

AFRICAN SLAVERY AND SALVATION
IN THE *DE INSTAURANDA AETHIOPUM SALUTE*
OF ALONSO DE SANDOVAL S. J. (1577-1652)

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1. Introduction

The connection between race and enslavement is not a necessary implication. Enslaving humans was accepted before modern racism based upon differences in religion and nationality, but not necessarily skin color¹. The connection between slavery and race is more evident after the mid-1500s, mainly on the basis of difference in skin color. Germeten shows that growth in the Atlantic slave trade strengthened this connection².

Hall argues that “slavery in Americas was justified by racist ideology³”, and in addition, one can say that it used a mechanism of hierarchically ordering people based on differences in skin color. He shows that, in medieval Spain, racial ideology was based on climatic determination; for this reason Eastern European peoples, such as the Slavs and Bulgarian, were taken as natural slaves. In Africa (before the Atlantic Trade), slavery motivated by differences of religion was more commonly Islamic⁴. Hall argues that, “In medieval Spain and Portugal, dark-skinned people were often identified as conquerors and rulers rather than as slaves⁵”. So, in medieval times, color difference was understood only as a corporeal characteristic. Therefore, racism and slavery were not naturally connected based on differences in skin color.¹

¹ Cfr. Gwendolyn Midlo Hall, *Slavery and African Ethnicities in the Americas: Restoring the Links*, University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill, 2005, pp. 8-9, where he defends that slavery is a historical, not a sociological category.

² Cfr. Nicole von Germeten, “Introduction”, in Alonso de Sandoval, *Treatise on Slavery: Selections from De instauranda Aethiopum salute*, Hackett Publishing Company, Inc., Indianapolis - Cambridge, 2008, p. XIV.

³ Cfr. Gwendolyn Midlo Hall, *Slavery and African Ethnicities in the Americas*, op. cit., p. 1.

⁴ Cfr. Paul E. Lovejoy, *A escravidão na África: uma história de suas transformações*, trans. by Regina A. R. Bhering and Luiz Guilherme Chaves, Civilização Brasileira, Rio de Janeiro, 2002, pp. 47-50.

⁵ Cfr. Gwendolyn Midlo Hall, *Slavery and African Ethnicities in the Americas...*, op. cit., p. 1.

Among all possible topics, one less treated is the importance of slavery in the Americas for the formation of a racial paradigm based upon differences of skin color. This hinges on Zack's proposed use of 'racial paradigm' refers to a "[...] set of ranges of beliefs about issues. [...] The issues in a racial paradigm are applied to human behavior, social situations, and events, so that the paradigm as a whole is a mechanism, and its ideational content a theory that provides explanations, predictions, and normative claims⁶". The formation of a racial paradigm⁷ is a complex matter, which obviously cannot be treated fully here, but we can explain how the use and manipulation of race based on skin color began and increased after the Atlantic slave trade.

Modern racism based on skin color as justifying the slavery of inferiors is strongly associated with the American slavery of Black-skinned people. Actually, Lovejoy suggests that slavery in Americas had two distinctive characteristics: "[...] the manipulation of race as way to control the captive population; and the dimension of an economic rationalization of the system⁸".

The first book written in Colonial times about the Black African slaves was *De instauranda Aethiopia salute* by Alonso de Sandoval⁹. But there is an ambiguity throughout *De instauranda* that is very difficult to solve: does Alonso de Sandoval's¹⁰ position give support or oppose slavery of Africans (and their descendants) in the New World? Against the back-

⁶ Cfr. Zack Naomi, "Philosophy and Racial Paradigms", in Tommy L. Lott and John P. Pittman (eds.), *A Companion to African-American Philosophy*, Blackwell Publishing, Malden - Oxford - Victoria, 2006, p. 239.

⁷ Cfr. Zack Naomi, "Philosophy and Racial Paradigms", op. cit., pp. 239-254.

⁸ Cfr. Paul E. Lovejoy, *A escravidão na África: uma história de suas transformações*, op. cit., p. 38.

⁹ Cfr. Alonso de Sandoval, *Treatise on Slavery: Selections from De instauranda Aethiopia salute*, transl. by Nicole von Germeten, Hackett Publishing Company Inc., Indianapolis - Cambridge, 2008, p. 206. (Hereafter: Alonso de Sandoval, *De instauranda*, op. cit.). Cfr. also Juliana Beatriz Almeida de Souza, "Las Casas, Alonso de Sandoval e a defesa da escravidão negra", *Topoi* 7 (2006) 25-59.

