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Breaking the Silence

Racial Subjectivities, Abolitionism, and Public Life in Mid-1870s Recife

Celso Thomas Castilho and Rafaella Valença de Andrade Galvão

> *Há tempo de calar e há tempo de falar. O tempo de calar passou, começou o tempo de falar.*

On these terms, the Afro-Brazilian journalist, educator, and law-school graduate Felipe Neri Collaço (1815–1894) launched the abolitionist newspaper *O Homem*. The opening line, in all its original rhythmic verve, put the northeastern city of Recife on notice: "There is a time to keep silent, and a time to speak up. The time for silence has passed, it is now time to speak up."[1] It conveyed an emboldened and, to many, a dangerously unencumbered Collaço. The well-known sixty-year-old appeared unconstrained by the decades-long relationship he had kept with the ruling Conservative Party. More frightening, perhaps, to the governing class, Collaço's introductory article immediately brought to light the struggles afflicting Recife's "men of color." These ranged from the administration's expunging of prominent Afro-descendants from public posts to the police's dispersal of a meeting where men of color had gathered to sign a petition.[2] In denouncing and linking together what may have otherwise been regarded as separate incidents, and in redefining these events as unconstitutional affronts on Recife's "men of color," Collaço deliberately broke with the entrenched code of keeping silent on race. Indeed, the process of suppressing racial discord in public life had long been integral to the preservation of slavery. *O Homem* thus strove not only to rally Recife's "men of color" around these recent examples of

[1] *O Homem*, January 13, 1876, p. 1.
[2] *O Homem*, January 13, 1876, pp. 1–2; also, *O Homem*, January 27, 1876, p. 2.

https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108917537.010 Published online by Cambridge University Press

exclusion but also to fundamentally render the call for racial solidarity in abolitionist terms. In arguing that slave emancipation was necessary for the fulfillment of racial equality, Collaço effectively sought to transform both the politics of the category "men of color" and the implications of abolitionism. Not surprisingly, a public anti-Black backlash followed. It was neither the first time that Collaço had personally encountered such type of racialized response, nor the last instance where the interracial abolitionist movement would be caricatured in anti-Black tropes. As such, this critical reexamination of *O Homem*'s aims, and of the racialized reactions that the paper elicited, offers a fresh perspective on how the ferment of the abolition debates set in motion important shifts in racial subjectivities.[3]

In probing Collaço's interventions in public life, this chapter also highlights the wider importance that the practices of silencing race held in structuring power in nineteenth-century Brazil. Collaço appears here as illustrative of a subgroup of Brazil's large free population of color that attained notable success.[4] In Recife, as across most cities, free Afro-descendants comprised about 40 percent of the population and gained access to spaces of influence through recognized social practices such as joining religious brotherhoods and civil associations and participating in partisan and professional networks. For the most part, these dynamics transpired in contexts free of legal exclusions based on race. Better yet, a shared cultural understanding prevailed that race was not to be discussed. This silencing of race, then, proved salient to the ordering of a nation that at once held the largest free Black and largest slave populations in Latin America.

Historians agree that official efforts to preclude debates on race were, in fact, critical to the construction and reproduction of racialized hierarchies. In working with parliamentary debates and state memoranda from the early 1820s, Márcia Berbel and Rafael Marquese have

[3] The most recent, and certainly the most incisive, study of Collaço's career is R. Andrade Galvão, "Felippe Neri." We know of only two other works touching on *O Homem*: M. Hoffnagel, "*O Homem*," pp. 52–62; and A. Magalhães Pinto, *Imprensa negra*, pp. 53–102. Andrade Galvão noted the following works as containing fragmentary elements of Collaço's biography: A. Xavier, *Letras católicas*, pp. 89–91; A. Blake, *Dicionário bibliográfico*, p. 358; G. Freyre, *Sobrados e Mucambos*, v. 3, p. 477 and *Um engenheiro*, p. 128; O. Montenegro, *Memórias do ginásio*, pp. 52, 53, 170; G. Veiga, *História das ideias*, v. 4, p. 274.

[4] Selected works include E. Silva, *Dom Obá*; E. Azevedo, *Orfeu da carapina*; K. Grinberg, *O fiador*; Z. Frank, *Dutra's World*; M. H. Machado, "From Slave Rebels," pp. 247–274; T. Holloway, "The Defiant Life"; A. Marzano, *Cidade em cena*.

https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108917537.010 Published online by Cambridge University Press

demonstrated that the "absence of race" in the definitions of legal citizenship strategically enabled Brazilian-born Blacks and mulattos to feel invested in a national project dependent on African slavery and the slave trade. Berbel and Marquese maintain that Brazilian political leaders, seeking to prevent any repeat of the dynamics that contributed to the outbreak of the Haitian revolution, worked to minimize racial hostility aimed at free Blacks.[5] Likewise, Sidney Chalhoub's work with the records from the Council of State, an advisory board to the emperor and the ministers, reveals the extent to which the government avoided using racial language to enact race-laden legislation. Chalhoub charts, for instance, the council's deliberations on what to call the newborns of slave mothers who were freed by the gradual emancipation law of 1871, knowing full well that to use the term "freed" would imply a lifetime of social stigma and yet to actually "free" them of this background would also enhance their political rights and significantly increase the Afro-descendant share of the voting population. The state's goal, Chalhoub argues, was to proceed carefully, and with "prudence," recognizing that "the best rule is not to talk about this [racial difference]."[6] Ultimately, Chalhoub contends, political leaders opted for a race-neutral term for the newborns – but then attached a literacy requirement to an electoral law implemented ten years later that, in effect, purged large numbers of Afro-Brazilian males from the voting rolls. Nevertheless, we must also remember that the processes of silencing racial discourse were not exclusively top-down. Hebe Mattos' research shrewdly captures how former slaves purposefully suppressed references to their slave pasts in their interactions with the legal system.[7] This silencing, she argues, should be understood as part of their assertions for autonomy and recognition as equal members of society. For Mattos, this "ethics of silence … reflected the full weight of racialization and racism in Imperial Brazil, rather than its nonexistence."[8]

Taken together, these references offer rich points of entry into the literature on racial silence. Certainly, the works immediately help us better appreciate the extent to which Collaço's opening declaration – "começou o tempo de falar" (it is now time to speak up) – signaled a sharp break with the status quo.[9] In addition, this sampling of the scholarship also permits us to consider how a deeper reckoning with Collaço's *O Homem* can productively spark new questions related to race, abolition, and silencing. For

