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Colonialism to Carnival: Tracking centuries of racialized imagery of Brazilian woman

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Introduction

"Vibrant colors, lively music and endless spectacle are part of Carnival, a week-long celebration in Brazil. Carnival celebrations vary, but visitors can always expect a great time, with tons of dancing and drinking, in any part of Brazil."[1] This description from *USA Today*, along with the pictures of the 2019 Rio's Carnival showing women minimally dressed by *The Atlantic*, illustrates the representation of Brazil, as the land of Carnival and sex paradise.[2] Even though Carnival, mulatta and soccer are the most well-known things associated with Brazil, according to a survey done by the *Confederação Nacional do Transporte* (Confederation of National Transportation) e *Instituto Sensus* (Institute Census) in 2004, only 41% of the Brazilians interviewed said that they enjoy Carnival and take part in the Carnival festivities and traditions. Brazil was a heavily Catholic country until the first part of the twentieth century and from the second part on, evangelical and protestant religious grew in large numbers, making religion a big part of many people's lives in the country. Not to say that necessarily religion does not go together with Carnival, but a lot of what takes place within some of the carnival festivities would be considered immoral or unethical no matter if you follow a religion or not. Indeed *Retiro de Carnaval* (Carnival Retreat) emerged in opposition to Carnival. Many evangelical churches hosted events where the all church members go to a farm or a camping site rented by the church and spend the Carnival days doing family oriented activities, and away from the Carnival celebrations.

There are many things throughout Brazilian history that helped to shape the image that

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[1] Caryn Anderson, "What is the Carnival in Brazil?," *USA Today*, march 09, 2018. Accessed May 11, 2019. https://traveltips.usatoday.com/carnival-brazil-100582.html.

[2] Ann Taylor, "Carnival 2019 Brazil," The Atlantic, Mar 4, 2019. Accessed May 11, 2019. https://www.theatlantic.com/photo/2019/03/brazil-carnival-2019-photos/584050/.

Brazilian woman has nationally and internationally. The valorization of beauty and bodies within Brazilian society and the idea of a luxurious hyper-sexual being are directly linked to the way that Brazilian women have been seen and treated inside Brazil and abroad. In July 1975, the *Manifesto das Mulheres Negras* (Manifest from the Black Women) at the *Congresso das Mulheres Brasileiras* (Congress of Brazilian Women), stated that any assumed unity between women of different races was open to debate.[3] The Manifest went on to say, "Black Brazilian women have received a cruel heritage: to be the objects of pleasure to the colonizers. The fruit of this cowardly crossing of blood is what is now acclaimed and proclaimed as 'the only national product that deserves to be exported: the Brazilian mulatta. But if the quality of the product is said to be so high, the treatment that she receives is extremely degrading, dirty and disrespectful."[4] By bringing attention to specific life experiences of a black woman, and how they are represented among society, the manifesto highlighted how practices of racial domination have formed the race and gender relations in Brazil. [5]

Some examples of how such ideas are ingrained in the minds of many people inside Brazil and around the world are the many assaults by tourists reported by women during international events hosted in Brazil such as the 2014 World Cup, and the 2016 Olympics.[6] Another example was an assault that happened live on television to a woman reporter while covering the World Cup in Russia in 2018.[7] Expressions well-known in the beauty industry

[3] Ibid., 152.
[4] Ibid., 152.
[5] Kia Caldwell, *Negras in Brazil* (Rutgers University Press: New Brunswick, 1971) 153.
[6] Loretta Chao "World Cup Tourists Treating Local Women With Disrespect," The Wall Street Journal, last modified June 27, 2014. https://blogs.wsj.com/dailyfix/2014/06/27/world-cup-tourists-treating-local-women-with-disrespect/.
[7] James Masters and Gianluca Mezzofiore "World Cup reporter shouts at man who tried to kiss her on camera," CNN online, last modified June 25, 2018.

such as the Brazilian wax, Brazilian butt lift, and Brazilian bikini, are other forms that reinforce the stereotypes and ideas regarding Brazilian women. Brazilian women, just like women in many societies around the world, still occupy a second class citizen position today. Even though Brazil is considered a developing country, it has many modern and globalized cities, and has an important presence in international trade, the level of women's rights among Brazilian society can be compared to some of the poorest and most politically conservative countries in the world.[8] Brazilian women's lives have very little value in the country, and policies to defend and promote their human civil rights are not enforced by politicians or state forces. Brazil only outlawed honor killing of wives by husbands in 1991.[9] The Brazilian Senate issued two extensive reports, one in 2016, and another in 2018, showing the number and types of crimes committed against women in Brazil nation-wide and by states.[10] One year later, another report published in February of 2019, by *Datafolha*, one of Brazil's most respected survey companies, showed that nothing effective has been done by the government to contain those crimes, and the number of crimes has increased in the last twelve months in Brazil, showing that 1, 6 million women affirmed to have been beaten, and 22 million Brazilian women (37,1% of the Brazilian women) reported to have suffered some kind of harassment.[11]

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https://www.cnn.com/2018/06/25/football/world-cup-reporter-kiss-spt-intl/index.html.

[8] Natalia Rodrigues, "Feminicídio: Brasil ocupa 5 lugar no ranking mundial," *Band News*, Jan 01, 2019. Accessed Apr 29, 2019. http://bandnewsfmrio.com.br/editorias-detalhes/brasil-ocupa-5o-lugar-no-ranking-mundial-de-v.

[9] James Brooke, Honor Killing of Wives is Outlawed in Brazil, The New york Times, Mar 29, 1991. Accessed May 5, 2019. https://timesmachine.nytimes.com/timesmachine/1991/03/29/333991.html?action=click&pageNumber=40.

[10] Instituto de Pesquisa Data Senado, "Panorama da violência contra as mulheres no Brasil: indicadores nacionais e estaduais," *Senado Federal*, Vol. II, 2018. Accessed May 5, 2019. http://www.senado.gov.br/institucional/datasenado/omv/indicadores/relatorios/BR-2018.pdf.

[11] Luiza Franco, "Violência contra a mulher: novos dados mostram que 'não há lugar seguro no Brasil,'" *BBC Brasil*, Feb 26, 2019. Accessed May 5, 2019. https://www.bbc.com/portuguese/brasil-47365503.

These histories have significant legacies, with relevance for the contemporary moment. Many scholars have examined the different types of marginalization of Brazilian women.[12] This research investigates how the stereotypes regarding the image of the Brazilian woman as sensual, sexual, and uniquely physically beautiful were constructed and how they started. I wanted to find elements throughout Brazilian history that helped to shape the image that Brazilian woman currently has nationally and internationally. While the Brazilian historiography includes a number of works focused on the marginalized status of women of color, unlike those works, this thesis tracks the construction of the idea of the Brazilian woman over five centuries. In taking a longer view, this thesis more fully tracks the evolution of this image, from colonial conquest to the present.

In chapter one I will argue that the first documents ever written about Brazil by the Portuguese that arrived in that country in the sixteenth century, and the journals of European travelers that visited Brazil in the seventeenth century were the first sources to create this idea

[12] Carole A. Myscofski, Amazons, Wives, Nuns, and Witches (Auston: University of Texas, 2013).
Lamonte Aidoo, Slavery Unseen: Sex, Power, and Violence in Brazilian History (Durham: Duke Press University, 2018).
Kia Lilly Caldwell, Negras in Brazil: Reenvisioning Black Women, Citizenship, and the Politics of Identity (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1971).
Edward E. Telles, Race In Another America: The Significance of Skin Color in Brazil (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006.
Richard Parker, Bodies, Pleasures and Passions: Sexual Culture in Contemporary Brazil (Vanderbilt University Press: Nashville, 2009).
Judy Bachrach, "Brazilian Women Are Confident About Their Beauty," in The Culture of Beauty, ed. Laurie Willis (New York: Greenhaven Press, 2011).
Lélia Gonzales, "A Mulher Negra na Sociedade Brasileira, in O Lugar da Mulher", ed. Luz Madel (Rio de Janeiro, Edições Graal, 1982).
Monique H. Ribeiro, "Black Womanhood, Telenovela Representation, and Racial Discourse in Brazil" (master's thesis, The University of Texas at Austin, 2016).
Luiza Barros, Mulher Negra: O reforco da subordinacao. In *Desigualdade racial no Brasil contemporaneo* (Belo Horizonte: MGSO Editores, Ltda, 1991).
Angela Gilliam, The Brazilian Mulata: Images in the Global Economy. *Race & Class* 40 (I), 1998, 57-69.
John Burdick, *Blessed Anastacia: Women, Race and Popular Christianity In Brazil* (New York: Routledge, 1998).
Sonia Giacomini, *Mulher e Escrava* (Petropolis: Vozes, 1988).
June E. Hahner, *A mulher no Brasil*. Trans. Eduardo F Alves (Rio de Janeiro: Civilização Brasileira, 1976).

regarding Brazilian woman internationally. I will go over their perceptions and accounts regarding the sensuality, physical appearance and moral attributes of the native Brazilian women they encountered.

On chapter two, I will discuss some of the characteristics of Brazilian slavery during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, which was the apex of the slave traffic in that country, and how slavery affected the perceptions and place of woman of color, freed or slave, in the Brazilian society. To accomplish that I will use journals of Europeans and North Americans that traveled or lived in Brazil. I will also use newspaper advertisements to demonstrate how slave women were treated, and the emphasis given to their physical characteristics in the sale process, which unveils some of the desires and interests from the slave buyer.

Chapter three examines the importance of some of Brazil's most famous literary authors in the twentieth century, along with the sociologist Gilberto Freyre, which reinforced and perpetuated of the image of the Brazilian women as uniquely beautiful and morally and sexually loose. I will analyze how the ideas promoted by literary works from the nineteenth century, and by the famous sociological work of Gilberto Freyre, *Casa Grande e Senzala* (The Masters and Slaves) influenced and shaped the idea of Brazilian woman within Brazilian society, which manifested itself through many forms of popular culture.

In chapter four, I will recount the history of the Brazilian Carnival and argue how some elements derived from it, such as the Professional Mulatta and the *Globeleza*, helped to reaffirm and promote the international depiction of the Brazilian woman. To achieve that, I will use accounts and articles from international and Brazilian newspapers.

Chapter One

Brazilian Woman and the first written documents about Brazil during the 16th and 17th centuries

> "And surely if the terrestrial paradise is in any part of this earth, I esteem that it is not far distant from those parts."[13]

This quote is part of one of the first and oldest accounts recorded about the "new world" and more specifically what is known as Brazil today. The objective of this chapter is to analyze how the first accounts written about Brazil influenced the construction of the image that Europeans and other cultures of the world have of Brazil and specifically, Brazilian woman. It will be seen that some of the characteristics and ideas presented in those early documents have been associated with the image of the Brazilian woman for five centuries after its discovery. This chapter will focus on documents and ideas that existed in Brazil and Europe in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

Throughout the letters, journals and diaries describing Brazil and its native indigenous people, words used such as nakedness, sensuality, and immorality were the main characteristics attributed to the native people of Brazil. Richard Parker, in his book, *Bodies, Pleasures, and Passion*, argues that these early documents promoted a vision of Brazil that focused on the question of sexual life, sensuality, and eroticism no less than on the clear potential for economic exploitation and colonization.[14] First seen in the words of the outsider, the explorer, the traveler, and later by Brazilians themselves, this characterization of the Brazilian lifestyle has been replicated, in an array of circumstances throughout Brazilian history. It is not to say that those

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[13] Amerigo Vespucci, *The Mundus Novus; Letter to Lorenzo Pietro di Medici*, trans. George Tyler Northup (London: Princeton University Press, 1916), 9.

[14] Richard G. Parker, *Bodies, Pleasures, and Passions: Sexual Culture in Contemporary Brazil* (Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press, 2009) 16.

reports from the first century after the arrival of the Portuguese in Brazil are entirely responsible for such an image. However, as we will see in the later chapters, to some extent, the traditions and customs of the native people living in Brazil in 1500 would be associated with "Brazilness" into the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

It is important to indicate that the documents used in this chapter have been extensively used by many historians, anthropologists, and sociologists to better understand the history and formation of Brazil and the Portuguese colonization process. Even though in one hand they have been important to the construction of the history of Brazil, on another, they are also considered eurocentric and racist accounts, which do not tell us the complete truth regarding the native indigenous people's lifestyle, culture and beliefs, but only the European perception of those things.[15] The historiography of Brazil has dramatically changed in the last half of the twentieth century into the twenty-first, trying to deconstruct some of the misconceptions about what is known in the field as the "myths of origin" of Brazil. Much research has been done attempting to scrutinize the true story of Brazilian slavery and the race and gender relations among its people. [16] There is also a great amount of material available about the history of Brazil's sexuality, and how Brazilians deal with and perceive their own sexuality.[17] I will analyze these documents focusing on the descriptions of different types of Brazilian women, and how such descriptions were perpetrated over time helping to shape the identity of Brazilian woman worldwide.

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[15] Philippa Levine, "State of undress: Nakedness and the colonial imagination." *Victorian Studies* 50 (2), 2008. 189-2019.

[16] Lamonte Aiddo, *Slavery Unseen: Sex, Power, and Violence in Brazilian History* (Durham: Duke Press University, 2018).
Robert Edgar Conrad, *World of Sorrow: The African Slave Trade in Brazil* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1986).
Stuart B. Schwartz, *Slaves, Peasants and Rebels: Reconsidering Brazilian Slavery* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1996).
Hebert D. Klein and Francisco Vidal Luna, *Slavery In Brazil* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

[17] Richard Park has more than 15 books and journals focuses on different aspects of sexuality in Brazil.

Far away from any conspiracy theory, all the documents used here were written by authors that went to Brazil at different times, and cannot be considered as a collection on the topic, or a conscious effort to study the Brazilian women. As far as this research went, the authors used here did not know each other, with the exception of Jean de Lery and Andre Thevet. The two authors were involved in a feud, and according to Sergio Millier, the Brazilian translator of Jean de Lery's journals, Lery's publication in 1578 is known to be an answer to Thevet's publication from 1557. In his work, Lery challenged many facts mentioned by Thevet in his accounts as not being truthful or precise. Estevao Pinto, the translator of Thevet's Brazilian copy added notes in some of Thevet's statements saying parts of them could have been exaggerated or sensationalized. Apart from this issue, according to Millier, both of their writings contained a lot of information about Brazilian fauna, flora and native people that have been proven to be accurate with facts. Millier goes on to say that especially Jean de Lery's book was a very popular travel and adventure account at the time it was first published in France in 1578, and was later published and translated to Latin, German and Dutch.[18]

The idea of race in the 16th century

One other important consideration to be made before the start of the analysis of the above-mentioned documents is the idea that the Portuguese explorers had about women and non-European people at the time they arrived in Brazil for the first time. In the sixteenth century, the idea of race was not elaborated within the European intellectual world, and most accounts regarding race are the result of writings of European philosophers and travelers that have been in contact with different peoples and tried to understand and explain the physical differences

[18]Jean de Levy, *Viagem A Terra do Brasil*, trans. Sergio Milliet, ed. Paul Gaffarel (Brasilia: Biblioteca do Exercito, 1961) 18.

between those people and the Europeans.[19] All the ideas presented in such accounts and discussed throughout this chapter regarding race are known as scientific racism, and do not have any credibility within the academic world today, nor are considered scientific theories.

Before the sixteenth century, the idea of the "other" was materialized by the Europeans in the persons of Muslims and Jews. The justification for European superiority was based on faith and the dichotomy of believers and nonbelievers.[20] In 1576, the French philosopher, Jean Bodin, tried to explain the black color of West African inhabitants affirming that, Africa's hot weather had produced hypersexual individuals. He believed that those individuals had close relations with "beasts" from the region giving birth to people that had both, human and monsters/animals characteristics.[21]

Other explanations such as the curse theory, defended by many European authors and were emphasized in the work of the English travel writer, George Best, in 1577. The theory is based on the Biblical story of Noah in the book of Genesis. According to the story, Noah said to his sons that the first one to bear a child once they left the Ark would inherit the earth. His son Ham decided to have sex while inside the Ark still, so he would have the first son once they left the Ark. According to Best's explanation, as a result of his cheating attitude, Noah cursed his son, asking God to make Ham's descendants "so black and loathsome, that it might remain a spectacle of disobedience to all the world."[22] G. Daniel argues that according to this theory, blackness and slavery was all part of the curse, even though the Bible does not say anything about slavery in this passage nor correlates it to the consequence to Ham's disobedience. He goes

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[19] G. Reginald Daniel, *Race and Multiraciality in Brazil and the United States* (University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2016) 9.
[20] Ibid., 16.
[21] Ibram X. Kendi, *Stamped from the Beginning: The Definitive History of Racist Ideas in America* (New York: Nation Books, 2017) 31.
[22] Ibid., 32.

on to say that the symbology of blackness together with the "uncivilized" lifestyle of Africans based on European standards were used to question the humanity of those individuals.[23] The Ham curse theory was then used to justify the economic, political and religious interests of white Europeans on black enslavement, and it can be found in many discourses of preachers of the American South as a justification for slavery, and also in the Dominicans debates in South America.[24]

The notion of womanhood in the 16th century

The Christian notion of a virtuous and honorable woman that existed in Europe at the time of Brazil's discovery was an old concept that dated back to the Greeks. According to Myscofski, in her book, *Amazons, Wives, Nuns, and Witches*, Greeks authors seldom questioned whether the women were or were not inferior, but instead, they held women's inferiority as the beginning point for any argumentation.[25] She goes on to say that Aristotle profoundly influenced Christian thought through Augustine of Hippo and Thomas Aquinas, with his ideas that women had the ability to learn and care for children, but their roles in nature were more material and submissive, since only they provided the matter for reproduction and the womb for nurturance of human life. Having their bodies and souls governed by men for their own good, the women's role was restricted to being of service to men, having to pursue moral virtues of justice, temperance, silence, and subordination.[26] Inspired by those ideas, Augustine of Hippo would influence the Christian doctrine with his teachings for centuries, affirming that women demonstrated their natural inferiority through their physical features compared to men, and this

[23] G. Reginald Daniel, *Race and Multiraciality in Brazil and the United States* (University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2016) 19.
[24] Ibid., 32.
[25] Carole A. Myscofski, *Amazons, Wives, Nuns, and Witches* (Auston: University of Texas, 2013) 58.
[26] Ibid., 59.

alone reflects their distance from the image of God. Since women distantly reflected the image of God and were created ultimately to serve as the procreative partner of men, they could only achieve their divinely designated early purpose through devoted marriage and motherhood.[27] The ideas of Aquinas and Augustine influenced Portuguese authors such as Gonçalo Fernandes Trancoso, in his book, *Contos de Exemplo e Proveito* (Tales of Examples and Manners), and Luis dos Anjos. In his book 1575, Goncalo throughout the different tales such as *The Disobedient Daughter*, *The envy Sisters*, and *The Honorable Woman Must Be Silent*, to mention a few, describes different stories of dominant and arrogant men as masters of honor and virtue, that met different types of independent women with harsh punishments and condemnation of their vices.[28] All his tales ended with a moral content praising the silent, submissive, chaste and restrained women as good examples to be followed. In contrast to that, the tales also had examples of what happened to women that were non submissive, outgoing, opinionated and immoral.[29] Trancoso also developed a booklet known as the *Moral ABC*, using all the letters in the alphabet to describe attributes to be pursued by the Portuguese woman,

> The A is to say that you should be a friend (amiga) of your house; B, well-loved (bem amada) in the neighborhood; C, charitable with the poor; D, devoted to the Virgin Mary; E, knowledgeable (educada) in your position; F, firm in faith; G, guardian of your property; H, humble before your husband; I, enemy (inimiga) of gossips; L, loyal; M, gentle (mansa); N, noble; O, honest (onesta)[30]; P, prudent; Q, docile (quieta); R, rule bound; S, sober; T, hard-working (trabalhadora); V, virtuous; X, simple or Christian; Z, zealous of your honor.[31]

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[27] Ibid., 61.
[28] Carole A. Myscofski, *Amazons, Wives, Nuns, and Witches* (Auston: University of Texas, 2013) 63.
[29] Ibid., 64.
[30] The world *honesta* in Portuguese, honest in English comes from the word onesta in Latin.
[31] Goncalo Trancoso, *Moral ABC*, quoted Myscofski, Carole A., *Amazons, Wives, Nuns, and Witches* (Auston: University of Texas, 2013) 65.

Those were some of the beliefs which the Portuguese that arrived in Brazil were familiar with and would most likely have used to analyze and describe the recently "discovered" people.