¹⁰ Alonso de Sandoval was born in Seville in 1577, son of Tristán Sánchez, a treasurer and notary of Viceroyalty of Peru. In 1584, the whole family returned from Spain to Lima where Sandoval had his formal education and was enrolled in the Jesuit College San Pablo. He entered the Society of Jesus in 1593 and was sent to Cartagena in 1605, where he worked for the rest of his life, with a stage of two years of studies at the Jesuit Library of Lima and missions among the Amerindians. He was made rector of the Jesuit College of Cartagena. He died in an epidemic in the year 1652, in Colombia. For a concentrated set of information about the biography and writings of Alonso de Sandoval, cfr. José del Rey Fajardo, *Los jesuitas en Cartagena de Indias, 1604-1767*, Pontificia Universidad Javeriana - CEJA, Bogotá, 2004, pp. 286-289. There are some incorrect information about the life of Alonso de Sandoval when it is reported that he was bishop of Lima and Cartagena de Indias in Luiz Fernando Restrepo, "Colonial Thought", in Susana Nuccetelli - Ofelia Schutte - Otávio Bueno (eds.), *A Companion of Latin American Philosophy*, Blackwell Publishing, Malden, Oxford - West Sussex, 2010, pp. 41 f.

drop of this large question, the main objective of Sandoval is to argue that African people need to be baptized, i.e., Christianized, because this is the only way to recover spiritual health, the soul's salvation¹¹.

This argument is found in the Book III of *De instauranda Aethiopum salute* entitled "Methods for promoting the salvation of blacks in the ports of Africa and the Indies¹²". In this book, Sandoval describes the methods for promoting spiritual salvation among the Ethiopic nation, which had left Africa and arrived in the Occidental Indies.

The point of this article is to study the set of beliefs expressed by Sandoval in his book, in which he endorses the necessity of the correct baptism of Africans' who arrived in the New World, while not clarifying his position on slavery itself.

Of course, it is necessary to understand appropriately Sandoval's position. He was not a strict preservationist, nor a strict abolitionist, regarding African Slavery; these terms were understood to mark radically opposite positions toward slavery. He was a Catholic priest with the clear understanding that his responsibility was to save souls. He had a pragmatic mind, which led him to offer a manual to help other priests in the service of the salvation of souls in the missions in Cartagena in the Indies and in Africa, due to the belief that many souls could be lost with misapplication of the sacraments. Thus, the book *De instauranda* is not a *tractatus* about slavery, but a handbook or set of orientations for missionary actions toward Africans who had recently arrived in the New World.

Germetten argues that "Sandoval perceived his work as encouraging a humane and just inclusion of Africans into the Catholic Church, despite the fact that his words indirectly contributed to formulating racist ideologies¹³". This position appears correct and will be defended through a close textual exposition of Book III of *De instauranda*.

In fact, Alonso de Sandoval deserves more attention in studies of slavery; *A Companion to African-American Studies*¹⁴ and *A Companion to African American Philosophy*¹⁵ never quote this author. In these *Companions*, Bartolomé de Las Casas and Ginés de Sepúlveda are quoted as the first important men who conducted a legendary debate regarding slavery in the New World¹⁶. However, this was about Amerindian, not African, enslavement.

¹¹ About the position of Sandoval cfr. also Juliana Beatriz Almeida de Souza, "Las Casas, Alonso de Sandoval e a defesa da escravidão negra", op. cit., 42-43.

¹² Cfr. Alonso de Sandoval, *De instauranda*, op. cit., pp. 99-168.

¹³ Cfr. Nicole von Germetten, "Introduction", op. cit., p. XIV.

¹⁴ Cfr. Lewis R. Gordon and Jane Anna Gordon (eds.), *A Companion to African-American Studies*, Blackwell Publishing, Malden - Oxford - Victoria, 2006, p. 668.

¹⁵ Cfr. Alton Hornsby (ed.), *A Companion to African American History*, Blackwell Publishing, Malden - Oxford - Victoria, 2005, p. 564.

¹⁶ Cfr. Lewis R. Gordon and Jane Anna Gordon, "Introduction: On Working Through a Most Difficult Terrain", in Lewis R. Gordon and Jane Anna Gordon (eds.), *A Companion to African-American Studies*, Blackwell Publishing, Malden - Oxford -

2. *De instauranda Aethiopum salute*: A Manual to the Mission Among African Slaves

The first edition of 1627 was written in Baroque Spanish: "Naturaleza, Policia sagrada i profana, costumbres i ritos, disciplina i catecismo evangelico de todos los Etiópes, por el P<adre> Alonso de Sandoval. Natural de Toledo, de la Compañia de Jesus, Rector del Collegio de Cartagena de las Índias", printed in Seville by Francisco de Lira. In the *Dedicatory* to the Father Mutio Vitelleschi, Sandoval phrases the title in Latin: *De instauranda Aethiopum salute*¹⁷, or 'On Restoring Ethiopian Salvation'¹⁸.

In this title, Sandoval expresses inspiration from the great works of José de Acosta (1540–1600): *De procuranda Indorum salute* (1588). Acosta¹⁹'s book *De procuranda* is quoted in two crucial passages of Book III, cap. IX and XX. Germeten suggests that Sandoval did for the Africans in America what Acosta did for the Amerindian²⁰. However, there is no legal basis established in the time of Sandoval about the slavery of Blacks like that used by Acosta in the treatment of the topic of Amerindian slavery.

