

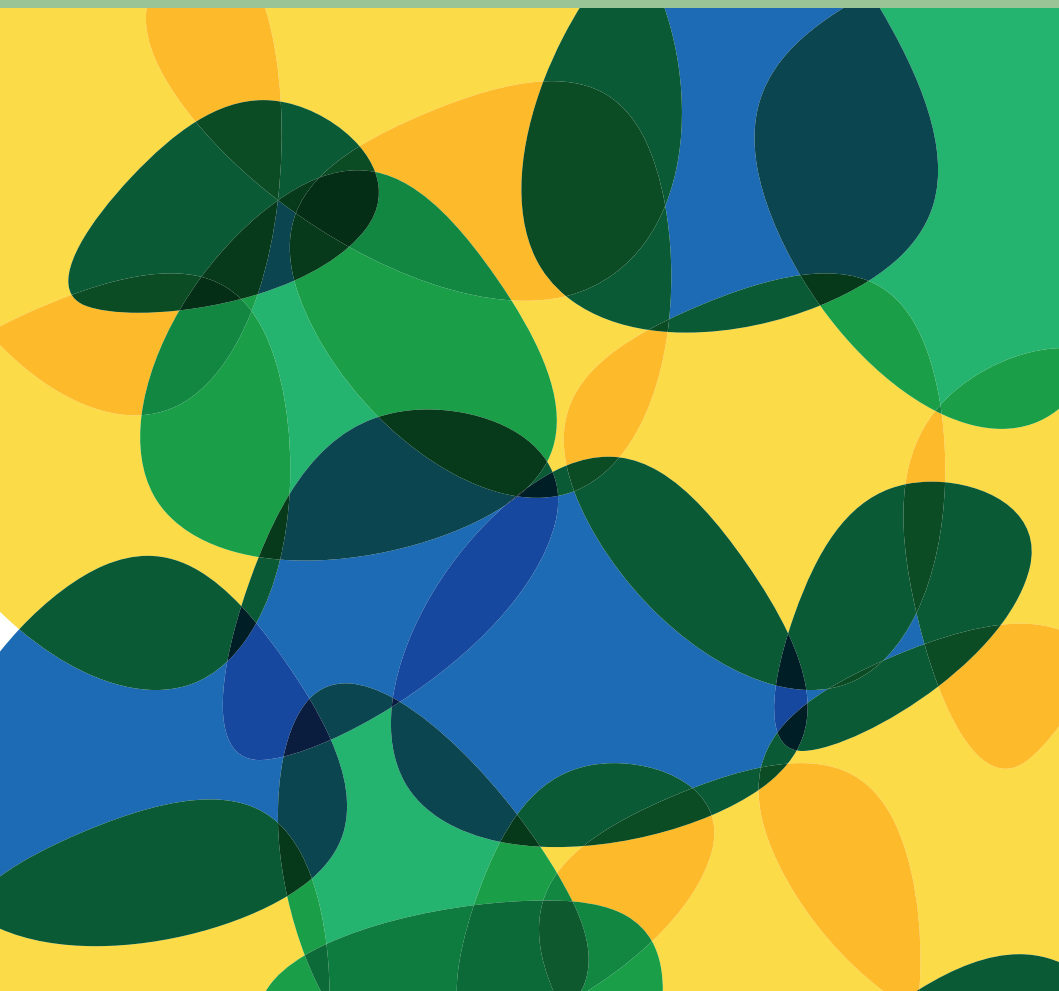
CRISTINA CARNEIRO RODRIGUES
TANIA REGINA DE LUCA
VALÉRIA GUIMARÃES
(EDITORS)

**CULTURA
ACADÊMICA**
Editora

BRAZILIAN IDENTITIES

COMPOSITIONS AND RECOMPOSITIONS

C O N T E M P O R A R Y C H A L L E N G E S



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IDENTITIES**

CRISTINA CARNEIRO RODRIGUES
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IDENTITIES
COMPOSITIONS
AND RECOMPOSITIONS

Coleção Desafios Contemporâneos
Pró-Reitoria de Pesquisa

Translated by Philip Badiz

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Presentation

The *Contemporary Challenges* collection proposed by the Office of the Dean for Research (PROPe) of São Paulo State University (UNESP) aims to make available essays on topics of broad interest concerning Brazilian society and to do so in a language accessible to those unfamiliar with the jargon that is found throughout specialised studies, while maintaining scientific rigor. Thus, the university fulfils one of its essential tasks, that of disseminating the results of the knowledge it produces.

In this volume dedicated to social issues, the authors faced the difficult task of providing a panoramic view of the complex issue of Brazilian identity, without losing sight of the way the theme is expressed in the dilemmas faced in our time.

Structured as large excerpts, the texts assume the present as their starting point so as to outline a retrospective assessment of the literature on the subject, highlighting current research and the dialogue with more traditional approaches, in order to indicate possible consequences for research in the field of humanities.

The reader is thus offered the result of this collective effort, which aims to contribute a reflection concerning the current

challenges using this framework of broad perspectives, without abandoning the double dimension of quality and complexity, given that its preferential target is the general public and not experts.

We would sincerely like to thank our translator, Philip S. P. Badiz, who offered valuable suggestions for each of the texts herein.

The page numbers of references cited in the essays refer to works consulted in Portuguese. To assist those readers who are interested in the wider context of these references, wherever possible, the original works or established translations in English are cited in the references at the end of the book.

Introduction

Tania Regina de Luca¹

The issue of national identity continues to challenge scholars in the Humanities; one needs only to observe the conflicts that have been ongoing since the 1920s to realise how much identity projects of a geographic, ethnic, linguistic, religious and cultural nature continue to merge in a complex game, despite globalisation and its homogenising effects. This scenario invites us to revisit the debate concerning Brazilian identity, a topic that has occupied our intelligentsia since Independence.

There is no lack of specific studies – dedicated to scrutinising institutions, characters, periods and events – that provide accounts of the Brazilian nation, its impasses and challenges, advances and retreats, which assume a myriad of forms over time. Equally rich are the overviews and analyses that seek to review

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interpretations and interpreters of Brazil. The essays produced specially for this book stand apart by adopting a broad perspective, from a temporal and thematic point of view. Their aim is not to inquire about a particular author or set of circumstances, however important these may be, but to provide broad strokes that contribute to answering the questions “what is Brazil?” and “who are the Brazilians?”, immersed in the understanding of contemporary – social, political, economic and cultural – challenges.

The book opens with a chapter that provides an overview of the different ways of understanding national identity, beginning by comparing the leading thinkers who are dedicated to examining this concept in the field of humanities, with particular emphasis on historiography, and continuing by discussing the meanings assumed by identity representations in the contemporary context.

The matter of Brazil is then introduced, and the manner chosen was to focus on five central themes: the issue of race, the body, language, religion and culture. In the first essay, the reader is presented with a dense discussion regarding the meanings attributed to the black presence and to miscegenation, which reveals different perceptions on the issue and its displacements in Brazilian social thought over nearly two centuries. The work also reflects on the appearance/absence of skin colour in national censuses, an issue that has already drawn a wealth of critical acclaim, which is updated here through discussion about the latest data, the action of black movements since the abolition of slavery and recent affirmative action measures, which have given rise to heated debates within Brazilian society.

In the final decades of the twentieth century, studies concerning the body gained importance in a context marked by the contesting of values and customs, which is not to suggest that the desire to control and monitor emerged at this time, as the chapter on this issue clarifies, but rather focusing on illness and

health. The authors invite us on a broad journey that discusses three different modes of conceiving the maintenance of the body and the healing of its ills: the mystical, the medicalised and the youth. The journey is anything but linear, beginning in the colonial period and culminating in the most current debate concerning the Medical Act (2013), which acquires new dimensions in light of this broad viewpoint.

The work of scholars and grammarians was essential for defining literary languages, entrusted to express specific ways of feeling and thinking, one of the pillars of the concept of nation, as has been defined in Europe since modernity. This effort to systematise and ordinate imposed silences that continue to be questioned, even though several centuries have passed – the Basque issue is one of many examples that could be evoked. For the vast majority of Brazilians, language is not considered to be an area of dispute; on the contrary, it seems established that Portuguese is and has always been the language shared by all. This “truth” is put to the test in the chapter devoted to the topic, which questions this belief, together with the alleged homogeneity of the Portuguese spoken in Brazil, placing it at the centre of linguistic prejudice, a powerful tool of discrimination, as attested by the examples in the text. On the other hand, the almost two hundred indigenous languages, which are the heritage of communities inhabiting the country, are seriously in danger of disappearing despite the assurances of the 1988 Constitution. When referring to the vision of the Other, constructed in Europe since modern times, Romain Bertrand (2011, p.11-12) lamented the fact that we know almost nothing of the thousand and one ways of being human and of constructing societies, an observation that hardly seems unreasonable regarding the peoples who inhabit the Brazilian territory.

The concern to establish a roster of particular attributes that may be considered “authentically” national is not restricted

to language and literature. The march against the electric guitar, in mid-1967, was the opening to reflect on the national/foreign tension that has traversed Brazilian culture, in varying shades and degrees. In a world interconnected and marked by the simultaneity of information and enormous entertainment corporations, which recognise no borders, the notion of cultural exchanges – understood as a two-way street – presents itself as an intriguing possibility.

The issue of religious identity, in turn, constitutes one of the hottest topics in the current Brazilian scenario, with repercussions in political parties, the economy, culture, the mass media and the everyday lives of the people. Census data are eloquent when it comes to revealing the pluralisation of the forms of identity of the population. In the part of the essay that is devoted to this theme, three identity projects were compared and their foundational narratives analysed: Catholic, Umbanda and Pentecostal.

Following what was presented in the opening chapter, the final chapter aims to provide an overview, and the choice here was to examine a representative list of collections published at the beginning of the new millennium, aimed at analysing the forms of use and appropriation of the concept of national identity by Brazilian researchers who are dedicated to the theme.

The book was designed to be made available online, which poses new challenges to the process of writing and to the editorial work. It seems reasonable to affirm that we still have a long way to go until we are producing material that effectively exploits all the possibilities of this new medium. In this work, we went no further than to ask authors to indicate material available on the internet, wherever possible and appropriate. Footnotes are featured in their traditional mode, because it was not possible to provide direct access to documents, pieces of music or excerpts of moving images. Indeed, writing in and for this new medium is a challenge we continue to face.

Revisiting the concept of national identity

Jean Carlos Moreno¹

The various social subjects conduct their experiences by representations – ascribed, self-ascribed and shared – concerning who they are and who they can or desire to be. Essentially conflictive, involving social interaction, feelings, self-esteem and power games,² *identity* is a discursively constructed social

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2 Discourses on identity can be interpreted as an exercise of symbolic power – established by recognition –, which produces the existence of that who enunciates, as Bourdieu (1989) has demonstrated. The approach to this power, this social magic – trying to bring into existence the thing named – is part of Bourdieu’s invitation to researchers to include, in what is understood as real, the representation of the real, or rather the struggle for – and between – representations that are designed to impose order and consensus. “The struggles over [...] identity are a particular case of the different struggles over classifications, struggles over the monopoly of the power to make people see and believe, to get them to know and recognise, to impose the legitimate definition of the divisions of the social world and, thereby, to *make and unmake groups*” (ibid., p.113).

category, expressed and perceived through different languages – written, corporal, gestural, imagetic, mediatic.

More incisively than the notion of culture, identity involves the production of discourses that are carriers of signs of identity. A group with a common culture does not always perceive, denominate or recognise itself as such, nor is it necessarily the object of identity discourses. Thus, identity is connected to the *representation* of the culture of one or more human groups. This finding led influential contemporary sociologist Manuel Castells (1996, p.26) to define identity as a “process of meaning construction based on a cultural attribute or even a set of inter-related cultural attributes, which prevail over other sources of meaning”. This *construction* also serves for various raw materials provided by history, geography, biology, collective memory, the apparatuses of power.

If discourse does not create, it at least organises difference, producing identities that are consolidated in social processes and expressed through symbolic actions, texts and contexts. Understanding identity as a discursive figure means understanding it as a creature of language (Silva, 2009b), an act of linguistic creation, a kind of metadiscourse on historical experiences (Diehl, 2002, p.128), a construction that narrates itself (Canclini, 1995, p.139). These narratives guide human actions, functioning as the construction, assertion, imposition or depreciation of social identities.

Since it is a representative text whose authors are necessarily social subjects, social construction of identity always occurs in a context of power relations. However, although identities can also be structured from dominant institutions, it must be acknowledged, as per Lilia Moritz Schwarcz, that

the meaning of identity is not a space of randomness, but rather part of a recognisable and shared cultural universe [...] its “suc-

cess” is connected to a community of meanings and the possibility of [the symbols that structure identity discourses] being simultaneously intelligible and shared. (Schwarcz, 2003, p.384)

Identities are always *construction*, but not necessarily *invention* in the sense of a deliberate act of power, consciously imposed and fully assimilated.

Indeed, *identity* is always something very elusive and slippery in the sociological imagination (see Bauman, 2005). However, identity becomes concrete in social discourses, or rather in discursive practices in which it appears that, together with an academic discourse and vindications that grasp identity within a *pluralistic* bias, other forms of discursive interpretation/action coexist, including positions that are usually called *essentialist*. Sometimes it is through these positions that identity is objectified for social uses.

In *essentialist* perceptions, identities appear as perennial, stable, permanent, homogeneous and innate realities. A process of *social categorisation*, present in discursive practices, simplifies differences and tends to resolve contradictions, constructing representations of immanent identities. Although at the level of representations identity must always to be connected to continuity in time, in essentialist discourses this time is frozen, mythologised, and cultural specificities become a social fact that is barely susceptible to change.

Contemporary analyses emphasise the clash between these two positions regarding representations of identities. Among *essentialist* positions, the notion of identity (or identification) ends up taking the place of a sense of “*human nature*, once seen as a lasting and not to be revoked legacy” (Bauman, 2008, p.180). Another understanding is that the perception of social categories – nationality, gender and class –, used to assign identities to the different subjects almost as if evident or *natural*, is questioned

and illuminated as much by social practices as by academic lenses, revealing that social identities are multiple, malleable and in constant transformation.³ Differences, previously obscured by these macro categorisations, simultaneously provide new global identifications and new local identifications, strengthening ties and other cultural loyalties “above” and “below” the level of the nation-state (see Hall, 2006, p.67).

However, the growing complexity of social dynamics and the acceleration of transformations render national identity more visible as a discursive construct, with its contradictions and lacunas. In contrast, it is interesting to perceive the longevity of representations surrounding national identities, which still demarcate a “territory of the imagination” through which material and symbolic disputes are established.

The debate on national identities

The *nation*, as the “principle of vision and di-vision” (Bourdieu, 1989) of social and political organisation, has become a ubiquitous element as one of the “principal sources of cultural identity” in modernity (Hall, 2006, p.47). Throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, national identity gradually shifted to the field of established representations capable of forming the basis for political and ideological mobilisation,⁴ including

3 Since all identities are located in symbolic space and time, the perception of this multidimensional aspect of identities leads researchers to highlight their fluidity and dynamism and, particularly, their historical dimension, despite the apparent temporal constancy. What is being questioned in the academic sphere is how to read, interpret and represent identities.

4 The nationalist discourse sometimes reifies the nation, even making it a social subject endowed with individuality. For Luis Fernando Cerri, this “personalisation” includes the treatment given to the nation as an individual endowed with “will, determination and [the] ability to act on nature and other

emotional and affective factors, such as security, certainties, hopes and even faith, thus becoming an important explanatory nexus to the relationship between past, present and future. This phenomenon, capable of generating such deep links, is the result – though certainly ambiguous – of the social and cultural relationships intrinsic to European modernity that are consolidated and irradiated in the nineteenth century.

When speaking of modernity, it has become commonplace (though still useful) to evoke the words of Marx and Engels.

Constant revolutionising of production, uninterrupted disturbance of all social conditions, everlasting uncertainty and agitation [...]. All fixed, fast-frozen relations, with their train of ancient and venerable prejudices and opinions, are swept away, all newly-formed ones become antiquated before they can ossify. All that is solid melts into air... (Marx; Engels, 1982, p.67)⁵

individuals” (Cerri, 2002, p.198). In another instance, reification makes the nation function as a semiophore, as Marilena Chaui (2000) has indicated. Imbuing a signification with present and future consequences for humans and endowed with great symbolic power and fecundity, the nation, as a semiophore, becomes the matrix of political power, an “object of the integrator cult of the one and indivisible society” (ibid., p.14).

- 5 Contemporary authors trace a path similar to the findings of Marx and Engels. Marshall Berman asserts that being modern is “to experience personal and social life as a maelstrom, to find one’s world and oneself in perpetual disintegration and renewal, trouble and anguish, ambiguity and contradiction: to be part of a universe in which all that is solid melts into air” (Berman, 1986, p.328). Bauman’s analysis follows in the same vein, “modernity is what it is – an obsessive march forward – not because it always wants more, but because it can never get enough, not because it grows more ambitious and adventurous, but because its adventures are bitter and its ambitions frustrated. The march must go on because any place of arrival is but a temporary station” (Bauman, 1999, p.18). Although the findings point to the constitution of a post-traditional (dis)order, with the pace of change generating ambiguity and anguish, it is worth highlighting that in the passage cited, Marx and Engels are praising the changes promoted by bourgeois revolutionaries.

The context in which discourses concerning the nation emerge coincides with this perception of modernity marked by an acceleration in social changes, by intense structural transformations, including industrialisation, urbanisation, secularisation and the struggles for constitutional democracy, whose effects are also perceived in the uprooting of traditional cultures and values. The conventional modes of life and traditions begin to be thwarted. English social philosopher Anthony Giddens believes that modern institutions “differ from all preceding forms of social order because of [their] dynamism, deep undercutting of traditional habits and customs, and global impact” (Giddens, 2002, p.9). And he goes further,

The modes of life brought into being by modernity have swept us away from all traditional types of social order, in quite unprecedented fashion.

[...] the transformations involved in modernity are more profound than most sorts of change characteristic of prior periods. [...] they have come to alter some of the most intimate and personal features of our day-to-day existence. (Giddens, 1991, p.14)

At first sight, all these affirmations regarding modernity seem to produce an excessive contrast to the idea of nation based on “origins, continuity, tradition and timelessness” (Hall, 2006, p.53).⁶ However, looking closer allows us to perceive that *nation*, as an identity discourse and sociopolitical organisation that is gradually imposed during the nineteenth century, is intertwined with cultural uprooting and the acceleration of social transformations.

⁶ The contrast is further enhanced if we consider the reflections by people like Kumar, “modernity feels that the past has no lessons for it; its pull is constantly toward the future” (Kumar, 1996, p.473).

Bauman shows us that this same modernity, experienced as a maelstrom, projected a new order, at least as a desire. “Solids can be melted, but they are melted in order to mould new solids” (Bauman, 2008, p.182). Although not always consistent with the standards of rationality and logic devised by modernity, the discourse of nationality is able to constitute a perspective of future and of transformation, while simultaneously eliminating, at least on the symbolic or imaginary level, chaos and disorder. Thus, *nation* becomes a stability project in the face of *melting into air*. Through it, transformations can be explained and acquire meaning.

The idea of nation, of national identity, and its development as a political force has long been discussed by social sciences. Not all authors fully endorse the diagnosis as indicated above. Thus, it is worth examining some of these positions, their similarities and differences, so we can then extract some of the more interpretive possibilities that will help us in this approach concerning the dilemmas of national identity.

Back in the nineteenth century, one of the most famous texts concerning the existence of the nation and its foundations is by the French historian Ernest Renan. In his lecture at the Sorbonne in 1882, entitled “What is a nation?”, he developed an argument in defence of the national principle, though surprisingly, if we consider the era, in contrast to the main arguments used in this period regarding the formative base of nations. For Renan, the nation was not the fruit of race, religion, language, geography, or even of military needs;⁷ rather it arises from a common will in

7 Angela Alonso and Samuel Titan Jr. warn us not to get excited by the “anthropological flavour” of Renan’s arguments, which were constructed in times of opposition between France and Germany. In other writings, the French historian vehemently uses the concept of *race* to explain the situation of European colonies. His concept of nation, therefore, is only valid for his own continent (Alonso; Titan Jr., 1997).

the present, of forgetting the original violence of all nations and of valuing a common glory, the legacy of the past. More than a simple consensus based on a modern social contract, for the author the latter characteristic makes the nation “a soul, a spiritual principle” (Renan, 1997, p.173).

In classic social sciences, the theme of the nation is addressed by, among others, Marcel Mauss and Max Weber. In seeking to classify the political forms of social life, both understand that the nation-state represents the culmination of integration and an organic social solidarity. It is precisely this sense of collectivism, made consubstantial in the institution of the nation-state, which marks an evolutionary transition in political organisation. In the manner of Renan, Mauss considers the nation as the result of a consensus of a general will and also recognises that it is the established nation that creates the idea of racial unity and many of its traditions, selected from diverse cultural practices. The concept of nation for Mauss resembles social nationalist discourses that were established from the nineteenth century onwards, emphasising the moral unity of the individuals who comprise the same. The nation is thus a social fact established by will, but also by a natural evolution that is the continuity of the organic solidarity of primitive clans. The merit of national identity for Mauss is in constructing a response to the tendency toward disintegration provoked by modernity, abolishing the internal divisions of society and broadly amplifying the solidarity and homogeneity of the primitive clan.⁸

Renan’s discourse has become a reference, such that Weber’s argument begins by denying the centrality of religion, of

8 Thus for Mauss, the nation is endowed with highly positive content. While acknowledging that some natural pride and chauvinism are intrinsic to national imagination, for the French anthropologist extreme nationalism, such as xenophobia and the defence of traditionalism, is a pathology of national identity that should be excised like an abscess.

language and of blood ties to achieve the establishment of nations. However, even considering the role of intellectuals and the media (books, journals and, above all, newspapers) in the dissemination of the national principle, Weber understands the nation as a community which normally tends to produce a state of its own. Therefore, not only is the fruit of disenchantment of the world generated by modernity, but also the need for cohesion that is inherent to any political community. Even though he recognises that national homogeneity is undefined and based on fairly heterogeneous feelings of solidarity, for Weber there is a *feeling of nationality* prior to the institutionalisation of the political nation.

From the 1970s onwards, the rejection of *essentialist* concepts of national identity begins to dominate the core of intellectual production. From within a *constructivist* position, perceiving that social categories are culturally constructed, authors are willing to envision the nation as a cultural artefact and thus as *representation* (see Rovisco, 2003).⁹ The action of the modern state and of nationalism, as a political movement, in the formation of national identity is up for debate. The cultural homogeneity of the nation can be politically induced. Despite their relationship with other forms of prior identity, national identities are something recently forged by a series of political and economic interests.

9 *Essentialist* positions continue to circulate, including in intellectual productions. Appropriating historians like Marc Bloch and Huizinga and sociologists like Weber, the work of Josep Llobera, *The God of Modernity* (originally published in 1994), for example, seeks to understand the nation as a cultural value, as a community rooted in the entire population and with a broad prior history. For the author, national identity was determined by the late medieval period. "It is true that modern nationalism only appeared as a sequel to the French Revolution, but national identity is a phenomenon of *longue durée*" (Llobera, 1996, p.13). Llobera, however, prudently refrains from generalising his findings to locations outside of Western Europe.

Ernest Gellner may hold the most vehement position of this line of thinking. For him, nations were constructed by an action of the elite who assumed control of the state in the nineteenth century. This was an attempt to amalgamate political unity with a cultural unity. It is the centralised action of the state that provides the homogenisation of a national identity, through public education and the implementation of a system of mass communication capable of unifying the language, disseminating a certain standard of elite culture, historical myths and “arbitrary ‘historical inventions’” (Gellner, 1993, p.89).

Remaining within this interpretive bias, but in search of broader visions concerning the ideas of *manipulation* and *invention*, the analyses by Benedict Anderson, Eric Hobsbawm and Anthony Smith are those that ultimately underpin the most contemporary interpretations of national identity.

The positions of English historian Eric Hobsbawm in *Nations and Nationalism since 1780* are those closest to Gellner. As an example of the latter, Hobsbawm (1991, p.19) stresses “the element of artefact, invention and social engineering which enters into the making of nations [...]. Nations do not make states and nationalisms, but the other way round”.

Using an approach similar in form to Renan, Hobsbawm gradually refutes those that maintain that language, ethnicity and religion are the preforming elements of the nation. For Hobsbawm, the creation of a modern administrative state, which mobilises and influences citizens, and the democratisation of politics are the essential factors in the formation of modern nations. “Naturally states would use the increasingly powerful machinery for communicating with their inhabitants, above all the primary schools, to spread the image and heritage of the ‘nation’ and inculcate adherence to it [...]” (Hobsbawm, 1990, p.112).

On the other hand, Hobsbawm tries to distance himself from the concept of “modernisation from above” advocated by Gellner. Nationalism is constructed by actions and reactions that can also come from popular mobilisation and, in many cases, there are *proto-national* ties, feelings of a pre-existing collective bond, that can be operated on a macro-political scale by states and nationalist movements.¹⁰ It is from this perspective that Hobsbawm ultimately characterises nations as

a dual phenomenon, constructed essentially from above, but which cannot be understood unless also analysed from below, that is in terms of the assumptions, hopes, needs, longings and interests of ordinary people, which are not necessarily national and still less nationalist. (Hobsbawm, 1991, p.20)

A reference even more present in contemporary studies on the nation and nationalism is the work *Imagined Communities*, by Benedict Anderson. In it, the author perceives the nation as the more or less spontaneous refining of “a complex ‘crossing’ of discrete historical forces” (Anderson, 2008, p.30) that is engendered from the late eighteenth century, and not just the object of a manipulation derived from a controlling centre.

One of the main keys to understanding this phenomenon lies in the development of the press as a commodity – what Anderson calls *print-capitalism*. The search for new readerships enabled the development of printed languages (with greater fixity than their oral counterparts, giving the impression of permanence in time) and unified fields of exchange and communication.

The nation is then an “imagined community” – as are all societies, “by necessity both a social structure and an artefact of

¹⁰ Including the possibility of “fill[ing] the emotional void left by the retreat or disintegration, or the unavailability of *real* human communities and networks” (Hobsbawm, 1990, p.63).

the imagination” (Balakrishnan, 2000, p.216) – and is founded on the transformations generated by new social relationships of production that arise with modernity. However, for Anderson, from the moment the model is established, it is likely to be imitated, with varying degrees of consciousness, even as the object of intentional manipulation. When referring to the new nation-states that emerged from the dissolution of the European empires, the author states that,

[...] in the “nation building” policies of the new states, one sees [...] popular nationalist enthusiasm and a systematic, even Machiavellian, instilling of nationalist ideology through mass media, the educational system, administrative regulations and so forth. (Anderson, 2008, p.164)

In most of his analysis, however, Anderson makes an effort to show that nations are carriers of a very strong legitimacy, awakening a deep emotional attachment. The way nationalism functions is closer to religious phenomena than to political ideologies. Thus, he proposes that “nationalism has to be understood by aligning it not with self-consciously held political ideologies, but with the large cultural systems that preceded it, out of which – as well as against which – it came into being” (Anderson, 2008, p.39). Nations are, therefore, imagined within the limits and ideals lived during every historical moment by specific communities. As Lilia Moritz Schwarcz says in the preface to the Brazilian edition of Anderson, “One does not imagine in a void, based on nothing. Symbols are efficient when affirmed within an affective communal logic of meanings [...]” (Schwarcz, 2008, p.16).

Verifying the ubiquity of the *nation* in the contemporary world, English theorist Anthony Smith, in turn, insists on the pre-modern origins of this phenomenon a little more than his

peers. The key to interpreting it is in the common ethnic roots, the legacy of a long-term history.

[...] historically, the first nations were [...] formed on the basis of pre-modern ethnic cores; and, being powerful and culturally influential, they provided models for subsequent cases of the formation of nations in many parts of the globe.

[...] the ethnic model of the nation became increasingly popular and widespread [...] because it sat so easily on the pre-modern “demotic” kind of community that had survived into the modern era in so many parts of the world. In other words, the ethnic model was sociologically fertile. (Smith, 1997, p.60)

His emphasis on the interpretation of the nation as a species of long-term historical depository means Smith diminishes the idea of *fabrication* or *invention*; “‘invention’ must be understood in its other sense of a novel recombination of existing elements” (Smith, 2000, p.202). Thus, the *nation* is a cultural phenomenon that gains political and ideological use.

