



Race, Religion, and Slavery in Alonso de Sandoval's S. J. *De instauranda Aethiopum salute*

ROBERTO HOFMEISTER PICH

Pontifícia Universidade Católica do Rio Grande do Sul, Escola de Humanidades, Programa de Pós-Graduação em Filosofia, Porto Alegre – RS, Brazil

ABSTRACT One of the most significant works on black slavery written by a Catholic thinker in the seventeenth century was Alonso de Sandoval's *De instauranda Aethiopum salute* (1627/²1647), which both describes the traffic of African slaves to Latin America and offers different clues to understanding the emergence of an 'ideology' of black slavery, which, to a certain extent, justified that system inside the Roman Catholic Church and the Iberian world. At the same time, Sandoval made an attempt to set up ethical criteria for the slave trade and the relationships between masters and slaves in the everyday life of the South American colonies. I propose an analysis of Sandoval's work focusing first on the theological foundations invoked for the slavery of black people, second on legal and moral debates over the justification of the enslaved condition of Africans and of the slave trade, and third on the roles of 'race,' 'racism,' and 'true religion' in Sandoval's arguments. Sandoval introduces peculiar language and descriptions that deeply devalue dark-skinned persons in general and African black culture in particular, supporting an ideology of subjection.

KEYWORDS black slavery, Alonso de Sandoval, race, racism, religion, ideology

Introduction

In order to assess how 'race' and 'religion' played a role in the theological and philosophical history of the transatlantic, early-modern, and modern slavery of black people, we can look to the fairly large number of works by religious men, theologians, philosophers, and jurists more or less related to early-modern Iberian and Latin American Scholasticism touching or focusing on that topic. Irrespective of the use of words such as 'race' and 'racism'—'race' is used quite often in seventeenth-century Iberian literature, whereas the use of 'racism' is more difficult to trace—both notions are there to be found on the conceptual level. This is especially the case if we grant 'race' and 'racism' a meaning broad enough to encompass views and attitudes to more or less well-defined groups of human beings that are characterized by specific and stable

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aspects of ethnicity or collective culture and, on these grounds, are put into rigid hierarchical structures of superiority/inferiority on a historical and a ‘metaphysical’ level.

As M. P. Cenci recently restated, summarizing historical studies and interpretations by G. M. Hall and P. E. Lovejoy, “the connection between race and enslavement is not a necessary” one; enslavement of human beings “was accepted long before modern racism based upon differences in religion and nationality” or in culture, ethnic identity, or skin color emerged (Cenci 2015, 75).¹ There is no doubt that slavery based upon racial views—and prejudices—and then connected to difference in skin color began to characterize slavery as an institution in the sixteenth century, together with the growth of the transatlantic slave trade. G. M. Hall argues for the thesis that “racist ideology” was used to justify “slavery in [the] Americas” (Hall 2005, 1; *apud* Cenci 2015, 75). Such an ideology needed strong narratives about “races” and made use of a “mechanism” for putting people from different racial types into a hierarchy “based on differences in skin color.” Apparently, in Africa, before “Atlantic trade,” slavery was usually motivated by differences *in religion*, as it was in Islamic societies, for instance. Moreover, on the medieval Iberian Peninsula—as in medieval times in general—difference in skin color was just “a corporeal characteristic” (Lovejoy 2002, 47–50, see also 2006, 9–38; Hall 2005, 1; *apud* Cenci 2015, 75). If racism based upon differences in skin color requires particular connections to be made and explained based on various contexts, narratives, and works, the same applies to connections between prejudicial views about race based on skin color and the institution of slavery. At any rate, such connections are not natural; they are certainly ideological. As a summary of the theory that American slavery presupposed “racism based on skin color,” Lovejoy identifies in it two basic characteristics: “[...] the manipulation of race as way to control the captive population; and the dimension of an economic rationalization of the system” (Lovejoy 2002, 38). [2]

I believe that both characteristics raised by Lovejoy apply conceptually and historically to early-modern views of black slavery to be found in Iberian – also Ibero-American – thinkers. In this regard, I want to explore the major work by a Catholic Jesuit priest and missionary, written in the first half of the seventeenth century, namely, Alonso de Sandoval (1576–1652) (on his life and work, see Vila Vilar 1987, 25–39; as well as Saranyana et al. 1999, 252–55; Rey Fajardo 2004, 286–89; Pich 2015, 51–54). He was the author of *De instauranda Aethiopum salute (On the Salvation of the Blacks [Ethiopians] to Be Restored)*², the first edition of which appeared 1627, in Seville.³ The meaning of the Latin title is quite peculiar indeed, and this is how Sandoval explains it: [3]

The title *De instauranda Aethiopum salute* means “How to restore the salvation of the blacks,” because its primary and fundamental goal is not to motivate people [4]

1 M. P. Cenci (2015, 75, note 1) refers to the thesis by Gwendolyn Midlo Hall (2005, 8–9), according to which slavery is a “historical,” not a “sociological category.”

2 The title of Alonso de Sandoval’s treatise reveals an obvious acquaintance with José de Acosta’s work *De procuranda indorum salute*, which is Acosta’s central exposition of the doctrinal basis for Catholic missions among the Indigenous peoples of America. See José de Acosta (1984); José de Acosta (1987).

3 The edition used as a main source for this study was the one that originally appeared in 1627 in Seville, which was (re)published 1987 in Madrid, with a transcription and “translation” into (a more) contemporary Spanish by E. Vila Vilar. The inscription “De instauranda Aethiopum salute” appears directly on the front page of the amplified edition of 1647 (Madrid). At any rate, the name by which the book used to be referred also appears in the 1627 edition; see Alonso de Sandoval (1987, 27) “Suma del Privilegio,” previous to the several “Aprovaciones”: “Este libro intitulado *De instauranda Aethiopum Salute* compuesto por el P. Alonso de Sandoval, Rector del Colegio de la Compañía de Jesús, de Cartagena de las Indias; tiene privilegio para que ninguna persona lo pueda imprimir, ni vender sin licencia de su autor, como consta de su original, que está en poder de D. Sebastián de Contreras, Secretario del Rey nuestro señor. Su fecha en 3 de febrero de

to go to their lands to convert them (although this is a secondary goal) but instead to go to the ports where the slaves disembark. These slaves are incorrectly judged to be Christians, so we must ask them if they have been baptized. If they have not, we must instruct them. Once they have been well instructed, we can baptize them and restore their spiritual health, which has been lost (Alonso de Sandoval 2008, [To the Christian Reader] 8–9, translated by N. Von Germeten, see also 1987, [Argumento de la obra al Christiano Lector] 55).

Sandoval’s work would explain the methods for restoring spiritual health to African people.⁴ [5] In a 1624 introductory *Letter* to Father Mutio Vitelleschi (1563–1645), who happened then to be the General of the Company of Jesus, he affirms even more clearly the book’s purpose, in words that already indicate racial prejudice based on skin color: “The book’s purpose is to help people who are poor and abandoned. Although they are black, they can be washed clean by the purity and whiteness of Christ’s blood” (Alonso de Sandoval 2008, [*Letter* to Mutio Vitelleschi] 7, 1987, [A nuestro muy reverendo Padre en Christo Mutio Vitelleschi [...]] 53).

De instauranda Aethiopum salute—from now onwards I shall mostly use the abbreviation [6] DIAS—is a treatise on mission and catechetical theology. Sandoval’s piece is arguably one of the most important works⁵ for understanding the several religious, philosophical, and cultural presuppositions which, taken together, constitute what we might call the ideological mind-set for conceiving and historically dealing with the phenomenon of black slavery—or, put differently, the institution of enslaved black people—in colonial Latin America. An important part of that construction was precisely the description and, thus, representation by Sandoval of black people (Ethiopians) as a human group or groups and the characteristics of the language or evaluating discourse he uses for that purpose: ‘race’ and ‘racism’ play a role in it and, at the same time, or perhaps even primarily, are historically constructed and characterized through it. In order to see that construction there are two paths within Sandoval’s book that I would like to explore: (a) Sandoval’s account of the enslaved status—both slavery conditions and enslavement processes—of the Ethiopians; and (b) his plea for major missionary and catechetical work⁶ with the enslaved Africans that arrive in Latin America in order to provide them access to the one ‘true’ religion that brings salvation. By describing and analyzing these two aspects, I intend to show (c) how religious discourse and religious practice play a role in the ‘manipulation of race’ and ideology of slavery. The exposition of topics (a) and (b) that follows centers on Sandoval’s 1627 edition of *DIAS*. This is because, although Sandoval’s reflections on the condition of slavery and the slave trade are much more complete in his 1647 edition, in which he enlarged his previous single Book I into three books of a first volume to be followed by others (which never appeared), it is only in his 1627 edition, divided into

[1]625.” Following Vila Vilar (1987, 38–40), there is a consensus that Sandoval prepared those materials in the period between 1616 and 1623.

4 Von Germeten (2008a, 9, footnote 11): “Throughout *De instauranda* Sandoval uses biblical references and accounts taken from other ancient and medieval sources to argue that the apostles went to parts of Africa and preached Christianity. Since that time, he believes, the devil (and, closely linked, Islam) has influenced Africans to lose their Christianity and their “spiritual health.” He hopes his work will return this health to them.”

5 Cenci (2015, 77), notes that in reference works to African-American history such as Hornsby, ed. (2005), and Gordon and Gordon, eds. (2006), Alonso de Sandoval is surprisingly never mentioned.

6 By highlighting religious and political ideas to be found in theological literature—i.e., history and theology of mission—the present study can be seen as a different contribution to the philosophical project “*Scholastica colonialis*: Reception and Development of Baroque Scholasticism in Latin America, Sixteenth to Eighteenth Centuries.” On this project, see Pich and Culleton (Pich and Culleton 2010, 25–45).

four books, that his religious project of mission among the blacks is fully presented, including his account of form and content for introducing the Africans into the Christian life through catechism and the sacraments.⁷

Alonso de Sandoval and the Debate on Black Slavery

It seems correct to affirm that the sixteenth-century debate on slavery initially focused on the reception of Aristotle's theory of slaves by nature. This theory was meant to legitimize the subjection of the newly discovered human groups and nations in the New World, given the lack of *dominium* by the Indigenous peoples. A further significant focus of the debate was slavery as a condition resulting from allegedly 'just' wars against the Indians. In the wake of engaged minds such as Bartolomé de Las Casas O.P. (1474–1566) and Francisco de Vitoria O.P. (1483–1546), most religious men and intellectuals of the Catholic Church condemned, strictly speaking, both the natural slavery of the Indians and the civil forms of serfdom applied to them as well. This last condemnation had not only theoretical, but also practical motivations, such as the supposed unsuitability of the Indians to enforced labor, as well as the remarkable decrease of Indigenous populations in the colonies at the end of the sixteenth to the middle of the seventeenth century.⁸ From the second half of the sixteenth century onwards, and especially in the seventeenth century, under the authority of classical, patristic, and medieval sources on the status and the practice of slavery similar to those that the previous generation used for the debate on the condition of the American aboriginal peoples, Catholic intellectuals had to face normative questions about the slavery of Africans or, more generally, 'black people' and the moral correctness of the slave trade and its many implications. In this second, large, context of reflection on the institution of slavery and slavery as, sadly enough, a traditional form of human social relationship, we will find several approaches in authors of the sixteenth to seventeenth century. These authors repeat patterns of discussion and also enrich the debate with new considerations on human nature and rights, as well as on the justice of political and economic systems (see also Pich 2019, 1–9).

There has yet to be any study that pursues an exhaustive chronological account of theological, juridical, and philosophical assessments of black slavery that might help with reconstructing, from those perspectives, the etiology and nature of such a social institution—perhaps also providing an explanation for it (see Pich, Culleton, and Storck 2015, 3–15). It is not only theoretically but also morally important to understand on that level of ideas how such a profound and long-prevailing structure of radically asymmetrical hierarchy, related to a

7 Alonso de Sandoval, *De instauranda Aethiopia salute – Historia de Aethiopia, naturaleza, Policia Sagrada y profana, Costumbres, ritos, y Cathecismo Evangelico, de todos los Aethiopes con que se restaura la salud de sus almas, dividida en dos Tomos*, Madrid: Alonso de Paredes, 1647. The topics of Volume II or Part II, which was not published then, would more or less cover the topics of Books II–IV of Sandoval's 1627 edition of the *De instauranda*; see Alonso de Sandoval (1647), ["Prologo al Letor"] n. 4 (no page numbers).