Brazil's "discovery" and the Brazilian woman

The territory that is known as Brazil today was discovered by a Portuguese expedition commanded by Pedro Álvares Cabral in April of 1500. The expedition was initially to have been going to India, following the route traveled by Vasco da Gama in 1490.[32] It is believed by a significant amount of scholars of the history of Brazil, that Cabral was aware of the existence of that land, and intentionally made a stop on his way to India, to assert that no other nation claimed the land before Portugal. After ten days exploring the recently found territory, he sent a ship back to Portugal to announce and report all that they had found and seen in their first encounter. He then proceeded to his final destination, arriving in India in September of the same year.[33] The first century after the arrival of the Portuguese in Brazil was marked by loosely formed settlements. It was not before the 1530s that the Portuguese Crown started to grant lands to Portuguese merchants and nobles with the purpose of establishing a settlement in the newly discovered territory. At the time of the colonization of Brazil, Portugal had a population of only one million people, and was able to send only four hundred males to settle the new colony and to build towns and plantations to explore the wood and grow sugarcane. Since not many Portuguese were interested in voluntarily migrate to Brazil, Portugal expanded its criminal Code making about two hundred crimes punishable by exile to Brazil, and also allowed the interracial relations among Portuguese and native indigenous women, which differed from other European colonization settlements.[34] During this process of the settlement the land received many

[32]Robert M. Levine, *The History of Brazil* (Westport: Greenwood, 1999) 34.
[33] Ibid 36.
[34] G. Reginald Daniel, *Race and Multiraciality in Brazil and the United States* (University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2016) 28.

travelers, missionaries, and explorers that spent different amounts of time in Brazil during their expeditions. As early as 1538, Portugal started to bring African slaves to work in the recently settled sugar plantations in the northeast of Brazil. In the 1690s, after gold and diamond were found in the center regions of Brazil, slaves were imported to work in those regions as well. During the first two centuries of the colonization of Brazil, Portugal was under political turbulence due to the invasion and occupation of its colony by Dutch and French explorers and by a marriage between the Portuguese and Spanish royal families, that made Portugal a dual monarchy. The dual monarchy lasted 60 years, and ended with the Treaty of Lisbon in 1668, after thirty years of war which Portugal tried to recover its independence from Spain.[35] By the beginning of the eighteenth century, Portugal also regained control of Brazil expelling all the foreign invaders from its colony.[36]

The first document ever written about Brazil was written by one Portuguese official who was part of the first expedition from Portugal that arrived in Brazil, in 1500. The author's name is Pero Vaz de Caminha, and he was commissioned to report in writing the details of the excursion to the King of Portugal.[37] There are many different aspects described in this letter about the newly discovered land, but for our purpose in this chapter, we will focus on Caminha's perceptions and descriptions of the native indigenous people, more precisely, the native woman. The Brazilian census of 2010, reported the existence of more than 300 indigenous tribes in Brazil, which number was most likely higher at the time the Portuguese first arrived in the country. Based on historical records at the time that Portugal arrived in Brazil the main

[35] Robert M. Levine, *The History of Brazil* (Westport: Greenwood, 1999) 44.
[36] Ibid., 42.
[37] "Letter from Pêro Vaz de Caminha", Unesco, accessed Feb 05, 2019, http://www.unesco.org/new/en/communication-and-information/memory-of-the-world/register/full-list-of-registered-heritage/registered-heritage-page-5/letter-from-pero-vaz-de-caminha/.

indigenous tribes living on the coast were the *Tupinambas, Tupiniquins, Caetes, Potiguas, Tamoios, Goitacazes* and *Patajos,* the *Tupiniquins* being most likely the one being described by Caminha is his letter.[38]

Caminha described the first encounter with the native people as peaceful and friendly. He recounts that the native people approached the Europeans at the beach but laid down their arms when requested through signs to do so. As far as his description went, they came closer and started to interact through body signs and began some physical contact towards the European's attire and accessories with amusement. They offered some of the things they were wearing such as beads necklaces and feathers in exchange for some of the Europeans artifacts.[39] The Portuguese went along and contributed to the success of the friendly interaction, practicing lessons long learned from the contacts with other people such as Africans and Asians who did not speak the same language as them.[40]

The first characteristic about the native people and by extent the native woman found in Caminha's letter is the difference between the moral system of the Europeans and these newly discovered people. Many times through his letter, Caminha emphasized the fact that the native people went about naked. More than a simple cultural difference in the dress code, what intrigued Caminha and so many other travelers that would land in Brazil after him, was the absence of shame or awkwardness regarding their nakedness. [41] According to him, "They go around naked, without any kind of garments. Do not even bother to cover their intimate parts; do

[38] Robert M. Levine, *The History of Brazil* (Westport: Greenwood, 1999) 39.
[39] "A Carta de Pero Vaz de Caminha", Fundacao Biblioteca Nacional, accessed Jan 28, 2019, http://objdigital.bn.br/Acervo_Digital/Livros_eletronicos/carta.pdf.
[40]Maria Beatriz Nizza da Silva "A carta-relatório de Pero Vaz de Caminha", Ide (São Paulo) vol.33 no.50(2010): 26-35, http://pepsic.bvsalud.org/pdf/ide/v33n50/v33n50a05.pdf.
[41] Maria Beatriz Nizza da Silva "A carta-relatório de Pero Vaz de Caminha", Ide (São Paulo) vol.33 no.50(2010): 26-35, http://pepsic.bvsalud.org/pdf/ide/v33n50/v33n50a05.pdf.

it so naively that one believes that they truly do not understand what they are doing."[42] Amerigo Vespucci, an Italian explorer that landed in Brazil somewhere in between 1499 and 1502, also was fascinated about this fact:

> They have no cloth either of wool, linen or cotton, since they need it not; neither they have goods of their own, but all things are held in common. They live together without a king, without government, and each is his own master. They marry as many wives as they please; and son cohabits with mother, brother with sister, male cousin with female, and any man with the first woman he meets. They dissolve their marriages as often as they please, and observe no sort of law with respect to them. Beyond the fact that they have no church[...].[43]

For both authors, the way the native people presented their bodies and made use of it could not be more foreign to their Medieval Christian Europe, more precisely their heavily religious countries of origin Portugal and Italy. According the Levine, nakedness at this time was synonym to the lack of moral and decency to Christian Europeans, which explains the classification of different peoples and cultures into the same category by European colonizers, even though their eurocentric perception did not describe or understand the true social and behavioral patterns and structures of the colonized peoples.[44]The so called "moral" behavior caught the attention of most of the other travelers who would land in Brazil, including the Calvinist priest, Jean de Lery, on his trip in 1556, while describing the Tupiniquim tribe said, "The next thing is no less strange than difficult to believe for those who have not seen it: the men, women, and children do not hide any parts of their bodies; what is more, without any sign

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[42] "A Carta de Pero Vaz de Caminha", Fundacao Biblioteca Nacional, accessed Jan 28, 2019, http://objdigital.bn.br/Acervo_Digital/Livros_eletronicos/carta.pdf.
[43] Amerigo Vespucci, *The Mundus Novus; Letter to Lorenzo Pietro di Medici*, trans. George Tyler Northup (London: Princeton University Press, 1916), 4.
[44] Philippa Levine, "State of undress: Nakedness and the colonial imagination." *Victorian Studies* 50 (2), 2008. 189-219.

of bashfulness or shame, they habitually live and go about their affairs as naked as they come out of their mother's womb."[45]Myscofski discusses the abysm between the two civilizations, affirming that, women's honor, relied on a sense of shame, of their bodies and hair from public appearance and their behavior from public observation[46]. She goes on to say that, "From the Portuguese perspective, a woman's failure to cover herself properly actually constituted a violation of honor and revealed her social and sexual vulnerability: shameless women were sexually immoral."[47] She goes to say that from the sixteenth through the nineteenth centuries, even non-religious publications in Portugal displayed a virtuous Christian woman little improved from the Middle Ages, and the Portuguese religious writings repeated the discourse of restrictions for women promoted on ancient Biblical teachings of sin as a discipline.[48]Apart from being an alien practice when contrasted to the European customs, it is also portrayed in some of the accounts as a unique practice since the Europeans had had contacts with native people from different continents, but they did not behave like this. In his writings, Andre Thevet brings out the fact that the African and Canadian native people that he had been exposed to, covered at least their intimate parts in contrast to the people found in Brazil, adding the fact that Africa was as hot as Brazil, not allowing the weather to be used as an explanation for such practice. [49]

Jean de Lery goes on to say:

> But among the things doubly strange and truly marvelous that I observed in these Brazilian women, there is this, although they do not paint their bodies, arms, thighs, and legs as often as the men do, and do not cover

[45] Jean de Lery, *History of a Voyage to the Land of Brazil, otherwise called America,* trans. Janet Whatley (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990) 57.
[46]Carole A. Myscofski, Amazons, Wives, Nuns, and Witches (Auston: University of Texas, 2013) 11.
[47] Ibid 11.
[48] Ibid 62.
[49] Andre Thevet, *Singularidades da França Antártica: que outros chamam America*, trans.Estevão Pinto (São Paulo: Companhia Editora Nacional, 1944) 175, 184.

> themselves with feathers or with anything else that grows in their land, still, although we tried several times to give them dresses and shifts (as I have said we did for the men, who sometimes put them on), it has never been in our power to make them wear clothes: to such a point were they resolved not to allow anything at all on their bodies.[...] This creature delights so much in her nakedness that it was not only the Tupinamba women of the mainland, living in full liberty with their husbands, fathers, and kinsmen, who were so obstinate in refusing to dress themselves in any way at all; even our women prisoners of war, whom we had brought and whom we held as slaves to work in our fort [...] would secretly strip off the shifts and other rags, as soon as the night had fallen.[50]

Such perceptions of Brazilian women as sensual, sexual, and naked would shape the outside world's perceptions of the Brazilian women for years to come.

On a side note, it is interesting to mention that even though most of the times the accounts used here emphasized the lack of morality and civilization of the native people, on the other hand, many writers acknowledged their belief system. The description of the different Brazilian native tribes suggests that even though they did not have an organized religious system like the World religions of the time, they did believe in a higher power and the immortality of the soul, and each tribe had different rituals and celebrations in place. They also believed in concepts similar to heaven and hell, which according to Caminha and Vespucci's accounts made the native people of Brazil possible prospects for the expansion of Christianity .[51] Many other details on their religious beliefs and practices can be found in the reports of Jean de Levy, in his,

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[50]Jean de Lery, *History of a Voyage to the Land of Brazil, otherwise called America,* trans. Janet Whatley (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990) 66.

[51]Jean de Lery, *Viagem A Terra do Brasil,* trans. Sergio Milliet, ed. Paul Gaffarel (Brasilia: Biblioteca do Exercito, 1961) 164,165.

History of a Voyage to the Land of Brazil, who had lived among one tribe for one year.[52]

Another trait found in those early reports about the native woman that would long outlive the first accounts written about Brazil is the narrative about their beauty and body forms. Caminha when describing the encounter with one native woman, described her intimate parts as so beautiful and perfect that the European woman would be embarrassed if compared to them. He also highlighted the fact that those people shaved all their body hair (except for the head) including the ones in their genitals, making those organs in his words, "so clean and perfect, that they (Portuguese) could not stop staring at them."[53]

Some of Vespucci's description of the native woman reinforced this dream body and mystic figure found in those lands:

> The women as I have said go about naked and are very libidinous; yet they have bodies which are tolerably beautiful and cleanly. Nor are they so unsightly as one perchance might imagine; for, inasmuch as they are plump, their ugliness is the less apparent, which indeed is for the most part concealed by the excellence of their body structure. It was to us a matter of astonishment that none was to be seen among them who had a flabby breast, and those who had borne children were not to be distinguished from virgins by the shape and shrinking of the womb; [...] When they had the opportunity of copulating with Christians, urged by excessive lust, they defiled and prostituted themselves.[54]

More than the description of a utopic woman that must have fed the imagination of the European minds at the time, this passage can also be seen as one of the first to promote the idea of looseness and sensuality that would be associated with the image of the Brazilian woman for

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[52] Ibid., 91.
[53] "A Carta de Pero Vaz de Caminha", Fundacao Biblioteca Nacional, accessed Jan 28, 2019, http://objdigital.bn.br/Acervo_Digital/Livros_eletronicos/carta.pdf.
[54] Amerigo Vespucci, *The Mundus Novus; Letter to Lorenzo Pietro di Medici*, trans. George Tyler Northup (London: Princeton University Press, 1916), 7.

many centuries to come. From Vespucci on, the detailed accounts from travelers and explorers of the lifestyle and habits of the native people of Brazil would broaden even more the gap between the two civilizations.

The lack of fragility and their practical role in their community can also be seen as another characteristic of the native woman that contrasted with the ladies or dames from Europe. According to Gabriel Soares de Sousa, a Portuguese settler that went to Brazil in 1569, and lived there for seventeen years, the native individuals from Brazil were such luxurious people, that there was no self-indulgent related sin they would not commit. To exemplify that, he described how their young men were initiated into his sexual life early on by the older women in their community since the men no longer wanted them. [55] This idea that the women were sexually active in their late years and would be willing to have intercourse with a young man would undoubtedly add to the idea of how strange and wild the customs of these people were. Both Vespucci and Soares in their narratives described a ritual where the native woman would cause the male genital part to swell by having a poisonous animal bite in that region causing in some cases the loss of the organ, just for the sake of lust.[56] Andre Thevet described how *Tupinamba* men took their wives to war with them, so they could care for them while away from home, providing their food and helping to carry their arms.[57] The *Tubunamba* women were also responsible for making the paints and applying them on their husbands with the traditional marks and designs that they wear on their bodies.[58] In a different passage, Vespucci outlines that the

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[55] Gabriel Soares de Sousa, *Tratado Descritivo do Brasil 1587* (Rio de Janeiro, 1851) 308.
[56] Amerigo Vespucci, *The Mundus Novus; Letter to Lorenzo Pietro di Medici*, trans. George Tyler Northup (London: Princeton University Press, 1916), 6.
[57] Andre Thevet, *Singularidades da França Antártica: que outros chamam America*, trans. Estevao Pinto (São Paulo: Companhia Editora Nacional, 1944) 208.
[58] Andre Thevet, *Singularidades da Franca Antarctica: que outros chamam America*, trans.Estevao Pinto (Sao Paulo: Companhia Editora Nacional, 1944) 228.

case of animosity among husbands and wives, man and woman would poison themselves out of revenge or rage as a form of punishment. He also described abortion plans that women would take in case they were unhappy with their husbands.[59] Gabriel Soares recounts another curious report about the tradition among the *Tupinamba* woman regarding labor rituals,

> When the woman goes into labor, they do not go back home, nor look for help from any other person. They stop where they are, whether in the forest or the fields, and they give birth. Once finished, they find a river or a body of water where they clean up themselves and the newborn child; after that, they go back to their homes, where they will take care of their husbands and the newborn child. The man is the one that stays in bed to rest once a child is born, and the woman spends her day cooking and caring for him and the guests that come to visit the newborn baby. [60]

Jean de Lery described what he had seen while staying with one *Tupiniquim* tribe, and stated that after giving birth, the woman would rest for about two days, and then return to her work routine in the community. She attached the baby to her chest with a cotton belt and did all her activities while carrying the newborn. In this same chapter Lery also compared how different this was from the routine of the European ladies that would take up to three weeks of resting after childbearing, and would give their children to be fed and taken care by serfs and maids.[61] These characteristics of strong women will be seen later in the colonial society through the position occupied by native and African descendants. In contrast to the fragile and secluded position of the white European women, the enslaved and freed African descendent women would hold many roles in the colonial society to include, cooking, sewing, laundry, selling produce in

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[59] Andre Thevet, *Singularidades da Franca Antarctica: que outros chamam America*, trans.Estevao Pinto (Sao Paulo: Companhia Editora Nacional, 1944) 216.

[60] Gabriel Soares de Sousa, *Tratado Descritivo do Brasil 1587* (Rio de Janeiro, 1851) 307.

[61] Jean de Lery, *Viagem A Terra do Brasil,* trans. Sergio Milliet, ed. Paul Gaffarel (Brasilia: Biblioteca do Exercito, 1961) 179.

the public markets, wet nurses, and working in the sugarcane fields.[62]

Another custom that intrigued the first travelers was the polygamy practiced among the native Indians. The number of wives could vary, and the most esteemed and honored man would have the most number of wives. Both Gabriel and Lery mentioned the fact that the first wife would be the one to receive respect and obedience from the newer ones, and jealousy was rare amongst them. [63] Michel Montaigne also described the Tupinamba social relations in his essay *Cannibals*, saying that "It is admirable that their marriages are so contrasting to ours, in which jealousy hinders friendship and tolerance; their wives only concern is their husbands well being and status, and they are willing to coexist and share with as many other wives as possible as a way to demonstrate their virtues and worth."[64] About this issue, Thevet pointed out that more than living peacefully they help to raise each other's children.[65] It is impressive to see how all the reports on this topic sounded so similar and conveyed the same feeling of submissiveness and passiveness while describing the woman, even though they have been written by different authors. It becomes hard to tell if the authors were using the native traditions as a way to subtly criticize the Europeans, or they were unconsciously emphasizing how such characteristics are naturally female independent of the culture in question. Jean de Lery bravely added that he believed that even in a scenario where God did not forbid polygamy, he thought the European woman would not thrive in such a social structure and succumb in feuds and intrigues.[66]

Still, regarding marriage laws among the native people, Lery described how adultery

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[62]Stuart B. Schwartz *Slaves, Peasants and Rebels: Reconsidering Brazilian Slavery* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1996) 47.
[63] Gabriel Soares de Sousa, *Tratado Descritivo do Brasil 1587* (Rio de Janeiro, 1851) 304.
[64] Michel de Montaigne, *Selected Essays of Michel de Montaigne*, trans. Charles Cotton, ed. Carew Hazlitt (New York: Thomas y. Crowell & Co, 1903).
[65]Andre Thevet, *Singularidades da França Antártica: que outros chamam America*, trans. Estevao Pinto (São Paulo: Companhia Editora Nacional, 1944) 209.
[66] Jean de Lery, *Viagem A Terra do Brasil,* trans. Sergio Milliet, ed. Paul Gaffarel (Brasilia: Biblioteca do Exercito, 1961) 178.

committed by a woman was abhorrent among them, being punished by death if that was the wish of the betrayed husband. [67] In contradiction, the virginity of their young woman did not have an essential place among their customs. Both Lery and Soares mentioned a custom of a father selling or giving a virgin daughter in return for favors or commodities, and how this practice would not leave the girl dishonored or without marriage prospects.[68] Lery went on to admit that much of the trade in return of sex happened among the first explorers, and even when the European explorers abused the native women without the permission of their fathers, she could still return to their tribes and acquire a successful marriage.[69] According to Soares accounts, this was not true for the married woman, and when abused by the colonizers and caught by their husbands in such situations, they were subject to punishments or beatings for such acts.[70] Thevet added that if a native woman got pregnant from such abuse, the newborn child would be buried alive and she would be killed or given as a sex slave to the young man of the tribe.[71] Without criticizing the specific cultural practices, it is at least intriguing to wonder the reasons why the explorers who most likely were forcing those woman into intercourse with them would not be seen as punishable as well as their woman.[72]

Some of the principal value of those first accounts is that they help us to understand the treatment and value given to the Brazilian native indigenous people, especially women, during the colonization process, and the perpetuation of such treatment towards the individuals of mixed

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[67] Ibid 178.
[68]Gabriel Soares de Sousa, *Tratado Descritivo do Brasil 1587* (Rio de Janeiro, 1851) 305.
[69] Jean de Lery, *Viagem A Terra do Brasil*, trans. Sergio Milliet, ed. Paul Gaffarel (Brasilia: Biblioteca do Exercito, 1961) 178.
[70] Gabriel Soares de Sousa, *Tratado Descritivo do Brasil 1587* (Rio de Janeiro, 1851) 309.
[71] Andre Thevet, *Singularidades da França Antártica: que outros chamam America*, trans. Estevao Pinto (São Paulo: Companhia Editora Nacional, 1944) 61.
[72]Lindsey Bever "The persistent myth that revealing clothing leads to rape," The Wall Washington Post, last modified January 10, 2018. https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/worldviews/wp/2018/01/10/the-persistent-myth-that-revealing-clothing-leads-to-rape/?noredirect=on&utm_term=.d4c0d63a1f0e.

origin born in Brazil from the ones with a true European descendant. Since the Portuguese settlement in Brazil was a majority of males, they ended up adopting some of the native customs to their benefits and to justify the need to populate the land.[73] The social structures of the first families during the colonization was very fluid, and the native indigenous woman became a commodity to be used by the settlers as they pleased. With the arrival of some priests from the Catholic church to the region, some of the arrangements established by the Portuguese began to be criticized and condemned, which did not mean it stopped happening.[74] In Brazil, such practices became the norm to some extent and would become the standard way to relate with the native women first, and later African descendant ones, which can be seen in the way slave and freed African descendant women were treated in Brazil during the slavery years. The idea of sexually loose and immorality given to the native indigenous women would throughout the colonization process be extended to the African descendant women, and it has been instrumental to the construction of the image of the Brazilian women within the Brazilian society and abroad.

[73]Robert M. Levine, *The History of Brazil* (Westport: Greenwood, 1999) 42.
[74]Carole A. Myscofski, Amazons, Wives, Nuns, and Witches (Auston: University of Texas, 2013) 72.

Chapter Two

Brazilian woman and Slavery in Brazil during the 18th and 19th century

While various forms of slavery and dependency existed on the African continent prior to Trans-Atlantic slave trade, the arrival of the Portuguese explorers in the Sub-Saharan African region in the 1400s represents a crucial new course in the history of the slave trade from Africa regarding its intensity, its sources and the type of labor exploitation of such slaves.[75] According to Herbert Kein, in his book, *Slavery in Brazil*, it was the settlement of the Portuguese colony of Brazil after 1500 that marked the beginning of the modern slave plantation economy in the Americas, and the economic system that would prevail on the continent for the next four centuries.[76] It is useful to emphasize that slavery in the Americas was not a uniform institution, and it had different characteristics depending on which period, place and time it was practiced.[77] The Spanish colonies in South America, for example, were far more successful in enslaving the native people than Portugal in Brazil. Since both the Portuguese and Spanish had been exposed to Africans prior American colonization they were more open towards manumission, cultural exchange, sexual relationships, and even intermarriage between Europeans and Africans in contrast with the English descendants in North America and their relationship with their slaves.[78] Robert Conrad also adds that the Catholic church in the Spanish and Portuguese colonies had a more humane approach to the slaves than the Protestant church in North America.