However, the distance between Smith and the other authors analysed is not as large as it might seem at first glance. He recognises that modern nations, with mass citizens, could only emerge in the era of industrialism and democracy. Nationalist language and symbolism begin as a phenomenon of the elite, in which intellectuals play a prominent role. A vigorous programme of political socialisation, conducted through public communication and mass education systems, was essential to set up a modern nation-state in conjunction with (and in the context of) other processes. Thus, the “new concept of the nation was made to serve as a time-space framework to order chaos and render the universe meaningful by harnessing pre-modern mass aspirations and sentiments for local and familial attachments” (Smith, 2000, p.103).

The views on the nation presented here convey within them explicit divergences, but also certain complementarities. Based on the convergences, we can thus highlight a general reading of contemporary interpretive possibilities concerning the nation and national identities as symbolic systems that ascribe social identities.

As José Murilo de Carvalho (2003, p.397) affirms, “sometimes the state creates the nation, sometimes the opposite occurs, sometimes the two are created mutually”. Notwithstanding doubts regarding precedence, it is important for us to perceive that the constitution of the binomial “nation-state” indicates that in modernity there was a tendency to make “culture and the political sphere congruent” (see Hall, 2006). Political unification, concomitant with cultural unification, for the most part, compels the requirements of loyalty for the state and the nation to coincide. To a certain extent, this explains the persistence of representations of national identity: the nation-state became the favoured space (physical and symbolic) for political action and it is within this space that most social interactions occur. As Hobsbawm (1991) shows, the presence of the postman, policeman, teacher, railroad, soldier, periodical censuses and so on indicates a significant increase in state interventions in the lives of families throughout the nineteenth century.¹¹

Similarly, although elements can be observed prior to capitalist modernity in the formation of national identities, it is important to recognise that the diffusion of the ideals of nation and nationalism is the legacy of the work and the essential adhesion of a category that Anthony Smith calls *intellectual educators*. In his work, Anderson (2008) emphasises the role played by the written culture and the media in the construction, narration and dissemination of a sense of nation. It is precisely among this part

11 The time reference of the diagnosis is specific to parts of Europe and the USA.

of the literate class, who are willing and able to produce written (or iconographic) representations, that a sense of (self-attributed) mission to institute, awaken or redeem national identity is found. Despite the need for the existence of objective preconditions for the efficacy of constructed representations, it is the intellectuals who *proposed and elaborated the concepts and language of the nation and nationalism* (Smith, 1997, p.119), at least in their most visible form. The nationalist promise of posterity attracted poets, musicians, painters, sculptors, novelists, historians and archaeologists, playwrights, philologists, lexicographers, anthropologists and folklorists (Smith, 1997, p.119), who conducted an intense “excavation” in the search for *genuinely national* identity and values, projected from a common past.

It is then through reconstructions and bricolage that identity discourses that substantiate the nation are structured on the “recombination of existing elements” (see Smith, 2000, p.207). While considering the possibility of direct and intentional state action through the means of communication, in which schools and textbooks can also be included, one must contemplate that this action uses deep-rooted values with some social support. Every representation of identities requires this resonance, “it is in the pre-existing cosmologies in ingrained concepts that enough material is found, a shared repository for the configuration of identity models, which make sense beyond the most immediate manipulation” (Schwarcz, 2001, p.14). However, the selection of aspects of the culture that will be highlighted is often made by assigning other values to these elements, seeking a resignification consonant with the objectives of each group in each period. The desired end is always the achievement of affective adhesion, channelling collective interests, emotions, aspirations and fears.

Either way, one can perceive that in discourses regarding the nation, cultural, political, affective and rational components are intertwined. This finding means not endorsing the dichotomy

between the ethnic and civic *Eastern* model – an imaginary superfamily, an organic and mystical concept – and the *Western* model – rational and associative (see Kohn, apud Smith, 1997) – of the nation. Rita Ribeiro shows that an interrelationship between these two models of nation (cultural-ethnic-organic and civic-political-territorial) is required to understand the phenomenon,

[...] while the political nations need to maintain a minimum degree of cultural cohesion, sacralising their symbols and applying the strength of the state to homogenise the language and the national education system, likewise the ethnic nations, whose borders are ideally inscribed in their blood, lineage and culture, have and are almost always appealing for the formation of a sovereign, but independent, state. (Ribeiro, R., 2004, p.90)

In his analyses, Bauman also sought to diminish the onus of the opposition between the possibility of belonging to a nation by primordial ascription or by choice. The fact is that culture and politics, ethnicity and civility are amalgamated in the tendency toward homogenisation that representations of national identity convey. It is within romantic ideals that the nation begins “to be conceived as an emotional entity, a symbol of uniqueness, to which all men should be integrated” (Oliveira, 1990, p.43). The collective “we”, the “horizontal comradeship” (Anderson, 2008), the neutralisation of differences and the emphasis on similarities are part of the constitution of a “utopia of harmonic inequalities” (Marchi, 1994),¹² present in national projects of varying models disseminated across the globe.

¹² I borrow the term from Euclid Marchi, who in turn, uses it to explain the world project present in *Rerum Novarum*, the basis of the Catholic social doctrine.

At the level of representations, all identity must be connected to a continuity in time, which is why the emergence of history as an academic discipline and school in the nineteenth century is central to the political and symbolic consolidation of nation-states. The writing of history is more than a privileged space; it is the protagonist in the construction of logic and the legitimisation of the narratives of the nation. José Carlos Reis even states that historiographical critique is the very “life of the spirit” of a nation. The historical narrative ends up constituting the main medium capable of promoting the “secular transformation of fatality into continuity and contingency into meaning” (Anderson, 2008, p.19). It is the search for a *usable* past whose construction also reveals the link between historicism and Romanticism in the nineteenth century.¹³

Unlike the universalising principles of the Enlightenment, the national historical discourse values specificity, which is irreducible, that composes a concomitant sense of coherence over time. One of its goals is to “highlight the continuity and unity of the nation as a collective being through the ages, despite oppressions, setbacks and betrayals” (Thiesse, 2002, p.12). Thus, the nation is represented as something that has always existed. The representations constructed produce or reinforce the subjective belief in a common ethnic ancestry (see Weber, 1991) and the existence of a place of origin and destination. In the temporal projection, the nation emerges as a becoming of this territory and this unique people.

13 Beyond a certain nostalgia for the past, in which you will find the origin and essence of the national spirit, much of the nineteenth-century historiography shares with Romanticism the *form* of the modern novel, composing a *bildungsroman* of the nation. “And it is a literary genre as young as the idea of nation, the novel, which will serve both as a narrative model for the first scholarly elaborations of national writing and as a diffusion vector of a new vision of the past” (Thiesse, 2002, p.12).

It is with the aid of historical discourse that the main representations of the nation are consolidated. In the discursive construct of the nation, in this mirror in which its organic unity is projected, are representations that, due to their constant reiteration, end up gaining greater weight, established at some greater depth in the social imaginary. These are *founding representations* in a double sense, expressed in two complementary forms of discourse: a) they are founding in the sense of being the first representations that the country received, reinforced (particularly, but not only, in the case of “positive” images) at the time of the commitment to the construction of the national identity within romantic ideals; and b) they are founding representations that evoke a *founding event*, in which the basic characteristics of the nation are defined to perpetuate itself in time. These representations are rooted in such a way that discursive constructions that are intended to overcome them necessarily have to negotiate meanings with them.

A consistent theoretical production has given prominence to the strength of these representations. Marilena Chaui takes them to be *founding myths*, in the anthropological sense, in which these narratives are the “imaginary solution for tensions, conflicts and contradictions that cannot be resolved in reality” (Chaui, 2000, p.9). To perceive them as the producer and the product of a consciousness, albeit diffuse, of belonging, the author considers that the *founding myth* “offers an initial repertoire of representations of reality and, at each moment of historical formation, these elements are reorganised” (Chaui, 2000, p.10).¹⁴

From another theoretical-methodological approach, which is no less exciting, Eni P. Orlandi examines these representations as *founding discourses*, discourses that function as a basic reference in the constitutive imagination of a country. For Orlandi, these enunciations “continue inventing an unequivocal past for us and

14 Chaui (2000, p.9) even invests in the psychoanalytic definition of myth, as a “compulsion to repeat something imaginary that creates a block to the perception of reality and impedes handling it”.

propelling a future from the front [...] giving us the sensation of being inside a history of a known world” (Orlandi, 2001, p.12). They are the enunciative images emanating from the *founding discourses* that transfigure the nonsensical into meaning, operating a silencing, even if temporarily, of other excluded senses. In the words of the author, the founding discourse

implements the conditions of formation of others, affiliating themselves with their own possibility, instituting as a whole a complex of discursive formations, a region of meanings, a site of significance that configures a process of identification with a culture, a nation, a nationality. (Orlandi, 2001, p.24)

Whether treated as myths, discourses or representations, narratives of the nation are constantly *presentified* – and resignified – in search of social cohesion. This feedback process determines that the past is thus not so “distant and dead”, since the nation itself becomes *a system of cultural representation* linked to the interests of social groups in the games, confrontations and conciliations of power in society.

This is how representations of the nation are concretely experienced by social agents, according to the groups to which they belong. Social actors take these representations to be real, incorporating them as referrals to their interpretations. Representations of the nation, present in the discourses of the most varied political tendencies, act by articulating senses: they serve as legitimising sources and end up guiding strategies, projects and other social practices.

In the guise of an epilogue

At the end of his book on nations and nationalisms (written in the late 1980s), Hobsbawm affirmed (based on a Hegelian

metaphor) that the owl of Minerva – which brings wisdom, but flies in the twilight – was now prowling nations and nationalism. At the height of the discourses on globalisation in the late 1990s, analysts also announced the crisis of the state and national identity as instruments capable of providing the contemporary world with meaning. Similarly, even today, researchers of identities highlight a lesser presence of national identity in the construction of contemporary subjects.

Despite the relevance of these analyses, which consider the transnational nature of economic relationships and the possibility of network communication, contemporaneously, other authors have highlighted that we live in a world where the issues and challenges posed by modernity have not yet been fully answered. Thus, it appears that the permanence of *national identity* as a form of collective identity coexists, without being erased, with other forms of identity because its structuration is “more hybrid in the articulation of cultural differences and identifications – gender, race or class – than can be represented in any hierarchical or binary structuring of social antagonism” (Bhabha, 2001, p.534).

Although, as we saw earlier, new sources of identity arise in contemporaneity, representations of national identities are constantly reiterated in the present. Indeed, these representations continue circulating in academic literature, in the media, in memory, in tradition and in schools. This possible ubiquity reveals itself in ways that have come to “so permeate our collective life that they become invisible because they are so evident” (Rosa; Bellelli; Bakhurst, 2008, p.179). For Smith, the persistence of discourses of national identity is linked to the multidimensionality of the concept of nation, a characteristic that has turned into a “flexible and persistent force in modern life and politics” (Smith, 2000, p.30), allowing it to effectively associate with other forces and modern movements, without losing its core elements. Anderson (2008) has warned that nations are carriers

of a very strong legitimacy, awakening a deep emotional attachment. The complexity and resistance of the phenomenon of national identity can even help explain the persistence of a certain “romantic vision of nation – a homogeneous territorial space, a homogeneous period of national history and a homogeneous culture throughout the entire population” (Novaes, 2003, p.12).

In the present, we should therefore consider a long trajectory of discourses of national identity, divulged over time, that function as an *incorporated history*,¹⁵ which cannot be ignored. As researcher Rita Ribeiro (2004, p.11) affirmed, “after nationalism, nothing can be thought of as if it had not existed and, as such, it is simply not possible to disregard nations”. The discursive, symbolic and political efficacy of new identity representations will depend on the dialogue established with long-duration elements, within the conditions and limits defined by specific conjunctures. Alberto Rosa, Guglielmo Bellelli and David Bakhurst help us reflect a little more on the permanences and reiterations of national identity representations, their discourses and their possibilities of transformation,

[...] it is not surprising that feelings of identity and modes of being collective have a great capacity for permanence, despite fairly radical cultural, social and political changes. The symbolic universe, the myths of the collective past, the very idea of the collective “we”

15 In addressing the relationship between reified history and incorporated history, Bourdieu extends his observations concerning the social origin of representations, or rather of cultural practices. For him, there is history in an objectified state, which has accumulated over time in objects, tools, institutions. There is also history that became *habitus*, incorporated, inscribed in the bodies, a notion that approaches the idea of Norbert Elias’ second nature. This permanence (the past remains alive) restricts the universe of the possible. “One can understand that social being is what has been; but that which once was is forever inscribed not only in history, which goes without saying, but in social being, in things and also in bodies” (Bourdieu, 1989, p.100).

are extremely resistant to the replacement of some significances by others, but that does not mean that change is impossible, since history shows us how ethnic groups and nations are created, transformed or even dissolved. What seems clear is that it is not easy to impose cultural change, or alter the constitutive ideas that people from a community have about their own being, even when using very brutal methods. Modification of signs of identity is not only achieved through the exchange of symbols, but also by the very meanings that they convey, which should be conventionalised in the community that uses them, and enter into the affective dynamics of the elements of the culture of that group. (Rosa; Bellelli; Bakhurst, 2008, p.190)

Thus, although the problematic issue of identities has returned to the agenda with greater intensity in the late twentieth century and the first decade of this century and identities are visibly becoming more consciously mobilised in the political field, involving material and symbolic disputes, one can perceive that identity diversity and national identity are not in such exclusionary conflict in the majority of established states, as first seemed to occur. In many cases, it is not national identity that is called into question, but its representation. The clashes between different groups are over the meanings – for a review of the grammar – which envelop this great identity symbol that functions as a semiophore for modern societies.

If, as we affirmed above, the objective and subjective experiences of human beings are constructed in interaction with representations of who they are and who they can be, it is clear that much of the contemporary dilemmas regarding alterity, self-esteem, ethics and morality dialogue directly with national identity representations. Through it all, thinking within, between and around the nation and its representations, past and present, it can still be an exciting, if not essential, intellectual resource.

The liberation of Ham: discriminating to equalise. The Brazilian racial issue¹

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The pictorial work *A redenção de Cam* [Ham's redemption] (1895), by Modesto Brocos y Gómez, has been used by numerous social scientists, anthropologists and historians to illustrate the whitening ideology in Brazil. The painting depicts a black grandmother, her mulatto daughter and her white son-in-law and grandson. In fact, it is a finished representation of the vaunted miscegenation policy to make the black Brazilian disappear, without destroying Ham, the cursed son of Noah (Genesis 9: 18-19), and without resorting to the violence that marked the

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end of slavery in the United States. When the director of the Brazilian National Museum, João Batista de Lacerda, went to London to participate in the Universal Races Congress (1911), he took Brocos y Gómez's painting to demonstrate his thesis *Sur les métis au Brésil* [On mestizos in Brazil]. In this printed work, there is a reproduction of Ham's Redemption, accompanied by the following caption, "Passing from black to white in the third generation, the effect of cross-breeding" (Seyfeth, 2011, n.p.).

Although the Bible records nothing concerning the colour of Ham and his descendants, according to David Goldemberg (2003, p.193, apud Oliva, 2007, p.48), the interpretive effects of the "curse on Ham" affected Western imagination in justifying the slavery of black Africans, who were believed to have descended from Ham. In the nineteenth century, in response to the abolitionist movement in the United States, racist whites seized on the biblical account. In Brazil, the curse of Ham served to justify the enslavement of both indigenous peoples and blacks. Enslavement and extermination were the price to be paid for the redemption of the sin Ham committed upon seeing his father naked while he slept intoxicated. Slavery was the fate of the black African population and their descendants, in order to regenerate and purify this sin. "The myth of Ham sought to some extent to explain the enslavement of Africans, but in fact it explained the link between slavery and skin 'colour'" (Carvalho Junior, 2011, p.4).

Here we evoke the image of Ham not to redeem him of his "invented curse", but as an allegory of the political, cultural and social movement that has emerged in Brazil in recent decades, particularly after the 1980s, against prejudice and racial inequality, on behalf of the black population.⁴ With the end of

4 Equally diverse policies have been established for the indigenous population. However, since both the history of this group and their current claims are highly specific and distinguish them from black Brazilians, we do not have space in the context of this article to address them adequately.

the belief in racial biological determinism came the recognition of the existence of sociological races; with the end of the belief in racial democracy came the recognition of the existence of racial prejudice; with the end of the belief in the superiority of white, European, Christian civilisation came the recognition of multicultural values; with the end of the single standard of beauty came the appreciation of black beauty and, consequently, the improved black self-esteem, paralleled by a series of events capable of establishing “positive discrimination” in favour of racial groups historically subjected to negative “discrimination”. In contrast to racism, racial prejudice and marginalisation, university quotas created a more colourful university that is blacker; the Black Movement and the affirmation of blackness gave rise to a new ethnosemantics: instead of “*preto*”, we say “black”, instead of “ethnicity”, we say “race”.

To acclaim the liberation of Ham, we began with the suggestion of David Theo de Goldberg (apud Azevedo, 2004, p.27):

although race has historically tended to define conditions of oppression, it can, under a culturalist interpretation [...] be the place for a counterattack, the ground or field to launch liberation projects or from which freedom(s) could expand and open emancipatory spaces.

We will use the term *race* herein, without quotes or reservations, in terms of its current meaning: today, its political use designates a sign for recognising social and cultural inequality and that enables visibility of the “other”, which is historically instituted and socially accepted. As Edward Telles (2003, p.38) stated:

Use of the term race strengthens social distinctions that have no biological value, but race remains hugely important in sociological

interactions and therefore should be taken into account in sociological analyses.

We are aware that the concept of race was one of the most perverse creations, between the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries, which served Eurocentrism and its domination over the earth. The concept of race is a fiction formulated in games of power. There is no doubt that the biological concept of race was the fulcrum of the most powerful ideological formation in history. The invention of the concept of race racialised peoples, positioning them at an advantage or a disadvantage, both in the contexts of international economics and imperialism and nationally, in the process of ethnic homogenisation and its civilisational processes. We are also aware that scientific racial theories radically fell into disuse, after World War II, when mass murder was committed in concentration camps in the name of race. However, biological racial theories had fallen into disrepute since the beginning of the century. In 1910, Franz Boas published “Bodily Changes in the Format of Descendants of Immigrants”, arguing that the size of the head of the first generation of Italian and Jewish immigrants in the United States did not confer with the original size. Although Boas received much criticism due to the limited consistency of his statements, he damaged the notion of physical stability that sustained racial theory and introduced the notion of plasticity of the body and of culture (Barkan, 1992, p.83). More than any other country, European or the United States, Brazil embraced the thesis of discrediting scientific racism from the 1930s onwards, particularly in the works of Gilberto Freyre.

Nevertheless, though the concept of race was a biological fiction, it was not without real-life influence on numerous historical contexts. In Brazil, the weight it had in constructing national history cannot be disregarded. Racial taxonomy, based

on the “fable of the three races”, was structuring for the entire social edifice. “The triangle of the three races [white, black and indigenous] was maintained as a fundamental fact in understanding Brazil” (Damatta, 1987, p.63). Moreover, the “ethnic triangulation” not only became ideologically dominant (praise of miscegenation was made while assuring white superiority), but spanned “the vision of the people, intellectuals, politicians and academics of the left and right” as a “powerful motivation to investigate the Brazilian reality” (Damatta, 1987, p.63-69).

In the nineteenth century, the fear was that the mixture of the three races prevented Brazil from joining the march of progress; the Republic applied the law of eugenics to whiten and integrate mestizos into Brazilian modernization and created the myth of racial democracy; with the industrialisation of Brazil, the generation of post-World War II intellectuals perceived that race in Brazil was a social issue, in which the relationship of classes played with our slave heritage. Since the 1980s, an alliance between government, academia and social movements sought not only to understand the historical socio-racial inequality in Brazil, but principally to implement policies to eliminate racism and racial exclusion.

The Brazilian racial issue

Culturalism

The portrait of Brazil, drawn by those who saw the fantastic spectacle of races (Schwarcz, 1993), was surprisingly scary. According to prevailing racial theories, Brazil was considered a degenerate country, “a beautiful sampling of barbarism, of Baroque illusionism”, following the accepted meaning of Ferdinand Dinis (apud Lima, 1984, p.132). “It was a totally mulatto

population, vitiated in blood and spirit and frighteningly ugly”, complained Count Arthur de Gobineau, who was stationed in Brazil between 1869 and 1870 as a diplomatic representative of France (Raeders, 1988, p.96). Given the identification that he made between civilisation, history and the white races, Gobineau, “the father of racist ideology” (Barkan, 1992, p.16), reflected pessimism concerning the future of South America, where racial interbreeding and degradation of the European groups would lead to irremediable decay (Ventura, 1988, p.191). It was within this context that the immigration of Europeans in the second half of the nineteenth century emerged as a propelling force in the whitening of the nation. In the words of Celia Maria Marinho de Azevedo (1987, p.75): “European immigration was irreplaceable as the exclusive agent of ethnic purification. Even if the country achieved some measure of material progress, without whites and the whitened it would suffer from a lack of moral and intellectual advances”.

In the late nineteenth century, with the abolition of slavery (1888) and the founding of the Republic (1889), the Brazilian elites had to deal with the massive presence of blacks and miscegenation. Defining or interpreting the nation meant addressing the issue of racial interbreeding. Sociologists, historians, naturalists and doctors were committed to studying and discriminating the different characteristics of the three races that moulded Brazilian nationality: the African, Amerindian and Caucasian. The doctors, whose greatest representative was Nina Rodrigues, tried to observe the reaction of the “various anthropological types”, i.e. treating the “psychological differentiation of the races”, considering the social or geographical stimuli: “each seemed to have their own individuality, a particular manner, a specific form of reaction” (apud Vianna, 1938, p.16). And they did not view miscegenation as a good thing, vaunting the harmful effects of racial interbreeding, attributing all ills, diseases,

physical and mental weaknesses and, consequently, racial degeneration to it.

However, in the early decades of the twentieth century, due to the modernising processes that were occurring in Brazil and the centrality of intellectual debate encompassing the issue of national identity, the pessimistic view of the contribution of the moulding races to Brazilian society was substituted for a positive approach, in which racial intercourse was transformed into an indicator of tolerance and harmony. Therefore, a “Brazilian way out” emerged for the ethnic problem: merging to integrate and extinguish the races regarded as inferior. Broad studies were conducted to identify the “impoverishing” factors of the Brazilian people and what remedies might address them (Flores, 2007). Being white no longer meant genuinely belonging to a blood group of European origin. For Oliveira Vianna:

as a rule, what we call mulatto is the inferior mulatto, incapable of ascension, wretched in the lowest strata of society [...] There are, however, superior mulattoes, Aryans in character and intelligence or at least susceptible to Aryanisation, capable of collaborating with whites in the organisation of the civilisation of the country. (apud Luca, 1999, p.176)

Gilberto Freyre (1998, p.289), in *Casa-grande & Senzala* [The Masters and the Slaves], informs us that Roquette-Pinto encountered ample evidence of Europeanising action among blacks. For Gilberto Freyre, miscegenation, besides possessing a democratic *ethos* (regarding vertical and horizontal social mobility) that was inherited from the Portuguese, was, at its most active stage, imbued with the character of biological mobility (Flores, 2007). Throughout Portugal’s history, miscegenation had created an undefined race, one which made the Portuguese rich in skills: mobility, adaptability and miscibility (Freyre, 1940).

Dominating enormous spaces and, wherever they might settle, in Africa or in America, taking wives and begetting offspring with a procreative fervor that was due as much to violent instincts on the part of the individual as it was to calculated policy stimulated by the State for obvious economic and political reasons. (Freyre, 1940, p.39)

The inclination of the Portuguese for social democratisation operates as “a dissolvent of the forces that solidified to create societies of masters and slaves, strict in their separation of classes and of races” (Freyre, 1940, p.55). The consequences were biological, aesthetic and ethical. “The mestizo [in his hybrid vigour] is biologically and culturally dynamic, from his gait to the relative stabilisation of the traits that can lead him to conditions favourable to inbreeding” (Freyre, 1940, p.44).

Thus, with Gilberto Freyre, the much-rumoured Brazilian “racial democracy” achieved its most refined formulation, making it one of the principal ideological foundations of racial integration, enough to attract international attention. It transpires, however, that all this reflection, articulated to global theoretical debates, also carries significant aspects of nationalist ideology based on identity, much of which is responsible for the frequent criticism that the work of Gilberto Freyre normally receives. The best analyses of the sociologist’s work conclude that he worked with a fundamentally Neolamarckian definition of race, that is, a definition, based on the unlimited aptitude of humans to adapt to the most varied environmental conditions, that emphasises above all else the ability to incorporate, transmit and inherit characteristics acquired in their interaction with the physical environment (Araújo, 1994, p.39). Modification of the biological concept of race to a cultural concept of race, applied to the environment and history of the group, in the first decades of the twentieth century, replaced the physical race by a linguistic, historical and psychological race. The term race, practically use-

less at the time, was replaced by the term ethnicity, a syllogism to define the identity of the nation (Todorov, 1993).

Freyre observed explicitly in *O mundo que o português criou* [The world that the Portuguese created] that “the process of nationalisation is the process of conversion, within the limits of space and time”. After all, he said, “the individual becomes Brazilian the same way or by the same process that he becomes Catholic”, a process that could be perceived by the “evidence of Brazilianisation in southern Brazil”, by German and other settlers, “through the gestures, the walking pace, the practice of traditionally Brazilian acts” (Freyre, 1940, p.31). “[...] almost every man from Blumenau or Santa Cruz, from Joinville or from São Leopoldo, if they are not already half converts [...] It will not be long before we hear irresistible voices in the backwoods and backwaters of Brazilian traditions: ‘Fritz, Fritz, why do you pursue me?’” (Freyre, 1940, p.34). Despite the apology to the mestizo, Freyre appreciated the continuity of European values. The Portuguese “was the conveyor of core values of European culture to the tropics” (Freyre, 1940, p.40).

If in the nineteenth century foreign travellers saw in the country a “racial laboratory” proving the “degeneration” arising from racial inbreeding, now the thesis of cultural and physical plasticity found in Brazil a new field of experimentation (Flores, 2010). Oliveira Vianna (1938, p.16), although still tied to biological theories, considered Brazil a “centre of excellence for race studies”, since the country had received several ethnicities. “Just among heterogeneous populations, where the most varied anthropological types welded together, where the most primitive races commingle with the Aryan races, only there can they be studied in optimal conditions of investigative efficiency” (Vianna, 1938, p.19-20). Roquette-Pinto was clear in his opposition to the “degenerationist [thesis] of miscegenation”, affirming that “whitening” would come with education and

health (Schwarcz, 1993, p.96). Arthur Ramos, a former student of Nina Rodrigues, suggested substituting the words race for culture and miscegenation for acculturation (Maio; Santos, 1996, p.111), defending an understanding of Brazil as a “laboratory of civilisation”, a term coined by North American historian Rüdiger Bilden in 1929 (Maio, 1999, p.142).

When Arthur Ramos assumed direction of the Department of Social Sciences of UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization), in 1949, he took his ideas with him, grounded in a proposal of an anthropology of intervention, which sought to enable the “integration of blacks and Indians into the modern world”. Although he believed in the existence of “racial democracy” or in cooperation between the races in Brazil, Arthur Ramos acknowledged the presence of racial prejudice; he pointed out the relevance of the study concerning the insertion of individuals into groups, strata and social classes to understand ethnic and racial inequalities; for him, the problem with racial inequality was directly associated with the theme of the incorporation of marginalised social groups (Maio, 1999, p.142).

The discovery of sociological race

Since the late 1940s, UNESCO has reflected on the perplexity of the global scientific community and political leaders in the face of the catastrophic acts carried out during the Second World War in the name of race. This anxiety has become even more acute with the persistence of racism in various parts of the world, with the emergence of the Cold War, the decolonisation process in Africa and Asia and the perpetuation of large social inequalities on a global scale. Given this scenario, UNESCO, “in a phase of extreme optimism and equipped with enlightened reason, has made every effort to find universal solutions to annul the perverse effects of rationalism, xenophobic nationalism and

socioeconomic disparities” (Maio, 1999, p.17). At its Fifth Session of the General Conference, in 1950, held in Florence, the First Declaration on Race emerged, denying any deterministic association between physical characteristics, social behaviour and moral attributes. Brazil, considered an example of a “unique and successful” experience (Maio, 1999, p.146) in the field of racial interactions, compared with the United States and South Africa, was chosen to serve as a “socio-anthropological laboratory” (Maio, 1999, p.144). Marcos Chor Maio believes that, although the proposed “pilot research”, as the UNESCO project for Brazil was denominated, contained a certain measure of ingenuity, the results obtained were considerable. “The ‘UNESCO Project’ was a catalysing agent” (Maio, 1999, p.142).