8 Vila Vilar (1987, 17–18) reminds us that, by the end of the sixteenth century, *Indios* were basically no longer enslaved: they had rather to live, according to royal mandates, under different forms of institutions, such as *encomienda*, *repartimiento*, and *peonaje*. Moreover, Philipp II signed monopoly contracts of the African slave trade with the Portuguese, who were also in need of labor forces to their South American colonies, where white or European owners had begun to successfully explore sugar cane plantations. However, the process of 'transition' from Indigenous slavery to the slavery of Africans in Latin America was not immediate and had several regional differences in chronology and characteristics. This is especially true regarding Brazil, where the transition was quite slow indeed; it began in the middle of the sixteenth century, after the introduction of sugar cane plantations, but it was accelerated only in the first decades of the seventeenth century. See Schwartz (2018, 216–22).

massive and global system of trade and economic exploitation, was ever possible. Of course, the discussion of the role of slavery in (trans)Atlantic and American colonial economic history is the object of a huge amount of research (Thomas 1997; Inikori 2002; Eltis 2006; Luna and Klein 2010; Tomich 2011; Zeuske 2006, 97–264, 2015, 296–348, 2018, 79–119). Among the first authors who reflected on the enslavement and trade, particularly transatlantic trade, of black Africans were Domingo de Soto O.P. (1494–1560), Fernando Oliveira O.P. (1507–1581), Tomás de Mercado O.P. (1525–1575), the jurist, active in Mexico, Bartolomé Frías de Albornoz (c. 1519–1573), as well as Francisco García (1525–1585).⁹ But there is a consensus that the Jesuit Luis de Molina (1535–1600) was the first intellectual to consider the topic of black slavery extensively, and after him many others such as Fernando Rebello S.J. (1546–1608), Tomás Sánchez S.J. (1550–1610), Alonso de Sandoval S.J. (1576–1652), and Diego de Avendaño S.J. (1594–1688).¹⁰

The reasons behind the ideology of black slavery, beyond the traditional juridical claims that show how and why slavery was accepted in human law, are various, and here we find notorious connections between enslavement, Christian religion, and race. In that regard the Jesuit Alonso de Sandoval has a special place in the history of ideas on black slavery. His account has multiple sides. He offers—and is in this regard perhaps the best possible example among Latin American thinkers for—a variety of explanations that can be helpful to the understanding of the emergence and establishment of the ideology of black slavery from the sixteenth to seventeenth century. At minimum, he offers a set of reasons that allows us to understand the regrettable combination of Catholic thought and acceptance of black slavery as a social institution in those times. It is worth mentioning that as late as 1839 the Roman Catholic Church published an official document, the Apostolic Letter *In Supremo Apostolatus*, issued by Pope Gregory XVI (1839), condemning slavery as a social institution, and particularly condemning every form of slave trade (see also Maxwell 1975; Adiele 2017, 380–405).¹¹ I use the word and the notion ‘ideology,’ in this study, in a general sense. The basic meaning of the word is: a complex set of philosophical, theological, legal, and cultural ideas, views, values, and narratives that are not necessarily objective, and in fact possibly and usually deviating from reality, that is constructed and shared by a group, class, or nation—even by groups, classes, or nations in the plural—in history, because of various interests and processes of social and political life. This then both determines and provides comprehension to given historical and socio-political situations and processes.

For the purpose of interpreting Sandoval’s views on black slavery, the words ‘race’ and ‘ethnicity’ will be employed throughout this essay. Sandoval knew these ideas in an ill-defined way. He makes use, for example, of the words *raza*, which can be related to ‘race,’ and of

9 See Dominicus de Soto, *De iustitia et iure*, Lugduni, (1559), lib. IV, q. 2, a. 2; Fernando Oliveira, *Arte da guerra do mar*, Coimbra, (1555), I, cap. 4; Tomás de Mercado, *Summa de tratos y contratos*, Sevilla, (1587), lib. II, cap. 20; Bartolomé Frías de Albornoz, *Arte de los contractos*, Valencia, (1573), lib. II, tit. 2; lib. III, tit. 4; Francisco García, *Parte primera del tratado utilísimo y muy general de todos los contractos, cuantos en los negocios humanos se suelen ofrecer*, Valencia, (1583). Interesting references can be found in Moreno Rejon (1994, 58–70). See also Davis (1966, 187–90); Boxer (2007, 45–53); Andrés-Gallego (2005, 32–35); Restrepo (2010, 39–42).

10 See Ludovicus Molina, *De iustitia et iure*, Venetiis, 1611, tract. II, disp. 32–40; Thomas Sanchez, *Consilia seu opuscula moralia*, Lugduni, (1634), lib. I, cap. 1, dub. 4; Fernandus Rebellus, *Opus de obligationibus iustitiae, religionis et caritatis*, Lugduni, (1608), lib. I, q. 10, sect. 1–2; Alonso de Sandoval, *De instauranda Aethiopum salute*, Madrid, 1627 / ²1647; Didacus de Avendaño, *Thesaurus indicus*, Tomus I, Antuerpiae, (1668), tit. 9, cap. 12, §8, n. 180–205. See also Andrés-Gallego (2005, 35–42); Montes d’Oca (2017, 280–83); García Añoveros (2000, 307–29); Hespanha (2001, 937–60).

11 On the unconditional condemnation of slavery in today’s Christian social ethics, see Hebblethwaite (2000, 394–96).

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nación and *casta*, which can be related to ‘ethnicity.’ Such notions were just emerging and being conceived in Sandoval’s times, and they are in fact directly related, at least in Western thought, to the rise of modern ‘nation-states,’ to projects of imperialism and colonization, and of course to the slave trade. Sandoval’s *De instauranda* helps us to understand precisely how those notions arise, and according to which theories and narratives. He certainly did not know any specific meaning of race as a distinguishable, natural, and permanent ‘biological fact,’ able to definitively distinguish human types and even determine their cultural achievements. Neither did he think of geographically, socially, and culturally—or genetically—well-defined and stable human groups or populations, sharing and mutually recognizing some kind of identity according to a common language, as well as common cultural and even physical patterns, which might be taken as ‘ethnicities.’¹² Nevertheless, both editions of Sandoval’s work contain remarkable stories about a large number of west and east African groups, as well as of other dark-skinned human groups around the world.¹³

Alonso de Sandoval was born in 1576/1577 in Seville and came from a well-established and large family. His father, Tristán Sánchez de Sandoval, was awarded, around 1583, the title of accountant of the *Real Hacienda* in Lima. Alonso de Sandoval was educated by the Jesuits in Lima and lived in Cartagena from 1605 to 1652, the only exception being the period 1617–1619, when he was again with the Jesuits in the *Ciudad de los Reyes*. This was certainly a research period towards the production of his *DIAS*. Sandoval held the position of principal of the Jesuit College in Cartagena in 1623/1624 (Pacheco 1959, 1:254; Vila Vilar 1987, 26–29), but his main vocation was as a minister and confessor. There is consensus that Sandoval showed a *sui generis* dedication to the ministry of black people in Cartagena, with a singular concern for the right administration of the sacraments, especially baptism (see below), the preparation for baptism through catechism, and the problem of getting information about whether slaves had already been baptized, in Africa, in order to avoid rebaptism (Vila Vilar 1987, 29–31; Von Germeten 2008b, IX–X, XV–XXI; Cenci 2015, 78–89). The mission of the *spiritual salvation* of black people (Zolli 1991, 177–86; Bénassy Berling 1995, 311–27; Vignaux 2009, 327–504)¹⁴ was taken by Sandoval as a special task of evangelization given to the Company of Jesus, whose best spiritual guidance was to be located, according to him, in the founder Ignatius of Loyola (1491–1556) and in Francis Xavier (1506–1552). This idea is developed by Sandoval in Book IV of his *DIAS*, which might be viewed as an addition to the original plan of the book after it was finished (Alonso de Sandoval 1987, [Argumento de la obra al Christiano Lector] 55–56). Book IV is an *apologia* for the missionary work of the Jesuits in general and the mission among blacks in particular (Pich 2015, 53–54, also footnote 15). The emphasis is put on the missionary work among enslaved black people, i.e., Africans not in Africa but in the diaspora, who were transported to Latin America and arrived on the shores of the New World.

De instauranda Aethiopum salute is a unique presentation of Africa. It brings historical and cultural descriptions of Africa, Africans and “blacks” broadly speaking. “Blacks” are for San-

12 Von Germeten (2008b, XXI–XXIX) approaches these topics. I do not fully share her descriptions regarding the Jesuits in general and Sandoval in particular. On racism and race, see Banton (1987, 1997, 142–52, 1998, 18–21). The notion of race as a biological and genetically-based fact and set of characteristics that would be able to distinguish human types was entirely abandoned by science at the end of the twentieth century; see also Sant’Ana (2008, 844 (844–47)); Schwarcz (2018, 403–9).

13 See the first paragraph of next section, as well as footnote 18.

14 At any rate, it is fair to Sandoval to recognize his concern for both spiritual *and* physical care of the enslaved Africans, as, for example, towards the “bozales” (see section “Miseries of the Blacks,” below), as well as in his demands for fair physical treatment by slaveholders (see also Pich 2015, 67–72).

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doval all people with black or even dark skin color, and these are, thus, the “Ethiopians” and, more specifically, most Africans, as well as all inhabitants of India, the Oceania, and the Philippines. Sandoval’s uses of “Ethiopian” and “black” bear more or less the same meaning. These expressions cover the field of all *tierras* and *naciones de negros* indeed—i.e., lands where people with dark skin live or recognizable social or political groups of dark-skinned people. For these distinguishable groups Sandoval has the words *nación* and *casta*. On the other hand, “Ethiopia” and “Ethiopians” usually mean in the *DIAS* “Africa,” even “all of Africa,” (Von Germeten 2008a, 194, entry “Ethiopia”) and “Africans,” and refer more narrowly to places and regions where black people live and come from in the African continent. Sandoval’s description of places in Africa focuses on Cape Verde, Sierra Leone, Guinea, Angola, and Congo, as well as St. Thomas (São Tomé e Príncipe) and Mozambique (Souza 2006, 38).¹⁵ Sandoval’s records—imperfect as they may be—were famous and original, and they probably remained until the eighteenth century the most complete report on the history and cultures of African nations—beyond the theological and missiological purpose of the work as such.¹⁶ The Caribbean city of Cartagena de Indias,¹⁷ in today’s Colombia, was then the main harbor for the disembarkation and trade of black slaves in the Hispanic colonies (Von Germeten 2008b, X–XIII). It was thus an appropriate context for a priest to reflect upon the Catholic and Jesuit mission with the Africans, since from 1595 to 1640 about 135,000 slaves arrived in Cartagena de Indias, and a similar amount in other Caribbean harbors, such as Veracruz, La Habana, Santo Domingo, and Puerto Rico, Santa Maria (on the coast of today’s Venezuela), as well as in Buenos Aires (Vila Vilar 1987, 18–19, see also 1977, 127–238, 239–83).

Theological-Philosophical Explanations of the ‘Ethiopians’

Sandoval’s main purpose in Book I of *DIAS* is to shed some light for his readers in the Western World on the hidden part of the world that is Africa or the place of the Ethiopians. In the second (1647) edition of the *DIAS*, in which Sandoval greatly expanded his anthropological-ethnological research, he dedicated Book I of Volume I entirely to Western Ethiopia, and Book II of Volume I entirely to Eastern Ethiopia and the “Ethiopians” or “blacks” to be found in Asia, the so-called “second part of the world,” as well. “Western” and “Eastern” Ethiopia are parts of the single continent called “Africa,” the so-called “third part of the world” (Alonso de Sandoval 1647, Part 1, Book I, 1–121; Part 1, Book II, 122–307). At any rate, in Book I of the 1627 edition Sandoval writes a sort of broad and loose cultural, ethnic, and political history of the Ethiopians (see also Souza 2006, 47–48)¹⁸—including accounts of the discovery of Africa by the Portuguese, as well as aspects of the history of Christian faith on the continent.

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15 On the Philippines and their inhabitants, see Alonso de Sandoval (1987, I, vii–ix, 93–100). A map of some “African Cultural Groups” that are important in Sandoval’s reports can be found in Alonso de Sandoval (2008, XXXII).

16 Vila Vilar (1987, 37, footnote 64) mentions some of the historical sources quoted by Sandoval.

17 Vila Vilar (1987, 18). 11–12 million African slaves were transported to the New World between the sixteenth and the nineteenth century; out of them nearly 4.8 million were imported to Brazil, which was also the last independent country to suppress traffic in the Americas, forced by England, as well as the last to end slavery as an institution; see Alencastro (2018, 57–63). On the history of slavery in Brazil, see recently Gomes (2019); on the history of slavery in Colombia, see also Navarrete (2005).

18 In fact, we find in at least one passage something like a short ‘natural history’ of Africa written by Sandoval; see Alonso de Sandoval (1987, I, xxxi (“De algunas cosas singulares y maravillosas, que los Autores cuentan hallarse en los Reinos de todos estos Etiopes”), 206–16). On the history of Africa in ‘pre-colonial’ times, see for example Maestri (1988); Iliffe (1995, 1–96); Ki-Zerbo ([1999] 2009, 47–261). Whenever I mention “Alonso de Sandoval 1987” and “Alonso de Sandoval 2008” throughout this essay, both in the body of the

One of his aims is to revive the sparks of faith that are still supposed to exist among the Ethiopians, due to apostolic work in the past. Africa belongs to the divine plan of redemption by Christ (Alonso de Sandoval 1987, I, 57–58). This is also supported by the idea that “Africa,” generally speaking, is referred to in the Old Testament as belonging to the divine plan of salvation. Moreover, both in the New Testament, in apostolic and post-apostolic times, there are references to theologians, missionaries and Catholic Saints that help attest God’s interest in bringing salvation to Ethiopians (Alonso de Sandoval 1987, II, xxxii, 217–29).

Right at the beginning, Sandoval claims to have collected information about Africa and Africans, beyond traditional ancient and medieval sources, in works and documents by fathers of the Company of Jesus and in communications with ship captains and traders—qualified informants, in his view, because they had concrete local experience. These last two kinds of sources are important to the purpose of morally assessing black slavery and the slave trade. Sandoval recognizes that Luis de Molina, in *De iustitia et iure* I, tract. 2, disp. 34 (Ludovicus Molina 1738 (1611), I, tract. 2, disp. 34 (disp. 32–40), 91–97 (86–117)), made use of the method of listening to people’s testimonies and trusting them—at least *prima facie*—as veracious. Sandoval confirmed this by saying that he was following Bede’s advice, according to whom “the true law of history is *simpliciter colligere, que fama vulgantur*” (Alonso de Sandoval 1987, I, i, 59). For the purpose of focusing on multiple, but together important sources for the justification of the enslaved condition of blacks, I skip Sandoval’s insightful explanations on the origin of the name “Africa” for the continent (Alonso de Sandoval 1987, I, i, 61–62), but I nevertheless mention our author’s view that in Scripture and in Antiquity “multitude and variety of nations” and “incomprehensibility and multitude” were associated with Ethiopia, and that is what *tenebrae* or *negrura* are supposed to mean (Alonso de Sandoval 1987, I, i, 63). “Ethiopia,” (i.e. Western and Eastern Ethiopia) again, is taken by Sandoval as the largest part of the African continent, i.e., black Africa.