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[75] Herbert S. Klein and Francisco Vidal Luna, Francisco, *Slavery In Brazil* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010) 7.
[76] Ibid., 13.
[77] Carl N. Degler, *Neither Black nor White: Slavery and Race Relations in Brazil and the United States* (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1971) 25.
[78] A.J.R. Russell-Wood, *Slavery and Freedom in Colonial Brazil* (Oxford: Oneworld Publications, 2002) 15.

For this research, I will focus on some of the most common characteristics of Brazilian slavery as a whole, and will not differentiate the variations that did exist in the treatment of different groups from different regions. I will briefly contextualize the historical background of Brazilian slavery, and then I will analyze the Western thinking of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries used to rationalize and legitimize slavery. Throughout this chapter, I will examine how the depictions of the nakedness of slave women and the status of African descendant women within Brazilian law helped to shape and influence the image and place of women, especially Black women, in Brazilian society.

Race and gender ideas in the 18th and 19th centuries

As mentioned in the first chapter, the idea of race cannot be understood as a timeless concept that can be applied to any society at any point in history. The justifications used to enslave native people in the Americas and Africa changed throughout the centuries of colonialism, changing from religious, biological, scientific and economic reasoning depending on the period, but in most stages had the element of "civilization" versus "barbarism".[79]

To better understand the motivations and structure of Brazilian slavery, it is significant to focus on the changes of the explanations used to endorse slavery in the eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth. During the Enlightenment in Europe, many writers and philosophers developed theories that would support and encourage enslavement. As mentioned on chapter one, these theories were part of what is known today as scientific racism, and are not considered science or part of acceptable academic thought today. All theories mentioned below regarding race and gender existentent in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries are discredited by the scientific and academic world today. According to J.M. Blaut, in the first part of the

[79] G. Reginald Daniel, *Race and Multiraciality in Brazil and the United States* (University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2016) 10.

eighteenth century, some Europeans believed that white people did not belong to the same biological species as individuals from other races.[80] Whites in this context being the people born in Europe and their descendants, not including Europeans with mixed ethnicity.[81] Africans were seen by European people mainly as a cruel, "savage" race, waiting to be rescued, taught how to work, and that could possibly be saved spiritually through Christianity.[82] Carl Linnaeus, father of the Swedish Enlightenment categorized humanity into a racial hierarchy. In his published work, *Sistema Natura*, in 1735, Linnaeus put humans on top of the animal kingdom and divided the *Homo sapiens* species into four other categories based on race. At the peak of the human category was *Homo sapiens europaeus,* who were "very smart, inventive, covered by tight clothing and ruled by law."[83] Then followed *Homo sapiens americanus,* "rules by custom", and home sapiens asiaticus, "rules by opinion". At the bottom, *Homo sapiens Afer*, "sluggish, lazy, crafty, slow, covered by grease, ruled by caprice, and their female's with genital flat and elongated breasts."[84] Other Enlightenment writers expanded on Linnaeus' theory of ethnic racism and were widely used to spread ideas that endorsed the division, conquest, and enslavement of other races. Voltaire, one of France's most prominent Enlightenment writers, is one of the authors that utilized Linnaeus racial scale. Voltaire, among other authors such as Christoph Meiners and Georges Cuvier, believed that the individuals from the White and Black races were from a different evolutionary origin, the Black race was the inferior one, and incapable to assimilate, be civilized or become White. Voltaire's ideas would be widely used to

[80] J. M. Blaut, *The Colonizer's Model of the World* (New York: The Guilford Press, 1993) 62.
[81] Matthew Jacobson, *Whiteness of a Different Color: European Immigrants and the Alchemy of Race* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999), 278.
[82] J. M. Blaut, *The Colonizer's Model of the World* (New York: The Guilford Press, 1993) 70.
[83] Ibram X. Kendi, *Stamped from the Beginning: The Definitive History of Racus Ideas in America* (New York: Nation Books, 2017) 82.
[84] Ibid., 82.

support segregationist ideas of Black inferiority by colonialist and enslaver entrepreneurs.[85]

Throughout the nineteenth century, the idea that the Black and White races came from different species was substituted for what is known as classical racism, which argues that human races have different endowments, similar to the differences existent among breeds of domestic animals. Blaut argues that by this logic, different human beings have different levels of intelligence, aggressiveness, courage and so forth, and those differences were biologically inherited. According to this theory, Africans were gifted with less intelligence than Europeans, so it was a natural and moral duty of the Europeans to colonize Africans and guide them through the path of civilization, morality and development.[86] George Gardner, a Scottish botanist, in his journal about his trip to Brazil, published in 1846, exemplifies this image held by Europeans regarding Black people while describing his experiences with the Brazilian slaves,

> Slaves, however, are variously inclined; from the very nature of a negro—his well-ascertained deficient intellectual capacity—the want of all education—the knowledge of his position in society, and the almost certainty of his never being able to raise himself above it—we need not wonder that there should be among them some who are restless, impatient of all control, and addicted to every vice. It is the frequent necessity which arises for the punishment of the evil-disposed, that has led to the supposition of the indiscriminate and universal use of the lash. It is no small proof of the deficient mental endowment of the negro, that even in remote parts of the empire, three or four white men can keep as many as two or three hundred of them in the most perfect state of submission.[87]

In this statement, Gardner seems to share the ideas of physical and mental inferiority of the

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[85] Ibid., 84.
[86] J. M. Blaut, *The Colonizer's Model of the World* (New York: The Guilford Press, 1993) 62.
[87] George Gardner, *Travels in the Interior of Brazil, Principally Through the Northern Provinces and the Gold and Diamond Districts, During the Years 1836-1841* (London: Reeve, Benham, and Reeve, Printers and Publishers of Scientific Works, 1849) 15.

Black man that was being debated at that time in different European intellectual circles.

Later in the nineteenth century and beginning of the twentieth century, those assumptions were being supported by scientific discoveries and theories. Institutions created in the mid-nineteenth century such as the Ethnological Society of London defended that the inferiority of dark-skinned people was the result of their cultural and environmental diversity instead of their biology, and could potentially be remedied.[88] Anthropologists from different parts of Europe and North America, on the other hand, argued that physical characteristics such as skeletal structure, hair texture, the shape of the facial features, the color of skin and eyes were what determined the racial hereditary.[89] James Hunt, the founder of the Anthropological Society of London, affirmed that "human equality is one of the most unwarrantable assumptions ever invented by man."[90] Paul Broca, a very well known and admired French physician in his time, and the founder of the Anthropological Society of Paris, stated that, "there is an unequal degree of perfectibility among races [...] Never has a people with a black skin, wooly hair, and a prognathous face, spontaneously arrived at civilization."[91]

Broca was also essential in the construction of the position of women among the French and European societies through his extensive and methodical study of craniology. His research tried to prove the relationship between brain weight and intelligence, and his findings confirmed the inferiority of women and Black individuals regarding White men based on the fact that their brains and skulls were smaller and lighter than those of White men. His conclusions were welcomed and accepted by scientists all around Europe and America.[92] The theories spread by

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[88] Cynthia E. Russett, *Sexual Science: The Victorian Construction of Womanhood* (Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1989) 25.
[89] Ibid., 26.
[90] Ibid., 27.
[91] Ibid., 27.
[92] Ibid., 33.

authors such as the French naturalist, Comte de Buffon; German anatomist, Johann Blumenbach; and the American physician, Benjamin Rush about race degeneration and blackness as a type of disease that was also essential to the justification and legitimacy of the slave system in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.[93]

According to Cynthia Russett, groups such as native indigenous people, women, criminals, disabled individuals, were a continual incognita to male intellectuals in the nineteenth century. Famous scientists, such as Charles Darwin, were very influential in shaping and promoting the different natural mental abilities existent between man and women. In his, 1871, *The Descent of Man, and Selection in Relation to Sex*, he argues that "Men excelled in courage, pugnacity, energy, and preeminently in the higher intellectual faculties of abstraction, reason, and imagination. Women's powers of intuition, of rapid perception, and perhaps of imitation were more strongly marked than the comparable powers of men. Women's greater tenderness and less selfishness contrasted to men's ambition which passes too easily into selfishness."[94] A follower of Darwin, the English psychologist, George John Romanos, expanded the natural characteristics inherited by women stating that the only good things associated with being a woman were their affection, devotion, self-denial, piety, and morality.[95]

The American paleontologist and anatomist, Edward Drinker Cope, defended that, "the gentler sex was characterized by a greater impressibility of warmth emotion, submission to its influence rather than that of logic; timidity and irregularity of action in the outer world".[96] G. Stanley Hall, one the most well-known American psychologists, took those ideas further arguing that women, savages and children were linked, and women just like the savage people being

[93]Ibid., 37.
[94]Ibid., 41.
[95]Ibid., 43.
[96]Ibid., 55.

colonized were seen in the evolution process as undeveloped men. He argued that women were stuck in the adolescent stage of development which boys usually passed. This childlikeness of women was proof of her physical, mental and moral inferiority in comparison to men.[97] Those ideas are crucial to understanding the reasoning that prevailed in the European and American intellectual circles during the apex of the Atlantic slave trade. The Catholic Church and its first missionaries were responsible for the rules and standards constructed throughout the Colonial period that shaped the role of women in Brazilian society. According to the church, women could not hold a leadership role in the Catholic Church, nor were exposed to the teachings of the church beyond indoctrination. The elite White womens' activities were also limited to home, and seclusion and little public exposure was associated with honor and decency until the late eighteenth century.[98] Women did not have access to education until 1758, when reform in the Brazilian education system strictly allowed a small number of elite girls to go to school.[99] An account from 1891, from Adele Toussaint-Samson, a French woman that lived in Brazil for a decade, exemplifies the limited lifestyle of the elite women,

> As for the Brazilian ladies, penned up as they are by their husbands in the enclosure of their houses, in the midst of their children and slaves, never going out unaccompanied to either Mass or processions, one must not imagine, on that account, that they are more virtuous than others, only they have the art of appearing so. [...] Besides, the appearances are so well guarded that one must live years in the land to begin to know the inner life

[97]Cynthia E. Russet, *Sexual Science: The Victorian Construction of Womanhood* (Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1989) 56.
[98] Carole A. Myscofski, *Amazons, Wives, Nuns, and Witches: Women and the Catholic Church in Colonial Brazil, 1500-1822* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2013) 10.
[99] Maria Inês Sucupira Stamatto, Um olhar na História: a mulher na escola (Brasil:1549-1910). In: História e Memória da educação Brasileira, 2002, Natal. II Congresso Brasileiro de História da Educação, 2002. Accessed Jan 24, 2019, http://www.sbhe.org.br/novo/congressos/cbhe2/pdfs/Tema5/0539.pdf.

> of these homes, of such patriarchal customs and habits.[100]

The women's personal behaviors in colonial Brazil affected the family honor and it could enhance or diminish her male kin status within the society, and her future possibilities regarding marriage lifestyle.[101]

African Descendant Woman in the Brazilian Slavery

According to, Robert Conrad, Brazil received close to 50% of all slaves that were shipped to the Americas in between the 1530s and 1850s. The first known slave ship that arrived in Brazil is dated 1538, and abolition would finally take place in 1888[102]. The numbers of slaves that arrived in the country is a controversy among historians and varies between 3,300,000 to 8,000,000, the author believes that the correct number of slaves brought to Brazil is probably somewhere in the middle of those numbers. [103] The slaves brought to Brazil during the three centuries of traffic were from different ethnic groups, tribes, and clans, with different social and government systems structures, religions, and cultures.[104] The majority of Africans taken to Brazil were from the Angola, and Coast and Mina.[105] He goes on to say that the main reason for the size of the Brazilian slave trade was the short life expectancy of the African slaves that reached Brazil.[106]According to Agostinho Marques Perdigao the need for such a large volume of

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[100] Adele Toussaint-Samson, *A Parisian in Brazil: The Travel Account of a French Woman in Nineteenth Century Rio de Janeiro*, trans. Emma Toussaint (Boston: James H. Earle, 1891) 80.
[101] Carole A. Myscofski, *Amazons, Wives, Nuns, and Witches: Women and the Catholic Church in Colonial Brazil, 1500-1822* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2013) 12.
[102] Robert Edgar Conrad, *World of Sorrow: The African Slave Trade in Brazil* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1986) 26.
[103]Ibid., 26.
[104] Katia M. de Queirós Mattoso, *To be a Slave in Brazil: 1550-1888*, trans. Arthur Goldhammer (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1991) 13.
[105] Robert Edgar Conrad, *World of Sorrow: The African Slave Trade in Brazil* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1986) 28.
[106]Ibid., 15.

slaves is the result of the fact that the Brazilian slave population could not reproduce itself because of some of the aspects of the Brazilian slavery, such as, the majority of the slaves being imported were men and very few women; marriage was not encouraged by the masters, when not forbidden; little care was given to the slave children causing high death rates at a young age; and death caused by sickness, precarious treatment, and extreme labor and service practices.[107] African slave labor was initially introduced in the northeastern areas of Brazil, mainly in the production of sugar, and throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. It gradually expanded to other sectors, such as tobacco, cocoa, and gold and diamond mines, and in the eighteenth century to the coffee plantations in the center-south regions of the country.[108]

The slave women in Brazil occupied the least privileged and respected position within the Brazilian women category during the slavery years, and after abolition. One of the first marks from the slavery period regarding African descent women throughout the history of Brazil is the idea that women of color did not have morals and were unworthy of respect. It is useful to mention though that among the Brazilian colonial society the classifications of race vary greatly. Slaves born in Africa were called *bocal*, and the ones born in Brazil *creolos*.[109] Even though both groups were part of the slave society, according to Russell-Wood the slaves spoke different languages and had different levels of literacy that influenced their hierarchy inside the labor.[110] The colonial society also made distinctions between the *mulatos*, black and white descendants, *mameluco*, black and native Indigenous descendants, and the *caboclos*, white and native

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[107] Agostinho Marques Perdigão Malheiro, A escravidão no Brasil Vol III: Africanos, (Rio de Janeiro: Typografia Nacional, 1866) 65.

[108] Kimberly Cleveland, "Not Your Mother's Milk: Imagining the Wet Nurse in Brazil," in *Gender*, Empire and Postcolony: Luso-Afro-Brazilian Intersections, ed. Hilary Owen and Anna M. Klobucka (New Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 128.

[109] Katia M. de Queirós Mattoso, *To be a Slave in Brazil: 1550-1888*, trans. Arthur Goldhammer (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1991) 92.

[110] A.J.R. Russell-Wood, *Slavery and Freedom in Colonial Brazil* (Oxford: Oneworld Publications, 2002) 96.

Indigenous descendants, while determining the types of privileges that the different African descendant people could have including slaves.[111]

Slavery displayed the black women's body as part of the public domain through the lack of clothes in a public setting and its use as a sexual object, where the women had no authority or say in any activity done to or with her body. The slaves in Brazil, both man and women were given very little fabric or clothing to cover themselves, leaving some of their intimate parts uncovered, especially the women's breasts, which automatically gave the slave women an immoral and promiscuous characterization, even though such exposition was out of her control.[112] Robert Walsh, an English Reverend that traveled through Brazil in 1828-1829, mentioned many times throughout his journals the nakedness of the Brazilian slave, and the inhumane condition in which they were treated. In some of his accounts, he said, "I saw the negro population under circumstances so striking to a stranger. The whole labour of bearing and moving burdens is performed by these people, and the state in which they appear is revolting to humanity. Here was a number of beings entirely naked, with the exception of a covering of dirty rags tied about their waists."[113] Another account from a German traveler in 1815 described a very similar scenario, "The slaves, packed by the hundreds into a sort of a hut, are scantily clad, wearing a bit of cloth of wool around the stomach. As a matter of hygiene, their heads have been shaved. Thus, naked and shorn, seated on the ground, looking curiously at passersby, they are not much different in appearance from macaque monkeys."[114] In a different section of his journal,

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[111] Robert M. Levine, *The History of Brazil* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1999) 51.
[112] Kia Lilly Caldwell, *Negras in Brazil: Re-envisioning Black Women, Citizenship, and the Politics of Identity* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1971) 53.
[113] Robert Walsh, Notices of Brazil in 1828 and 1829 Volume I (London: Frederick Westley and A.H Davis, 1830) 134.
[114] Katia M. de Queirós Mattoso, *To be a Slave in Brazil: 1550-1888*, trans. Arthur Goldhammer (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1991) 13.

Walsh also describes his encounter with an old woman at a farmers' market whose only property was one young lady that she lent for money to whoever wanted her and for whatever purpose,[115] which exemplifies how slavery was intrinsically connected with prostitution. [116]

According to Carole Myscofski, it was a common practice for slave owners to oblige their female slaves to perform sexual relations with the family members or guests and offered sex for payment to unrelated males, when not taking them to public places to solicit customers.[117] Slaves with certain trades were placed on a labor pool and also rented by their masters per day, week, month or year slaves to perform work for third parties. Adele Toussaint-Samson in her journal about her visit to Brazil described the horror she felt every time she encountered a slave market in the streets of Rio de Janeiro,

> At every instant my heart revolted or bled when I passed before one of those places, where the poor negros, standing upon a table, were put up at auction, and examined by their teeth and their legs, like horses or mules; when I saw the auction over, and that a young negress was being handed over to the plantation owner, who would reserve her for his intimate service, while her little child was sometimes sold to another master. Before all of these scenes of barbarism my heart would rise up and generous anger would boil in me...[118]

In a different part of her journal, she describes another terrifying encounter with slaves while visiting a "fazenda" or a plantation,

> "Here it was that the miseries of slavery appeared to me in all their horror and hideousness. Negresses covered in rags, others half naked, having as covering

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[115] Robert Walsh, Notices of Brazil in 1828 and 1829 Volume II (London: Frederick Westley and A.H Davis, 1830) 18.
[116] Carole A. Myscofski, *Amazons, Wives, Nuns, and Witches: Women and the Catholic Church in Colonial Brazil, 1500-1822* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2013) 133.
[117] Idid., 134.
[118] Adele Toussaint-Samson, *A Parisian in Brazil: The Travel Account of a French Woman in Nineteenth Century Rio de Janeiro*, trans. Emma Toussaint (Boston: James H. Earle, 1891) 44.

> only a handkerchief fastened behind their back and over their bosoms, which scarcely veiled their throats, and a calico skirt, through whose rents could be seen their poor, scraggy bodies; some negros, with tawny or besotted looks [...] The majority carried on their shoulders the marks of scars which the lash had inflicted; several were affected with horrible maladies, such as elephantiasis or leprosy. All this was dirty, repulsive, hideous. Fear or hate, that is what could be read on all these faces, which I never have seen smile.[119]

The sexualization and accessibility of the slave women's bodies could also be seen in the 19th-century newspaper ads for runways slaves. The detailed description of women's bodies in the ads can suggest how the masters and their taskmaster had free access and knowledge of the slave womens' bodies. It also acknowledged the punishments and mistreatment the slaves went through while describing detailed marks on the slaves' bodies resulted from recently endured punishments such as whippings, or their masters' burned engraved initials. Features such as big, small, firm or flat breasts[120]; thin, fat and nice shape body[121]; beautiful or ugly[122]; thin lips[123], round face and small ears[124]; firm and upright buttocks[125]; wounds and warts on genitals[126] are some of information that can be found in ads while describing a wanted runaway slave. Examples such as the ones following can be helpful in understanding the physical conditions of

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[119]Ibid., 58.
[120] Diário Rio Janeiro, Apr 5, 1830. Accessed Feb 1, 2019. http://memoria.bn.br/DocReader/docreader.aspx?bib=094170_01&pasta=ano%20183&pesq=.
[121] Diario Pernambuco, Aug 2, 1835. Accessed Feb 1, 2019. http://memoria.bn.br/DocReader/docreader.aspx?bib=029033_01&pasta=ano%20183&pesq=.
[122]Diario Pernambuco, Mar 1,1839. Accessed Feb 1, 2019.http://memoria.bn.br/DocReader/docreader.aspx?bib=029033_01&pasta=ano%20183&pesq=.
[123] Diario de Pernambuco, Mar 13, 1835. Accessed Feb 1,2019. http://memoria.bn.br/DocReader/docreader.aspx?bib=029033_01&pasta=ano%20183&pesq= .
[124] Diario de Pernambuco, Dec 15, 1959. Accessed Feb 1, 2019. http://memoria.bn.br/DocReader/docreader.aspx?bib=029033_03&pasta=ano%20185&pesq=.
[125]Diario de Pernambuco, Oct 8, 1844. Accessed Feb 1, 2019. http://memoria.bn.br/DocReader/docreader.aspx?bib=029033_02&pasta=ano%20184&pesq= .
[126] Diario de Pernambuco, Jan 7, 1845. Accessed Feb 1,2019. http://memoria.bn.br/DocReader/docreader.aspx?bib=029033_02&pasta=ano%20184&pesq= .

the bodies of slave women in Brazil,

> Rosa, nation Baca, tall, skinny, with a scar on her chest, has one thigh thicker than the other.[127]
> Benedita, nation Cabinda, have a big burned scar on her breasts; do not have hair in the middle of the head, pale shade of black, bad teeth. [128]
> Teresa, nation Congo, big and saggy breasts, had a necklace with white beads on, did not have the front tooth.[129]
> Maria, black, big belly and breasts, shaved hair, has open whip cuts in her back and breasts.[130]

The exposure and defenselessness of the slave women's body helped to dehumanize the African descendant women during slavery and transformed her body as an object that could be observed, explored and used at the white man's discretion. Countless descriptions of the Black women's bodies by travelers that visited Brazil during the slavery years exemplified the black slave women's place in that society and the image they occupied in the minds of the white men. Accounts such as the French L.F. de Tollenare, from 1816, showed how accessible and vulnerable the black women's bodies were in the public realm,

> The black women generally have a flexible and elegant figure, the shoulders and arms very well formed. Many are seen who could qualify as pretty women if their necks were longer, giving more freedom to their heads. Their breasts are firm and fleshy, and they seem to understand their value, proving themselves very wise by concealing them … When they walk about wearing only a thin cloth knotted above their breasts, I must say that they are all attractive and very graceful…

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[127] Diario de Pernambuco, Jun 21, 1834. Accessed Apr 5, 2019. http://memoria.bn.br/DocReader/docreader.aspx?bib=029033_01&pasta=ano%20183&pesq=.
[128] Diario de Pernambuco, Oct 10, 1835. Accessed Apr 5, 2019. http://memoria.bn.br/DocReader/docreader.aspx?bib=029033_01&pasta=ano%20183&pesq=.
[129] Diario de Pernambuco, Aug 23,1839. Accessed Apr 5, 2019. http://memoria.bn.br/DocReader/docreader.aspx?bib=029033_01&pasta=ano%20183&pesq=.
[130] Diario de Pernambuco, Mar 16, 1835. Accessed Apr 5, 2019. http://memoria.bn.br/DocReader/docreader.aspx?bib=029033_01&pasta=ano%20183&pesq=.