By presenting Brazil as a model for the world, the political objective of UNESCO was to conduct investigations to determine the factors that contributed to the “existence of harmonious relations between races and ethnic groups” (Maio, 1999, p.18). This made it possible for foreign and national social scientists to work together, driving the development of a thought that was already underway. During the project, Brazilian researchers found conditions that were favourable to their investigations, even within academic circles headed by Brazilian specialists – Florestan Fernandes, Thales de Azevedo, Oracy Nogueira, L.A. Costa Pinto and others (Maio, 1999, p.154).

On the other hand, international researchers got involved in the project and strengthened their partnership with Brazilians: anthropologist Alfred Métraux, with extensive experience in ethnological work (blacks and indigenous peoples) in both South and Central America; Roger Bastide, who lectured at the University of São Paulo from 1938 onwards as a member of the “French Mission”, contracted to the faculty of the School of Philosophy, an important reference in studies on Afro-Brazilian culture and the author of a number of sociological works on

blacks in Brazil; American anthropologist Charles Wagley, who, since the late 1930s, maintained close links with Brazil, particularly in the study of indigenous communities (Maio, 1999, p.144). Foreign and Brazilian social scientists had accepted an intellectual challenge, not only that of making the Brazilian racial scenario intelligible, but also of answering the recurring question regarding the incorporation of certain social segments into modernity, doing justice to the original intent of Arthur Ramos, who died before the completion of the project.

In his presentation of the new edition of the book *O negro no Rio de Janeiro* [The Negro in Rio de Janeiro], by Luiz de Aguiar Costa Pinto, Marcos Chor Maio (1999, p.17) affirms that this publication is not only in recognition of the importance of the work, but it also represents a moment of reflection concerning the “UNESCO Project”. Costa Pinto participated in the debate on the scientific status of the concept of race, which resulted in the First Declaration on Race in 1950, and articulated an agreement to also conduct research in Rio de Janeiro, in a metropolitan area.

According to Marcos Chor Maio, Costa Pinto’s work presents a series of critiques of ethnographic studies from the “afro-Brazilian” phase (late nineteenth century up to the 1940s), because they focused on physical and psychological characteristics intrinsic to races, on cultural traits, on the processes of acculturation. A sociological reading of the challenges dictated by capitalist development, by social mobility and due to the new relationships of social classes derived from the passage from the situation of slavery to the condition of proletariat, until blacks attained the middle class, was lacking in Brazil (Maio, 2009). According to Maio, the great contribution of the book *O negro no Rio de Janeiro* concerns its understanding of how racial prejudice emerges within a society in the process of industrialisation and urbanisation. Portions of blacks and mulattoes were aligned with proletarian vindications; social mobility leads dominant

sectors, threatened by the loss of position, to assume racist attitudes; the process of vertical social mobility created an internal differentiation among blacks, forming a “black elite” that sought to affirm their blackness. “The new form of black ascension is no longer individual and is not interested in ‘whitening up’, as occurred in the traditional, paternalistic society, especially in the nineteenth century” (Maio, 2009, p.333). This dynamic favours the creation of various social movements of racial groups, which we will discuss later.

Another prominent name in the context of the “UNESCO Project” was Oracy Nogueira. In his research on racial prejudice in Brazil and the United States, he formulated differences between the two countries: in the Brazilian context, Nogueira conceives the existence of a “prejudice of mark” and in the North American context, a “prejudice of origin” (Cavalcanti, 2009). The former elects the phenotype (racial appearance) as a criterion for discrimination. Innumerable classificatory gradations consider not only the nuances of colour – black, mulatto, pale mulatto, dark, brown, white –, but also facial features, like the nose, lips, eye colour and hair type. The concept of white and nonwhite thus varies enormously from individual to individual within the same family or the same social group, from class to class, from region to region (Cavalcanti, 2009, p.260). The latter, the “prejudice of origin”, is determined by birth. The parental origin of individuals classifies them and links them to the discriminated group. “Black” is one who is recognised as such in their community, regardless of their physical appearance (Cavalcanti, 2009, p.261).

According to Nogueira, in Brazil, prejudice discriminates through *preterition*. When competing on equal terms, the “dark person” is always neglected by the “lighter person”; however, if the “dark person” demonstrates superior intelligence, economic status, diplomacy or perseverance, that allows for “an exception to be made”. In this kind of prejudice, personal relationships of

friendship or admiration frequently cross the boundaries of the “mark”; awareness of discrimination is intermittent, and since the group discriminated against is less well defined, it tends to react in a more individualised manner. The etiquette of race relations, in turn, tends to control the behaviour of the discriminating group, in order to avoid the susceptibility or humiliation of the discriminated group. “Colour” is understood as a metonymy for racial appearance, and thus emerges as a doubly cultural category. This is a classificatory choice, in that ascendancy is not what matters. At the same time, the concrete act of classifying a person as “white”, as “mulatto” with varying degrees of “darkness”, or “black” results from the interlinking of appearance with other equally pertinent criteria for the definition of the situation at hand. This works in such a way that, in this relational system, social discrimination can maintain close ties with personal intimacy (Cavalcanti, 2009, p.263-264).

In 1960, the book *Cor e mobilidade social em Florianópolis* [Colour and social mobility in Florianópolis], by Fernando Henrique Cardoso and Octavio Ianni, came out as an offshoot of the UNESCO Project to remedy the “lack” of regional studies, as the authors justified in the introduction, since research was concentrated on communities located in the North, Northeast and East of the country. In the Southern regions, only the city of São Paulo had received some attention. It was necessary to verify how the process of integration of blacks had occurred in Southern Brazil, colonised by large European contingents, principally Germans, Italians and Poles, and who therefore had not resorted to large-scale slave labour (Cardoso; Ianni, 1960, p.20-21).

In the preface of *Cor e mobilidade social em Florianópolis*, Florestan Fernandes highlights the importance of the work by Cardoso and Ianni, since it shows how much we are lacking in “historical experiences, likely to intensify and solidify the development of social democracy in Brazil” (Fernandes, 1960, p.12).

If “we have some achievements that deserve to be preserved, because they are potentially positive” in the field of “conventionalised tolerance in race relations”, then effective racial democracy as yet does not exist. “This can satisfy the requirements of ‘good manners’, a debatable ‘Christian spirit’, and the practical necessity of ‘keeping everyone in their place’” (Fernandes, 1960, p.10). But our supposed racial democracy “does not really approximate men solely on the basis of mere coexistence in the same social space”, regulated by codes that enshrine inequality. According to Florestan Fernandes, this requires increasing awareness of citizenship and more effective exercise of democracy (Fernandes, 1960, p.10). Thus, he added, the research by Cardoso and Ianni broadened “our ability to explain, sociologically, the bases and sociodynamic products of race relations in Brazilian society”, showed “the existing connections between the economic basis of the social system and the organisation of race relations” and explained “the origins and social functions of racial stereotypes” (Fernandes, 1960, p.16, 18).

While analysing the book *Cor e mobilidade social em Florianópolis*, Elide Bastos (2009) raises questions concerning the relationship between diversity and inequality in the work and concludes that the authors felt that inequality is not reduced to the black-white opposition, nor to the wealth-poverty opposition. Denying access to true political and social engagement and participation in cultural goods strongly promotes and configures the notion of inequality. Racial discrimination influences social mobility, moreover, this prejudice leads to the internalisation, by blacks, of social roles that constitute obstacles to their ascension in society. By denouncing racism, therefore, the authors deny the myth of “racial democracy” in Brazilian society, showing how social relations generated by the slave regime permeated Brazilian society following abolition, in order to safeguard privileges and impede the invocation of civil, political and social rights.

Racial classification in Brazil

Racialised statistics

The “fable of the three races” as a formative of the country’s population was inaugurated when Von Martius published the book *Como se deve escrever a historia do Brazil* [How one should write the history of Brazil] (1845). “Anyone who is in charge of writing the history of Brazil”, asserts Martius, can never fail to consider the participation of the three races: “the copper colour of the Native American, the white [...] and finally the black or Ethiopian [...]” (Martius, 1982, p.87). This was followed by the book *História geral do Brasil* [General history of Brazil] (1854), by Francisco Adolfo de Varnhagen, which consolidates Brazil’s racial history based on the particular characteristics of the three races that moulded the nation. The creation of a national history and the study of the population were *sine qua non* requirements in the process of forming the modern nation-state. It is no wonder that historian Varnhagen was the official emissary sent to the International Congress of Statistics in St. Petersburg, Russia, in preparation for the realisation of the first Census of Brazil, in 1872 (IBGE, 2011, p.208).

The problem that Brazil had to face was establishing racial categories for the statistical survey of its population. How should one classify races in Brazil? When racial classification of human groups was invented, between the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries in Europe, the category of colour was introduced to identify them. The peoples of the East and Amerindians were regarded as belonging to the yellow race; Europeans or Caucasians formed the white race; and the peoples of the sub-Saharan Africa, Negroids, were designated as blacks. Thus, in Brazil, the 1872 census resorted to the common form to racially classify and prioritise the population according to skin colour, thus inaugurating the colour system for their racial classification (IBGE, 2013, p.88).

In the table below, we can monitor the process of the introduction of colours or races in Censuses conducted in Brazil, from 1872.

Table 1: Process of introducing the question of colour or race in Censuses conducted in Brazil

1872	White	Black	Brown	Mestizo		
1890	White	Black	Mixed	Mestizo		
1900	–	–	–	–		
1910						
1920	–	–	–	–		
1930						
1940	White	Black	–	–	Yellow	
1950	White	Black	Brown		Yellow	
1960	White	Black	Brown		Yellow	
1970	White	Black	–		Yellow	
1980	White	Black	Brown		Yellow	
1991	White	Black	Brown		Yellow	Indigenous
2000	White	Black	Brown		Yellow	Indigenous
2010	White	Black	Brown		Yellow	Indigenous

Source: Census of Brazil 1872-1920; IBGE Census 1940-2010 (IBGE, 2011, p.16)

The first census, in 1872, identified four options for racial classification: white, black, brown [*parda*] and mestizo (this last category was used to count the indigenous population), thereby crystallising the colour system used to characterise the Brazilian nation. In the 1891 Census, an indigenous category was introduced and the term “brown” was replaced by “mixed”, a category that best suited the whitening ideology, as described above. In the Censuses in 1900 and 1920, information concerning colour or race was not collected and in 1910 and 1930, no census operations were performed in the country. From the 1940 Census onwards, the colour yellow appears to specifically account for the Japanese participation that resulted from their immigration, occurring primarily between 1908 and 1930. In the 1940 Census, classification is restricted to the colour catego-

ries – white, black and yellow. Those who did not fit into any of the three categories received a dash in the space corresponding to colour, which, during result analyses, were coded as mixed race (*mullato*, *mestizo*, *caboclo*) (IBGE, 2011, p.14).

By the Censuses in 1950 and 1960, the category brown is re-incorporated and these are the first instances that clarify in their instructions how to complete the census regarding the response of the person included in it, the first reference of self-declaration being used (IBGE, 2011, p.15). In 1970, the category brown is again excluded from the survey, returning in 1980, when it is used in the sample questionnaire. Finally, in the last census, conducted in 2010, the categories white, black, brown, yellow and indigenous were maintained. This was the first census in which people identified as indigenous were questioned concerning their ethnicity and the language they spoke.

It is important to emphasise that the racial structure of Brazil has continued to change in the last 50 years, with a reduction in the proportion of whites and blacks in relation to the growth of brown [*parda*], as presented in the figures and the 2010 Census table below.

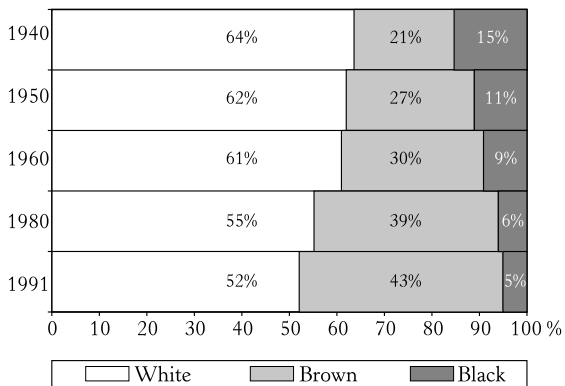


Figure 1: Relative participation according to colour – Total Population – Brazil, (1940-1991)

Source: Sachs; Vilheim; Pinheiro, 2001, p.35

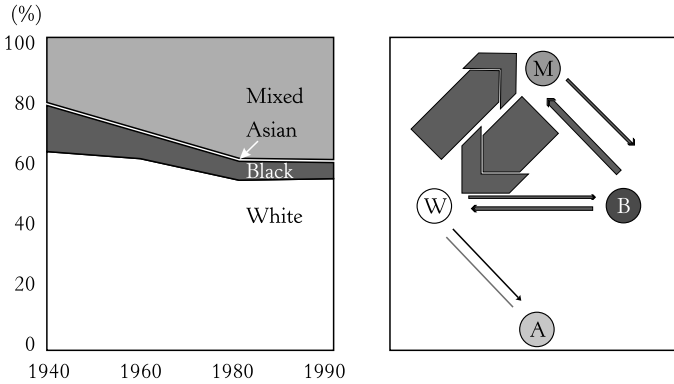


Figure 2: Ethnic composition and interethnic marriage

Source: Sachs; Vilheim; Pinheiro, 2001, p.35

Table 2: Participation in absolute and relative numbers of the population, according to colour, Census 2010

Colour	Absolute numbers	Percentages
White	91,051,646	47.7
Black	14,517,961	7.6
Yellow	2,084,288	1.0
Brown	82,277,333	43.1
Indigenous	817,963	0.4
Not declared	6,608	0.0

Source: IBGE Census – 2010

Self-reported colour

The *Pesquisa das características étnico-raciais da população – Um estudo das categorias de classificação de cor ou raça* [Survey of the ethnic-racial characteristics of the population – A study of the classification categories of colour or race] (Pcerp/2008), conducted by the IBGE in 2008, sampling the states of Amazonas, Paraíba, São Paulo, Rio Grande do Sul, Mato Grosso and the Federal District, aimed to “improve” the classification system of colour and race in Brazil to assist official statistics

in this regard. It was the third time the IBGE had surveyed information to improve their instruments for determining the racial characteristics of the population used in the Censuses. On previous occasions, this investigation occurred within the Pesquisa Nacional por Amostra de Domicílios [National Survey by Household Sampling] (PNAD), conducted in 1976, and the Pesquisa Mensal de Emprego [Monthly Employment Survey] (PME), conducted in 1998.

The system of racial classification in Brazil, based on an individual's colour and phenotype, incorporates identity conflicts and negotiations that are processed in contexts of social interaction. The classificatory gradations consider not only the nuances of colour – black, light-skinned or dark-skinned mulatto, brown, white –, but also facial features as well – nose, lips, eye colour, hair type – in the midst of various social, subjective, generational, political and economic complications that alter the perception and conception of white and nonwhite. One commonly cited survey, conducted by Harris in 1970, identified 492 terms to define the colour of the interviewees, while the PNAD, conducted by the IBGE in 1976, while using self-definition in free responses, formed a list of 135 colours, including reddish brown, Galician, porcelain, navy blue, very fair, very dark, tanned white, coffee-coloured, cinnamon, pink, jambu, peach, honey, light brown, dark brown, purple, negro albino, swarthy, olive... Faced with so much variety when allowing interviewees to define themselves, a more limited selection was decided upon: when taking part in the census, Brazilians can only choose from four colours: white, brown, black and yellow (Azevedo, 2004).

The Pcerp/2008 initiative also addressed the commitments made by Brazil at the Third World Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance, held in Durban, South Africa, in 2001. That year, the “Durban

Declaration and Programme of Action” was adopted, which dealt specifically with the policies and practices of collecting and aggregating data in this area.

The goal of Pcerp/2008 was to understand the current classification system of colour or race in Brazil, in household surveys, approximating the respondent to the theme of racial self-identification to capture the degree of perception of the social phenomena of discrimination based on people’s colour or race. In several variables of questions, whose answers were processed on a set of 65 tables, the Pcerp/2008 presented figures demonstrating the degree of correlation between colour/race and family, socioeconomic and cultural characteristics; the influence of colour/race in social discrimination; the correlation between an individual’s subjectivity in their racial self-identification; the hierarchisation of class and identity construction; the degree of resorting to denominations of colour, race, ethnicity and origin, both from the point of view of the ethnic composition of the population and of regional diversities; the correlation between education levels and occupation and racial/colour groups; and the correlation between race/colour, sex, age group and generation.

The Pcerp/2008 provided the possibility of open questions, allowing interviewees to express the recognised multi-ethnicity that characterises the country’s population. It enabled the responses to apply new terms to expand the scope of identification, without departing from the classic categories of racial identification. The person was asked whether they declared themselves to be of African descendancy or indigenous (specifying ethnicity and language); or Asian (yellow); or whether they declared themselves to be *negro* (black), *preto* (black) or white. The results of the Pcerp/2008, translated into demographic data that was published in 2011, as mentioned above, immediately received a supplementary volume, published in 2013 under the title *Características étnico-raciais da população – classificações e*

identidades [Ethnic and racial characteristics of the population – classifications and identities], bringing together a collection of articles by experts on the theme, with critical analyses of the racial dynamics in Brazil. The analyses by these experts focused on three thematic axes: 1) reflections on the notion of race; 2) analyses of the classification of colour or race in open questions; 3) the theme of social, educational and intergenerational mobility, according to racial categories.

The study considered that the concept of race is a purely sociohistorical construct. In Brazil, this finding takes into account the problem of encountering the “other” in their alterity, the construction of taxonomies from the eighteenth century onwards and the way racial ideology determined a hierarchical classification, inherited from the processes of colonisation and slavery. By analysing the tables produced by Pcerp/2008, it was concluded that the role of racial inequality controls numerous other dimensions of everyday life that influence social mobility. Being “nonwhite” remains a factor for less upward mobility and greater downward mobility. In Brazil, racial prejudice is characterised by being predominant. Racial inequality and the frequent repetition of disqualifying stereotypes contribute to maintaining the discriminated groups in the worst living conditions, on average (IBGE, 2013, p.11).

The analysis of the racial classification of individuals was carried out by Rafael Guerreiro Osorio, in the fourth chapter of this volume (IBGE, 2013, p.83). The author concluded that the definitions of colour or race presented complexities, in relation to the process of constructing ethnic-racial, individual and collective identities, but the results obtained by the Pcerp/2008 corroborated the adequacy of the IBGE’s current classification system of colour or race. There is a large degree of coincidence between the self-identification of colour or race made by the respondent and that assigned by the interviewer; the population

represented continues to choose a large number of terms to define themselves regarding colour or race, but 95% choose within a restricted set of eight categories, which includes the ones currently used in the Census (black [*preta*], brown [*parda*], yellow [*amarela*] and white [*branca*]); the others are black [*negra*], brown [*morena*], light brown [*morena clara*] and fair [*clara*]. The survey also revealed that the majority of the population represented by the interviewees, 63.7%, considered that colour or race influence people's lives in Brazil. The novel and relevant information revealed by the Pcerp/2008 concerns the degree to which people are aware of their own race or colour. In the six states surveyed, 96% of people aged 15 or older affirmed that they knew what their colour or race was (IBGE, 2013, p.89).

Rafael Guerreiro Osorio thus refutes the common critique of the IBGE's racial classification, saying that it is poor, considering the richness of the vocabulary used by Brazilians to describe their racial identity, by restricting it to the terms white, brown, black and yellow. Osorio says that, despite the huge variety of colours that appeared in the 1976 PNAD (136 categories recorded), 95% of spontaneous responses fell into only seven categories: 57% of respondents chose white, black, brown [*parda*] or yellow to spontaneously designate their own colour; 38% of the responses were concentrated in three terms: brown [*morena*], light brown [*morena clara*] and pale. In the PME, conducted in 1998, 94% of free responses focused on the same seven colours. In the Pcerp/2008, these seven categories were also among the most frequent, but the percentage of those who chose them was somewhat lower, 88% (IBGE, 2013, p.90).

The major change revealed by the Pcerp/2008 in relation to previous research was the growth in preference for the classification *negra* and the decrease in preference for *morena*. The term *negra* – due to the valuation of blackness, the analyst assumes – probably includes those who declare themselves in the Census

as *preta* or *parda*, since in this survey the options are preselected. The colour *morena*, declared in the spontaneous responses, must correspond in part to those who do not appreciate the condition of *parda*. The category *preta* also faces a certain degree of rejection. Therefore, the colour categories *parda*, *preta* and *morena* all migrate to *negra*. If the colour *negra* were to become a classification category, it would not substantially alter the proportion of the sum of the groups composed of blacks and browns [*parda* and *morena*] in relation to the group of whites in the census, thus maintaining comparability with the historical series and all the accumulated knowledge on the subject (IBGE, 2013, p.91).

As a general conclusion, the analysis shows that the evidence from the Pcerp/2008 endorses the IBGE's racial classification system, since the general population knows what category they belong to, defined primarily by skin colour; the majority use one of the categories defined by the institute to classify themselves during spontaneous response surveys. Moreover, the Pcerp/2008 revealed that the majority of the population represented consider that colour or race influence people's lives socially, which reinforces the need to continue promoting studies concerning the consequences of belonging to racial groups (IBGE, 2013, p.95).

Self-attribution works as well as the hetero-attribution, given the low degree of disagreement between interviewers and interviewees, which is concentrated on borderline types, those being more difficult to classify. Obviously, classification is not absolutely precise or objective, nor could it be, since the phenomenon one intends to capture varies situationally. The comprehensive categories and fluid boundaries of classification allow one to deal with this imprecision: though one cannot, based on the results of one's job, know exactly what the ideal national phenotype of blacks, or browns or whites is, one knows that it identifies people who fall into these categories in their relational contexts. (IBGE, 2013, p.96)

The black movement

The fallacy of racial democracy

This characteristic of the population – in which the complexity of identification requires an entire machinery of classification not only from an institutional point of view, but also from the point of view of an individual's subjectivity, such as their ability to change colour or the fact that they perceive their colour according to their insertion in the social dynamic – substantiates the arguments against “racial affirmative policies” or “positive discrimination”, which see in these actions “the ‘victory’ of a bipolar taxonomy over the old, traditional taxonomy of numerous categories” (Maggie; Fry, 2004, p.70). There are fears that the country of “mixed races” could be replaced by a country of “distinct races”, of two races, white and black, in a manner that impedes us from continuing to identify with “the Macunaíma of Brazilian modernism” (Maggie; Fry, 2004, p.68), and thus jeopardising the ideal of racial democracy (namely, harmonic and slightly conflicting race relations). It is the same racial democracy that caught the attention of UNESCO, choosing Brazil as an example of a political consciousness that excelled in harmony between races and that could provide a lesson in how to eradicate racism in the world.

For at least the first half of the twentieth century, interpretations of race relations in Brazil were based on the image of a “racial paradise”. And while the elites perceived it as a “problem” of integrating the post-abolition black population into the country's modernisation process, miscegenation arising from racial intercourse, both sexual and in the sphere of sociabilities, ended up being positively valued as an indicator of tolerance and harmony. This belief in racial democracy and the defence of miscegenation, the foundations of the interpretation of Brazil

as a country that included blacks in society, favoured the thesis that there was no racial consciousness in the country. Donald Pierson (1971), in *Pretos e brancos na Bahia* [Blacks and whites in Bahia], made comparisons between the capital of Bahia, Salvador, and Chicago, his hometown. Based on the premise that in Brazil interracial relationships tended to incorporate nonwhites into the world of whites through a process of “acculturation”, Pierson concluded that there were no racial conflicts in Brazil. In the Afro-Brazilian Congress of 1930,⁵ in Salvador, Pierson said that intellectuals were engaged in cultural issues and traditions of black culture with no political agenda directed towards the discussion of racial conflicts, which denoted “the relative absence of any racial consciousness by blacks and mestizos, or by any other group” (Rios, 2010, p.8).

Notwithstanding the racial mix and fluidity of race relations, this did not mean greater advantages for a large part of black Brazilians (Telles, 2013, p.312), nor can it be concluded that there has been no racially-based political action. While accompanying moments of black mobilisation throughout the twentieth century, we perceive that these racial movements were not isolated or sporadic events. They represent a history of protest and struggle. Blacks were mobilised to assert themselves politically. Mobilisation was high in the context of 1880; it continued to be effective and consistent, though at a lower level of intensity, during the first half of the twentieth century. In 1925, the main black newspaper in São Paulo, *O Clarim d’Alvorada* [The trumpet of dawn], had requested “a major political party, composed exclusively of men of colour” (Andrews, 1991, p.32). From the 1970s and 1980s, the movement has gained not only more power, but also new political implications, which we will discuss later.

5 Two African-Brazilian congresses, scientific in nature, took place in 1930: the first in Recife, organised by Gilberto Freyre, and the second in Salvador, under the organisation of Carneiro.

The delay in the abolition of slavery (1888) and the installation of the Brazilian Republic (1889) did not promote effective change for the black population. Political marginalisation, due to the limitations of the republican regime regarding the right to vote and regarding representation; social and psychological marginalisation due to discrimination supported by the doctrines of scientific racism and the ideology of whitening; economic marginalisation, due to a preference for foreign labour, are some general explanations for the structural exclusion of the heirs of the slavery system in Brazil. Resistance to this scenario occurred through various worker associations and others that could be designated as recreational or cultural associations, formed by blacks, former slaves and their descendants.

Among these clubs and guilds, in São Paulo, the Club 13 de Maio dos Homens Pretos [13th of May Black Men's Club] (1902), the Centro Literário dos Homens de Cor [Men of Colour Literary Centre] (1903), the Sociedade Propugnadora 13 de Maio [13th of May Advocate Society] (1906), the Centro Cultural Henrique Dias [Henrique Dias Cultural Centre] (1908), the Sociedade União Cívica dos Homens de Cor [Men of Colour Civic Union Society] (1915), the Associação Protetora dos Brasileiros Pretos [Protective Association for Black Brazilians] (1917) were founded; in Rio de Janeiro, the Centro da Federação dos Homens de Cor [Centre for the Federation of Men of Colour]; in Pelotas, RS, the Sociedade Progresso da Raça Africana [African Race Progress Society] (1891); and in Lages, SC, the Centro Cívico Cruz e Souza [Cruz e Souza Civic Centre] (1918). The oldest black college in that period was the Clube 28 de Setembro [28th of September Club] (1897), in São Paulo. The largest were the Grupo Dramático e Recreativo Kosmos [Kosmos Drama and Recreation Group] (1908) and the Centro Cívico Palmares [Palmares Civic Centre] (1926), both in São Paulo (Domingues, 2007a, p.103).

Black worker associations were formed mainly by port and rail workers, constituting a kind of union. Between 1907 and 1937, some 123 black associations were founded in São Paulo (Domingues, 2007a, p.104), in Porto Alegre, 72 were recorded between 1889 and 1920, and in Pelotas, there were 53 associations between 1888 and 1929 (Muller, 1999, p.104). Some associations were comprised only of women, such as the Sociedade Brinco das Princesas [Princesses' Earring Society] (1925, São Paulo) and the Sociedade de Socorros Mútuos Princesa do Sul [Southern Princess Mutual Aid Society] (1908, Pelotas, Brazil). Most women in these associations were also members of the Frente Negra Brasileira [Brazilian Black Front] (FNB), founded in 1931 (Domingues, 2007a, p.104).