[5] M. Berbel and R. Marquese, "The Absence of Race," p. 430.
[6] S. Chalhoub, "The Politics of Silence," p. 84. [7] H. Mattos, *Das cores do silêncio*.
[8] H. Mattos, *Das cores do silêncio*, p. 368. [9] *O Homem*, January 13, 1876, 1.

https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108917537.010 Published online by Cambridge University Press

example, if historians have mostly, and successfully, explained the policy objectives and consequences of silencing race, there is more to discover about the cultural facets of this process.[10] That is, questions abound about how this code of not talking about race worked publicly, outside of official, legal contexts. For example, how did the crossing, and also the policing, of these lines of "keeping silent" in turn shape the access and representation that Afro-Brazilians had in public life? And, relatedly, how were disputes over public discussions of race, as happened between *O Homem* and other newspapers, linked to ongoing processes of racial and abolitionist formations? It is to these questions that we now turn, beginning in the next section with a detailed analysis of the political and intellectual environment from which Collaço's *O Homem* emerged. In two further sections, we scrutinize what Collaço's "breaking the silence" entailed, both in terms of his racial project for Recife's "men of color" and in relation to the anti-Black backlash that left a lasting imprint on public discourse.

COLLAÇO'S RECIFE, CA. 1876

O Homem burst onto the scene of a dynamic provincial capital. The third-largest city in Imperial Brazil, Recife was the principal port of Pernambuco and home to some 115,000 people. It featured one of the nation's two law schools, several theaters, a bustling press, associations and religious brotherhoods, and distinguished historical and literary institutes. It had been a site of global contact since the beginning of colonization, shaped by native, African, and European traditions. In the mid-seventeenth century, Pernambucan sugar paced world production, fueling both imperial rivalry and the expansion of African slavery. This age of sugar, which sparked the Dutch occupation of the Brazilian northeast (1624–1655), captivated nineteenth-century intellectuals. Specifically, Collaço and an array of playwrights, novelists, and visual artists exalted the multiracial forces that expelled the Dutch and rendered that history as emblematic of Brazil's strong interracial heritage.[11] Effectively, the Pernambucan past stoked the national imaginary, its long history of slavery notwithstanding.

An entrenched seigneurialism also pervaded the rules and customs of Recife, a slaving port since the sixteenth century. Social conventions,

[10] The classic study is T. Skidmore, *Black into White*.

[11] Collaço's columns about the "heroes" of the resistance, include: *O Homem*, March 2, 9, and 16, 1876, pages 2, 2, and 3 respectively; *O Homem*, March 23, 1876, p. 2. More broadly, see H. Kraay, *Days of National Festivity*, pp. 220–228.

https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108917537.010 Published online by Cambridge University Press

including the silencing of race, ensured the continuing importance of slavery as an institution that created order, even as the number of people that were actually enslaved decreased over Collaço's lifetime.[12] For example, urban slaves dropped from about 25 percent of the overall population in the late 1840s to approximately 15 percent in the 1870s.[13] This decrease, however, was in line with broader changes in Brazilian slavery, where slave populations were largely reconcentrated in plantation settings from about the 1830s onward.[14] In Pernambuco, if the sugar planters of the late nineteenth century no longer wielded the global might of their seventeenth-century forebears, they still defended slavery and the sugar economy as interrelated matters. They still clung to the slave system, even though so-called free workers were widely available.[15] In the 1870s and 1880s, rural political associations formed to safeguard the "interests" of the sugar economy, which invariably centered on constraining all processes related to emancipation. At this point, the vast majority of the province's slave population toiled in the sugar belt, and virtually half of those laborers (48 percent) were well within prime working age (between sixteen and forty years old).[16] Hardly, then, an institution without deep roots, slavery in Recife and Pernambuco – and across the greater northeastern region, for that matter – held firm on the basis of history, law, and tradition. The fact that announcements for runaway slaves appeared in virtually every major daily in the country up until a handful of newspapers stopped publishing them in the 1880s hints at the cultural ways that slave power was inscribed and reinscribed in public life.

O Homem's publication in 1876 thus emerged in a context where the legitimacy of slavery remained intact; where it was still more honorable to own people than to call that system into question. Altogether, the weekly ran for three months, reaching twelve issues. Its transformative character – its redefining of a "men of color" identity around the principle of abolitionism – becomes more visible when we take into

[12] The best book on urban slavery in early-nineteenth-century Recife is M. Carvalho, *Liberdade*. Also on slavery and free people of color in late-nineteenth-century Recife, see M. MacCord, *O Rosário* and *Artífices da cidadania*; F. Cabral and R. Costa, eds., *História da escravidão*; I. Cunha, *Capoeira*; F. Souza, *O eleitorado*; M. E. Vasconcellos dos Santos, "Os significados."

[13] On shifts in the slave population, see M. Carvalho, *Liberdade*, p. 74.

[14] A recent starting point for this literature is R. Marquese and R. Salles, eds., *Escravidão e capitalismo*; see also R. Marquese, T. Parron, and M. Berbel, *Slavery and Politics*.

[15] P. Eisenberg, *The Sugar Industry*, pp. 146–180.

[16] C. Castilho, *Slave Emancipation*, p. 69.

https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108917537.010 Published online by Cambridge University Press

account the state of the abolition debate in the mid-1870s. In Recife, the issue had become debatable among a wider segment of the population about a decade earlier. Prompted by the confluence of different national and international events in the late 1860s – the Paraguayan War, the US Civil War, and the then-recent struggles of liberated Africans – activists took to the press, theater, associations, the courts, and local political bodies to portray slavery as an offense to national ideals.[17] Slaves' pursuits of freedom, through the courts and in conjunction with associational funding-freedom practices, took on new meaning and further politicized the growing civic campaigns. In general terms, then, the movement included Afro-descendants and whites and invented a nationalist narrative of antislavery.

More specifically, abolitionist politics in Recife stemmed in part from local institutions (the law school and the press) and in part from political developments across the country. As in other places, whether it was São Paulo city or Porto Alegre, local abolitionists in Recife imagined their actions on a national scale. However, for most of the 1860s and 1870s, the decentralized form of Brazilian abolitionism remained just that, and most interprovincial and interregional connections were largely symbolic. In the years after *O Homem*'s publication, however, the operation of "underground railroads," the circulation of abolitionist theater troupes, and the more pronounced role of abolitionism in the national capital (Rio de Janeiro) helped fasten ties between local publics. It was also the case that the intensification of Brazil's interprovincial slave trade in the 1870s fueled interprovincial abolitionism.