It is in Book I, Chapter II (“The nature of the Ethiopians, commonly called “blacks” [*negrus*]”) that we have a first important view that helps us in the purpose of understanding the ideology of servitude connected to black people and sponsored by Sandoval. Essentially, the inhabitants of Ethiopia or “Abyssinia” were *chuseos*, a word that derives from “Chus,” son of “Ham,” who populated the land; *chus* is supposed to be how the Hebrews name those whom the Spanish call *etiope*. Moreover, if Pliny (Pliny the Elder 1942, *Naturalis historia* VI, 36) took *etiope* from the name “Etiopie,” son of Vulcan, and others affirm that it comes from *cremo* (“to burn”), Sandoval is able to conclude that “etiopes” are “men with burnt face,” and all nations where people have black skin color may be called “Ethiopians.” Thus, the use of that word is not confined to referencing the African continent (Alonso de Sandoval 1987, I, ii, 69).

It is particularly curious and sometimes hilarious to look at the ways Sandoval tries to explain the etiology of black skin color, appealing to old biological explanations about how human beings—supposedly not black in origin—could somehow give birth to children with different skin colors. Sandoval plays with some theories of modified descendance, especially where the “imagination” of parents might play a role at the very moment of conception and in the resulting heredity of characteristics (Alonso de Sandoval 1987, I, ii, 69–73). He seems to endorse an interpretation of Aristotle’s *De anima* II according to which, in beings such as humans that have three functional kinds of soul or animated life—characterized essentially by the rational soul, which contains and gives the form to both vegetative and sensitive souls—all

text and in the footnotes, I refer respectively to the edition of Sandoval’s *DIAS* in Spanish by E. Vila Vilar and to the English translation of selections of that work done by N. Von Germeten.

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three of these souls with their virtues and operations play a role in the generation of another similar being in the species.¹⁹ It should be noted that it is the rational soul that reasons and imagines; following the imagination theory just sketched, the rational soul would play a crucial role in the moment of conception as well (Alonso de Sandoval 1987, I, ii, 73).

In order to explain a thesis about ‘race’ and even about ‘racism’ towards the Ethiopians, I will initially focus on the singular way Sandoval searches for the etiology of black skin color. He finds a singular theological account of it that makes sense to him. The skin color of the Ethiopians could be explained through the heat concentrated in the surface of a body frequently exposed to the sun. After all, the Ethiopians used to live in sunny, exceedingly hot lands, which are fit to the arising of exotic creatures and beasts. In a nutshell, skin color might change according to the “temper”—i.e. “climate”—of the lands people inhabit, which would be sufficient ground to challenge what is commonly taken by “philosophers” as the right opinion about the “matter” of generation in animals—including human animals—which is supposed to be always “white” as milk, although it is perhaps a form of “blood” or “boiled blood” (Alonso de Sandoval 1987, I, ii, 74). This natural substance should in principle generate white-skinned human beings, but many are not so. In any case, Sandoval believes that the reason for blackness in skin must be a different one. Were the climate sufficient reason for that, Spanish males married to Spanish females and living in the sunny lands of blacks would give birth to black children, but experience obviously disproves such a silly view. Sandoval will then explore two theses on the origin of black skin color: (a) black people are so because they were made up of certain “intrinsic qualities”; (b) black people are so because of the will of God.²⁰ We can affirm that Sandoval combines both aspects of this apparent disjunction. Black skin is not produced only as a punishment by the divine will; God’s will supernaturally *changes* nature at it was before: black skin color relates to a lineage of cursed people.

If we accept that “whiteness” and “blackness” are called by philosophers “second qualities” of living beings, the idea is that these qualities are derived from “intrinsic” or “innate” “first qualities” such as “coldness” and “extreme heat” (*sumo calor*) to be found in the corresponding “matter of the mother.” By means of such a quality that God created and planted in a human being—i.e., in the character “Ham,” son of Noah, from the Book of Genesis—children were generated having in their appearance black skin color as a true mark of a particular descent: as a mark of descent from a *cursed* human being, thus as a punishment for Ham’s having rudely treated his own father, as we read in the story of Genesis 9:20–29. So, although *blackness as second quality* is an effect of “extreme heat” in the (‘embryonic’) stuff that is planted in the mother, the latter was ultimately caused by God as a punishment for Ham’s insolent behavior toward his father Noah. The name “Ham” itself becomes an object of an etymological experiment by Alonso de Sandoval, for if extreme heat is an intrinsic quality implanted

19 On Aristotle’s theory of the soul, see for example Everson ([1999] 1995, 168–94). See also Aristoteles (1995), *Über die Seele* II 1–3, 58–77; Seidl (1995, IX–XII, XIX–XXII).

20 Alonso de Sandoval (1987), I, ii, 74–75: “[...]. Assi esto proviene o de la voluntad de Dios o de las particulares calidades que esta gente en si misma tienen intrinsecas. Y assi tratando los Filósofos de las segundas calidades, y la generacion dellas dicen, que la blancura proviene de la suma frialdad, como se ve en la nieve; y la negrura del sumo calor, como se ve en la pez; lo qual se confirma con el parecer de Aristoteles, y otros antiguos, [...]; de donde se puede ingerir (y no sin fundamento) que la tez negra en los Etiopes no provino tan solamente de la maldición que Noé echó a su hijo Cham [...] sino también de una calidad innata e intrinseca, con que le crió Dios, que fue sumo calor, para que los hijos que engendrarse, saliessen con esse tizne, y como marca de que descendian de un hombre que se avia burlado de su padre, en pena de su atrevimiento. [...] Lo qual se puede entender en los Etiopes que traen su origen de Can, que fue el primer siervo y esclavo que hubo en el mundo, como veremos, en quien estava este calor intrinseco, para con el tiznar a sus hijos y descendientes.”

in nature by God's wise punishing judgment, which causes blackness in human beings after Ham's descendancy, there is a Patristic tradition that finds in the word "Ham" the meaning *calidus* or "hot," perhaps also *calor* or "heat."²¹ By so causing a new intrinsic and, hence, a new secondary quality in human beings, God himself turned a new aspect of nature into a permanent instrument for punishment—that is, of the Ethiopians, who are the true descendants of Ham. As the Genesis story reports, Ham is taken to have been the first "serf and slave" (*siervo y esclavo*) that existed in the world, in whom that extreme heat was found and was effective in order "to burn" (*tiznar*) his descendants (Alonso de Sandoval 1987, I, ii, 74–75; see also Eguren 1973, 57–86; Bénassy Berling 1981, 49–60; Souza 2006, 39; on the complex history of the exegesis of Genesis 9.20–29 and the use of the story of Ham and his sons to legitimize the idea of lineages of slavery together with racial components, see Evans 1980, 15–43; Braude 1997, 103–42; Schorsch 2004, 135–65; Haynes 2007).

The fact that theses (a) of "intrinsic qualities" and (b) of punishment by God's will are connected allows both the understanding of a given 'naturalness' in the slavery of blacks, which Sandoval partially supports, and a supernatural grounding of their condition. In thesis (a) of the origin of black skin color, Sandoval sees an explanation which is 'philosophical' in nature. For the (b) idea that what explains black skin color is a punishment by God, Sandoval seeks support in the Old Testament²² and Patristic interpreters. He refers to an exegesis of Ambrose, who noted that Abraham took care in order for his son not to marry a woman from "Chanam," not because the inhabitants of that land ("Chananeos") were "idolaters," but because they were descendants of an ignoble man. This was again a reference to Ham, son of Noah, who shamed his own father and did not show him the due respect. As a consequence, Ham lost his nobility, his liberty, and so did his descendants. It may be the case that that etiology of the first servitude in the world can be found in the interpretations by Chrysostom, Ambrose, and Augustine (Alonso de Sandoval 1987, I, ii, 75; Augustine 2000, *De civitate Dei* XIX, 15, 1923–1925; see also Glancy 2011, 87ff.), but Sandoval is the one who explicitly connects it with 'blackness,' for which he devises a 'philosophical' account and can now relate it to an Ethiopian dark-skinned lineage of servile people cursed in the Scripture. This is Sandoval's new move and certainly it is the interpretation that he endorses. As noted above, the fact that Ham's lineage was black-skinned was a mark of punishment and condition of subjection. When, after Ham—who *was made* a "serf and slave"—slaves *were introduced* in the world, so were black people as a human type, and *the cause of their skin color is a divine punishment decided by God* for a wrongdoing that merited *an external signal*. Sandoval also relies on Father Pedro de Valderrama (Alonso de Sandoval 1987, I, ii, 75)²³ in order to affirm that "good" people or people from a good lineage have good parents—they are people of "clarified blood" (*de sangre esclarecida*). "Bad" people are those from a bad lineage of people that have bad parents—they have blood "of obscure people" (*de gente obscura*). So, according to Scripture and some of its interpreters, there is a foundation in divine punitive justice for the following: wrongdoing against a father's honor, slavery as a punishment for a son's lineage, and black skin color as a signal of such punishment. The people affected by that justice are the "Ethiopians": the

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21 Sandoval's account of the etymology of the word "Cham" and the etiology of slavery based on Genesis 9:20–29 is influenced by the biblical commentaries by Alonso Fernández de Madrigal or "el Tostado" (c. 1410–1455), who was a professor at the University of Salamanca and later became bishop of Ávila. On accounts of slavery by Fathers of the Church, see Gülzow (1969); Sainte-Croix (1975, 1–38); Harrill (1995); Garnsey (1996); Klein (Klein 2000, 380–81).

22 On slavery in the Old Testament, see Dietrich (2000, 367–73 (with a rich bibliography, 372–73)).

23 Sandoval might be speaking here of the Augustinian Friar Pedro de Valderrama (1550–1611); see García-Garrido (2011, 253–80).

“blacks.”²⁴ In the 1647 edition, the interpretation of such stories gets more complicated, in order to accommodate the thesis that blackness becomes, as a second quality, the external signal of a cursed lineage from Ham’s descendance onwards. Sandoval emphasizes again that Ham— meaning *calidus*—was created with the extreme heat that causes blackness, and both intrinsic and secondary qualities were transmitted to Chus, Ham’s first-born son. Ham’s fourth son, i.e., “Chanam”—who told his father about Noah’s drunkenness and nakedness—and his descendants were also cursed and enslaved, but it was Chus who was actually already born black before Ham’s offence. This was due to a simple color variance in nature, and not due to any specific guilt. He was the one who became the founder of the Ethiopians: because of Ham’s offence, all Chus’s descendants were and remained black because of a quality planted by God to work as a mark of punishment (Alonso de Sandoval 1647, Part I, I, iii, 4–6, 17–19).

In Book I of his original work, Sandoval thus attempts to geographically and historically define Africa more specifically and all the lands and the “nations” (*naciones*) of the Ethiopians or blacks (Alonso de Sandoval 1987, I, ii, 76) more generally. He does so by explaining the nature and origin of their dark-skinned inhabitants. The author’s narrative combines a taste for the report of marvelous and wondrous things with narratives that describe Ethiopians as miserable people—people and peoples that stay at or even are – in terms of function and position in a kind of global body of peoples – at the world’s feet, as he will emphasize in the Book I of the 1647 edition of the *DIAS*.²⁵ We should pay attention to a further example of the patterns of derogatory discourse that Sandoval invokes of the ‘human type’ or ‘race’ and the ‘ethnicities’ of blacks or Ethiopians. Leaving aside some silly explanations about the parts of the body of blacks, such as “hairs” and “teeth,” he emphasizes and explains their utter “ugliness” and “monstrosity” not only because of the poor conditions of the local paediatrics and, as it were, the various policies of beauty and body care, but, further reflecting “on the cause of the extraordinary monsters and other marvellous things that are found in Africa, especially on the part occupied in it by Ethiopia,”²⁶ Sandoval is able to formulate theses about the “cause of the generation of monsters,” i.e. about the principle of their generation. He seems to follow an Aristotelian line of reasoning, i.e., that the principle of ‘monstrosity’ is that there are cases in nature in which nature itself does not reach its perfect end. It fails, in a certain respect at least, regarding the expected teleology of a given species. So, a specific living being of nature does not generate a descendant as a “fellow” or “similar,” but rather as *a different one* (Alonso de Sandoval 1987, I, iii, 77). Sandoval, thus, can view in a “monster” a sort of “sin of nature,” which can be understood either in terms of “defect” (like a defect of matter, say a cat born without legs) or of “excess” (like an excess of matter, say a cat born with more than four legs), for in both ways the generated item does not acquire its specific “completeness” (*perfeccion*) that the corresponding living being was supposed to have (Alonso de Sandoval 1987, I, iii, 78). Even if this report of defects and sins of nature does not

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24 Alonso de Sandoval (1987), I, ii, 75: “[...]: que por aver maldecido Noe a su hijo Cham por la desvergüenza que uso con el, tratandole con tan poca reverencia, perdio la nobleza; y aun la libertad costandole quedar por esclavo el y toda su generacion, de los hermanos, que fue según los santos Augustino, Chrisostomo y Ambrosio, la primera servidumbre que se introduxo en el mundo. [...]. Y siendo claro por linaje, nacio escuro. Y de ali nacieron los negros, dize el M. Pedro de Valderrama, y aun pudieramos dezir tambien los esclavos, como tiznando Dios a los hijos por serlo de malos padres. Que a los que tienen buenos, llamamos de sangre esclarecida, como a los que no, de gente obscura.”

25 Alonso de Sandoval (1987, “Argumento de la obra al Christiano Letor,” 55, 1647, “Prologo al Letor,” (second page, with no indication of number)).

26 Alonso de Sandoval (1987, I, iii, 76–82) is an intriguing text, in which we find material for an ideology of “monstrosity” and “ugliness” related to sins and defects of nature. See also Tardieu (1984, 164–78); Olsen (2004, 92–104).

amount—at least at this point of Alonso de Sandoval’s work—to a debasement of the spirit, it is a depreciation of bodily traces of the ‘different’ Africans.