Another important post-abolitionist movement was configured by the so-called *Black Press*, a term used in academic circles to designate the newspapers and magazines published in São Paulo in the early twentieth century, which excelled in combating prejudice and in social affirmation of the black population. It printed media, reports, poems, social events, competitions and parties that would rarely appear in the other media of the period. Among the principal newspapers and magazines of the *Black Press*, the following should be highlighted: newspapers *Getulino* (1916-1923) and *O Clarim d'alvorada* (1929-1940), magazine *Senzala* [Slave Quarters] (1946), *Voz da Raça* [Voice of the race], by the Brazilian Black Front (1933-1937), and later magazine *Quilombo* (1950), edited by Abdias do Nascimento.⁶

6 The Public Archives of the State of São Paulo, an organ linked to the Casa Civil [Cabinet Office], have housed 23 newspaper and magazine titles of the so-called Brazilian *Black Press* on its website. The newspapers available for online access at: <http://www.arquivoestado.sp.gov.br/hemeroteca_digitalizado.php?periodico=titulo&titulo=Baluarte,%20O:%20orgam%20oficial%20do%20Centro%20Litterario%20dos%20homens%20de%20C%F4r> are *O Alfinete* (1918-1921), *Alvorada* (1948), *Auriverde* (1928), *O Bandeirante* (1918-1919), *Chibata* (1932), *O Clarim* (1924), *O Clarim d'Alvorada* (1929-

On September 16, 1931, the Frente Negra Brasileira – União Político-Social da Raça [Sociopolitical Union of the Race] (FNB)⁷ was officially founded, regarded as an institution⁸ that would be the successor of the Centro Cívico Palmares, established in 1926, as one of the most important black entities from São Paulo up to 1930.⁹ The Legião Negra [Black Legion], also known as Pérolas Negras [Black Pearls], appeared in the same year of the foundation of the FNB, due to divergences in political positioning regarding adhesion to the Constitutionalist Rev-

1940), *Cruzada Cultural* (1950-1966), *Elite* (1924), *Getulino* (1916-1923), *Hifen* (1960), *O Kosmos* (1924-1925), *A Liberdade* (1919-1920), *Monarquia* (1961), *O Novo Horizonte* (1946-1954), *O Patrocínio* (1928-1930), *Progresso* (1930), *A Rua* (1916), *Tribuna Negra* (1935), *A Voz da Raça* (1933-1937), *O Xauter* (1916), as well as magazines *Quilombo* (1950) and *Senzala* (1946). Accessed on: August 2013.

- 7 Besides the Frente Negra Brasileira, others flourished with the purpose of promoting the broader integration of blacks into society, including the Clube Negro de Cultura Social [Black Social Culture Club] (1932) and the Frente Negra Socialista [Black Socialist Front] (1932), in São Paulo, the Sociedade Flor do Abacate [Avocado Flower Society], in Rio de Janeiro, the Legião Negra [Black Legion] (1934), in Uberlândia / MG, and Henrique Dias Society (1937), Salvador (Domingues, 2007a, p.107).
- 8 It was a political party which sought to combat racism and fought for better working conditions and health services. It was the first political party formed and conceived by blacks, having been closed in 1935 by Getúlio Vargas. It was perhaps the most important front the black movement ever had, involving many participants from other smaller movements and relying on affiliates in other states. Thus, the Frente Negra Brasileira reached about 20 thousand participants, who benefited from access to musical and theatrical groups, football, medical services and political formation, which relied on the power of the newspaper *A Voz da Raça*. Women's participation made up a significant portion (Domingues, 2007a, p.103). Andrews (1991, p.34) informs us that the Frente Negra was allied with Brazilian Integralism and even adopted "for family, for country and for God" as its motto. *A Voz da Raça* reported, in highly positive terms, the achievements of Nazism and fascism in installing discipline and patriotism among their people.
- 9 The Centro Cívico Palmares was the most important, whether in terms of the proposed political, moral and cultural elevation, or the degree of organisation and capacity to penetrate the black community. The group was willing to assume the fight against "colour prejudice" from a more political perspective, without resorting to recreational activities such as dances or balls. In 1929, the Centro Cívico Palmares was essentially dissolved (Domingues, 2007a, p.148).

olution in São Paulo. Some believed in the revolution and saw it as a struggle that also involved black people. Others considered only the possibility of receiving some sort of compensation from the battlefronts (Domingues, 2003). After 87 days and with the end of the revolution, the Legião Negra began acting as a civil society in support of the struggles of black people. In 1937, with the Estado Novo, the Legião Negra and the Frente Negra Brasileira, along with many other political organisations, were extinguished (Domingues, 2007a, p.105).



Figure 3: *Voz da Raça*, São Paulo, 18th of March, 1933.
Source: Archives of the State of São Paulo

E' assim que se confirma a victoria do esforço de um pugilo de bravos lutadores! A Casa do Negro, será a crystallisação perfeita de uma idéa que se torna realidade. A sua instalação representa o alvorecer de uma época promissora. E' uma conquista que deve ser analysada, porem, deve merecer os aplausos e o apoio de toda a collectividade negra.

TRIBUNA NEGRA

PELA UNIÃO SOCIAL E POLITICA DOS DESCENDENTES DA RAÇA NEGRA

Diretor: Augusto P. dos Santos — Redactor-Chefe: Manoel A. Soares
Redacção: Avenida São Paulo, 110 — Caixa Postal 110 — São Paulo, S. Paulo

ANO I
São Paulo, 1.º Quinzano de Setembro
NUM. 1

Trajectoria do Ideal

Revista mensal da Casa

A SOCIEDADE NEGRA

Revista Augusto Costa

Esta revista tem por objectivo a divulgação da cultura negra e a educação do povo negro. É dirigida por Augusto Costa, e tem como colaboradores os mais destacados nomes da literatura e da arte negra brasileira. A revista é publicada mensalmente, e contém artigos, estudos, poesias, contos e notícias de interesse para a comunidade negra.

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Figure 4: *Tribuna Negra*. Year I, Edition I. São Paulo, 1935.

Source: Archives of the State of São Paulo

With the end of the Estado Novo, in 1945, a “Black Renaissance” took place (Silva, 2003, p.219). The movement returned with important vindications and the emergence of discussion groups and actions against racial discrimination and racism, as well as new associations with great power of assembly, such as: the Cruzada Social e Cultural do Preto Brasileiro [Social and Cultural Crusade of Black Brazilians], the Centro de Cultura Luiz Gama [Luiz Gama Cultural Centre], the Frente Negra Trabalhista [Black Labour Front] and the Associação do Negro

Brasileiro [Association of Black Brazilians] (ANB). In Rio de Janeiro, the Grupo de Afoxé Associação Recreativa Filhos de Gandhi [Afoxé Group Children of Gandhi Recreation Association], the União dos Homens de Cor [Union of Men of Colour] (UHC), the União Cultural dos Homens de Cor [Cultural Union of Men of Colour], the Teatro Popular Brasileiro [Brazilian Popular Theatre] (TPB), the Renascença Clube [Renaissance Club] and the Orquestra Afro-Brasileira [Afro-Brazilian Orchestra], comprising eighteen musicians. In the same year when the Estado Novo ended, the Convenção Nacional do Negro [National Negro Convention] took place in São Paulo (Andrews, 1971, p.33). Still in 1944, in Rio de Janeiro, the Teatro Experimental do Negro [Black Experimental Theatre] (TEN) was founded under the leadership of Abdias do Nascimento, with the aim of:

Recovering, in Brazil, the values of the human person and black African culture, degraded and denied by a dominant society that, since the times of the colony, bore the mental baggage of their European metropolitan education, imbued with pseudoscientific concepts concerning the inferiority of the black race. TEN proposed to work for the social valuation of blacks in Brazil, through education, culture and art. (Nascimento, 2004, p.210)

TEN criticised Afro-Brazilian studies, branding them as alienating. Blacks should reflect on their own situation. Following this proposal, TEN alphabetised its participants, a heterogeneous group of maids, civil servants, professionals, labourers and individuals with no defined profession, a project that had 600 registrations in its first edition, and promoted meetings and discussions with the presence of speakers from different areas of expertise. After six months of intense preparation, the artists from TEN were ready to take the stage.

On the 8th of May, 1945, at the Municipal Theatre in Rio de Janeiro, TEN staged *The Emperor Jones*, authored by anarchist

playwright and American socialist Eugene O'Neill. The presentation at the Municipal Theatre, where "a black man had never set foot as a performer or in the audience" (Nascimento, 2004, p.210), was made possible by direct authorisation from President Getúlio Vargas, who had learned of the denunciation made by Abdias, accusing the Municipal Theatre of being a "fortress of racism" (Douxami, 2001, p.318).

Apart from their theatrical activities, TEN organised the *Convenção Nacional do Negro* in São Paulo (1945) and Rio de Janeiro (1946). On this occasion, the group drafted a document and sent it to the Constituent Assembly of 1946, with the proposed inclusion of racial discrimination as a crime against the homeland. According to Abdias do Nascimento, "these antecedents of the anti-discrimination law, which later became known as the Afonso Arinos Law, are little known" (Nascimento, 2004, p.223).

In January 1950, in Rio de Janeiro, TEN held the I Congresso do Negro Brasileiro [1st Congress of Brazilian Blacks]. The papers presented were collected in the book *O negro revoltado* [The angry black man], organised by Abdias do Nascimento (1968). Other events, such as the Concurso do Cristo Negro [Black Christ Contest], held in Rio de Janeiro in 1955, and the beauty pageants Rainha das mulatas [Queen of mulatto women] and Boneca de pixe [Pretty black woman; literally Tar doll], used as pedagogic tools for the valuation of black beauty, were also supported and organised by TEN. The group remained on the scene until the end of the 1960s, but with the exile of Abdias do Nascimento in the United States in 1968, it was practically dissipated.

Affirmation of blackness

Since the 1950s, the intelligentsia has been threatening the belief in racial democracy, arguing that Brazil is characterised by racial exclusion. From the late 1970s, and throughout the entire

decade of the 1980s, a period which saw “new characters come into play” (Sader, 2001) in the exercise of democracy, numerous social movements resolved to become the subjects of history. The black movement, in addition to defining a position against the dictatorship, assumed the notion of race for itself, whether in terms of “black community”, “black identity” or “black people”; finally, it radically assumed the designation “black race”.



Figure 5: Cover of the magazine *Movimento Negro Unificado* (MNU). Jul-Aug. 1981, n.4, p.1

Source: <<http://www.cpvsp.org.br/upload/periodicos/pdf/PMNEUSP071981004.pdf>>. Accessed on: August 2013.

Following the exile of Abdias, the black movement fragmented, but it was not extinguished. The news of various anti-discriminatory events in the United States resonated in Brazil. In São Paulo, in 1971, the Centro de Cultura e Arte Negra [Centre for Black Art and Culture] (CECAN) was created; it was one of the first black entities to work with the notion of blackness, using theatre as a tool of awareness and denouncement, as well as education and culture.¹⁰ The *black press* showed renewed signs of life, albeit tentative, with newspaper *Árvore das Palavras* [Tree of words] (1974) and *O Quadro* [The tableau] (1974) in São Paulo; *Biluga* (1974), São Caetano, SP, and *Nagô* [Yoruban] (1975), in São Carlos, SP. In Porto Alegre, the *Grupo Palmares* (1971) was organised; it was the first to advocate substituting the commemorations of the “13th of May” for the “20th of November”, the day of Zumbi dos Palmares in 1695. In Rio de Janeiro, among the black youth, the Soul Movement, which was later renamed Black Rio [literally Rio Black music], exploded and the Instituto de Pesquisa das Culturas Negras [Institute for Research on Black Cultures] (IPCN) was founded in 1976 (Domingues, 2007a, p.112).¹¹

In 1978, amidst a climate of student and union protests, the Movimento Negro Unificado [Unified Black Movement] (MNU) was founded; it was considered a milestone in the formation of the contemporary Black Movement. On the 18th of June, at a meeting in São Paulo with other organisations – Grupo Afro-Latino América [Afro-Latin America Group], Câmara do Comércio Afro-Brasileiro [Chamber of Afro-Brazilian Commerce], *Jornal Abertura* [Open Journal], *Jornal Capoeira* [Capoeira Journal], Grupo de Atletas [Athletes Group] and Grupo de Artistas Negros [Black Artists Group] –, the MNU

10 Concerning the Centro de Cultura Negra, see Silva (2012).

11 For further information concerning this period of the Black Movement, see Monteiro (1999).

drew up the directives of their first activity: a public act with 2000 people, held on the 7th of July, in repudiation of racial discrimination suffered by four youths at the Clube de Regatas do Tietê [Tietê Boating Club] and the death by police torture of the young black man Robson Silveira da Luz, was held on the steps of the Municipal Theatre of São Paulo.

Several months after the public act, the MNU drafted a “Charter of Principles”, defining “o que é ser negro no Brasil” [what it is to be black in Brazil] and its principal vindications, which were later included in the agenda of affirmative action policies aimed at the black population: the valuation of memory and culture, university and employment quotas, the teaching of African History and the reassessment of the role of blacks in the history of Brazil, ownership of *quilombo*¹² lands.

We, members of the black population – understanding how all those who possess in the colour of their skin, in their face or their hair, characteristic signs of this race – convened in Assembly [...], resolve to join forces and fight in defence of black people in all respects. For more job opportunities, better health care, education, housing, for the reassessment of the role of blacks in the history of Brazil, the valuation of black culture, the extinction of every form of persecution [...] For the liberation of black people! (Charter of Principles of the MNU, 1978, apud Pereira, 2013, p.99)

At the second MNU assembly, on the 4th of November, 1978, in the city of Salvador, the 20th of November was established as

12 A *quilombo* is a Brazilian inland settlement founded by people of African origin. Though the majority of *quilombo* inhabitants (called *quilombolas*) were escaped slaves, they later provided shelter for other minorities: marginalised Portuguese, Brazilian indigenous peoples, Jews, Arabs and other nonblack, non-slave Brazilians, all of whom experienced oppression during colonisation.

the “*Dia da Consciência Negra*” [Black Consciousness Day], currently a holiday in more than 200 municipalities throughout the country (Pereira, 2013, p.99). During the commemoration of the centenary of the Abolition of Slavery, in 1988, while the political, economic and intellectual elite celebrated the “miscegenated” country, the country of “racial democracy” in the media, the black movement refused to celebrate the 13th of May. The refusal of official memory surpassed the borders of the movement and took over the streets and the voice of a significant part of the population through the songs of samba schools. That same year, the Vila Isabel samba school, from Rio de Janeiro, was the carnival champion with the samba “Kizomba, festa da raça” [Kizomba, party of the race], whose first lines were “valeu Zumbi, o grito forte dos Palmares, que correu terras, céus e mares, *influenciando* a abolição” [thanks to Zumbi, the strong clamour of Palmares, which flowed over the lands, skies and seas, *influencing* abolition] (Pereira, 2013, p.18).

From the protests and commemorations of the centenary of Abolition, two vindications became laws and were inscribed in the 1988 Constitution: the criminalisation of racism (Article 5) and the recognition of land ownership for the remaining *quilombos* (Article 68 of the Constitutional Provisions Act).

That same year, the Catholic Church launched the *Campanha da Fraternidade* [Brotherhood Campaign]: “A Fraternidade e o Negro: Ouvi o clamor desse povo” [The Brotherhood and the Black man: I heard the clamour of these people] (Amado, 1989, p.75). The *Campanha da Fraternidade* (1988) in favour of black people was the result of a large number of black leaders in the grass-roots organisations of the Catholic Church, in meetings, in the articulation of blacks in the União e Consciência Negra [Black Union and Consciousness] movement, in the group of black pastoral agents and the conversion of important sectors of

the Church to the struggles of the poorest individuals. Thereof, the Afro-Brazilian Ministry and the Associação de Padres Negros [Association of Black Priests] (APNs) emerge. On this occasion, the Church recognised the marginalisation that the black community faced and also recognised their involvement in the history of Brazilian slavery. The theme of the *Campanha da Fraternidade* (1988), which touched on the central problem of everyday life of the lower classes, was warmly welcomed in certain areas, although it aroused bewilderment and unease in others and was marginalised in some parishes (Amado, 1989, p.76).

On the 12th of May, 1988, under the Lapa arch in Rio de Janeiro, 300 black artists presented the *Missa dos Quilombos* [Mass of the *quilombos*], celebrated by Dom Pedro Casaldáliga and Pedro Tierra, with a song by Milton Nascimento which, in 1982, had been prohibited by the Congregation for Divine Worship. That same day, the army suppressed the march of ten thousand blacks. The speeches in Congress were jeered, and many of the official celebrations of the 13th of May were boycotted by the black community, who insisted on celebrating the 20th of November, the day of Zumbi's death, the last chief of the Quilombo dos Palmares, as Black Consciousness Day (Amado, 1989, p.76).

In 1995, the Zumbi dos Palmares March was held in Brasília, in honour of the 300th anniversary of the death of Zumbi dos Palmares. This event served as a catalyst for discussions regarding affirmative action and the advancement of civil society concerning the racial issue. The march was an “act of indignation and protest against the subhuman conditions that blacks endured in the country on account of exclusion and racial discrimination” (Duarte, 2013, p.68). The myth of racial democracy had collapsed.

In 2001, the United Nations World Conference against Racism, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance took place in Durban, South Africa, with the goal of developing strategies against racism and prejudice. The Conference was attended by 170 countries, which mobilised internally to prepare documents and proposals for action. On the 8th of July, 2001, just days before the Durban conference, the Conferência Nacional contra o Racismo e a Intolerância [National Conference against Racism and Intolerance] was held in the city of Rio de Janeiro, at which time the *Carta do Rio* [Rio Charter] (2001) was drawn up, vehemently advocating the need for affirmative policies formulated and implemented by public authorities and articulated to civil society, in order to combat racism, intolerance and the reproduction of socially discriminatory practices and policies.

The criminalisation of racism

The institutional recognition of racial prejudice in Brazil was made explicit in legal form for the first time in the 1946 Constitution, Chapter II, which dealt with individual rights and guarantees: “War propaganda, violent processes to subvert the political and social order or prejudices of race or class will not be tolerated”. Law 1390 of the 3rd of July, 1951, known as the Afonso Arinos Law, was the first to consider the practice of any discrimination or racial prejudice as a misdemeanour, i.e. an infraction considered less offensive.

Although the Afonso Arinos Law had been deemed to be “no public outcry”, incapable of transforming the racist mentality of a country that until then, at least legally, had believed in the myth of Brazilian racial democracy and in the lack of severity of racial prejudices compared with the United States or with countries in Europe, it acted as the catalyst of a debate, unveiling a social problem that was not discussed in the legal

sphere or in public policies (Grin; Maio, 2013, p.35). In 1985, racism as a misdemeanour was transformed into a crime by the Caó Law (7437/85). The 1988 Constitution made the practice of racism a “unbailable and imprescriptible offense, subject to imprisonment under the law” (Brasil, 1988, tit.II, cap.I, XLII, art.5). On the 5th of January, 1989, law 7716/89 came into effect, a second version of the Caó Law, which regulates the constitutional clause that criminalises specific practices linked to racism. It listed situations that, motivated by prejudice based on race, colour, ethnicity, religion or national origin, were considered crimes of racial discrimination (Brasil, 1997).

The wording of law 7716/89 was amended by law 9459/97, authored by then Congressman Paulo Paim (PT-RS), prescribing punishment for the crime of libel when it involves elements pertaining to race, colour, ethnicity, religion or origin (Brasil, 1940, art.140, §3). The “qualifying injury” in article 140 of the Brazilian Penal Code is one of the most prevalent manifestations of racism. It occurs through the use of offensive words and verbal aggression, “attributing negative qualities that offend the dignity” based on the disparagement of race/colour/origin/ethnicity and phenotypic characteristics, such as hair texture, format of the nose, mouth, etc. Item 2 of law 7716/89 prescribes the following:

They will be subject to punishment of fines and the provision of community services, including activities to promote racial equality, whosoever, in announcements or any other form of recruitment of workers, demands aspects of appearance specific to race or ethnicity regarding employment in which the activities do not justify such requirements.¹³

13 Other laws that present important guarantees for the black population can be found at the following website: <http://portal.mj.gov.br/sedh/ct/legis_intern/ddh_bib_inter_universal.htm>. Accessed on: 6th of August, 2013.

Positive discrimination

The Statute of Racial Equality and the establishment of the *Secretaria de Políticas de Promoção da Igualdade Racial* [Secretariat for Policies to Promote Racial Equality] (Seppir)

On the 21st of March, 2003, the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination,¹⁴ the *Secretaria de Políticas de Promoção da Igualdade Racial* (Seppir) was created¹⁵ in Brazil with the following functions: to formulate, coordinate and articulate affirmative policies to promote racial equality; to protect the rights of individuals and groups, with emphasis on the black population; to monitor the implementation of affirmative action legislation and public policies aimed at fulfilling agreements, conventions and other similar instruments signed by Brazil, on aspects related to the promotion of equality and to combating racial or ethnic discrimination.

Also in 2003, the Statute of Racial Equality was approved “in defence of those who suffer prejudice or discrimination on account of their ethnicity, race and/or colour” (Brasil, 2003, p.27) and in favour of affirmative action.¹⁶ In countries where this

14 This date was instituted by the United Nations in memory of the Sharpeville Massacre. On the 21st of March, 1960, 20,000 blacks protested in the city of Johannesburg, South Africa, against the pass laws, which required them to walk with identification cards specifying the locations where they could transit. Even though it was a peaceful demonstration, the army fired on the demonstrators. A total of 69 dead and 186 wounded were recorded (Brasil, 2013).

15 By provisional law 111 on the 21st of March, 2003, converted into law 10978.

16 First used by former US President J. F. Kennedy in 1963, the expression affirmative policy means: “a set of public and private policies of a compulsory, optional or voluntary character, conceived with a view to combating discrimination based on race, gender, etc., as well as to correcting the present effects of discrimination practiced in the past” (Domingues, 2005, p.166).

type of action had already been implemented, such as India, the USA, Canada, New Zealand, Germany, England and Brazil, they encompassed the purpose of:

Offering excluded and discriminated groups a differential treatment to compensate for the disadvantages due to their situation of victims of racism and other forms of discrimination; hence the terminologies “equal opportunity policies”, affirmative action, positive action, positive discrimination or compensatory policies. (Munanga, 2003, p.1)

According to philosopher Nigel Warburton (2007, p.121-122), affirmative action, also called positive discrimination, means:

To actively recruit people from groups previously finding themselves in a disadvantaged situation. In other words, positive discrimination deliberately treats candidates unequally, favouring people from groups that have regularly been victims of discrimination. The purpose of treating people unequally is to accelerate the process of making society more egalitarian, ending not only the existing imbalances in certain professions, but also providing models that can be followed and respected by young people from groups that are traditionally less respected. [...] Positive discrimination is only a temporary measure, until the percentage of traditionally excluded members of the group roughly reflects the percentage of members of this group in the general population. In some countries it is illegal; in others, it is mandatory.

In Brazil, according to the Statute of Racial Equality (Brasil, 2003), a quota system for the admission of minorities into higher education would correct the harmful effects of prejudice on the discriminated populations and minimise the unequal occupa-

tion of institutional and educational spaces between blacks and whites. In defence of the Statute, Senator Paulo Paim affirmed that Brazil was far from being a country where everyone was equal and, therefore, the “closed circles of the elite needed to be broken” (Brasil, 2003, p.28). In the introduction to the Statute, the following argument for the adoption of the quota system was presented:

We know that the quota system will be subject to profound discussions, similar to those that took place in the United States, where the arguments range from the temporality of the system to concepts of free promotion of the individual, of their freedom, will and competence, thus transforming the rule of law into an administrator of interest groups and corporations. This justification for not adopting affirmative action in Brazil might have consistency if everyone had the same opportunities. In reality, society is not equal and treating genuinely unequal people as equal only amplifies the initial distance between them, thereby masking and justifying the perpetuation of inequities. In addition to the system of quotas in universities and at work, we want all books related to the participation of black people in Brazil to be rewritten, similar to what Nelson Mandela did in South Africa. (Brasil, 2003, p.28)

The Statute required a minimum quota of 20% for the Afro-Brazilian population when filling vacancies related to jobs for the public sector and undergraduate courses in all institutions of higher education nationwide. It also required that private companies with more than 20 employees maintain a quota of at least 20% of Afro-Brazilian workers (Brasil, 2003, p.23). In 2006, a new Statute of Racial Equality was drafted, also authored by Senator Paulo Paim. The directives of the previous statute were reaffirmed and the institutionalisation of affirmative action was endorsed by the multicultural conception and by differentialist

anti-racism. Land rights for the remaining *quilombos*, mandatory classes on the History of Africa¹⁷ in primary and secondary schools and quotas for the admission of black students into higher education were the main fronts of affirmative action policies promoted by the Brazilian State.¹⁸

Quilombo lands

In 1984, the Serra da Barriga, the former site of the Quilombo dos Palmares, was elevated to the status of a National Historic Landmark. Beginning with this event, the struggle for the recognition of *quilombo* communities for the right to own the land intensified. *Quilombo* communities are “ethnic-racial groups, according to a self-attributed criterion, with their own historical trajectory, endowed with specific race relations, with the assumption of black ancestry related to resisting the historical oppression suffered” (Brasil, 2003).¹⁹ The 1988 Constitution had guaranteed the right to ownership of the land of *Quilom-*

17 Article 20 of the Statute of Racial Equality (2003) requires: “The discipline of ‘General History of Africa and of Blacks in Brazil’ must be integrated into the curriculum of public and private primary and secondary education”.

18 In 1996, the *Seminário Ações Afirmativas: Estratégias Discriminatórias?* [Seminar Affirmative Action: Discriminatory Strategies?] also occurred at the Instituto de Pesquisa Econômica [Institute of Economic Research] (IPEA), followed by the *Seminário Internacional Multiculturalismo e Racismo: O Papel da Ação Afirmativa nos Estados Democráticos Contemporâneos* [International Seminar Multiculturalism and Racism: The Role of Affirmative Action in Contemporary Democratic States], promoted by the Ministry of Justice in Brasília (Moehlecke, 2002, p.207).

19 Self-recognition of *quilombo* communities was legally protected by Convention 169 of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and inserted in Brazilian legislation by Decrees 143/2002 and 5051/2004. The regulation of the procedure for identification, recognition, demarcation and ownership of lands occupied by *quilombo* inhabitants is determined by decree 4887/2003 of the 20th of November, 2003, specifically under Article 68.

bo properties and, in the same year, during the fervour of the commemorations of the centenary of Abolition, the Fundação Cultural Palmares [Palmares Cultural Foundation] was also created, linked to the Ministry of Culture, with the purpose of promoting the cultural, social and economic values that resulted from the black influence on the formation of Brazilian society, with the function of developing actions that propitiated:

- a) To stimulate, put value and develop Afro-Brazilian culture and heritage;
- b) To develop actions in terms of inclusion and sustainability for the remaining *quilombo* communities;
- c) To conduct research, studies and survey data and information on the Afro-descendant population and, more specifically, concerning Afro-Brazilian culture and heritage. (Brasil, 1988)

In addition to these functions, the Fundação Cultural Palmares also became responsible for issuing certificates of recognition for *quilombo* communities. According to the Fundação Cultural Palmares, it is estimated that in the entire country there are 2,187 remaining *quilombo* communities whose certificates of recognition have already been issued; as of the 6th of June, 2013, there are 270 open cases and a further 556 communities identified as remaining *quilombos* that have not claimed recognition.²⁰ In 2003, by Decree 4883, responsibility for delimiting, regularising and assigning ownership of lands of *quilombo* communities passed to the Instituto Nacional de Colonização e Reforma Agrária [National Institute for Colonisation and Agrarian Re-

20 The complete lists can be accessed at the Fundação Cultural Palmares (2013) website. Available at: <<http://www.palmares.gov.br>>. Accessed on: August 2013.

form] (INCRA). However, the process of regulating the land must be forwarded to the INCRA by the communities interested, following issuance of the certificate of registration in the *Cadastro Geral de Remanescente de Comunidades de Quilombos* [General Register of Remaining *Quilombo* Communities] of the Fundação Cultural Palmares. The title deed issued to *quilombo* communities is collective, pro-indiviso and in the name of the residents' association. The land cannot be sold, auctioned or dismembered (Brasil, 2011).