The lack of any legal, philosophical or theological justification concerning the enslavement of Africans or the need to evangelize them was Sandoval's incentive in elaborating a mix of Biblical exegesis, natural history and fantasy showing that Africa was a place in the world where Devil dominated²¹. Using ideas about the action of the Devil was important in justifying the actions of the Society of Jesus²².

Victoria, 2006, pp. XX-XXII. About Las Casas, cfr. Juliana Beatriz Almeida de Souza, "Las Casas, Alonso de Sandoval e a defesa da escravidão negra", op. cit., 37: "Las Casas antecipa, portanto, essa crítica na medida em que, ao discutir a guerra justa, encontra no aprisionamento na África a razão da injustiça da prática ibérica na escravização dos negros".

¹⁷ The second edition was amplified with a index and published in two parts: "Tomo Primero. *De instauranda Aethiopum salute*: Historia de Aethiopia, naturaleza, Policia sagrada y profana, Costumbres, ritos y catechismo evangelico, de todos los Aethiopes con que se restaura la Salud de sus almas – Dividida en dos tomos, ilustrados de nuevo en esta segunda impresion, con cosas curiosas y provechosas, y indice muy copioso. Por el P<adre> Alonso de Sandoval de la Compañia de Jesus, natural de Toledo". Printed with special right in Madrid by Alonso de Paredi, in 1647. There is a modern edition of 1956, published in Bogotá and edited by Angel Valtierra based on the edition of 1627 and another of 1987 by Enriqueta Vila Vilar based on the same original edition. There is no modern edition about the text of 1647. Cfr. Alonso de Sandoval, *Un tratado sobre la esclavitud, De instauranda Aethiopum salute*, by transcripción y traducción de Enriqueta Vila Vilar. Alianza Editorial, Madrid, 1987, 614 pp. (Hereafter Alonso de Sandoval, *De instauranda*, op. cit., 1987).

¹⁸ Cfr. Nicole von Germeten, "Introduction", op. cit., p. XIV, and cfr. Alonso de Sandoval, *De instauranda*, op. cit., p. 7.

¹⁹ Cfr. José de Acosta, *De procuranda Indorum salute*, ed. by Luciano Pereña, Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas (C.S.I.C.), Madrid, 1984, 521 pp.

²⁰ Cfr. Nicole von Germeten, "Introduction", op. cit., pp. XXV ff.

²¹ Cfr. Enriqueta Vila Vilar, "Introducción", in Alonso de Sandoval, *Un tractado sobre la esclavitud*, Alianza Editorial, Madrid, 1987, pp. 36-37.

²² Cfr. Nicole von Germeten, "Introduction", op. cit., pp. XXI-XXIII.

The sense of the Latin title is not absolutely clear, but Sandoval tries to explain the meaning:

“How to restore the salvation of the blacks”, because its primary and fundamental goal is not to motivate people to go to their lands to convert them (although this is a secondary goal) but instead to go to the ports where the slaves disembark. These slaves are incorrectly judged to be Christians, so we must ask them if they have been baptized. If they have not, we must instruct them. Once they have been well instructed, we can baptize them and restore their spiritual health, which has been lost²³.

Sandoval believed that *De instauranda* would explain the methods for restoring the spiritual health to African people²⁴. He exposes more clearly the objective of the book in the *Dedicatory* to Father Mutio Vitelleschi: “The book’s purpose is to help people who are poor and abandoned. Although they are black, they can be washed clean by the purity and whiteness of Christ’s blood²⁵”.

The playful contrasting of the colors black and white is a noteworthy way to express ideas about eternal salvation or damnation and the human situation in this world. If we take care about the ‘Approval of Father Vicente Imperial, *Predicador* [Preacher] of the Company of Jesus’, we note, with Germeten, that he “[...] repeatedly uses the color white to symbolize purity and goodness, while black represents sin, ugliness, and the devil²⁶”. As Father Vicente Imperial suggests, “This book hopes to transform them –if not their skin color, it will at least make their souls white with grace. Father Alonso de Sandoval wrote this book in order to whiten so many souls and free them from the ugly blackness of sin²⁷”. In fact, here he quotes Jeremiah 13:23: “Si mutare potest Aethiops pellem suam aut pardus varietates suas”. This is an interesting quote, because it suggests an interpretation on which there is something original and immutable in the corporal condition of the African Black people. Although Sandoval never deduces directly the necessity of corporal slavery, it is an implicit idea.

Furthermore, this suggests a hierarchical scheme ordering people in the world. The source of this idea is Acosta²⁸. As Germeten argues:

²³ Cfr. Alonso de Sandoval, *De instauranda*, op. cit., pp. 8-9.

²⁴ Cfr. Nicole von Germetten, “Introduction”, op. cit., note 11, p. 9: “Throughout *De instauranda* Sandoval uses biblical references and accounts taken from other ancient and medieval sources to argue that the apostles went to parts of Africa and preached Christianity. Since that time, he believes, the devil (and, closely linked, Islam) has influenced Africans to lose their Christianity and their ‘spiritual health’. He hopes his work will return this health to them”.

²⁵ Cfr. Alonso de Sandoval, *De instauranda*, op. cit., p. 7.

