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Racial Prejudice in the Lusitanian Empire? Race Relations in the Portuguese Colonial Empire

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unofficial bodies which would function outside the bureaucratic hierarchy. Here, then, was a second cleavage: the line drawn between the Inner Court of men who often held no official, substantive positions but enjoyed the confidence of the emperor, and the Outer Court of "career" bureaucrats. A third element in the power play within the ruling class was the group of court eunuchs whose power rested upon their influence with the Empress, the concubines, and the imperial children. With a set-up like this, even granting that the machinery for imposing the will of the government on the people existed, genuine totalitarian control by one man or by one clique would, perhaps, have been still the exception rather than the rule.

The title of the collection was given by Etienne Balazs himself *Chinese Civilization and Bureaucracy: Variations on a Theme*. It is providential that Etienne Balazs was himself so intimately involved in the preparation of this volume. He died in November 1963, a week after giving his approval to the final table of contents. In a sense, therefore, the book is his final testament—the fruit of a lifetime of mature reflection and disciplined scholarship. The ambivalence, suggested by the title, of what seems to have been Balazs' final assessment of Chinese civilization, is noted by Arthur Wright in his introduction to the volume.

On the one hand, he admired the great achievements of the Chinese: the creation of the most enduring political order in history, the brilliance of their art and literature, the ingenuity and resourcefulness of the builders and reformers of three millennia who dealt with the whole range of problems of man and society and often reflected brilliantly upon them. On the other hand, he was sensitive to the human cost of these achievements: the oppressions of orthodoxy, the authoritarianism of the traditional family and the educational system, that totalitarian strain that found expression in law, government, and the instruments of social control (ix).

The book is, in fact, a storehouse of the many insights of Balazs into Chinese civilization. But more than this, it must also serve, in the words again of Arthur Wright, as "a memoir of a great man and a great scholar, a reminder to us and to our students that our studies of China will be neither valid nor enduring if expertness in research is not wedded to a deep engagement with the human problems of our time" (JAS, 23:3).

EDILBERTO DE JESUS, JR.

RACIAL PREJUDICE IN THE LUSITANIAN EMPIRE?

RACE RELATIONS IN THE PORTUGUESE COLONIAL EMPIRE, 1415-1825. By C. R. Boxer. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1963. 136 pp.

Anyone interested in the former colonial empires of the Portuguese or the Dutch must sooner or later acquaint himself with the studies of Charles R. Boxer. They range over a wide area, from the early Christian missions in Japan to the Dutch in Brazil, and all, without exception, are marked by an almost complete mastery of printed and manuscript sources as well as a lucid and engaging prose style.

In November, 1962, Professor Boxer delivered the Richard Lectures at the University of Virginia, choosing as his subject, race relations in the Portuguese colonial empire. Admittedly, he was prodding a hornets' nest, for Portuguese historians and politicians never seem to tire of telling us that a color bar never existed in the far-flung Lusitanian empire. Professor Boxer set out to show otherwise.

His lectures encompassed three broad areas where the Portuguese encountered indigenous peoples, Africa, India and Brazil. All three bristle with numerous examples pointing to the existence of a color bar, attributable in the final analysis to race prejudice. In Portuguese West Africa slaves from Angola were the principal object of interest, for they constituted the bulk of the labor force on plantations of Brazil and Spanish America. Negroes were considered little above the irrational and fit only to be slaves and indentured laborers. Few white women came to West or East Africa; so miscegenation was the rule. Very few Portuguese accepted negresses as lawful wives, however, preferring them as mistresses and occasional companions. Government and military circles were conspicuous for their lack of negroes and when negroes did attain some degree of advancement, it was usually accompanied with their white masters' disdain. In India it was much the same. "Base, cowardly and unreliable" are the adjectives which Portuguese officials and soldiers most frequently used to characterize the native peoples of Portuguese India. The natives of Brazil hardly fared any better at the hands, or pens, of the Portuguese. The rise of a numerous mulatto population in Brazil is attributed by Professor Boxer to biological necessity rather than to a conscious preference for negro mates. White women were always scarce in Brazil.

In all three areas, Africa, India and Brazil, the ecclesiastic, government and military positions of dignity were denied the native peoples. It was only with the enlightened despotism of Pombal, for whom Professor Boxer shows little admiration, that the lot of the conquered was noticeably improved. Various reforms abolished negro slavery and the Hindus in India were guaranteed complete freedom of worship and respect for their religion. The relative absence of a color bar, then, dates only from the time of Pombal.

Professor Boxer's conclusion to the *de facto* existence of a color bar is principally induced from examples of mistreatment, frontier policy, and derogatory statements of conquerors, missionaries and travellers. He argues from particular instances to a general principle. It seems, however, that opponents of Professor Boxer's thesis can use the same method and logically arrive at the opposite conclusion, simply by changing the examples. The difficulty inherent in this method lies in the necessity of judicious selection as well as exclusion of the "facts". Judicious selection can lead a historian to a variety of conclusions. As E. H. Carr remarked, facts are rather like fish on the fishmonger's slab. The historian chooses those he wishes, brings them home, cooks them and serves them up to suit his own taste.

Professor Boxer's facts are indisputable. And they do indicate serious shortcomings in Portuguese attitudes towards the conquered. But if it is true that all great empires were built upon some form of slave labor, then it is equally true that some were the slaves and some were the masters, a situation hardly conducive to smooth race relations.

NICHOLAS P. CUSHNER

WATER-CONTROL AND CHINESE DEVELOPMENT

KEY ECONOMIC AREAS IN CHINESE HISTORY; AS REVEALED IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS FOR WATER-CONTROL. By Ch'ao-ting Chi. (First published, London: George Allen and Unwin, Ltd., 1936; issued under auspices of American Council Institute of Pacific Relations.) New York: Paragon Book Reprint Corp., 1963. xiv, 168.

Key Economic Areas in Chinese History began as "an attempt to trace the development of irrigation and flood control in Chinese history" (xi). In the course of his study, Ch'ao-ting Chi consulted the information given in the dynastic histories, special Chinese works on water-benefits, but, especially, the data contained in provincial gazetteers. A statistical survey, based on these gazetteers, of the development and geographical distribution of water-control activities provided the factual basis for the concept of the key economic area.

The statistical study revealed a correlation between the political and strategic potential of a region and the extent of water-control activities. Such activities, whether in the form of preventing floods or preventing droughts, were made the indispensable basis of agricultural