The abolition debate acquired an intense register rather early in Recife, and activists in São Paulo, Salvador, Fortaleza, and Rio de Janeiro recognized it as an important site of action. In the first comprehensive, national-level study of abolitionist associations, Angela Alonso noted Recife among the places with the largest number of abolitionist events between 1867 and 1871.[18] Also, the provincial assembly of Pernambuco created state emancipation funds in 1869 and 1870. It attributed these measures to intensifying local pressure and to the example of similar funds being created in other provinces. In short, a snapshot of Brazilian abolitionism as it consolidated into a national phenomenon in the late 1860s reveals

[17] Several recent works have argued for this longer periodization for the "era of abolition," rooting the beginning of this process in the 1860s, as opposed to the customary 1880s focus. For example, in chronological order of publication, E. Azevedo, *O direito*; A. Alonso, *The Last Abolition*; and C. Castilho, *Slave Emancipation*.

[18] A. Alonso, *The Last Abolition*, chapter 1.

https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108917537.010 Published online by Cambridge University Press

that Recife occupied as important a place as any city in the national picture. To date, however, we have not found traces of Collaço within this specific milieu, although he had been long active in the press, associations, and the legal arena.

The 1871 Free Womb Law changed the nature of the slavery debate, setting a course for the eventual ending of slavery. Just as important, it galvanized a proslavery reaction. In establishing a "free birth principle," the state ensured that all children born to enslaved mothers after September 28, 1871, would one day (after turning twenty-one) become free. Notably, this law signaled the state's willingness to supersede the owner's authority on how and when to free "someone's property." On the issue of manumission, whereas before the owner had the power to consent (or not) to a slave's request to buy themselves out of bondage, they were now obliged to accept the said person's freedom as long as they provided the requisite compensation. And it was clear that such legal changes immediately resonated among the enslaved, as a woman printed a notice in the *Diário de Pernambuco* asking for a specified sum to buy her freedom.[19] This happened only weeks after the law, illustrating the new ways that the "public" could now participate in this issue. The advertisement, which appeared alongside rows of slave-runaway notices, demonstrated that the points of reference for engaging the abolition debate were changing because of the 1871 law; it also captured the press's role in stretching the political field.

Yet it was not long ago that historians quickly dismissed print culture as a site of critical inquiry, either because Brazilians supposedly did not read or because written culture was considered a domain of the small white elite. Nevertheless, since the early 2000s, a slew of studies about the nineteenth-century press, with most emerging in the Brazilian academy, are changing our view of this phenomenon.[20] These current researchers are not only amassing a more complex view of public life – finding over 140 women's periodicals for the nineteenth century, for example – but

[19] C. Castilho, *Slave Emancipation*, pp. 53–55.

[20] M. Barbosa, *Os donos*; M. Carneiro, ed., *Minorias silenciadas*; M. Morel and M. de Barros, eds., *Palavra*; L. Ribeiro, *Imprensa e espaço*; L. Neves et al., eds., *História e imprensa*; M. Barbosa, *História cultural*; A. Martins and T. de Luca, eds., *História da imprensa*; J. Meirelles, *Imprensa e poder*; M. Balaban, *Poeta do lápis*; C. Mizuta et al., eds., *Império em debate*; P. Knauss et al., eds., *Revistas ilustradas*; B. Santa Anna, *Do Brasil ilustrado*; C. Costa, *A revista*; C. Duarte, *Imprensa Feminina*; A. El Yousseff, *Imprensa* e *escravidão*; R. Godoi, *Um editor*. M. Meyer's *Folhetim* also deserves mention. In English, see H. Kraay, *Days of National Festivity*; A. Silva and S. Vasconcelos, eds., *Books and Periodicals*; Z. Frank, *Reading Rio*.

https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108917537.010 Published online by Cambridge University Press

also revisiting the underlying assumption that only 15 percent of the population was literate. The 15 percent statistic is in fact reflected in the 1872 national census; however, in and of itself, it obscures as much as it reveals when scholars do not sufficiently contextualize it. For Recife, when one calculates the literacy rates for the three most populated and "urban" districts, this number almost triples; for Rio, a similarly closer look at the urban geography puts the city's literacy rate at nearer to 50 percent.[21] The bottom line is that contemporaries recognized the importance of the press, saw in it a space for participating politically, and disseminated information through public collective readings. To brand it a "white" space is to profoundly misunderstand how involved Afro-descendants were as printers, journalists, and readers in the world of print.

Through the press, various constituencies politicized the implications of the 1871 law, essentially reigniting the abolition debates. And it is important to remember that, from the perspective of contemporaries, this law had resolved – that is, settled – the question of abolition. It was not intended as a first step, and the gradualist narrative that has come to define it is mostly the result of later political and historiographical making. Six new, republican abolitionist papers surfaced in the early 1870s. From 1872 to 1875, *A Republica Federativa* and *A Luz* were among the most visible in denouncing slaveowners who continued selling their newborns, despite the prohibitions of the 1871 law. Notably, the papers were rather explicit in this, naming names.[22] Meanwhile, and in response to both the 1871 law and the reemergent abolitionism, Pernambuco's sugar planters launched their own association – the Society to Aid Agriculture in Pernambuco (SAAP) – in 1872. For effect, they organized their inaugural meeting on the first anniversary of the 1871 law. The SAAP was an association of national profile, convening two important congresses in 1878 and 1884. At both, the issue of slavery in general, and the question of how to proceed with the children of the 1871 law in particular, remained a point of anxiety and debate. It was thus upon this immediate context that *O Homem* surfaced: where mobilizations for and against slavery vied for public opinion.

Collaço's appreciation of politics and local power dynamics more generally stemmed from his close contact with the city's important institutional structures. Born into a family with deep roots in Pernambuco – his great-grandfather José Vaz Salgado was considered the richest merchant in the

[21] C. Castilho, *Slave Emancipation*, p. 19. H. F. Machado, *José do Patrocínio*, p. 114.
[22] C. Castilho, *Slave Emancipation*, pp. 59–66.

https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108917537.010 Published online by Cambridge University Press

mid-eighteenth century – he was raised in comfortable surroundings, if not amidst the same levels of wealth that those of earlier generations had enjoyed. His Portuguese-descended father inherited sugar plantations and owned slaves, while his mother was Brazilian, *parda*, and from modest origins. Their marriage, however, left his father estranged from his family. And for Collaço, the fourth of six children, the split from his more affluent family meant a loss of important support.[23]

