Int J Histor Archaeol (2009) 13:513–548
DOI 10.1007/s10761-009-0090-1

Slave Communities and Pottery Variability in Western Brazil: The Plantations of Chapada dos Guimarães

Marcos André Torres de Souza · Luís Cláudio Pereira Symanski

Published online: 25 August 2009

Abstract In the region of Chapada dos Guimarães, Western Brazil, planters relied heavily on slave labor during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In this article, we examine the locally produced pottery found on slaves contexts in five rural sites of this region. Based in data from probate inventories and the pottery decorative variability we suggest that slaves used decorated pottery to express cultural and social differences.

Keywords Brazil · Slave communities · African nations · Pottery variability

For more than three centuries, slavery was a major force in the Brazilian economy and society. The number of slaves shipped to Brazil was approximately 4,500,000 (Curtin 1969, pp. 47–49; Curto and Lovejoy 2004, p. 11) and for many regions, including the Western parts of Brazil, they represented the vast majority of the population (Karasch 2004, pp.164–167; Palacin et al. 1995, pp. 60–64; Silva 1995, p. 212). Although in a subordinate position, they acted in the shaping of new cultural and social forms, managing both their cultural background and the elements that they adopted from the colonial society, being also one of the major groups responsible for the unique material configurations that emerged in the Brazilian colonial encounters.

It is our intent in this article to explore the emergence of slave communities and the possible roles of the material culture, more specifically pottery, in this process. Taking as a starting point some of the complexities involved in this type of investigation, we analyze the diachronic variability of decorated pottery and its

M. A. T. de Souza (✉)
Instituto Goiano de Pré-História e Antropologia, Universidade Católica de Goiás,
Setor Universitário, Caixa Postal 86, Goiânia, GO 74605-010, Brazil
e-mail: torresdesouza@yahoo.com

L. C. P. Symanski (✉)
Centro de Estudos e Pesquisas Arqueológicas, Universidade Federal do Paraná,
Rua General Carneiro 460—12 andar, Curitiba, PR 80060-150, Brazil
e-mail: symanski@ufpr.br

correlations to the African regional groups who occupied the plantations of Chapada dos Guimarães (Fig. 1). As will be further developed, society classified slaves from different regions of Africa into distinct groups, called nations. Although these nations did not keep a direct correlation with the forms of self-ascription current in Africa, the enslaved Africans recreated their identities in the New World considering these categorizations because they referred to geographic and linguistic-cultural areas wide enough to permit a general identification among those individuals coming from these areas (Nishida 2003, p. 38; Oliveira 1995, p.176; Thornton 1992, pp. 195–205). Because the slaveholding lists analyzed classified the slaves in nations, in this study this simultaneously etic–emic classification was kept as a device to explore the relationship between the cultural diversity on these plantations and the locally produced pottery.

Pottery and Theories of Cultural Contact in African-American Archaeology

Ferguson (1991, pp. 31–32), discussing the case of South Carolina, pointed out that pottery produced by slaves reinforced their common heritage and their differences from whites. These artifacts ordinarily show little evidence of individual group segmentation or hierarchy, since they are quite similar from site to site, being plain

Fig. 1 Map of Brazil showing the locations mentioned in this text

and undecorated, even though, as Hauser and DeCorse (2003) have cautioned, this superficial simplicity may be deceiving and more variability may be represented in attributes such as manufacture, firing, and temper. Although assemblages from North America and the Caribbean have limited decorative inventories, this is not the case with pottery from Chapada dos Guimarães, which displays a great deal of decorative variability. This variability may suggest both cultural heritage and group segmentation. Nevertheless, some critical methodological aspects regarding the relationship between pottery and the cultural practices of the slaves must be taken into account before exploring the meanings of these assemblages.

While only few archaeological investigations have been carried out about slavery in Brazil (see an overview of these studies in Funari 2007; Symanski and Souza 2007; Singleton and Souza 2009; and, more especially on the Quilombo dos Palmares, see Funari 1999; and Orser and Funari 2001), a variety of approaches have been suggested by Americans for the archaeological investigation of slavery in the context of the colonial encounters, which have influenced the ways in which slave-related pottery have been analyzed. They include ethnogenesis (Perry and Paynter 1999), transculturation (Deagan 1998; on the early use of this approach in Cuba, based on the seminal work of Ortiz, 1983 [1940], see Corzo 1988; and Dominguez 1980), the "cultural transformation approach" (Armstrong 1999) and, especially, creolization (Dawdy 2000; Ferguson 1992), besides some inherited notions based on theories of acculturation (Otto 1984; Wheaton and Garrow 1985) and ethnicity (Schuyler 1980).

While these approaches have increased our knowledge about the relationship between pottery and the cultural and social life of slave groups, they have also produced some disagreement about the appropriate way to interpret the data (Hauser and Armstrong 1999; Hauser and DeCorse 2003; Singleton 1999a). In this article, we take into consideration some of the critical issues exposed by these studies as a way to develop some methodological guidelines for our analysis.

One of the most evident problems in studies involving pottery and slave groups is the simplicity of some interpretations, which still focus almost exclusively on the identification of African continuities, a sort of residue from the search of ethnic markers from the 1960s and 1970s (Singleton 1999a, b, p. 2) that continues to attract the attention of historical archaeologists (Orser 1998, p. 67). Commenting on creolization, Gundaker (2000, p. 127) stressed the risk of reductiveness in the search for a distinct culture of slaves, which tend to identify as "African American" only the African-influenced elements, while those incorporated from the colonial society are dismissed. This remains a recurrent problem in many interpretations in historical archaeology. This problem is due, at least in part, to a tendency to perceive the slaves as living in a completely separate world, ignoring the fact that a great deal of interaction took place between them and the wider society, which was responsible for the formation of a complex mixing of influences and the emergence of new material forms. In this concern, Mintz and Price (1992, p. 82) urged that our view must be driven by the perception that slaves and free individuals, at the same time, were deeply divided from each other and yet profoundly interdependent, a notion that they considered critical for our understanding of the shaping of African-American cultures. This perspective also implies that both the free population and slaves were affected by each other, and that it was not only masters who determined

slaves attitudes but also slaves who, to some degree, determined the world in which masters were living (Mintz and Price 1992, p. 38).

One of the possible ways to make discussions move beyond the strict search for African continuities in pottery analysis is to get back on track with Mintz and Price (1992, pp. 52–60), who suggested that the apparent dichotomies separation/ interaction and continuity/ change were also an inherent part in the shaping of slaves' cultural practices, a notion that finds some correspondence with post-structural approaches (see especially debates in the postcolonial and hybridization theory in Bakhtin 1981, pp. 358–262; Bhabha 1994, pp. 66–75; Shohat 1992, p. 108; for an archaeological perspective, see Gosden 2001). Although pivotal in Mintz and Price's (1992) work, this notion has been barely adopted by historical archaeologists (exceptions include Armstrong 1998; DeCorse 2001, pp. 175–192; Hauser and Armstrong 1999, p. 67; Howson 1990, p. 80) and may potentially allow a renewed understanding of the complexities involved in the manipulation and transformation of disparate sets of reference by slaves in making sense of their lives and the material world that surrounded them.

Another risk related to the identification of African continuities concerns the tendency of simplifying the immense diversity of the cultural backgrounds of slaves, what may involve differences not only in African origins but also between those born in Africa and in the European colonies (DeCorse 1999, p. 132; Russel-Wood 2001, p. 25). Moreover, the slave trade patterns varied over time, which created significant diachronic differences in the origin of African slaves in the same region (see Curtin 1969; Florentino 1993; Mann 2001; Miller 1988). Slaveholdings in Brazil were frequently heterogeneous and their cultural background or preferences may not be simplified to one single influence (see Florentino and Góes 1997; Reis 2003; for a different perspective, on the formation of a Bantu proto-nation on the Southeastern Brazil, see Slenes 1991, 2002). This perception implies that the idealistic assumption that slaves composed a cohesive block, sharing the same ethnic traditions and having solidarity networks based in a common sense of belonging may not necessarily be true, existing, in fact, social and cultural difference or disagreement among them (Alpers 2005; Nishida 2003, Reis 2003, pp. 326, 328).

Another important issue regards the widespread awareness that there is not necessarily a positive correlation between material culture and group affiliation. It has been demonstrated that sometimes ethnic boundaries or particular identities may not be archaeologically identified (Dietler and Herbich 1989), different groups may be related to similar artifacts (Crossland and Poznanski 1978; DeCorse 1989a; Phillipson 1974:19; Stahl 2001) or, to the contrary, different artifacts may be related to the same group (Gosselain 1992; MacEachern 1998; Phillipson 1974:18), and what is usually related to ethnicity is, in fact, related to other types of social boundaries (Larick 1986). This is especially valid in the case of hierarchical societies. An additional problem is the interplay of competing social strategies. Since material culture may be related to class, gender, ethnicity, age group and other forms of social differentiation, particular correlations are usually difficult to establish. The investigation of competing social strategies in material culture have gained more visibility in historical archaeology in recent years through the growing interest of archaeologists in discussing slaves' social identities, which has exposed the situational nature of these identities and the slaves' capacity in overlapping different

strategies through material culture (Franklin 2001, p. 89; Loren 2000, p. 96; Samford 2004, p. 151; Singleton 1996, pp. 197, 207; Wilkie 2000, p. 5).

We believe that these problems may be overcome if we consider the complex social and historical contexts involved with the artifacts under analysis in two complementary ways. First, we consider that the examination of situations in a non-universalizing, differential manner, focusing on local contexts and particular encounters, is crucial for the understanding of possible correlations between pottery and slave groups, along with the broader context in which particular situations took place, a long-held assumption among post-processual archaeologists (Hodder 1982, pp. 182–184; 1987). Second, we consider that a diachronic perspective may be valuable for understanding the meaningful relationships regarding slave communities and pottery. Discussing the scope of culture contact studies, Lightfoot (1995) suggests that diachronic approaches would be valuable for the study of multi-ethnic interactions involving prehistoric, protohistoric, and historic contexts, since it would allow a close examination of innovations in the technology, materials, and forms of artifacts over time. This perspective is also a useful tool for the examination of slave-related pottery, allowing the establishment of relevant temporal and cultural contexts for analogies (Hauser and DeCorse 2003, p. 70). In this sense, correlations involving variability in material culture and demographic data—including those related to fluctuations in the slave trade patterns and variations in the number of African-born slaves versus European colony-born—may be effectively established. According to Neiman (1999, p. 146), the seriation method, which involves measuring stylistic similarity among pottery assemblages to verify variations in time and space, can be successfully employed to track cultural continuity. This method was employed to this study in order to verify possible correlations between the pottery diachronic variability and the fluctuations in the slaves' origins over time, looking not only for cultural continuity but also for innovations that could be the result of both the arrival of different groups of slaves in the region of Chapada dos Guimarães and their interactions with the wider society.

Mato Grosso: Economy and Slavery in Western Brazil

The historical occupation of the Mato Grosso territory started in 1719, when an expedition from São Paulo discovered gold on the margins of the Coxipó River. A village was founded there, giving origin to Cuiabá, the first capital of the province. During the eighteenth century, gold mining, carried out by slave labor, was the economic activity responsible for the colonization of the territory, but by the end of that century the mines were exhausted, forcing the population to restructure productive activities (Lenharo 1982, p. 10; Siqueira et al. 1990, pp. 10–22). Thus, most of the slaves previously employed in gold mining were reallocated to cattle farms and sugar-cane plantations, which increased substantially in number during this period (Lenharo 1982, p. 10). In 1805, the Portuguese Crown authorized diamond mining, prohibited up to then due to boundary conflicts with Spain over this frontier territory. Gold and diamond mining, however, did not bring wealth to the region because its isolated geographical location, in the center of South America, was an obstacle to connections and commerce with the more economically developed center-south of Brazil (Volpato 1993, p. 36).

During the eighteenth century, Mato Grosso was connected to the Brazilian coast by three routes. The first, called *monções do sul*, connected Mato Grosso to São Paulo through a system of rivers, a trip that lasted 4 to 6 months (Siqueira et al. 1990, p. 26). This was the predominant route until 1755. Between 1755 and 1778, the fluvial route called *monções do norte*, which connected Vila Bela to Belém do Pará predominated. In 1736, a road connecting Cuiabá to Goiás was opened, providing an overland route from Mato Grosso to the northeastern and southern-central Brazilian coast (Lenharo 1982, pp. 17–26). Despite the existence of these routes, communication with the Brazilian coast continued to be a problem until 1857, when a treaty between the Brazilian and Paraguayan governments liberated navigation on the Paraguai River. The establishment of this fluvial route permitted closer contact with Rio de Janeiro and Buenos Aires, which strongly affected the province's economic and social life (Volpato 1993, pp. 36–44).

During the period of the *monções do sul* route, the African slaves introduced on Mato Grosso disembarked at the port of Rio de Janeiro, which had become, since the early eighteenth century, the main port of entry for Angolan slaves, whose final destination was the gold-producing regions of Minas Gerais, Goiás, and Mato Grosso (Miller 1988, pp. 450–452). It is calculated that 15,606 slaves arrived in Mato Grosso through this route between 1722 and 1750 (Silva 1995, p. 250). The *monções do norte* route (1755–78) was not important for the slave traffic in Mato Grosso, introducing in this territory only a small number of slaves, predominantly from Bissau and Cacheu, in West Africa (Neto 2001, p. 44; Silva 1995, p. 250).