²⁶ Cfr. Nicole von Germetten, “Introduction”, op. cit., p. 6.

²⁷ Cfr. Alonso de Sandoval, *De instauranda*, op. cit., p. 7.

²⁸ Cfr. Joseph de Acosta, *The Natural and Moral History of the Indies – Volume 1: The Natural History*, ed. by Clements R. Markham, Cambridge University Press, New York, 2009; Joseph de Acosta, *The Natural and Moral History of the Indies – Volume 2: The Moral History*, ed. by Clements R. Markham, Cambridge University Press, New York, 2009.

“Acosta put nomadic, hunter-gatherer societies on the bottom level of his rankings; the Spanish Acosta clearly saw social hierarchies as a sign of an advanced civilization²⁹”. Sandoval expresses this idea when, in the guide for the Christian reader, he writes: “[...] in this world they are slaves or the world’s feet³⁰”. Nowhere is there any account maintaining the equality (legal or anthropological) of Ethiopians and Spaniards. The equality is implicit only when the topic is souls and the powers of the Christian faith.

In the imagery proposed by Sandoval, the Black people –the *negros*– are portrayed as being of little intellectual capacity. Hence, religious instruction for them should not include difficult topics. The terminology used by Sandoval holds our attention. The new coming African Blacks in Cartagena were called *bozales*. The Blacks acculturated to Colonial society, or the ones who had learned the Spanish language, were called *ladino*. And normally, Sandoval uses *moreno*, instead of *negro*, for Christianized Africans.

He believes that the dangerous situation of the Black African slave will be corrected in Heaven, if they are correctly baptized. This is the great responsibility to act for the minister of sacraments in the ethnocentric thought of Sandoval. The necessity for the spiritual salvation of Africans is clear to him. Another implicit idea is a great innovation of Sandoval’s book: the enslaved Black Africans are humans, so it is mandatory to Christianize them.

Spiritual salvation does not imply the abolition of bodily slavery. Sandoval never explicitly considers criticizing the enslavement of Africans, at all. However, as Blackburn³¹ suggests, he focused his criticisms on the methods of slavery and the lack of pity for the slaves, similarly to Father António Vieira in Brazil. Sandoval shows that slaves talked to him about their absurd condition: “They complain about their work; they describe how uncharitable their masters are; they describe the inhumane treatment they receive when they are sick, and they beg me to help provide them with shelter or gifts because they are so abandoned and needy³²”. Nevertheless, the interesting point is that he never criticized the use of a Black people as instruments³³.

²⁹ Cfr. Nicole von Germeten, “Introduction”, op. cit., p. XIII.

³⁰ Cfr. Alonso de Sandoval, *De instauranda*, op. cit., p. 9.

³¹ Cfr. Robin Blackburn, *The Making of New World Slavery: From the Baroque to the Modern, 1492–1800*, Verso, New York, 1998, p. 74: “Belief in the curse was to be entertained even by clerics who denounced the inhumane treatment of African slaves, such as the Spaniard Alonso de Sandoval, who ministered to the slave arrivals at Cartagena, and the Portuguese Antonio Vieira, who preached against the abuse of slaves in Brazil”.

³² Cfr. Alonso de Sandoval, *De instauranda*, op. cit., p. 108.

³³ The importance of slavery to the economy is object of an abundant bibliography, mainly to the production of sugar, tobacco, coffee, rice, and silver, in the Americas. We can check some information in David Eltis, *Europeans and the Rise of African Slavery in the Americas*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge - New York, 2006, p.

Vilar suggests that Sandoval does not assume a strict position against slavery in any way in the *De instauranda*, because: either he would not otherwise have received the *Licentiae* to publish the book; or he did not think that slavery was unfair, even though the methods could be more humanitarian; or for both reasons. The fact is that the ambition regarding African newcomers and the energy applied to helping them were constants in the life of Sandoval. And one disciple of Sandoval, Pedro Claver (1580-1654), followed his methods and advice under the motto *aethiopum semper servus* - 'Slave of the Slaves' - becoming an important saint in the Society of Jesus³⁴.

3. The Potential for Blacks to Understand the Christian Faith

Learning the basic principles of the Christian religion is a condition for wanting (or needing) baptism and thus also becoming Christian. Indeed, Book 3 is the central part in which Sandoval details baptism and catechism. For Sandoval, being Christian implies baptism and the reception of other indispensable sacraments. Indeed, the main point concerns the potential to understand the knowledge that Christian faith requires. In the time of Sandoval, there was no agreement on whether Blacks have or lack the power to understand the catechism. The first part of Book 3 treats of the natural capacity for understanding the principles necessary for the baptism of Black African adults.

The 'ecclesiastic imperialism' that characterized others' belief systems as invalid is, as argues Germeten³⁵, expressed in Book III. This was a method built into the Society of Jesus and it can be noted in Acosta³⁶ too, when he proposes advancing the faith to others through evangelization.