> Their legs are normal, but their feet are damaged by hard work and lack of footwear.[131]

Adele Toussaint account regarding Black women in Brazil was also as detailed, but less flattering, "Many men find these negresses handsome; as for me, I acknowledge that the curled wool, which does duty for the hair, their low and debased forehead, their blood-shot eyes, their enormous mouth with bestial lips, their disjointed teeth, like those of deer, as well as their flattened nose,had never appeared to me to constitute but a very ugly type."[132] As it will be seen in the next part, whether having a positive or negative perception the image of the Black women bodies was presented in minds of all classes and gender of the Brazilian society.

Another inherited characteristic from the slavery years that would impact the history of black women in Brazil was their relationship with Brazilian law. Carl Degler, in his book, *Neither Black nor White*, affirmed that during the slavery years in Brazil the law in general and the different levels of authorities, including the Catholic church, deemed Blacks and Mulattos lower in status than Whites.[133] He goes on to say that during most of the three centuries of colonial Brazil, the Portuguese law forbade marriage between white and Negros or Indians. They were not allowed to bear weapons, go to school or convents, become priests.[134] Slave women were not protected by law regarding the separation of their families, and the status of being married did not provide for the slave women the privileges and appreciation as that of the white

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[131] Louis-Francois de Tollenare, *Notas Dominicaes*, 93-96, quoted in Robert E. Conrad, *Children of God's Fire* (University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1994) 69-70.
[132] Adele Toussaint-Samson, *A Parisian in Brazil: The Travel Account of a French Woman in Nineteenth Century Rio de Janeiro*, trans. Emma Toussaint (Boston: James H. Earle, 1891) 34.
[133]Carl N. Degler, *Neither Black nor White: Slavery and Race Relations in Brazil and the United States* (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1971) 214.
[134]Ibid., 213.

women.[135] Mattoso added that the slave was a thing, an object. He existed in a state that not only terminated his right to possessions but as a human being, he was denied any legal or civil rights.[136] According to Russell-Wood, even for free African descendant people, justice was arbitrary and cruel, affirming that there was one set of laws and punishments for whites and another for African descendant individuals.[137]

The study of the concept of rape from the seventeenth century to the mid-twentieth century is a good example of a practical aspect of how women of African descent were consistently excluded from legal protections by Brazilian law. According to Lamonte Aidoo, in his book, *Slavery Unseen*, rape as a crime could only be applied to an "honest" white woman that belonged to a distinct social class. Until the late twentieth century, the word "honest" was associated with ideas of chastity, modesty, and morality; words that were mainly linked to middle and upper-class women. Antithetically, black women were commonly considered immoral, obscene and wicked.[138]According to Caldwell, during the colonial period the constructions of gender, race, and class excluded the slave women of patriarchal concepts of chastity and female virtue. Women of each race category were positioned in social roles that could not be changed, exchanged or escaped. While white women were given the realm of legitimate and honorable sexuality as wives and candidates as marriage partners, Black women were associated with domestic labor and sexual attributes."[139] Colonial writers such as priest

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[135] A.J.R. Russell-Wood, *Slavery and Freedom in Colonial Brazil* (Oxford: Oneworld Publications, 2002) 181.
[136] Katia M. de Queiros Mattoso, *To be a Slave in Brazil: 1550-1888*, trans. Arthur Goldhammer (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1991) 87.
[137] A.J.R. Russell-Wood, *Slavery and Freedom in Colonial Brazil* (Oxford: Oneworld Publications, 2002) 68.
[138]Lamonte Aidoo, *Slavery Unseen: Sex, Power, and Violence in Brazilian History* (Durham: Duke Press University, 2018) 51.
[139] Kia Lilly Caldwell, *Negras in Brazil: Re-envisioning Black Women, Citizenship, and the Politics of Identity* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1971) 54.

Padre Vieira and Domingos Loreto Couto defended that white honorable women were submissive, chaste, obedient and secluded from society. Russell-Wood described the role of different women in Brazilian colonial society as,

> The white woman, belonging to an elite, the future mother of his sons, must be kept secluded, having to be virtuous, honorable, and passive, since she was the one responsible for the transmission of the habits, patterns, and values of society. The black or *mulata* woman (whether free or slave) was the one who served to satiate his sexual desires and fantasies. Thus a certain social promiscuity was already expected of the black or *mulata* woman, while the white woman of the elite must keep herself honorable.[140]

Aidoo adds saying that this strict definition of "honest women" eliminated the possibility of sexual violence to be committed against Black women. The idea of "honesty" in the Brazilian law had practical consequences into racial and class relations and its vague scope permitted elite white men, from colonial times and for centuries after, to determine which bodies could be legally violated and which could not for reasons that uniquely benefited themselves.[141] A husband could not rape his wife whether she was white or black since he owned her, and slaves for the same reason could not be raped.[142] Based on this logic, Aidoo affirms that the majority of cases of sexual relations between white men and slaves were considered consensual even when coercion and violence were included.[143] He goes on to say that sex and slavery under Brazilian colonialism were both used as a mechanism of control and domination, and sex had an essential role in confirming the white male gender, racial and sexual supremacy both in the home and

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[140] A.J.R. Russell-Wood, "Female and Family in the Economy and Society of Colonial Brazil", in *Latin American Women*: Historical Perspectives, ed. Asuncion Lavrin, 60,61.
[141] Aiddo, Lamonte, *Slavery Unseen: Sex, Power, and Violence in Brazilian HIstory* (Durham: Duke Press University, 2018) 51.
[142] Ibid., 27.
[143] Ibid., 27.

social sphere affirming that, "sex became the Portuguese weapon of colonization and vehicle of exploitation".[144] Black men and all women were reduced to white male's property and could be used socially and legally to serve and satisfy any of the white male desires.[145] It is important to mention that this representation of the Black women as a highly sexual and deviant being also interfered in the relationship between slaves and mistress. Aidoo stated that because the mistress was impotent to prevent her husband's sexual enterprises with female slaves, they often directed their anger and frustration against the slaves. Many forms of violence committed against slave women performed by their mistress have been registered, including mutilation, stabbing, whipping, burning and amputation.[146] An account from Toussaint-Samson tells how she was awakened by the cries of her neighbor's slaves being punished,

> Every day the most terrible scenes took place over our head. For the least omission, for the least fault of either of [the slave girls], the senora would beat them… and we would hear the poor negresses throw themselves on their knees, crying, 'Mercy! Senora!' But the pitiless mistress would never be touched and gave mercilessly the number of blows she would consider necessary to be given.[147]

The French traveler, Charles Expilly, in his report from 1862 about his trip to Brazil also recounted, "How many proud and tender *senhoras* are at first indifferent to the attention that their husbands pay to the slave women, and then after their pride and love are wounded by the constancy of the preference, try to attract him to her. Flirtatious gestures, tears, explosions of

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[144] Ibid., 26.
[145] Ibid., 27.
[146] Ibid., 107.
[147] Adele Toussaint-Samson, *A Parisian in Brazil: The Travel Account of a French Woman in Nineteenth Century Rio de Janeiro*, trans. Emma Toussaint (Boston: James H. Earle, 1891) 43.

anger, all of these means have been employed in vain.[148] Once none of those tactics worked, he described many scenes of revenge witnessed by him performed by white women such as whipping, cutting off fingers and poisoning.[149]

According to Aiddo, White women, like their fathers, husbands, and sons, helped to shape Black womanhood through violence, torture, humiliation, and abuse. Black women were not naturally sexually perverse or inclined to prostitution but were forced into it through routine practices of sexual exploitation by white masters, their mistress and the men who would take part in the process. The sexual abuse of enslaved women against their will during the centuries of Brazilian slavery can be found extensively in newspapers, literature, and accounts from the period well into the twentieth century. An article from an abolitionist newspaper in 1851, recounts, "A female slave is obligated to cede to the libidinous desires of her master in order to not be exposed… to all types of torture. She is not able to guard the honor of her daughter if she has one, nor her own against the attempts of her powerful master. A slave is not able to complain about the infidelity of his wife and retaliate her seducer."[150] Those scenes were also present in the literature of the nineteenth century written by famous authors such as Machado de Assis and Aluísio de Azevedo. One very graphic account can be withdrawn from Azevedo's book, O Mulato, from 1881, where he described a scene from the protagonist's childhood as a product of a sexual relationship from a slave and her master,

> Stretched out on the ground with her feet in the stocks, head shaved and hands behind her, lay Domingas, completely naked and with her genital parts burned by a hot iron. Off to one side her little three-year-old son

[148] Aiddo, Lamonte, *Slavery Unseen: Sex, Power, and Violence in Brazilian HIstory* (Durham: Duke Press University, 2018) 107.
[149] Ibid., 107.
[150] Kia Lilly Caldwell, *Negras in Brazil: Re-envisioning Black Women, Citizenship, and the Politics of Identity* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1971) 54.

> screamed like one possessed, as he attempted to embrace her. Each time he approached his mother, two slaves, on Quiteria's (white mistress) orders, would flick the whip away from Domingas's back and direct it against the child. The shrew, hideous and drunk with rage, stood there laughing, hurling obscenities and howling with spasms of rage. Domingas, half dead, lay groaning and writhing in pain on the ground.[151]

Rape and violence became associated with part of their job and, throughout Brazilian history. Black women have been portrayed as active agents of such actions and not as the victims. Telles goes on to say, that the mixed-race society that Brazilians were so proud of during the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth centuries, can be considered the result of the consistent rape and abuse of African, indigenous and mixed-race women during the slavery period. The offspring resulting from the sexual encounter between slaves and masters were first used to sustain the enslaved population, since the child of a slave mother was born a slave independent of the status of the father civil status, and later to create a free inexpensive labor force that would ultimately substitute and fulfill the slaves' roles in the Brazilian society.

The unequal economical, political and social position between the black and white women among the slave society were carried over into the structures of Brazilian society into the twentieth century, and personified in the image of the mixed-race women, the *mulata*.

[151]Aluísio de Azevedo, *O Cortico*, quoted Aiddo, Lamonte, *Slavery Unseen: Sex, Power, and Violence in Brazilian History* (Durham: Duke Press University, 2018) 108.

Chapter Three

The importance of Gilberto Freyre's work, *Casagrande e Senzala* (Masters and Slaves) in the consolidation of the Brazilian woman image

The existence of mixed-race among the Brazilian people can be traced back to the first time the Portuguese arrived in the territory. By 1845, Emperor Dom Pedro II gave his official approval to the theory of the nation's unique heritage published in an essay by the Brazilian Historical and Geographic Institution affirming that the Brazilian people were the result of the mixture of "three races," Indian, African, and Portuguese.[152] The idea of race mixture and harmony has been essential to the identity of the Brazilian people and it has been widely popular in the country well into the end of the twentieth century, greatly due to the work of the sociologist, Gilberto Freyre, and his coined term, "racial democracy."[153].

The goal of this chapter is to examine the ways in which the works of prominent sociologists in Brazil, during the twentieth century, such as Gilberto Freyre and Paulo Padro, contributed to promote the idea of the Brazilian women as an attractive *mulata*, with sensual, sexual and exquisite traits. I will also mention how some elements of this image of the Brazilian woman was already present in the literary works of well-known authors such as Machado de Assis, and Aluísio de Azevedo at the end of the nineteenth century. In the first part of this chapter, I will explore some of the ideas about race and gender prevailing in Brazil and worldwide during the period mentioned above to better contextualize the authors' mindset, and how that influenced the constructions of such characters. I will then briefly describe the Brazilian

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[152] Yuko Miki, *Frontiers of Citizenship: A Black and Indigenous History of Postcolonial Brazil* (Cambridge University Press: New York, 2018) 4.

[153]Edward E. Telles, *Race In Another America: The Significance of Skin Color in Brazil* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006) 33.

political and economical scenarios in which those ideas were being developed, and in the second half of the chapter, I will focus on the works and ideas promoted by Aluísio de Azevedo, Machado de Assis, Gilberto Freyre, and Paulo Padro.

The idea of race between mid 1800s and first part of 1900s

At the end of the nineteenth century, Europe was enjoying widespread economic prosperity resulting from the Industrial Revolution, fast urbanization, economic growth, and expansion of its political and economic dominance toward non-European regions.[154] As we have seen in the last chapter, all through the nineteenth century, European intellectuals and thinkers were justifying the northern European superiority using scientific, biological and environmental explanations. Those theories are known today as scientific racism and are completely discredited by the academic world, no longer being considered science. Some of them will be mentioned in this chapter with the purpose to better understand the thought and actions of the individuals of that time, and how those ideas were used to justify individual's behaviors and social and economic systems.

Charles Darwin's ideas dismissed the prevailing traditional, mystical, and theological views concerning man's origin and nature. His scientific arguments and research disqualified both the polygenists and monogenists theories as an acceptable explanation for the origin of humankind. Despite the fact that he eliminated the basis for much of the old racism existent during the nineteenth century, Darwin delivered a new rationale within which almost all of the old convictions about race superiority and inferiority could still be used. According to Gosset, authors writing about race borrowed the idea of natural selection and transposed it to a struggle between individual members of a society, between members of classes of a society, between

[154] J.M Blaut, *The Colonizer's Model of the World* (Guilford Press: New York, 1993) 201.

different nations, and between different races. For most authors, this conflicts, far from being a bad thing, with nature's necessary method for producing superior men, superior nations, and superior races. [155]

Herbert Spencer was another English biologist and sociologist that believed that the principles of biology and a living organism could be applied to the structures of societies. For him, a society evolution is a very slow process, and a specific society cannot be made better or worse, but through the natural process of evolution.[156] According to Spencer, little or nothing could be done for what he called, "primitive peoples" because their civilization merely mirrored the phase of their biological evolution. He saw native indigenous peoples as an intriguing subject of study because it could help to uncover the process by which evolution had taken place.[157] Other authors such as the English historian, Henry Thomas Buckle, defended the climatic determinism of European superiority arguing that Europe's unique climate, topography, and geography was the principal cause of the level of civilization and development achieved by Europeans, and could not be achieved by other races with different climate patterns.[158]

Another important deterministic author was Arthur Gobineau, a French aristocrat and politician who believed that the white race was inherently and uniquely superior to the other human races, and that could be seen and proved by historical facts. For him, throughout history, the Whites or Aryans in its pure state had a "reflective energy" and "energetic intelligence," resilient to overcome any hardship that they encountered, a remarkable instinct for discipline, and disposition for freedom that could be seen in all the great civilizations that they had

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[155]Thomas F. Gossett, *Race: The History of an Idea in America* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 1997) 145.
[156] Ibid.,146.
[157] Ibid.,148.
[158] Thomas E. Skidmore, *Black into White: Race and Nationality in Brazilian Thought* (Duke University Press:Durham, 1993) 28.

created.[159] On the other hand, he argued that the Yellow race, which he considered the Asian people, was passive, stagnant, unmotivated, uninventive, and fond of institutions. The Negro was instinctively gluttonous, sensual and ignorant, and for Gobineau, their sensory organs were unusually developed to counterbalance for his inferior intellect.[160] Even though Gobineau believed in the hierarchy of races, he also believed that interracial mixture had both positive and negative effects to human-kind. He argued that, "not enough mixture" and "too much mixture," could be a problem for societies' development, and he believed that traits such as beauty and artistic genius, for example, were characteristics or improvements acquired by the human specie as a result of the mixed of races. Gobineau's theory about history is that civilizations have risen and thrived while they had a perfect balance of racial intermixture, but this balance always came to an end. For him, the main cause of civilizations' decline was the result of mixed of ethnicities of its individuals that overtime affected the quality of that blood and capability of its population.[161] Gobineau visited Brazil in 1869, and was able to use the Brazilian people as an example of how too much interracial mixture made that race inferior compared to the non-mixed Europeans. He argued in some of his notes that, "Not a single Brazilian has pure blood because the pattern of marriages among whites, Indians and Negroes, is so widespread that the nuances of color are infinite, causing a degeneration of the most depressing type among the lower as well the upper classes."[162] He went on to predict that the Brazilian population, due to its degeneracy, would eventually disappear.[163]

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[159] Thomas F. Gossett, *Race: The History of an Idea in America* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 1997) 342.
[160] Ibid., 343.
[161] Ibid., 343.
[162]Thomas E. Skidmore, *Black into White: Race and Nationality in Brazilian Thought* (Duke University Press:Durham, 1993) 30.
[163] Ibid., 30.

By the end of the nineteenth century and early twentieth century notions of the degeneracy of mixed-blood populations were causing a lot of agitation amongst the Brazilian elite. The large presence of Afro-Brazilians was viewed as being the primary impediment to the advancement of Brazilian society. Slavery in Brazil ended toward the end of the nineteenth century in 1888, making Brazil the last country in the Americas to abolished slavery.[164] At that time mixed-race people, known as *pardos or mulattos* in Brazil, constituted the majority of the population of the country in Brazil's first census in 1872, and still outnumbered the whites in the second one, in 1890.[165] Russell-Wood added that this idea of whitening the black race was constantly present during the slavery years affirming that, "a female slave could have more to gain from being a white man's concubine than a black man's wife; her offspring would reap the social benefits of lighter pigmentation."[166] He goes on to say that interracial adultery and concubinage during the slave years could also increase the likelihood of mother and children obtaining manumission. According to Daniel, the mulatto offspring of white masters and their slaves were usually raised inside the master's house, where sometimes they were given a less harsh treatment than the other slaves, and taught how to read and write.[167]

Brazilian authors such as Silveo Romero, who considered himself a social Darwinist, would share the Europeans' ideas about race in his time defending the fact that the Brazilian habitat debilitated the Brazilian people and compromised its advancement. He also believed in the hierarchy of races, and that the Brazilian population was composed by one superior race, the

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[164] Robert M. Levine, *The History of Brazil* (Greenwood Press: Westport, 1999) 70.
[165] G. Reginald Daniel, *Race and Multiraciality in Brazil and the United States* (University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2016) 31.
[166] A.J.R. Russell-Wood, *Slavery and Freedom in Colonial Brazil* (Oxford: Oneworld Publications, 2002) 181.
[167] G. Reginald Daniel, *Race and Multiraciality in Brazil and the United States* (University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2016) 30.

White, and two inferior ones, the black African and native indigenous groups.[168] He went on to say that because of the long term interracial mixture experienced by the Brazilian population, there were no individuals with pure race left in Brazil.[169] Brazilian intellectuals were also greatly influenced by the ideas of positivism, evolutionism, and materialism present in Europe, but such ideas were introduced to the Brazilian race with adaptations to fit the Brazilian context. According to Skidmore, Positivism had such a large impact in Brazil, first because French culture had constantly influenced the ideas and customs of the Brazilian elite. Secondly, positivism appeared at a moment when traditional values such as Monarchy, Catholicism and Eclecticism were being questioned by the young intellectuals of the agrarian elite. And lastly, positivism attracted the members of the elite who wanted economic development without social mobilization.[170]The Brazilian elite identified the majority of their population as not capable for full participation in society (because of their illiteracy and inferior racial background), and found in the authoritarian element of positivism a way to modernization which justified the ongoing concentration of power in the hands of the elite.[171] Since evolutionary models of social development understood that racial intermixture resulted in the deterioration of both individuals and collectivities, the Brazilian elite started to worry about how their mixed-race population's ancestry could affect the destiny of the Brazilian nation, and wondered if Brazil would ever achieve higher levels of civilization and progress.[172]

During the 1920s and 1930s, the intellectual elite of Brazil, such as politicians,

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[168] Ibid., 34.
[169] Ibid., 35.
[170] Ibid.,12.
[171] Thomas E. Skidmore, *Black into White: Race and Nationality in Brazilian Thought* (Duke University Press: Durham, 1993) 13.
[172] Kia Lilly Caldwell, *Negras in Brazil: Re-envisioning Black Women, Citizenship, and the Politics of Identity* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1971) 29.

businessmen, lawyers, doctors, and old plantation landowners, started to welcome the ideology of "whitening" or the also known as the Progressive Aryanization of Brazil as the solution to Brazil's racial problem.[173] The whitening theory constituted a middle ground between European theories of racial determinism and Brazilian social realities. The Brazilian ideology of whitening was developed in response to the popularity of eugenics and evolutionary social thought in Europe. Believers of the whitening solution argued that the lower races such as Africans and native peoples would be absorbed by and into the higher race, in Brazil's case, the Portuguese. [174] One of the most famous representatives of this theory in Brazil was the lawyer and historian, Oliveira Vianna, who had been influenced by the European scientific racist theories. Vianna defended this idea that Brazil was to achieve ethnic purity by interracial mixture, and that would happen with the increase of European immigration in the decades following the abolition. He also argued that the African and indigenous population were capable of reaching the peak of civilization only through intermixture with white, Aryan populations. In his view, the process of racial mixing allowed what he called, the "two primitive" races to lose their purity and contribute eugenically to the formation of a superior racial type. [175] The Brazilian literary critic, Jose Verissimo, shared Vianna views in a newspaper article, from 1889,

> I am convinced… that western civilization can only be the work of the white race, and that no great civilization can be built with mixed peoples. As ethnographers assure us...race mixture is facilitating the prevalence of the superior element. Sooner or later it will perforce eliminate the black race. And immigration… will, through the inevitable mixtures, accelerate the selection process.[176]

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[173]Carl N. Dangler, *Neither Black nor White: Slavery and Race Relations in Brazil and the United States* (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1971)
[174] Kia Lilly Caldwell, *Negras in Brazil: Re-envisioning Black Women, Citizenship, and the Politics of Identity* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1971) 30.
[175] Kia Lilly Caldwell, *Negras in Brazil: Re-envisioning Black Women, Citizenship, and the Politics of Identity* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1971) 31.
[176] Ibid., 30.