The commercial use of the Goiás road was intensified at the end of the eighteenth century, when many local merchants, unsatisfied with the monopolistic practices of the *Companhia do Grão Pará and Maranhão*, a Portuguese trading company which controlled the route of the *monções do norte*, started to use the Goiás road to trade with the coastal cities of Rio de Janeiro and Salvador. The Goiás road continued to be the major route of commerce, and consequently of slave traffic, until the opening of navigation on the Paraguai River, in 1857 (Lenharo 1982, p. 26).

In 1850, the Atlantic slave trade was officially abolished in Brazil, making Brazilian planters dependent on the inter-provincial slave trade and on the natural reproduction of their slaveholdings to acquire servile labor for their plantations (Conrad 1972). Slaveholdings lists present in the probate inventories of the Chapada dos Guimarães' planters suggest that the Mato Grosso province was not active in the importation of slaves during this period, since between 1870 and 1888—the year of the abolition of slavery in Brazil—the great majority of the slaves had been born in Mato Grosso, with a small number coming from Minas Gerais, Goiás, and Bahia (Symanski 2006, p. 119).

The importance of slave labor to Mato Grosso's economy can be better understood through the demographic data. In 1768, from a total population of 10,886 individuals, 2,348 (21.52%) were slaves. In 1800 the population had grown to 28,690 individuals, 11,910 (43.01%) being slaves (Silva 1995, pp. 251–253). In 1815 numbers had fallen to 27,265 individuals, but the slave population had grown to 17,227 (63.18%) (Assis 1988, p. 48). The next demographic data available is for 1860, being limited to Cuiabá and its adjacent regions, which included the county of Chapada dos Guimarães. According to Volpato (1996, p. 218), in that year there were 19,543 inhabitants in this region, 7,158 (36.62%) being slaves. Finally, in

1888, the year of the abolition of slavery, the number of slaves in the province had fallen to 3,233 (Assis 1988, p. 49).

The Historical Context of Chapada dos Guimarães

The historical occupation of the region of Chapada dos Guimarães started in1720, when the first plantation was installed in this region. This plantation kept 30 slaves working in cattle razing, in planting and processing of sugar cane, and in cultivating other crops (Crivelente 2001, p. 40). Insofar as gold mining was collapsing in the second half of the eighteenth century, the number of plantations in this region was increasing. The production of these plantations, principally sugar cane and its by products, sugar and cachaça (an alcoholic beverage), was focused on supplying Cuiabá, the major urban center of the captaincy (Lenharo 1982, pp. 28–29). However, Crivelente (2001, p. 51) notices that most of the planters of this region also maintained part of their slaves working in gold and diamond mining, concurrently with plantations activities.

At the end of the eighteenth century, Chapada dos Guimarães agglutinated the majority of the sugar plantations of Mato Grosso. According to Mesquita (1931, p. 33), in 1796 there were 20 plantations with *engenhos* (sugar-processing mills) in this region, employing a total of 728 slaves, while in the rest of captaincy there were only 14 plantations with *engenhos*, which employed 331 slaves. In 1815, the number of slaves in this region had increased substantially to 2,147 individuals, in a total population of 3,743 inhabitants, indicating the intensification of the productivity of these plantations (Crivelente 2001, p. 52). This slave population was predominantly African and African-descendent, since indigenous slavery had been officially abolished in 1755 (Assis 1988, p. 38). However, a small parcel of the slaves was composed of individuals of mixed indigenous and African descent, known as *caborés* (Symanski 2006, p. 156). Regarding the indigenous population, two groups occupied this region, the Western Bororo, also called "Coroados", and the "Bakairi." While the Bakairi had been pacified since the eighteenth century, the Bororo strongly resisted to colonization, attacking the plantations of the region until the end of the nineteenth century, when they finally established pacific relations with the surrounding society (Siqueira 2001, pp. 134–140).

A rigid social stratification, with the planters at the top, was maintained on these plantations. Planters resided on the plantations during the dry season (April–November), supervising the harvesting of the cane and the preparation of sugar and derived products. At the end of this period, most of them removed their families to Cuiabá, where they could satisfy their social needs and look after their political and economic interests (Seckinger 1970, p. 69). Free laborers, divided into wage-laborers, known as *camaradas*, overseers, sharecroppers, and artisans, composed the middle stratum. Overseers had as main function controlling the labor and daily lives of the slaves. Sharecroppers lived in the plantations, keeping their own clearing to plant and giving part of their production to the planters. *Camaradas* composed the lowest stratum among the free laborers. They worked as wage-laborers under the orders of the overseers, in activities such as carpentry, blacksmithing, conducting of mule troops and, principally, planting (Volpato 1993, p. 201). Artisans, such as carpenters and blacksmiths, offered their services in the plantations of the region,

being contracted in a daily basis or paid in accordance to the service they carried out (Symanski 2006, p. 33). Slaves lived in *senzalas* (collective or individual slave houses). They were subjected to extremely violent and oppressive forms of treatment, as described the German naturalist Georg Heinrich von Langsdorff (1997, pp. 111–112) when he visited the plantation Engenho do Quilombo in 1827.

Sometimes, such violent forms of treatment resulted in rebelliousness, with slaves running away from the plantations and forming their own settlements—the *quilombos*. The formation of *quilombos* in this region was intensified after 1850, reaching its peak during the Brazil–Paraguay war, between 1864 and 1870, when the government troops were concentrated on the war. During this period, the *quilombolas* (runaways living in quilombos) became more daring, continuously attacking the plantations of the region. This situation led many planters to invest less in production and even to abandon their properties (Volpato 1996, p. 232). The regional instability was even more intensified during the 1870s and the 1880s, when these plantations also suffered several indigenous raids (Mesquita 1931, p. 48). The final coup came with the abolition of slavery in 1888, when most of the slaves left these plantations and several planters, without laborers to keep these unities productive, abandoned their properties (Correa Filho 1969, p. 111; Mesquita 1931, p. 48).

The Historical Sites of Chapada dos Guimarães

Five historical sites were excavated in the county of Chapada dos Guimarães as part of two historical archaeological rescue projects (Symanski and Souza 2001, 2002). These five sites were identified as three plantations (sites Taperão, Buritizinho and Engenho do Quilombo), one possible small *quilombo* (site Tapera do Pingador), and one small rural house (site Piteiras), occupied in the early twentieth century, related with the late diamond mining boom period, during the 1930s.

The Taperão site, originally named Engenho do Rio da Casca, was occupied between the end of the eighteenth and the end of the nineteenth century. It is a site of large dimensions in the regional context, with structures and features distributed over an area of 180×180 m. Archaeological excavation on this plantation was concentrated on deposits associated with six units of habitation: the planter's house, the overseer's house, and four unities associated to the slaves. A total of 422 m^2 was excavated in this site (Symanski and Souza 2001, pp. 16–21).

Documentary research in the Arquivo Público do Estado de Mato Grosso permitted us to identify the Taperão planters' families and respective slaveholdings for the first half of the nineteenth century (see Symanski 2006). The first owner of this plantation was the Portuguese Captain Luis Monteiro Salgado, who acquired this site at the end of the eighteenth century. He was married to Rosa Cardosa de Lima, who was born in Mato Grosso. The couple had three sons and four daughters. When Luis Monteiro Salgado died, in 1808, the plantation was very productive. Sixty-one slaves lived there and eight slaves lived in his urban residence in Cuiabá. Among his slaves, 32 were Africans and 29 were Brazilian. Upon his death, the plantation was inherited by his wife. In 1812, she put her son, Antônio Monteiro Salgado, in charge of its administration, an activity that he carried out until 1838.

During the period of his administration, the plantation seems to have prospered even more, since in 1826 there were 71 slaves living there, 21 Africans and 50 Brazilians. Both Rosa Cardosa de Lima and Antônio Monteiro Salgado died in 1841. The plantation apparently was in economic decline, since its slaveholding had dropped to 33 individuals, nine Africans and 24 Brazilians. The plantation then passed into the hands of João Fernandes de Mello, as payment of part of a debt, and the slaves dispersed, some being given in payment of debts and others distributed among Rosa Cardosa's heirs. João Fernandes de Mello was also a planter of the region and owner of the Engenho da Glória. He was married to Rosa Leite do Amaral, granddaughter of Luis Monteiro Salgado and Rosa Cardosa de Lima. He probably sold the Taperão plantation after a short period of time, given that when his wife died, in 1856, this property was not listed in the couple's probate inventory (Symanski 2006, pp. 52–55). Although archaeological material demonstrates that this plantation was occupied until the end of the nineteenth century, documentary records of their subsequent owners were not found.

The Buritizinho site, originally named Engenho de Água Fria, is other plantation of large dimensions, with structures and features distributed over an area of 80× 140 m. Archaeological excavations on this plantation concentrated on deposits associated with three units of habitation: the planter's house, the overseer's house, and one *senzala*. The planter's residential area presented deposits from the first and second half of the nineteenth century, while the overseer's and slaves' areas are related to the period between the second and third quarters of the nineteenth century. A total of 117 m^2 was excavated in this site (Symanski and Souza 2001, pp. 71–75).

Mato Grosso's provincial governor conceded the title of this plantation to Domingos da Silva Barreiros in 1809. Domingos Barreiros was married to Ana Luiza da Silva, daughter of the Lieutenant Paulo da Silva Coelho, one of the greatest planters of the region in the end of the eighteenth century. Domingos Barreiros died in 1818, leaving the property to his wife. Unfortunately, his probate inventory was not found. When Ana Luiza died, in 1848, the plantation had 57 slaves, 25 Africans and 32 Brazilians. The plantation was inherited by her daughter, Antônia Pereira da Silva, who was married to the son of another planter from the region, José Gomes Monteiro. Antônia Pereira da Silva died a widow in 1870, leaving no descendants. In her will, she freed all of her slaves, which explains why a list of plantation slaves does not appear in her probate inventory. She left the plantation to her goddaughter Antônia Guilhermina de Oliveira, who was married to the physician Caetano Xavier da Silva Pereira. This couple lived in Cuiabá, and had little interest in keeping the plantation, selling it a few years later to Inácio José de Sampaio, who still owned this property at the beginning of the twentieth century (Symanski 2006, pp. 56–59).

The site Engenho do Quilombo is a smaller plantation, with features and structures distributed over an area of 70×80 m. Archaeological excavations were concentrated in two areas of refuse deposition, the first related to the planter's house and the second one, located 40 m from this house, related to a dwelling that was occupied by plantation laborers in the beginning of the twentieth century, but no conclusive evidence affirms whether slaves or overseers who had previously lived there. The deposit associated with the planter's house presented material predominantly from the second and third quarter of the nineteenth century, while the second unit presented material predominantly from the end of the nineteenth and beginning

of the twentieth century. A total of 108 m^2 was excavated at this site (Symanski and Souza 2001, pp. 97–99).

The first owner of this plantation was Antônio Dias Lessa, who acquired it through land title granted by the captaincy governor in 1781. In the beginning of the nineteenth century, this property was owned by the Portuguese Domingos José de Azevedo. In 1827, the German naturalist Ludwig von Langsdorff, after spending the night in the Engenho Água Fria (Buritizinho site), where he was very well received by Ana Luiza da Silva, visited this plantation. Langsdorff (1997, p. 111–112) described the property as decadent, and Domingos José de Azevedo as a mean man, who used to treat his slaves worse than any other planter that he met in Brazil. According to Langsdorff, these slaves were undernourished and barely dressed. The women were burdened in their cotton weaving tasks and, at night, Azevedo locked them in a room located right under his bedroom.

Domingos Azevedo was married to Antônia Maria Dias, who died in 1812, leaving five young children. At this time the plantation had 33 slaves, 10 Africans and 22 Brazilians. Domingos Azevedo probably died in the 1830s. The Engenho do Quilombo was inherited by his son, Francisco Vieira de Azevedo, who was married to Ana Lutéria Felix de Aquino, also a daughter of planters of the region. Ana Lutéria died in 1847, a period in which the plantation's slave holding had dropped to 21 slaves, being only one African. After Ana Lutéria's death, Francisco Vieira married Ana Leite Pereira. He died in 1861. At this time, four Africans and eight Brazilian slaves lived on the plantation. In 1870, Ana Leite sold the Engenho do Quilombo to another planter of the region, Antônio Bruno Borges (Symanski 2006, pp. 59–63). Borges died in 1877, a time in which his plantation had 32 slaves, only five African. According to oral information, at the end of the nineteenth century, Antônio Borges' heirs sold the plantation to Raimundo José da Siqueira, who kept two of the female ex-slaves who lived there. This property still belongs to the descendants of Raimundo Siqueira (Symanski and Souza 2001, p. 96).

The Tapera do Pingador is a site of small dimensions. The features and structures are distributed in an area of 30×30 m. A total of 131 m^2 was excavated. Two components were identified, one related to the first half of the nineteenth century and the other one to the end of that century. In the bottom clay level of the archaeological deposit, a feature of irregular shape, about 3×4 m of diameter and .5 m deep was exposed. It was filled in with dark soil yielding many pottery fragments, which in some cases formed complete vessels, a small number of fragments of refined earthenware, and two coins, coined in the first half of the nineteenth century. On the eastern border of this feature, a line of wooden posts was exposed, probably indicating the walls of a house (Symanski and Souza 2001, pp. 110–113). The feature beside the wooden posts is similar to the clay pits found in African American sites in the United States, which consisted of holes excavated close to the slaves' houses, with the clay used to build the walls of the wattle-and-daub houses. The holes were used as refuse areas (Ferguson 1992, p. 64).

The land where this site is located is occupied since the end of the nineteenth century by an Afro-descendent family. According to oral information from the head of this family, Durvalino Nascimento da Mata, this site was occupied by slaves, being a small *quilombo* (Symanski and Souza 2001, p. 110). As previously discussed, throughout the nineteenth century there were several *quilombos* in this

region. Usually, the smaller *quilombos* were founded by *quilombolas* who had left bigger, well-established, *quilombos* (Siqueira et al. 1990, p. 94). Other evidence sustaining this possibility is the local toponimy, since the closest hill is called Serra do Cambambe. Cambambe is the name of a region in Angola's hinterland and, in Brazil, it also came to be the name of an African nation (Russel-Wood 2001, p. 13).