We know that for almost a decade, beginning in the mid-1840s, Collaço was a copy editor of the *Diário de Pernambuco*. From then until *O Homem* in 1876, he edited a wide range of literary, religious, political, scientific, and women's newspapers. For his role in the print arena, Collaço was recognized as a "dignified representative of Guttenberg" at a national exposition in 1866. In addition, from 1847 through the 1870s, he served as a juror, playing a part in legal matters and showing himself an honorable man of the community. Relatedly, he earned a law degree in 1853, and his knowledge of constitutional matters is on full display in *O Homem*. A devout Catholic, Collaço also belonged to a brotherhood and built extensive ties to church leaders. Still, a significant part of his public profile grew from his role as an educator; for over two decades, Collaço taught at Recife's famed secondary school, the Ginásio Pernambucano. His expertise spanned the subjects of Algebra, Geometry, Philosophy, French, English, and Physics; notably, two of his textbooks were adopted for general use in Pernambuco's education system.[24] These different capacities (he also contracted as a surveyor and an engineer with the municipality) therefore put Collaço at the intersection of powerful entities and influential people. Not surprisingly, a paper he edited in 1859 provided some of the most riveting and detailed coverage of Dom Pedro II's visit to Recife.[25] His place within the patronage networks of the Conservative Party also in part explains his long and successful hold of public posts. In the early 1870s, however, the relationship with Conservatives began to fray, and not long after he was controversially driven from the Ginásio Pernambucano. At that point, through *O Homem*, he railed openly against racial discrimination; and, in joining the abolitionist chorus led by republican newspapers, he posited that only the abolition of slavery could ensure "men of color" the promise of equality enshrined in the constitution.

[23] R. Andrade Galvão, "Felippe Neri," pp. 20–28. [24] D. Collaço, *Aritmética*.
[25] R. Andrade Galvão, "Felippe Neri," pp. 56–57.

https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108917537.010 Published online by Cambridge University Press

OF "MEN OF COLOR" AND ABOLITIONISM

O Homem unfurled its banner of equality on the masthead. The words "liberty, equality, fraternity" encased the full title of the journal: *O Homem: realidade constitucional ou dissolução social*. For emphasis, Collaço affixed quotes from the constitution and the Bible to illustrate these guiding concepts. Below "equality," for example, Collaço inserted two clauses from the famed article 179, which in its entirety reads like a veritable bill of rights. One clause defended all (male) citizens' eligibility for civic, political, and military posts, and a second reiterated that those considerations must rest on "talent and merits alone, irrespective of other differences [read: race]."[26] Interestingly, in analyzing *O Homem*'s constitutionalist language, historian Ana Flávia Magalhães Pinto noted that a Rio de Janeiro Black paper from the 1830s had also used article 179 as a basis for political action.[27] At the very least, this suggests the importance of rights-based discourse to the history of Black political formations. Collaço, meanwhile, also placed a verse from the gospel under "fraternity," which warned about the "darkness that blinds the paths of those who hate their brothers."[28] These referents established the legal, national, and moral foundations of the paper.

O Homem's specific objectives came into focus toward the middle quadrant of the page. Collaço presented them in bullet-point-like fashion, using the first three to articulate his vision for racial solidarity. The first stated that the paper "aimed to promote the unity, education, and moral growth of Pernambuco's men of color." The second stressed that it "would advocate on behalf of the men of color's legitimate and political rights, demanding that the constitution apply equally to everyone." The third promised to "publicize all wrongs committed against us so that the perpetuators would be exposed and feel the same oppression and persecution that their actions bring on others."[29] In these few lines, *O Homem* shattered the long-held custom of not discussing racial problems. It showed, moreover, that this process of "breaking the silence" went hand-in-hand with projecting, if not inventing, a "men of color" subjectivity. It was thus toward this project – of defining the terms of what this category *should* imply – that the paper focused its next several issues. *O Homen*'s abolitionist turn became more explicit later, in what turned out to be the paper's last issues; for reasons still unclear to us, the weekly stopped after

[26] *O Homem*, January 13, 1876, p. 1.
[27] A. Magalães Pinto, *Imprensa negra*, p. 61.
[28] *O Homem*, January 13, 1876, p. 1.
[29] *O Homem*, January 13, 1876, p. 1.

https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108917537.010 Published online by Cambridge University Press

a three-month run. Nevertheless, we note that, from its first numbers, Collaço drew readily from US examples to suggest that Black equality and success could only flourish in a post-emancipation context.

O Homem's project to "unify Pernambuco's men of color" drew on Collaço's vast intellectual repertoire. It featured religious and legal articles on equality, a regular column called "The Illustrious Men of Color" that recovered the life stories of prominent Afro- and Native Brazilians, and a pointed abolitionist platform. Together, these pieces served not only to rebut the string of recent firings of Afro-descendant public officials but also to trouble the code of racial silence. Reviewing the standing context of January 1876, the article explaining the journal's impetus iterated that "in the last year, six men of color have been pushed out from their jobs . . . and that without faith or the rule of law . . . a lasting peace cannot exist."[30] This reality extended a deepening political crisis, as Collaço reminded readers that "men of color" had been excluded from Recife's municipal council for the last twenty-eight years, since the late 1840s.[31] It was thus to religion and science that Collaço turned early in the paper to counter the charges that "society does not want, nor accept, men of color in public posts."[32] Attributing these words to the provincial president, he invokes several "we are created equal" passages from the Bible before seamlessly paraphrasing French naturalists who also argued for humankind's common origins. In confronting – disproving, really – ideas about innate racial differences, Collaço pivoted to the issue of political rights, for the violent dispersal of the public meeting, where notable men of color had gathered to sign and send off a petition to Parliament, illustrated the unequal treatment they endured. The incident encapsulated the disregard for their constitutional rights, he argued, which they had to fight together to reclaim. The incident also revived anxieties over legislation from the year before that placed restrictions on where free and enslaved men of color could hang signs.[33] Collaço believed essential a "unified" response to strengthen the political capital of this "class of people, the most numerous and hardest working in Brazil."[34]

O Homem's process of racial formation required a smoothing over of class and gender distinctions, as it strove to rewrite the political handbook for Pernambuco's "men of color." The newspaper form allowed Collaço a unique means to string together an unending series of "we's" and

[30] *O Homem*, January 13, 1876, p. 1.
[31] *O Homem*, February 24, 1876, p. 1.
[32] *O Homem*, January 13, 1876, p. 1.
[33] A. Magalães Pinto, *Imprensa negra*, p. 60.
[34] *O Homem*, January 13, 1876, p. 3.

https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108917537.010 Published online by Cambridge University Press

"our's" when referring to the "men of color" that, when juxtaposed with the "they's" and "them's," gave the impression that oppositional, racial dialectics indeed shaped political dynamics. In fact his trajectory offers a different view of political networks. Though race, of course, shaped social networks of all kinds, the stories of Brazil's prominent Afro-descendants are also stories of interracial collaborations. Furthermore, the "we's" also seemingly glossed salient class differences within a heterogeneous, free, Afro-descendant male population. This "class," in Collaço's words, encompassed carpenters and stonemasons in addition to law-school graduates and influential businessmen.[35] Clearly, the "men of color" invoked in the paper referred to the latter, a small but accomplished and visible group. The gendered nature of the racial category is also explicit in the journal's title. The universalizing form of "man" feeds and reflects extant gendered discourses of power and can be read as part of a discernible nineteenth-century phenomenon of trying to preserve a "masculine" identification with the political arena.[36] For Collaço, who earlier in his career had edited "women's" and "family" newspapers, this contentious entry into public debate required adhering to, and reinscribing, the gendered codes of discussions about political rights.