Jose Patrocinio, well-known outspoken author on the abolition of slavery, also shared the ideas of empowerment of the race through interracial relations in one of his articles, "We have been able to fuse all races into a single native population, because Portuguese colonization assimilated the savage races instead of trying to destroy them, thus preparing us to resist the devastating invasion of race prejudice."[177]

It is important to mention that women, just like African descendant individuals were also seen as inferior beings, and second class citizens. Herbert Spencer also wrote about the women's characteristics and believed that, "Young women stopped developing both physically and mentally at a stage somewhat less advanced than that attained by young men."[178] He went to say that, "Adolescent girls, arriving at maturity earlier than boys, missed out on the final refinement of the nerve-muscular system. Their mind has somewhat less of general power of massiveness; in particular they lacked those two faculties, intellectual and emotional, which are the latest products of human evolution."[179] He also believed in the "physiological division of labour," arguing that man and woman were constructed differently, each one with specific functions made to cooperate with each other for the development of society.[180] According to Russet, many Victorian scientists agreed with Spencer that the sexes were designed to be complementary, not competitive. Each sex had a unique function for which it was best fitted, neither could succeed alone, and social harmony as well as social evolution would happened when the limits that

[177] Thomas E. Skidmore, *Black into White: Race and Nationality in Brazilian Thought* (Duke University Press: Durham, 1993) 24.
[178] Cynthia E. Russet, *Sexual Science: The Victorian Construction of Womanhood* (Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1989) 119.
[179] Ibid., 119.
[180] Ibid., 141.

separated their distinctive domains were respected. [181] Such ideas gave women certain importance in the evolutionary process and advancement of men, but still subjugated them to men since they must obey and comply with the functions created for them by men for the welfare and survival of the society.

Different than the bi-racial system of the United States, in Brazil, the "phenotype" which is the result of the person's skin color, hair texture, facial and other visible physical characteristics were the main elements used to classify the individual's position in Brazilian society.[182] According to Daniel, blackness and whiteness were just extremes on a continuum where physical appearance, in addition with class and cultural (rather than exclusively racial) factors, has come to determine one's identity and status in the Brazilian social and gender hierarchy. As a result, the Brazilian race formation has led to fluid racial-cultural characteristics and have been accompanied by the absence of legal barriers to equality in both the public and private spheres.[183] But in reality, after the abolition of slavery, black people were largely excluded from the free labor economy that followed the abolition by both formal and informal mechanisms. Even though many laws preceding the abolition had created a large group of free black workers as part of the society, the Brazilian government did not develop any kind of program or incentive to train and prepare the black individuals to be assimilated by the workforce.[184] Instead, the Brazilian government funded the tickets of European immigrants that wanted to migrate to Brazil, increasing the number of white workers available and while they

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[181]Cynthia E. Russet, *Sexual Science: The Victorian Construction of Womanhood* (Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1989) 142.
[182] Thomas E. Skidmore, *Black into White: Race and Nationality in Brazilian Thought* (Duke University Press: Durham, 1993) 39.
[183] G. Reginald Daniel, *Race and Multiraciality in Brazil and the United States* (University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2016) 26.
[184] Kia Lilly Caldwell, *Negras in Brazil: Re-envisioning Black Women, Citizenship, and the Politics of Identity* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1971) 29.

also increased the amount of white individuals in the Brazilian population.[185]

Daniel argues that after the abolition of slavery in Brazil, blacks and mulattoes were forced into the margins of society, where they radically contrasted from whites in terms of color and occupation. After the abolition, slaves were not given any economic or social support to start their new lives as free people. Dengler argues that in many ways their lives became worse, and as free individuals, they did not have a place to go or money to buy or to rent a house, or money to buy food and other items to survive. The majority of freed slaves stayed on their master's properties and worked for their old masters until they could get resources to start a new life.[186]

Brazilian woman and the literature of late 1800s and early 1900s

The reality of African descendant individuals in Brazil during slavery years and after abolition have been well-documented and described in the literature and sociological works of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Aluísio de Azevedo and Machado de Assis are two of the most well known Brazilian authors from that period, and are both born to traditional families of the Bazilian elite.[187] They are popular representatives of the naturalist literary movement in Brazil. The Naturalism movement can be considered one section of literary realism style, which was influenced by the positivism scientific movement. The realism style of novels is known for using facts, logic, and impersonal details while describing a storyline instead of having mystic and imaginative characteristics of Romanticism. One of the main elements of their novels is their characterization of Brazilian women. They portrayed their women characters as archetypes of the

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[185] G. Reginald Daniel, *Race and Multiraciality in Brazil and the United States* (University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2016) 37.
[186] Ibid., 47.
[187] Dudley Fitts, *A Masterpiece from Brazil*. The New York Times, July 13, 1953. https://timesmachine.nytimes.com/timesmachine/1952/07/13/93380167.pdf.
Harvey Curtis Webster, *The Essential Ambiguity in us all*. The New York Times , May 24, 1953. https://timesmachine.nytimes.com/timesmachine/1953/05/24/282561212.pdf.

pure and timid daughter of an agrarian elite family, the bitter slave mistresses, prostitutes, lesbians, maids and many more.[188] The works of these two specific authors are important in the popular construction of the Brazilian woman since they were mandatory readings in high school in most public and private schools, since the 1930s, and are until today in a great number of them. Even though their novels are not based on true stories, in many cases, their characters are very relatable and most of their stories contain a very familiar description of social interactions commonly present within the Brazilian society.

Machado de Assis' most famous female character can be considered certainly a controversial one. Capitu, the main character of his novel, *Dom Casmurro* (1899), is a poor girl and who was mixed race, who marries a man from a well to do family who was studying to be a priest. This alone makes her a very seductive girl responsible for making a decent man give up the pursuit of a sacred life, to give in to fleshly temptation in the eyes of many other characters of the novel. After years of marriage, she bears a child that looks just like her husband's best friend, who happened to pass away before the child was born, which left her husband without a chance to ever confront his friend and find out the truth about his wife's possible betrayal. This then becomes another reason for a lot of drama and contention around her character and morality, and making her a prime example of female mischievousness among other stories in Brazilian literature.[189]

Another complicated character of Machado de Assis is Sofia, from his novel *Quincas Borba* (1891), who was a married woman that became friendly with an ordinary man that became a rich man after he inherited a lot of money from his best friend. Even though Sofia does

[188]Earl E. Fitz, *Machado de Assis and Female Characterization* (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press: 2015) 10.
[189]Earl E. Fitz, *Machado de Assis and Female Characterization* (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press: 2015) 12.

not seem emotionally interested in Rubiao, the main character of the novel, she became closer to him, acting in ambiguous ways around him to benefit from his status and money. He eventually fell madly in love with her, but never succeeded in his attempts to pursue her, ending story, demented and having lost all his inheritance money. Throughout the novel, Sofia's attitudes towards Rubiao can be considered examples of emotional games or psychological torture, in a well-elaborated demonstration of how mean and cold a women can be to achieve what she wants.

Aluísio de Azevedo's main woman character is Rita, from his novel *O Cortico*, published 1890, the novel tells the stories of lower-class Portuguese immigrants that came to Brazil in the pursuit of a better life, and their process of adaptation and assimilation into Brazilian society. The main events of the storyline take place in the cortiço (a type of tenement buildings around a courtyard) in São Romão, where all kinds of people lived, and among them, Rita.[190] Rita was a mixed-race woman, or a *mulata*, described as very beautiful and sensual, always joyful, who loved to dance and drink, and had a lot of friends. She was the woman to whom one of the recently Portuguese immigrants fell in love with and developed a turbulent relationship. Rita was described as a very complex being but also was known as a very smart woman who knew how to use her attributes to her own benefit.

> That mulatta was mystery, the sum of the perception he saw when he arrived: she was the hot sun of mid-day; the hot flavor of the spices, found in the Brazilian fauna ; she was the poison and the delicious sugar; she was sweeter than honey and tasted better than all the Brazilian nuts together; she was the poisonous and deceitful snake, a bee that spread around aphrodisiacs pollen. [191]
>
> What a weird influence the woman had over them, to the point that they would come desolate and miserable begging for pardon for things they have not even

[190]May Bletz, "Race and Modernity in O Cortico by Aluísio de Azevedo," *The Journal of the Students of the Ph.D. Program in Latin American, Iberian and Latino Cultures.* Accessed March 20, 2019. https://lljournal.commons.gc.cuny.edu/2007-1-bletz-texto/.
[191]Aluizio de Azevedo, O Cortico, my translation.

> done. It was then that she realized how powerful she was and how much she could do. She smiled. And her smile alone was a trap.[192]

The passage is a good example of the mysticism surround the image of the mixed raced and *mulata* woman. The woman is compared to so many good things, that a man could not help himself but desire her. She is represented as malicious and manipulative, attributes that are commonly used to justify things that are done to her, including abuse and oppression, as a results of her own fault or actions.

Paulo Prado another preeminent author, descendant of a prestigious elite family in Brazil, was a lawyer and historian who became famous for his polemic book, *Retrato do Brasil - Ensaio sobre a tristeza brasileira (Portrait of Brazil, an essay about the innate Brazilian Sadness),* published in 1928 at the height of the agitated modernist cultural movement in Brazil.[193] The modernist movement was a rejection from Brazilians artists especially within literature and art fields by use of European forms and style in their work, which had been the traditional way among Brazilian artists and writers in times prior to that. The Brazilian intellectual class tried to understand and reinterpret the Brazilian past and what it meant to be a Brazilian.[194] According to Parker, in order to accomplish that, Brazilian authors went back to study reports and accounts of Europeans to examine what Brazil looked like when it was first "discovered", the traits of its people, geography, climate, and natural characteristics. In his book, Prado tries to recount the history of the people of Brazil from the colonization until the first part of the twentieth century. Prado argues that the tropical climate of Brazil, the customs of the native indigenous groups and

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[192]Aluizio de Azevedo, O Cortico, my translation.
[193]E. Bradford Burns, *Nationalism in Brazil: A Historical Survey* (New York, Frederick A. Praeger Publishers, 1968) 64.
[194]Hermano Vianna, *The Mystery of Samba: Popular Music & National Identity in Brazil* (The University of North Carolina Press: Chapel Hill, 1999) 41.

the loneliness of the first European men to arrive in Brazil were the main cause for the interracial relations of the Brazilian people. Through his analysis of the past he focused on the importance of the native indigenous women, the pleasures and products of their bodies, their unrestricted sensuality and their peaceful seduction of the European male as essential for the understanding of the Brazilian population physical and psychological constitution.[195] According to Prado,

> "Being a feature so peculiar to the ethnic development of our land, the sexual hyperesthesia that we have seen in the course of this essay avoided the segregation of the African element that occurred in the United States dominated the racial prejudice and antipathy. Here lust and social laxity brought together and united the races. Nothing and nobody repelled the new afflux of blood. ...the amalgam was freely made, by chance sexual meeting, without any physical or moral repugnance. It repeated what had happened with the Indian crossing with the European spurred on by the polygyny of the first peopling. On the contrary, the seduction of the Portuguese settler by the *negra* and the *mulata* would become legendary.[196]

Prado's book is an important sociological work in the study of Brazilian culture because it was the first book of its era to explain and theorize the sexualization of the Brazilian people associated with what he described as inherent characteristics of the mixed-race women. Ideas that were reproduced by many historians and sociologists that came after him, and helped to construct the image that the Brazilians and foreigners would have of Brazilian women all through the twentieth century into the twenty-first.[197]

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[195]Richard Parker, Bodies, Pleasures and Passions: Sexual Culture in Contemporary Brazil (Vanderbilt University Press: Nashville, 2009) 21.
[196]Paulo Prado, "Retrato do Brasil: Ensaio sobre a Tristeza Brasileira", quoted in Richard Parker, *Bodies, Pleasures and Passions: Sexual Culture in Contemporary Brazil* (Vanderbilt University Press: Nashville, 2009) 22.
[197]Richard Parker, Bodies, Pleasures and Passions: Sexual Culture in Contemporary Brazil (Vanderbilt University Press: Nashville, 2009) 23.

The importance of Gilberto Freyre in the consolidation of the image of the Brazilian woman

The most famous scholar of Brazilian history and culture is Gilberto Freyre, and his book, *Casa Grande e Senzala*, published in 1933, is considered the most influential interpretation of Brazilian civilization ever written among the majority of the scholars of Brazilian historiography.[198] The ideas promoted by his book are deeply immersed in the popular cultural beliefs about the formation of the country and has been widely used to reinforce nationalist discourse.[199] Freyre rejected the belief that racial intermixture would hinder national development. Instead, he mentioned in his book the cultural, scientific and political achievements of Brazilians and argued that Brazil was no less civilized than any important nation in Europe and Latin America. For over five decades his books and newspaper articles supplied positive interpretations of Brazil's colonial period and offered a positive analysis of the national contemporary race formation. Until his death in 1987, he was a respected intellectual authority regarding issues of race and national identity.[200] Freyre argued that the high level of interracial mixture of the Brazilian population should be considered proof that the Portuguese held an egalitarian racial attitude during the colonial period towards native indigenous people and Africans. Freyre proposed that a mainly equal relationship between the races enabled members of indigenous groups, African and Portuguese populations to merge under social democratic conditions in the past as well as the present.[201] His ideas were controversial and went against

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[198] G. Reginald Daniel, *Race and Multiraciality in Brazil and the United States* (University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2016) 33.
[199] E. Bradford Burns, Nationalism in BRazil: A Historical Survey (New York, Frederick A. Praeger Publishers, 1968) 65.
[200] Kia Lilly Caldwell, *Negras in Brazil: Re-envisioning Black Women, Citizenship, and the Politics of Identity* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1971) 29.
[201] Ibid., 33.

much of what was being practiced in the United States and many parts of Europe. Reviews of his book can be found in the English newspapers, such as The Manchester Guardian in 1946,[202] which had a positive tone emphasizing the boldness of Freyre in praising racial intermixture in a time where that was still a very controversial issue especially in the segregated United States, and the Germany post war situation. The American Journal of Orthopsychiatry, in 1947, published a more critical review accusing Freyre of being racist and misogynist, citing especially his comments regarding native Brazilian woman.[203]

Among the main topics that the book has approached is the promotion of peaceful coexistence and relationships among slaves and masters, and the harmonious sexual relations between masters and slave women were the most important and harmful statements to the image of the Brazilian women. Throughout his book, Freyre reconstructed the history of Brazil with a mystical and romanticized view. The passages below can be used as one example of how he understood the character of Brazilian slavery,

> But admitting that the influence of slavery upon the morality and character of the Brazilian of the Big House was, in general, a deleterious one, we still must note the highly special circumstances that, in our country, modified or attenuated the evils of the system. First of all, I would emphasize the prevailing mildness of the relations between masters and household slaves - milder in Brazil, it may be, than in any other part of the Americas.[204]
>
> The Big House caused to be brought up from the senzala, for the more intimate

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[202] *Prefácio a 6a Edicao de Casagrande e Senzala.* Diário de Pernambuco, 1 de Janeiro, 1950. http://memoria.bn.br/DocReader/DocReader.aspx?bib=029033_13&pesq=Gilberto%20Freyre&pasta=ano%20195.

[203] *Prefácio a 6a Edicao de Casagrande e Senzala.* Diário de Pernambuco, 1 de Janeiro, 1950. http://memoria.bn.br/DocReader/DocReader.aspx?bib=029033_13&pesq=Gilberto%20Freyre&pasta=ano%20195.

[204] Gilberto Freyre, *The Masters and The Slaves: A Study in the Development of Brazilian Civilization* (Alfred A. Knopp: New York, 1946) 369.

> and delicate service of the planter and his family, a whole set of individuals: nurses, house-girls, foster-brothers for the white lads. These were persons whose place in the family was not that of slaves, but rather of household inmates.[205]

Such passages implied a paternalistic relationship of dependence between the masters and the free or slave domestic workers where situations of violence and humiliation were not present. But as Sidney Chaloub argues, even though sometimes the masters could have demonstrated esteem towards his slaves, their status of superiority most of the time provoked suffering and humiliation.[206]

According to Caldwell, another element that can be found in Freyre's book is what he described as a predisposition for inter-cultural interaction that allowed the male colonialist to bear unfamiliar environmental conditions through their apparent consensual sexual relations with African and native indigenous women.[207] Freyre also tries to explain the masters' sexual desires towards the slaves and most likely any women that they desired, "As for the Brazilian, so fond of women from his infancy, there were influences of a social nature that act upon him with greater force and that ran counter to continence, asceticism, and monogamy. With us the tropical climate could not but contribute to the sexual superexictation of children and adolescents, leading at times to a morbid anticipation of the sexual and conjugal functions."[208] In Freyre's narrative of Brazilian history, native indigenous and African women are depicted as a passive channel for the interracial mixture. One of Freyre's statements regarding this topic can be seen below,

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[205] Ibid., 369.
[206] Carl N. Degler, *Neither Black nor White: Slavery and Race Relations in Brazil and the United States* (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1971) 190.
[207] Kia Lilly Caldwell, *Negras in Brazil: Re-envisioning Black Women, Citizenship, and the Politics of Identity* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1971) 50.
[208] Gilberto Freyre, *The Masters and The Slaves: A Study in the Development of Brazilian Civilization* (Alfred A. Knopp: New York, 1946) 25.

> Thanks to all the fortunate predisposition of race, mesology, and culture of which I have spoken, he (the Portuguese colonialist) not only succeeded in overcoming those conditions of climate and soil that were unfavorable to the settlement of Europeans in the tropics; he also, through unions with colored women, made up for the extremely small number of whites available for the task of colonization. Through intercourse with the Indian or the Negro woman the colonizer propagated a vigorous and ductile mestizo population that was still more adaptable than he himself to the tropical climate.[209]

Dengler goes on to say that behind Freyre's racial intermixture theory one can find the justification behind the institution of prostitution in the West; the defense of one group considered as superior, and consequently untouchable, to the harm of another racial or social group.[210] Instead of being viewed as the result of an asymmetrical gender and racial interaction, interracial relations and sexual license have been regarded as natural and indispensable aspects of the colonial encounter.[211] The reality of treatment of women in general in Brazil, especially the mixed-race women, can be illustrated in many ways in popular culture. Songs written throughout the twentieth century that became hits in Brazil whether samba or other rhythms such as country, shows the oppression and abuse that women were subjugated.

Amor De Malandro (Francisco Alves, 1929)[212]

Vem, vem (Come here, come here)
Que eu dou tudo a você (I will give you everything you want)
Menos vaidade (But vanity)
Tenho vontade (I am willing)
Mas é que não pode ser (But it has to be my way)

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[209]Ibid., 18.
[210]Carl N. Degler, *Neither Black nor White: Slavery and Race Relations in Brazil and the United States* (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1971) 190.
[211] Kia Lilly Caldwell, *Negras in Brazil: Re-envisioning Black Women, Citizenship, and the Politics of Identity* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1971) 55.
[212]Francisco Alves, "Amor De Malandro," *Letras.com*, accessed Jan 25,2019. https://www.letras.com/francisco-alves/1743969/.

O amor é o do malandro (I can give you this womanizer love)
Oh, meu bem (Oh, my love)
Melhor do que ele ninguém (He is better than any other)
Se ele te bate (If he hits you)
É porque gosta de ti (It is because he likes you)
Pois bater-se em quem (Because I have never seen)
Não se gosta (anyone hits someone)
Eu nunca vi (they don't like)

Formosa (Vinicius de Moraes, 1965)[213]

Formosa, não faz assim (Beautiful, don't do that)
Carinho não é ruim (Affection is not bad)
Mulher que nega (Woman that refuses to give affection)
Não sabe não (Has something
Tem uma coisa de menos (missing)
No seu coração (In their heart)

A gente nasce, a gente cresce (We are born, and grow up)
A gente quer amar (Longing for love)
Mulher que nega (Woman that refuses to give affection)
Nega o que não é para negar (It is going against her nature)
A gente pega, a gente entrega (We should try to get, try to give)
A gente quer morrer (We will die without it)
Ninguém tem nada de bom (No one gets good things)
Sem sofrer (Without suffering)
Formosa mulher! (Beautiful woman)

Vidinha de Balada (Henrique e Juliano, 2017)[214]

Tô a fim de você/ (I like you)
E se não tiver, você vai ter que ficar/ (If are going to have to like me)
Eu vim acabar com essa sua vidinha de balada/ (I came to put an end to your party life)
E dar outro gosto pra essa sua boca de ressaca/ (And give another taste to your mouth other than hangover)
Vai namorar comigo, sim!/ (You are going to date me)
Vai por mim, igual nós dois não tem/ (Believe me, you are meant to be together)
Se reclamar, cê vai casar também (And if you complain, you are going to marry me)

Misogynist songs similar to the ones above are plentiful in Brazilian popular music.