The last site investigated, Tapera das Piteiras, was a small rural domestic unit occupied in the first half of the twentieth century. A total of 160 m^2 was excavated in this site, including a small residential area, where post holes and disturbed stone foundations were identified. Oral information suggests that this site was occupied by a low-income domestic group, probably descendant of earlier occupants of the region. This site is related with the late diamond mining boom period that occurred in this region during the 1930s, when agriculture was relegated to a minor activity at the local level (Symanski and Souza 2002).

Slave Communities in Chapada dos Guimarães: The Historical Evidence

In Brazil, both African and Brazilian slaves developed broader conceptions of belonging, usually under the label of a nation, a term created by Europeans and vastly appropriated by slaves as a self-ascribing category. Nishida (2003, p. 31) reminds us that the classification of African slaves into nations in the New World was a device used for reducing African slaves to a limited number of categories, inherited from the European custom of identifying slaves in Africa by nationalities, regardless of their specific places of origin or ethnic affiliations. An African nation was characterized according to one of five criteria: (1) the name of the port which slaves were shipped, such as Mina, referring to slaves embarked in the Bight of Benin, Western Africa, where the major slaving port was the Portuguese fortress of São Jorge da Mina (currently Elmina, Ghana); (2) a wider ethnic-linguistic term, such as Nagô, which was applied to all Yoruba-speaking peoples; (3) the geographical regions of origin of the slaves, such as Congo and Angola; (4) the names by which more discrete ethnic groups were known to other ethnic groups, such as Tapa, a designate by which the Yoruba called the Nupe; and (5) the rarest cases in which the original African ethnic designation was kept, like the Hausas (Curtin 1969, pp. 184–185; Karasch 2000, p. 45; Nishida 2003, p. 32; Soares 1998, p. 4).

Therefore, in general, the African nations did not keep a direct correlation with the forms of self-ascription current in Africa. Nevertheless, the enslaved Africans adopted such categorizations to re-create their identities in the New World for the reason that these designations referred to geographical and linguistic-cultural areas wide enough to permit a general identification among the different people classified under these general labels (Nishida 2003, p. 38; Oliveira 1995, p. 176). In this sense, the declaration given by the slave Antônio, one of the rebels from the Malê (Islamized Yoruba) rebellion that occurred in Salvador in 1835, is illustrative of this point. On the occasion of his trial he affirmed: "We are all Nagôs, but each of us has his/her own homeland" (see Nishida 2003, p. 38).

As previously discussed, almost all African slaves that entered Mato Grosso came from the two principal disembarkation ports, Rio de Janeiro and Salvador (Bahia).

While Rio de Janeiro received slaves predominantly from Central Africa, Salvador admitted a majority of slaves from Western Africa. Central Africans included speakers of Kikongo, Umbundu and Ovimbundu, from the group of Bantu languages (Curto and Lovejoy 2004, p. 12). Cabinda, Congo, Angola, and Benguela composed the most numerically expressive Central African nations during the first half of the nineteenth century (Karasch 2000, p. 50–58). In the case of Bahia, Western Africans mostly originated from Bight of Benin, where Bahian traders established strong commercial links from the beginning of the eighteenth century (Verger 1987). These Western Africans included speakers of the various Yoruba and Gbe languages (Ewe, Fon, Allada), being generally classified under the general label of Mina. Sometimes, Mina slaves could be more specifically identified, as was the case of the Geges (Gbe speakers), Nagôs (Yoruba speakers), Malês (Islamized Yorubas) and Hausas (Islamized groups from Central Sudan).

The importation of slaves from East Africa was carried out principally after 1815, when the British banned the African slave trade north of the equator. Groups from this region represented about one quarter of the African slaves disembarked in Rio de Janeiro between 1817 and 1843 (Curtin 1969, pp. 240–241; Florentino 1993, p. 87). Among them, the Moçambique nation was the most representative. Although most of the Eastern Africans were Bantu speakers, there were significant differences between them and those Bantu speakers from Central Africa, due the absence or very little contact between the peoples of these two areas (Huffman 1989, pp. 157–158; Russel-Wood 2001, p. 14). Indeed, there are references that Moçambiques had rivalries with the Congos, kept their own dances and songs, and separated themselves in some religious brotherhoods (Alpers 2005).

Brazilian slaves were classified in three nations based on skin-color rather than on the regional origin of these groups: *criolo, pardo, and cabra* (Karasch 2000, pp. 36–41; Soares 2000, pp. 99–102). The term *criolo* was applied to slaves whose ancestors could be directly related to an African origin; *pardos* or *mulatos* were slaves of mixed African and European descent; and *cabra* was the term for slaves of mixed or uncertain descent, which could involve indigenous and African ascendance, but also other mixed origins. In the case of Mato Grosso an additional category, *caboré*, was used to classify slaves of mixed African and Indigenous descent (Silva 1995, pp. 177).

It has been argued that the formation of African nations was more likely in urban settings, due to factors such as the greater concentration of slaves, the weaker control over them, and their greater mobility (Bastide 1978, pp. 51–52; Hardesty 2000, pp. 52–54; Thornton 1992, p. 202). Indeed, in the beginning of the twentieth century, scholars in Rio de Janeiro and Salvador observed that ex-African slaves still tended to gather with those from the same nation in specific locations of these cities and kept their own religious cults (Rio 1906; Rodrigues 2004).

Regarding rural areas, travelers like Saint-Hilaire (1938, p. 50) and Ribeyrolles (1941, p. 39) left descriptions suggesting that the creation of these communities also could have been common in plantations. The case of the Hausa rebellions in Bahia, between 1807 and 1821, is not only very suggestive about the maintenance of such African nations in plantations but also demonstrates that the boundaries between plantations did not inhabited slaves from making connections and establishing relationships with those from the same nation living on other plantations (Reis 2003, pp. 68–93). The case of the Malê rebellion, which happened in Bahia in 1835, is an

example of the maintenance of wide networks among Islamized Nagôs, free and slaves, living in plantations and in the city of Salvador (Reis 2003, pp. 246–282).

Additional evidence for the maintenance of these African nations in rural areas is presented in studies on slaves' marriage patterns. Scholars studying this subject in rural Brazil (Florentino and Góes 1997, p. 150; Schwartz 1985, pp. 391–393; Sweet 2003, p. 46; Wimmer 2004, pp. 152–153) have noticed that slaves sometimes tended to follow endogamic strategies of marriage, choosing as partners those of the same nation or those with similar cultural backgrounds.

For the context of Chapada dos Guimarães, research on slaveholding lists present on 51 planters' probate inventories from the Arquivo Público do Estado de Mato Grosso, to the period between 1790 and 1888, permitted the identification of 31 African nations (see Table 1) (Symanski 2006, p. 130). Benguela, Mina, Congo, Mozambique, Angola, Hausa, Cabinda, and Cassange were the most numerically expressive nations in the region during this period. As discussed below, the first four nations tended to constitute the majority groups in different periods within this temporal spectrum.

Crivelente (2001, p. 124), discussing the African slaves' marriage patterns in these plantations between 1798 and 1830, notices that for the registers of 290 slave marriages, both partners were Africans in 37.2% of the cases. However, Crivelente did not separate Brazilian slaves from African slaves in this calculation. When the separation is made, it can be observed that from the population of 580 slaves, 316 (54.48%) were Africans. From this African population, 216 individuals (68.35%) married African partners, demonstrating the trend of Africans to marry among themselves. Despite the higher proportion of African marriages, only 66 Africans (30.55%) got married to partners from the same nation, indicating that the marriage between African slaves from the same nation, although usual, were not the norm in these plantations. Although Crivelente (2001, p. 125) notices that Benguela slaves tended to present a higher degree of endogamy (13 marriages), followed by the Mina slaves (eight marriages), demographic data about the slave population of these plantations present on the planters' probate inventories demonstrates that, for the period in question, Mina and Benguela were the two major African nations (Symanski 2006, p. 133). These two groups composed, together, 62.85% of the African slaves between 1790 and 1830. Thus, these preferences seem to be more related to the quantitative significance of these two nations than to intentional endogamic marriage strategies. This possibility is further reinforced by the greatest number of intermarriage between Mina and Benguela slaves, represented by 14 marriages (see Crivelente 2001, p. 133).

In summary, these data suggest two significant situations in the region. On one hand, a great proportion of marriages between Africans (69.45%), and on the other, that individuals from different African nations were entering consensual unions. These individuals coped not only with their differences of nation in the creation of the plantations communities, but also with the wider social categories created by the colonial encounters. The colonization of western Brazil, motivated by the discovery of gold, resulted in the arrival of people from different parts of the colony, who joined with the Portuguese and, to a lesser degree, with other Europeans, in villages, plantations, farms, and mining camps. In these settings, slaves from different ethnic and geographic backgrounds shared spaces with free individuals. In addition, the

Table 1 Slaves nations described in probate inventories from Chapada dos Guimarães, Mato Grosso, 1790–1888

	1790–1809		1810–1829		1830–1849		1850–1869		1870–1888	
	N	%	*N*	%	*N*	%	*N*	%	*N*	%
Central Africa										
Southern region										
Angola	15	6.09	10	2.12	6	1.78	8	1.42		
Benguela	30	12.19	96	20.38	39	11.60	17	3.03		
Cassange			6	1.27	14	4.16	11	1.96		
Ganguela			4	0.84	4	1.19				
Mobundu			1	0.21						
Quissama	1	0.40			1	0.29	1	0.17		
Rebolo	3	1.21	12	2.54	1	0.29	3	0.53		
Songo					2		1	0.17		
Σ	49	19.91	129	27.36	67	19.94	41	7.30		
Northern region										
Cabinda	1	0.40	11	2.33	9	2.67	12	2.13		
Congo	9	3.65	22	4.67	23	6.84	63	11.22		
Loango							1	0.17		
Manuana							1	0.17		
Mazumbo							1	0.17		
Monjolo	1	0.40	4	0.84	3	0.89	12	2.13		
Sunde							1	0.17		
Σ	11	4.47	37	7.84	35	10.41	91	16.22		
Western Africa										
Beni					1	0.29				
Cabo Verde	1	0.4								
Gege							1	0.17		
Hausa			22	4.66	8	2.38	5	0.89		
Mina	38	15.44	79	16.7	13	3.88	6	1		
Nagô	5	2.03	4	0.84	6	1.79	7	1.24		
Sobo							1	0.17		
Tapa	1	0.4	2	0.42	6	1.79				
Σ	45	18.27	107	22.66	34	10.14	20	3.56		
Eastern Africa										
Baca					3	0.89	3	0.53		
Macumbe	4	1.62	9	1.9	5	1.49	1	0.17		
Missena							1	0.17		
Moçambique					20	5.97	44	7.8		
Mujaca							1	0.17		
Nhambanda					1	0.29				
Quilungi							1	0.17		
Pambá					1	0.29				

Table 1 (continued)

	1790–1809		1810–1829		1830–1849		1850–1869		1870–1888	
	N	%	*N*	%	*N*	%	*N*	%	*N*	%
Σ	4	1.62	9	1.9	30	8.93	51	9.01		
Amerindian										
Cotocóxi			1	0.21						
Mampuia							1	0.17		
Σ			1	0.21			1	0.17		
Unidentified										
African unidentified							18	3.2	43	21.93
Chiburigo							1	0.17		
Chumbo							1	0.17		
Mapamgangue					1	0.29				
Undetermined							3	0.53		
Σ					1	0.29	24	4.24	43	21.93
Brazil										
Cabra	24	9.75	17	3.6	34	10.14	74	13.19	29	14.79
Caburé	1	0.4	6	1.27			5	0.89	10	5.10
Criolo	74	30.08	121	25.63	107	31.94	215	38.32	88	44.89
Mulato	16	6.5	23	4.87			15	2.67		
Pardo	22	8.94	21	4.44	28	8.35	24	4.27	26	13.26
Σ	137	55.67	188	39.83	169	50.44	333	59.35	153	78.07

various Indigenous groups who occupied this region also maintained different levels of integration with the colonial society. As a consequence of these interactions, a highly diversified cultural landscape was created, which forced individuals with different cultural backgrounds to realign their sense of group affiliation and manage their identities at different levels.

In the following discussions, we will take into account the multicultural landscape of western Brazil during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. We will also incorporate the perception that not only significant internal differences existed among slave groups in the context of slavery but also wider socio-cultural differences involved slaves as distinct from other social groups in western Brazil. In this sense, the possible presence of different scales of interaction will be considered, as well as the possible overlapping of competing social strategies.