Historical narratives figured as a source and form of establishing a "men of color" tradition. The recurrent "Illustrious Men of Color" column, for example, accomplished several interrelated objectives. It first provided a context, a "historical" basis from which to establish the legitimacy of the current generation's successes. This tradition of achievement doubtless responded to charges of Afro-descendant inferiority; it used historical biography of past leaders of color to affirm the political rights of the contemporary community. Additionally, the sketching of some figures – like the famed Afro-Bahian jurist Antonio Pereira Rebouças (1798–1880) – also opened the chance to introduce antislavery as a topic that was important to this group. In fact, the paper's first issue carried with it an insert of Rebouças. Collaço extolled Rebouças "for his virtues and service to the *patria* since its beginnings" and reiterated his national standing by pointing to a recent book published in Rio that contained Rebouças' parliamentary speeches from 1830 to 1847.[37]

[35] MacCord's books convey well the class spectrum of Recife's free men of color. See M. MacCord, *O Rosário* and *Artífices da cidadania*.

[36] If focused on the United States, an indispensable reference on race and public life is E. Barkley, "Negotiating and Transforming"; on Brazil, see R. Kittleson, "Campaign All"; M. Santos, "On the Importance."

[37] *O Homem*, January 13, 1875, p. 3.

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Collaço also emphasized Rebouças' role in presenting a bill to Parliament in 1837 that called for an enforcement of the prohibition on the transatlantic slave trade.[38] Through this specific column, Collaço not only created an antislavery lineage that was important to abolitionist activists in the 1870s writ large; he also made a "man of color" central to this process.

As part of a project of reasserting a historical memory, the "Illustrious Men of Color" articles were instrumental in establishing the key qualities of this group. Whether the biographies focused on known men like Rebouças and Henrique Dias or on lesser-known figures like the musician Elias Lobo, they emphasized personal sacrifice and contributions to the nation. The articles, however, also decried the historical neglect of Afro-descendant achievements, which could have well reflected Collaço's own anxieties about his legacy. These columns also revealed that Indigenous men belonged in Collaço's "of color" category. That is, though the paper's justification stemmed from recent developments involving Afro-descendants, Collaço also wrote about Felipe Camarão, the Indigenous leader who led a native battalion against the seventeenth-century Dutch occupation. Camarão exemplified the national-hero narrative. Collaço also invoked, if in exaggerated fashion, the triumphs of natives across the Americas in order to make the point that "non-white populations enjoyed equal rights in other societies, including in the United States, and in Mexico, Chile, Bolivia, and Peru .... In Mexico, as is well known, a full-blooded Indian [sic] was elected president."[39] These references, including that to Benito Juárez in Mexico, painted Brazil in a comparatively unfavorable light for its inability to consider the talents of the "men of color." This Juárez mention, specifically, foreshadowed a later tendency among Brazilian abolitionists to celebrate the Mexican political leader; an officer of a radical abolitionist association in Ceará, for example, used "Juárez" as his nom de guerre in the early 1880s.[40]

The racial project of *O Homem* acquired a distinctive register when it explicitly embraced abolitionism. The editorial of the fourth issue read: "we want the realization of constitutional equality for all Brazilians ... we want our constitutional rights respected by the rule of law, not granted as an extension of personal favors ... and we want the complete extinction of

[38] For more on Antônio Rebouças's thoughts and deeds on slavery, see K. Grinberg, "Em defesa," pp. 111–146; a sweeping study of his life as it reflects the histories of Brazilian citizenship and state-making is K. Grinberg, *O fiador*.

[39] *O Homem*, March 23, 1876, p. 3. [40] P. Silva, *História da escravidão*, pp. 191–229.

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slavery in Brazil."[41] The racialized "we" here became defined by its call for abolition. In part, Collaço's abolitionism arose from ties maintained with other newspapers in the print milieu. We know that he traded issues with, and reprinted articles from, *A Luz*, the fiery republican abolitionist newspaper printed in Recife in the early 1870s.[42] Antislavery developments abroad also factored into Collaço's thinking. The US context, for example, loomed large. He hailed the enthusiastic reception that *Uncle Tom's Cabin* enjoyed in Europe, whereas in Brazil theatrical adaptations of the story had been all but prohibited up until that point.[43] In the last issue, Collaço most imaginatively created a shared US-Brazilian abolitionist storyline. In an extended two-page article, he invited readers to dream a scenario where the emperor's upcoming trip to Philadelphia, to participate in the US centennial celebrations, would occasion further action in the legislature to end slavery once and for all (with, it should be said, a provision for indemnity). *O Homem* argued that this was a plausible scenario given that the 1871 law had also been passed while Dom Pedro II was out of the country and that, therefore, his presence abroad, especially in the context of this big event in the United States, would allow Brazil to show itself favorably on the world stage. Returning to the domestic context, the article then emphasized that this discussion about abolition was also transpiring in the national capital, via the *O Globo* newspaper. As opposed to *O Homem*, however, the Rio journal was actually adamant in rejecting any and all provisions for slaveowners' compensation. The larger point, *O Homem* stressed, was that the press "worked to bring public opinion around to this perspective" and that in due time the larger dailies across the country would also stoke this debate. "Could this all just be a dream, what we've just described?" asked *O Homem* rhetorically. "Only time will tell," the article closed.[44]

Though it ended rather abruptly, Collaço's newspaper nonetheless calls attention to Afro-descendants' sometimes quite prominent place in public life. Recent research has, in fact, analyzed the relationships between several prominent "men of color," public figures who used newspapers and literature as platforms for also "breaking the silence" on racial matters and on slavery. Historian Ana Flávia Magalhães Pinto, for example, probed and connected the works of José Ferreira de Menezes, Luiz Gama, Machado de Assis, José do Patrocínio, Ignácio de Araújo Lima, Arthur Carlos, and Theophilo Dias de Castro, who in different