Although this is not a line of reasoning that is either systematically developed or explained [21] in any textually connected sequence in the *De instauranda*, we can argue that Sandoval works with several tools or narratives to create a view of Ethiopians or blacks that makes of them people both related to servitude and to the status of bearers of miseries in terms of defective bodies, sufferings of all sorts and religious disorientation.

Miseries of the Blacks

In fact, the depreciation of Ethiopian lineages goes even further and is articulated by Sandoval [22] in several and complex ways. Book II of Alonso de Sandoval’s *DIAS*, which bears the title “Of the evils that these blacks suffer and the necessity of this ministry, which brings help to them, whose highness and excellence shines because of several titles” (1987, II (“De los males que padecen estos negros y de la necesidad deste ministerio, que los remedia, cuya alteza y excelencia resplandece por varios titulos”), 231–361), contains in its first chapters important views on the conditions of the Ethiopians: after all, if the “evils” that the blacks suffer help us understand why they need the spiritual ministry of the Jesuits,²⁷ they also help to legitimize their human condition of subjection. The heart of the pious, i.e., the Jesuits, suffer together with those that live in such human misery, and they are ready “to help” (*remediar*). Sandoval emphasizes that the main evils the blacks suffer are spiritual ones. Above all, they have necessities related to their souls. Jesuit ministers are able to bring knowledge of spiritual things and to take over the “ministerio de los Negros” (1987, II, 231–32).

To begin with, let us describe the evils of which Sandoval is speaking in Book II, Chapter I [23] (“Of how of all evils and miseries a human being can suffer in general, blacks have a greater share”) (Alonso de Sandoval 1987, II, i, 232–35). Following Aristotle’s *Rhetoric*,²⁸ there are (i) evils of nature, such as those suffered by human nature for what it is, as composition by contraries, “sicknesses,” “accidents,” “disasters,” “needs,” “pains,” “deaths,” “afflictions,” and “melancholies”; (ii) evils of fate, such as misfortunes in life and the absence of friends; and (iii) evils of the human soul, such as bad inclinations, vices, immorality, error, ignorance, etc. (Alonso de Sandoval 1987, II, i, 232–33). Reflecting on this, Sandoval affirms that when such evils come together, a man speaks inside the individual, saying that he has become a burden to himself (Alonso de Sandoval 1987, II, i, 233). Really, the description of those evils, for Aristotle, should be viewed as reasons for having or exciting “pity” towards those who suffer them (Nehamas 1994, 269–76; Busche 2005, 172). Alonso de Sandoval has the purpose of exciting pity towards black people in his readers, which might be seen as a way of persuading

27 Scriptural and theological reasons why, to God and Church, such a spiritual ministry for the salvation of the souls is so important, are presented in Alonso de Sandoval (1987 II, vi, xv–xviii, 252–56, 298–317). This understanding of the ministry of the Jesuits follows the missionaries Francis Xavier, who was active in India and China, and Pedro Gomez (1533/1535–1600), who was active in Japan. The practice of theological virtues – faith, hope, and charity – will be especially demanded, and martyrdom is also a possibility. In fact, there is a profound exposition of the “excellence of this ministry” of mission, for its particular connection to the practice and development of all virtues, particularly of charity (after Romans 13), in Alonso de Sandoval (1987, II, xix–xxiii, 318–61), with mentions of Francis Xavier and José de Anchieta (1534–1597).

28 The threefold typology of evils explained by Sandoval is Aristotelian. See Aristotle (1941, *Rhetorica* II 8, 1396–1398 (especially II 8, 1386a3–16, 1397)).

the Catholic Church, priests, missionaries, and slaveholders of the urgent religious and moral task they have of bringing black people relief and help.

Sandoval emphasizes that evils and sufferings that touch the soul are the central ones. If philosophers show divided opinions about their cause, he does not hesitate to call it “sin.” Because of sin, human beings suffer vices such as “greed,” “ambition,” “insatiable desire for living,” concern for death and the future, as well as suffering shortcomings of understanding. Sin affects will and intellect, causing the soul suffering. Without faith, there is “evil” in understanding, for the intellectual soul lives, then, apart from God’s principles, and blindness—error or ignorance—is the result. And a will affected by sin is able to receive all moral evils. When the *concupiscibile* and the *irascibile* control the human soul, it becomes “full of a thousand uglinesses [*fealdades*]” and is then more like the “the soul of a brute” than like a soul made “in God’s image” (Alonso de Sandoval 1987, II, i, 233). [24]

After having made these distinctions, Sandoval confirms his belief that all these evils have a place among human beings, and *above all* among “the miserable blacks.” Quite uncritically, he affirms that because the “fate” (*suerte*) of the Ethiopians is to be slaves their lives are far worse regarding their share in *males*. Inspired by a line of Homer in Latin translation—*Dimidium mentis Iuppiter illis aufert, qui servituti subiecti sunt*—Sandoval seems to endorse the view that it is a kind of divine providence that the sensing capacity of the slaves was, as it were, taken away (their bodies are in “poor condition [*vil condición*]”) and, as a consequence, their understanding was also half taken away. In a sense, this made possible that they could endure terrible suffering at the traders’ hands, and it also brought about the result that their bodily appetites multiplied. Though Sandoval makes this appeal to a supernatural explanation to what he considers to be an actual defective sensitive and intellectual condition of the blacks—which can at least bring about the positive side-effect of being able to bear bad living conditions and cruel and unjust treatments by the owners of slave ships—he believes that this does not mean that their souls are less perfect than the souls of free (white) human beings. The reason, we can suppose, is that their souls are equally capable of salvation.²⁹ In truth, in other parts of his work, our author affirms that black people are not “beasts,” that they are capable of receiving the sacraments, for they have reason and free will (see also the section “Catechesis of Black People and Race Ideology,” below). He even affirms that the use of reason by the African slaves equals its use by Spaniards who are silly and foolish—or, perhaps, uneducated (Alonso de Sandoval 1987, III, ii, 379–81; III, xx, 480). Sandoval never affirms that black people’s status of lacking reason is a permanent state or a strictly natural condition. [25]

But in fact, in *DIAS* Book II Sandoval’s position comes close to stating a sort of natural or actual condition of slavery for blacks that is caused supernaturally or, more simply, by the will of God. In Book II, Chapter 2 (“Of the evils of nature and of fortune endured by these blacks”) (Alonso de Sandoval 1987, II, ii, 235–38), he even reminds us of Aristotle, who affirmed that some human beings are naturally born to be slaves and subjects. We might think [26]

29 Alonso de Sandoval (1987, II, i, 234–35): “Y si todos estos males, que avemos dicho tienen asiento en los hombres por serlo, claro es que ternan mayor cabida en los miserables negros, cuya suerte por ser de esclavos, dixo agudamente aquel Poeta tan celebrado de los Griegos, Homero: *Dimidium mentis Iuppiter illis aufert, qui servituti subiecti sunt*: que parece que Dios, hablando a su estilo, avia quitado la mitad del entendimiento a los esclavos (yo aun añado considerando el grande mal, que es ser esclavo de señores de Armazones, que para poderlo sufrir lo avian de tener quitado del todo) no porque se aya de creer, que tienen menos perfectas almas que los muy libres, sino porque la mesma vil condicion del cuerpo, enbaraza el entender del alma, y entienden como si tuvieran medio entendimiento, y apetezen como si tuvieran mil apetites. [...]. Sea como se fuere, que sin duda ninguna, todos los males que en comun se dizen de los hombres, parece que tienen mayor cabida en los esclavos: [...].”

that he implies that this condition applies to black people, although the subjection condition in question would be supernaturally caused by God only after human beings' sin.³⁰ With this kind of explanation, evils of nature, of fate, and of the soul suffered by blacks would have a common cause, which is sin and the corresponding punishment by God. In particular, lack of understanding, congenial incapacity for the virtue of prudence, and simple corporeal aptness to hard work by the enslaved Africans—again, Aristotelian characterizations for slaves by nature³¹—have as an effect more responsibilities for slaveholders, for slaves will need holders who understand what is important for the goodness of their bodies and souls. Sandoval sees this situation as divine providence for the sake of black people and describes slave masters in an Aristotelian sense, where masters possess a complete understanding and the means for supplying the slaves with the other half of understanding they themselves do not possess. Their good government is done above all through “good example.” Masters, thus, must have “one understanding and a half”—to supply what the slave lacks—or even a “double understanding”—to be successful in governing the house—and privileged capacity to undertake the defects of their subjects, which implies capacity to look after their souls and bodies, to care for their needs, to speak well with them, etc. (Alonso de Sandoval 1987, II, i, 234–35; see also Souza 2006, 41). Beginning with Ham, the first serf and slave, and passing through his lineage, blacks are depicted as being prone to or inclined by nature to slavery. This is even true if they actually live in civil liberty in Ethiopian lands and, for any given reason, they come to lose their liberty not on natural, but rather on ‘legal’ grounds, as is the case for those who are in what might be called the ‘African-Ethiopian diaspora.’

Still in Book II, Chapter 2, Sandoval affirms that the corporeal sufferings caused by severe— [27] even perverse— treatments by Christian slaveholders are a sort of *evil of fortune* that happened to the blacks. Indeed, Sandoval denounces abuses. He denounces the fact that blacks are treated as beasts of burden, not as human beings, and that most slaveholders have no concern for their lives. This applies to blacks who are “miners,” “farm workers” (*estancieros*), “cutters” (*asserradores*), “fishers,” or house workers. Taking the last context of housework as an example, one would say that the famous sentence by Emperor Octavian holds: “in Herod’s house it was better to be a pig than a son” (Alonso de Sandoval 1987, II, ii, 237).³² After all, in the houses of slaveholders there was more care for beasts than for black slaves (Alonso de Sandoval 1987, II, ii, 236–37). Sandoval wants to contrast two types of masters’ behaviour, i.e., the abandonment of black people by the Spaniards, and the care and concern of the religious men towards them. It is thus no surprise that Sandoval insists upon a Christian ethics for slaveholders (Alonso de Sandoval 1987, II, ii, 238).

In a further passage, in Book II, Chapter III (“Of the evils that these blacks suffer in the supernatural”) (Alonso de Sandoval 1987, II, iii, 239–42), Sandoval still offers a picture of (iv) [28] evils suffered by the blacks in the sphere of the supernatural. What he means in this case is that although Christ died for all humankind, including black people, their holders seem not to like

30 Alonso de Sandoval (1987), II, ii, 235: “Bien pudieramos tratar de los males de naturaleza, que estos miserables negros tienen: que si ella apensionó la vida de los mismos Reyes, con censos y tributos de miserias, fundadas en la mesma naturaleza, raiz de donde ellos provienen: claro está que no ha de ser mas liberal, con los que la suerte hizo de tan peor condicion, que parece se verifica en ellos, lo que Aristoteles dixo, que avia hombres, que naturalmente parece, que nacieron para siervos y sugetos de otros.”

31 On Aristotle’s theory of (natural) slavery, see Aristoteles (2009), *Politik* I 4–7, 49–57; I 13, 1260a12–36, 73; I 13, 1260b5–7, 74. See also Brugnera (1998, 75–102); Geiger (2005, 136–38); Höffe (2006, 255–57); Pellegrin (2013, 92–116).

32 Alonso de Sandoval (2008, II, i, 70, footnote 8 (by N. Von Germeten)): “A reference to the Roman Emperor Augustus Caesar (27 B.C.E. to 14 C.E.), who was probably referring to Herod the Great, a Roman king of Judea born in 74 B.C.E.”

that slaves are indoctrinated and baptized. They make no efforts towards those purposes, even avoiding it in all possible ways, persuading them that they should refuse to be indoctrinated and learn about Christian religion.³³ Partial, but significant, reason for that stance is the belief by the owners that the slaves are basically unable to learn the items of faith through catechism, and accordingly any attempt at baptizing them and bringing them to confession and holy communion is fruitless and potentially a way to blasphemy. This applies both to *bozales*³⁴ (recently arrived blacks from Africa) and to *ladinos*³⁵ (blacks already established in the colonies and linguistically inculturated) (Alonso de Sandoval 1987, II, iii, 239).

These accounts of the capacities of enslaved Africans for Christian life and the sacraments and conceptual categories related to their faculties and communicative skills deserve an excursus on the relationship between language, race, and racism in Sandoval's work. After all, in the choice of words and use of language there is a notorious importation of prejudice denoting that the closer dark-skinned people from Africa are to white people, their world, and their religion, the more they are categorized in positive words. Interestingly enough, some of these prejudicial meanings connected to words remain today both in Spanish and Portuguese. For instance, as mentioned, the incoming African blacks in Cartagena who were unable to speak and understand Spanish were called *bozales*.³⁶ Today, *bozal* still has the meaning of "stupid" in Iberian languages, at least in their Latin American versions. Likewise, blacks enculturated into colonial society, i.e., the ones who had learned and even mastered the Spanish language, were called *ladinos*.³⁷ The word *ladino* is still used today for 'clever' or 'smart'. Moreover, sometimes we find, in the context of *DIAS*, the use of *moreno*, instead of *negro*, for enslaved Africans (Alonso de Sandoval 1987, [Aprobación del Padre Balthasar Mas, Rector del Colegio de la Compañía de Jesus, de la ciudad de Santa Fé de Bogota], 49; [Aprobacion del Padre Vicente Imperial, professor[r], y predicador de la Compañía de Jesus], 52), a word with a more 'positive' connotation, perhaps, which, in today's Latin American Spanish and Portuguese, is actually used to refer to dark-skinned persons in order to attenuate or euphemistically express the 'negative' or somehow 'regrettable' or 'embarrassing' fact that he/she is black or simply not white.