Slave Communities and Pottery Variability in Chapada dos Guimarães

Pottery (low-fired earthenwares) represents 32% of the total of the three material categories analyzed (the other two are refined earthenware, and glass) (Tables 2 and 3). A significant aspect of these assemblages is that, while great variability in

Table 2 Total number of recovered/analyzed fragments of pottery[a]

Site	Fragm	Pottery—total		Analyzed pottery		Period
	N	*N*	MNP	*N*	MNP	
Taperão	7,543	2,741	113	2,146	98	ca.1780–1880
Buritizinho	6,986	2,224	112	2,168	109	ca.1800–1890
Engenho do Quilombo	5,183	845	39	753	36	ca.1850–1930
Pingador	3,234	1,097	43	1,036	39	ca.1800–1900
Piteiras	1,958	1,020	37	1,020	37	ca.1930–1950
Total	24,904	7,927	344	7,123	319	

[a] The exclusion of some fragments in the analysis was due to a number of reasons. The most frequent was the lack of a sufficient number of fragments or a minimum number of pieces (MNP) in particular deposits. In the case of pottery, the MNP was estimated based on the account of noncoincident rims or bases in each deposit

glass and European refined earthenware was identified in the intra- and inter-site levels, pottery did not present significant spatial variability. In fact, only two differences in pottery spatial variance were identified, both in Taperão site. In the early occupation (deposits mean dated between 1797 and 1836), there is a

Table 3 Number of fragments analyzed and MNP for each site and deposit[a]

Site	Area	Layer	N fragm	MNP	Mean date
Taperão	7+8+12	1	206	15	1850.5
Taperão	7+8+12	2	535	14	1836.2
Taperão	14	2	140	10	1825.6
Taperão	1	1+2	251	13	1810.9
Taperão	3	2	440	19	1820.3
Taperão	4	1+2	194	14	1802.5
Taperão	15	1+2	380	13	1797.0
Buritizinho	1	1–4	1,547	77	1840.0
Buritizinho	2	1–4	196	18	1852.7
Buritizinho	3	1–4	425	14	1862.1
Engenho do Quilombo	1	2	475	27	1853.0
Engenho do Quilombo	2	1+2	278	9	1894.0
Pingador	1	1	349	10	1887.8*
Pingador	1	2 + 3	687	29	1850.0*
Piteiras	1	1	1,020	37	1935.0*
Total			7,123	319	

[a] In each site, different areas and deposits were separately analyzed. Some areas and layers were combined when laboratory analysis showed that, despite some apparent physical distinctions, they were related to the same depositional events. For the majority of deposits, the mean dates were calculated by the use of the South Formula for European ceramics (see its application in Symanski and Souza 2001). Mean dates represented with the signal (*) were not calculated with the South Formula and the year is approximate

predominance of larger cooking vessels (5 to 8 l) in the refuse from the planter's house, while smaller ones (1 to 4 l) predominate in the refuse areas from the *senzalas*. This variability could be related either to the existence of a centralized kitchen in the planter's house or to different sizes in the domestic groups of these areas, since smaller domestic groups tend to use smaller vessels. Another variance involves assemblages from the *senzalas* of Taperão site in the same period, which presented a greater number of large storage vessels. Apart from this evidence, there is a lack of variability among contemporary pottery forms and decorations in the intra- and inter-size levels, and a negative correlation between technological attributes and particular groups of vessels. Such attributes include firing, manufacturing techniques (mainly coiled, but also molding and combined techniques), and inclusions (minerals—usually triturated quartz, fine sand, *Cariapé B*—an organic temper produced by the burning of the bark of different species of trees, triturated pottery, and charcoal, all of them appearing in different combinations).

Despite this negative evidence, there are significant diachronic correlations in the pottery assemblages from the investigated sites. One of them involves a relationship between the frequency of decorated pottery and the extent to which these vessels were used over time, suggesting that decoration had an inherent importance among the attributes displayed in these artifacts. In the earlier periods (mean date: 1797–1836), pottery was more extensively used for different functions, including food preparation and processing, service and consumption, and storage of both liquid and solid food, contrasting with those from later periods (mean date: 1840–1894), when usage became progressively restricted to food preparation and processing, and to a lesser degree, for storage. Concurrently with these changes, glass and other ceramic categories became more popular in the areas related to slaves and overseers, assuming some of the functions previously attributed to pottery. This tendency parallels with a gradual decrease of decorated pottery. In deposits whose mean dates are prior to 1853, the number of decorated fragments is greater than 20%, which is a representative percentage, since decorations in general were located on the neck of the recipient and, less frequently, on the lips and upper bulge. In deposits with mean dates between 1853 and the year of the abolition of slavery in Brazil (1888), decorated fragments were relatively less popular, comprising between 10% and 20% of the pottery assemblages. For later periods, percentages are even lower, representing less than 10% of the assemblages.

The temporal variability of decorated pottery is related to another aspect, involving a correlation between decorative techniques and styles, and particular groups of vessels, which can be better understood through the examination of the seriated frequencies of decorated pottery and its correlation with particular functional categories (Fig. 2; see Fig. 3 for both decorated and undecorated forms). In the earlier periods the decoration was less varied than in later periods and was mostly composed of designs produced by incisions, which consisted of geometric motifs, predominantly rectilinear, applied in the upper parts of the vessels. The most popular designs included diamonds, zigzags, and less frequently, waves (Fig. 4). Deposits from this period also present decorations produced by the deliberated exhibition of coils used in the construction of the vessel, frequently in combination with incisions, always in the upper part of the vessel. This was the most frequent technique of this earlier period. Less frequent techniques include red painting by dipping, and

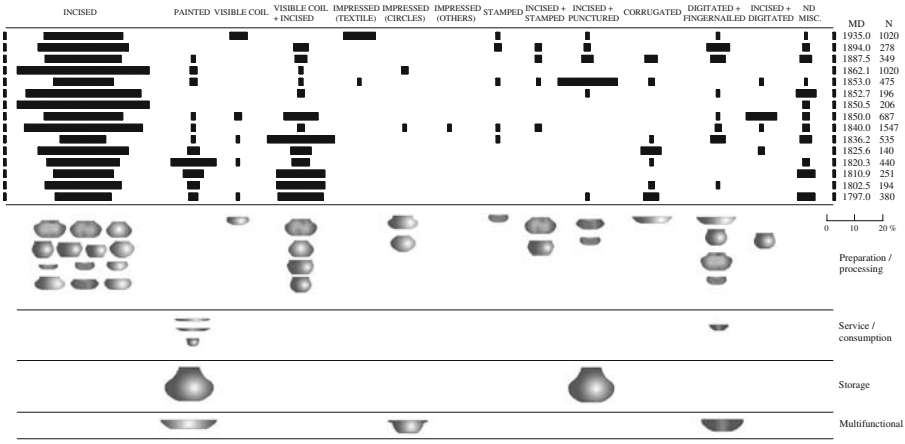

Fig. 2 Seriated frequencies of decorated pottery from Chapada dos Guimarães sites and associated functional categories

corrugated (Fig. 5). Finally, punctured, digitated, and fingernailed decorations, sometimes in combination with incisions, are present in minimum proportions.

As can be seen in Fig. 2, the most popular of these decorative techniques had specialized uses, being correlated with particular functional categories. These include the pottery presenting incisions or visible coils with superimposed incisions, which have massive presence of soot and were used for the processing or preparation of food, generally in the form of cooking pots. It also includes the red painting, present in vessels related to the service or consumption of food, such as plates, small bowls etc (in later periods multifunctional vessels were also decorated in that manner); and the corrugated, present only in vessels used for processing food, particularly, the large manioc flour toasters, which are still in use in the region.

Visually, there are some clear-cut differences among these pottery groups, allowing individuals to detect immediately the differences among them. In the cooking pots, incisions produced on the flat surface of the vessels differ from those made over visible coils. Conversely, the red color, used in the service and consumption vessels, makes them clearly different from the cooking pots that, besides their typical incised decoration, frequently have a very dark surface. Finally, the distinctive aspect of corrugated decorations used in the manioc flour toasters offers another modality of differentiation. The corrugated pattern presents a characteristic surface produced by successive pressures with the thumb in the clay before it is fired (see Fig. 5).

Considering the context of use of these different pottery groups, as well as the cultural diversity identified in the sites of Chapada dos Guimarães, it is possible that these artifacts might be related to more inclusive groups of individuals with different cultural backgrounds. Taking into account that these vessels were used in different activity areas of the plantations, we consider the possibility that, at least to some degree, these vessels were related to the creation of different sets of references by particular groups of individuals.

In Brazil, some scholars have suggested that incised decorations present in pottery from the historical period are predominantly associated with slave groups since this

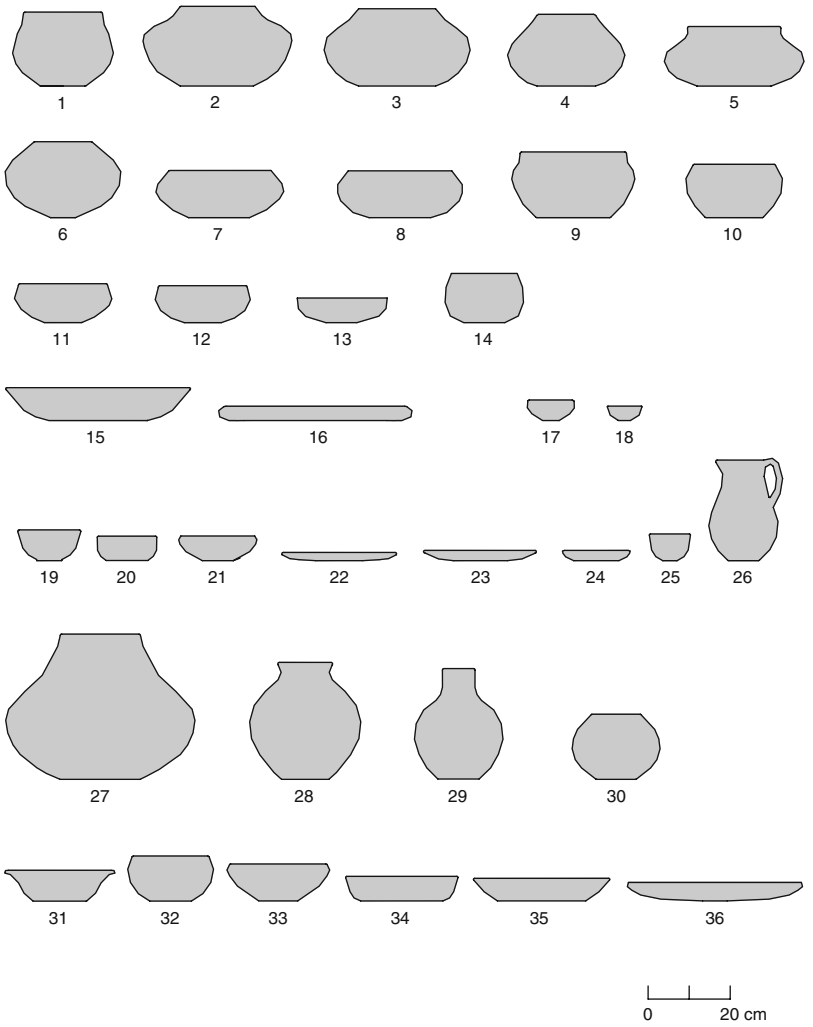

Fig. 3 Identified forms of decorated and undecorated pottery. Preparation and processing of food: cooking pots (*1–14*), manioc flour toasters (*15–16*), domestic melting pots (*17–18*); service and consumptions of food: bowls (*19–21*), plates (*22–23*), small plate (*24*) mug (*25*), jar (*26*); storage of food (liquid and solid): *pote* (jug) (*27*); *pote d'água* (water jug) (*28*), *moringa* (water jug) (*29*), unknown (*30*); multifunctional vessels: *alguidar* (*31*), unknown (*32–36*)

type of decoration was predominantly employed in cooking pots, a type of vessel used in the kitchen, where female slaves carried out a significant part of their daily tasks, including cooking (Dias 1988, p. 8; Jacobus 1997, p. 66; Souza 2002, pp. 76–77). Taking into account the active participation of female slaves in local economies during the Brazilian colonial period, especially in the production and commercialization of food and utilitarian objects (Figueiredo 1993; Mott 1976), as well as the fact that free individuals were directly involved in productive activities only in cases of poverty, it is probable that female slaves—and in some cases, female Amerindians—were the main

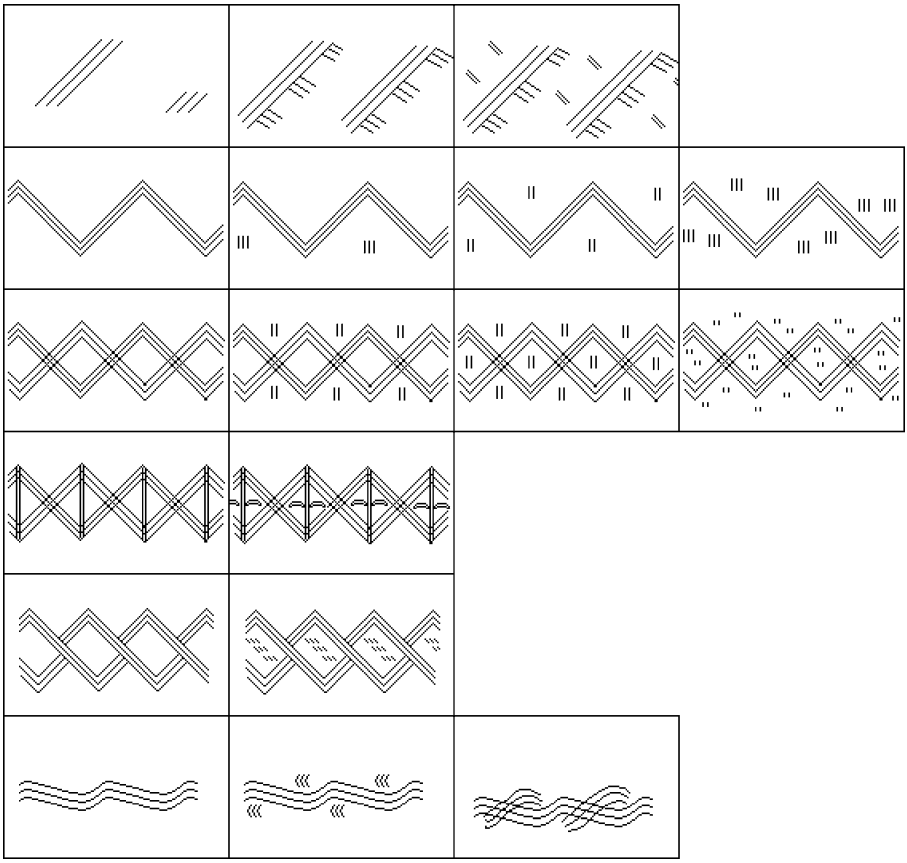

Fig. 4 Schematic representation of the most popular incised patterns present in pottery from Chapada dos Guimarães sites

responsible for the production of pottery in Brazil during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In Mato Grosso, D'Alincourt (1857, p. 63) observed that poor women made pottery in the shapes of cooking pots, storage pots, plates, and basins. Most of these women were from Africa and, in lesser numbers, of Amerindian origin. This information is corroborated by Silva (1995, p. 212), who points out that in 1797 only 5.96% of the Mato Grosso's population was white. Moreover, in the case of Chapada dos Guimarães, the tradition of pottery making has been kept up by women of African and Amerindian descent. At least one potter exists in each rural community (Ataides 2001). In this sense, the possibility, suggested by Jacobus (1996), that the historical pottery could have been commercialized at both the local and regional levels has to be taken into account. In view of this evidence, we consider that slaves were presumably the ones responsible for the production of these vessels.