The Statute of Racial Equality (2003-2006) provides the right of definitive ownership of land occupied by the remaining *quilombos*, reiterating the need for economic compensation and ownership of the land for the descendants of the *quilombolas* for the reparation of "injustices suffered." On the 12th of March, 2004, the *Programa Brasil Quilombola* [Brazilian *Quilombola* Programme] (PBQ) was launched in partnership with Seppir and the Fundação Cultural Palmares. The programme's goal was to consolidate State policies for *quilombo* lands. One outcome of the project was the creation of the *Agenda Social Quilombola* [*Quilombola* Social Agenda] (Decree 6261-2007), which has the following objectives: to guarantee access to land, education and health actions; housing construction, electricity and environmental restoration; to encourage local development; full coverage of *quilombo* families by social programmes like *Bolsa Família* [Family Allowance]; and preservation measures and the promotion of *quilombo* cultural events (Brasil, 2013).

Since then, Seppir considers that there has been a remarkable growth in *quilombo* demands, which are reflected in budgetary actions. The *Plano Brasil Maior – Plano Plurianual 2012-2015* [Greater Brazil Plan – Multiyear Plan 2012-2015] (PPA) –, in Item 2034 on Combating Racism and Racial Equality Promotion, provides for an investment of R\$ 313 million (£ 80 million/US\$ 133 million) to promote affirmative actions for the

population, for land regulation and the maintenance of services and programmes specifically aimed at *quilombo* populations (Brasil, 2012a).

University quotas

The most controversial affirmative action and the one with the greatest media and academic impact was the adoption of quotas for black students to enter Brazilian universities. In Brazil, this vindication was a long time coming. In 1968, technicians from the Ministry of Labour supported the establishment of measures that obligated companies to hire “people of colour” (Moehlecke, 2002, p.199), in varying percentages, according to demand and to the industry segment. The proposal did not even become a bill. According to the Instituto de Pesquisa e Estudos Afro-brasileiros [Institute for Afro-Brazilian Research and Studies] (2013), the first formulation of an affirmative action bill occurred in 1980, authored by then congressman from the *Partido Democrático Trabalhista* [Democratic Labour Party] (PDT) Abdias do Nascimento. The bill, which was given the no. 1332-83, advocated civil and political equality before the law for blacks in relation to the remaining ethnic segments of the population, through 20% reservation of vacancies for black women and 20% for black men in jobs in the public sector; wage equivalence between blacks and whites; study grants for black students; the alteration of school curricula aimed at inserting a positive image of Afro-Brazilians into textbooks and supplementary literature; mandatory classes on African civilisations and Africans in Brazil (Brasil, 1983).

The project followed the procedures of the Brazilian House of Representatives for some years without being approved. In 1995, representatives of the Zumbi dos Palmares March against racism, for citizenship and for life drafted a proposal for the cre-

ation of the *Programa de Superação do Racismo e Desigualdade Social* [Programme for Overcoming Racism and Social Inequality], with the following agenda: tax incentives for companies that adopted racial equality programmes; incorporation of the issue of colour in numerous information systems; a programme for the *Convenção sobre Eliminação da Discriminação Racial no Ensino* [Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination in Education]; the provision of grants for black adolescents from low-income families; access to and completion of primary and secondary education; the development of affirmative action to ensure access for blacks to vocational courses, university and areas of cutting-edge technology; a guarantee of proportional representation of racial ethnic groups in government communication campaigns and by entities that maintained economic and political relations with it (Marcha Zumbi, 1996).

The document was handed to the Federal Government on the 20th of November, 1995, Black Consciousness Day and the date of the tercentenary of Zumbi's death. On the same date, the government established the Grupo de Trabalho Interministerial [Interministerial Working Group] (GTI) that would act in the promotion and development of the black population. The following year, on the 13th of May, the Programa Nacional dos Direitos Humanos I [National Human Rights Programme] (PNDH I) was launched, which established the development of affirmative action for blacks to access vocational courses, university and areas of cutting-edge technology and compensatory actions that socially and economically promoted the black community by supporting private initiatives that fostered "positive discrimination" (Brasil, 1996, p.30).

For us to follow the trajectory that led to the institutionalisation of affirmative policies through "positive discrimination", it is important to mention again the World Conference Against

Racism in Durban in 2001. At the conference, on the 7th of September, a declaration and a plan of action were approved, directed towards the problem of racism and intolerance in the world. However, three days after the publication of the document, the World Trade Center was attacked, which had repercussions on public opinion regarding the Durban Plan of Action, in defence of tolerance and equal rights between ethnicities, religions and lifestyles. As the initial shock had passed, the guiding principles of the Durban Conference were positively assimilated by many countries, and policies to combat intolerance and racism were stimulated (Saboia; Porto, 2002, p.22).

This was also the case in Brazil, which introduced the discussion of affirmative action policies on its policy agenda. The preparations and the participation of a large delegation in Durban enabled broad and rich discussion on racism and intolerance, contributing to raising the

level of public awareness concerning the reality of racism and its effects. This seems to be the most important achievement of the conference for Brazil: to have succeeded in including the fight against racism as a task to be undertaken by Brazilian society. (Saboia; Porto, 2002, p.24)

In 2002, with intense debates and pressures by social movements, the Programa Nacional dos Direitos Humanos II (PNDH II) was launched, which contained virtually the same actions as the PNDH I from 1996. In September 2001, the Ministry of Agrarian Development and the INCRA were the first federal agencies to institutionalise a programme of affirmative action: reserving 45% of its employment vacancies for women, blacks and the disabled. In 2002, it was stipulated that all subcontractors that provided services for these agencies were required to reserve 20% of their vacancies for blacks. Since then, several seg-

ments have adhered to the quotas, particularly Brazilian public universities.²¹

On the 28th of April, 2004, then President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva sent Draft Law 3627/2004²² to Congress, proposing quotas in federal public universities of at least 50% of the vacancies for students whose pre-university studies occurred exclusively in public schools, 50% of which were reserved and destined for those who declared themselves black or indigenous.²³ The bill was finally approved as Law 12,711 (Brasil, 2012b), on the 29th of August, 2012. Thereafter, quotas are prescribed by law.

The challenge

Célia Maria Marinho de Azevedo (2004), a historian with extensive experience in research on the black population, posed the following question concerning racial affirmative policies: the abolition of racism or the right of a race? This was the dilemma that divided the opinions of intellectuals, experts in the fields of anthropology, history and sociology. The dilemma is: perhaps the quota system does contribute to abolishing “Brazilian racism”, but it could create distinct racial groups, which have always been absent from the nation’s characterisation. Thus, does

21 A full list of the 107 universities that have joined the quota system is available at the Fundação Cultural Palmares (2013).

22 There were already 28 bills in the House and 4 in the Senate dealing with quotas in federal institutions of higher education for candidates belonging to ethnic minorities and for strata of the population with low income levels (Pacheco; Silva, 2007, p.47).

23 Studies related to the creation of Draft Law 3627/04 were conducted by the Interministerial Working Group, with representatives from the Ministry of Education and Seppir. University administrators, teacher associations, student representatives and entities that develop courses for pre-university exams aimed at Afro-descendants and those from low-income families were consulted (Pacheco; Silva, 2007, p.48).

the implementation of racial affirmative policies, the processing of “positive discrimination”, not defile or destroy that which was a singularity of Brazil, it always having been a country of mixture, hybridity, of the anthropophagy of Oswald de Andrade, of the racial democracy of Gilberto Freyre? Does the emergence of “positive discrimination” work towards a future society that is universalist or does it delineate borderline, competitive, capitalist identities? (Azevedo, 2004, p.24-25) Do affirmative policies not create a new apartheid, encouraging prejudice and producing permanent situations of ethnic conflict? (Durham, 2003, p.66) Can the recognition of racial groups by the population based on a State anti-racist policy be undone by the same State when it eventually concludes that “positive discrimination” has achieved the desired effect? (Azevedo, 2004, p.25) Evidently, affirmative actions imply imagining a Brazil composed not of endless mixtures, but rather of tight groups: those who are and those who are not entitled to affirmative action, in this case, black and white (Maggie; Fry, 2004, p.68).

Among the intellectuals who have spoken out – in articles, texts, conferences or in interventions in the media – analysing and pondering reasons to at least question, if not reject, the reservation of racial quotas for admission to public universities, we can cite: anthropologists Peter Fry (UFRJ), Ricardo Ventura Santos (UFRJ and Oswaldo Cruz Foundation), Yvonne Maggie (UFRJ), Eunice Durham (USP) and Lilia Schwarcz (USP), political scientist Marcos Chor Maio (Fundação Oswaldo Cruz) and historians Celia Maria Marinho de Azevedo (UNICAMP), Monica Grin (UFRJ) and Manolo Fiorentino (UFRJ).

Generally these intellectuals argue that the quota policy will not bring about effective change. What should be attacked are the deep structures of society that promote inequality. The root of the problem is primary education. Their principal affirmation

is that the policies of quotas for blacks racialise the nation, which until now has constituted a raceless legislation in the country, thus instituting the Negro as a legal figure. Rather than ignoring race as a criterion for the classification and allocation of rights, the State enshrines it as a form of social definition, provoking the division of the country, as argued by Peter Fry (2003):

We would all like to see increasingly multicoloured public universities (the private ones already are). I also believe that the majority wants Brazil to eliminate racism in such a way that racial discrimination and the fear of it stop hurting so much. But the “solution” of quotas will increase the problems, not diminish them. Does anyone really believe that it is possible to correct the gross racial inequities at zero cost to the public purse? The real cost will be the consolidation of racialism, not the end of racism.

Marking this position contrary to the policy of quotas, on the 29th of June, 2006, the manifesto “Everyone has equal rights in the Democratic Republic” (Public Letter to Congress, 2006) was delivered to the then president of the Brazilian Senate. It was signed by 114 people,²⁴ including intellectuals, artists and activists of the Movimento Negro Socialista [Black Socialist Movement] (MNS).²⁵ The manifesto states that the policy of

24 The list includes: André Campos, Professor of History at UFF and UERJ; Angela Porto, historian, in-house researcher at Oswaldo Cruz/Fiocruz; Antonio Cícero, essayist and poet; Bernardo Kocher, Professor of the Department of History at FFU; Caetano Veloso, singer-songwriter; Gilberto Velho, Professor and Dean of the Department of Anthropology of the National Museum of UFRJ and a member of the Brazilian Academy of Sciences; Lilia K. Moritz Schwarcz, Professor of Anthropology at USP.

25 The representative of the MNS, Carlos Miranda, said the majority of the *Movimento Negro* supports quotas, but has abandoned the struggle for a more just and equitable society, and he assumes that such a policy will increase the conflict and opposition between blacks and whites (Moehlecke, 2002, p.211).

quotas and the Statute of Racial Equality implements an official racial classification for Brazilian citizens by creating privileges in commercial relationships with the government for private companies that adhere to quotas when hiring employees. Moreover, the Brazilian nation will begin to “define the rights of people based on the tone of their skin, by ‘race’. History has painfully condemned such attempts” (Public Letter..., 2006). It goes on to argue that the adoption of racial identities must not be imposed nor normalised by the State:

Policies directed at tight “racial” groups in the name of social justice do not eliminate racism and may even produce the opposite effect, thereby providing legal support to the concept of race and enabling the intensification of conflict and intolerance. The widely recognised truth is that the principal way to combat social exclusion is the construction of quality universal public services in education, health and welfare, particularly the creation of jobs. These goals can only be achieved by the joint efforts of citizens of all skin tones against odious privileges that limit the scope of the republican principle of political and legal equality. (Public Letter..., 2006)

In the book *Divisões perigosas: políticas raciais no Brasil contemporâneo* [Dangerous divisions: racial politics in contemporary Brazil], the authors consider that quotas represent a rupture from deeply seated concepts in the national imagination and see it as a threat.

The projects [of quotas and of equal status] intend, in short, to transform the Brazilian nation into a nation divided into two halves – one made of whites and the other of blacks. This is a proposal for social engineering that makes the racialisation of society legal and binding. (Fry et al., 2007, p.14)

For them, the positivity of the Brazilian past comes from the process of miscegenation, of hybridism, responsible for the peaceful process of national integration (Fry et al., 2007).

On the other hand, there was a movement determined to support university quotas and the entire racial affirmative policy. Anthropologists José Jorge de Carvalho (UNB), Kabengele Munanga (USP), José Carlos Gomes dos Anjos (UFGRS), Rita Segato (UNB) and Ilka Boaventura Leite (UFSC), sociologists Antonio Sérgio Alfredo Guimarães (USP) and Ilse Scherer-Warren (UFSC), economist Marcelo Paixão (UFRJ), physicist Marcelo Tragtenberg (UFSC), pedagogue Vanya Beatriz Monteiro da Silva (UFSC) and solicitor of the Federal University of Paraná (UFPR) Dora Lucia Bertúlio are some of the names that have gone public advocating racial quotas.

These intellectuals show examples of positive experiences in other countries; qualitative and quantitative data collected from surveys by the IBGE and the IPEA prove the existence of strong exclusion of blacks and mestizos in Brazilian society. Faced with this situation, the improvement of primary and secondary education as a solution to the problem of exclusion requires an enormous amount of time; they consider that racial prejudice exists and that if poor whites suffer discrimination, then blacks suffer twice as much due to their racial and socioeconomic status; it is hoped that the use of this instrument is transient, a passage for the construction of full citizenship in a democratic society. Ultimately, if it is true that Brazil has never legislated apartheid, “the theories and interpretations of race relations in Brazil have themselves always been racialised” (Carvalho, J. J., 2005, p.91). Kabengele Munanga, a militant from the Black Movement and a retired professor of Anthropology at USP, argues in favour of quotas as the only way to increase the black contingent in higher education, “releasing them from the situation of 2% in which they find themselves 114 years after the abolition of slavery in

relation to the white contingent, which alone accounts for 97% of Brazilian university students” (Munanga, 2003).

Five days after the manifesto against the projects of university racial quotas and the Statute of Racial Equality, in 2006, was delivered to the president of the Brazilian Senate, supporters of these measures made the same move. A manifesto, in favour of quotas and the Statute of Racial Equality, was written by Alexandre do Nascimento (member of the Coordination Of The Pre-University Movement For Blacks And The Poor), by Brother David Raimundo dos Santos (executive director of the Network Of Community Pre-University Courses: Education And Citizenship For Afro-Descendants And The Poor), and by José Jorge de Carvalho (anthropologist at UNB and one of those responsible for the project of affirmative action at this university). The manifesto received 330 signatures and was supported by more than 60 researchers from the area of Humanities and Social Sciences, including Selma Pantoja (UNB), Sidney Chalhoub (UNICAMP), Robert Slenes (UNICAMP), José Reginaldo Gonçalves Santos (UFRJ), Hebe Mattos and Daniel Aaron Reis (UFF) – and representatives of social movements from various regions of the country: Centro de Estudos e Defesa do Negro do Pará [Centre for the Study and Protection of Blacks in Pará] (Cedenpa), Coletivo Estadual de Estudantes Negros [State Collective of Black Students], RJ (Ceneg), Coletivo dos Estudantes Negros das Universidades da Bahia [Collective of Black Students of the Universities of Bahia], BA (Cenunba).

The manifesto in support of affirmative policy refutes the argument that the inclusion of black students through quotas will provoke an intensification of racial conflicts in universities. The text affirmed that this is an alarmist perspective and that instances of racism that emerge due to quotas would be resolved within the academic communities, with greater transparency and efficiency. Moreover,

The manifesto that firmly rejects the two laws (Affirmative Policy and the Statute of Racial Equality) under discussion presents no concrete alternative proposal for racial inclusion in Brazil, but merely reiterates that all are equal before the law and that it is necessary to improve public services until they attend all segments of society equally.²⁶ (Confirm..., 2006)

Epilogue

On the 15th of June, 2012, the auditorium of the Casa da Ciência [House of Science], in Botafogo (RJ), received geneticist Sergio Danilo Pena (Federal University of Minas Gerais) and historian José Murilo de Carvalho (Federal University of Rio de Janeiro) for a debate on recent developments in genetics and history, focused on individuality. The geneticist refuted the erroneous concept of race to classify Brazilians, and the historian, the determinist concept of history (Garcia, 2012). In the guise of an epilogue, we will comment solely on the work of the geneticist, since this is not the moment for us to enter into the methodological issues of history, as discussed by José Murilo de Carvalho.

Sergio Danilo Pena, the geneticist, based his arguments on the results of the research that he had been conducting since 1995 regarding the genetic characteristics of the Brazilian people. The method consists in verifying the Y trait, passed down from father to son, and the mitochondrial DNA, passed from the mother to all her children, “like a kind of time machine capable of identifying the contribution of whites, blacks and in-

26 See the full manifestos for and against quotas in *Folha de S.Paulo*, São Paulo, 4th of July, 2006. Available at: <<http://www1.folha.uol.com.br/folha/educacao/ult305u18773.shtml>>. Accessed on: August 2013.

digenous peoples to the genetic makeup of the population". In 2000, Pena published the article "Retrato molecular do Brasil" [Molecular portrait of Brazil], showing the result of the analysis of a sample of 147 Caucasian individuals.²⁷ The result revealed the surprising presence of 60% of Amerindian and African matrilineages in white Brazilians (Pena, 2000, p.20).

In 2004, a new article by Pena was released, this time co-authored by Maria Cátira Bortolini, within the context of the debate concerning racial quotas in Brazil (Pena; Bortolini, 2004). The general conclusion of the study was that there is an enormous black contribution to the formation of the Brazilian population, such that, in 2000, 87% of Brazilians in the sample presented at least 10% of African ancestry. Moreover, in Queixadinha, in Jequitinhonha Valley, northeastern Minas Gerais, only 73% of those classified as blacks presented a proportion of African ancestry greater than 50% (Pena; Bortolini, 2004, p.43). The data also showed that 48% of Brazilians with African descendancy, i.e. those who have African genetic ancestry, classify themselves as white. In the Southern region, more than two thirds (72%) of those with African descendancy consider themselves white. "The striking conclusion is that, in our country, over 90% have at least 10% of African ancestry" (Pena; Bortolini, 2004, p.43).

The authors concluded that the results of the research show that African descendents are greater in number than those that appear so based on their physical characteristics, reaching a staggering figure of 146 million people, and, on the other hand, many who identify themselves as black have a significant proportion of European ancestry that they received through the

27 The author informed us that only individuals who declare themselves white were used, because the black population had already been studied in the 1970s to determine the proportion of European genes in Brazilian blacks.

genetic load of their fathers, and many who identify themselves as white present black ancestry through the genetic load that they received from their mothers. “Thus, it is of no surprise that there are confusions and problems related to the criteria adopted to define who should benefit from affirmative action policies in Brazil” (Pena; Bortolini, 2004, p.45).

Thus, besides corroborating the thesis that scientific racial doctrines were always ill-conceived, the results of the research by Sergio Pena and Maria Cátira Bortolini further demonstrate that racial prejudice in Brazil, as we have seen throughout this chapter, does not arise from genetic ancestry.

Our racial distinction is not posited at the level of the genotype, but at that of the phenotype. Perhaps, for this reason, the black movement has been diminishing its use of the term Afro-descendant to designate black Brazilians. If we fully consider the research of the geneticist cited above, almost all of us, men and women, are Afro-descendants. But if we are “equal” in genetic origin, we present ourselves very unequally in social, political, economic and cultural spaces.

On this subject, we must reverse the order of things. If liberalism has accustomed us to treating the unequal equally, “affirmative actions” apply unequal modes of dealing with those who feel racial prejudice in their “skin”, as a form of historical redress. Affirmative policies provide the insertion of black contingents in the field of social, cultural and economic opportunities, and university quotas favouring their entry to university. In 2002, at the beginning of the debate, Kabenlege Munanga (2003), as we saw above, presented the following figures to substantiate the defence of university quotas: 97% of the students are white, 2% are black and 1% are others. Since then, these figures have changed: white students are now 31.1%, browns and blacks, 13.4% and 12.8%, respectively, according to the Ministry of Education 2010 Census. This is still disproportionate, con-

sidering that the white population makes up 47.7% and the black population, browns and blacks combined, comprises 50.1%, but the disproportion is already smaller than that seen in 2002. To say that affirmative policies racialise Brazil is a half truth. Racially affirmative action or “positive discrimination” deals with a country that has been racialised since we began speaking of a Brazilian nation, in the mid-nineteenth century.

Relations with the body in Brazil

Jean Marcel Carvalho França¹
Ana Carolina de Carvalho Viotti²

Sociologist and anthropologist Marcel Mauss (1872-1950), nephew of the renowned Émile Durkheim –, who had a great deal of influence on him –, wrote in his paper in 1935³ that with regard to the attitudes of the body, “each society has its own habits” (Mauss, 1974, p.403); such habits, as he clarified, do not vary “simply with individuals and their limitations; they vary mostly with societies, educations, conveniences and modes, with prestige” (Mauss, 1974, p.404).

In lands that gradually consolidate, as was the case in Brazil, the considerations of anthropologist Mauss are especially pro-

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3 Originally published in the *Journal de Psychologie*, v.32, n.3-4, 1935. Paper presented at the Société de Psychologie, Paris, on the 17th of May, 1934.

vocative, after all, there are few cultures in which the body, its exhibition, its maintenance and the use of the pleasures that it provides have occupied and occupy such a central role. At least, to cite but a few examples, that is what the travel accounts and colonial sermons, medical theses and novels of the nineteenth century, or electronic media of the second half of the twentieth and early twenty-first century confirm.

It is therefore logical to assume a true continent of relationships that Brazilians have historically maintained with their body. From such a broad territory, here we would like to map a small fiefdom: that referring to attitudes related to the health and disease of bodies. Briefly, it would not be wrong to say – as an initial hypothesis – that concerning the issue of the maintenance of the body and the healing of its ailments, over five centuries, we have created at least three major modes of understanding in Brazil, one of which is still in the process of consolidation. It is the history of these three modes that we seek to describe here in general terms.

The *mystical* body

In 1740, João Pedro Xavier do Monte, a Portuguese physician born in Santarém, had set out to print a paper entitled *O homem médico de si mesmo* [Man, doctor to himself], in which he stated, among other things, that “disease and sickness are more common in the world than doctors, and their injury is more rapid than medicine, and suffering from these diseases is more certain and easier than remedying them; in the whole world there are diseases and sicknesses, and in few parts of it are doctors found” (Monte, 1760, p.26). Xavier do Monte’s statement, halfway through the century of the Enlightenment, indicates the minimal presence of doctors among the Portuguese, up to that

time; and this was in the metropolis. Across the Atlantic, sometimes denominated Portuguese America, the absence of learned individuals is even more evident; in Brazil, they are a virtual unknown (Santos Filho, 1947, 1960, 1966, 1991). Despite this absence, the natives of the land, settlers and their slaves got sick, worried about their bodies and obstinately sought ways to ease their pain and prolong their lives. If it was difficult, almost impossible, and even undesirable to rely on physicians, where could they seek help and what steps should they take when faced with an eventual complaint?

Between the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the population resorted to religious people, especially the Jesuits, when their body was attacked by some illness. Although their action in the tropics primarily addressed the treatment of souls, the circumstances of the time led them to also treat the ailments of the body. Even cupping, which *a priori* was forbidden for religious practice, was permitted by special canonical legislation (Algunas..., p.45), given the need to care for the sick and fulfil the *Commitments of the Order*, dated 1516. The instructions concerning care of the body present in the *Commitments* included “rescuing captives and visiting prisoners, caring for the sick, clothing the naked, feeding the hungry, providing drink for the thirsty, sheltering travellers and the poor and burying the dead” (apud Russell-Wood, 1981, p.90).

For the religious, however, healing the sick was not only about treating sick bodies; they had to go further and also take care of the genuinely nodal part of the human being, the soul, as explained by the Archbishop of Bahia, Sebastião Monteiro da Vide (1642-1722): “since bodily infirmity often comes from the soul being sick with sin [...] when going to visit the sick, before you apply medicines to the body, first address the medicine of the soul” (Vide, n.d., p.74). Applying the medicine of the soul first, explains Vide, implied immediately praying for the patient

to rid themselves of their sins and ensure that they did not acquire others:

And likewise we order the so-called physicians and surgeons, under penalty of major excommunication and ten cruzados,⁴ applied in the aforesaid manner, that they do not recommend to the infirm, with regard to the health of the body, that which is dangerous for the soul. And we exhort all family members and relatives of the infirm that as soon as they get sick they send a note to the priest and persuade the sick to, indeed, confess their sins. (Vide, n.d., p.74)

In truth, this medicine was characterised as a set of practices that should be adopted permanently during one's entire life. We admit that taking care of the spirit from birth to death, adopting the correct conduct from a Christian point of view, so that even the body does not get sick, was no easy task.

From the onset, it was necessary to receive the sacrament of baptism, preferably at an early age. To ensure a place with God, as José de Anchieta (1534-1597) and many other known brothers affirmed, receiving the first of the sacraments was indispensable, since, in addition to initiating the sinner on the path to salvation, "it erased the malignancy of the disease" (Anchieta, 1933, p.180). Thus the religious strove "with the intention of preparing to receive the baptism [...], earnestly watching birthing mothers in order to baptise mother and child, hence attending to the salvation of the body and soul" (Breve..., n.d., p.147). In the eyes of these men of God, self-titled spiritual and corporal doctors, even illnesses that were considered incurable to the learned were to be excised by anointing with water, indicating

4 The Brazilian currency of the time.

the close relationship between conversion to Christian doctrine and the healing of bodies.

There are numerous passages in the religious missives concerning the implementation of the sacrament of immersion, passages that tell of the successes achieved by the converted; such was the case, for example, of a badly wounded man who, after being submitted to baptism and treated by a religious person, not only presented the healing of his festering wounds, but especially that of the wounds of his soul (Carta..., 2006). Hence, the priests of the Company tirelessly recorded that it is “wonderful to see how all those who are baptised heal” (Documentos para la historia argentina, 1927, p.89). Even in the face of death’s victory, an apparent failure of the healing process, the Jesuits drew positive lessons. Regarding a sick infant from the village of San Vicente in 1560, Anchieta reports, “we were presented with a small child almost ready to expire and were convincing the parents to baptise their child; they consented to this in good faith; we baptised the child, and a few hours later the child was taken to heaven” (Anchieta, 1933, p.110). Though in this case the gentle tiny baby did not foil death, according to the Brother it received, on departing early from a body subject to all sorts of sins, the prize of eternal life due to the intervention of baptism.

According to Father Jerome Rodrigues, the natives, incidentally gifted with an “animalistic spontaneity”, lacked any ability to behave socially, since “[...] whenever the urge to urinate takes them, that is where they do it, in the hammock, where they are eating, at the door [...] talking with someone and often at our feet, with hands and arms crossed without heed to what they do, nor even aware that it is such uncleanness” (Leite, S., 1940, p.238). It was however understood that, as souls that should be saved for God, up to the mid-seventeenth century, those born of the earth received special attention from religious people who offered them “spiritual aid, confessing and baptising them, and

bodily aid, bleeding and healing them, according to what each needed” (Anchieta, 1933, p.248).

Continuing in the seventeenth century, beginning with the increasing presence of Guinean Negros – the prevailing designation for slaves from Africa –, the gaze and requirements of the priests were also oriented towards them. The recommendations of Jesuit author André João Antonil indicated increasing concern with regulating the tasks and treatment of these slaves, recommendations that ranged from the mitigation of work when affected by some illness to attention to the sacraments at the hour of death:

When a slave falls ill, he should excuse him from work and put another in his place. He should also tell the planter so that he can have the sick man cured, and the chaplain so that he can hear his confession, or comfort him with the sacraments in the face of death, if the illness gets worse. He must take care not to yoke the oxen carts that have been heavily worked in the preceding days. Just as some rest must be given to the oxen and horses, so with greater reason must the slave gangs be allowed to rest from time to time. (Antonil, 1982, p.84)

For Antonil, it was not befitting of the masters that their slaves “be remembered as slaves when the work is being apportioned but then forgotten when they needed medicine and clothing” (Antonil, 1982, p.91). The Italian priest argues that

[...] the owner rightfully ought to give whoever serves him sufficient food, medicine when sick, and the wherewithal to dress himself decently, as befits the servile state, and not let him appear nearly naked on the streets. The owner should also regulate the work in such a way that it is not more than his labourers can perform, if he wishes them to last. (Antonil, 1982, p.90-91)

Another priest, the Lisbonian who settled in Bahia Manoel Ribeiro Rocha, sought to emphasise in various moments in his book, *O Etíope resgatado, empenhado, sustentado, corrigido, instruído e libertado* [The Ethiopian rescued, engaged, supported, corrected, instructed and liberated] (1758), that the care of the captive should not falter when he is useless for work, believing that if he were,

sick or old, that everything still applied, with greater reason we should keep him, because it is in the time of his greatest need that he calls on our deepest gratitude and obligation, such that acting otherwise we should rightly fear and dread the punishment. (Rocha, M., 1758, p.315)

Furthermore, Rocha asserts that an outburst of blows to the face of the slaves is not advisable during the application of some punishment, because

[...] it exposes them to the danger of causing some permanent deformity of the face and harm to their health, and perhaps even to their lives; this would be acting more like their executioners than their masters; and it is more like using the power of dominion to destroy them than economic punishment to correct them; and treating them harshly and severely will do injury to the slaves. (Rocha, M., 1758, p.208)

The indications of the religious people regarding caring for the slave are multiple: the master should watch over his property in sickness, concerning his sustenance, and should be frugal in the application of physical punishment, both to preserve his slave and regarding deliverance from guilt before God and before men.⁵ A

5 "Civil Law imposes severe and condign penalties on the holders of slaves, who are absent and who neglect their obligations, for those who do not aid them with food and medicines required in sickness, and in doing this forsaking them are to be totally stripped of their dominion" (Rocha, M., 1758, p.152-153).

decade before the publication of *Cultura e opulência do Brasil por suas drogas e minas* [Brazil at the dawn of the eighteenth century] (1711) and more than half a century before the publication of *O Etiópe resgatado...* (1758), Jorge Benci had already affirmed that “of all the natural assets, the only one that the slave enjoys is health”, which is why, in times of sickness, he deserves “greater compassion, since the state of the sick servant is more miserable than that of all other infirms” (Benci, n.d., p.74).