Bozales, in particular, are taken as rude and slow in understanding, but this is no reason for excluding them from baptism and communion, after instructing them and creating in them a good disposition, according to Sandoval. Nothing proves that black people are incapable of learning doctrine and receiving sacraments. Doctrine should be taught to them slowly, which amounts to giving them more free time for learning the things that belong to their new faith, instead of forcing them to work all day long. Good examples by holders count as an especially effective form of religious education. Holders should feel compelled to provide slaves the adequate means for preparing themselves and taking part in the ceremonies of sacraments. This is a form of respect towards the slaves: having been removed from their

33 Sandoval exerts an honest criticism on the negative role holders play in the slaves' lives. Examples of this are causing difficulties to those who want to contract marriage and separating mothers from children. Owners become rich because of their slaves, but their conscience has no concern either for the slaves' health and safety or for their salvation (see Alonso de Sandoval 1987, II, iii, 242).

34 Von Germeten (2008a, 193): "*bozal*: Rough or crude. Spaniards used this derogatory term for non-Spanish-speaking slaves who had recently arrived in the Americas from Africa."

35 Von Germeten (2008a, 193): "*ladino*: An African or Native American person who speaks Spanish or Portuguese and behaves in a manner that shows knowledge of Iberian culture and the Catholic religion. Usually *ladinos* had lived among Europeans for most of their lives. *Ladino* is often used to mean the opposite of *bozal*."

36 See footnote 34, above.

37 See footnote 35, above.

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lands and set apart from their old gods, it is unfair to keep black people away from their new God as well (Alonso de Sandoval 1987, II, iii, 239–41).

Sandoval's multi-faceted account of Ethiopians as miserable people and ethnically prone to servitude still does not explain how and why, *as slaves*, they crossed the Atlantic Ocean towards American ports and the lands of Spanish and Portuguese colonizers. The point here is not about the economic aspects that explain the need for enslaved Africans to sustain the colonial enterprises of European empires. It is about why, irrespective of their alleged misery and proneness to servitude, blacks were sent away to the New World in the condition of enslaved people and within a complex chain of commercial practice, of which Sandoval was aware and which he was expected to morally assess. [31]

Legal Topics and Commutative Justice: Enslavement and Slave Trade

Sandoval's discussion of the examination of conscience concerning those engaged in trading slaves on the transatlantic routes between Africa and the Americas is not the main focus of this essay. However, there is an important theoretical question regarding how he combines his different accounts of the enslaved condition of black people—the first being his etiological explanation of it (as discussed in the last two sections above) and the second being his explanation of it in terms of the justice of enslavements and of trading slaves. In the structure of his book, the characterization of Ethiopians as a cursed type of human and the idea of cursed non-Christian nations come before the treatment of the legal claims of enslavement. Actually, with different emphases but common language, Sandoval's depiction of black people as miserable is to be found all over the book. Sandoval's final opinion about what to do regarding the justice or injustice of existing enslavements and the slave trade is conditioned by those narratives and the view he has, as a priest and a missionary, of the historical possibility of bringing black Africans to the Christian religion. [32]

In the 1627 edition of the *DIAS*, Sandoval treats enslavement and trade more directly in Chapter XVII ("Of the Slavery of these Blacks from Guinea and Other Ports, Speaking Generally") (Alonso de Sandoval 1987, I, xvii, 142–49) and Chapter XVIII ("Of the *Armazones* [large slave ships] of These Blacks") (Alonso de Sandoval 1987, I, xviii, 149–54) of Book I. He is aware of a controversy among *doctores* concerning the "business" of slave traffic. In fact, he leaves to the *doctores* the last word regarding the justification of that business. Among them, he admires Luis de Molina, with whose *De iustitia et iure* I, tract. 2, disp. 34–35³⁸ he is well acquainted. Sandoval endorses Molina's accounts and just wants to add something to the debate, from the standpoint of his many years of ministry. He is open to taking different opinions into account, especially those based on the experience of people engaged in slave traffic, but to consider any real change in the system is not his aim. His first concern is the question of how certain those engaged in the traffic of slaves are that black people crossing over the Atlantic Ocean on ships were really (and legitimately) slaves in their original ports and locations in Africa, such as Cacheu, Guinea, Cape Verde Islands, São Tomé Island, as well as Angola, from where slaves used to come to South America. It might be a hard task to safely judge the true [33]

38 See again Ludovicus Molina ([1611] 1738), *De iustitia et iure*, I, tract. 2, disp. 34–35 (disp. 32–40), 91–106 (86–117). Molina's views are also important for Sandoval in the 1647 edition of his *DIAS*; see Alonso de Sandoval (1647, Part I, I, xxi–xxii, 93–103). On Molina's treatment of black slavery, see Kaufmann (2014, 183–225); Joner (2015, 39–50); Pich (2019, 1–24 (e36112–e36136)).

status of Africans, considering that, in many cases, slaves were purchased at Latin American ports, where they disembarked, after already having been negotiated over three or four times (Alonso de Sandoval 1987, I, xvii, 142). Although Sandoval seems willing to believe that purchasers in African ports act in good faith, and the traders in South American ports as well, he wants to highlight that perhaps purchasers *should have doubts* in some cases. Concrete moral worries in that regard come originally from captains of slave ships, who consulted our priest in Cartagena, in order to find spiritual relief for their conscience (Alonso de Sandoval 1987, I, xvii, 143–44). This worry over the relief of the slavetraders' conscience is a particular aspect of Molina's treatment of black slavery, and, to a large extent, Sandoval follows that path as well (Moreno Rejón 2007, 99–101).

We can affirm that Sandoval spent some time in search of trustworthy information. In the case of Angola, he received a letter by Luis Brandon (or Brandão),³⁹ the principal of the Collegio de San Pablo, of the Jesuits, in Luanda, dated August 21st, 1611.⁴⁰ Answering Sandoval's questions over whether black people had been made captives justly, Luis Brandão advises Sandoval not to have hesitations in that regard. Luis Brandão reminds Sandoval that the "mesa de la conciencia"⁴¹ in Lisbon never complained about the traffic in Angola, and their members could be seen as persons both wise and of safe conscience (Alonso de Sandoval 1987, I, xvii, 143). Bishops who had been in São Tomé, Cape Verde, and Luanda never reprimanded it, and nothing illicit in that regard was reported by the Jesuits working in Brazil.⁴² Luis Brandão affirms that the merchants made the trade "in good faith," and purchases might also be made in South America in good faith. In a nutshell, merchants buy slaves in good faith in Angola and sell them in good faith in South America (Brazil and other coasts). Captive black people will always claim that they have been made slaves unjustly (Alonso de Sandoval 1987, I, xvii, 144).

The same Luis Brandão admits that sometimes black people are captured (and made slaves) mistakenly. Some have been simply stolen, and sometimes their local lords sold them for quite trivial reasons. Luis Brandão believes these cases are few in number, and it is impossible to inspect this small number of unfortunate cases⁴³ among ten to twelve thousand blacks that depart from Luanda each year. Moreover, Luis Brandão does not believe it is worth doing. To rescue those few unjustly captured and made slaves for arbitrary and negligible reasons and

39 "Luis Brandão" is the Portuguese name; Sandoval rendered it "Luis Brandon" in Spanish.

40 On this report by Luis Brandão, see also Suess (1998, 142–43); Block (2007, 92–93).

41 Von Germeten, in Alonso de Sandoval (2008, I, xvii, 51) translates the passage in a paraphrastic way: "In Lisbon, wise men of good conscience do not find slavery reprehensible." In *id. ibid.*, p. 51, footnote 73, she explains: "The writer [Luis Brandão] might be referring to jurists, philosophers, and religious and secular leaders." In fact, Sandoval is certainly referring to the "Mesa de Consciência e Ordens," a kind of royal council created by the Portuguese king, Dom João III, in 1532, in order to deliberate in matters of public interest that touched "obligations of conscience" – it was officially extinguished in 1833. See also Marcussi (2013, 72–75).

42 Luis Brandão also assumes that Jesuits, in this case both in Angola and in Brazil, owned slaves perfectly licitly as well. See again a remark by Von Germeten, in Alonso de Sandoval (2008, 51, footnote 74): "During Sandoval's lifetime Jesuits were increasing their use of slaves on sugar estates in Brazil. Especially in 1700s, Jesuits ran large plantations worked by hundreds of slaves. However, it is not correct to argue, as have some scholars, that the purpose of *De instauranda* was to explain why it was morally correct for Jesuits to own numerous slaves." A fundamental work about the attitude of the Jesuits towards the slavery of Indigenous and black people in sixteenth to seventeenth century colonial Brazil is Zeron (2011).

43 Luis Brandão's judgement goes in the opposite direction to what, for example, decades later Diego de Avendaño summarizes in Didacus de Avendaño 1668, *Thesaurus indicus*, Tomus Primus, tit. IX, cap. XII, § 8 ("De contractu Aethiopicorum mancipiorum"), n. 203, 329–30, as his own view, but also as a common opinion about what Jesuit moralists wrote on the matter, that is, that most enslaved Africans were either illicitly enslaved or were enslaved due to reasons which were uncertain.

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to stop the whole traffic of slaves from Angola to South America—in that case, to Brazil in particular—because of these few would result in the loss of many souls that could otherwise have a unique chance of finding their salvation. Confessing that black people are captured and made slaves by several different means in Africa, Brandão claims that the alleged reasons for enslavement— following local laws and customs, for example—suffice as justification for their captivity (Alonso de Sandoval 1987, I, xvii, 144).

Sandoval does indeed seem to justify the existence of slave traders: Firstly, he accepts *prima facie* that they act *bona fide*, for they put questions about the condition of people they purchase and are (quite naturally) satisfied with the justification given for their captivity; secondly, their activity seems to be fair: they work, take risks, have expenses, etc.; thirdly, the effect of their work is to bring pagans to Christian lands, which can amount to those people’s salvation. Sandoval endorses the view that slave traders work in good faith; the aspects of their risky job and the circumstances around their business seem to be acceptable (Alonso de Sandoval 1987, I, xvii, 145; see Vila Vilar 1990, 27–28; Souza 2006, 42). [36]

But in the same chapter, Sandoval reveals hints of doubt, which arise because of his own efforts to get information about the fairness of the circumstances surrounding that business. He reports a conversation with the captain of an “amazon de negros” coming from Angola that was shipwrecked in a bay not far from Cartagena. This anonymous captain, in order to explain the large number of misfortunate slaves sent to Cartagena in those days, tells a different story from Luis Brandão concerning that practice. He reports of a war waged between two powerful kings, where one of them, having difficulties, came to the whites or Europeans, offering them a large amount of slaves in exchange for their provision of military support. The other king, his enemy, was informed of the strategy and made an even better offer. After having fought a cruel war, the victorious king again offered the whites a number of enslaved blacks who happened to be captured after their ruler’s defeat. A large number of black people were thought to arrive in Cartagena as a result of such conflicts (Alonso de Sandoval 1987, I, xvii, 145), or “wars,” in Africa, about which no one was assured of acceptable just causes, clear offenders and offended, nor patterns of corrective justice at all. [37]

There are several more reasons for doubting the legitimacy of the trade. From the ports of Guinea come “blacks of the law”—i.e., Muslim blacks⁴⁴—who are captured with the help of other blacks and *mochileros*, who in their turn go into the land and buy enslaved blacks in markets by giving quite simple goods in exchange, which ship captains and merchants had given them. In several other ports it is possible to find black people condemned to slavery because of small faults and because of wars that were waged with justifications such as offensive hearsay or irrelevant injuries. Local authorities such as kings and princes rely—with manifest tendencies to abuse of power—on crimes such as adultery, homicide, and theft to justify, as legal punishment, the captivity of black people, and in many cases also the captivity of the felons’ descendants as well (Alonso de Sandoval 1987, I, xvii, 146–47). With the help of blacks from the coast, captains and merchants entered the land and ambushed people [38]

44 About black people from Guinea, Alonso de Sandoval (see Alonso de Sandoval 1987, I, xiii, 117–22) reports that they were influenced by Islam. The “perverse Mohammedan sect,” particularly because of the dedication of its ministers, plays a dominant role in that part of Africa. Guineans worship Allah and honor Allah’s great Prophet, whose doctrine they have in written form, i.e., in “parchments.” Sandoval reports what would be an articulated presence of Islam in Guinea, namely a place where ministers preach and explain the doctrine of Muhammad, and apparently celebrate ceremonies in mosques. Preachers and missionaries of the Islam are very influential on political authorities, and so they are taken by Sandoval as a major factor for precluding the Guineans from becoming Christians. On the presence of *mouros* in those African regions and the Jesuits’ efforts to diminish their influence, see Souza (2006, 46–47).

for capturing. Back at the coast, Portuguese ships—crowded with real “pirates” (*piratas*)—are waiting for the precious acquisitions (Alonso de Sandoval 1987, I, xvii, 147).

Armadores (men that participate in such captures at ports on the African West coast) and other people also engaged in the traffic report to Sandoval about their troubles of conscience. According to them, less than half of the reported wars in Africa, commonly used to justify the captivity and sale of black people because of alleged injury, had really taken place. To put it briefly, cases of enslavement of black people by black people in Africa and of their purchase by captains and traders are morally suspicious. Sandoval also mentions disagreements expressed by a cleric—in conversation with him in Cartagena—who, speaking from the perspective of Guinea, denounced that Luis de Molina wrote falsities about “unjust wars” in that land, the “rulership of the Kings and the captivity of the Blacks.” In fact, in Guinea there were abuses of rulership because there was no free black person in the land; there, all blacks were slaves of the king, and they were simply used and sold for his own benefit and according to his arbitrary use of power (Alonso de Sandoval 1987, I, xvii, 147–48; see Ludovicus Molina [1611] 1738, *De iustitia et iure*, I, tract. 2, disp. 34, 91–97). This amounts to the judgment that those people, as well as their relatives, were arbitrarily condemned to “perpetual servitude and slavery” in an unmistakable case of subjection and enslavement by “absolute power,” not on juridical grounds of any sort at all (Alonso de Sandoval 1987, I, xvii, 148–49).

Although Sandoval does not insist on the point, he is aware that, due to such testimonies, the slave trade is not free of injustices. Together with what the *doctores* say about it, Christians should make use of quiet reflection in order to judge the justice of enslavement in cases where doubts arise. It is *implicit* in Sandoval’s account that such injustices must be repaired (Alonso de Sandoval 1987, I, xvii, 149).