Book 3 is composed of 22 chapters discussing the conditions that were mandatory for Blacks to receive baptism, and the methods for achieving them. Chapter 22 is a reproduction of an instructional letter written in 1614 by the Archbishop of Seville, D. Pedro de Castro Quiñones about the

353. Maestri suggests that the use of Africans instead of the Indian population was rather a question of market than a problem of the not adaptation with the work of Amerindians. Cfr. Mário Maestri Filho, *Breve história da escravidão*, Mercado Aberto, Porto Alegre, 1986, p. 112. Lovejoy shows that the slavery is connected with the labour force and production, for this reason was indispensable to the economy in the American's Colonies. Cfr. Paul E. Lovejoy, *A escravidão na África: uma história de suas transformações*, op. cit., p. 497.

³⁴ Cfr. Enriqueta Vila Vilar, "Introducción", op. cit., p. 34; Alberto Gutiérrez S.J., "San Pedro Claver - precursor de la defensa de los derechos humanos", *Studia Missionaria* 55 (2006) 49-51.

³⁵ Cfr. Nicole von Germeten, "Introduction", op. cit., p. XV; p. 99.

³⁶ Cfr. José de Acosta, *De procuranda Indorum salute*, ed. by Luciano Pereña, Educación y Evangelización, Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas (C.S.I.C.), Madrid, 1984, p. 521.

value of baptizing Black people "[...] in order to assure their salvation as much as possible³⁷".

The basic premise of Sandoval is that baptism is the door to the good³⁸. This premise implies that the whole of humanity, through baptism, could access the Good, i.e., eternal salvation in Heaven. So, if Black African slaves would be baptized correctly, they could access the good like a White European free man. This is a strong idea in the *De instauranda*, because it expresses that the whole of humanity, independently of position in the earthly hierarchy, could access the good.

Frequently, he expresses concerns regarding what is mandatory for the administration of baptism (as well as other sacraments). The case of baptism is decisive, because its correct administration is indispensable for eternal salvation. However, when in doubt, the minister needs to be careful not to administer baptism twice, which would result in sacrilege. The procedure, in case of doubt, was baptism *sub conditione*. If baptism is the door to the salvation, and it is possible to lessen uncertainty as to the validity of baptism, one must establish criteria for discerning if the Blacks from Africa were baptized or not.

Chapter 1 addresses conditions in which the minister perfectly executes functions for the administration of sacraments to Blacks. Actually, correct administration of the sacraments contributes toward the final end, the happiest end, which is eternal salvation³⁹. The minister is the instrument of salvation, and if he cannot help all people to be saved, his performance fails. From the viewpoint of the value of the soul, all are important. There is no hierarchy here, but, if anything, a kind of inversion of merit. Who are 'in the world's feet' need more of the works of the ministers. The motivation of the minister is charity.

I believe that confessing, converting, teaching, baptizing, and guiding these poor black *bozales* and putting them on the road to heaven is the most meritorious work, of the greatest glory to the Lord, and the most advantageous and useful for us⁴⁰.

Sandoval offers some warnings mainly to the Jesuits who work with Blacks. The warnings are to the minister to not wait for someone to ask for help but to act immediately. Efforts to free Black souls cannot be measured⁴¹. Even though offering medicine to the soul is not a topic of choice,

³⁷ Cfr. Alonso de Sandoval, *De instauranda*, op. cit., p. 159.

³⁸ Cfr. Alonso de Sandoval, *De instauranda*, op. cit., 1987, p. 363.

³⁹ Ibid., 1987, p. 365.

⁴⁰ Cfr. Alonso de Sandoval, *De instauranda*, op. cit., p. 100.

⁴¹ Ibid., pp. 101-102: "The first is that we cannot wait to be called to help people who need us. [...] My second important warning is that when you see a sick slave, help him immediately, even if he does not seem that badly off. [...] <The third:> We must make the doctors remember to inform us when they find someone with an incurable disease. [...] Ultimately, we cannot think only of successful conversions. We should dwell on the will of God. We can do nothing more than our best to please God".

baptism is not a case of compulsory action. Sandoval proposes that the priest as instrument of salvation, in this sense, needs to be used correctly.

The variety of African language was one of the most practical problems in the administration of sacraments detected by Sandoval. He registered more than seventy of them. There are two problems with the variety of languages: one concerned the validity of a sacrament of confession; and the other, regarding the catechism, is the necessity for people to understand what is being said by the minister. For this reason, Sandoval dedicates Chapter 2 to detailing the necessity of interpreting other languages⁴².

Chapter 3 follows a logical order: do Blacks have the potential to understand principles of the Christian faith? If Africans were not able to understand the principles of the Christian faith, why would the effort be justified? Sandoval answered that yes, they can understand, and this justifies the effort of the institutions of his time to teach and save Africans⁴³. We can note a strong ecclesiastic imperialism, as we earlier saw was observed by Germeten.

However, Sandoval shows that it is not a question of the equivalence of all humans' potential to understand Christian faith. There is a gradation of potentiality, similar to the different capacities of the use of intellect⁴⁴. Therefore, Blacks are not unable to be Christian⁴⁵ and they are capable of salvation.