Explicit messages about a woman being forced or pushed to do something that they do not want,

[213]Vinicius de Moraes, "Formosa," Vinicius de Moraes, accessed Jan 25, 2019. brhttp://www.viniciusdemoraes.com.br/en/node/771.
[214]Henrique e Juliano, *"Vidinha de balada," Vagalume*, accessed Jan 25,2019. https://www.vagalume.com.br/henrique-e-juliano/vidinha-de-balada.html.

or male demonstrations of violence and abuse associated with love, perpetuate and promote a distorted idea about the woman's place in society and in relation to men.

Another important characteristic of Freyre's work is his proposition of fluidity of the Brazilian color categories based on the existence of a fluid, non-rigid social order.[215]

> In tropical America there was formed a society agrarian in structure, slave-holding in its technique of economic exploitation, and hybrid in composition, with an admixture of the Indian and later of the Negro. This was a society that in its evolution was protected less by a consciousness of race, which was practically non-existent in the cosmopolitan and plastic-minded Portuguese. [...] The singular predisposition of the Portuguese to the hybrid, slave-exploiting colonization of the tropics is to be explained in large part by the ethnic or, better, the cultural past of a people existing indeterminately between Europe and Africa; [...] with the African influence seething beneath the European and giving a sharp relish t sexual life, to alimentation, and to religion.[216]

Caldwell affirms that the presumably fluid nature of Brazilian racial and color identities also encouraged the belief that Brazil is a color-blind society that allows equal rights and opportunities to all of its citizens. As a consequence of Freyre's ideas, defendants of interracial mixture and racial democracy have tended to combine biological mixture between racial groups with social integration. This combination has been based on the belief that interracial sexual interaction and mixed-race people are proof of egalitarian racial attitudes.[217] The mixed-race identity of the Brazilian population was so unique that official vehicles such as the census or other surveys that took place in the twentieth century did not include race as a category as the

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[215]Kia Lilly Caldwell, *Negras in Brazil: Re-envisioning Black Women, Citizenship, and the Politics of Identity* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1971) 54.
[216]Gilberto Freyre, *The Masters and The Slaves: A Study in the Development of Brazilian Civilization* (Alfred A. Knopp: New York, 1946) 3-4.
[217]Kia Lilly Caldwell, *Negras in Brazil: Re-envisioning Black Women, Citizenship, and the Politics of Identity* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1971) 62.

one recognized in the United States and Europe, where if a person had any African descendant they were classified as part of the black race. Among the Brazilian categories of race, the black race was subdivided in different categories that took in consideration physical characteristics such as skin color, hair type, nose shape and lip shape.[218] Depending on those physical characteristics you could be included in one of the race categories. A person would be considered *Negro,* if he had a very dark skin, and possessed all the physical characteristics associated with African people, including their hair texture, shape and size of their nose and lips. M*ulato*, were the individuals that could have dark or medium dark skin, but had white physical features. *Pardo,* would be the person that had medium brown color skin, and native indigenous physical characteristics. *Moreno* would be the light brown skin with white physical traits. Lastly, the *caboclos*, were the white or very light brown skin people, with native indigenous physical characteristics. Those categories of race in Brazil are the result of the belief in the "whitening theory" mentioned in the first part of this chapter. Brazilians believe that they could transition from one race to another through the mixture of races, and self-identified themselves not by their origin of their descendants but by their current physical characteristics.[219]

This identity can also be seen in many sources of Brazilian popular culture, such as some of the samba lyrics below.

Cor Mulata Brasileira (Lázaro Justo Jacinto, 2014)[220]

Cor que assinala um povo assaz diferente, (A color that made its people differently)
Obtida por meio do ajuntamento multirracial; (Acquired by unification of races)
Raça que caracteriza deveras a nossa gente! (Race that still marks our people)

Maravilhoso foi o cruzamento que formou (Wonderful was the result)

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[218]Edward E. Telles, *Race In Another America: The Significance of Skin Color in Brazil* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006) 101.
[219]Edward E. Telles, *Race In Another America: The Significance of Skin Color in Brazil* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006) 87.
[220]Lázaro Justo Jacinto, "Cor da Mulata Brasileira," *Web Artigos*, accessed Jan 25, 2019. https://www.webartigos.com/artigos/a-cor-mulata-brasileira-poesia/125897.

U'a cútis típica e acentuadamente brasileira, (Skin color typically Brazilian)
Legando ao nosso povo de forte miscigenação, (Inheritance from our strong miscegenation)
A cor notável, marcante, de beleza trigueira; (A strong , unique and beautiful color)
Testificando, destarte, que o brasileiro possui (That makes the Brazilian who he is)
A pele e o sangue de uma Nação sobranceira!(A skin and blood that makes us stronger)

Beleza e saúde são marcas indeléveis dessa cor, (Beauty and health are undeniable symbols of this color)
Realce de um povo heroico, bravo, lutador; (Reflexion of a heroic, hard working and strong people)
Até mesmo a nossa canção, alegre não seria, (Our song would not be so joyous)
Sem essa tez que o mundo inteiro reverencia (Without this trait that the whole world admire)

Despite appeals to the nonracial nature of Brazilian color categories, Brazilian understanding of color has been inseparably connected to the social economic and cultural legacies of Portuguese colonization and the enslavement of African populations. As it can be seen in most plantation societies in the Americas, the Brazilian system of color categories has been closely tied to racial practices developed during the colonial slave era and within the post-abolition social order. As a consequence, Brazilian color categories are inseparable from common sense views that blackness and African ancestry signify difference and inferiority.[221]

Another issue approached by Freyre that would influence the thought of Brazilian society is the distinction between the roles that white women have in contrast to the African descendant ones traditionally held in society,

> In Brazil the white ladies, in addition to becoming mothers prematurely, suffered from the incessant action of a subtropical clime, a climate that exhausts their vital forces and irritates the nervous system; whereas the Negro nurses were endowed with a physical organization for living in hot regions, where their health prospers more than elsewhere; and under such climatic conditions they acquire a power of breast nourishment that the same region generally refuses to white women. [...] Brazilian tradition leaves us in no doubt on the subject: when it comes to a wet-

[221]Ibid., 36.

> nurse, there is none like a Negro woman.[222]
>
> The Negro women and a large part of the mulatto women as well, for whom honor is a chimerical term signifying nothing, are ordinarily the first to begin the early corruption of the young masters, giving them their first lessons of libertinism, in which, from childhood on, they are engulfed; and from this there comes, for the future, a troop of young mulattoes and crias whose influence in the families is to be a most pernicious one.[223]
>
> With reference to Brazil, as an old saying has it: "White woman for marriage, mulatto woman for f-, Negro woman for work", a saying in which, alongside the social convention of the superiority of the white woman and the inferiority of the black, is to discern a sexual preference for the mulatto. Moreover, in our national lyricism there is no tendency more clearly revealed than one toward a glorification of the mulatto woman, the *cabocla* or Indian woman, the brown-skin or brunette type, celebrated for the beauty of her eyes, …, the wiles and languishments and witching ways, far more than are the pale virgins and the blonde damsels.[224]

In a different passage, he adds other functions to the African descendant women in slavery society,

> Of the female slave or "mammy" who rocked us to sleep. Who suckled us. Who fed us, mashing out food with her own hands. The influence of the old woman who told us our first tales of ghost or *bicho*[225]. Of the mulatto girl who relieved us of our first *bicho de pe*,[226] of a pruriency that was so enjoyable. Who initiated us into physical love and, to the creaking of a canvas cot, gave us our first complete

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[222] Gilberto Freyre, *The Masters and The Slaves: A Study in the Development of Brazilian Civilization* (Alfred A. Knopp: New York, 1946) 380.
[223] Ibid., 396.
[224] Ibid., 14.
[225] Portuguese word for animal.
[226] A *bicho de pe* is a type of flea that burrows underneath the skin of the foot and lays its eggs there. Very common in farmlands of Brazil until today.

sensation of being a man.[227]

Freyre's analysis of colonial Brazil normalized the status of African and mixed-race Brazilian women within the Brazilian society as domestic servants and sexual objects. By repetitively associating African descendant women with manual labor and sexuality, Freyre's work legitimized and endorsed historical patterns of sexual exploitation and economic domination.[228] The connection between whiteness and fragile womanhood also helped to shape the notion of hierarchical constructions of female gender in Brazil. In many ways, the color of the woman's skin worked as the primary means of differentiating and determining their place within Brazilian society, including their level of sensuality and association to physical labor.[229] Many samba songs also described mixed-race women as morally degraded or being mischievous.

Piranha (Alipio Martins, 1974)[230] [231]
Não quero mais para mim (I don't want anymore)
Aquela falsa mulher (That deceptive woman)
Me comeu a carne toda (Ate all my flesh)
Deixou meu esqueleto em pé (Left me on my bones)

E eu que fui dono de uma crioula (I once owned a mulata)
Desses tipo violão (The one with the guitar shaped body)
Ela jogava baralho de ronda (She liked to play cards)
Bebia cachaça e brigava na mão (Drank cachaca[232] and enjoy a good fight)

Tá ouvindo piranha? (Can you hear me piranha?)

Quando eu tava de bola cheia (When I was on top of the world)
A vida dela era só me beijar (All she wanted was to kiss me)
Mas depois que eu fiquei duro (But when I got broken)
A malandra demais me tirou do ar (She did not want anything to do with me)

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[227] Ibid, 278.
[228] Kia Lilly Caldwell, *Negras in Brazil: Re-envisioning Black Women, Citizenship, and the Politics of Identity* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1971) 55.
[229] Ibid., 51.
[230] Piranha is the name of a carnivorous fish very common in Brazil, and also a vulgar name for a loose woman.
[231] Alipio Martins, "Piranha,"Vagalume, accessed Jan 25, 2019. https://www.vagalume.com.br/alipio-martins/piranha.html.
[232] The Brazilian version of tequila. It is made from sugar cane, and most of the time have 50% or more alcohol proof.

> Eu só sei que a mulher é igual a cobra (I just know that woman is just like a snake)
> Tem veneno de peçonha (her poison is like venom)
> Deixa o rico na miséria (makes the rich poor)
> E o pobre sem vergonha (and the poor shameless)

Jorge Amado, an internationally known Brazilian author, whose books were translated into forty-nine languages, has many female characters that follow Freyre's perception of the Brazilian woman. Gabriela, Jorge Amado's most famous character, from his book *Cravo e Canela* (1958), became a symbol of how sensual and sexual a *mulata* woman can be. Gabriela is a mixed-race woman that left the desert part of Brazil to pursue a better life in Ilheus, one of the important cities along the Brazilian coast from the sugar plantation days. After her arrival, she soon found a job as a cook in one of the town's main restaurant. Her beauty, sensuality and charismatic personality attracted many people to the restaurant promoting the business, and resulting with the rigid owner of Turkish origin to feel attracted by her. The book develops around Gabriela's complex and improbable relationships. Some of her characteristics can be seen below.[233]

> He wanted her to be as well dressed as the richest lady in Ilhéus; fine clothes would erase her past and hide the stove burns of her arms. But the fine clothes rarely left the closet.[234]
>
> He took her as though she were a toy, a toy or a closed rosebud which he brought into bloom each night of pleasure. She began to lose her timidity, giving herself over to that lascivious union, growing in response, turning into a heartsome, spirited lover.[235]

[233]Jorge Amado, Gabriela Clove and Cinnamon Trans. James L. Taylor and William L. Grossman (New York: Vintage International, 2006) 91, 174.
[234]Ibid., 45.
[235]Ibid., 67.

> She was a glass snake. She wasn't poisonous but she sowed affliction just by going among men-mysteriously, like a miracle.[236]

The book shows how hard it is for Gabriela to fit the role of a contained wife, the role usually occupied by white women. It also emphasizes how she can't help herself regarding her sexual desires and sensual interactions, endorsing the idea that mixed-race women are hypersexual. One of the most famous idealized and romanticized images of the Brazilian woman is on the Garota de Ipanema.

Garota De Ipanema (Tom Jobim, 1962)[237]

Olha que coisa mais linda (Look how beautiful)
Mais cheia de graça (How gracious)
É ela, menina (Is this woman)
Que vem e que passa (That walks along)
Num doce balanço (In a charing sway)
A caminho do mar (On her way to the ocean)

Moça do corpo dourado (Woman of a golden body)
Do sol de Ipanema (From the Ipanema sun)
O seu balançado é mais que um poema (her sway is just like a poem)
É a coisa mais linda que eu já vi passar (The most beautiful things I have ever seen)

Ah, se ela soubesse (Ah, if she knew)
Que quando ela passa (That when she walks)
O mundo inteirinho se enche de graça (The world is filled with grace)
E fica mais lindo (And become more beautiful)
Por causa do amor (because of love she spreads)

Brazil's foreign reputation as a racial democracy committed to the pursuit of sensual pleasures is directly linked to the sexual objectification of women of mixed racial identity. As a product of Brazil's notorious interracial relations, veneration of the *mulata* can be viewed as

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[236]Gilberto Freyre, *The Masters and The Slaves: A Study in the Development of Brazilian Civilization* (Alfred A. Knopp: New York, 1946) 385.
[237]Tom Jobim, "Garota de Ipanema," *Letras*, accessed Jan 25, 2019. https://www.letras.mus.br/tom-jobim/20018/.

proof of Brazil as a non-racist society. The *mulata* women also played an essential role in the international images of Brazil as the country of carnival and a tropical paradise, where the physical attractiveness and sensuality of the *mulata* women became one of the main characteristics of what it means to be authentically Brazilian.[238]

[238] Richard Parker, Bodies, Pleasures and Passions: Sexual Culture in Contemporary Brazil (Vanderbilt University Press: Nashville, 2009) 58.

Chapter 4

Brazilian Woman and the Carnival of the 20th century

Considering differences in the cultural depictions of white, black, and mixed-race women in Brazil, it is essential to unveil and demystify the implications of race in gender categories in the country. According to Kia Caldwell, while both white and mixed race women are idealized in Brazil, they are idealized in distinct ways and for distinct reasons. White women are usually seen as the standard of female beauty and femininity, in contrast to the image of the *mulatas* as sexual, provocative and seductive.[239] Caldwell goes on to say that the contemporary racialized gender hierarchies in Brazil, categorize women by dividing their bodies, and attributing certain physical features to the category of either sex or beauty. This division process allots features such as skin color, hair texture, and the shape and size of the nose and lips to the category of beauty, while features such as the breasts, hips, and buttocks are allotted to the sexual category. One of the reasons why black women have consistently been described as being sexual, rather than beautiful is due to the heavy influence of Eurocentric beauty standards that have prevailed in Brazilian society.[240] In a variety of ways, images of mixed race women in Brazilian social thought, such as, literature and popular culture show the ambivalence and intricacy of Brazilian constructions of race, gender, and sexuality, and popular images of the *mulata* women who often hide a complex configuration of social oppression and sexual desire.[241]

The aim of this chapter is to analyze how the Brazilian Carnival and elements associated with it, helped to consolidate the image of mixed-race Brazilian women as an exceptionally

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[239]Kia Caldwell, *Negras in Brazil* (Rutgers University Press: New Brunswick, 1971) 58.
[240]Judy Bachrach, "Brazilian Women Are Confident About Their Beauty," in *The Culture of Beauty*, ed. Laurie Willis (New York: Greenhaven Press, 2011), 59-69.
[241] Kia Caldwell, *Negras in Brazil* (Rutgers University Press: New Brunswick, 1971) 88.

sensual and sexual being in the twentieth century. I will briefly recount the history and structure of Carnival in Brazil, and explore how it has been portrayed through international newspapers' photographs. Next, I will examine the "*mulata*" as a profession as a product of the Brazilian Carnival. The "professional *mulata*" were Brazilian women who performed at theaters and other entertainment venues around the world while wearing the costumes traditionally worn during Carnival parades in Brazil. The last element derived from Carnival that I will argue was important to the cementation of the image of Brazilian women, as the promotion campaign for the Carnival in Rio de Janeiro, the city that hosts the biggest Carnival parade in Brazil, by the *Rede Globo*, the major Brazilian television broadcast company from 1990 until today. As seen in the previous chapters, the representation of the Brazilian women, especially the African descendant women, have been closely associated with sensuality, sexual looseness, lack oh shame, and unworthiness and disrespect to her body. Carnival in Brazil can be considered one more vehicle where this image is perpetrated and promoted.

Race and the Black Movement in Brazil – 1930 to 1980

The widespread interracial mixture among Brazilian society has helped to blur the line between whites and blacks and it was important to reduce any collective problem in post-slavery years regarding the question of race and social status. It has also served to keep European Brazilian dominance and control by producing the idea that social prejudice and discrimination were based not in physical characteristics, such as race, but instead the result of economic and cultural characteristics that could be changed by individual merit and accomplishments.[242] The concept of race by the middle of the twentieth century transformed dramatically worldwide rejecting the scientific and biological explanations presented during the nineteenth century and

[242] G. Reginald Daniel, *Race and Multiraciality in Brazil and the United States* (University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2016) 41.

beginning of the twentieth. Edward Telles argues that during the second half of the twentieth century there was a consensus among the majority of academic fields in the interpretation of race as a concept socially constructed with very little or no biological basis. He goes on to say that even though theories of hierarchical and intellectual differences among races are discredited in the academic environment, the idea of race was still important since it could be found in social practices and have a great influence on social organization among different societies.[243] He also affirms that the concept of race has different connotations according to the different languages and cultural contexts in which they are immersed.[244]

In various ways, Brazilian discourses on racial democracy and racial hybridism have created a serious impediment to the development of a strong antiracist and black identity movement.[245] Since Brazilian nationalist discourse centers on color and stresses racial intermixture, the country is commonly thought to be excluded from the domain of racist attitudes and practices. During most of the twentieth century, Afro-descendent organizations either faced white indifference or were accused of threats to social harmony and national unity.[246]

The *Frente Negra Brasileira* (Brazilian Black Front), created in 1931, was the first national African Brazilian civil rights and political institution to appear in the post-abolition era, and it was encouraged and supported by the first African-Brazilian newspaper, *Clarim da Alvorada* (Clarion of the Dawn), founded in 1924.[247] Both institutions worked together to

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[243] Edward E. Telles, *Race in Another America: The Significance of Skin Color in Brazil* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004) 21.
[244] Ibid., 22.
[245] Kia Caldwell, *Negras in Brazil* (Rutgers University Press: New Brunswick, 1971) 44.
[246] E. Bradford Burns, *Nationalism In Brazil: a historical survey* (New York: Frederick A. Praeger Publishers, 1968) 103.
[247] G. Reginald Daniel, *Race and Multiraciality in Brazil and the United States* (University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2016) 62.

promote racial unity trying to unify the Brazilian African descendants in one group, *negros*[248], instead of the two well-established groups of blacks and mulattos. The organization was able to put together an elementary school and also funded adult education classes focusing on literacy skills and vocational training. It also structured a medical clinic that offered dental and medical care at reduced rates or no cost to patients, and it had a legal department that helped its members with dissensions against their landlords or employers.[249] The Front continued to exist and operate until the government of Getulio Vargas, 1930-1945, forbade the existence of political parties. During his years in power, political and intellectual freedoms were greatly limited, especially political protests and opposition.[250] Instead of tackling the issue of race and inequality in Brazil, Vargas fully adopted and promoted the ideas of Gilberto Freyre of racial democracy as the official national ideology of Brazil. Moreover, he integrated African Brazilian expressions such as *samba*, *Candomble* (African inspired religion), and *capoeira* (African martial art) as symbols of the Brazilian culture.[251]Daniel argues that the preservation and embracing of African Brazilian elements as part of the official Brazilian culture was a practical example of how racial democracy worked as an effective marketing instrument of the idea internationally, especially when compared to the Jim Crow era in the United States, and the Third Reich in Germany.[252] The most successful national symbol promoted by the Vargas government was the Carnival, along with *futebol* (soccer).

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[248]*Negro* means black in Portuguese, but it is considered a more human or polite way to describe a Black person. *Preto* is another word that means black but it is more commonly used to describe objects, it has also been used to describe slaves. In the first part of the twentieth century, it was still used in Brazil to describe a person of black color skin, but it is considered denigrative. People with brown skin color were called *moreno*, light shades of brown, or *mulato*, darker shades of brown.

[249] G. Reginald Daniel, *Race and Multiraciality in Brazil and the United States* (University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2016) 62.

[250] Ibid., 68.

[251] Ibid., 68.

[252] Ibid., 70.

