning of a modern era. The violence experienced by the guanches in the Canaries and the Taíno in the Antilles was, over time, that of more devastating effects in the Atlantic world. At the beginning of the 17th century after one hundred and fifty years of exploitation, slavery and deportations, the guanches became extinct. An analogous process of extermination of the indigenous population in the Antilles by violence was faster: in the 1540s the Taíno and the Carib disappeared. To get an idea of the impact of the conquest on Native Americans it must be considered that estimates of the total population of the continent on the eve of the arrival of Europeans vary enormously from less than twenty million to eighty million or more. As regards these estimates of twenty-eighty millions for the whole continent, the population of North America amounted to between one and two millions, according to the lowest estimates, and eighteen millions, according to the highest. While the total figures remain the subject of debate, there is no discussion about the fact that the arrival of Europeans provoked a demographic catastrophe with losses of around 90% in the hundred years following first contact (Newson L. A, 1993, p. 247-288). However the estimates of those who try to enlarge the numbers to support the hypothesis of a catastrophe and a ruinous decline: the faster the decline, the higher the assessment of the population at the time of contact. To justify the speed of decline – which would not be possible to attribute neither to the sword of the few conquerors nor to other economic and social causes that acted gradually-it is functional to accept the epidemiological cause as the main factor of depopulation. Those who support the estimates of the expansion of the population existing before the arrival of Europeans are induced to underestimate other unnatural factors of the decline (Bacci, M. L, 2005, p.15).

The question of whether or not this catastrophe was the result of atrocities committed during the conquest, derived from mistreatment and the successive exploitations of the indigenous populations became a source of violent discussions among Spanish observers in the conquest period. The so-called "Black legend" (or Leyenda Negra) of the conquest was not a polemical invention of Friar Bartolomé de Las Casas, skillfully exploited by Protestants and other enemies to defame Spain, but the common opinion among Spanish intellectuals involved in the facts. The Brevisíma relación de la destrucción de las Indias written,

probably, in 1542, known in court circles and published in Seville in 1552 became popular outside Spain with dozens of translations in flamingo, English, French, German and Italian. This work was marked in the European consciousness as an implacable testimony to the barbaric behavior of his compatriots. The central thesis is presented at the beginning of the book: "the reasons for the catastrophe are due to two great causes, the direct violence of war and the oppression of slavery" (Las Casas, 2020).

The catastrophe was provoked by the wars of conquest, marauding attacks and conflicts between the indigenous people themselves. In addition to direct violence, wars caused famine and famine because the plantations were destroyed, the crops confiscated and the Indians unable to sow were constrained to escape. Slavery caused even greater disasters through uprooting, oppression and exploitation. The most extreme form of domination consisted in reducing the American Indians to slavery, either by direct, violent and individual subordination, or by forcing the caciques to pay tribute with slaves. The negative impact of the conquest was also the displacement, more or less forced, of entire populations from one region to another with traumatic climate and environmental changes. The European domination and the individual subordination of the indigenous had a demographic effect of great importance in the Atlantic world with the more or less forced subtraction of women from the indigenous reproductive cycle and the emergence of the mestizo. In a broad view of American demographic events, the mestizo would have compensated the indigenous decline, but the imbalance generated in Indigenous communities determined a drop in reproductive and weakened the resumption of growth after the demographic crisis (Bacci, 2005, p.50). The formation of a mixed population also resulted from the widespread practice of rape and other types of violence carried out by Europeans against African and Amerindian women.

Faced with this reality and various denunciations, there were several efforts by the Spanish monarchy to limit and control violence towards the Amerindian population. Charles V Habsburg enacted a number of laws to protect the indigenous people, but these measures were rarely observed. Even if slavery was, in theory, forbidden, the encomienda system used to exploit indigenous labor, they continued to be a major cause of mass destruction. The behavior of the Spaniards suggests that the conquest of America was largely carried out without the control of the Spanish and Portuguese crowns. The arrest of Columbus and his brothers, the trial of Hermán Cortés, the civil war between conquerors in Peru, the chaotic expedition of Lope De Aguirre are all events that demonstrate that the conquistadors were neither agents of a state authority nor private entrepreneurs.

The Iberian monarchies did not, therefore, have a control of violence.