Regarding the predominance of incised decorations in the cooking pots, it is significant to note that prehistoric pottery recovered from several sites in the region of Chapada dos Guimarães present minimal incised decorations (Vianna 2001). This technique is also infrequent in pottery from archaeological contexts of eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in Portugal (e.g. Abraços and Diogo 1992, 1998). In Africa,

Fig. 5 Some of the decorative techniques used in the pottery from Chapada dos Guimarães sites. *Upper left*: incised; *upper right*: visible coils with superimposed incisions; *lower left*: red painted (dipping); *Lower right*: corrugated (photography: Cláudio Silva)

however, this is a widespread technique (DeCorse 1999). In fact, with the exception of corrugated decorations, all other decorative techniques present in the Chapada dos Guimarães' pottery assemblages may be found in sub-Saharan Africa's archaeological assemblages from both the end of the Iron Age and the colonial period. In addition, designs such as waves, diamonds, and zigzags are employed generically in pottery from Africa, appearing in a number of compositions. This evidence suggests that slaves were probably using a repertoire of knowledge from their experience in Africa for building these vessels. The evidence does not mean, however, that they were reproducing African pottery decorations. In fact, there are clear stylistic differences between the pottery from the Chapada dos Guimarães and those from different regions of Africa, indicating that slaves who lived in Chapada did significant adaptations in creating these decorative motifs.

Examining the locally produced pottery from Ouro Fino, an eighteenth-century mining village located in Goiás, Central Brazil, where slaves composed between 60 to 80% of the population (Karasch 2002, p. 119, 2004, pp. 164–167) and also responsible for making many crafts, including pottery (Karasch 1996, pp. 85–89), Souza (2002, pp. 70–80) has identified a strong correlation between pottery decorations and functional categories. He suggests that this correlation was related to the building of differences associated with gender and cultural asymmetries in the domestic spheres. According to him, these differences could involve both slaves and masters, what may be also applicable for the case of Chapada dos Guimarães. In eighteenth century deposits of Ouro Fino, pottery comprised between 63% and 85% of the whole assemblage, having been widely used in different locations of the houses. In this case, differences also involved vessels employed in the processing and preparation of food, decorated with linear designs of incisions forming diamonds, zigzags, and parallel lines on dark surfaces; and those vessels used for the service and consumption of food, decorated with red painted motifs, such as

flowers and concentric semi-circles, or by dipping the vessel in red pigments, usually over a white surface. In this case, distinctions involving functional categories were also related to technological attributes, indicating a higher degree of specialization in these vessels. To support the assumption that differences were associated with gender, Souza (2002) considered the place in which these groups of artifacts were used: the kitchen, which was the place were slaves executed their tasks; and the sociability areas, where food was consumed by predominantly male masters.

In the case of Chapada dos Guimarães, although painted vessels were also used for the service and consumption of food, they are clearly less elaborate than those from Ouro Fino. Additionally, the functional categories of Chapada dos Guimarães are not related to technological attributes. Despite these differences, similar rules were employed in the pottery of both regions, suggesting the interplay of both masters and slaves. Manipulating their cultural background and knowledge in the production of pottery vessels used in different locations of a house, slaves—probably females—created decorative differences capable of delineating domestic spheres. In the creation of these relationships, it is possible that domestic slaves actively participated in the creation of new meanings, which involved both the adoption of new material forms in pottery and the recollection and transformation of African references.

A significant aspect of the Chapada dos Guimarães' painted pottery is that the period of greatest popularity of this category (mean dates: 1797.0 and 1825.6; see Fig. 2) is strongly correlated to the period in which Western African Mina slaves were the major African nation in this region, as can be seen in the Table 4. Concurrently, for Ouro Fino's case, slave death records from the parish of Meia Ponte, located close to that village, show that Western Africans, represented by Minas and Nagôs, comprised the overwhelming majority of the slave population in the locality before 1765, with a demographic presence of around 80%. This presence was supplanted by Central Africans and crioulos only in the end of 1780s.

Considering this evidence, it is interesting to note that in Western African sites dating from the late Iron Age and the period of European contact, both red painted and red-slip decorated vessels are common in pottery assemblages. They have been found in the region comprised by the hinterlands of Senegal (McIntosh and Bocoum 1999, p. 21), and Nigeria (Wesler 1999, p. 256), as well as in Mali, in the old cities

Table 4 Major African nations in Chapada dos Guimarães, 1790–1869

	1790–1809		1810–1829		1830–1849		1850–1869	
	N	%	*N*	%	*N*	%	*N*	%
Mina	38	34.86	79	28.01	13	7.83	06	2.71
Benguela	30	27.52	96	34.04	39	23.49	17	7.69
Congo	9	8.25	22	7.80	23	13.85	63	28.50
Moçambique	0	0	0	0	20	12.04	44	19.90
Others	32	29.37	85	30.15	71	42.79	91	41.20
Σ	109	100.00	282	100.00	166	100.00	221	100.00

of Jenné-Jeno (McIntosh 1995, p. 135, 137–138, 156, 212) and Gao (Insoll 1997, p. 18). In general, Connah (1987, p. 114) and Frank (1998, p. 20) agree that this type of decoration is associated with the northern Savanna regions of West Africa, even though they are also found, with less frequency, closer to the coastal areas, as is the case of Benin, Nigeria (Connah 1975, pp. 121–133), and Kuulo Kaata, Ghana (Stahl 1999, p. 23). Nowadays, Mande speakers and some of their neighbors are still produce water jars with red-slip decorations, use them for public display, and treat cooking pots hot from the fire with a vegetal solution that gives them a shiny black surface (Frank 1998, p. 19).

Taking into account this information, as well as the fact that Mina slaves from Ouro Fino and Chapada dos Guimarães are contemporary with the red-painted vessels in eighteenth century archaeological deposits from these regions, it is possible to consider that Western Africans used some of their previous knowledge to build these vessels. In this correlation, however, it must be taken into account that although red-painted pottery is widespread in a vast territory of West Africa, they are not representative of a unified tradition. In fact, they are highly varied and are associated with a wide range of ethnic groups. This picture parallels with an inherent characteristic of the Mina nation: the fact that it was actually composed of a variety of ethnic groups. In this sense, we are not arguing that these ceramics are correlated with particular ethnic groups. Rather, we are arguing that given the evidence for specific regional connections, a case can be made for the African influence on pottery from Ouro Fino and Chapada dos Guimarães, which represent the recollection and recontextualization of known cultural references by a more inclusive group of individuals.

Red painted pottery was not only known is some regions from Africa. It was also adopted, in less scale, in Iberian settlements (DeCorse 2001, p.155). Since this type of decoration is related to the service and consumption of food especially by the free population, it is possible that slaves adapted this knowledge in order to create vessels that also pleased their masters, who could recognize some familiar aspects in these items. The introduction of motifs like the red or white-over-red painted flowers, which are absent in assemblages from West Africa, suggest that a number of adaptations were made by slaves in this pottery, which was obviously the results of a negotiation between masters and slaves in their material world.

While Africans and their descendants composed the vast majority of the enslaved population in Brazil during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Amerindians, although in smaller numbers, also frequently lived in cities and on plantations. In Mato Grosso, indigenous labor was employed in cattle raising, in the extraction of *poaia* (a native medicinal herb), and in domestic services in the cities. They were less common on plantations, where slave labor predominated (Aleixo 1984, pp. 63–66; Silva 1995, p. 263). There is little documentary evidence indicating indigenous presence on the Chapada dos Guimarães' plantations. Only two possible indigenous slaves have been identified in the slaveholding lists present in the planters' probate inventories—Francisco Cotocoxi, for the year of 1816, and Sebastião Mampuia, for the year of 1855. However, slaves of mixed African and indigenous descent, called *caborés* in Mato Grosso (Silva 1995, p. 177), are present on these slaveholding lists, albeit in very small proportions. *Caborés* slaves are represented by only 22 (1.21%) individuals out of 1810 slaves listed in these probate inventories. In addition, there is

a possibility that the indigenous origin could also be present in other skin color categories listed in these documents, particularly the *cabra*, which was a designation for slaves of uncertain mixed descent (Karasch 2000, p. 39). *Cabra* slaves are represented by 178 (9.83%) individuals in these slaveholding lists.

Despite the apparent low number of Amerindians in these plantations, the indigenous influence in the pottery assemblages of Chapada dos Guimarães is evident in the use of *cariapé B*. This temper is found in prehistoric sites of the region (Vianna 2001), rarely being identified in historical contexts or contemporary pottery in other Brazilian regions (for the Mato Grosso case, see Ataídes 2001; Scheur 1982). Another indigenous reference is the corrugated decoration that, as pointed out above, was employed exclusively in the manioc flour toasters. This presence is probably related to some colonial practices which originated in the Brazilian southeast during the sixteen and seventeenth centuries, when indigenous groups were in close contact with Europeans and the food intake in colonial settlements relied heavily on indigenous resources (Holanda 1994). It is interesting to note that while manioc had also been a food staple in Africa, its use in the everyday diet was borrowed from indigenous groups from the beginning of the Portuguese colonization. Such discussion is especially significant since the captaincy of Mato Grosso, as previously discussed, had an important connection with the southeastern region, especially with São Paulo, where contact with indigenous peoples was historically significant (Holanda 1994; Monteiro 1994).

Although some indigenous influence in the assemblages of Chapada dos Guimarães is evident, it must be noted that, as in the case of correlations involving Africa, indigenous-influenced pottery vessels present obvious differences when compared with assemblages from prehistoric sites. In this case, it also seems that individuals with an indigenous background selected particular aspects of their cultural references and transformed them in order to play a role in a new context, where the emergence of new material forms predominated.

The combination between particular decorations and vessel function—which indicates its place of use—may be helpful for understanding how individuals with different cultural backgrounds negotiated their references in the regional level. As exposed above, it is clear that individuals did not replicate African or indigenous traditions. Rather, they managed particular aspects of their knowledge and recontextualized them. The evidence suggests that the recalling and transformation of particular references by individuals acted in the creation of shared references, serving as relational types of identification. This process could involve, especially, the use of more visible attributes, as the corrugated decoration of the manioc flour toasters and the incised decoration of cooking pots, which were remarkably different from the red-painted vessels, used for food service and consumption. The existence of particular types of pottery in Chapada dos Guimarães—presenting elements transformed from African and Amerindian backgrounds—suggest that these artifacts may be related to the emergence of broad communities and the creation of more inclusive groupings that have originated in reference to the condition and position of individuals in society, which could include slaves, Amerindians and free individuals.

While the correlation between pottery decoration and functional categories is clear-cut early in the history of the region, it lost its intensity in deposits with mean dates after 1836, when different types of decoration began to be used with less

distinction. After this period, red painting also lost popularity (see Fig. 2). At the same time that the frequency of pottery vessels used in the service and consumption of food declined, European refined earthenwares became more diversified in slaves' assemblages. This change may have been the result of a series of events. On a large scale, it is possibly related to the increasing availability and accessibility of imported items in Brazil during the nineteenth century, due to the opening of the Brazilian ports to friendly nations in 1808 as a consequence of the arrival of the Portuguese Royal Family in Brazil on that year. Fleeing from the Napoleonic wars, the Portuguese Crown was temporarily transferred to Brazil, providing a great stimulus to commercial exchanges, favoring the importation and distribution of European items.

As pointed out by Symanski (2006, pp. 228–230), while slaves were using second-hand European refined earthenwares distributed by the planters during the first half of the nineteenth century, they began to acquire these pieces by themselves on the market in the second half of that century, indicating that they had a higher degree of economic autonomy during this period. As noticed by Aleixo (1984, p. 48) and Assis (1988, p. 38), slaves in Mato Grosso usually had their own provision grounds, where they cultivated, among other vegetables, corn, beans and manioc. Archaeological evidence suggests that these slaves were able to commercialize their surplus in the marketplace, thus generating earnings that permitted them to become more active consumers. According to Symanski (2006, p. 230), this expansion in the slaves' decision-making opportunities resulted in an increase in their possibilities for self-expression through their material culture, insofar as they were able to buy refined earthenwares whose decorations were more related to their culturally specific tastes. It is important to note that during this period the number of *quilombos* increased in the region, intensifying the social tensions between planters and slaves. In this sense, the disappearance of clear-cut correlations involving the decoration and functional categories in pottery does not indicate that some social struggles were becoming less evident and social distinctions attenuated. Instead, the material expression of these differences was probably relocated to other material categories.