In a sequence of examples, Sandoval discusses a black man who can understand a contradiction; another who is grateful because he received baptism; another who can ask a question about the mystery of Trinity, and so on, with a long list. All these cases are used to demonstrate the natural potential of Blacks for Christian faith.

When Sandoval expressed his own opinion, he demonstrated more empirical conclusions, moving away from an ecclesiastic imperialism. He said: "I appreciate these kinds of questions from a black man like him because they prove to me that these people are not really *bozales*. When they speak in their own language, they seem as intelligent as if they were *ladinos*"⁴⁶.

We note the difficulty in understanding the ambiguous position of Sandoval. Of course, 'ambiguous' can be an anachronistic interpretation, but if we work only with the text of *De instauranda*, it is possible to find ambiguity implicitly in his ideas.

⁴² Ibid., pp. 102-105. The Society of Jesus was the owner of some slaves who work like interprets to solve this problem of communication. Sandoval learned some languages to enable and simplify the evangelization.

⁴³ Ibid., p. 106: "Our Lord God, the Catholic Church, the pope, the monarchs of Castile and Portugal, and the Company of Jesus have shown that they value black people, because they work to convert and save them in Ethiopia, Guinea, Congo, and the Philippines. I believe that black people are worthy of all this effort".

⁴⁴ Cfr. Alonso de Sandoval, *De instauranda*, op. cit., 1987, p. 375-376.

⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 376.

⁴⁶ Cfr. Alonso de Sandoval, *De instauranda*, op. cit., p. 108.

Sandoval did not assume that Black Africans, in general, were animals. Furthermore, when he writes about them, he shows compassion toward them.

These poor people suffer so much violence in these miserable times. It seems they are not capable of receiving the sacraments because they are thought to be *bozales*. Because they do not understand our language, they are left to die without the sacraments, as if they were beasts. I know one black *bozal* man who is certainly not a beast. [...] I know a black woman of the Nalu caste [ethnicity] who is a *bozal* but surely not an animal⁴⁷.

The sequence of cases and reasons in Chapter 3 support two claims:

First, these blacks are not the beasts that some people like to think they are. These people *want* them to be incapable of Christianity. The blacks should not be considered infants, either. They are adult men, and as such they should be baptized after being instructed and giving their free consent. When we instruct them, we have to consider what nation they come from and how much they might understand, because every nation differs⁴⁸.

If they are animals, it is easier to justify the instrumentation of slavery. But, how is it possible to understand that Blacks have a potential for the knowledge like Spanish Whites, while they are subdued as slaves (without war or in some other justified way, when that is the case)? It is necessary to know clearly that Sandoval works not like a philosopher, or a jurist, or a theologian, but like a priest who shepherds souls, like the mission of the Society of Jesus.

The second point that he deduces is:

[...] these people cannot understand us as quickly as Spaniards do, so pastors and ministers must teach them slowly and spend a great deal of time on their catechism. However, they do possess free will and exercise it in all of their actions, like any other human being. They have wars and make peace, they marry, buy and sell, barter and exchange just like we do. Sometimes, very rarely, the slaves do not want to be baptized⁴⁹.

Sandoval rejects the reasoning according to which Blacks who do not learn Spanish are unable to adopt the faith. He inverts the ethnocentric position, putting himself in the place of Africans:

I conclude by rebuking those who say that the blacks are incapable of receiving the sacraments and living by God's law or that blacks cannot understand these concepts. [...] I confess that when a black person speaks to me in his language, I do not understand a word and seem more *bozal* than he does when I speak to him in my language. I believe that all people confess the same. Why do we think that a black person should understand our language? Why do we use their ignorance as an excuse to avoid working with such needy and hopeless people⁵⁰?

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Ibid., pp. 109-110.

⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 110.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

Chapter 3 is conclusive in some points: first, if Sandoval does not reject slavery openly, it is clear that he assumes a position against the undignified and inhumane treatment of all slaves by corporal suffering. Therefore, he does not accept that a slave should be battered and endure an excessive injury.

Second, the hierarchy of races does not necessarily correspond to the nature of intellect, or the nature of the mind of individual people. Civilization and Christianization can help people to upgrade the uses of the intellect. This is an advanced argument that shows a comprehension, within limits, that there is no reason that sustains a real difference that justifies the enslavement of some races based on the lack of spiritual potential. But, in another sense, civilization and Christianization cannot change such corporeal characteristics as skin color. We can recall the quote from Jeremiah 13:23: "Si mutare potest Aethiops pellem suam aut pardus varietates suas". Given that Sandoval did not advance a philosophical argument in treating this point, this ambiguity remains in the *De instauranda*.

The third point is that, if he is not against slavery, then how is it possible to harmonize this with the thesis that Blacks have free will or, as he said, that they have the use of the will in *all* human actions? We can note that he talks about the necessity of voluntary acceptance of baptism (in the case of adults), but why he did not thus infer the wrongness of slavery and forced servitude?