The encounter with the Europeans implied, finally, in a process of acculturation of the war. Indigenous Peoples, at first terrified of European firearms, soon began to crave them. Even if by Spanish and English legislation, the Amerindians could not bear arms or ride horses, it was practically impossible to respect such prohibitions in the border regions. Horses, as well as firearms were absorbed into the Amerindian military culture, in particular, of the machupes or araucanos and the apaches who made war a kind of lifestyle. Emulating the methods used so successfully in the wars against the Aztecs and the Maya, Europeans sought help from certain indigenous groups against others, pitting one tribe against another and weaving networks of cross-alliances. In the case of Brazil, the Portuguese used a vigorous warrior tradition to mobilize the Tupi armadas, formed by more than a hundred individuals, to assault the fortresses of the French enemies.

CONCLUSION...

The present study aimed to examine the historical formation of the Atlantic world from the end of the medieval period due to a very gradual process that involved dynamics of explorations, encounters, exchanges and interactions between geography and reality. In this narrative, we highlight, at first, the commercial construction of the European Atlantic world that linked the Baltic Sea to the Mediterranean and was characterized by the development of cartography and navigation, reaching the conquests and colonizations of the eastern Atlantic archipelagos, taken as decisive stages for European expansion in West Africa and for the conquest of America. Then, we seek to demonstrate the involvement and participation of the kingdoms and nations of West Africa in trade with Europeans in a more expanded Atlantic by navigation. The examination of how African cultures transformed and appropriated foreign influence revealed the strong dynamism of these societies that spread, successively, across the ocean towards the Americas. In the interactions between Europeans and the native populations of the Americas, it was verified how Amerindian cultures and traditions were decisive in the experiences of encounters and confrontations with the Explorers of the Old World, as well as the approach adopted by these conquerors and colonizers in the New World. For many of the native populations of both the Atlantic archipelagos and the Americas, the arrival of Europeans meant extinction and, for other Amerindians, involved a process of rearticulation and redefinition within the new colonial society. Finally, it was also sought to substantiate how

violence was the characteristic of the process of conquest and colonization in the New World. Genocides, massacres, forced conversions and slavery; violence involved both Amerindians, Africans and Europeans. The fear that everyone was entering a dark "New Era" was widely shared, in this context, by the protagonists involved in the construction of the Atlantic world.

The Atlanticist approach adopted in the research sought to understand and explain the ocean as a space of interconnections and interdependencies formed from European expansion and the discovery of the new world between the European, African and American continents that gave rise to new societies, economies and cultures. It sought to combine with this approach the initiatives and actions not only economic and colonial empires, but also those of individuals with their respective interests, lifestyle, work, consumption, cultural and religious practices do not always coincide with national and imperial histories. The Atlantic can be considered as a "encounter" and a "connection", as proposed by F. Braudel, that is, as a single context of analysis that promotes commercial, migratory, political, strategic, cultural and religious interactions in a fluid and maritime space, but based on the diversification of the interests, ideas and identities of the various societies that coast the ocean until contemporaneity (Vivero, Juan Luis Suarez de. 2020), following the experienced perception and celebrated historian: a sea that offers "all the colors of the Earth's climates".

A FORMAÇÃO DO MUNDO ATLÂNTICO: "TODAS AS CORES DOS CLIMAS DA TERRA"

RESUMO

A proposta do presente artigo é reconstituir narrativamente a formação histórica do mundo atlântico Para tanto foram combinadas as perspectivas transnacional, transatlântica, nacional e regional do debate atlanticista contemporâneo, com ênfase nas trocas comerciais e nos intercâmbios de ideias, religiões e práticas culturais; nos fluxos migratórios; nas transferências ecológicas e na expansão imperial em escala global. Essa abordagem, debitaria da revisão historiográfica no campo atlanticista, privilegia a análise de uma dada conjuntura oceânica com base em categorias analíticas capazes de abarcar, de modo integrado os espaços terrestres, deslocamentos, fluxos e movimentos próprios do "espaço marítimo", aqui considerado preferencialmente como o resultado de uma rede diversificada e integrada de várias regiões costeiras do Atlântico, pela ação de múltiplos atores.
Palavras-chave: História do Atlântico; Atlanticismo; Atlântico Sul.

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