Concomitant with the changes in the pottery used for service and consumption of food, other significant changes occurred in the pottery decorative dimension after 1836. In the first place, both painted vessels and vessels with visible coils and superimposed incisions dropped drastically in popularity. Second, although in deposits whose mean date is after 1836, the incised decorations in cooking pots (in designs forming zigzags, diamonds and waves), were still very popular, new decorative techniques—stamped and impressed with textiles and circles—were introduced, and a greater diversity of motifs appeared. These motifs included a variety of compositions including the combined use of incised and punctured, finger-nailed, and digitated marks (Fig. 6).

This increase in pottery decorative variability was concurrent with a process occurring in this region between 1830 and 1869: the introduction of several new groups of African slaves in the region due to wider changes in the patterns of the Atlantic slave trade. Between 1790 and 1869, the number of African nations in the region had a progressive increment going from 12 in the period 1790–1809, to 14 in 1830–49, and then reaching its peak in 1850–69, when 24 nations were documented (see Table 1). This increase in the number of African nations suggests that new

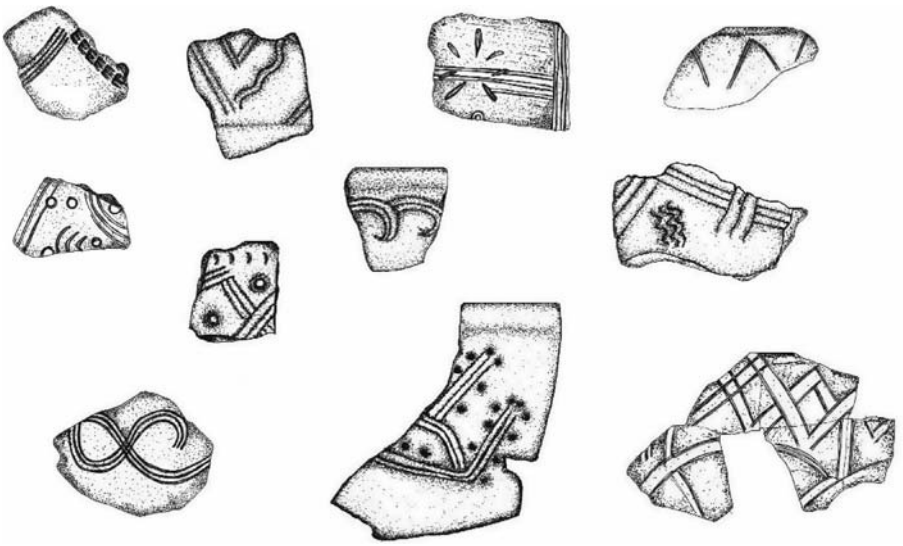

Fig. 6 Some decorative patterns from sites with mean dates after 1836 (not to scale)

cultural influences, brought by the new groups who arrived in the region after 1830, could have gradually substituted previously established references for pottery production. The period between 1830 and 1869 also evidenced the replacement of the two major African nations, Mina and Benguela, by Moçambique and Congo. As can be seen in Table 4, Benguela and, principally, Mina slaves, radically dropped after 1830. The decrease of these two nations is, thus, strongly correlated to the dropping of the painted vessels and vessels with visible coils and superimposed incisions after 1836, as described above. In addition, new cultural practices might have been introduced in the region during this period mainly by Eastern Africans, given that the cultural traditions of these groups were very different from those of the central Africa, due to the reduced contact between the peoples of these two areas (Russel-Wood 2001, p. 14). Thus, the increase in pottery decorative variability and the introduction of new techniques of decoration after 1836 might be related, at least in part, to the introduction of eastern African cultural influences.

Although Central Africans continued to prevail in the Chapada dos Guimarães' African demographic composition after 1830, their origin presented some significant fluctuations over time. As can be seen in Table 5, while in the period between 1790 and 1829 groups from southern Central Africa (Angola, Benguela, Cassange, Ganguela, Mobundu, Quissama, Rebolo, and Songo) predominated in the region, Central Africans from the northern region (Cabinda, Congo, Loango, Manuana, Mazumbo, Monjolo, and Sunde) increased in numbers between 1830 and 1849, becoming dominant between 1850 and 1869. Among them, the Congo became the major African nation in the region during this period (see Table 4). In this context, the introduction, after 1836, of a very specific type of appliqué seems to be very representative of possible cultural practices/beliefs related to these northern Central Africans groups. This type of appliqué, placed in the upper bulge of the vessels, has a circular form and an average of 3 cm in diameter. In its interior, incised patterns

Table 5 Proportions of Central Africans from different regions described in probate inventories from Chapada dos Guimarães, Mato Grosso, 1790–1888

	1790–1809		1810–1829		1830–1849		1850–1869	
	N	%	*N*	%	*N*	%	*N*	%
Southern region	49	19.91	129	27.36	67	19.94	41	7.30
Northern region	11	4.47	37	7.84	35	10.41	91	16.22

form a cross (Fig. 7) and, less frequently, a design similar to an asterisk, produced by the addition of two more incised lines in the cross. The representation of a cross inscribed in circular appliqués is comparable to what a number of archaeologists have associated with a Bakongo cosmogram (Ferguson 1992, pp. 110–116; Samford 1996, pp. 104–106; Russel 1997, p. 64; Young 1997, pp. 22; Wilkie 1999, p. 274, 2000, pp. 20–21). Although the representation of crosses are not exclusive to this group, appearing in West Africa (DeCorse 1999, pp. 139–140), East Africa (Pikirayi 1993, p. 145), as well as in locations from Central Africa occupied by other groups (Ervedosa 1980, p. 250), its temporal correlation with the increase of Congos in Chapada dos Guimarães, suggests that individuals with a Bakongo background produced them.

Other possible evidence related to the spirituality of the slave groups in the region during this period is the use of beads in the production of circular patterns in the bulge of the vessels, formed by the technique known as *roulette* (Soper 1985) and by stamping (Fig. 8). As is well known, beads not only had an esthetic appeal but also a deep connection to the spiritual life of slaves (DeCorse 1989b, 2003). As pointed out before, at the time in which these changes were occurring, historical evidence suggests a higher social stress between slaves and masters in the region. In this sense, one cannot ignore the possibility that representations connected with the spirituality of enslaved individuals assumed visible expression in the pottery vessels,

Fig. 7 Appliqués with cruciform representations from different Chapada dos Guimarães sites (photograph: Cláudio Silva)

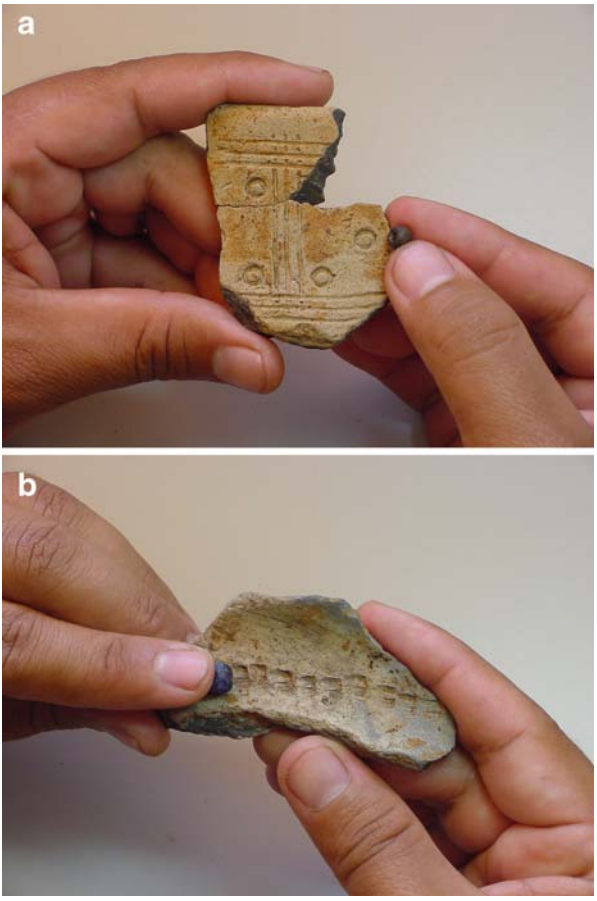

Fig. 8 Simulation of the production of decorative patterns made by beads using pottery from Chapada dos Guimarães. (**a**) stamped, combined with incisions; (**b**) impressed, using the *roulette* technique (Photograph: Marcos Souza)

which could potentially serve as a way to reinforce identities and hopes in a period of tension.

Considering the changes in the African slaves' origin in Chapada dos Guimarães during the period under study, and in view of the fact that slaves were struggling to gain some autonomy in the region, some possibilities emerge. First, the dissemination of incised patterns such as diamonds and zigzags in the cooking pots represents a broad category, which may be related to individuals who shared the same social position. Taking into account that other broad categories were used, such as the red painted service/consumption vessels and the corrugated manioc flour toasters, it seems that the incised diamonds and zigzags patterns served as a tool in the expression of wider shared references involving slaves. Second, the less popular decorations of the cooking pots seem to be related to the creation of more discrete differences, which may be associated with the emergence of narrower slave communities, constructed through different types of affinities, such as linguistic, ethnic, spiritual, geographic, and so on. The changes that occurred in cooking pots

over time, and concurrently to a process of population displacement among slave nations, indicates that pottery decoration acted not only in the creation of larger sets of differences involving functional categories but also in the expression of discrete cultural differences, expressed by the changes of the decorative patterns in these vessels. It is interesting to note that the overlapping of different scales of identification, including both broad and narrow categories, has a correspondence with the "additive" technique used in the decoration of the incised vessels, as exemplified in Fig. 4. This technique is an efficient way to overlap differences, since it allows the creation of new mechanisms for differentiation without invalidating previous ones. Such an assumption is consistent with Mintz and Price's (1992, p. 45) observation that Western and Central Africans were relatively permeable in their practices in the Americas, tending to be "addictives" instead of "exclusives" in the acceptance of other practices.

Diachronic changes in the less popular decorations reveal a complementary aspect in this discussion. When vessels with visible coils and superimposed incisions dropped in popularity, a diversified number of new techniques and decorative patterns appeared in the region. This increase in pottery stylistic diversity was concurrent with the increase in the African diversity, suggesting a very dynamic process in the expression of cultural and social differences in the region. As suggested before, these changes can be related to different aspects, including the origin of slaves and their search for some autonomy at the local level.

As can be seen in Table 6, the period starting in 1850 marks the intensification of the creolization process (here defined as the increase in the number of *crioulos* over time) in Chapada dos Guimarães, in which the number of Brazilian slaves surpassed the Africans on the slaveholding lists, coming to represent more than three-quarters of the slave population in the 1870–88 period. This process tended to dissipate some of the social and cultural differences existent among slaves, insofar as these Brazilian-born slaves, although not representing a cohesive group, tended to share, from birth, very similar conditions of existence. The pottery from this period seems to support this assumption. While contexts with mean dates between 1836 and 1853 presented the peak in the popularity of decorated pottery, decorated vessels gradually dropped in popularity in contexts with mean dates starting in 1862, coming to represent less than 10% of the pottery assemblages in contexts dating from the end of nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth centuries. In these later contexts, whose mean dates are post-abolition (1888), the incised patterns, although still maintaining some of the popular motifs of the eighteenth and nineteenth century, became, in the vast majority of cases, roughly executed and without symmetry or creativity.

Table 6 Proportions of Africans to Brazilian-born slaves in Chapada dos Guimarães, 1790–1888

	1790–1809		1810–1829		1830–1849		1850–1869		1870–1888	
	N	%	*N*	%	*N*	%	*N*	%	*N*	%
Africans	109	44.4	283	60.2	166	49.5	222	40.5	153	21.93
African-Brazilians	137	55.6	188	39.8	169	50.4	333	59.3	43	78.07
Σ	246	100	471	100	335	99.9	555	99.8	196	100

Concomitantly, vessels also lost technical refinement. In the latest archaeological deposit identified, which dates from the first half of the twentieth century, the presence of reduced firing, which gives better resistance for thermal stress, significantly dropped in the cooking pots, despite the fact that this context presented the highest proportion of this functional category (70%, against 60% to 64% in the other sites). In addition, the shapes of cooking pots drastically changed, potters tried to emulate the shape of iron cooking pots, popular in the region especially during the first half of the twentieth century (Fig. 9). This evidence obviously does not indicate that potters from the region lost their technical skills or creativity. Instead, it suggests that, after the last quarter of the nineteenth century, the significance of pottery decoration in the plantations of Chapada dos Guimarães in expressing cultural differences began to be denied or was transferred to other material categories.

Nowadays, cooking pots and other pottery vessels continue to be produced by a few artisans in Chapada dos Guimarães. However, once again they do not look like their predecessors, since the rough and poorly finished vessels of the first half of the twentieth century no longer exist. Female potters of the region currently produce vessels highly diversified in form and finely decorated, with a multiplicity of floral motifs. At this time, these changes are motivated by the potters' desire to sell their goods to tourists. This new commercial focus has created a series of new issues connected to pottery production. They include the empowerment of women through their active participation in the family economy, traditionally dominated by men, and the introduction of new techniques and decorative patterns by governmental craft schools and organizations, which is creating tensions in the relationship between the traditional and the modern in regional cultural practices (Jézus Marco de Ataídes, pers. comm.). As in the past, pottery from Chapada dos Guimarães is going beyond its more mundane meanings.