Brazilian Carnival and the Brazilian *mulatta*

Carnival is a period of time celebrated in the West since the early days of Christianity that preceded the rigid restrictions imposed by Lent.[253] In sum, it has been perceived as a period of celebration of the flesh in which the suppression and prohibitions of ordinary life do not exist and all forms of pleasures are then possible.[254] That is also the meaning of the name in Latin, *carnis* or flesh, and *vale* or farewell, *carnavale*, "a farewell to the flesh."[255] According to Hufferd, Carnival can be dated since Ancient Rome and it was a social event, promoted by the Roman government in which the government gave food and drinks to the population as they celebrated their gods. The Roman event that most resembled Carnival was the Saturnalia, a celebration of the god Saturn marked by feasts and pleasures, and parade-like processions where ordinary individuals had permission to excess.[256] During those events individuals made fun of each other, slaves were allowed to scorn their masters and violent games were typically played. Inversion of social classes and gender were also allowed through costumes and masks.[257] Even though the Roman government enforced some regulations and policies regarding how the celebrations should take place, Carnival was also a period where criticism about the government and high taxes were permitted. Moreover it was a time where the lower class could forget their poverty and scarce access to food.[258] Ancient Rome styles of Carnival spread to other places in Europe, and each country started to practice Carnival according to their own cultural customs,

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[253] Richard Parker, Bodies, Pleasures and Passions: Sexual Culture in Contemporary Brazil (Vanderbilt University Press: Nashville, 2009) 155.
[254]Benito Cao, White Hegemony in the Land of Carnival (Doctor's Thesis, University of Adelaide, 2008) 181.
[255] Richard Parker, Bodies, Pleasures and Passions: Sexual Culture in Contemporary Brazil (Vanderbilt University Press: Nashville, 2009) 156.
[256]Marlene Lima Hufferd, Carnaval in Brazil, samba schools and African culture: a study of samba schools through their African heritage (master's thesis, Iowa State University, 2007) 4.
[257]Ibid., 6.
[258]Ibid., 6.

even though most places in Europe had in common religious and political values. During the Modern age, French and Italy developed the most elaborate and famous carnivals balls marked by their theatrical operas and masquerade balls, mostly for the bourgeoisie.[259]

During the eighteenth century, Carnival in Portugal was known as *Entrudo* (entrance) and was celebrated annually as an observance of the beginning of the spring season. Following the Christian calendar, the festivities of Carnival started on Fat Saturday and went through Ash Wednesday.[260] This tradition was brought to Brazil, and such celebrations happened on public streets, where parades of dressed up people walked through the streets in a procession, while people watching from their houses and balconies used to throw water and body wastes on the audience as the parade went along.[261] Fights were very common during those events, and practical jokes were played all around the city. Carnival was considered so unsafe and harsh that only the Brazilian middle and upper class men participated.[262] In 1808, Dom João, the king of Portugal and his entourage moved to Brazil fleeing from Napoleon Bonaparte's invasion of Portugal in 1807. During their stay in Rio de Janeiro, they introduced a more civilized and European style Carnival, mainly inspired by the French Carnival which was at that time known as the best and most modern Carnival in Europe. The *Entrudo Carnaval* was replaced by a more elegant and refined event, and focused on the construction of elegant costumes and the use of carriages to transport the nobles during the Carnival parades.[263] Dom Joao returned to Portugal in 1822, but Carnival in Rio kept following the tendencies and rituals of the European Carnival, and

[259]Ibid., 8.
[260]Ibid., 21.
[261]Ibid., 22.
[262] Ibid. 23.
[263] Charles Perrone and Christopher Dunn, "Chiclete com Banana:Internationalization in Brazilian Popular Music, in *Brazilian Popular Music and Globalization*, ed. Charles A Perrone (New York: Routledge, 2002)10.

by the mid-1850s Rio was hosting Carnival balls in its theaters and City Hall very similar to the ones taking place in France and Italy. In contrast to the elite balls, lower class people and freed slaves also had their own parties and celebrations inside their neighborhoods, where they danced and played to songs and rhythms of African origin using different instruments from the *Candomblé* religion, a religion brought to Brazil by slaves from Africa. According to Parker, street Carnival in Brazil was officially born in 1852, and the first known Carnival group was called *Zé Pereira,* composed mainly by lower-class white people. They paraded through the streets of a suburb in Rio making noises by banging on pots, pans, cans, drums, and anything else they could find.[264] Poor black people had their own street Carnival groups as well; some of the most famous ones were *Os Cordões* (The Chains) and *Ranchos* (Farmers), dating from the 1890s. Those groups gained visibility for composing music that was easily sung by the people following in the parades and are known as the predecessors of the Samba Schools in Rio de Janeiro. During the end of nineteenth century and beginning of the twentieth the street Carnivals in Rio de Janeiro were closely regulated and oppressed by the police.[265] The police feared the concentration of people, especially of black people, since during this period, it is estimated that blacks outnumbered whites in Rio de Janeiro. The police were concerned that the large black population could lead to a revolt against their precarious social and economic status. [266]

The first Samba School was created in 1929 and received its name because the Samba dance was practiced in an empty lot of a vocational school for training teachers.[267] According to

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[264]Marlene Lima Hufferd, Carnaval in Brazil, samba schools and African culture: a study of samba schools through their African heritage (master's thesis, Iowa State University, 2007) 25.

[265] Hermano Vianna, *The Mystery of Samba: Popular Music and National Identity in Brazil* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1999) 27.

[266] Ibid., 28.

[267] Charles Perrone and Christopher Dunn, "Chiclete com Banana:Internationalization in Brazilian Popular Music, in *Brazilian Popular Music and Globalization*, ed. Charles A Perrone (New York: Routledge, 2002)19.

Recto, samba schools are "a manifestation of the urban folklore, made up of a group of people who use music and dance to tell a story."[268] The first Samba School parade took place in 1932, and was financed by a journalist named Mario Filho. Rector argues that this parade was arranged to introduce Samba music composed by black musicians to the population who lived in the southern neighborhoods of Rio, composed of mainly middle and high-class people. The idea was to promote black people creativity and talent in a much divided city.[269] Events like this where black artists and musicians were hired to play at white Brazilian's parties started to become more and more common, with the white population starting to appreciate and enjoy the music styles previously associated with the poor and African descendant individuals.

Samba, the closest music style associated with Carnival in Brazil is known for being born as the result of the sounds and rhythms played in the house of *Tia Ciata*, a respected religious leader from *Candomble*. She was well-known among the blacks that lived in Rio, especially within her neighborhood, "little Africa", where she hosted many parties in her house. Her parties were known for having *Rodas de samba* (Samba circles) where people stood in a circle, singing and clapping hands, taking turns in going to the middle of the circle to show off dance moves.[270] Samba as a music style is the combination of many music styles present in Brazil during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, but especially the *modinha* and *lundu.* The first one is a mixture of Portuguese, Spanish and African musical rhythms and the second one, an African music style popular among the Brazilian slaves[271]. Comments regarding the different music

[268] Umberto Eco, Ivanov, V.V. and Monica Rector, *Carnival!* (New York: Mouton Publishers, 1984) 44.
[269] Ibid., 45.
[270] Charles Perrone and Christopher Dunn, "Chiclete com Banana:Internationalization in Brazilian Popular Music, in *Brazilian Popular Music and Globalization*, ed. Charles A Perrone (New York: Routledge, 2002) 8.
[271] Elements of the native indigenous culture have been traditionally erased from the history of Brazil, and the history of Carnival. But it is important to mention that some of the instruments, costumes and rhythms used by the Samba Schools during Carnival parades are part of the culture and rituals of native indigenous people that lived in Brazil.

styles that could be found in Brazil, in contrast to the music style prevalent in European during the same period can be found in letters and journals of Europeans visiting Brazil during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.[272] *Rodas de samba* became very popular among black people's celebrations, by the second part of the twentieth century became part of the Brazilian culture, being practiced even today during birthdays and wedding celebrations.[273]

Carnival became an official national symbol during the 1930s in the first part of the government of the populist Getulio Vargas, who governed Brazil until 1954. Trying to defend the country from the international threat of Communism, and the internal political division, the Vargas administration had a political program to unite Brazil and include a large scale of the population in the economic life of the country.[274] Vargas nationalist government criticized the foreign exploitation of Brazil's natural wealth and promoted the use of Brazil's natural wealth to the benefit of the Brazilian people. He created the national campaign, *"O Petroleo e Nosso"* (The Oil is Ours), creating a state monopoly company to manage the extraction and distribution of Brazilian oil that exists until today, *Petrobras*. On the ideological field, Vargas promoted the idea of national identity, inspired by his Foreign Minister after his visit to Germany in 1933. Starting in 1932, Getulio Vargas' government started to give public licenses to Samba Schools to perform their parades in public streets, and he authorized the local police to help with organization and security.[275] His administration regulated the themes of the parades, pressing for themes that talked or promoted Brazil, instead of international reference. His administration also

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[272] Hermano Vianna, *The Mystery of Samba: Popular Music and National Identity in Brazil* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1999) 24.
[273]Ibid., 10.
[274]E. Bradford Burns, *Nationalism In Brazil: a historical survey* (New York: Frederick A. Praeger Publishers, 1968) 77.
[275] Fabio Ponso e Nivaldo Esperança, "Carnaval e poder: do nacionalismo na era Vargas até o império dos bicheiros", *O Globo*, Feb. 23, 2017. https://acervo.oglobo.globo.com/em-destaque/carnaval-poder-do-nacionalismo-na-era-vargas-ate-imperio-dos-bicheiros-20972662#ixzz5njDVkb00.

ordered songs to be written by famous song writers about the beauty of Brazil and its people, and sponsored their promotion on radio shows.[276]

Throughout the mid-twentieth century on, Carnival in Brazil became an annual set of festivities when the whole country shuts down, business, medical clinics, schools, banks, supermarkets, and so on, for at least five days, starting from the Friday before the week of Ash Wednesday, until mid-day of Ash Wednesday.[277] It can easily be described as a time to relax and have fun. It has been characterized by samba and sensuality, and it can be best displayed during the parades of the *Escolas de Samba* (schools of samba), and many of the events and parties taking place around the country where people dress up in a variety of costumes and dance and drink for several days in a row.[278] As more and more people registered to be members, and were willing to participate in the parades, the bigger the parade structures became. Many organized Samba Schools became non-profit organizations, or some type of business registered within the federal administration.[279] In 1960 the Brazilian President Juscelino Kubitschek changed the capital of Brazil from Rio de Janeiro to Brasilia, a recently constructed city. Rio lost its status and glamour of being the capital, and had to focus on something to replace the income that had been lost. The government of the state of Rio de Janeiro concentrated and invested in the Samba Schools, sponsoring improvements in many elements of Carnival, such as costumes, music, and

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[276] Yuri Alhanati, "Sob inspiração nazista, Getúlio inventou o carnaval brasileiro," *Gazeta do Povo*, Feb. 09, 2013. https://www.gazetadopovo.com.br/ideias/sob-inspiracao-nazista-getulio-inventou-o-carnaval-brasileiro-a64fpn1ovrutmeepdb7jo18bk/.

[277] Marlene Lima Hufferd, Carnaval in Brazil, samba schools and African culture: a study of samba schools through their African heritage (master's thesis, Iowa State University, 2007) 41.

[278] Organized Carnival parades have taken place in Brazil since the 1930s on, and have never been canceled or forbidden since then. During the military dictatorship that governed Brazil through 1964 to 1985, the carnival themes songs went through censorship and were not allow to have words such as hero, freedom, revolution, protest, torture, fight and so forth. But the military government did not censor the costumes, nakedness, nor any other from for extravaganza that took place during Carnival. Some Samba Schools had their rehearsals inspected and watched by police members to prevent that such assembly events became of political nature.

[279] John Murphy, *Music in Brazil* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006) 20.

physical structure as an official impulse for tourism. The Samba Schools in Rio de Janeiro were organized into the *União das Escolas de Samba* (Samba Schools Union). [280] The parades became so big, taking so many streets of the downtown area of some of the major Brazilian cities, that state governors started to finance the construction of facilities known as *sambodromo* for the carnival parades to take place. The *sambodromo* are stadium-like structures that allows better organization and accommodation of the audience, and a systematic and direct remuneration through the sale of tickets. The largest and most famous *sambodromo* is in Rio de Janeiro, and was inaugurated in 1984, and designed by Oscar Niemeyer, an international renowned Brazilian architect.[281] According to Hufferd, as Samba Schools in Rio de Janeiro re-invented themselves through modernization, the focus has shifted from popular celebration of black culture to business mindsets. The rehearsals for the official parades happen all year round, mainly on Fridays and Saturdays, and people from all neighborhoods, including from the middle and upper class participate in such events. Carnival parades became an official national event that symbolizes the diversity of the Brazilian culture and race, and in the foreign imagination as the place of the "world's biggest party."[282] As well described by Richard Parker, "It has been seen as a world of laughter, of madness and play, in which the established order of daily life dissolves in the face of an almost utopian anarchy, in which all hierarchical structures are overturned and the fundamental equality of all human beings is proclaimed."[283]

There are many specific characteristics and analyses that can be made about the structure

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[280] Marlene Lima Hufferd, Carnaval in Brazil, samba schools and African culture: a study of samba schools through their African heritage (master's thesis, Iowa State University, 2007) 47.
[281] John Murphy, *Music in Brazil* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006) 23.
[282] Alexander Edmonds, *Pretty Modern: Beauty, Sex, and Plastic Surgery in Brazil* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2010) 42.
[283] Richard Parker, Bodies, Pleasures and Passions: Sexual Culture in Contemporary Brazil (Vanderbilt University Press: Nashville, 2009) 155.

and composition of Carnival in Brazil, for the purpose of this research, I will focus on how this event helped to shape and promote the national and international identity of Brazilian women. [284]Edwards affirms that the emphasis on this sensual and uniquely beautiful symbol that was the result of an exciting cultural syncretism and racial harmony, could not have had another outcome than the appeal and enthusiasm among Brazilians and those abroad.[285] Caldwell adds that the fame and popularity of the mulatta was an evidence that Brazil was not a prejudiced society.[286] The representation of the women during Carnival defied all notions of morality and privacy presented in societies traditionally, morally conservative, such as the North American, and of many European nations. Even though Carnival events are present in many countries, the scope of Carnival in Brazil throughout the twentieth century cannot be found in any other event taking place in different parts of the world. Scenes of what takes place during Carnival in Brazil could be found in different countries most likely in spaces or events associated with performances of prostitutes or strippers instead.

The uniqueness and exoticness of Brazilian Carnival has been extensively illustrated internationally through newspapers, magazines and even airline advertisement posters. Below are some examples of how it has been portrayed throughout the twentieth century.

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[284] Edward E. Telles, *Race in Another America: The Significance of Skin Color in Brazil* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004) 37.
[285] Alexander Edmonds, *Pretty Modern: Beauty, Sex, and Plastic Surgery in Brazil* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2010) 26.
[286] Kia Caldwell, *Negras in Brazil* (Rutgers University Press: New Brunswick, 1971) 59.

THE NEW YORK TIMES. SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 1928.

A REIGN OF PAGAN JOY MARKS CARNIVAL AT RIO

The Quiet, Dignified Brazilian, High and Low, Completely Changes His Personality for Four Days, Then as Quickly Slips Back Into Good Lenten Behavior

By ANN CONYERS.

TURNING angrily upon a distinguished-looking old gentleman in evening dress who had just sprayed the back of my neck with an icy liquid, I said, "Don't do that!"

"You had better be prepared for much worse," whispered my companion. "Anything is permitted during carnival. That man is E—, once Minister of Finance."

We had just stepped into the hotel elevator on our way out to see the sights of the first night of the carnival at Rio de Janeiro, and it was my first experience with the potent "lanqua." During the course of the evening I learned to endure such sudden douches with stoic calm.

Every one in carnival time arms himself or herself with a supply of fantastic pageant take place, for its preposterously wide boulevards along the sea and its rows of beautiful trees and strips of gardens separating the down-going traffic from the up, lending themselves to vast display. Then the grotesque architecture of the buildings, the stage greenery of the palms and other exotic plants, the strings of lights reflected in the bay at night on one side, with the heavy, black hills overhanging it on the other, make a perfect setting for any strange theatrical show. The whole night of the Corso has a goblinlike beauty that seems to belong to another world.

A Colorful Pageant.

By Monday morning we come back to earth, and most of the merry-makers retire to catch a little sleep, a distant roar of approval tells us that an especial favorite is on its way, and the successful one trundles by amid thunderous cheers.

These floats are got up by the night clubs and other places of diversion as advertisements of themselves and their artists or inmates, and no expense is spared. Each one is magnificent beyond words, and not a few are daring, even for South America. All the girls on them, at least amid the gilt and the Greek architecture and in the light of flares and torches, look pretty. Each float is preceded by a group of young men on horseback in full evening dress, including top hats.

When the float has passed, the multitude surges forth for one farewell night of carousal. It is like the first evening, only by now the con-

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IN GAY RIO DE JANEIRO
SHOW SUMMARY

New York Times, February 26, 1928.[287]

Private Carnival Ball in Rio de Janeiro
Michael Ochs Archives, Feb 1, 1953[288]

Rio de Janeiro Street Carnival 1972
The Life Picture Collection/Getty Images, Feb 1 1972[289]

Both pictures showed above were taken by American photographers and journalists covering the Rio Carnival but in different decades. In spite of the time difference that separates them, they both illustrate the idea of uniqueness of Brazilian cultural values and customs. The

[287] Ann Conyers, "A Reign of Pagan Joy Marks Carnival at Rio," *New York Times*, Feb. 26, 1928.https://timesmachine.nytimes.com/timesmachine/1928/02/26/107090841.html?pageNumber=12.

[288]Carnival in Rio de Janeiro, Photo by Earl Leaf, Michael Ochs Archives, Feb. 1, 1953. https://www.gettyimages.com/detail/news-photo/view-as-carnival-parade-revelers-dressed-in-costumes-party-news-phot o/569063311?adppopup=true.

[289] Carnival in Rio de Janeiro, photo by Bill Ray, The LIFE Picture Collection, Jan. 1, 1972. https://www.gettyimages.com/detail/news-photo/carnival-in-rio-de-janeiro-news-photo/50655046?adppopup=true.

uniqueness of Brazilian Carnival can be seen not only through the size of its structure and elaboration, but also by the fact that individuals from different races not only were allowed to be in the same place during a social event, but at the same time seemed to be enjoying their company while doing it, which was not something common in many places during the first part of the twentieth century.

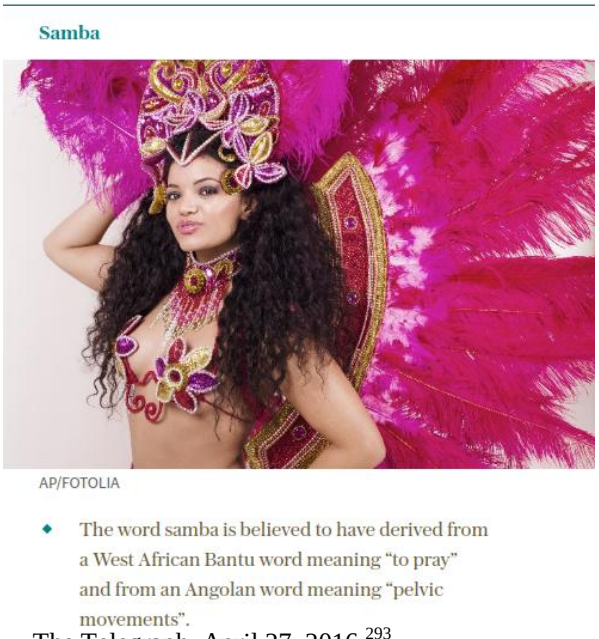
ımbodromo - Rio de Janeiro (Le Monde, Feb 12, 2013)[290]

ıe Guardian, Feb, 17, 2012.[291]

The Guardian, Feb 17, 2012.

[290]"Au Sambodrome, l'apothéose du carnaval de Rio", *Le Monde*, Feb 12, 2013.https://www.lemonde.fr/ameriques/portfolio/2013/02/12/au-sambodrome-l-apotheose-du-carnaval-de-rio_1831008_3222.html.

CNN, Feb 18, 2014.[292]



The Telegraph, April 27, 2016.[293]

The pictures replicated above from international newspapers suggest how Brazilian Carnival and the Brazilian women are still being displayed internationally up to the second decade of the twenty-first century. The picture from the Telegraph is actually part of an article in the Travel section, which gives tourists that were planning to go to the Olympics in Brazil in 2016, information about Rio de Janeiro, and facts they must know about the culture of the country. The Guardian pictures are part of a special column about the story and distinctive characteristics of Brazilian Carnival. The pictures shown here, and most of the ones that I encounter, did not offer personal information about the woman in the photo. One issue with that is that many women that are part of the Carnival parades in Brazil are professional women such as doctors, lawyers, nurses, teachers and they chose to be there, and many times spend thousands

[291] "Week of carnival celebrations kicks off in Brazil," *The Guardian*, Fe. 17, 2012. https://www.theguardian.com/world/gallery/2012/feb/17/brazilian-carnival-begins-photo-galler.
[292] Autumn Spanne, "World's most colorful carnival celebrations", *CNN*, Feb. 18, 2014. https://www.cnn.com/travel/article/most-colorful-carnivals/index.html.
[293] Gavin Haines, "100 Fun Facts About Rio de Janeiro,"The Telegraph, Apr. 27, 2016. https://www.telegraph.co.uk/travel/destinations/south-america/brazil/rio-de-janeiro/articles/rio-2016-olympics-100-fascinating-facts-about-rio-de-janeiro/.

of dollars to be part of such event. The replication of the pictures without in-depth information about the individual helps to create this generic image of Brazilian women without name or identity that is then used, even if unconsciously to create this generalized and universal image of the Brazilian women.