[41] *O Homem*, February 3, 1876, p. 2. [42] *O Homem*, January 27, 1876, p. 1.
[43] *O Homem*, March 23, 1876, p. 1. [44] *O Homem*, March 30, 1876, p. 2.

https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108917537.010 Published online by Cambridge University Press

ways combined forces to make the issues of race, slavery, Black equality, and citizenship all worthy of public discussion.[45] Their concentration in São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro played a part in this recognizable explosion in collaboration and activism. While aware, undoubtedly, of this abolitionist and race-consciousness ferment, Collaço did not align *O Homem* with these contemporaneous developments. His relative isolation may have been because he was historically aligned with men in Conservative networks, while most of these other leaders emerged from Liberal and Republican backgrounds; it may have been because of a generational difference and his lack of contact with this younger cohort of public figures; it may have also been because of his comparatively more recent turn to abolitionism. More work, to be sure, remains to be done on the wider resonance of *O Homem* beyond Recife.

REACTION AND ANTI-BLACK SUBJECTIVITIES

O Homem animated racial subjectivities. However, it was not only Pernambuco's "men of color" that it stirred; it also generated an anti-Black response, showing that racialized discourse indeed played a part in shaping Brazilian power relations. These public airings of anti-Blackness, however, drew on traditions of racial silence instead of deviating from them. In analyzing the policing of these spaces of public discourse, we are able to better understand the contentious terms through which Afro-descendants engaged powerful dimensions of public life, such as the press. José Mariano's daily, *A Provincia*, for example, welcomed the new journal into the public arena. Mariano – the popular, ascendant leader of the Liberal Party – even praised the new organ, lauding its banner of "Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity." Mariano hailed the paper for strengthening Brazil's tradition of a free press and iterated that it would refrain from weighing in on its racial politics until it better understood the paper's objectives. Nevertheless, in its initial observations of the paper, Mariano's *A Provincia* disingenuously questioned whether a public existed for a paper of *O Homem*'s nature and used the ambivalent phrase "mulatos em cena" (mulattos on the scene) to sum up, and spoof, its debut.[46] To be sure, the "mulattos on the scene" phrasing conjures up the mocking and racist spirit of jokes about "uppity" Afro-descendants, jokes that are intended to delegitimize all sorts of broader claims-making.

[45] A. Magalães Pinto, "Fortes laços." [46] *A Província*, January 14, 1876, p. 1.

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The following day, despite its earlier assurances that it would reserve judgment until it saw more from *O Homem*, *A Provincia* unleashed a blistering, front-page attack on the new paper. It called *O Homem* "impolitic" and "unnecessary."[47] And it affirmed that Brazilian citizens already coexisted easily, without distinctions in color and opportunities. Until this point, it mostly repeated the familiar tropes associated with racial silencing; that is, arguing that legal equality already existed for the entire free population. Yet, while deliberately disregarding *O Homem*'s complaints and justifications, *A Provincia* went further and criminalized them. It accused the new paper of fostering racial divisions, of the sort that "would tear the country apart."[48] The portrayal of *O Homem*'s mission as racial, as opposed to political or legal, was itself part of a campaign to delegitimize the paper. This line of attack resonated precisely because of the cultural understanding that it was wrong to discuss racial problems in public. A paper like *O Homem* was simply unprecedented in Recife. Thus, *A Provincia* warned it to "defend the theses and arguments that you wish, but do not call for separate spheres . . . for you are as free and enterprising as those of the *Caucasian* race" (emphasis in original).[49] With some condescension, Mariano tried to reset the framework in which to engage *O Homem*'s claims for broader political rights. Curiously, however, though Mariano was white and Collaço Afro-descendant, Mariano's exploits and reputation up until that moment in 1876 had not matched Collaço's standing. His fame would, of course, far surpass Collaço's in the ensuing decade and in popular memory. As is well-known, Mariano went on to play a prominent role in the national and regional histories of abolitionism. As an elected deputy to parliament in the 1880s, he formed part of, and vigorously defended, the small abolitionist wing of the Liberal Party. He supported measures to halt the interprovincial slave trade and backed an early, radical version of what became the 1885 Sexagenarian Law. He went against the status quo in that latter instance in supporting the immediate and uncompensated freeing of elderly slaves. Because of his abolitionist commitments, however, he lost a reelection bid in 1886. Locally, Mariano allied with the most militant abolitionist societies. After ceremoniously freeing his own slaves in 1882, Mariano acted as an interlocutor for an interracial association that helped enslaved people flee north to the province of Ceará. He was a fiery orator at large, public meetings. And his place in abolitionist lore was enshrined in the popular

[47] *O Homem*, January 27, 1876, p. 1. [48] *A Província*, January 15, 1876, p. 1.
[49] *A Província*, January 15, 1876, p. 1.

https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108917537.010 Published online by Cambridge University Press

dramatic representation of "May 13," where he was the protagonist that announced news of the abolition law to cheering crowds. Doubtlessly, the charismatic Mariano changed the course of local politics, including how the debates over abolition unfolded.[50]

Yet, from the vantage point of 1876, Mariano's response to *O Homem* showed that an anti-Black rant carried little to no political risks. The rising Liberal in his twenties clearly did not feel intimated by taking on the accomplished Collaço, a man twice his age. The reverse scenario, however – of a younger Afro-descendant challenging a white man as established as Collaço was – is virtually impossible to imagine. Still, the anti-Black response did not register as a "break" with the code of racial silence. Nor, certainly, did it register that this language informed its own process of racial formation, where, if whiteness was not explicitly touted as the ideal, blackness definitely signaled inferiority. Mariano's defense of unified rather than "separate" spheres rested on the belief that indeed all males had equal opportunity to succeed – that what historians have referred to as the "precariousness of Black freedom" did not exist.[51] Nevertheless, it is important to situate Mariano's critique of the "separate spheres" within the context of contemporary abolitionism, for *A Provincia* had also been involved with this discussion since its founding in 1873. Yet the paper operated on a largely partisan basis, mobilizing the abolition issue in order to instrumentally undermine Conservative power. Such was the case, for example, when it denounced slaveowners' abuse of the 1871 Free Womb Law. Like Republican antislavery journals, it publicized instances of owners illegally selling young children; it made an even bigger issue of the province's slow implementation of the national emancipation fund, which was also tied to the 1871 law. Yet in printing runaway slave ads on the back pages of all its issues, and in targeting Conservative rather than Liberal slaveowners, the paper underscored its partisan and contradictory facets. Throughout, its antislavery politics remained bound to an imagined raceless ideal of liberal freedom. In short, the clash between *O Homem* and *A Provincia* demonstrated how their contentious interactions, which at heart rested on who got to determine whether race was silenced in public discourse, played a key part in shaping racial subjectivities. For as much as the "we's" in *O Homem* worked to mold a narrative about what it meant to be "of color," the "we's" in *A Provincia* similarly worked to set the terms for opposition to the presentation of race-specific claims. The terms for the

[50] C. Castilho, *Slave Emancipation*, pp. 120–136; 180–182.
[51] S. Chalhoub, *A força da escravidão*, p. 21.

https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108917537.010 Published online by Cambridge University Press

latter project evolved part and parcel with the sarcastic and insulting references to the "mulattos on the scene."