Conclusion

Slaves were not insular. They constantly interacted with the different groups of individuals who composed the colonial society, so that issues involving the use and transformation of their cultural backgrounds demand that different scales of

Fig. 9 Cooking pots from Chapada dos Guimarães, first half of the twentieth century. On the *left*, pottery produced by Sebastiana dos Santos (1908–1988) around 1940. This decorative pattern was popular in some historical sites of Central Brazil during the eighteenth century. On the *right*, an iron cooking pot from a surface context of the middle of the twentieth century (pottery vessel donated to IGPA/UCG by Matias dos Santos; iron cooking pot donated to IGPA/UCG by Bernardina Silva; photograph: Paulo Mendonça)

interaction be considered. Pottery from Chapada dos Guimarães suggests that slaves built new sets of relationships based on their interactions among themselves, indigenous groups, and free individuals. As a relational category, the decoration present in these artifacts indicate the possible overlapping of disparate dimensions, involving differences between slaves and other social groups, as well as differences among slaves communities. While slaves managed distinct African backgrounds as an instrument for creating difference, references created by the colonial encounters were significantly added in their repertoire, giving new meanings to their previous references.

In a broader sense, this work is an attempt to demonstrate that the study of slaves' cultural practices and their material manifestations in specific contexts requires a very wide scale of analysis: the Atlantic World. Although historians of slavery in Brazil have had this concern for a long time (see Ramos 1951; Rodrigues 2004; Viana Filho 1988), the study of the Atlantic world has received renewed attention since Thornton (1992) published his seminal book on this subject. In African American archaeology, this interest was presented more than a decade ago, but few archaeologists have taken into account Posnansky's (1999, p. 22) urge that the knowledge of the geographical origins of African populations transplanted to the New World is fundamental for understanding the cultural practices of these groups. This approach provides a potential way to escape from generalizing misconceptions about an African monolithic culture, focusing on the diversified cultural backgrounds of these groups and on the ways through which they kept, modified, recontextualized, and reinvented their cultural practices and worldviews in the multicultural environments of the New World's plantations. Without control over the slaves' origins in specific contexts, any kind of correlation with Africa becomes just a speculative exercise. Moreover, given the prominently dynamic nature of the Atlantic slave trade, which privileged slaves from different regions in different periods, a diachronic perspective is an important tool for the understanding of the cultural dynamics in the plantations and its correlations to the slaves' material culture.

We believe that the control over the origin of the Africans slaves in the case of Chapada dos Guimarães sites allowed the establishment of significant correlations between different African populations and the pottery diachronic variability. At another level, it also represented an indispensable element for understanding the ways in which different slave groups used this material to express their affinities and differences. Moreover, the diachronic perspective proved to be an efficient strategy to approach the dynamics of the building and surpassing of the differences among these groups, demonstrating the ways through which the heterogeneous cultural environment of the plantations was gradually homogenized insofar as a Brazilian generation of *crioulos* replaced the Africans over time.

Acknowledgments We would like to thank Camilla Agostini, Christopher DeCorse, Charles Orser, Irmhild Wust, Mark Hauser, James Davidson, and Tania Andrade Lima for their comments on earlier drafts of this article. Any shortcomings or misinterpretations are, of course, our responsibility. Cláudio Silva, Diogo Costa, Gersino Cândido and Paulo Mendonça helped with some of the pictures in this article, and Marga Celli Nascimento provide us assistance in editing this text, for which we are grateful. The research in Chapada dos Guimarães sites had the financial support of FURNAS—Centrais Elétricas S.A. The Instituto Goiano de Pré-História e Antropologia of the Universidade Católica de Goiás offered the

institutional support for the research. This article was written while Marcos Souza was on leave from the Universidade Católica de Goiás, to which he is thankful; both authors had also the support of CNPq, an entity of the Brazilian Government focused on scientific and technological development.

References

Abraços, H. C., and Diogo, J. M. (1992). *1as jornadas de cerâmica medieval e pós medieval*. Câmara Municipal de Tondela, Tondela, Portugal.

Abraços, H. C., and Diogo, J. M. (1998). *Actas das 2as Jornadas de Cerâmica Medieval e Pós-Medieval*. Câmara Municipal de Tondela, Tondela, Portugal.

Alpers, E. (2005). 'Mozambiques in Brazil': another dimension of the African Diaspora. In: Curto J., Soloudre-LaFrance R. (eds) *Africa and the Americas: Interconnections During the Slave Trade*. Africa World Press, Trenton, pp 43–68.

Aleixo, L. H. (1984). *Mato Grosso: Trabalho Escravo e Trabalho Livre*. Ministério da Fazenda, Brasília.

Assis, E. (1988). *Contribuição para o Estudo do Negro em Mato Grosso*. UFMT, Cuiabá.

Armstrong, D. V. (1998). Cultural transformation among Caribbean slave communities. In: Cusick J. (ed) *Studies in Culture Contact: Interaction, Culture Change, and Archaeology*. Southern Illinois University, Center for Archaeological Investigations, Carbondale, pp 378–401.

Armstrong, D. V. (1999). Archaeology and ethnohistory of the Caribbean plantation. In: Singleton T. (ed) *"I too, am America": Archaeological Studies of African-American Life*. University Press of Virginia, Charlottesville, pp 173–192.

Ataídes, J. M. (2001). As oleiras do Manso. In Projeto de Levantamento e resgate do Patrimônio Histórico-Cultural da região da UHE-Manso. Relatório final de atividades. L.M. Fraga (coord.). Report to FURNAS—Centrais Elétricas S.A., from Instituto Goiano de Pré-História e Antropologia; Universidade Católica de Goiás, Goiás, Brazil.

Bakhtin, M. (1981). *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays*. University of Texas Press, Austin.

Bastide, R. (1978). *The African Religions in Brazil*. The Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore.

Bhabha, H. (1994). *The Location of Culture*. Routledge, London.

Connah, G. (1975). *The Archaeology of Benin*. Clarendon, Oxford.

Connah, G. (1987). *African Civilizations. Precolonial Cities and States in Tropical Africa: An Archaeological Perspective*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

Conrad, R. (1972). *The Destruction of Brazilian Slavery, 1850–1888*. University of California Press, Berkeley.

Corrêa Filho, V. (1969). *História de Mato Grosso*. Instituto Nacional do Livro, Rio de Janeiro.

Corzo, G. (1988). *Los Cimarrones en Cuba*. Editorial de Ciencias Sociales, La Habana.

Crivelente, M. A. (2001). *Casamentos de Escravos Africanos em Mato Grosso, Um Estudo sobre Chapada dos Guimarães, 1798–1830*. Unpublished thesis, Universidade Federal de Mato Grosso, Cuiabá.

Crossland, L. B., and Posnansky, M. (1978). Pottery, people and trade at Begho, Ghana. In: Hodder I. (ed) *The Spatial Organization of Culture*. University of Pittsburgh Press, Pittsburgh, pp 77–89.

Curtin, P. D. (1969). *The Atlantic Slave Trade. A Census*. University of Wisconsin Press, Madison.

Curto, J., and Lovejoy, P. (2004). Introduction. In: Curto J., Lovejoy P. (eds) *Enslaving Connections: Changing Cultures of Africa and Brazil During the Era of Slavery*. Humanity Books, Amherst, pp 11–18.

D'Alincourt, L. (1857). Resumo das observações estatísticas desde o Porto Geral da cidade de Cuiabá pelo rio Cuiabá acima, até a vila do Paraguai Diamantino. *Revista do Instituto Histórico e Geográfico Brasileiro* 20: 55–89.

Dawdy, S. L. (2000). (ed.). Evidence of creolization in the consumer goods of an enslaved Bahamian family. *Historical Archaeology* 34(3): 1–133.

Deagan, K. (1998). Transculturation and Spanish American ethnogenesis: the archaeological legacy of the quincentenary. In: Cusick J. (ed) *Studies in Culture Contact: Interaction, Culture Change, and Archaeology*. Center for Archaeological Investigations, Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, pp 23–43.

DeCorse, C. R. (1989a). Material aspects of Limba, Yalunka and Kuranko ethnicity: archaeological research in northeastern Sierra Leone. In: Shennan S. (ed) *Archaeological Approaches to Cultural Identity*. Unwin Hyman, London, pp 125–140.

DeCorse, C. R. (1989b). Beads as chronological indicators in West African archaeology: a reexamination. *Beads* 1: 41–53.

DeCorse, C. R. (1999). Oceans apart: africanist perspectives in diaspora archaeology. In: Singleton T. (ed) *"I too, am America": Archaeological Studies of African-American life*. University Press of Virginia, Charlottesville, pp 132–155.
DeCorse, C. R. (2001). *An Archaeology of Elmina*. Smithsonian Institution Press, Washington D.C.
DeCorse, C. R. (2003). Toward a systematic bead description system: a view from the lower Falemme, Senegal. *Journal of African Archaeology* 1(1): 77–110.
Dias, O. Jr. (1988). A cerâmica neo-brasileira. *Arqueo-IAB—Textos Avulsos* 1: 3–13.
Dietler, M., and Herbich, I. (1989). Tich matek: the technology of Luo pottery production and the definition of ceramic style. *World Archaeology* 21(1): 148–164.
Dominguez, L. (1980). Cerámica transcultural en el sitio colonial Casa de la Obrapía. *Cuba Arqueológica II*, Edit. Oriente, Santiago de Cuba.
Ervedosa, C. (1980). *Arqueologia Angolana*. Edições 70, Lisboa.
Ferguson, L. (1991). Struggling with pots in Colonial South Carolina. In: McGuire R., Paynter R. (eds) *The Archaeology of Inequality*. Blackwell, Oxford, pp 28–39.
Ferguson, L. (1992). *Uncommon ground. Archaeology and early African America, 1650–1800*. Smithsonian Institution Press, Washington, D.C.
Figueiredo, L. (1993). *O Avesso da Memória: Cotidiano e Trabalho da Mulher em Minas Gerais no Século XVIII*. José Olympio, Rio de Janeiro.
Florentino, M. (1993). *Em Costas Negras: Uma História do Tráfico Atlântico de Escravos entre a África e o Rio de Janeiro*. Arquivo Nacional, Rio de Janeiro.
Florentino, M., and Góes, J. (1997). *A paz das Senzalas: Famílias Escravas e Tráfico Atlântico, Rio de Janeiro, c. 1790-c. 1850*, Rio de Janeiro, Civilização Brasileira.
Frank, B. E. (1998). *Mande Potters and Leather Workers*. Smithsonian Institution Press, Washington, D.C.
Franklin, M. (2001). The archaeological dimensions of soul food: interpreting race, culture, and Afro-Virginian identity. In: Orser C. E. Jr. (ed) *Race and the Archaeology of Identity*. The University of Utah Press, Salt Lake City, pp 88–107.
Funari, P. (1999). Etnicidad, identidad y cultura material: un estudio del cimarrón Palmares. In: Zarankin A., And Acuto F. (eds) *Sed non Satiata: teoría social en la arqueologia latinoamericana*. Ediciones del Tridente, Buenos Aires, pp 77–96.
Funari, P. (2007). The archaeological study of African diaspora in Brazil. In: Ogundiran A., Falola T. (eds) *Archaeology of Atlantic Africa and the African Diaspora*. Indiana University Press, Bloomington, p 355.
Gosden, C. (2001). Postcolonial archaeology: issues of culture, identity, and knowledge. In: Hodder I. (ed) *Archaeological Theory Today*. Polity Press, Cambridge, pp 241–261.
Gosselain, O. P. (1992). Technology and style: potters and pottery among Bafia of Cameroon. *Man* 27(3): 559–586.
Gundaker, G. (2000). Discussion: creolization, complexity, and time. *Historical Archaeology* 34(3): 124–133.
Hardesty, R. E. (2000). *A Refuge in Thunder. Candomblé and Alternative Spaces of Blackness*. Indiana University Press, Bloomington.
Hauser, M., and Armstrong, D. (1999). Embedded identities: piecing together relationships through compositional analysis of low-fired earthenwares. In: Hauser J. (ed) *African Sites Archaeology in the Caribbean*. Markus Wiener, Princeton, pp 65–93.
Hauser, M., and DeCorse, C. (2003). Low fired earthenwares in the African Diaspora: problems and prospects. *International Journal of Historical Archaeology* 7(1): 67–98.
Hodder, I. (1982). *The Present Past*. Batsford, London.
Hodder, I. (1987). The contextual analysis of symbolic meanings. In: Hodder I. (ed) *The Archaeology of Contextual Meanings*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
Holanda, S. B. (1994). *Caminhos e Fronteiras*. Companhia das Letras, São Paulo.
Howson, J. E. (1990). Social relations and material culture: a critique of the archaeology of plantation slavery. *Historical Archaeology* 24(4): 78–91.
Huffman, T. (1989). Ceramics, settlements and late iron age migrations. *African Archaeological Review* 7: 155–182.
Insoll, T. (1997). Iron Age Gao: an archaeological contribution. *Journal of African History* 38: 1–30.
Jacobus, A. L. (1996). Louças e cerâmicas no sul do Brasil no século XVIII: o registro de Viamão como estudo de caso. *Revista do CEPA* 20(23): 7–58.
Jacobus, A. L. (1997). *Resgate Arqueológico e Histórico do Registro de Viamão (Guarda Velha, Santo Antônio da Patrulha—RS)*. Unpublished thesis, Pontifícia Universidade Católica do Rio Grande do Sul, Porto Alegre, Brazil.

Karasch, M. C. (1996). Slave women on the Brazilian frontier in the nineteenth-century. In: Gaspar D., Hine D. (eds) *More than a Chattel. Black Women and Slavery in the Americas*. Indiana University Press, Bloomington, pp 79–96.

Karasch, M. (2000). *A Vida dos Escravos no Rio de Janeiro. 1808–1850*. Companhia das Letras, São Paulo.