If slavery, in spite of possible injustices, is taken to be an acceptable social institution, most clearly (on the normative level) as a consequence of corrective law after a ‘just’ war won by the offended side and of punishment because of serious felonies, Sandoval is still able to make a further reflection on the cause of slavery. Why is liberty lost by people? In “the beginning,” people were not put into the world, by God, as “masters” and “slaves.” People began to tyrannize others by taking away their liberty because of “malice.” This would amount to unjust enslavement of human beings because of the wickedness of slavers. Sandoval stresses the view that human beings are “naturally”—i.e., according to nature before the advent of sin—“free,” and any human being is made a slave because of “iniquity” (Alonso de Sandoval 1987, I, xviii, 149–50).⁴⁵ He believes that both the powerful and the poor have the same “principle” and “finality,” and he is able to affirm, with Seneca, that all people “live under the sky,” that “the sun shines” on all, and that all “breathe the same air” (Alonso de Sandoval 1987, I, xviii, 150; Seneca 1988, *Epistula XLVII.10*, 28–29), which amounts to saying that, naturally/originally, all have the same share (Pohlenz 1964, 135–36; Garnsey 1996, 143; Reale 2011, 100). In fact, without much discussion of its foundations, Roman Stoic thinkers like Seneca usually located the possible legitimacy of slavery in the legal sphere—particularly in the *ius gentium*—rather than in a given account of slavery based on nature itself (see Flaig 1995, cols. 977–78; Garnsey 1996, 134–42). Malice explains why this does not happen in practice: here, by touching upon an Augustinian *leitmotif* for explaining the introduction of slavery into the world, namely “sin,” Sandoval endorses the idea that it can be caused both

45 If this fits the discourse that the enslavement of black people was supernaturally introduced by God as a form of punishment because of Ham’s offence, here Sandoval explores the Patristic idea that slavery was introduced by sin in the world because of human beings’ iniquity towards their fellows.

by the iniquity of unjust slavers and because of sins committed by persons that were then, as a consequence, justly enslaved. But, again, the Good News is equally destined to all human beings as most excellent creatures of God, and even though there can be masters and slaves, they are equally called to the salvation of their souls through the redeeming deeds of Christ (Alonso de Sandoval 1987, I, xviii, 150–51). In the end, it is on this level that there is the same freedom for all: a freedom, through faith, of the servitude of sin, which gives someone a “highest nobility” (because of virtues) to the eyes of God, as well as the same dignity of being Christ’s serfs equally. From an eschatological perspective, everyone will receive a prize only because of their good or evil deeds on the spiritual level. In fact, people should care most about the healing of their souls, which need to be redeemed by Christ.

Sandoval’s final word concerning the problem of traders’ safe conscience confirms that he was at the same time aware of many situations of unjust enslavement and unable to confront the system of slave trade at a legal, economic, and political level. After all, he relieves the situations of doubt, for he accepts the idea that “blacks were captured with the justice that God knows,” and in the status of corporeal slavery they happened to be touched by the hands of the Jesuit priests and missionaries, who are supposed to bring them relief, seeking their “spiritual freedom” and above all the freedom “of their souls.” Surely the Jesuits would also work concretely towards the slaves’ bodily relief, as soon as they arrived at South American ports after horrendous conditions of shipment, as a means towards the more important goals of catechism, doctrine, baptism, and confession (Alonso de Sandoval 1987, I, xviii, 151). [42]

Clearly, Sandoval’s reports both reveal (or help verify) and construct (or confirm) a representation of the different Ethiopians that appeals to patterns of prejudice and discrimination. The narratives selected in this study, both in content and in language, depict black people as a human type, to be found in many different human groups and nations, thus, ethnicities, full of congenial defective aspects and marked by an inferior condition—i.e., servitude or natural inclination to servitude. Moreover, “black” or “Ethiopian” as a human type is characterized by features that, in the end, are endorsed or even caused by God. Any possible critical attitude concerning the conditions in which enslaved black people are transported to the Americas is relativized by the fact that Ethiopians are not Christians and are in need of salvation: the good of the salvation of the soul relativizes the urgency of protecting any other human good that would be otherwise due to black people but denied to them in the project of colonization, like, for example, the overt fight against undeniable injustices done in the original enslavements and the slave trade. But perhaps we find the most revealing aspects concerning a religion- and race-based subjection in Sandoval’s work in passages where he explicitly connects religion and race, religion and skin color. These texts, the analysis of which is the *second and final* focus of this study of the *DIAS* and which certainly, on the doctrinal level, characterize the Jesuit missions among black people, are those where Sandoval explains the key contents of a Christian catechesis. We must remember that, in the 1627 edition, Sandoval’s book has a total of Four Parts. Parts One and Two are those that I have roughly described so far. In Book III Sandoval presents topics related to the correct administration of sacraments, especially the sacrament of baptism, which, since it presupposes a knowing and free-willing consent to the key contents of faith, must be preceded by proper catechesis. [43]

Catechesis of Black People and Race Ideology⁴⁶

We cannot analyze the catechesis of enslaved blacks without also considering that its performance presupposed a paternalistic—and, to a certain extent, symbiotic—ethics of masters and slaves inspired by the Bible (in particular St. Peter’s and St. Paul’s *Letters*), reflecting the exemplary role of both lay and clerical Christian masters as people chosen by God to discipline their ‘children’ and teach them the true religion. According to St. Paul’s ethics, in particular, true believers and redeemed people live under the same spiritual freedom and, in a sense, the same spiritual servitude towards each other in love and subjection to Christ as Lord. In such a state there are no masters and slaves, although the apostle himself did not direct explicit words against the political state of slavery or civil servitude. What St. Paul says about Christian masters and (Christian) slaves must be understood under the perspective of an eschatologically-inspired pedagogy of faith that should—that at least might—be conducted in a master-slave relationship. Partly inspired by Augustine’s endorsements of it,⁴⁷ Sandoval makes a careful application of this kind of human relationship with the purpose of introducing proper religious views and habits among the Ethiopians, i.e., with the primary goal of the salvation of their souls (Alonso de Sandoval 1987, II, iii–v, 242–51).⁴⁸

As Nicole Von Germeten correctly points out, Book III of Sandoval’s *DIAS* “highlights the fact that” he viewed his own work “as a manual for Jesuits who wanted to join his mission baptizing African slaves in Cartagena.”⁴⁹ So, he offers several pieces of practical advice to those who want to join him in the ministry of blacks. Sandoval carefully explains his approach to the Catholic sacraments, most especially to baptism—both of children and above all of adults—showing particular interest in knowing about those who had been baptized already in the African lands and under what circumstances and criteria of proper administration (Chapters 4–6) (Alonso de Sandoval 2008, III, iv–vi, 111–25, 1987, III, iv–vi, 382–406). He then focuses on the examination of the enslaved Africans’ true status as baptized people after they disembark from slave ships and arrive at ports in the Americas, and, if necessary, on further prerequisites and the due preparation for catechism (Chapters 7–9) (Alonso de Sandoval 2008, III, vii–ix, 125–33, 1987, III, vii–ix, 406–20). For those whose inspection reveals that they did not receive any baptism at all, or at least no valid baptism, the Jesuit priest proposes, thus, a form of catechism (teaching of the fundamental articles and precepts of the Christian faith) which, irrespective of the presupposition that black people are both able to basically understand those contents and freely receive baptism afterwards (Chapter 3) (Alonso de Sandoval 2008, III, iii, 105–10, 1987, III, iii, 375–81; see also Cenci 2015, 83–85), also reveals a remarkable connection between (Christian, and the only ‘true’) religion, ‘race’, and ‘ethnicity.’ Despite all the hard or demeaning descriptions of the human status of black people offered by Sandoval in Book II of his *DIAS*, and granting that our author is neither always consistent nor

46 For this section, see also Pich (2017, 213–26).

47 Inspired by Augustine’s (2000) *De civitate Dei* XIX, 14–15, Sandoval conceives a scale of love within the scope of a household ethics: we owe love *first* to God, *second* to relatives, *third* to our children, and *fourth* to the people in the house, including here servants and slaves. But if servants and slaves are good, they should be even more loved than bad children. See Alonso de Sandoval (1987, II, v, 251).

48 In Pich (2015, 69–72) I explained several aspects of this ethics, which Sandoval develops and finds confirmed above all in passages of the New Testament. Sandoval makes honest efforts to protect the slaves and calls the attention of their white holders to their human and Christian responsibilities. On St. Paul’s thought about slavery, see Schrage (1994, 237–43, 283–85); Garnsey (1996, 173–88).

49 See Von Germeten’s editorial introductory note in Alonso de Sandoval (2008, III, i, 99–100, see also 1987, III, i, 363–64). I make use of Von Germeten’s translation into English of selections of Sandoval’s *DIAS* throughout this section of the essay.

particularly precise in his expositions, according to his opinion in Book III Africans have free will and are able to at least understand the essentials of Christian faith before actually being baptized. Sandoval even affirms that they must be brought to Christian faith by some forms of induction (Alonso de Sandoval 2008, III, iii, 105–10; III, x, 133–37, 1987, III, iii, 375–81; III, x, 420–26), although we must also mention that the mysteries of faith, “due to the slaves’ ignorance,” should be explained in a quick and simple way, without “much detail” (Alonso de Sandoval 2008, III, x, 133; III, xi, 137–41, 1987, III, x, 420–21; III, xi, 426–33). But the passages that I really want to analyze are about Sandoval’s reflection on the kind and amount of information to be received by enslaved black people, and about how much knowledge was enough for them to be properly catechized and rightly express the acquisition of faith before receiving the sacrament of baptism. What must they know?

Summarizing what Sandoval affirms in *DIAS* III, 10, the African slaves (i) must first “be taught that without baptism, they cannot go to heaven,” and they must be attentive to every instruction, because without correctly answering questions later “they will not have the water poured on them” (Alonso de Sandoval 2008, III, x, 133–34, 1987, III, x, 420–21). (ii) Second, they must know that “the water is not for washing their heads or refreshing them,” it is instead “God’s water, and baptism is a great thing that Jesus Christ commands to renew humankind,” in such a way that sinners and “slaves of the devil” become “children of God.”⁵⁰ (iii) Third, the slaves must be taught that “God is watching us, even if we cannot see him,” hearing then an explanation in very simple words about the mysteries of omnipresence, eternity and omnipotence (Alonso de Sandoval 2008, III, x, 135, 1987, III, x, 422). (iv) Fourth, they must know, by means of comparisons, about the mystery of the Holy Trinity, that there are three persons and only one God (Alonso de Sandoval 2008, III, x, 135, 1987, III, x, 422–23). (v) Fifth, they must be told that “God has a son, also a God like him, who is the second figure” of the Holy Trinity (Alonso de Sandoval 2008, III, x, 135, 1987, III, x, 423). (vi) Sixth, they must be told “how this Son of God became a man and was born of Saint Mary,” whose status as “Mother of God” should be made explicit (Alonso de Sandoval 2008, III, x, 135, 1987, III, x, 423). (vii) Seventh, the African slaves must be told that the “great and all powerful God has two houses [*sic!*]”; one is heaven, which “is very beautiful and is always full of happiness and is located up in the sky,” and the other is hell, a house below that “is nothing but fire, whips, and punishment,” with the warning that “Those who do not have water poured on them and who do not want to serve him go there, where they are tortured forever” (Alonso de Sandoval 2008, III, x, 135, 1987, III, x, 423). (viii) Eighth, African slaves must be told that “the Son of God died because he loves them and wants all of them to have their heads washed. After he died, he returned to life.” Sandoval here emphasizes that Christ wants black people to do everything he commands, and this is connected to a further will, i.e., that Christ wants them to dwell in his “upper house” (Alonso de Sandoval 2008, III, x, 135–36, 1987, III, x, 423–24). (ix) Ninth, they must be told about “the mystery of the Resurrection,” which requires an explanation of the immortality of the soul and its union with the resuscitated body in glory

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50 Alonso de Sandoval (2008, III, x, 134, 1987, III, x, 421–22): “Lo segundo se les dirá, que aquella agua no se les echa para lavarles las cabezas de alguna suziedad refrescarselas o para quitarles el cabello: sino que es agua de Dios, una cosa grande, ordenada por Jesu Christo, para que con ella se renovasse el hombre perfectamente, dandole la gracia de Dios, su amistad, y grandes bienes con ella; por la cual de esclavos del demonio se buelven hijos de Dios, y de pecadores se buelven justos; y no solamente lava el alma de toda mancha de culpa, mas también la libra de toda la pena del infierno y del purgatorio, de modo que si uno muriesse luego despues de ser baptizado, iria derecho al cielo, como si jamas huviera cometido pecado [...]”

and in heaven (Alonso de Sandoval 2008, III, x, 136, 1987, III, x, 424–25). In all these steps⁵¹ of basic Christian catechism, Sandoval follows a clear pedagogy: he recommends simplicity of language, patient repetition (like someone who is speaking with children), as well as some use of force or pressure with words, so that enslaved Africans realize how important to their souls the sacrament of baptism is:

It is sufficient to teach these mysteries in this simple way, because the slaves are in desperate need and understand so little. If they die, they have learned enough to be saved and to receive the other sacraments. If they live, little by little they will learn the rest and perfect themselves. After we finish instructing them, we ask their express permission for baptism, before passing to the other actions necessary for faith, hope, charity, and contrition⁵².