Preceding by little more than half a century, the *Economia cristã dos senhores no governo de escravos* [Christian economy of the masters in the government of slaves] (1705), one of the greatest preachers in Portuguese of the times, Father Antonio Vieira, availed himself of the slave as the protagonist, or rather as one of the central topics, of his writings. In works prior to his *Sermão XIV* [Sermon XIV], 1633, those subject to their masters still appeared only marginally in the descriptions of the New World, losing ground to the then known “grandeurs of Brazil”, as Ambrose Fernandes Brandão (1618) named them: the land and the heathen. Beginning with this sermon in 1633, among the *Irmandade dos Pretos na Bahia* [Brotherhood of Blacks in Bahia], the urgency and obligation of the master to treat the body – in its physical and spiritual dimensions – of slaves⁶ gained distinction. Considering that “there is no work or way of life in the world more like the Cross and Passion of Christ than yours [that of slaves] in one of these estates”, Vieira (1998) recommends that the captives, like the heathens and the remaining settlers, are incorporated “into Christ through faith and baptism” as a sign

6 “And what confusion, in contrast, will it be for those who call themselves masters of the estate, attentive only to temporal interests that they acquire with this inhumane labour, from their slaves, and from the souls of those wretched bodies, if they take such little care that they do not help them to praise and serve God, nor even to know Him?” (Vieira, 1998).

of repentance of their sins and the purification of their body and spirit.

Black or white, slave or free, it is noted that all the care with the body – gestures, acts, health or disease – is thus unavoidably filtered through the relationship with the spirit. In the late eighteenth century, Dr. Francisco de Melo Franco synthesises this relationship. In his words, the confessors

also know how the soul works on the body, and the body on the soul, they know how both communicate with each other, and are firm in their passions and acquire their virtues; and after understanding this unseen mechanism, this remarkable sympathy, they draw reliable conclusions, form correct judgments and apply not only moral, but also physical, remedies, or provide both so as to readily cure the sinners of their spiritual and bodily infirmities, and to direct them on the paths of the health of body and the salvation of the soul. (Franco, 1794, p.15-16)

Hence, once the moral remedies had been applied, it was necessary to move on to the physical remedies. In this matter, religious people and graduates had an arsenal of tools and limited and common formulas: besides the aforementioned blood-letting, purges were the most common treatments; together with patches, ointments, syrups, powders, suppositories, lickers, pills, eye drops, enemas, emetics, liquids, pastes and liqueur remedies.⁷ The Jesuits were also recognised for their mastery in handling drugs. Not by chance, in 1703, a French slave trader, who was passing through Rio de Janeiro, said: “the pharmacy maintained by this house is excellent: well decorated, neat and provided with all kinds of drugs. I believe that in all of France,

⁷ See, among others: Cunha, 2004; Leite, S., 1936, Gomes, 1974; Marques, 1999; Nava, 2003; Ribeiro, L. L., 1971; Ribeiro, M., 1997; Studart 1997.

we possess none that can compare to it. This pharmacy of the priests supplies all the others in the city” (*Journal d’un Voyage*, 2008, p.80-81).

Though armed with many remedies for the body, the perception that religious people have concerning the sick is sustained throughout the colonial period by the idea that what manifests on the outside is actually a mirror of the wounds of the soul. To put it another way, nothing would come of caring for the ills of the body if the soul is still suffering, particularly when it is due to moral defects or lack of diligence in the exercise of Catholicism. Although the quill of many priests has been wielded to discuss the medical field and a whole pharmacopoeia likely to be employed in combating diseases, their greatest legacy is the production of a kind of “theological medicine”. Works such as that of Angelo de Sequeira, who argued that “Saint Mary is the truly precious apothecary” (Sequeira, 1754, p.5) and that her deeds “surpass all the sciences and wonders of nature” (Sequeira, 1754, p.3), gained prestige and notoriety. It is therefore understandable that, in 1749, in Minas do Sabará, they piously believed that water of a holy lake was the most fruitful remedy against all sorts of ailments.

What is apparent, in short, is that for people of the colony the perception of their own bodies, whether healthy or sick, was sustained by a relationship with the sacred, or rather with the *mystical*. Even graduate surgeons, like José Antonio Mendes, counselled that for the treatment to be successful, “the sick [should] immediately receive confession and be sanctified, [...] commune, seeking God the Father and Master of all creation, since this is the best manner in which to vanquish the complaint” (Mendes, 1770, n.p.); finally, it would not be wrong to conclude that, for people of that time, religious ones and laymen, graduates or otherwise, taking care of bodies involved, first and foremost, resorting to moral remedies and caring for the soul.

The *medicalised* body

The first decade of the nineteenth century saw the birth of a new relationship with the body in Brazil, one relatively distant from that which was in force in the early centuries of the colony: the *medicalised* body, the body that gradually submits to a new manner of envisioning health and disease – the normal and the pathological, as it was then called –, the medical method (Santos Filho, 1960). Medicine lacked, as we shall see, any presence or prestige both in Brazil and in the remainder of the Kingdom until 1808, when John VI moved his court to Rio de Janeiro. According to Viceroy Luís de Vasconcelos e Sousa (1778-1790), in 1789, there were only four doctors in Brazil and surgeons were so few that a single professional, usually a charlatan with little or no training, was required to extend his clinical dominion over a radius of more than 300 leagues.⁸ All regulation of the activity was in the charge of the Chief Physician and the Surgeon-general of the Kingdom (Canguilhem, 2000), who, based in Lisbon, supposedly oversaw the exercise of the profession, granted licenses and gave notices of qualification for such exercise. In practice, this regulation did not exist on Brazilian soil. Here, the activity was exercised, with almost no competition, by religious people, bleeders, apothecaries and healers. Medical graduates were virtually an unknown category for Brazilians.

When John VI arrived in Rio de Janeiro in 1808, the situation began to change. In April of that year, the monarch, concerned about the health of his subjects – particularly that of his courtiers, who would not stop falling ill in the tropics⁹ – appointed the surgeon of the fleet, Antonio Joaquim da Rocha Nazarém, as

8 This is roughly equivalent to 1000 miles or 1600 kilometres.

9 Concerning the poor health of the courtiers settled in Rio de Janeiro, see: “Cartas de Luiz Joaquim dos Santos Marrocos, escritas à sua família em Lisboa, de 1811 a 1821” [Letters from Luiz Joaquim dos Santos Marrocos,

the master of anatomy of the Military Hospital, in order for him to minister therein a course on *ligatures, deliveries and surgical operations*. In 1809, the same surgeon was appointed professor of operative medicine and the art of midwifery. Thus, the Escola Cirúrgica e Médica [Surgical and Medical School] of Rio de Janeiro was created. In December of the following year, a royal order determined that three students be dispatched from the school in Rio de Janeiro to study in Edinburgh, which would be paid for by the Royal Treasury; this measure was expected to provide better teachers to compose the deficient faculty of the recently created school.

In 1812, executing a plan by Dr. Manuel Luis Alvares de Carvalho (Director of Medical and Surgical Studies for the Court of Brazil), the Escola Médico-cirúrgica [Medical-surgical School] was founded in Rio de Janeiro. The course taught by this institution lasted five years and its curriculum contained the following subjects: General Anatomy, Pharmaceutical Chemistry, Physiology, Hygiene, Etiology, Pathology, Therapeutics, Surgical and Operative Instruction, the Art of Midwifery and Medicine. The school granted the title of *approved surgeon* to those who followed the regular course and the title of *graduate surgeon* to students who, in the sixth year, repeated the materials taught in the fifth year. Finally, in 1832, crowning this series of efforts, the Escola Médico-cirúrgica was transformed into the Faculdade de Medicina do Rio de Janeiro [Rio de Janeiro School of Medicine]. The curriculum was reorganised and three courses were instituted: Pharmacy, Medicine and Childbirth.

Medical education consisted of fourteen disciplines, distributed from the first to the sixth year: Medical Physics, Medical Botany

written to his family in Lisbon, from 1811 to 1821.] In: *Anais da Biblioteca Nacional do Rio de Janeiro*, vol. LVI, 1934.

and Zoology, Medical Chemistry and Mineralogy, General and Descriptive Anatomy, Physiology, External Pathology, Internal Pathology and Pharmacy with the therapy and art of formulations, Topographic Anatomy with surgical medicine and appliances, Childbirth and the diseases of pregnant and parous women and the diseases of newborns, Hygiene and History of Medicine, Forensic Medicine, External Medicine and its respective Anatomical Pathology, and finally Internal Medicine and its respective Anatomical Pathology. (Holland, 1967, v.3, p.468)

Admission to the *faculdade* required the applicant to know philosophy, arithmetic, geometry and a foreign language, which could be Latin, English or French, wherein the latter was preferred. The title of Doctor of Medicine was conferred on sixth year students who publically defended a thesis written in the vernacular or in Latin. In its first two decades, the *faculdade* relied on strong interest and awarded its prestigious diploma to almost a hundred professionals.

Concurrently with the Escola Médico-cirúrgica and, later, the Faculdade de Medicina, the Sociedade de Medicina e Cirurgia [Society of Medicine and Surgery] of Rio de Janeiro, actuated since 1829, the institution, founded in June and implemented in April 1830, was extremely important for the consolidation of medical knowledge within Brazilian territory. The *sociedade*, which was transformed into an academy in 1834, worked on three main fronts: it fought for regulation of the profession and the punishment of charlatans; together with public bodies, it required greater participation by the medical fellowship in the elaboration of health policies; and it streamlined the publication of journals, books, treatises, translations and anything else that might serve to disseminate medical knowledge and improve the education of professionals in this

sector.¹⁰ Physician Alfredo Nascimento, during the centennial celebrations of the Academia de Medicina [Academy of Medicine], sums up the action of this body in the first decades of the nineteenth century in a panegyric tone:

The *academia*, instituted in the early period of the organisation of our homeland, was contemporaneous to this entire transformative phase of Medical Sciences. In those days, all the problems of public hygiene, the study of prevailing epidemics, the indication of means of prevention and cure, the population's health registry, issues of professional and pedagogical interest, medical-legal discussions, debates of clinical cases, pronouncements on matters of professional practice, problems of ontology and medical ethics, it all came from therein. (Nascimento, 1929, p.222-223)

This work of institutionalising and consolidating medical knowledge on Brazilian soil, work primarily developed by the *academia* from Rio de Janeiro, was performed in parallel with the elaboration of the public image of the health professional. We recall that during this period of the implementation and expansion of medical knowledge in the country, at least in its most populous cities along the coast, the physician had a very low social status and was rarely listened to regarding the relationships that individuals had with their bodies. The population,

10 The first medical journal launched in Brazil was entitled *O Propagador das Ciências Médicas ou Anais de Medicina, Cirurgia e Farmácia* [The propagator of medical sciences or Annals of medicine, surgery and pharmacy], published in Rio de Janeiro in 1827 by Dr. Francis Xavier Sigaud. Following *O Propagador* (1821-1828), the *Semanário de Saúde Pública* [Public health weekly] (1831-1833), the *Revista Médica Fluminense* [Medical Journal from the state of Rio de Janeiro], the *Revista Médica Brasileira* [Brazilian medical journal] (1841-1843), the *Anais de Medicina Brasiliense* [Annals of Brazilian medicine] (1845-1848) and finally *Anais Brasilienses de Medicina* [Brazilian annals of medicine] (1849-1884), were all published by the Sociedade de Medicina.

which for a long time had been isolated from the services of skilled professionals, did not see them as the only ones capable of ensuring their health and the preservation of their bodies. The above-mentioned religious people, apothecaries, bleeders, midwives and healers were much sought after and competed on equal footing, or even more favourably, with the few, poorly trained doctors that were exiting the benches of the medical schools, particularly from the Portuguese school of Coimbra.

Being aware of this situation, the medical class began constructing, together with the inhabitants of the court and the country, an image capable of ensuring them the necessary legitimacy to demand a monopoly on healing and control of bodies. The first point which attracted the attention of the category was related to the formation of their cadre; after all, well-trained professionals would not only perform their delicate functions better, but would also arouse in patients a wholesome confidence.

However, in the eyes of the fellowship, what did *good education* consist of? In general, it should meet at least two basic requirements. Firstly, it should provide professionals with a theoretical and conceptual framework that would allow them to have detailed and solid knowledge of their patients, knowledge of both organic problems and those of a spiritual nature. As Dr. Manoel de Castro Santos had recommended in 1846, in his work *A inteligência do homem explicada pelo sistema frenológico* [The intelligence of man explained by the phrenological system]:

[...] the purpose of medicine is to restore any physiological function to its normal state, [...] but [for this] it is necessary to know the patient [...], the laws that govern him, the constituent parts of his body, the influence of the physical on the moral and the relationship of the material with the spiritual. (Santos, 1846, p.10)

Good education, however, should not only equip professionals with knowledge restricted to their area of expertise; when effective, it must also provide them with a broad general culture and good capacity for expression, fundamental items to make their speech more persuasive, consistent and, consequently, one that carries greater authority. Concerning such a sensitive theme, in 1846, Dr. Antônio Teixeira da Rocha thus manifested:

And do not tell me that the doctor need not be eloquent to be perfect at his art, the talent of speech and writing clearly enter a great deal in the persuasion of truths, and medical truths are of paramount importance. Style contributes mightily to facilitating teaching and to assisting intelligence. The speaker or writer must have medical eloquence to persuade and style to facilitate. The art of speaking well is required to do no more than to carry conviction to many diseased, who when are pusillanimous [...] do not wish to be subject to therapeutic means. (Rocha, A. T., 1846, p.15-16)

However, the consolidation of the image of the health professional does not depend solely on *good education*. It was necessary, in parallel, to perform a kind of negative work, the work of combating *quackery*. Before the Court disembarked, the officials responsible for supervising the art of healing turned a blind eye to numerous practitioners working in the colony. Moreover, the Fisicatura [Portuguese Medical Tribunal], aware of the huge shortage of trained doctors (in the colonial period they never exceeded ten in number), conceded *permission* to *many surgical practitioners*. In 1808, a few months after the arrival of John VI, Englishman John Luccock weaves a very illustrative narrative of the situation:

[...] I believe that there was not a single physician, before the arrival of the Court, who had been regularly brought up in the medical

schools of Portugal. Neither were there any Surgeons, as a distinct branch of the profession; inferior operations were performed by barbers; the more important ones by men who are utterly ignorant of anatomy. The skill of the Apothecaries in ascertaining and curing disease was not superior to their acquaintance with the human frame. A detail of their absurd modes of treatment would excite incredulity, as well as wonder as to how patients escaped with life and limb. (Luccock, 1975, p.70-71)

From the arrival of the Portuguese monarch, the shortage of medical graduates, as well as the means to provide them with proper diplomas, was gradually overcome. The number of qualified doctors grew and the firm proposal to combat the ancient and varied practitioners of the healing arts was established among them. Thus, many measures were taken: greater zeal from the authorities was demanded regarding supervision of the profession; systematic disqualification of the activity of practitioners, associating them with barbaric behaviour and, at the same time, contrasting them with the rational, scientific and civilised procedures of trained professionals; and, above all, contrasting the speculative and self-serving activity of the charlatan with that of the *philanthropic* and detached physician. A curious and striking example of the latter strategy can be found in the novel *Os dois amores* [Two loves], by physician and writer Joaquim Manuel de Macedo, in the passionate tone with which the narrator compares the procedures of the charlatan and those of the physician:

[...] he who [...] wanders around healing his diseased, if he can, while maintaining sight only of ignoble interest; he who only lends his advice in exchange for gold, [...] this... is a mere merchant of remedies. But he who [...] makes no distinction between rich and poor, and only sees individuals who have need of his care; who

fights infirmities, competing against death day by day, hour by hour, moment by moment, in the field of life; he who bravely invades the atmosphere of pestilence; he who exposes himself with martial prowess to the deadly contagion, breathing here miasmatic and poisoned air, bathing there in fetid and poisonous sweat, to charitably bring aid to the miserable, from whom he knows he will receive not one farthing; he who is never discouraged, even in this living labour, before the monster that many thousand times wounds the physician's heart – ingratitude; – he whose patient conforms to the impertinence of childhood, to the caprice of old age and to the modesty of virginity; he who knows not only in man the ailments of the flesh, who understands and also speaks the language of sensibility, the eloquent utterance of the soul; he who has [...] upon his lips salutary consolations with which to mitigate the torments of the miserable, and in his heart a grave to eternally encase the secrets of families; yes this... this is a physician. (Macedo, 1964, p.8-9)

Combating the charlatan, as one can see, not only sought to discredit this noxious and dangerous *usurper* of rights, but also aimed to exalt the talents of trained professionals. By opposing religious people, unknowing of science, the mercenary healer, the barbaric shaman, the unqualified midwife, the coarse apothecary, the ignorant bleeder, physicians could, in one stroke, eliminate the competition and simultaneously emphasise their sound scientific knowledge, their humanitarianism, their devotion to the cause of life and their concern for the health and welfare of bodies that inhabited the cities. Hence the decisive character of this struggle was to elaborate the public image of the health professional, to show how crucial it was to definitively assert the physician as the only one capable of promoting healing and preserving bodies.

Sketched, at the end of this rapid journey, is the image of the *ideal physician*, constructed throughout the first half of the

nineteenth century, but that would live on in Brazilian culture: they should have a profound knowledge of their science, be endowed with good general culture and ease of expression, show no distinction in their interest in the health of rich and poor, and above all treat their profession as a *true priesthood*. The slow and gradual consolidation of this image among Brazilians depended, one must not forget, on the institutional structuration of medicine. It was only to the extent of which the number of graduates increased and the means to educate them on national soil were created that the category gained strength, organised itself and improved control of its members, thus legitimating its authority as the bearer of truth concerning disease and concerning cure. In turn, it was due to the support of this growing authority that the category began demanding, with increasing force, greater attention from the authorities regarding their needs: better schools, more hospitals, greater participation in public health policy, improved control of the profession and so forth.

Both processes, however, are insufficient to explain the success of medicine in Brazil from the nineteenth century onwards – in Brazil and, in some ways, throughout the Western world (Foucault, 2001, 1984). Stated more clearly, neither the consolidation of the image of the health professional nor the improvement in the organisation of the fellowship alone can convincingly explain the immense presence and penetration of medical knowledge on Brazilian soil, its gradual, but powerful and long-term, dominion over the bodies of the population. To understand such an intense and rapid rise, it is necessary to broaden our perspective a little and include therein the strategies for organising the local society that began with the landing of the monarch in 1808, civilising strategies, as they were called.

One of the first actions of John VI, upon settling in Rio de Janeiro in 1808, was to order the Chief Physician, Manoel Vieira da Silva, together with other professionals, to conduct a study

on the state of the health of the city, which indicated the main sources of disease and the means of eliminating them. Months later, in response to the monarch's demands, Vieira da Silva produced a report which indicated two types of causative factors for the ills that afflicted the capital: natural and unnatural. The first group included the weather (hot and humid) and the geography of the city (surrounded by marshes that exhaled miasma and by hills that hindered the circulation of air). In the second group – the one that combined the factors that, *because they were the work of men, could meet their end by the hand of men* –, the doctor included contamination of the air by graves installed in churches and makeshift, poorly maintained graveyards, poor quality of food available for consumption, insalubrity of the streets and the port and, moreover, neglect of the victims of the activities of licensed medical practitioners, an almost unknown population. Faced with this situation, Vieira da Silva advised, the most prudent and beneficial action would be to promote sanitary control of the city conducted by those who best understood the subject, namely physicians (Silva, 2008).

Based on the physician's suggestion, John VI established, in 1809, the post of Chief Health Provider of the Coast and States of Brazil. The occupant of this post, who incidentally was Vieira da Silva, should coordinate all efforts related to the maintenance of public hygiene. The terms of the decree, responding to the call of the Chief Physician, consider that the matter in question is

[...] very much like people versed in the science of medicine in that it has all the intelligence of that which undertakes the preservation of health and the necessary knowledge to provide measures adapted to cases that occur in this matter of such importance [...].
(apud Machado, 1978, p.164)

The creation of the Health Provider met one of the requirements of the Fisicatura: it filled the vacancy of an organ that, controlled by physicians, elaborated and coordinated the health policy of the Court and the country; its work, however, left much to be desired. Throughout the period when, under the rule of Dr. Manoel Vieira da Silva, the organ did little to increase the participation of the medical class in knowledge processes and the hygiene of the city and its inhabitants. Equally ridiculous was its actuation in favour of the category: it did not promote the implementation of medical school education, it did not edit a single specialised journal or newspaper, nor did it intensify the fight against quackery. In 1828, due to the extinction of the position of Chief Physician, the institution was controlled by the City Council. Through its inspectors, it was up to the new management to inspect apothecaries, commercial trade of drugs and foodstuffs, to promote the hygiene of public places and control the exercise of the medical profession. Once again, the health policy of the city was demedicalised, excluding the medical class from decision-making in the sector.

The category, now organised around the Sociedade de Medicina e Cirurgia, reacted immediately to the retreat. Their criticisms of this new policy of public health were numerous, criticisms that gained increasing visibility as City Council inspectors proved themselves incapable of controlling the many epidemics that ravaged the capital: monkey fever, between 1828 and 1835; smallpox, from 1834 to 1835; the flu, in 1835; measles, from 1834 to 1835; and yellow fever, in 1828 and from 1839 to 1840. Taking advantage of the atmosphere of near panic that was generated among the city's inhabitants and administrators, physicians sought to exploit the incompetence of the City Council's inspectors to promote hygiene on the streets, to control food quality, to supervise the port, to control the activity of healing, to oversee apothecaries, and finally, they sought to exploit the

inability of the inspectors to formulate an efficient and comprehensive health policy. However, the doctors did not stop there. In parallel with the criticisms, they brought to light their alternative project for sanitising the urban space, a broad project that promised much for the city's administration.

We recall that in this era, the 1830s, the court, the administrative laboratory in the country, was undergoing a particularly troubled period, because the population had grown so much and in a disorderly manner, which produced devastating effects on public health. It was also a troubled time because political tension was high, criminals and the unemployed were numerous, prostitution was spreading rapidly, in short, because there were more than a few outbreaks of *social disorder*. We also remember that, in the same period, the efforts of the local administration designed to *educate* the inhabitants of the capital, to provide them with orderly and productive habits, had intensified.¹¹ It was amid this scenario of changes and adjustments that the medical fellowship presented their *project* of sanitation and organisation of the urban space, of an ideally wholesome society with disciplined bodies. In 1836, in the opening speech of his course of Forensic Medicine, when explaining to his disciples the utility of medical knowledge, Dr. Cruz Jobim provides us with a rough idea of how audacious a project it was:

The utility of medical and natural sciences, whose object is profound knowledge of the organism and the bodies that exert any influence on ours, would be restricted if they eventually only prompt us to understand the nature of diseases and the means of curing or preventing them in every member of society. This knowledge becomes more important and necessary to the extent that this

11 Regarding the *civilising process* that was initiated in Rio de Janeiro from 1808, see: França, 1999.

science is applied to the needs of the social body [...]. It is from medicine, and the ideas it provides, that legislators from all countries have sought to extract the foundations of a large number of laws. The more valid and stable they are, the more they are based on the knowledge of human nature and its true needs [...]. (Jobim, 1836, v.II, p.20)

There were two principal objectives of this daring enterprise of the medical fellowship. Firstly, to get to know the cities in great detail and, from there, formulate rational and competent health policies, in short, care for the social body. To this end, several measures were undertaken: *standing committees*, appointed by the Sociedade de Medicina, which organised demographic health and obituary tables for Rio de Janeiro (the initial target of intervention); members of the same society offered free consultations and distributed medicines to the needy, in order to attract them to investigate their illnesses and their way of life; groups of physicians roamed the city streets and promoted a detailed survey of potential sources of insalubrity; and, principally, numerous reports were forwarded to the authorities demanding action and suggesting solutions for hygiene problems in the capital and, later, the country.

Secondly, to combat certain *vices* entrenched in the *modus vivendi* of Brazilians and, at the same time, to promote the adoption of healthier and more productive habits, especially in relation to the treatment and use of the body. This objective is of particular interest here because it is intimately related to the strategies of vigilance – and the induction towards self-vigilance – and control of the body that, since then to an increasing extent, have become abundantly present in the routine of Brazilian society and have begun to influence, sometimes decisively, the ways Brazilians deal with their own bodies. What can we expect from the body? What vices should be avoided to best conserve

it? Should pleasures be limited so that the body is not resentful? What to eat? What to wear? How and where to live? What care should be taken when the body is burdened by any illness? These and other anxieties concerning the best way to prevent disease and maintain a healthy, productive, attractive and long-lived body began to increasingly torment the soul of Brazilians, concomitant with the certainty that physicians were best able to placate them.

The physician, thenceforth, actuating inside houses, colleges, prisons, clubs, schools and countless other social spaces, provided a decisive impulse to the broad process of the change in habits that urban Brazilian families had experienced, especially during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Opening houses to life outside, alteration in their operating regime, reformulation of the female routine, the weakening of parental authority, in short, what many historians have called the *Europeanisation of habits* or *modernisation of customs* involved the active participation of doctors of medicine, with their commitment to dethroning the supposedly unhealthy habits inherited from the colonial past and introducing a new economy in dealing with the body, to be more productive, orderly and rational – scientific, as we have learned to believe in over time.

Somehow, in their eagerness to assert themselves as the masters of truth concerning disease and healing, physicians dreamed at that time of a body – social, inclusive – free from all manner of physical and moral pathologies. It was in the name of a sanitised society that they provided opinions concerning the organisation of institutions, the best way to control prostitution and disinfect prostitutes, the education of children and youth, the cleanliness of public places and commercial establishments, and even food and the clothing of men, women and children. It was in its name that they sought, and largely succeeded, to mould Brazilian bodies, or rather to mould the relationship that Brazilians had

with their own bodies. After all, they were times in which one believed in the unlimited powers of medicine, in the unlimited powers of said *scientific knowledge*.

The young body

Admittedly, in these nearly 200 years of existence and self-assertion, the knowledge of these hopeful doctors concerning the body had yet to lead to an understanding of the long-touted human nature and how best to preserve it, or to the stipulation of more adequate and more rational rules for the organisation of Brazilian society.¹² Luckily for the category, however, society had questioned them less and less concerning such thorny issues. The expectation of “laypeople” towards them had been directed elsewhere; the common man is willing to detail his life for doctors, listening to their indiscreet opinions and abiding by the prescriptions of physicians and psychiatrists, as long as it brings with it hope, not to attain an understanding of human nature nor to live in a society free from tension, but simply to have a longer-lasting body and to maximise the vigour (and beauty) of youth.