Notably, another paper, the Catholic journal *A União*, also joined the anti-Collaço chorus. Its editor, however, was a "man of color," which furnished a unique perspective on the tensions surrounding *O Homem*.[52] The argument between the two Afro-descendant editors produced some of the most charged anti-Black discourse seen in the late-nineteenth-century Recife press. Like *A Provincia*, *A União* initially attacked *O Homem* on the grounds "that it was an unnecessary paper because between us, no one pays attention to a man's color; once he displays merits, he is able to ascend the social hierarchy."[53] It silenced race by shifting to a discussion about merit. Thereafter, *A União*'s editor proceeded to ironically and disparagingly invoke Collaço's own trajectory in order to support his position. It stated that *O Homem*'s editor "is proof of what we believe, that despite being *black-skinned* [*sendo de cor preta*], he still holds a degree from the law school; he still holds various public posts, and is currently *enjoying retirement* as a teacher from the secondary school" (italics in original).[54]

This provocative statement stung Collaço on several fronts. First, it brought up Collaço's controversial and racially fraught dismissal from a prestigious secondary school, a circumstance that we will turn to shortly. In so doing, it prompted Collaço to not only refute that characterization of him enjoying a comfortable retired life but also to call his removal an actual "firing." Still clearly reeling from those recent events, Collaço nonetheless warned this now-rival editor that he "could also be displaced from his position, just like I was, given that we are both of the same color, even if you are a little *fulinho* [*lighter-skinned*]" (italics in original).[55] Both men's attacks, then, featured a comment about the other's African heritage. They asserted their power in prying open the other's blackness. Collaço's insult – and it was an insult to highlight someone's African descent in this context – did interestingly hint at a "we" regarding their circumstances: a "we" Collaço forged out of an imagined common struggle as "men of color." This construct lay at the

[52] *O Homem*, January 27, 1876, p. 4. All references to this exchange between *O Homem* and *A União* come from *O Homem*, Collaço's newspaper. We have not had access to *A União*; it is not in the National Library's digital archives. More than ascertaining the actual who-said-what of the back-and-forth, what is important here is to show how *O Homem* framed and responded to *A União*.

[53] *O Homem*, January 27, 1876, p. 4.

[54] *O Homem*, January 27, 1876, p. 4.

[55] *O Homem*, January 27, 1876, p. 4.

https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108917537.010 Published online by Cambridge University Press

heart of *O Homem*'s classed and gendered racial project to unify men of influence. Yet, it was ultimately a fleeting "we," for Collaço reached deeper in order to upset the other man. He followed the comment on his "light skin" by asking "the owner of the *União* if he remembers seeing slaves even lighter than him in the houses he enters," because, Collaço continued, "I can assure you that in the kitchens there are slaves that light, as was the case in my parent's house."[56] Collaço purposely collapsed the socioracial distance that ostensibly differentiated a professional, light-skinned man of color from an enslaved person. Though written to offend, this last matter actually brought out *O Homem*'s larger point that only the abolition of slavery could ensure a meaningful measure of honor and equality for Afro-descendants. Meanwhile, the rather casual reference to the light-skinned slaves Collaço was raised among shows that slaveowners were still not stigmatized at this point in the 1870s. In fact, the allusion to his upbringing – perhaps ironically – lent Collaço a degree of credibility and power with which to debase the other editor.

In contrast to the initial polemic with *A Provincia*, the confrontation with *A União* pointed to and revived Collaço's recent clashes with the provincial government. As everyone knew, those clashes derived from an infamous punch he threw at a colleague during a school function, from the legal battle that ensued, from his subsequent firing, and from the racist overtones that were used to describe the process in the press. In other words, by the time *A União* appeared to take Collaço on, it had been long deemed acceptable to racially slight him. The school incident happened about a year before *O Homem* was published, at a teacher's meeting where a colleague of Collaço's sang the praises of an outgoing administrator. Protesting the glorification, Collaço asked to speak, which prompted the administrator, who was present, to leave the room because he knew the criticism that he awaited. Tensions escalated among the teachers, according to the official account of the afternoon. To resolve matters, the organizers simply ended the meeting. Witnesses reported, however, that the bickering continued, and the speaker told Collaço that his "slandering of the outgoing administrator was as black as his own skin" – in reply to which the accomplished editor, mathematician, and law-school graduate simply decked him on the chin.[57] Collaço was immediately placed under house arrest, and his actions were reported to the provincial

[56] *O Homem*, January 27, 1876, p. 4.

[57] APEJE, Fundo: Instrução Pública, 1875. Documentação administrativa do Ginásio Pernambucano.

https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108917537.010 Published online by Cambridge University Press

president, who ordered a legal investigation. Little question remained that he would be indicted, but – whether because of Collaço's legal acumen or because of the powerful political allies he still preserved – he beat the charges twice, including on appeal.[58] Meanwhile, the partisan press also took up the incident, using the case as a means to defend or support the administration. While it is beyond the scope of this chapter to delve into those details, we can now more clearly appreciate how it was through *O Homem* that Collaço was finally able to exert his own voice on the situation.