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But in order to see the most interesting aspects of such pedagogy of salvation applied by Jesuit priests—those aspects that can reveal new perspectives which help us understand the ideologies of black slavery in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries—we should give attention, again, to (ii) the second teaching recommendation or requirement mentioned above. This second step, as described by Sandoval, is accompanied by an emphatical language of truth and falsity in religion and characterized by remarkable (embarrassing!) connections between religion and race, religion and ethnicity, and religion and skin color, although such connections appear in several other passages of Book III of *DIAS* as well.⁵³ Sandoval affirms that baptism cleans the slaves' souls "of all stains of guilt," it frees their souls "from the pain of hell and purgatory," opening for them the doors of heaven after their death. As a matter of fact, in order to characterize the souls' states before and after baptism, Sandoval makes use of simple (even childish) language that resorts to straight and emphatic oppositions such as 'clean and dirty,' 'peace and suffering,' 'heaven and hell,' 'true and false,' etc. However, at the core of the Christian catechesis, the Jesuit thinker uses words that belong to the discourse of the previous exposition that consciously devalued black-skinned people (and peoples). In other words, Sandoval's catechetical narrative remains close to the idea that the skin color and 'race' of Africans and their status as subjected or subjectable human beings is ultimately explained by a divine punishment, and the enslaved condition of Africans in the American diaspora follows a divine plan. This derogatory narrative is related now to 'true' religion (Christianity)

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51 In fact, if for any given reasons the catechist is "very rushed because the person is very sick and cannot understand anything," the essentials of Christian faith can still be reduced to six basic items (see Alonso de Sandoval 2008, III x, 137, 1987, III, x, 425–26). Those six items do not mention the mysteries of Christ and the Holy Trinity, and Sandoval agrees with theologians such as Francisco de Vitoria and Melchor Cano O.P. (1509–1560) that, although according to the "common [divine] law" the explicit knowledge of Christ (and the Holy Trinity) is necessary for justification and salvation, in some extraordinary cases an implicit faith in Christ (and the Holy Trinity) should suffice. On this discussion, see Pich (2018, 16–17).

52 Alonso de Sandoval (2008, III, x, 136–37, 1987, X, x, 425): "Dichos estos misterios por este modo o por el que Dios enseñar a cada uno, o mejor se acomodare, no se les diran mas, pues parece bastan estos en tan grave necesidad y en tan grande cortedad de entendimiento, pues si mueren, saben lo necesario para salvarse y poder recibir los demas Sacramentos y si viven, poco a poco iran aprendiendo lo demas y perfeccionandose en esto. Y aquí antes de passar a los demas actos necesarios de Fè, Esperanza y Caridad, contricion si pudiese ser, se les buelva antes de administrarles el bautismo, a pedir su consentimiento expresso, de recibirle y preguntarles las demas cosas que quedan referidas, de la inteligencia y noticia de lo que reciben y que utilidades tiene."

53 See, for example, Alonso de Sandoval (1987), III, iv, 389; III, v, 397–99; III, viii, 415–16; III, ix, 416–17; III, x, 424 [Sandoval talks of "animas blancas"]; III, xii, 434–35 [Sandoval defends the practice of changing the names of African slaves as soon as they are baptized, i.e., of giving them new Christian and "white" names, instead of keeping the names they received in their lands, where they still were sons of the devil].

and ‘false’ religion (any religion professed by blacks), ‘right’ or ‘blessed’ skin color and race (white and whites) and ‘wrong’ or ‘cursed’ skin color or race (black and blacks). This proves what I take to be one of the most powerful items of the ‘philosophy of black slavery’ generally speaking and thus, of the ‘ideology of black slavery’ more narrowly. That is to say, there is a true religion, this is the religion of the whites, this a white religion, and this is Christian faith. After his exposition of the second step in teaching blacks the essentials of Christian faith, and before describing how such teaching items should be repeated by the catechized slaves until they know by heart the answers to all questions put to them before receiving the sacrament of baptism, Sandoval writes:

This is how they will become Christians, like the whites, and how they receive the law of Jesus Christ in order to adore him and remember nothing more of the idols and false gods of their land, [but only of the God of the whites and of Jesus Christ, His son].⁵⁴ We repeat this point as many times as is necessary for them to understand, until they give the correct answers to these questions.⁵⁵

[49]

In the following lines, Sandoval mentions a kind of script of doctrinal repetitions that must be performed as a simple interplay of questions and answers between priest or catechist and a group of enslaved Africans, regarding the essential meaning of the water of baptism to be poured over the slaves’ heads. As in the case of every other basic doctrine taught in baptismal catechesis, Sandoval seems to formulate textual scripts that should be used by priests with the help of ‘converted’ *ladino* interpreters, who, by so directly speaking to catechumens in testimonial fashion, also play a significant role in evangelizing and thus in acculturating enslaved black people shortly after arrival. This is a role black interpreters would also play in Pedro Claver’s (1580–1654) missionary work (Brewer-García 2020, 121–68). In those scripts, it is impossible not to perceive the scandalous connections between religion and race that, with similar or comparable narratives, possibly characterized Jesuit missions specifically and Christian missions in general from the end of the sixteenth up to (at least) the eighteenth century:

[50]

[Q.] What is this water that will be poured over them? [A.] They respond that it is water of God. [Q.] Do they want to receive it with all their heart? [A.] Yes. [Q.] Where will they go if they receive it? [A.] To heaven with God. [Q.] Whose children are they after receiving that water? [A.] Children of God. [Q.] If they receive the water, will they be children of the devil or of God? [A.] Just children of God. [Q.] Which gods should they have from now on, the true God of the whites [al Dios verdadero de los blancos], Jesus Christ, his Son, or the false and lying gods of their land and of witchcraft and superstition? [A.] Only the God of the whites [que no quieren sino al Dios de los blancos, etc.]. [Q.] Do they want to be Christians obeying the law of Jesus Christ like the whites, living like them,

[51]

54 This important part of the original text (see next footnote) was unfortunately missing in the English translation by N. Von Germeten.

55 Alonso de Sandoval (2008, III, x, 134, 1987, III, x, 422): “[...] que con ella quedan Christianos como los blancos, y reciben la ley de Jesu Christo, para adorarlo y no acordarse mas de los idolos, Chinas y dioses falsos de su tierra, sino del Dios de los blancos y de Jesu Christo, su hijo. Y este punto se les repita las vezes que fueren necessarias, para que entiendan y como tan principal y el fundamento de todo no se passe del, [...]”

serving and obeying the great God of the Christians, or be the Moors [Muslims], gentiles, and barbarians, like they were in their land? [A.] Be like Christians.⁵⁶

Actually, the lines next to this litany (see below) might be seen as a mitigation of the thesis that Sandoval's mission handbook works with an ideological association between 'true' religion and 'right' race—thus, 'false' religion and 'wrong' race—but in fact it does not change anything concerning the emphasis that the religious attitude of whites is the one to be imitated (after all, they had already accepted the water of Christian baptism). We must keep in mind that, on being baptized, enslaved Africans were supposed to receive new names, i.e., names to be found in a Christian colonial ethos.⁵⁷ Moreover, the personal value slaves acquire after baptism and the socio-spatial participation they win for themselves after receiving the sacrament are explicitly presented by Sandoval as a very modest integration, by means of true religion, into a 'white world':

Also say to them at this point that the whites are important because they have accepted this water that makes them Christians. If they had not, they would be unimportant and without value. If the slaves receive the water, they will also be respected, and they will be able to go to the temples and houses of God, to associate and eat with the other Christians. If they are Christians, when they die they will be buried in the church. If they are not Christians, they will be thrown in the rubbish dump, where they will be eaten by dogs.⁵⁸

Sandoval is aware of the danger of overstressing any connection between a Christian thing such as baptism and the world of the whites. He had made important reflections on it some Chapters before, in *DIAS* III.v, where he writes on the "most important topic" of his treatise, i.e., "The value of these baptisms [received in Africa, before transportation to the Indies]" and expresses the view, based on "moral certitude," thus on a probability high enough to overcome any relevant doubt, that those baptisms are "usually null and invalid, and evidently doubtful" (Alonso de Sandoval 2008, III, v, 117, 1987, III, v, 390–92). Regarding the due preparation for the rite of being washed by water, Sandoval made explicit that the most important thing would be to make the Ethiopians understand, through catechism, what "Christian" or "to be a Christian" means, avoiding any view that "Christian" simply amounts to "Portuguese" or "white," since that would associate Christian faith with something bad for the blacks, i.e., the enslavers, their "worst enemies" at a first glance. Carefully analyzing whether slaves still on

56 Alonso de Sandoval (2008, III, x, 134, 1987, III, x, 422): "[...], hasta que preguntados que agua es aquella con que les quieren lavar respondan que es agua de Dios. Que si la quieren recibir de todo corazon, que si. Que donde han de ir con ella? Al cielo con Dios. Que cuyos hijos han de ser con aquella agua? Que hijos de Dios. Que si recibida aquella agua seran se alli adelante hijos del demonio, o de Dios? no, sino hijos de Dios. Que a quien quieren de alli adelante, al Dios verdadero de los blancos, a Jesu Christo su hijo, o al Dios falso, y mentira de su tierra, a sus Chinas, hechizarias y supersticiones? que no quieren sino al Dios de los blancos, etc. Que si quieren ser Christianos, tener la ley de Jesu Christo como los blancos, vivir como ellos, sirviendo y obedeciendo al Dios grande de los Christianos? o ser Moros Gentiles, Barbaros como en su tierra y vivir como allà vivian? que no, sino como Christianos, etc." "Q" = "Question" (by the catechist), and "A" = "Answer" (by the African slaves).

57 See footnote 53, above.

58 Alonso de Sandoval (2008, III, x, 134, 1987, III, x, 422): "Tambien se les dirà luego en este punto que la causa de ser los blancos tan estimados de todos, es, por aver recebido esta agua con que se hicieron Christianos, que sino lo fueran no uviera quien hiziera caso dellos. Que la reciben ellos tambien y seran estimados, como ellos, podran ir a los templos y casas de Dios, tratar y comer, con los demas Christianos y cuando se mueran los enterraran en la Iglesia si son Christianos, o si no en el muladar, donde sean comidos de perros."

the African coast received a valid baptism or not—and emphasizing that a person with the use of reason is validly baptized only if he or she gives his or her free consent, knowing what the consent is about—Sandoval writes:

[Other authors [...] all agree on one thing]: [...] that in order for baptism to be valid, some knowledge of baptism as baptism is necessary, i.e., as ^[59] a ceremony connected to religion and a belief in God and that it makes them friends or sons of God, takes away their sins, and helps them go to heaven. They must at least realize that it has something to do with the Christian religion. They cannot only say that it is something Christian, Portuguese, or white, without knowing what the word “Christian” means, other than that it refers to a person who has taken away their liberty. This is not enough information!⁶⁰

[55]

[Talking about baptisms not preceded by due catechism and a properly willing consent according to enough understanding of the sacrament and the ceremony, as they used to be done still before the slave ships crossed the ocean] If someone asks them if they want to have this water poured on them so they can be like whites, and so on, I am certain that they not only reject this but detest this water and all other things connected to the whites from the bottom of their hearts. Whites are their worst enemies: they take the slaves from their homelands, separate them from their parents and siblings, take away their liberty, put them in chain gangs, shackles, and prisons, and then confine them in a ship to take them to distant lands, without hope of returning to their own. [...]. Not only do they [i.e., the blacks] want nothing to do with the whites’ water, but they abhor doing something that makes them like the whites, because the Spanish have earned their great spite and hatred. The blacks hate and deeply reject anything that they believe will unite them or make them similar to their worst enemies: the whites.⁶¹

[56]

In almost complete ignorance of what Christian baptism is all about, black slaves can even think that the water of baptism can bring them to death or that, when thrown upon them, it works like the brand masters used to burn into slaves’ bodies in order to recognize their holdings in buying and selling them on a market (Alonso de Sandoval 2008, III, v, 119, 1987, III, v, 398). But these last conceptual links between baptism, Christian status, and whiteness are all based upon reflections and conjectures about invalid conditions according to which

[57]

59 Up to this point, translation of mine.

60 Alonso de Sandoval (2008, III, v, 118, 1987, III, v, 395): “Otros [...] todos convienen en una misma cosa: y es, que para que el bautismo sea valido, es necessaria noticia del bautismo en quanto bautismo: esto es en quanto cerimonia de religion y culto de Dios, que se endereza a hazer amigos o hijos de Dios, a perdonar pecados, a llevar al Cielo, que es conocerlo por sus efectos: o a lo menos, que sepa que aquello es cosa de Christianos en quanto Christianos, y de diferente Religion; que si lo tuviessen por sola cosa de Christianos en quanto Portugueses o blancos no sabiendo, como no saben, que significa aquella palabra Christianos, o en quanto amos suyos o enemigos suyos que les quitan la libertad, cierto es que no bastaria.”

61 Alonso de Sandoval (2008, III, v, 119, 1987, III, v, 397): “[...]: y cuando se lo pidiessen diziendo, si querian recibir aquella agua, y ser como blancos, etc., es cierto que no solo no le darian, pero abominarian en sus corazones de agua, y cosa de blancos, gente que ellos tienen por capitales enemigos, que los sacan de sus tierras, los apartan de sus padres, y hermanos, de sus mugeres e hijos, les quitan su libertad, los tienen actualmente en colleras, grillos y prisiones, metidos en un navio para llevarlos a lejanas tierras, sin esperanza de bolver a las suyas, [...]; y esso crea passarà en los negros, que no solo no querran agua de blancos, pero aborreceran ser como ellos, porque como tienen cobrado a los Españoles tan grande ojeriza y aborrecimiento, juntamente aborrecen y apartan de su corazon todo aquello que ven o les dizen concierne a unirse y juntarse con sus capitales enemigos, que son los blancos: [...].” See also Cenci (2015, 87) where the passage in question is partially quoted.

baptism was performed on African shores, picturing a context in which neither proper doctrinal instruction nor due consent were present. Christian life in the space of Jesuit ministry in the Indies should be different.