To the regret of some, however, the realisation – though slightly wry, it is true – of the nineteenth-century dream of establishing the supremacy of the medical discourse in that which pertains to individuals’ relationship with their bodies coincides with two other processes that are not so auspicious for doctors. It is true that the gradual hygienisation of society has brought with it the cure or control of a number of ills that have pestered human life for centuries – we recall, for example, the benefits brought about by mass vaccination, asepsis of treatment-relat-

¹² On the expansion of medicine in the twentieth century, see: Rosen, 1980; Brownlee, 2009.

ed environments and the cure of diseases or health impacts on populations provided by the elaboration of certain drugs – and it has provided greater longevity to those who could access health services. It was, above all, thanks to such constantly renewed advances that doctors of all varieties have achieved relative success in their mission to sanitise society, and that many of the norms that individuals began resorting to, in order to organise their everyday lives are impregnated with hygiene recommendations. It is far from a coincidence, for example, that the Internet has more websites with tips on health and well-being than with pornographic content. Today it is easier for children and young people to be lured by a pharmaceutical product, functional food, a vitamin or a cleansing tea rather than an erotic article. Nor is it by chance that in recent times the major newspapers have started to devote pages, sections and even entire supplements to tips and reports supported by the opinion of infallible “doctors” and “experts”, which are directed towards the health and the physical and mental “equilibrium” of their readers. We are, in short, as the doctors dreamed of in the nineteenth century, reeking of “medical truths”.

But the supposed advances have also had perverse outcomes that were not foreseen in the medical dream of producing an entirely medicalised body. They have expanded, for example, the standard of requirements of users of medical services: the demands for greater and greater longevity have intensified and, as if that were not enough, they have begun to be accompanied by an additional *need*, the much touted *quality of life* – quantity with quality. To make matters worse, these growing demands, both uncertain and difficult to meet, coincide with what is conventionally called the *crisis of scientific paradigms*, that is, the dissemination of the feeling that science is incapable of filling the seat once occupied by religion and of providing satisfactory

answers for our concerns about the world, including those related to the body, its conduction and its preservation.

These perverse outcomes, potentiated by an unprecedented crisis of scientific knowledge, have brought back an old problem that had long seemed surmounted: the rivalry with the formerly denominated charlatans. The name has changed, of course; we no longer speak of quackery, rather of *complementary medicine*, *alternative medicine* or even *integrative medicine*. Charlatans also no longer exist; the new actors are acupuncturists, physical therapists, therapists of every kind and a number of other professionals, eager to question and *complement*, with legitimacy, the knowledge and practice of physicians. Unlike the competitors of yore, these have now sat on the benches of universities and, wherever possible, have adopted the nomenclature and said scientific procedures, i.e., they have sought, at least apparently and tangentially, to legitimise themselves within the criteria required by institutionalised discourses on the body, namely, the medical discourse (Aldridge, 2004; Kelner; Wellman, 2000; Natelson, 2008; WHO, 2005).

It is, of course, the rivalry with these competitors approved by university knowledge – who doctors insist we regard as a renewed variance of the old quackery – that has motivated the category, once again appealing to the powers of the State, to attempt to pass laws that prohibit or subject to medical authority and approval the many *diagnoses*, *therapies* and *interventions* directed towards the body that are proposed and controlled by nonphysicians. A quick look at the controversial *Ato Médico* [Medical Act], vetoed not long ago by the presidency, but still the subject of heated discussions, imparts the dimension of what is at stake:

Article 1 The practice of medicine is governed by the provisions of this Act.

Article 2 The object of the work of physicians is the health of human beings and human collectivities, in whose benefit they should act with the utmost zeal, to the best of their professional ability and without discrimination of any kind.

Single paragraph. Physicians will develop their professional actions in the field of health care for:

- I – the promotion, protection and recovery of health;
- II – the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of diseases;
- III – the rehabilitation of the sick and disabled.

Article 3 The physician, as member of a healthcare team that assists the individual or collective, will act collaboratively with other health professionals that comprise the same.

Article 4 The following are activities exclusive to physicians:

- I – the formulation of nosological diagnoses and the respective therapeutic prescription;
- II – the indication and implementation of surgical intervention and the prescription of pre- and postoperative medical care;
- III – the indication and implementation of invasive procedures, whether diagnostic, therapeutic or aesthetic, including deep vascular access, biopsies and endoscopies;
- IV – tracheal intubation;
- V – the definition of an initial ventilatory strategy for invasive mechanical ventilation, as well as the necessary changes when confronting clinical complications;
- VI – the supervision of the programme of discontinuation of mechanical ventilation, including tracheal extubation;
- VII – the implementation of deep sedation, anaesthetic blocks and general anaesthesia;
- VIII – the issuance of reports of endoscopies and imaging examinations, of invasive diagnostic procedures and anatomopathological examinations;
- IX – the indication of orthotics and prosthetics use, except orthotics for temporary use;

- X – the prescription of ophthalmic prostheses and orthoses;
- XI – the determination of prognoses relative to nosological diagnoses;
- XII – the indication for admission and discharge from medical health care services;
- XIII – the performance of specialized medical inspection and forensic examinations, except for laboratory tests for clinical, toxicological, genetic and molecular biology analyses;
- XIV – the medical certification of health status, disability and illness;
- XV – the certification of death, except in cases of natural death in a location where there is no physician.

And further on, it reads:

Article 5 The following are exclusive to physicians:

- I – the direction and management of medical services;
- II – the coordination, specialised inspection, audit and supervision immediately and directly related to activities exclusive to physicians;
- III – the teaching of specific medical disciplines;
- IV – the coordination of undergraduate courses in medicine, residency programmes and post-graduate courses specific to physicians.

Single paragraph. The administrative direction of health services does not constitute a function exclusive to physicians.

Article 6 The designation of “physician” is exclusive to higher-education graduates in medicine and the exercise of the profession of those enrolled in the Regional Medical Council that holds jurisdiction over the respective unit of the Federation.

Article 7 Among the powers of the Federal Council of Medicine is the editing of rules concerning which procedures can be practiced by physicians, which are prohibited and which can be practiced on an experimental basis. (Brasil, 2013a)

The caution of doctors is not unreasonable, at least from the angle of a category that is passionate about its secular control over the production of truth related to the body. The advancement of alternative therapies is not only remarkable but reinserts in the scene a matter which, in its own way, was known to the settlers of the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, one related to the ills of the soul and their impact on the body. The empire of psychosomatic pathologies, about which physicians still have little to say, but which seem to be old friends of the yogis, the neurolinguists, the holistic practitioners and a handful of other healers who have emerged in recent decades. Hence the numerous treatments available on the market for those ills that plague the body, causing pain and discomfort, but which appear not to furnish; those ills which ultimately refer to a kind of moral deviation, to poor conveyance of the soul, that need a specific intervention – moral, spiritual, sentimental, especially not limited to the physical body – to be corrected.

Beside these diseases of the soul that haul the body along with them, doctors are faced with another little-known territory: one related to bodily changes of an aesthetic nature, or rather relative to the valuation of aesthetic parameters as indicators of health and longevity. What is at issue here is the production of an ideal body from the point of view of beauty, but also (leaner, more agile, more productive...) social operability. There is admittedly a portion of this territory that is entirely dominated by physicians: that of cosmetic surgeries.¹³ However, in neighbouring plots of this territory, their presence and authority is relative; it is constantly questioned and, it seems, diminishing. It is the realm in which nutritionists and their miscellaneous diets, tattoo artists with their artistic interventions, personal trainers and

13 See Loeb, 1993; González-Uolla, 1985; Santoni-Rugiu, 2007; Wolfenson, 2005.

their miraculous programmes, beauticians, masseurs, aesthetic dentists and so many others proliferate, all bearers of a truth about the body, and each with their own methods to model it according to the client's taste – a socially determined taste, of course.

We have, therefore, a paradoxical situation: on the one hand, never before has medical knowledge concerning the body had such impact and penetration – from private check-ups to broad public health policies, the presence of physicians and their prescriptions as intermediaries between the individual and their body became widespread in Brazil between the nineteenth and twentieth centuries; on the other hand, for various social reasons, including a subtle but profound failure of the Enlightenment, belief in science and a persistent and growing demand for better results – better *performances* –, medical knowledge is being challenged on all sides – after all, many promises have been frustrated –, which casts suspicion on its practices and has paved the way for the emergence of a number of contenders who are interested in at least sharing with the physicians, sons of Hippocrates, the right to produce a truth about the body.

Language in Brazil: variation and multilingualism¹

Cristina Carneiro Rodrigues²

This essay aims to examine notions rooted in the Brazilian imagination regarding the spoken language in the country and to question some widely accepted ideas concerning this theme. The first of these is the belief that Portuguese has always been the nation's language; the second is that a homogeneous language is spoken from Oyapock to Chuy, and the discussion concerning the heterogeneity of Portuguese leads to the final point, which is the issue of linguistic prejudice.

Contrary to what many people think, the arrival of Pedro Álvares Cabral in Brazil, in 1500, did not mean that the roots of the Portuguese language were quickly established. When the Portuguese decided to send a ship to the King with the news that they had “found” land, they left two exiles here to learn the language of the native inhabitants, so that, in the future, they would act as

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línguas or “tongues”, as interpreters were called. According to Rodrigues (2006), it is estimated that about five million indigenous speakers of 1,175 languages lived in the territory at that time. Two of these languages were used along almost the entire Atlantic coast: Tupi, on the coast where the State of São Paulo is today, and Tupinambá, spoken in what is now a region that spans from Rio de Janeiro up to the mouth of the Amazon River.

Considering that these languages were very similar to each other, contact between the indigenous populations and Europeans was made possible; this was because foreigners only had to learn one of them to be able to communicate along most of the Brazilian coastline. This fact did not favour the establishment of the Portuguese language, nor did it require the creation of a *pidgin* – a simplified, usually “precarious” system of communication used exclusively for contact between speakers who have no language in common –, as was the case in countless situations of language contact all over the world between inhabitants of the land and settlers.

Portuguese colonisation initially stick to the coast, meaning that the language learned at one point along the coast served in almost all the other places, which is why the indigenous language was widely used. Even catechesis, promoted by the Jesuits from 1549 onwards, did not favour the spread of Portuguese, because the religious order also sought to master the language spoken in the region. Upon their arrival, as well as learning the language of the land, Jesuits began to translate the catechism into the indigenous language, such that the first translations made in Brazil used Portuguese as a source language. In 1595, the *Arte da gramática da língua mais usada na costa do Brasil* [Art of the grammar of the language most used along the coast of Brazil] was published in Coimbra. In this work, priest José de Anchieta elaborated a grammar for the language, thus systematising Tupi, which they named Brasilica. In 1618, *Catecismo*

da língua brasílica [Catechism in the Brasilica language]³ was published in Lisbon, an adaptation of Christian doctrine for indigenous populations used as a working tool in catechesis.

The colonisation of Brazil happened in different ways; the extremes of Portuguese rule, the coasts of São Paulo and Maranhão, received fewer immigrants and thus were the places where the most intense forms of miscegenation occurred. Elsewhere, from Rio de Janeiro to northeastern Brazil, relations between indigenous populations and Europeans were not so peaceful, and Tupinambá-speaking peoples were being decimated as early as the sixteenth century.

In São Paulo, interaction between the Tupi and Portuguese occurred both on the coast and in the countryside. Since the first settlers were men, they procreated with women from the land, though their offspring often only spoke their mothers' languages. As time passed, the Tupi were extinguished as an independent people, the mestizo took over the activities of their European fathers, new Portuguese immigrants arrived in the territory and the language spoken by this new society began to change. This language, referred to by Rodrigues (1996) as the *língua geral paulista* [general Paulista⁴ language], was used from the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries by inhabitants of the region and was taken by them on their forays into the countryside of the Brazilian states of Minas Gerais, Goiás, Mato Grosso, Paraná and Rio Grande do Sul.

Similarly, in the Amazon and in Maranhão, a population of mestizos developed who spoke the language of their Tupinambá mothers; however, this process was initiated later in the seventeenth century, when the states of Maranhão and Grão-Pará

3 Available at: <<http://biblio.etnolinguistica.org/barbosa-1952-catecismo>>.

4 *Paulista* is an adjective that simply refers to all things deriving from the State of São Paulo.

were created. Similar to what happened in São Paulo with Tupi, the language began moving away from Tupinambá, and a general Amazonian language penetrated the territory via the Amazon River tributaries.

Thus, in Brazil, there was a situation of widespread multilingualism up to the eighteenth century, with the use of Tupi or Tupinambá for catechesis, a predominance of Portuguese in the central coastal area, Spanish along the southern coast – since this area had been assigned to the Spanish crown in the Treaty of Tordesillas –, the use of general languages in São Paulo and from Maranhão throughout the Amazon and the continued use of hundreds of indigenous languages in the interior of Brazil. The picture diversified further with the arrival of numerous African languages brought to Brazil by African slaves, who were initially put to work in the large sugar-producing estates in the northeast, followed by numerous services throughout the territory. Completing the scenario, other European languages were used during the colonial period, though for shorter periods and in specific places: French was used along the coast of Rio de Janeiro from 1555 to 1567 (Antarctic France) and in Maranhão from 1612 to 1615 (Equinoctial France) and the Dutch brought their language during their occupation of northeastern Brazil between 1630 and 1655.

The language of administration and communication with the metropolis, however, had always been Portuguese. This language of prestige – previously systematised by the grammar of Fernão de Oliveira, 1536, and João de Barros, 1540 – is that of Portugal's period of great prosperity and long travels and was used by writers, poets and playwrights, such as Sá de Miranda, Camões, Gil Vicente and Antonio Ferreira.

After the period of Spanish dominion that ended in 1640, Portugal experienced a regime of absolutist monarchy, during which the kings attributed a great deal of power to ministers.

Among these, the best known was Sebastião José de Carvalho e Melo, the Marquis of Pombal, a statesman of Joseph I, King of Portugal, between 1750 and 1777. Pombal had a project to ensure the riches from the colonies were of benefit to Portugal, and thus he fought powers that he considered parallel to that objective, such as the Society of Jesus. While seeking to undermine the power of the Jesuits in the colony, in 1758 he imposed by decree that Portuguese be used as the language of teaching and, in 1759, he finally expelled the Jesuits from all Portuguese dominions.

Researchers, like Callou et al. (2006, p.266), are not convinced that Pombal's decree was decisive in eradicating the use of other languages in Brazil. Their argument considers the educational structure of colonial Brazil: decades after the decree, the system was still incapable of fulfilling the determination to teach Portuguese to the entire population. Only white men and socially accepted brown men had some access to public education. It is estimated that in 1818, only two and a half percent of men had free access to schooling in São Paulo (Vital, 2001, p.306).

Certainly the decree was not responsible for ending the use of the general Amazonian language, which continued to be widely used up to the nineteenth century. According to Freire (2004, p.247), when the political unit of the State of Maranhão and Grão-Pará was instituted in the region, the metropolis and the Church also intervened to pursue a linguistic unit. The multilingualism that characterised the region moved toward bilingualism, in which the vernacular was the indigenous language, and the other, the general language. After a long process, the general language was adopted and monolingualism reigned. On the one hand, this policy facilitated the occupation of the Amazon, but on the other hand it contributed to the extinction of numerous languages because it permitted the exchange of the initial monolingualism of the language of the indigenous community by the

primary monolingualism of the general language, and then by Portuguese. This exchange occurred following Grão-Pará being split into two provinces, Pará and Amazonas, in 1823, both subordinate to Brazil, which had been independent from Portugal since 1822. Migration to the Amazon, especially by *nordestinos*⁵ involved in the production of rubber, the navigation system based on steam ships and the urbanisation process all contributed to the spread of Portuguese. The indigenous languages were used in the villages, but, in terms of men going out to work, they encountered Portuguese being used in urban areas, while the general language which was initially used in these two spaces, over time, was abandoned in favour of Portuguese.

Freire (2004) does not describe a harmonious coexistence between languages and cultures in contact in the Amazon. Quite the opposite, conflict occurred; the general language was discriminated against as a dominated language, spoken by indigenous populations and mestizos. Portuguese was the language of literacy and the administrative system, which endowed the population with greater cultural and political weight. In addition, two events, the Cabanagem⁶ and the Paraguayan War (1864-1870), contributed to accelerating the process of diminishing the speakers of the general Amazonian language. The movement of the “cabanos” or “Tapuios”, who were dissatisfied with their lifestyle and work conditions, was harshly repressed. It is estimated that between 30 and 40 thousand individuals died in the five years of repression, the majority being speakers using the general language. Although the proportion was much

5 Brazilians from the northeastern states of Alagoas, Bahia, Ceará, Maranhão, Paraíba, Pernambuco, Piauí, Rio Grande do Norte and Sergipe.

6 Cabanagem (1835-1840) was a social revolt that occurred in the province of Grão-Pará, Brazil. Among the causes of the revolt were extreme poverty among the population and the political irrelevance to which the province had been relegated following Brazil's independence from Portugal.

lower, deaths among the indigenous populations recruited to the Paraguayan War also contributed to decreasing the number of speakers using the general Amazonian language. Freire (2004) affirms that 1850 marks the year of the beginning of Portuguese hegemony in the Amazon, i.e., nearly a century after Pombal's decree.

The general Amazonian language has been heavily documented, since between 1838 and 1931 the Brazilian Historical and Geographical Institute (IHGB) organised a systematic search of historical documents related to Brazil and reserved an important place for linguistic studies. The results of these surveys, as well as reports from travellers who observed the use of the general language, were systematically published in the journal of the IHGB. The same did not occur with the general Paulista language, which is not only poorly documented, but is often confused with the Amazonian, even in its denomination: *nheengatu*.

Some linguists, including Barbosa (1998, p.231), regret that there is a lack of appropriate sources to study the language used in Brazil between the sixteenth and the nineteenth centuries and, secondly, a lack of information concerning the sociocultural context of colonial Brazil. The problem identified is related to the fact that "the social history of languages is a field of knowledge of a transdisciplinary nature that is still poorly explored" (Freire, 2004, p.246). This is reflected in the statements of researchers like Castilho (2001, p.351), who argue that the language actually used by Paulistas in the seventeenth century is currently unknown. Mattos and Silva (2001, p.286-287) question if "what colonial documents refer to as *using the general language, speaking the general language, knowing the general language*" refers to "a simplified Portuguese, with interferences from indigenous and African languages", or to "poorly spoken Portuguese". Other researchers have little doubt that the gen-

eral Paulista language was widely used and seek to explain the reasons for its abandonment. Callou et al. assert that the victory of Portuguese took place because of a

change in the linguistic choice of the white minority and free brown men who spoke one of the general languages of that era: over generations, they abandoned the general language, used in private, in favour of the Portuguese language, first in public life, then extending it to family life. (2006, p.270)

However, considering the extent of the territory where Paulistas would have taken their general language, this account does not seem sufficient to elucidate how a language spoken in many places ceased to be used and left so few traces, to the point that today few know that it was ever used. In less populated areas and where no effective population centres were established, such as Goiás and Mato Grosso, it is understandable that the general language was not disseminated. In Minas Gerais, the War of the Emboabas, fought between Paulistas, who wanted control of the area and the Portuguese (Emboabas), and those from other parts of Brazil who also wanted to take advantage of the mineral wealth discovered there, helps to explain why the general language was abandoned. The confrontations occurred from 1707 to 1709, and Paulistas lost control of the region, thereby resulting in the end of the expansion of the language they spoke in this part of Brazil. According to Vitral (2001, p.312), this was the victory of a language considered to be civilised, Portuguese, over the general Paulista language, which was associated with barbarism.

Concerning southern Brazil, the research developed by Oliveira (1998, 2001) indicates two cycles of occupation in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries: by the Paulistas and by Azorean settlers. Initially, Paulistas settled along the coast,

where they founded Laguna, Santa Catarina, “which became a centre for disseminating the Paulista language and culture in the seventeenth century and the beginning of the eighteenth century” (Oliveira, 2001, p.403). Since 1720, the focus of the Paulista advance moved to the countryside, when mule trains travelled from Sorocaba to Vacaria, passing through Lapa and Lages. The expansion of the Paulista variety would have come into contact with another, that of the Azoreans, who came to Brazil to protect the interests of the Portuguese Crown, which was intent on conquering and maintaining the left bank of the River Plate. The Azoreans ended up not occupying the region of the Missions, settling along the coast of Santa Catarina and in the central-eastern region of Rio Grande do Sul. By analysing the maps produced by the project Linguistic and Ethnographic Atlas of the Southern Region (Alers), particularly that of Santa Catarina and Rio Grande do Sul, Oliveira (2001) established relationships between these historical cycles and certain linguistic features, especially those related to the systems of addressing others (“tu”, used in areas where Azoreans settled, versus “você”, used in regions where Paulistas passed by). Oliveira reminds us that Portuguese was not homogeneously spoken among Paulistas. It is possible that the advance of urbanisation in the eighteenth century was accompanied by the use of Portuguese as a contact language, since researchers like Rodrigues (2006, p.148) established the second half of the eighteenth century as the end of the dominion of the general Paulista language.

Considering the relatively recent interest in a social history of Brazilian Portuguese – the Programme for the History of the Portuguese Language (Prohpor) was only created in 1992 and the 1st Seminar for the History of Brazilian Portuguese was held in 1997 –, many questions remain unanswered. The issues that seem central to Jania Ramos (1998, p.166) in the study of the “social history of Brazilian Portuguese” include: how to explain

the success of Portuguese in Brazil and how to explain the dialectal differences throughout the Brazilian territory.

Within linguistic studies, the first question seems to be the most controversial, since it involves understanding how, given the multilingual panorama of the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries, Brazil began using Portuguese as a hegemonic language, while forgetting that both the indigenous languages (Tupi and Tupinambá) and the general Amazon and Paulista languages were so important in colonial Brazil. Besides explaining the dialectal differences, a subject that has occupied sociolinguistics since the late 1960s in Brazil, controversy revolves around the formation of what we now call “Brazilian Portuguese”, i.e., what is the origin of the Portuguese spoken in Brazil?

First, it is important to remember that there is widespread prejudice against unwritten languages, such as indigenous and African languages. Thus, many explain the dominance of Portuguese based on its inherent qualities, considering European languages to be superior. Portuguese is a structured language, “a language of culture”, as emphasised in Houaiss (1992), while indigenous languages, which are the basis for the general languages, are considered poor and incapable of expressing abstract concepts. Thus, forgetting that the allegedly less noble languages were widely used in Brazil could be related to the also widespread notion that there is a relationship between speaking well and thinking rationally. Since language is one of the elements that compose a national identity,

a linguistic unit [has been constructed] since 1500, based on transforming Portuguese into the only language used by Brazilians, while ignoring the wide dissemination, in time and space, of the general Amazonian language and the general Paulista language, which was hegemonic throughout the colonial period in significant portions of what is now national territory. (Freire, 2004, p.33)

Their silencing has been so effective that, after two or three generations, descendants of speakers of the general Amazonian language ignored the language that their grandparents used. Freire associates this with forgetting the construction of a territorial unit, erasing the fact that it was only in the second half of 1823 that Grão-Pará, previously politically independent, was integrated into the Brazilian empire.

What we know for certain is that Portuguese incorporated a considerable number of indigenous words. According to Rodrigues (1994, p.21), from a sample of about a thousand bird names, one third (350) come from Tupinambá, while for fish, from a sample of 550 names, almost half (225) come from the indigenous language. The number of names of places, plants, other animals and foods with this origin is also large. This type of lexical contribution indicates that the indigenous element was predominantly rural, not urban.

In contrast, the lexical contribution of Africans was most striking in relation to objects and events of a religious nature, thereby indicating that they were present in both rural and urban areas. Human trafficking was authorised in 1549, but it is not known exactly when the first slaves arrived in Brazil – João Ribeiro (1954, p.203) reports that their arrival “must date from at least 1532”, information that was ratified, with similar reservation, by Prado Júnior (1971) – nor exactly how many there were. It is known, however, that when the Africans arrived, they encountered a scenario that was already multilingual. And with them, numerous African languages arrived in Brazil. Pessoa de Castro (2006) affirms that it is difficult to determine the exact number of African languages which were spoken by five to eight million individuals who were brought to Brazil over three centuries. All official documents related to the trafficking were burned in 1891, and existing reports concerning the lives of slaves in Brazil did not consider their origin or the language

they spoke. Based on the hypothesis that the study of the lexicon of African origin used in Brazilian Portuguese could lead to the language it originated from, Pessoa de Castro (2006) sought linguistic evidence to diminish such deficiencies in the historical information. The author concluded that among the languages of West Africa (from Senegal to Nigeria), Yoruba and the languages of the Ewe-Fon group, such as Ewe, Fon, Gun and Mahi (Pessoa de Castro, 2006, p.105), stood out in Brazil; while from the African Bantu territory, ranging from the equator to the southern part of the continent, three languages predominated, namely Kikongo, Kimbundu and Umbundu (Pessoa de Castro, 2006, p.107). For this researcher,

the Bantu languages were the most important in the process of configuring the profile of Brazilian Portuguese, due to the antiquity and numerical superiority of its speakers and the magnitude, in time and space, achieved by their human distribution in colonial Brazil. (Pessoa de Castro, 2006, p.108-109)

Initially, the enslaved Africans were brought to work on the large sugar estates of northeastern Brazil, replacing the indigenous populations, after which they performed numerous services throughout the territory. They were active in all the economic cycles in Brazil, from the south to the Amazon, in plantations, mines and extractive activities. Following the opening of the ports in 1808, their activities intensified in urban centres.

Data concerning the ethnic distribution of the population clearly indicate that non-European ethnic groups predominated in Brazil until the end of the nineteenth century. Mattos and Silva (2006, p.238) use data collected by other authors to show that between 1538 and 1850 about 70% of the population was composed of Africans, Brazilian blacks, mulattoes and integrated indigenous populations. The percentage of the nonwhite

population decreases between 1851 and 1890, but remains expressive at 59%; only 2% of this is made up of integrated indigenous citizens. In the late sixteenth century, African presence (42%) extended to the entire territory and exceeded that of the indigenous peoples (28%) and those of European origin (30%). These data provide evidence that territorial occupation in Brazil could not have been achieved by the white population. Thus, the diffusion of Portuguese would also have been the responsibility of the Africans and their descendants. Mattos and Silva (2000, p.23) provide the following arguments to support the hypothesis: their extensive presence, their performance in all economic cycles, their geographic mobility and the multiple roles that they played in urban and rural society.

This discussion leads to another question: what is the origin of the popular form of Portuguese spoken in Brazil? According to Castilho (2007, p.13), the three theories that are mostly debated by linguists are: the “antiquity of our language”; the “emergence of a new Portuguese grammar”; and “creolisation”. The first theory, proposed by philologists in the 1950s and 1960s, asserts that Brazilian Portuguese is a continuation of European Portuguese, which leads many to denominate it as the *theory of drift* or of *natural evolution*, since languages change over time following a course that is particular to each one. This thesis is partly taken up by Anthony Naro and Martha Scherre (2007), who since the 1990s have “mined” for facts within European Portuguese to show that some of the alleged peculiarities of Brazilian Portuguese are found in Portugal. Thus, they refuted the hypothesis that the spoken language is the result of a process of simplification. The two main traits analysed, frequent in the speech of Brazilians from all regions, are:

- (1) variation in the nominal agreement; e.g. the use of the plural only in the determiner of the noun phrase, as in “*as* (pl.) *roda* (sg.)

de madeira”; neutralisation or loss of agreement between the verb and the subject, as in “eu (1st sg.) *fez* (3rd sg.)”; lack of agreement between subject and predicate, as in “foi os *meninos* (3rd pl.) que *fez* (3rd sg.)”;

(2) frequent use of explicit pronouns in the subject position, as in “*ele*⁷ *falou*”, which also occurs in verbs with an explicit plural (*eles* *falaram*) and without an explicit plural (*eles* (3rd pl.) *falou* (3rd sg.)).

With their arguments, Naro and Scherre (2007) do not intend to imply that the Brazilian Portuguese and European Portuguese languages tread the same paths; they aim to show that supposedly Brazilian structures are used in Portugal, the difference being the frequency of their use, which is much higher in Brazil, and their social distribution, which is widely employed by all social classes in Brazil, whereas in Portugal they are only used in rural areas or by people with little or no education. For the authors, the origins of Brazilian Portuguese are internal, but a “confluence of multiple motivations”, such as the collapse of the norm due to a situation of weakened social pressure, contact with other languages and informal learning of Portuguese, has intensified changes in the language.