Parker argued that the images and traditions promoted by Carnival influenced the evolution and changes of Brazilian society regarding their own sexual image and practices, and has throughout the years pushed its structures and meanings to the daily lives defining the shape of sexual life in contemporary Brazil.[294] Physical beauty, along with samba and soccer became the three main elements associated with Brazil by the end of the twentieth century. The construction of the idea of Brazil as a tropical paradise and a "world without sin" in the foreign mind was a slow process constructed throughout the five centuries of existence from the letters of the Portuguese sailors to catalogs of online sex tourism business that unfortunately portrayed the Brazilian women with not much difference.[295]

Another way that the Brazilian Carnival created a presence abroad was through the professional *mulatas*. The professional *mulatas* were brown or black Brazilian women, who had the ability to dance the samba, possessed the sculptural body shape with a thin waist and accentuated buttocks, and who radiated charm and seduction over public spectators.[296] According to Caldwell, the *mulata* dance shows were primarily centered on the visual consumption of *mulata* bodies by foreign men.[297] Those shows usually paid them really well and

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[294] Richard Parker, Bodies, Pleasures and Passions: Sexual Culture in Contemporary Brazil (Vanderbilt University Press: Nashville, 2009) 180.
[295] Alexander Edmonds, *Pretty Modern: Beauty, Sex, and Plastic Surgery in Brazil* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2010) 24.
[296]Sonia Giaconomi, "Aprendendo a ser Mulata:Um Estudo Sobre a Identidade da Mulata Profissional", quoted in Kia Caldwell, *Negras in Brazil* (Rutgers University Press: New Brunswick, 1971) 60.
[297] Kia Caldwell, *Negras in Brazil* (Rutgers University Press: New Brunswick, 1971) 60.

were much better options than the other professional opportunities they had inside Brazil. African descendant women in Brazil since post-slavery years occupied mainly labor roles, as domestics, maids, nannies and so forth. To some extent the *mulata's* professional life not only gave the mixed race women status but a better quality of life, and the change to improve the lives of their family members as well.[298] Many shows were held during the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s in the United States, France, England, Germany and other countries boosted the music and sensual culture associated with Brazil and Brazilian women. Countless newspaper articles have been written both in Brazil and internationally about the success of the *mulatas* abroad, and the exoticness of such attractions. I will utilize some photos and headlines here to illustrate the scope and portrayal of the *mulata* profession.


HORACINA CORREIA

Um pedaço do samba volta

Explode na Europa a bomba do samba – Horacina Correia a sambista que ficou seis anos na Europa – No Cairo os bombeiros também não são rápidos – Um conjunto que morre por conta do casamento – E finalmente o "Ana C." traz Horacina de volta e com sotaque novo e o corpo cansado.

Revista Manchete, 1953, ed. 0070.[299]


Esta brasileira está enlouquecendo Paris

WATUSI

a rainha negra do Moulin Rouge

Revista Manchete, 1980, ed. 1480.[300]


Singers and Dancers Shake and Sway To a Brazilian Beat

New York Times, April 1, 1988.[301]

[298] Ibid., 61.

[299] Fernando Lobo, "Um pedaço do samba volta," *Revista Manchete*, ed. 0070, 1953. Accessed on Apr. 20, 2019. http://memoria.bn.br/DocReader/docreader.aspx?bib=004120&pasta=ano%20195&pesq=.

The images above are parts of two different articles from the *Revista Manchete* (Manchete Magazine) a very popular magazine in Brazil through 1952-2000, about entertainment, beauty and lifestyle). The first picture displayed a Brazilian dancer that travelled through Europe for six years with her samba group. The second one is about a Brazilian dancer that had established a permanent show at the Moulin Rouge in Paris, and was reportedly "driving the French crazy", and being called by them, as the "Black Queen of the Moulin Rouge".[302]

According to Giacomini, such images have been used to reconfirm the white male attraction and sexual exploitation of non-white women.[303] Just as ideas of the hyper-sexuality of enslaved women explained their sexual exploitation during the colonial era, images of *mulata* sensuality have been used to rationalize contemporary actions of sexual objectification and cultural propaganda. By representing Afro-Brazilian women as seductresses and sexual aggressors, the mainstream configurations of race, gender and sexuality proposes that white men have engaged in interracial sexual relationships throughout history unintended and involuntarily. [304] Throughout the twentieth century, the *mulata* has shifted from being a source of national pride to be both an export product and a source of tourist income. The position of sensualized images of the *mulata* in the international sex trade is so strong that the term *mulata* has become synonymous with a "prostitute" for many European/ North American men who travel to Brazil

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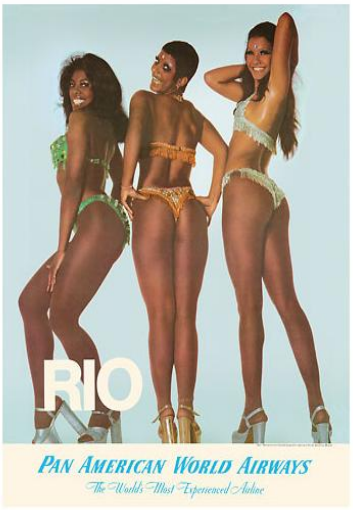
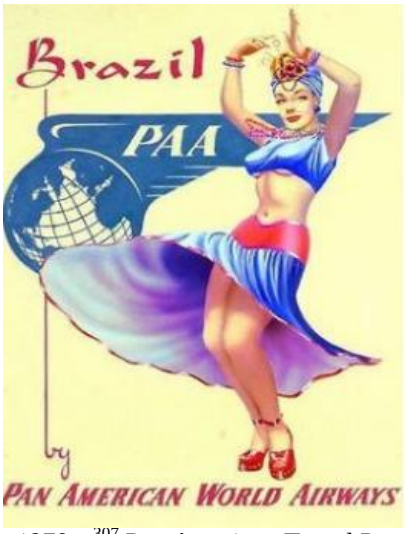
[300]"Esta brasileira está enlouquecendo Paris: Watusi, a rainha negra do Moulin Rouge," *Revista Manchete*, ed. 1480, 1980. Accessed on Apr. 20, 2019. http://memoria.bn.br/docreader/DocReader.aspx?bib=004120&pagfis=19139.
[301] New York Times, April 1, 1988.
[302] "Esta brasileira está enlouquecendo Paris: Watusi, a rainha negra do Moulin Rouge," *Revista Manchete*, ed. 1480, 1980. Accessed on Apr. 20, 2019. http://memoria.bn.br/docreader/DocReader.aspx?bib=004120&pagfis=19139.
[303] Sonia Giaconomi, "Aprendendo a ser Mulata:Um Estudo Sobre a Identidade da Mulata Profissional", quoted in Kia Caldwell, *Negras in Brazil* (Rutgers University Press: New Brunswick, 1971) 60.
[304] Kia Caldwell, *Negras in Brazil* (Rutgers University Press: New Brunswick, 1971) 60.

for the purpose of sexual tourism.[305]





Braniff Airways Travel Poster, 1960[306] Pan American Travel Poster, 1970s. [307] Pan American Travel Poster, 1960s.[3]

The posters above give us a good idea of how Brazil was promoted internationally as a sexual paradise and the image of women was directly connected with the idea of things to do or enjoy in Brazil, or reasons to travel there.

Scarlett Entertainment, accessed April 28, 2019[309]

[305] Ibid., 61.
[306]David Pollack, *Vintage Posters.* Accessed Apr. 15, 2019. https://www.dpvintageposters.com/cgi-local/searchnew.cgi?query=Brazil.
[307]Island Art Store. Accessed Apr. 15, 2019. ttps://www.islandartcards.com/shop/rio-de-janeiro-brazil-oba-oba-oh-boy-samba-dancers-giclee-art-print-poster-wap4784.html.
[308] Vintage Poster Shop. Accessed Apr. 15, 2019.https://shop.actionposters.co.uk/vintage-pan-am-flights-to-brazil-airline-poster-a3-print-24270-p.asp.

The concept of the professional *mulata* it is not a thing of the past, the last photo posted above shows a group of professional *mulata* available to be hired for any event that might want to have Brazilians dancing as an attraction.

Another vehicle that was responsible for popularizing and fantasizing the image of the Brazilian *mulata* was the commercial aired by the main broadcasting network in Brazil, *Rede Globo*, that promoted Carnival and announced its dates. This network was for many years the only one to have the rights to broadcast live the famous parades of the *Escola de Samba* (School of Samba) from Rio de Janeiro. Even though Rio de Janeiro's parades are the most well-known ones, parades with the same glamour and size take place in the majority of Brazil's big cities, and are broadcast by other national or local networks. The commercial is composed of a video of a *mulata*, name *Globeleza*, a mixture of the word *Rede Globo* (the name of the TV channel) and beauty (*beleza*) dancing for approximately one minute.[310] Throughout the first twenty-six years of such commercials, the *mulata* just joyfully danced for the most part naked, with some parts of her body covered with only sparkly paint, while announcements were made by a male background voice about dates and times which the parades would be broadcast. This commercial was aired throughout the day on open tv, imposing nudity to whoever was watching their daily shows or even the news. The *Globeleza* can be considered as the personification of the *mulata*, symbol of Carnival, and her nudity and sensuality only reinforced and idealized the image of what a Brazilian woman looked like. It goes on to say that *Globeleza* allows Brazil to see itself

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[309] "Brazilian Dance Show New York", *Scarlett Entertainment*, accessed May 2, 2019. https://www.scarlettentertainment.com/page/brazilian-dance-show-new-york.

[310] Nicole Froio, "Hyper sexual Carnival atmosphere has a dark side for Rio's women," *Independent*, Feb. 11, 2013. https://www.independent.co.uk/voices/comment/hyper-sexual-carnival-atmosphere-has-a-dark-side-for-rios-women-8490306.html.

as a hybrid, beautiful and modern country, without forgetting the colonial times, where African descendant women were the mulatta and remains the impeccable symbol of sexual object. [311]

Globeleza 1993[312] Globeleza 2011[313] Globeleza 2000[314]

During the second half of the twentieth century into the twenty-first, Brazilian women have had a greater participation in education and the labor market, but still the image of the sensual and sexual Brazilian woman is what is commonly associated with her identity. Throughout history, for the most part, Brazilian women did not have control of the perception

[311] Benito Cao, White Hegemony in the Land of Carnival (Doctor's Thesis, University of Adelaide, 2008) 285.
[312] "Os destaques do Carnaval." Revista Manchete, ed. 2135, 1993. Accessed Apr 20, 2019. http://memoria.bn.br/DocReader/DocReader.aspx?bib=004120&PagFis=277843&Pesq=Globeleza.
[313] Leonardo Bruno, "Vinheta Globeleza entra no ar neste domingo, pela sexta vez com a mulata Aline Prado," *Jornal Extra*, Jan. 14, 2011. https://extra.globo.com/tv-e-lazer/roda-de-samba/vinheta-globeleza-entra-no-ar-neste-domingo-pela-sexta-vez-com-mulata-aline-prado-863300.html.
[314] "Caprichosos de JK a Collor," *Revista Manchete*, ed. 2498, 2000. Accessed on Apr. 20, 2019. http://memoria.bn.br/DocReader/DocReader.aspx?bib=004120&pesq=Globeleza&pasta=ano%20200.

and treatment directed toward them. Have they done anything to alter this tradition of body exploitation or idolatry of the sensuality once they acquired civil rights and power over their bodies? Did their body exploitation change to an endless search for beauty and self-care through beauty products and medical procedures that dominate Brazilian society today? Does the freedom to dress as sensually as they please, or their participation in the parades of Carnival in a semi-naked state prove empowerment or is this a new way to perpetuate an old form of subjugation? Will the gains and improvements made towards women's rights worldwide and within Brazil challenge the conversation about fashion and old customs and traditions in Brazilian society or be used to justify them?

Conclusion

The feminist movement in Brazil became an active political actor during the transition years from dictatorship to democracy, during the end of the 1970s and beginning of 1980s. According to Caldwell, the emergence of the women's movement has been motivated by employment discrimination and economic deprivation experienced by white middle-class women during most of the second half of the twentieth-century [315]. The growth of an international feminist movement together with the gender discrimination existent in the left political organizations in Brazil also helped the development of the women's movement. During the first years of the feminist movement in Brazil in the 1970s, activists tried to address gender-specific issues, including employment, education and reproductive health, as well as other social and political matters. [316] As mentioned in chapter four, African descendant women broke away from the feminist movement during its early years. According to Lelia Gonzales, a well-known black feminist in Brazil, elevating the issue of racism within the women's movement was believed to be fundamental by African descendant women and was seen as an unnecessary issue by white women. She goes on to say that white women were resistant to address the problem of racism because of their own collaboration in racial domination in the history of Brazil.[317] The consequences of racial and gender domination resulted from slavery and the post-abolition years impacted the social experiences of black and white women differently within Brazilian society[318]. Gonzales argued that, while white women were becoming independent and gaining spaces in the labor market outside the home, the black women were still raising the white

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[315] Sonia, Alvarez, *Engendering Democracy in Brazil: Women's Movement in Transition Politics* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990).
[316] Kia Caldwell, *Negras in Brazil* (Rutgers University Press: New Brunswick, 1971) 151.
[317] Lelia Gonzales, "A Mulher Negra na Sociedade Brasileira, in *O Lugar da Mulher*", ed. Luz Madel (Rio de Janeiro, Edições Graal, 1982)100-101.
[318] Ibid., 101.

children, cooking and cleaning now as domestic servants, showing that the exploitation and status of the African descendant women in Brazilian society had barely changed by the end of the twentieth century. She also states that the white feminists did not want to talk about the sexual exploitation of the domestic servants in the white middle class homes, such as the well-known fact in Brazil regarding young boys initiating their sexual experiences with their domestic servant, perpetrated the patterns of the slavery years. [319]

The combined impact of a sexual and racial division of labor has positioned the vast majority of Afro-Brazilian women at the bottom of the socioeconomic ladder. Research on the Brazilian job market has shown that African-Brazilian women enter the job market the earliest and remain the longest.[320] Although African descendant women often make the largest investment in education, they typically receive the least return and suffer higher rates of unemployment.[321] The familiar practice among middle-class Brazilians is to hire mixed-race women to do domestic labor such as maids, cook, and nannies, only reinforces and reproduces colonial customs of racial and social dominance. The National Household (PNAD) survey data from 1990 indicated that 48.0% black women and 30.5% mixed race women worked in domestic service.[322] The socioeconomic position of most Afro-Brazilian women descendents is inseparably connected to social beliefs that strengthen the idea that women of African ancestry are best adapted for service professions. Edward Telles brings up another practical consequence

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[319] Kia Caldwell, *Negras in Brazil* (Rutgers University Press: New Brunswick, 1971) 153.
[320] Marcia Lima, "Trajetória Educacional e Realização Sócio-Econômica das Mulheres Negras", in *Estudos Feministas 2* (Santa Catarina, Instituto de Estudos de Gênero da Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina, 1995) 489-495. https://www.jstor.org/stable/43903811.
[321] Maria Aparecida da Silva, "A Mulher negra no mercado de trabalho", in *Estudos Feministas 2* (Santa Catarina, Instituto de Estudos de Gênero da Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina, 1995) 479-495. https://www.jstor.org/stable/43903810.
[322] Marcia Lima, "Trajetória Educacional e Realização Sócio-Econômica das Mulheres Negras", in *Estudos Feministas 2* (Santa Catarina, Instituto de Estudos de Gênero da Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina, 1995) 489-495. https://www.jstor.org/stable/43903811.

of the perpetration of the idea that African descendant women cannot be considered a good example of decent women, affirming that black women marry disproportionately less than white and brown women in Brazil. He goes to say that even though the theory of whitening of the races is not a state policy in Brazil in the twenty-first century, it survived as a popular belief that marrying a lighter partner will enable social mobility and better future to the lighter children, which can be seen in the country's statistics regarding interracial marriage in Brazil.[323]

The prevalent status of the African descendant woman within Brazilian society is also spread and emphasized through the Brazilian media, especially nighttime soap operas, and through socialization exercises within Brazilian homes, schools, and communities, and are obvious in racialized and gendered patterns of occupational segregation.[324] Although the majority of the Brazilian population is composed of mixed race individuals they have been underrepresented in the mainstream media until today. Ribeiro argues that Afro-descendant characters are not displayed as equals to white characters, and are usually in very small numbers and often represented in subaltern roles, which is a reflection of the structure of Brazilian society. African descendant women in those soap operas have traditionally taken the character of maids, nannies, cooks, prostitutes or mistress.[325] Soap operas have been very influential among Brazilian society promoting fashion, beauty patterns, music styles, home decor and much more. The first time a Brazilian soap opera had a mixed-race woman as the female lead was in 2004, and even though the actress has a darker shade of brown skin, she has white traits. Since they have been exported and very popular in other countries in South America, Africa, and the Middle

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[323] Edward E. Telles, *Race in Another America: The Significance of Skin Color in Brazil* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004) 174.
[324] Kia Caldwell, *Negras in Brazil* (Rutgers University Press: New Brunswick, 1971) 70.
[325] Monique H. Ribeiro, "Black Womanhood, Telenovela Representation, and Racial Discourse in Brazil" (master's thesis, The University of Texas at Austin, 2016) 42.

East, they have been important to the dissemination of the Brazilian image in many parts of the world.[326]

While in many ways black women are connected by familiar experiences and struggles, they are also separated by differences in class, educational opportunities, sexual orientation, religious practices, and political affiliation. Regional contrasts and socioeconomic disparities between the more industrialized and rich states of the south-southeast, and the less industrialized states of north-northeast have aggravated the difficulty of organizing black women at the national level in Brazil.[327] Brazilian black women's organizations have ranged in size from small, informal groups, to professionalized non-governmental organizations that receive international funding. Black women's organizations have focused on areas based on the needs of their local populations and have counted on the experience and competency of their members for their expansion. Popular areas of concern in many organizations have incorporated reproductive health and sexual, racial and domestic violence.[328] Many black women's organizations are also committed in efforts to empower and promote Afro-Brazilian culture and identity.[329] Caldwell affirms that some of the criticisms made towards the black women organizations in Brazil by African descendant women themselves, is that the activists are more concerned with promoting cultural and aesthetic elements of blackness, such as owning black culture through hairstyle, clothing and cultural celebrations, as a tool to empower women, instead of focusing on the importance of education and affirmative actions to create more opportunities for African descendant women as a strategy to fight discrimination and encourage social mobility.[330] Even

[326]Monique H. Ribeiro, "Black Womanhood, Telenovela Representation, and Racial Discourse in Brazil" (master's thesis, The University of Texas at Austin, 2016) 43.
[327] Kia Caldwell, *Negras in Brazil* (Rutgers University Press: New Brunswick, 1971) 159.
[328] Ibid., 165.
[329] Ibid., 159.
[330] Ibid., 170.

though there are some division and disagreements among the Black women movement in Brazil, those groups have had an essential role in challenging racism and sexism in Brazil, as well as confronting the meaning of democracy and citizenship in Brazil. [331] African descendant women activists in Brazil have shown that contrary to the ideas the "Brazilian race" and "racial democracy", black women suffered oppression and marginalization as a group due to their status among Brazilian society regarding their race, gender, and class. Moreover, they are pushing against the ways in which racist and sexist discourses and practices have worked together to replicate and maintain structures of inequality in Brazil regarding mixed-race women that are still readily in place in Brazil even today.[332]

Just like any other historic topic, it is not possible to exhaust the discussion regarding the image of Brazilian woman, and there are many other forces that influenced the construction and consolidation of such a stereotype.[333] The image of Brazilian woman discussed in this paper is not something from the past, and there are still elements and institutions in place today within Brazilian society that allows this stereotype to go on. As seen throughout this research, the association of Brazilian woman with notions of sensuality, physical beauty and sexual liberalism were slowly constructed and reaffirmed throughout Brazilian history through culture, popular thought and media outlets. The attributes linked to the Brazilian women and their image has been used consciously and unconsciously to oppressed and diminish the status of women within

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[331] Ibid., 175.

[332] Ibid., 181.

[333]Because of time and space, I could not include in this work, for example, the importance of the North American and European missionaries that lived in different parts of Brazil during the 20th century, and their perspective regarding the Brazilian people and culture through reports to their "mother" churches in their country of origin. There was also the exchange among Brazilian students, and the North American and the Europeans academic world, which Gilberto Freyre himself was a part of when he got his masters from Columbia University in the 1920s, along with many others Brazilian elite members that studied abroad. Moreover, there is the importance of Hollywood, and Brazilian artists such as Carmen Miranda, or beauty contests in the establishment of the image of Brazilian woman abroad which have been greatly discussed in other works.

Brazilian society, especially African descendant women, and has reaffirmed the power and influence of white male. The little respect and value associated with the image of Brazilian women internationally can be seen as the reflection of how Brazilian women have been and are treated and seen nationally wise. In 2019, Brazil still has the South America's highest rates of femicide, according to the United Nations,[334] and in 2018, the country has elected a president that openly opposes the idea of gender equality and has threatened to revise the hard-earned reproductive health and women rights in the country.[335] Sadly, based on Brazil's political and economic environment the woman's status within Brazilian society, and their image internationally will not suffer any major difference in the near future, and their excluded and subjugated position will still be the norm for the generations to come.

[334] "Brazil: four women killed every day in 2019, human rights body says", *The Guardian*, Feb 4, 2019. Accessed May 12, 2019. https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/feb/04/brazil-women-killed-2019-rate-alarming-iachr.
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