4. The Methods of Christianizing Others in the Lower Ranks

Explicitly, Sandoval defends Blacks' potential for understanding the faith and their free will. In Chapter 4, he advocates their being baptized in the ports. He uses a vast number of narrations of priests and laymen who attest, with juridical certification, to a great quantity of null baptisms in African ports⁵¹.

In Chapter 5, the argument for nullity was based on the point that baptism lacking correct ritual administration, sufficient knowledge of the value of baptism, or the willingness of its subject is rendered null. Sandoval said: "all Christian laws, Church councils, and Christian scholars and authorities agree that when adults are baptized, they must willingly and knowingly agree to being baptized. Otherwise, their baptisms are invalid⁵²".

The opinion of Sandoval is that the ritual, if wrongly performed, is worse than it is good for evangelization. This position demonstrates the sensibility and pragmatic solution to a problem of concern to Sandoval: is

⁵¹ Ibid., pp. 112-114.

⁵² Ibid., p. 117.

it possible to be certain about the baptism of Black Africans upon their arrival in Cartagena? A doubt existed about the spiritual salvation of these people as promoted by ministers of the Catholic Church. Therefore, a solution proposed by Sandoval was that baptism *sub conditione* applied to all Black Africans arriving in Cartagena. The justification was that the sacrilege of double baptism was better than the risk of losing so many souls.

Applying the concept of certainty to Black African baptism was the topic of Chapter 5. This kind of certainty does not concern supernatural certainty, which is a topic about God. Nor is it a topic of natural certainty, even though it concerns natural things. It is, rather, a topic of moral certainty taken as an *existimatio*, because there is no evidence about the matters, and it is always subject to change. However, this kind of certainty is about the "[...] verisimilar conjectures and probable grounds that in this area use the Doctors⁵³". Really, this concept of moral certainty is frequently invoked in the Letter of the Archbishop of Seville in Chapter 22⁵⁴, where he discusses the action of the priest regarding an African Black recently arrived. That moral certainty was constantly associated with the cleric's consciousness of having satisfied the obligation to save souls.

Sandoval explains how to detect invalid baptism. The central point is lack of consent. He notes the necessity of "[...] teaching each person about baptism. All must be instructed before they can be baptized. Baptismal water is just water on the body, providing no spiritual benefit if the soul has not received the faith⁵⁵". This instruction is necessary for each person. Baptism is not a mass event without personal learning. Sandoval shows his empirical background: "I work with each person individually, so in this case they are not afraid and know that what I am doing will not hurt them⁵⁶". In fact, it is not necessary to have a perfect comprehension or knowledge of the faith. Sandoval said: "They must understand that baptism is a ceremony connected to religion and a belief in God and that it makes them friends or sons of God, takes away their sins, and helps them go to heaven⁵⁷".

Without this learning a Black man could misunderstand baptism as a ritual of Whites, and he could simply associate 'baptism' with 'things of White men'. If this occurs, it would be a great problem because the Black Africans could also associate the word 'Christian' with 'White Portuguese' or 'White Spaniard'. If the Black Africans are not sufficiently informed,

⁵³ Cfr. Alonso de Sandoval, *De instauranda*, op. cit., 1987, p. 392. That sentence was not selected and translated by Germeten.

⁵⁴ Cfr. Alonso de Sandoval, *De instauranda*, op. cit., pp. 159-168.

⁵⁵ Cfr. Alonso de Sandoval, *De instauranda*, op. cit., 1987, p. 392. That sentence was not selected and translated by Germeten.

⁵⁶ Cfr. Alonso de Sandoval, *De instauranda*, op. cit., p. 119.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 118.

they could not understand the meaning of the word 'Christian'. Sandoval argues: "They cannot only say that it is something Christian, Portuguese, or white, without knowing what the word 'Christian' means, other than that it refers to a person who has taken away their liberty. This is not enough information!⁵⁸". In this point, he expresses the importance of baptism as a universal signal of being Christian. Baptism is a ritual of the Christian as Christian, not the Christian as White.

Whites are their worst enemies: they take the slaves from their homelands, separate them from their parents and siblings, take away their liberty, put them in chain gangs, shackles, and prisons, and then confine them in a ship to take them to distant lands, without hope of returning to their own⁵⁹.

After we read this description, we reflect upon the conclusion, which for us is necessary: the problem is not the methods of slavery but slavery *per se*. But this is not so in Sandoval's *De instauranda*. Regarding the administration of sacraments, he is strongly in favor of respecting the freely given consent of Blacks. Administration needs both conditions: comprehension and consent.

If the catechism was not sufficient, or if it is absent, it would be impossible to convince Africans to consent to baptism. Waiting for Africans' consent without the correct teaching was immoral, for Sandoval⁶⁰. Requiring consent without sufficient understanding of the reality of the ritual of baptism was the worst thing that a minister could do for evangelization.

In Chapter 8, Sandoval suggests the strategies to examine when Blacks are apt for catechism. He provides a list of procedures more appropriate for Africans and suggests a way of teaching the catechism. And he spoke of improvement in their lives.