Karasch, M. (2002). Central Africans in Central Brazil. In: Heywood L. (ed) *Central Africans and Cultural Transformations in the American Diaspora*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, pp 117–151.

Karasch, M. (2004). Guiné, Mina, Angola, and Benguela: African and Crioulo nations in Central Brazil, 1780–1835. In: Curto J., Lovejoy P. (eds) *Enslaving Connections. Changing Cultures of Africa and Brazil During the Era of Slavery*. Humanity Books, New York, pp 163–184.

Langsdorff, G. H. (1997). *Os Diários de Langsdorff—Mato Grosso e Amazônia*. Editora Fiocruz, Rio de Janeiro.

Larick, R. (1986). Age grading and ethnicity in the style of Loikop (Samburu) spears. *World Archaeology* 18: 269–283.

Lenharo, A. (1982). *Crise e Mudança na Frente Oeste de Colonização*. Editora UFMT, Cuiabá.

Lighfoot, K. (1995). Culture contact studies: redefining the relationship between prehistoric and historical archaeology. *American Antiquity* 26: 199–217.

Loren, D. D. (2000). The intersections of colonial policy and colonial practice: creolization on the eighteenth-century Louisiana/Texas frontier. *Historical Archaeology* 34(3): 85–98.

MacEachern, S. (1998). Scale, style and cultural variation: technological traditions in the northern Mandara mountains. In: Stark M. (ed) *The Archaeology of Social Boundaries*. Smithsonian Institution Press, Washington D.C., pp 107–131.

Mann, K. (2001). Shifting paradigms in the study of the African Diaspora and of Atlantic history and culture. *Slavery and Abolition* 22: 3–21.

McIntosh, S. K. (1995). *Excavations at Jenné-Jenno, Hambarketolo, and Kaniana (Inland Niger Delta, Mali), the 1981 Season*. University of California Press, Berkeley.

McIntosh, S. K., and Bocoum, H. (1999). New perspectives on Sincu Bara, a first millennium site in the Senegal Valley. *African Archaeological Review* 17(1): 1–43.

Mesquita, J. (1931). Grandeza e decadência da Serra-Acima. *Revista do Instituto Histórico e Geográfico de Mato Grosso* 28: 31–56.

Miller, J. C. (1988). *Way of Death. Merchant Capitalism and the Angolan Slave Trade, 1730–1830*. The University of Wisconsin Press, Madison.

Mintz, S. W., and Price, R. (1992). *The Birth of African-American Culture. An Anthropological Perspective*. Beacon, Boston.

Monteiro, J. M. (1994). *Negros da Terra: Índios e Bandeirantes nas Origens de São Paulo*. Companhia das Letras, São Paulo.

Mott, L. (1976). Subsídios à história do pequeno comércio no Brasil. *Revista de História* 53(105): 81–106.

Neimam, F. (1999). Dimensions of ethnicity. In: Franklin M., Fesler G. (eds) *Historical Archaeology, Identity Formation, and the Interpretation of Ethnicity*. Colonial Williamsburg Research Publications, Williamsburg, pp 139–149.

Neto, J. M. (2001). *Escravidão Negra no Grão-Pará*. Editora Paka-Tatu, Belém.

Nishida, M. (2003). *Slavery and Identity. Ethnicity, Gender, and Race in Salvador, Brazil*. Indiana University Press, Bloomington and Indianapolis.

Oliveira, M. (1995). Viver e Morrer no Meio dos Seus—Nações e Comunidades Africanas no Século XIX. *Revista USP* 28: 174–193.

Orser, C. E. Jr. (1998). The archaeology of African Diaspora. *Annual Review of Anthropology* 27: 63–82.

Orser, C. E. Jr., and Funari, P. (2001). Archaeology and slave resistance and rebellion. *World Archaeology* 33: 61–72.

Ortiz, F. (1983). *Contrapunteo Cubano del Tabaco y el Azúcar*. Ciencias Sociales, La Habana.

Otto, J. (1984). *Cannon's Point Plantation, 1794–1850: Living Conditions and Status Pattern in the Old South*. Academic, New York.

Palacin, L. et al (1995). *Historia de Goiás em documentos: I. Colônia*. Editora da UCG, Goiânia.

Perry, W., Paynter, R. (1999). Artifacts, ethnicity and the archaeology of African Americans. In: Singleton T. (ed) *"I too, am America": Archaeological Studies of African-American Life*. University Press of Virginia, Charlottesville, pp 299–310.

Phillipson, D. W. (1974). Iron Age history and archaeology in Zambia. *Journal of African History* 15(1): 1–25.

Pikirayi, I. (1993). *The Archaeological Identity of the Mutapa State*. Uppsala University, Uppsala.

Posnansky, M. (1999). West Africanist reflections on African-American archaeology. In: Singleton T. (ed) *"I too, am America": Archaeological Studies of African-American Life*. University Press of Virginia, Charlottesville, pp 21–37.

Ramos, A. (1951). *O Negro Brasileiro*. Graphia, São Paulo.

Reis, J. J. (2003). *Rebelião Escrava no Brasil. Revised and expanded edition*. Companhia Das Letras, São Paulo.

Ribeyrolles, C. (1941). *Brasil Pitoresco*. Livraria Martins, São Paulo.

Rio, J. (1906). *As Religiões no Rio*, Rio de Janeiro.

Rodrigues, N. (2004). *Os Africanos no Brasil*, reprint of the 1933 ed., Editora UNB, Brasília.

Russell, A. E. (1997). Material culture and African-American spirituality at the Hermitage. *Historical Archaeology* 31(2): 63–80.

Russel-Wood, A. J. (2001). Através de um prisma africano: uma nova abordagem ao estudo da diáspora africana no Brasil colonial. *Tempo* 12: 11–50.

Saint-Hilaire, A. (1938). *Viagem pelas Províncias do Rio de Janeiro e Minas Gerais*. Companhia Editora Nacional, São Paulo.

Samford, P. (1996). The archaeology of African-American slavery and material culture. *The William and Mary Quarterly* 53(1): 87–114.

Samford, P. (2004). Engendering enslaved communities on Virginia's and North Carolina's eighteenth- and nineteenth-century plantations. In: Galle J., Young A. (eds) *Engendering African American Archaeology. A Southern Perspective*. The University of Tennessee Press, Knoxville, pp 151–176.

Scheur, H. L. (1982). *A Tradição da Cerâmica Popular*. Editora Livramento, São Paulo.

Schuyler, R. (ed.) (1980). *Archaeological Perspectives on Ethnicity in América: Afro-American and Asian American Culture History*. Baywood, Farmingdale.

Schwartz, S. (1985). *Sugar Plantations in the Formation of Brazilian Society, 1550–1835*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

Seckinger, R. L. (1970). *Politics in Mato Grosso, 1821–1851*, Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Florida, Gainesville.

Shohat, E. (1992). Notes on the "post-colonial". *Social Text* 3132: 99–113.

Silva, J. V. (1995). *Mistura de Cores*. Editora UFMT, Cuiabá.

Singleton, T. A. (1996). The Archaeology of slave life. In: Orser C. Jr. (ed) *Images of the Recent Past. Readings in Historical Archaeology*. Altamira Press, Lanham, pp 141–165.

Singleton, T. A. (ed.) (1999a). *"I too, am America": Archaeological Studies of African-American Life*. University Press of Virginia, Charlottesville.

Singleton, T. A. (1999b). An introduction to African-American Archaeology. In: Singleton T. (ed) *"I too, am America": Archaeological Studies of African-American Life*. University Press of Virginia, Charlottesville, pp 1–17.

Singleton, T. A., and Souza, M. A. T. de (2009). Archaeologies of the African Diaspora: Brazil, Cuba, and United States. In Majewski, T., and Gaoimster, D. (eds.), *International Handbook of Historical Archaeology*, Springer, New York, pp. 449–469.

Siqueira, E. M. (2001). Resgate Histórico. In Fraga, L. (coord.), *Projeto de Levantamento e resgate do Patrimônio Histórico-Cultural da região da UHE-Manso. Relatório Final de Atividades*, Report prepared by the Instituto Goiano de Pré-História e Antropologia, Universidade Católica de Goiás for FURNAS—Centrais Elétricas S.A., Rio de Janeiro.

Siqueira, E. M. et al (1990). *O processo Histórico de Mato Grosso*. UFMT, Cuiabá.

Slenes, R. (1991). "Malungu, Ngoma vem!": África Coberta e Descoberta do Brasil. *Revista USP* 12: 48–67.

Slenes, R. (2002). The great porpoise-skull strike: central African water spirits and slave identity in early-nineteenth-century Rio de Janeiro. In: Heyworth L. (ed) *Central Africans and Cultural Transformations in the American Diaspora*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, pp 183–210.

Soares, M. (1998). Mina, Angola e Guine: Nomes d' Africa no Rio de Janeiro Setecentista. *Tempo* 3(6): 1–13.

Soares, M. (2000). *Devotos da Cor: Identidade Étnica, Religiosidade e Escravidão no Rio de Janeiro, Século XVIII*. Civilização Brasileira, Rio de Janeiro.

Soper, R. (1985). Roulette decoration on African pottery: technical considerations, dating and distributions. *The African Archaeological Review* 3: 29–51.

Souza, M. A. (2002). Entre práticas e discursos: a construção social do espaço no contexto de Goiás do século XVIII. In: Zarankin A., Senatore M. (eds) *Arqueologia da sociedade moderna na América do Sul: cultura material, discursos e práticas*. Ediciones Del Tridente, Buenos Aires, pp 63–86.

Stahl, A. B. (1999). The archaeology of global encounters viewed from Banda, Ghana. *African Archaeological Review* 16(1): 5–81.

Stahl, A. B. (2001). Historical process and the impact of the Atlantic trade on Banda, Ghana, c. 1800–1920. In: DeCorse C. (ed) *West Africa During the Atlantic Slave Trade. Archaeological Perspectives*. Leicester University Press, London, pp 38–58.

Sweet, J. (2003). *Recreating Africa: Culture, Kinship, and Religion in the African-Portuguese World—1441–1770*. The University of Carolina Press, Chapel Hill.

Symanski, L. C. (2006). *Slaves and Planters in Western Brazil: Material Culture, Identity and Power*. Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Florida, Gainesville.

Symanski, L. C., and Souza, M. A. (2001). A arqueologia histórica: relações sociais e construção de identidades na região do rio Manso, séculos XVIII e XIX. In Fraga, L. (coord.), *Projeto de Levantamento e resgate do Patrimônio Histórico-Cultural da região da UHE-Manso. Relatório Final de Atividades*, Report prepared by the Instituto Goiano de Pré-História e Antropologia, Universidade Católica de Goiás for FURNAS—Centrais Elétricas S.A., Rio de Janeiro.

Symanski, L. C., and Souza, M. A. (2002). Arqueologia histórica. In Ataídes, J. (coord.), *Resgate do Patrimônio Histórico-Cultural da região afetada pela linha de transmissão Manso-Nobres*. *Relatório final*, Report prepared by the Instituto Goiano de Pré-História e Antropologia, Universidade Católica de Goiás for FURNAS—Centrais Elétricas S.A., Rio de Janeiro.

Symanski, L. C., and Souza, M. A. (2007). O registro arqueológico dos grupos escravos: questões de visibilidade e preservação. *Revista do Patrimônio Histórico e Artístico Nacional* 33: 215–243.

Thornton, J. (1992). *Africa and Africans in the Making of the Atlantic World*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

Verger, P. (1987). *Fluxo e Refluxo do Tráfico de Escravos entre o Golfo de Benim e a Bahia de Todos os Santos: dos Séculos XVII a XIX*. Corrupio, São Paulo.

Vianna, S. A. (2001). Os grupos horticultores ceramistas da região do rio Manso – MT. Report prepared by the Instituto Goiano de Pré-História e Antropologia, Universidade Católica de Goiás for FURNAS – Centrais Elétricas S.A., Rio de Janeiro.

Viana Filho, L. (1988) [1946]. *O Negro na Bahia*., Editora Nova Fronteira, Rio de Janeiro.

Volpato, L. R. (1993). *Cativos do Sertão: Vida Cotidiana e Escravidão em Cuiabá em 1850–1888*. Editora Marco Zero, Cuiabá.

Volpato, L. R. (1996). Quilombos em Mato Grosso: resistência negra em área de fronteira. In: Reis J., Gomes F. (eds) *Liberdade por um Fio: História dos Quilombos no Brasil*. Companhia das Letras, São Paulo, pp 213–239.

Wheaton, T., and Garrow, P. (1985). Acculturation and the archaeological record in Carolina lowcountry. In: Singleton T. (ed) *The Archaeology of Slavery and Plantation Life*. Academic, Orlando, pp 239–259.

Wesler, K. W. (1999). Chronological sequences in Nigerian Ceramics. *African Archaeological review* 16 (4): 239–258.

Wilkie, L. (1999). Evidence of African continuities in the material culture of Clifton plantation, Bahamas. In: Haviser J. (ed) *African Sites in the Caribbean*. Marcus Wiener, Princeton, pp 264–275.

Wilkie, L. (2000). *Creating Freedom. Material Culture and African American Identity at Oakley Plantation, Louisiana, 1840–1950*. Louisiana State University Press, Baton Rouge.

Wimmer, L. (2004). Ethnicity and family formation among slaves on tobacco farms in the Bahian Reconcavo, 1698–1820. In: Curto J., Lovejoy P. (eds) *Enslaving Connections: Changing Cultures of Africa and Brazil During the Era of Slavery*. Humanity Books, Amherst, pp 149–162.

Young, A. (1997). Risk management strategies among African-American slaves at Locust Grove Plantation. *International Journal of Historical Archaeology* 1(1): 5–37.