Even if he shows understanding for the negative image that enslaved Africans can have of Christian religion as a contemptible set of rites practiced and imposed by white believers and enslavers, Sandoval insists on drawing quite a different picture of how Africans' lives can be better in the Christian ethos of the Indies. Sandoval will make a plea for the possibility of a Christian colonial society suitable for the Africans' acceptance of the new religion as well as a call for a strict observance of Christian duties by ministers and masters for the sake of the Africans' successful catechizing and introduction into the Catholic Church. In fact, the story told above, based on *DIAS* III.v, does not change to fit a second the view that the enslavement and transportation to the Americas was viewed as a good thing for black people: in the new land they receive the holy water of baptism, the liberty of the soul, and they live as slaves in a good house treated well by a new family – a positive message of relief that should be kindly communicated to slaves by priests, again with the help of *ladino* interpreters, as soon as Africans arrive at Latin American ports: [58]

Tell them that their master loves them very much and that they must do what he says; they must ask and beg him to treat them well, give them gifts, and heal them when they are sick so that they will have a good master with whom they can live happily in their captivity. Make them understand that the Lord did them great mercy in bringing them to a Christian land. It is better to be a slave here than free in their lands, because here, even though the body suffers working in captivity, the soul rests in the liberty that is attained through the holy water of baptism. Tell them that in this land they have family and that if they serve well, they will have a good captivity, and they will be content and well dressed. Tell them to give up their sadness and pain and be happy.⁶² [59]

This was taken as the beginning of the slaves' catechesis, in their new home, in order to prepare and conduct them as soon as possible to sacrament. But through baptism and the cleaning up of their souls, followed by obedience to God's commands, enslaved Africans will obtain, not now but in the afterlife, the condition of free men, in which the whites are already: a life in free "Christian brotherhood." Warning priests to make use of some clues by examining slaves upon arrival, Sandoval says to them that: [60]

You must be convinced that they were baptized properly, with words said in their own language, and with some understanding of the purpose or meaning of baptism. Even the roughest and most confused person must understand that it is the water of God for the children, captives, and servants of God, in order that they may do [61]

62 Alonso de Sandoval (2008, III, viii, 129, 1987, III, viii, 415): "Dirales, que su amo les quiere mucho y haze lo que le dize, que le pedirà y rogarà les trate bien, les regale y cure, y despues les de buen amo con que vivan contentos en su cautiverio. Deles a entender la merced grande del Señor, en averles traído a tierra de Christianos, donde vale mas ser cautivos que en su tierra libres: pues acá aunque el cuerpo está en trabajo por el cautiverio, el anima está con descanso, por la libertad que ha de alcanzar con el agua del santo baptismo. Ensancheles el corazon, dicendoles tendran por estas partes muchos parientes con quien tratar, y que si sirven bien, tendran buen cautiverio, estaran contentos y bien vestidos, que desechen toda tristeza y pena y que se alegren, que luego tendran salud y en todas las cosas contento." See also Cenci (2015, 87) where the passage in question is partially quoted.

what God commands and clean their souls of sin, allowing their souls to go to heaven and bringing them into Christian brotherhood with the whites.⁶³

In the narratives related to catechism and baptism, the end of slavery for black people is always referred to the future or the afterlife. In *DIAS* III.x, where Sandoval describes the teaching of Christian faith prior to the sacrament, we read that the souls of those who for the first time have validly received the “brand” of baptism will become white: being made “children” and “slaves” of God, in the future house in heaven blacks will still have a “master”: God Himself, i.e., the best possible slaveholder. Slaves should know that, after resurrection and reunion of soul and body, in eternal life in the “presence of God,” “enslavement and sickness” will be forgotten (Alonso de Sandoval 2008, III, x, 136, 1987, III, x, 424–25). [62]

All things considered, black people now have the opportunity to live in ‘good’ captivity: through baptism they will achieve the soul’s liberty and will belong to the good family of the Church; moreover if things happen according to the ethics proposed by the Jesuits to the Christian-Hispanic slavery-based colonial society, African slaves will work hard but will be compensated by the prudent and Christian care of new and white families and owners. Such a white hierarchical Christian society, which of course exists according to the true religion of the whites, is the ideal, and in any case best, historical possibility that God provided for the redemption of peoples originally cursed and prone to servitude, according to Sandoval. [63]

Concluding Remarks

Slavery, and more specifically black slavery, was a justifiable practice for Sandoval, both philosophically and theologically. It was so primarily as a result of ‘just’ wars and as a punishment for grave felonies. In this sense, the introduction of slavery into the world, ultimately because of sin, is not an offence to a ‘natural right’ of human beings.⁶⁴ Sandoval comes close to an account of the natural slavery of black people, but he justifies their proneness to servitude—here a status introduced into human nature—supernaturally, that is, through the punitive will of God. For that purpose, he also invokes biblical-theological foundations for slavery, for example the exegesis of the story of Ham in Genesis 9.20–29. These forms of justification are accompanied by discourses of ethnic discrimination, comprising “sins of nature” and needs of the soul, as well as “evils of nature,” “of fortune,” “of the soul,” and a note on misfortune in the religious sphere. Such discourses of devaluation help to create an ideology of acceptance towards the Ethiopians’ condition of slavery, portraying it as perhaps a better destiny for their bodies and souls. [64]

Sandoval sees legitimacy in the system of the slave trade generally, although he accepts the idea that, when firsthand testimonies report of illegal purchases, injustices are probable and cases must be verified. Sandoval’s text conveys an emphatic belief that many cases—perhaps even most cases—of the enslavement of blacks were unjust, but he never develops [65]

63 Alonso de Sandoval (2008, III, ix, 131, 1987, III, ix, 417): “Aviendo hecho las preguntas que a su parecer bastaren, si dellas o de sus respuestas constare con certeza moral, que le echaron agua diziendole las palabras del bautizmo, y que por medio de algun interprete, que supiesse su lengua o la nuestra, le dixeran alguna cosa del fin o utilidad o significacion del bautizmo, y que entendió, aunque fuese tosca, grossera y aun confusamente conforme a su capacidad, que era agua que Dios manda para hazer hijos, cautivos y siervos para hazer lo que Dios manda que limpia el alma de los pecados, que la hermosa y lleva al cielo, o haze hermanos de los blancos, Christianos como ellos a diferencia de su ley: [...]”

64 Souza (2006, 40) affirms that, for Sandoval, liberty was not a part of natural law. For reasons that I presented in section “Legal Topics and Commutative Justice: Enslavement and Slave Trade,” above, I do not think that this is a correct view.

a legal or political criticism or confrontation of that institution as such. Sandoval seems to be honestly worried about the safe conscience of traders. In this sense, he is in line with Dominican and Jesuits thinkers who showed concern for the normativity of relationships in the traffic and exploitation of black slave labour (Pich, Culleton, and Storck 2015, 10–11; Culleton 2015, 29–38; Pich 2019, 1–24 (e36112–e36136)). At the same time, and even more keenly, Sandoval was concerned about the salvation of the souls of the Africans. This led him to a paternalistic attitude about the religious care of those whom he deemed most in need of spiritual masters, as if the conditions of slavery in an economic system, within an imperial project of colonization, were in the end of minor importance. The effects of political servitude might be reduced by a well-articulated and biblically grounded Christian ethics of duties between masters and slaves. We may affirm that his concern for consolidating a Christian ethics of mutual obligations between masters and slaves was sincere—to a certain extent, even utopian. For the purpose of a Christian moral life in the Spanish colonies was, for him, probably the cleanest possible conscience that both masters and slaves might achieve. Alonso de Sandoval sees more benefits than flaws in black slavery. His *De instauranda* approves the institution of slavery in the Spanish and Catholic projects in the Americas, that is, an imperial project of colonization and a Catholic project of a new Christendom.

As M. P. Cenci has again highlighted, Sandoval's depiction of black peoples in Books I and II of the *DIAS* (1627) clearly suggests that he works with a "hierarchical scheme ordering people in the world" (Cenci 2015, 79). In such a stance Sandoval was probably inspired by José de Acosta's hierarchical classifications of peoples according to allegedly uncontroversial different levels in civilization,⁶⁵ which had a legitimating effect on ordered hierarchies within human societies as well (Von Germeten 2008b, XXI–XXII).⁶⁶ Nowhere in Sandoval's work is there any account of creating or maintaining in this world and history a human social equality of Ethiopians and Spaniards: this is a theme only when discussing the soul and the powers of true faith.

It is likely that the connection between religion and skin color, religion and 'race,' or, in our case, Christianity and whiteness as a relation between truth in religion and moral-religious correction, can be verified in several other cases of colonization in Western history or in the history of Christianity, of Western political powers and colonization systems around the world, especially in the period from the sixteenth to the nineteenth century. Alonso de Sandoval's and the Jesuits' evangelization project among enslaved black people can be viewed as, at least indirectly, a strategy for profound control of those who were socially oppressed (Borja Gómez 2003, 292–329). Moreover, Jesuit ministry, to a significant extent, had as an effect the destruction of "African life" and culture in the African diaspora (Chamberlin 2018, 672–93). Beyond these facts, what we should emphasize here is how stories like those of doctrinal instruction and the Christian catechism have quite an ideological appeal and make strong political and, in fact, 'racial' use of words, in the sense of sketching a contrasting picture very useful for colonization and the system of slavery: true Christian religion and whiteness *versus* false African religion and blackness. These connections reinforce, at a deep level, a culture of devaluation of blacks, of subjection to what is culturally and religiously white, the idea of a natural social status of black people as inclined by nature and divine blame to live as subjects or slaves in the world, the acceptance of the status of slavery under white masters

65 José de Acosta (1962), *Historia natural y moral de las Indias* VI, xix, 418–20: "Del origen de los Ingas, señores del Pirú, y de sus conquistas y victorias"; José de Acosta (1984), *De procuranda indorum salute*, Prooemium, 60–69.

66 See also footnote 12, above.

[66]

[67]

as a possibility for finding redemption for such a God-willed condition and the bonus of an eschatologically inspired freedom from sin and new slavery under Christ as a master. Religion strengthened the ideology of slavery through its powerful literal meaning, the linguistic performances or uses, and the symbolic import of words biased by racial prejudice. In substantial parts of the Catholic rites conducted by Jesuit missionaries among blacks in colonial South America, religion was quite often put into a language of racial supremacy, including here aspects of a superior moral, social, and political status. Religious language was conceived and used to establish, justify, and confirm a status of inferiority, subjection, and even natural or constitutive distance from God. Perhaps black slavery was only possible for such a long time because—on the superstructural level, the level of ideas, mind-sets, and ‘ideologies’—it received support and was reinforced by religious views of superiority and truth which clearly had a color.⁶⁷

De instauranda Aethiopia salute was clearly understood in that way. As M. P. Cenci also notes, in agreement with a characteristic of Sandoval’s discussion in his book, namely “the contrasting of the colors black and white,” the second referred to positive aspects of a soul pure and good, the first, in contrast, referred to a soul ugly and evil (Cenci 2015, 79). Connected to civilizational and even mental or spiritual evaluations, it is particularly relevant to notice that one of the censors of the 1627 edition of Sandoval’s book on mission theology, namely Father Vicente Imperial, understood that “This book hopes to transform them [the Ethiopians]—if not their skin color, it will at least make their souls white with grace. Father Alonso de Sandoval wrote this book in order to whiten so many souls and free them from the ugly blackness of sin.”⁶⁸ Truly, these are ugly white words. In fact, here the censor quotes Jeremiah 13:23 (Vulgata): “Si mutare potest Aethiops pellem suam aut pardus varietates suas” (“Can the Ethiopian change his skin or a leopard change its spots?”), which suggests an immutable character in the skin color of Aethiopians, but a mutable character in the condition of their souls.⁶⁹ Discussing a curious question in Part I of the second, i.e., 1647 edition of the *DIAS*, whether black people will be, after the resurrection, in the body of glory, white, according to what the original human skin colour was supposed to be—a topic which became a theological issue worthy of further deliberation due to all these connections between Ethiopians and the demonic and the cursed—Alonso de Sandoval gives a negative answer. However, he stresses that only then blacks will have true “beauty” (*hermosura*): their skin color will be beautiful, “vivid” (*vivo*), “resplandecent” (*resplandeciente*), “fully penetrated by light” (*penetrado todo de*

[68]

67 There were exceptional and unequivocal critical views on the legitimacy of the slavery system in the seventeenth century, above all about the morality of every form of slave trade – based on reflections on the value of liberty and the prerogative of guaranteeing it as a natural right against any claim short of evidence for the opposite stance. I am talking here of Francisco José de Jaca (c. 1645–1689), who was the author of a *Resolución sobre la libertad de los negros y sus originarios, en estado de paganos y después ya cristianos* (finished in 1681) and of Epifanio de Moirans (1644–1689), who wrote the treatise *Servi liberi seu naturalis mancipiorum libertatis iusta defensio* (finished in 1682). See Francisco José de Jaca (2002), *Resolución sobre la libertad de los negros, en estado de paganos y después ya cristianos: La primera condena de la esclavitud en el pensamiento hispano*, edición crítica por M. A. Pena González; Epifanio de Moirans (2007), *Siervos libres: una propuesta antiesclavista a finales del siglo XVII*, edición crítica por M. A. Pena González. See also Pena González (2002a, 599–671, 2002b, XXIII–XCVIII, 2004, 111–45, 2005, 279–327, 2007, XVII–LXXV).

68 Alonso de Sandoval (2008), “Approval of Father Vicente Imperial, *Predicador* [Preacher] of the Company of Jesus,” 7; (1987), “Aprobación del Padre Vicente Imperial, professo[r], y predicador de la Compañía de Jesus,” 52: “A esse si de tanta dificultad, acude esta obra con otro si de facilidad grande, para mudar, sino la tez del cuerpo, el rostro del alma en singular blancura de la gracia; [...]. Para blanquear tantas almas, y librarlas de la fea negrura del pecado, se compuso y ordenò este libro por el Padre Alonso de Sandoval, Rector del Colegio de nuestra Compañía, de la ciudad de Cartagena; [...].”

69 Id. *ibid.*

luz), and their appearance will somehow show “meekness” (*suavidad*) and be changed and affected by the shining clarity of their redeemed souls through the grace of God (Alonso de Sandoval 1647, Part 1, I, iv, 23). Sadly enough, colors mattered.

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