Make them understand that the Lord did them great mercy in bringing them to a Christian land. It is better to be a slave here than free in their lands, because here, even though the body suffers working in captivity, the soul rests in the liberty that is attained through the holy water of baptism. Tell them that in this land they have family and that if they serve well, they will have a good captivity, and they will be content and well dressed. Tell them to give up their sadness and pain and be happy⁶¹.

Sandoval's distinction between the liberty of the soul versus the liberty of the body is here explicit. There is no clear treatment of these concepts. Sandoval, in his role as priest, must treat the first. With this

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Ibid., p. 119.

⁶⁰ Cfr. Alonso de Sandoval, *De instauranda*, op. cit., 1987, p. 397: "Y assi digo que con esto nos es posible (moralmente hablando) recibirle de su voluntad, sino forzados, por no poder contradzir a sus amos, que ven los traen en tan crueles prisiones, donde si no les obedecen se vengaran dellos con mayor crueldad". The translation of Germeten lost the subtleties of Baroque Spanish language.

⁶¹ Cfr. Alonso de Sandoval, *De instauranda*, op. cit., p. 118.

difference, we can note another point about spiritual salvation and spiritual damnation.

Sandoval thinks that spiritual damnation is the fate for all non-Christians. But damnation does not correlate with slavery, or the privation of corporal liberties. Blacks could be enslaved even if they were Christian. So becoming Christian does not have the abolition of Slavery as a necessary consequence. Spiritual salvation is the only necessary result.

Sandoval discusses how to persuade slaves of the truth of baptism:

You must be convinced that they were baptized properly, with words said in their own language, and with some understanding of the purpose or meaning of baptism. Even the roughest and most confused person must understand that it is the water of God for the children, captives, and servants of God, in order that they may do what God commands and clean their souls of sin, allowing their souls to go to heaven and bringing them into Christian brotherhood with the whites⁶².

Two points are to be noted: (i) In heaven, all baptized people, White or Black, are joined in the relation of brotherhood. And he adds the idea that the water makes Black people sons of the same God as the Whites⁶³. The language utilized by Sandoval is charged by an ideological position that associates white color with the heaven and the salvation.

This can be further explained, if we note the second point: (ii) baptism cleans souls. In other words, baptism makes souls white. Elsewhere, he says of Blacks who need a second baptism: "They should know that when they are baptized a second time, their souls will become white and washed clean of sin, and they remain children of God⁶⁴". The association of cleaning with the white color can explain the ideological position of Sandoval. And if accepted that, one can support the racial paradigm of under-estimation, including cruelty, directed toward people of black skin color.

5. Concluding Remarks

The following are the set of beliefs that support the racial paradigm present in Sandoval's *De instauranda*: 1. Black Africans are "the world's feet"; 2. They can comprehend the faith; 3. They have free will; 4. They can consent to the Christian faith; 5. If 2 and 3 are true, they are not bestial; 6. They can be enslaved (from 1).; 7. If 2 and 4 are correct, they can be properly baptized and can, thus, be saved; 8. 6 does not contradict 7.

Sandoval takes care to treat each person individually, not generically. Proposition number eight can clash with this point. But, this is not the absolute and explicit position of Sandoval in all cases. He is sensible with

⁶² Ibid., p. 131.

⁶³ Ibid., p. 134.

⁶⁴ Ibid., p. 136.

some individuals. However, we cannot find propositions in *De instauranda* that refute proposition 8.

But, it is the proposition that, in a time when slavery is despised, we can remove from the text and analyze to comprehend better how slavery in America was so brutal.

Reading the *De instauranda* as a book that express a racial paradigm that Black Africans need to be baptized and purified, it is not their bodies but their souls that can be saved. So, by not discussing the justification for slavery, but by expressing the necessity of salvation through proper baptism, Sandoval did not challenge the pro-slavery paradigm.

Facilitating spiritual salvation was the main task of Sandoval toward the Black Africans. He was a priest and missionary, in accord with his function in the Society of Jesus and the Catholic Church. Even though there is no direct criticism of slavery, there was criticism of the atrocious treatment of enslaved Blacks, possibly motivated by a Christian vision of the fraternity uniting all humanity.

RESUMEN

Objetivo del artículo es estudiar la relación entre esclavitud y salvación en el Lib. 3 del *De instauranda Aethiopum salute* (1627) de Alonso de Sandoval (1577-1652). Esta obra es un manual de misión para restaurar la salvación de los negros y garantizar su salvación. La salvación espiritual no es incompatible con la esclavitud. Pretendemos demostrar que la relación entre raza y esclavitud no es necesaria, sino construida junto con un paradigma racial basado en las diferencias de color de la piel. Aunque Sandoval sea un crítico de los métodos brutales de esclavitud, no lo es de ella en sí misma. La esclavitud no es un obstáculo para la salvación. Pues, la condición básica es que las personas sean correctamente bautizadas. Así que la correcta administración del bautismo, dependiente de la comprensión de los principios de la fe cristiana y la aceptación libre, es la labor más importante de Sandoval en este texto.