In a most fundamental way, the paper enabled him to make racial discrimination the key problem. And this was not a point that he took for granted. He had endured racial taunts in public for years, long before the incident at the school and despite the norms of racial silencing. The worst, perhaps, happened in 1874, after he returned to the school he taught at from a disputed leave of absence: a note appeared in the city's paper of record, taunting him, asking if "he was ready to obey his superior." Despite this loaded insult, the statement hints at the degree to which Collaço had previously unsettled the so-called order of things. Overall, though, the note surely meant to return him to "his place," a "place" of subordinated blackness. The author signed off, "Vicente, the overseer," so as to leave clear how centrally the reality of slavery shaped the way people exercised racial power.[59] Neither the author, who was presumably tied to the school, nor the editor of the city's most important paper balked at using such language as "overseer" in relation to one of the country's most talented citizens. It was not, then, that race was completely silenced in public discourse. In fact, research on Afro-descendant editors in the Brazilian southeast has shown that they, too, were publicly taunted and referred to as "slave-like."[60]

Such examples iterate that anti-Black language shadowed Collaço's public interventions; that the strategy of turning a political grievance into a discussion about race allowed those in power not only to deflect attention from systemic problems but also to further extend their levels of surveillance over public discourse. The anti-Black responses in effect represented an act of policing public life, an act of constituting racialized normativity. Furthermore, these instances of trying to stigmatize Collaço must be seen as related to ongoing processes of relegating blackness to the

[58] *Jornal do Recife*, September 6, 1875, p. 2.
[59] *Diario de Pernambuco*, October 26, 1874, p. 3.
[60] A. Magalhães Pinto, "Fortes laços," pp. 50–52, 99–105, 135–145.

https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108917537.010 Published online by Cambridge University Press

political margins of the nation. And this was not lost on Collaço. He wrote that "the outspokenness against my paper comes from voices interested in preserving the actual state of things."[61] He also went to extraordinary lengths to respond to criticism lobbed against him in equally racialized terms. His was a rare voice that mocked whiteness, referring to those who chided him as "the pretentious descendants of the Caucuses."[62] While the "pretentious" part of the slight probably weighed more than referring to someone as a "descendant of the Caucuses," the conjoining of the two destabilized ingrained assumptions about white superiority. He actually also appropriated the insulting line – "mulattos on the scene" – for the name of a column that he maintained to describe his paper's evolving political stance. In so doing, Collaço signaled the fearlessness that made him appear threatening: "Whatever direction the storm comes from, it no longer scares or bothers us. We are already used to swallowing our pride, calmly and without reacting. This has been the daily bread of our existence."[63]

CONCLUSION

This chapter represents the first in-depth analysis of Collaço and *O Homem* to appear in English. Many more questions than answers remain about Collaço's life, especially about the period following *O Homem*. We have also yet to learn much about his children beyond the reference to them that appeared in his obituary. Still, this initial foray into the newspaper and its editor's biography highlights some salient aspects of the process of slave emancipation: its public nature, the importance of the press, and the racialized political responses that responded to the rise of abolitionism. Clearly, the abolition debates bore upon the practice of politics, and their consequences were felt both immediately in the mid-1870s and in the longer term.

Most uniquely, *O Homem*'s story calls attention to the important nineteenth-century history of racial silencing, which was an ideology and cultural process that shaped power relations. Collaço's paper illuminated the racialized work that this ideology did in suppressing debates on hierarchy and politics and, by extension, slavery. It also helps us better understand how the "breaking of this silence" sparked noticeable shifts in racial subjectivities. *O Homem* argued that patterns of racial

[61] *O Homem*, January 27, 1876, p. 1. [62] *O Homem*, February 10, 1876, p. 1.
[63] *O Homem*, January 29, 1876, pp. 2–3.

https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108917537.010 Published online by Cambridge University Press

discrimination existed and that the select prominent Afro-Brazilians occupying public posts were being subjected to an extralegal campaign of removal. Collaço's own controversial dismissal from the secondary school doubtlessly drove this perception. These actions, he insisted, violated the constitutional ideal of legal equality and required Pernambuco's "men of color" to respond accordingly and in a coordinated manner.

The newspaper thus represented a bold means of rewriting the racial narrative. Collaço proceeded through a variety of columns on history, the law, religion, science, and contemporary affairs. Notably, he also embraced the abolition of slavery as integral to his project and, for the first time in almost a decade of local abolitionist struggle, linked the debates about abolition to considerations about Black belonging and rights. In so doing, *O Homem* provoked even a publication like *A Provincia* – which was ostensibly on the antislavery side of the political spectrum – to lash out. This racialized response revealed a pervasive ambivalence about blackness, including in circles presumably committed to abolitionism. These contradictory, racist strands of abolitionist discourse endured within the broad reformist coalition. But rather than dismissing this history as exceptional, it is important to situate these anti-Black responses as part of a long and troubling history of anti-Black racialized politics. *A Provincia*'s and *A União*'s interactions with *O Homem*, for example, skirted discussions about power, and in this case public jobs, by generating a polemic around race. These new polemics cleverly and disingenuously changed the focus from racial discrimination and political patronage to whether it was even legitimate for "men of color" to present their grievances in such terms. In a sense, the responses were about a normative construction of an "us" that was strategically portrayed as not being about race, which enabled the perpetuation of Black political exclusion.

In terms of the history of racial silence, then, this chapter points to the public arena as an important site where this ideology operated. It highlights the prevailing discourses used to enforce such "silence," which in the end revealed the rather open nature of racialized language in the press. When one takes into the account the plethora of runaway-slave ads in Brazilian newspapers for most of the nineteenth century, it is clear that both slavery and race were indeed quite regular features of public life. However, the controversies surrounding *O Homem* make it clear that it was not that race could not be discussed but instead that Black empowerment remained too threatening an issue; such discussions endangered not only social relations among the free population but also the slave-based

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foundation of the national order. The policing of Black political discourse, which we saw practiced by rival white and Afro-descendant editors, also signaled a mechanism through which to constrict how Black politics were articulated and debated. The comparatively small number of avowedly nineteenth-century Black newspapers in Brazil should thus not be seen as reflecting a lower degree of Afro-racial consciousness but perhaps as more a reflection of the dominant modes of public politics.

There remains yet one last consideration to highlight in terms of the effects of anti-Black racialization in political discourse, and that pertains to how former slaveholders in the post-emancipation era depicted the wider abolitionist movement in racialist language to discredit the legitimacy of popular political action. In the months following emancipation, it was not unusual to find articles in the press about "disorderly Black gangs" disrupting procedures on election days or, worse, instigating conflicts to shut down the electoral process altogether.[64] These sentiments, for example, surfaced quite prominently during the last election cycle of the empire (August/September 1889), some eighteen months after the abolition of slavery, and aimed to stoke anti-Black fear and sideline popular, including Black, political participation. Collaço's story, then, especially in terms of *O Homem*, should be understood as connected to this larger period where anti-Black discourse emerged as a response to political contestation. His experience illustrates that within the struggle over abolition, a related, fiercely disputed process unfolded in the press over the place of blackness in public life; that the deep-seated tradition of "silencing race," in effect, set in motion anti-Black racial subjectivities.

[64] C. Castilho, *Slave Emancipation*, pp. 182–191.

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