The second argument is that, since the nineteenth century, Brazilian Portuguese constructed a new grammar. Tarallo “outlined the emergence of a Brazilian grammar that by the end of the nineteenth century had already showed clear-cut structural differences from the European Portuguese grammar” (1993b, p.70); this presented four major syntactic changes to demonstrate the thesis. The first is the preference for full pronoun subject as in “*eu li*” [I read], instead of “*li*” [ø read]. The second concerns strategies of relativisation, with the virtual disappearance of the

7 In Portuguese, unlike in English, use of the pronoun in the subject position is not mandatory.

standard construction, as in “este é o homem *com quem eu falei ontem*” [this is the man *with whom I talked yesterday*], replaced by the prepositional-phrase chopping, “este é o homem *que eu falei ontem*” [this is the man *who I talked with yesterday*] or by the stigmatised resumptive pronoun strategy, “este é o homem *que eu falei com ele ontem*” [this is the man *who I talked with him yesterday*]. The third refers to sentencing order, with the emergence of the rigid order of the subject preceding the verb. The fourth change, related to the three already mentioned, concerns the standard interrogative structures, which in the eighteenth century were almost categorically constructed with the verb preceding the subject (as in “*acabou o doce?*” [*is it finished, the dessert?*]) and prominently changed to the subject preceding the verb (*o doce acabou?* [*the dessert is finished?*]). Kato (1993) also mentions the impoverishment of inflectional morphology (ele (3rd sg.) *fez* (3rd sg.), nós (1st pl.) *fez* (3rd sg.), eles (3rd pl.) *fez* (3rd sg.)) and the loss of the clitic system as the object (using “*eu vi ele*” [I saw *he*], instead of “*eu o vi*” [I saw *him*]). The conjunction of research demonstrates that “what happens is not a process of the ‘deterioration of grammar’, as the educated think from a prescriptive perspective, but a coherent internal reorganisation, a radical (*parametric*) change in the language” (Kato, 1993, p.19). This grammar also led to constructions of topic, very common in speech, in which the utterance does not begin with the subject, but with an element called “topic”, and is separated from what follows, the “comment”, by a pause, as in “o João, eu vi ele ontem” [John, I saw him yesterday]).

Naro and Scherre (2007) refuted the third argument by saying that the characteristics of Brazilian Portuguese have a creole origin. In situations of contact between two groups that do not speak the same language, a pidgin often develops, which is an emergency language that has only basic functions to be used exclusively in the circumstances of contact. It serves specific

local needs, however, when relationships continue, transmission to a second generation can occur and the *pidgin* is creolised. The process of creolisation has occurred in various places around the world and is marked by the enslavement of African peoples, such as the Portuguese-based creoles in Cape Verde and São Tomé, the English-based Jamaican Creole, French-based Haitian and the Spanish-based creole on Curaçao.

According to Tarallo (1993a), the thesis dates back to the nineteenth century, when Adolpho Coelho proposed the creole origin of Portuguese. In the late 1950s, it was countered by prestigious philologists, such as Serafim da Silva Neto, Celso Cunha and Antenor Springs, but was taken up by contemporary researchers, such as Guy (1981, *apud* Tarallo, 1993a).

Other linguists do not exactly endorse the thesis of the creolisation of Portuguese, because they conceive several factors have inhibited the formation of a creole in Brazil. For Lucchesi (2009), these include the fact that the white population in Brazil was not as small as in Jamaica, which enabled greater access to the Portuguese language, but with the decisive factor being racial miscegenation. Mestizos were numerous and since social mobility was possible for them, they tended to seek integration within the culture of the dominant group; they did this by assimilating their language patterns. Lucchesi argues that the formation of the current Brazilian linguistic reality is due to an irregular linguistic transmission, i.e., inadequate learning of a second language characterised by the simplification of grammatical structures. Integrated indigenous individuals and Africans learned Portuguese precariously and a “defective model of Portuguese as a second language resulted in the following generations”, which has triggered the formation process of the current “popular varieties” of Portuguese (Lucchesi, 2009, p.71). Moreover, “the model of the transmitted language would have been constantly weakened and diluted due to successive

renewals of the contingent of African slaves” (Baxter; Lucchesi, 1997, p.72). Thus, in defence of the creole origin of Portuguese, Baxter and Lucchesi (1997, p.74) consider it is “better to contemplate creolisation as a process that belongs to a continuum of transmission genres” of the language of the dominant group by the dominated group, who simplifies and changes it, possibly due to the influence of their own mother tongue.

Following a historical or sociohistorical approach, linguist Rosa Virginia Mattos e Silva defends a similar thesis that is grounded in historical demography and education. Based on the data mentioned, according to which between 1538 and 1850 about 30% of the population was made up of white Brazilians and Europeans, the remaining 70% acquired the Portuguese language “in a situation of imperfect acquisition or irregular learning”, i.e., “without any normative-prescriptive control” of their education, whether they were speakers of indigenous or African languages (Mattos; Silva, 2006, p.239). Therefore, this large populational contingent had learned Portuguese under circumstances of orality and were responsible not only for territorial expansion in Brazil, but also for the concomitant spread of Brazilian Portuguese “in its majoritarian configuration, this being the *popular* or vernacular” (Mattos; Silva, 2006, p.246). Data on illiteracy strengthen the argument: in 1872, 20% of free men were literate, while among slaves 99.9% were illiterate. There is no doubt that there was an enormous gap between the educated elite and the great illiterate mass.

For Naro and Scherre (2007, p.67), use of the term “creolisation” to refer to the process of the formation of Portuguese in Brazil is a “misconception”. They argue that learning a second language in adulthood, which is a process that has predominated throughout Brazil’s history, even before the arrival of slaves, accelerated and exaggerated “the initial trends during the process of *nativization* of the Portuguese language by communities from

the most diverse of cultural backgrounds” (Naro; Scherre, 2007, p.53). They use the term *nativisation* to refer to the passage from nonnative language to a native one rather than a process of simplification. Thus, the foreign language – in this case, Portuguese – becomes the native language of the community, replacing the previous native languages of individuals. Moreover, according to the authors, the Portuguese that arrived in Brazil already contained the variables that researchers like Lucchesi have classified as creole or semi-creole. In Brazil, given the conditions of multilingualism and language acquisition by adults, the speech community was not subjected to the normative pressure that weighs on a community of stable speech, like that of Portugal, and developed and maintained the use of forms considered non-prestigious in the varieties of European Portuguese. Thus, Brazilian Portuguese is not a simplification nor a language with African influences; it is rather “Portuguese with its original, rural and popular roots, transplanted to a more fertile land and consequently [presenting] a more intense development” (Naro; Scherre, 2007, p.181).

Each of these theories concerning the origin of Brazilian Portuguese posits a way to explain the differences from European Portuguese. However, they all refer to a popular form of the Portuguese spoken in Brazil, this being the language spoken by the majority of the population. Some use the term “popular Brazilian Portuguese” or “popular Portuguese of Brazil”, “popular norm”, others use “nonstandard Portuguese” or “substandard Portuguese”. This variety has always coexisted within the variety of official contexts, namely the educated elites in Europe. Certainly, the community that used it was small – until the education reform promoted by Pombal, and there were large numbers of illiterates, even in Portugal. Thus, it was not a standard written norm that came to Brazil, rather the common spoken varieties, which were maintained by a population

with little education. Colonial Brazil had few schools, few literate individuals, few books and no press – the metropolis did not encourage the acquisition of knowledge, since a population kept in an uninformed state was easier to dominate. Even with the arrival of John VI, in 1808, the opening of the ports, the creation of the Royal Print and the first Brazilian newspaper, inequality reigned. Regarding the end of the nineteenth century, Faust (1994, p.237) speaks of a chasm separating the elite from the mass of illiterates and people with little formal education. Despite the proclamation of the Republic, the onset of industrialisation and urbanisation in the country, the reformulation and universalisation of education and the creation of the first colleges, this chasm still persists. At least two varieties of Brazilian Portuguese are spoken, these being the so-called *educated norm* and *common norm*. Since heterogeneity is inherent to languages, some researchers direct attention to the problem of discussing “Brazilian Portuguese”. Oliveira (2001, p.417), for example, considers that talking about “Brazilian Portuguese”, as opposed to “European Portuguese”, is a generalising and homogenising perspective; operating with a homogeneous concept of “Brazilian Portuguese”, we are “very much within the sphere of a discursive construction of a ‘national language’”.

This emphasises, as Ilari and Basso (2006, p.151) affirm, that “the uniformity of Brazilian Portuguese is largely a myth”. The idea was formed over time to ensure that Brazil would become a nation of continental proportions in which one language was spoken; however, it is also related to a lack of perception of variation, not only that of the other, but also of one’s own variation, when one adapts one’s language according to the context. The myth was also constructed with the aid of grammars and dictionaries, which traditionally only record the standard written language. Moreover, as Tarallo (1993b, p.70) observes, “the profile of our Brazilian grammar has been dictated by the Por-

tuguese tradition and this fact only makes the void between oral and written language that much deeper in Brazil”.

Linguistic variation is a common phenomenon in every speech community. Languages include the possibility of using variants, i.e., different ways to express the same referential meaning. A linguistic phenomenon is variable when there are at least two alternative ways to say the same thing with comparable semantic value. For example, the plural of the noun phrase consisting of a mandatory core noun modified by an optional determiner and adjective is variable in Portuguese; the standard norm requires redundant agreement, i.e., plural marking in all three constituents, as in “os (pl.) livros (pl.) antigos (pl.)”, but often plural marking focuses only on the determiner, as in “os (pl.) livro (sg.) antigo (sg.)”, or on the determiner and the noun, as in “os (pl.) livros (pl.) antigo (sg.)”. However, the use of one variant or another is not random; it is rather influenced by variables that may be linguistic (conditioning of variants by factors internal to the language, such as phonology, syntax and semantics) or social (conditioning by factors external to the language, such as education and social class). Sociolinguistic studies developed over the last century have verified that free variation does not exist, i.e., there is always conditioning that determines the choice of one variant over another.

Variants can coexist for shorter or longer periods of time, but a change is only complete when one of the forms ceases to be used. From a linguistic viewpoint, all variants are legitimate, but from a social point of view an evaluation occurs. In general, society positively evaluates the standard variant, which is considered prestigious, while nonstandard variants, those not described in grammars, are socially stigmatised.

There are different manifestations of variation: diachronic, time-related; diatopic, dependent on geographical region; di-

astratic, related to social strata; and diamesic, referring to the vehicle of expression in which the language is used.

Diachronic variation occurs over time and can affect all levels: orthographic, lexical, morphological, syntactic, semantic and pragmatic. Older speakers of a language readily perceive lexical variation, while younger generations no longer understand expressions that seem commonplace to them. However, there are cases of diachronic variation that are not so easily perceived, such as “*você*”, a word whose origin comes from the form of address “*Vossa Mercê*” (literally *Your Honour, Your Grace*), which transformed into “*Vosmecê*” and that is now a personal pronoun used in Brazil in place of the second person singular pronoun “*tu*” in several regions.

This is yet another manifestation of variation, the diatopic. In Brazil, certain lexical, morphosyntactic and phonological differences are associated with different geographic regions. Ilari and Basso (2006, p.167-169) describe several features that differentiate the pronunciation of speakers from different regions, such as the distinct executions of “*r*”, “*t*” and “*d*”, as well as facts which have a morphosyntactic character, like the use or omission of the definite article before proper names, the use of “*tu*” or “*você*” to express the second person and the tendency to omit the reflexive pronoun with pronominal verbs (as in “*eu penteei*” [I combed hair] instead of “*eu me penteei*” [I combed my hair]).

The systematic study of diatopic variation in Brazil is being conducted by a large team of researchers associated with the Linguistic Atlas of Brazil (ALiB) project, which is in the final stages of data collection and by 2012 had completed its research in 20 of the 27 states. According to Cardoso and Mota (2012, p.859), one of the goals of the ALiB project is to provide researchers and educators with subsidies to contribute to improving the teaching of Portuguese and interpretation of the country’s multidi-

alectal character. Another objective is to provide data to allow the authors of textbooks to adequate their work to the reality of each region, and to provide teachers with a reflection on variation that will enable them to find ways to lead students to the dominion of a variant considered to be cultured, without devaluing the variant of their origins.

Some states have already been mapped and their regional atlases have been published: Bahia (1963), Minas Gerais (1977), Paraíba (1984), Sergipe I (1987), Paraná (1990), the southern region (2002), Pará (2004), Sergipe II (2005), Mato Grosso do Sul (2007) and Ceará (2010). These atlases show that there are no political boundaries for the use of certain linguistic variants, for example, three forms of speech were identified in Minas Gerais, one related to speech from the State of Bahia, another to the State of São Paulo and a third that is more specific to Minas Gerais (Zagari, 1998, 2005). The virtual lines that differentiate the use of one or the other variety are denominated isoglosses and they are drawn by combining clusters of morphological, phonological and lexical features, thereby indicating the relative homogeneity of a linguistic community in relation to others.

The profile of the informants of the ALiB project seeks to address spatial issues, whereas other research focuses its mapping on socioeconomic groups, i.e., it involves diastratic variation. The majority of these studies work with data that are related to both family income and education and include male and female informants from different age groups. Given that phonological and morphophonological facts can be more easily systematised, studies involving this type of data are more frequently developed in Brazil.

Regarding education in Brazil, research verifies that the chasm, mentioned above in relation to the nineteenth century, has not been surmounted. Data from the *Map of illiteracy in Brazil* (Brasil, n.d.), published by the National Institute for

Educational Studies and Research (INEP), are daunting. Even though the illiteracy rate dropped from 65.3% in 1900 to 13.6% in 2000, the absolute numbers have risen from about 6 million to 16 million, considering a population aged 15 years or above. If we take into account the functionally illiterate, meaning those who have not completed the first four years of primary education, in 2000 this number was greater than 30 million. That same year, according to the Census of Higher Education (Brasil, 2009a), about 350,000 people completed university. Although this number has more than doubled, reaching about 750,000 in 2007, inequality is evident, especially considering that more than 56 million people over 18 were not in school and had not completed primary education, as was verified by the 2012 School Census (Brasil, 2013).

This disparity in educational terms is reflected in the language, because an important difference is determined between the so-called educated norm, spoken by the population with greater education and higher income, and popular Brazilian Portuguese, spoken by the group with less education and lower income. These two segments have been studied by sociolinguistics, addressing both the written and spoken modalities.

The variation related to different modes, written and spoken, is denominated a diamesic variation. Since writing is planned and can be corrected before being made public, it tends to be closer to the standard norm or standard language in formal situations. Faraco (2002, p.40) draws a distinction between educated norm, understood as the linguistic norm practiced in certain situations by social groups related to the written culture, and standard norm. Since written culture, associated with groups that control social power and historically legitimised by the same, leans towards linguistic unification and stabilisation, to the neutralisation of variation and control of change, the result is a stabilised standard, standard norm or standard language.

Bagno (2003) establishes a similar distinction, but he names the idealised model of language as “standard norm”; in this case “norm” refers to the prescription, the rule that should be followed. To avoid the relationship of antonymy between educated norm and uneducated or common norm, the author prefers the term “prestige norm”, stressing that the prestige is social, and uses the expression “stigmatised variety”.

Standard language is a language that is systematised by grammars and results in

a purist, normative attitude that perceives errors everywhere and condemns any use of any phenomenon – even those widely prevailing in the educated norm and in the texts of our most important authors – that disregards that which is stipulated by the most conservative grammar textbooks. (Faraco, 2002, p.43)

The prescriptive norm is not the language, but rather one of its descriptions; unlike those developed by linguists, this description is associated with value judgments of good language, with supposedly correct speaking or writing. However, since this is the standard that is taught in school, it eventually functions as a parameter for the formal execution of the language and, consequently, as a factor in sociocultural discrimination and exclusion, via linguistic prejudice.

However, studies conducted within the scope of the Project of Spoken Portuguese Grammar, initiated in the late 1980s, together with research developed by sociolinguists, indicate that the spoken educated norm is not the standard norm. Scherre (2005, p.19-20) provides several examples, in the spoken modality, that “even educated people fail to use all the plural forms in diverse constructions”.

Even though there is greater monitoring of the written form than of speech, several authors (Faraco, 2002; Scherre, 2005;

Bagno, 2003) provide examples of common phenomena in cultured speech that also find expression in writing, in contexts where one would not expect their presence, such as in the newspapers *Folha de S. Paulo*, *Jornal do Brasil*, *Correio Braziliense* and *O Estado de S. Paulo*. Despite this, we read in the *Folha de S. Paulo*, in an editorial column signed by Roberto Dias (2013, p.A2), assistant editing secretary, that “whoever tunes into the radio today in Brazil might think that plurals have been abolished from the Portuguese language” and that “it seems that a brand new grammar has been implemented, which ignores the boundaries of musical genres and the rules of verb conjugation”. He provides several examples of musical lyrics in nonstandard Portuguese and laments that the time when music “produced educational examples” is now long gone.

Dias equates the language to the standard of grammars and implies that only this standard should enter schools and be heard on the radio. He seems to ignore the fact that language is a social activity related to identities and the authors of the lyrics mentioned only give voice to the constitutive forms of their formation, the social group to which they belong, to which they adhere to and by which they are venerated. Since the 1950s, Paulista Adoniran Barbosa, a son of Italian immigrants, introduced an identifying mark into his lyrics by using very similar forms to those execrated by Dias; this can be seen, for instance, in the famous “Samba do Arnesto”.⁸

The journalist does not limit himself to practicing linguistic prejudice by saying that the songs promote an “assault on syntax” and annihilate “verb conjugation”; he also draws a connection between the manner (poor?) in which the authors write and, regarding their cognitive skills, he does this by reminding

8 Available at: <<http://www.vagalume.com.br/adoniran-barbosa/samba-do-arnesto.html>>. Accessed on: December 2013.

us that “philosopher Wilhelm von Humboldt claimed that language mirrors thinking”. An illegitimate relationship between linguistic constructions and the people who use them is naturalised, thus disqualifying the majority of the population that has restricted access to quality formal education and to literary culture. That which derives from a dominant minority, merely conserving the structure of exclusion implemented in colonial Brazil and preserving the aforementioned chasm between the literate and illiterate, is valued. It materialises, as an example of linguistic prejudice, that which Gnerre (1985) denounced: a variety is “worth” what is “valued” by its speakers in society, i.e., a linguistic variety is assessed in relation to the type of power and authority that its speakers maintain in economic and social relationships.

Prejudice – social, religious, racial – is closely related to the nonacceptance of difference. Although Brazilian society is opening up to alterity, linguistic prejudice is strongly rooted in it; this is the fruit of conservatism and intolerance in relation to variation and change. One of the challenges of contemporaneity is the recognition and acceptance not only of the heterogeneity of Portuguese, but also of many other languages that have been and are spoken in Brazil.

Oliveira (2000) estimates that communities of immigrants and their descendants speak around thirty languages. They can now be used in print, but it was not always so. Just as Pombal suppressed teaching in the general and indigenous languages, the nationalist politics of the New State, established by Getúlio Vargas, led to the prohibition of foreign languages being used in schools and institutions founded by immigrant groups, especially by the Germans, Italians and Japanese. Speaking a foreign language in Brazil was banned in the name of an alleged national unification, in order to forge a homogeneous identity for the population of Brazil. Thus, multilingualism was again suppressed.

Besides the languages brought by immigration, we also have so-called autochthonous languages, i. e., indigenous languages. Rodrigues (2006, p.153) estimates that, in contemporaneity, the indigenous nations of Brazil speak around 189 languages.⁹ Many of these are spoken by extremely small populations and are unlikely to survive. This is regrettable, but not surprising, since it was only following the 1988 Constitution that indigenous peoples were ensured the right to their languages within the school system. However, according to an INEP report (Brasil, 2009), the category of “indigenous school” was only regulated in 1999, in order to ensure the specificity of the intercultural and bilingual education model. The school, which was one of the main instruments for the negation of linguistic diversity and the imposition of Portuguese as a national language, can begin to play an important role in the maintenance of linguistic diversity in Brazil. Two reports on indigenous education, one in the 2005 School Census (Brasil, 2007) and the other in the 2008 School Census (Brasil, 2009), show that there is a long way to go before we can celebrate the creation of indigenous schools. Survey data show that from 2,698 schools serving about 200,000 students, 1,783 have bilingual learning, while only 128 teach classes exclusively in an indigenous language. In the remaining 787, education is provided only in Portuguese, both for communities that have lost their languages and whose language is currently Portuguese and for those that speak their language in everyday life, but not during school activities. Almost all of these enrolments are for kindergarten and primary education, since the enrolment rate in secondary education is less than 6%. This means that if students wish to continue their studies, they have to move out of their environment.

⁹ Rodrigues (1994, p.18) estimated that the number of indigenous languages spoken in Brazil was around 170.

The greatest problems faced seem to concern textbooks and teacher training. Only 38.4% (1,035) of schools have teaching materials that are specially designed for indigenous students. One of the challenges of bilingual or indigenous language education is the development of material specific to this purpose, particularly when considering that some languages have not been adequately described or have no written form. Regarding teachers, from the roughly 11,000 who work in these schools, only 40% are graduates and 38% only studied at secondary level, though not all graduated at this level. Thus, the preparation of teaching materials and teacher training are a priority.

The greatest challenge, however, is social. The hiatus of 11 years between ensuring indigenous nations the right to their languages in the Constitution and the regulation of indigenous education indicates that society is not concerned with this issue and that the death of languages is not a problem. The idea that they are minor, disarticulated languages seems to be rooted in the Brazilian imagination, which is full of prejudiced statements regarding difference.

The same society that erased the memory of other languages spoken in Brazil, that views the less prestigious varieties of Portuguese with prejudice, appears not to desire being reminded that such internal heterogeneity exists. In the imaginary of the elite, at least in relation to language, difference presupposes inferiority.

The biblical story of the Tower of Babel narrates that the tribe of Shem decided, autocratically, to raise a tower to reach the heavens and impose their language and reason on all people. God, however, interrupted the construction and instituted the diversity of languages. Thus, at the same time as giving us the gift of heterogeneity, God barred the possibility of linguistic imperialism: the Shem could no longer impose their language nor its meaning as unique. The aberration of linguistic homo-

geneity, accompanied by the negation or ignorance of the other, was barred. For Niranjana (1992, p.144), however, the intervention “initiated cultural violence”, because if a language is not imposed, meanings are determined by the most powerful and its values are assigned by rulers.

The march against the electric guitar and “authentic” Brazilian music¹

Valéria Guimarães²

“Down with the electric guitar!”

There was a rivalry that was also stimulated by Record TV, which had a monopoly on music at the time; television did not show soap operas, therefore its strength came from music, and Record had 90% of Brazilian music under contract. Every day they showed a music programme and Record wanted the programmes to be published in the newspapers, played on the radio and be in people’s lives, so it was strange, because at

1 I would like to thank Marcelo Januário for his contributions to numerous discussions and the selection of songs analysed here and José Adriano Fenerick for reading the first version of the text and for his enlightening comments.

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the time MPB³ was said to be Brazilian music and Jovem Guarda was music for youths. And we thought: Dear God, why can we not have music that is both Brazilian and for youths? It is an obvious question, but it was pertinent to the times to such an extent that people organised a march right in the middle of a military dictatorship, when there was so much to protest about! A rally was organised with 300 to 400 people, holding banners, with posters and people shouting “Down with the electric guitar! Down with the electric guitar!” The electric guitar was a symbol of U.S. imperialism, with old clichés of communism being very active at the time.

Nelson Motta, *Uma noite em 67* (2010)

This epigraph was taken from the documentary *Uma noite em 67* [One night in ‘67], which talks about a phenomenon of the Brazilian entertainment industry at the time, with the music festivals being sponsored by the Record television network. Besides the well-known journalist Nelson Motta, several others have spoken about this curious episode in our cultural history, the “march against the electric guitar”, held on the 17th of July, 1967, which began at the Largo de São Francisco and ended at the old Paramount Theatre, the “Temple of Bossa”.⁴ In the first row of the demonstration, a picture of Elis Regina, which was reproduced in the documentary, can be seen together with Gilberto Gil in the centre, accompanied by Jair Rodrigues and Edu Lobo.

3 MPB, Música Popular Brasileira [Popular Brazilian Music].

4 Bossa Nova, which literally means “new trend”, is a lyrical fusion of samba and jazz that became popular in Brazil in the late 1950s and 1960s, acquiring a large following among young musicians and college students.

It was subsequently ridiculed by some of those present and compared by Nara Leão – who refused to join the march, even though she was invited – to a fascist act rejected by apparently repentant participants, such as Gilberto Gil. It might still attract fans today.

Sergio Cabral, a jury member at the festivals, made a very explicit self-criticism:

Look, today I can be self-critical. I stood next to the march, right, I see now how ridiculous a thing it was. Of course, shortly after I saw it, I became a record producer and finally saw that it was silly to take a stance against the electric guitar! It is stupid, right? Nonsense. But for us, we nationalists, from the left, music should not be invaded by what was coming from abroad and the electric guitar was a symbol of this invasion.

Cabral, *Uma noite em 67* (2010)

The situation was polarised into two groups: Fino da Bossa [Finest of Bossa Nova] and Jovem Guarda [Youth Guard], which were two Record TV music programmes. The former programme frequently invited names present at this march against the electric guitar, such as Elis Regina, Jair Rodrigues, Geraldo Vandré, Edu Lobo and others. In the latter, the most emblematic figures were Roberto Carlos, Erasmo Carlos and Wanderléa, who, despite playing popular, commercial music, adopted the electric guitar and the accompanying rocker stance without any major conflicts.

Even today, it is not uncommon in Brazil for rock – the style in which the electric guitar is a central element – to be associated with immaturity, unsophisticated music, or to be seen, in some way, as a symptom of copying foreign references. Following this logic, rock is understood as a sign of poor adherence to “real” Brazilian music. Moreover, the stigma that pursues musicians, due to the rebellious image fostered by many, remains, even though their posture as musicians is quite professional.

But what is Brazilian music? Perhaps it is bossa nova? Something which sells well abroad and is somehow the ambassador of “Brazilian culture”. Bossa nova translated an identity linked to sophistication, exoticism, originality and, above all, different from the hegemonic “American” music in which electric guitar chords are almost always used. But how is one type of music perceived to be authentically typical of a country? Can it be said that all types of music from Brazil contain a foreign element? If this is the case, why fight a specific musical instrument and the music it represents as “a symbol of imperialism”?

Perhaps we will not arrive at any conclusions, since the goal in this essay is to merely speculate on the topic of Brazilian national identity during the contemporary period, while considering the viewpoint of media culture and its increasingly universal products,⁵ and using certain cultural manifestations like music as the starting point. The march against the electric guitar played out during a period that spanned the 1950s right up to the late 1970s, which was the transition period between the development of the culture industry and the insertion of Brazil in the globalisation era. We use the term globalisation in the sense given by Ulrich Beck (1999), that of a process that began in the late twentieth century and that characterises the end of the idea of nation, in terms of modernity, of a closed and territorially bounded unit, together with the redimensioning of several spheres of society in order to highlight technological changes. Although its point of inflection is the 1980s, following the rise of Thatcher and Reagan, in cultural terms the process had initiated earlier.

We may also use the concept of “*culture médiatique*” (Maigret, 2010), or media culture, to refer to the globalisation of cultural production aimed at the general public, which, though

⁵ Including the press, a theme to which we have devoted ourselves for some time, Guimarães (2012).

it began in the nineteenth century, finding its most complete expression from the mid-twentieth century onwards, was principally anchored in the increasing speed of the media and the new possibilities of international integration.

Cultural exchanges are not only encompassed by a sense of imperialist domination; other factors are at stake in the complex circulation of cultural artefacts. Given that it is one of the expressions that has the greatest weight in the media culture of our times, music is an excellent research object through which to observe the phenomenon of the interaction of cultural products in the culture industry.

Moreover, music was also considered by Mário de Andrade⁶ as the fullest expression of “Brazilianness”, given that it seems pertinent to associate the cultural phenomenon of Brazilian music with the question of national identity, in order to problematise the very idea of identity.

Thus, the march against the electric guitar is one of the most curious episodes precisely because it singlehandedly causes discomfort and awkwardness in today’s world.

Who would currently adhere to a march like this?

Nelson Motta clearly states in the epigraph that despite it having been outlined in ideological terms, it had a very concrete commercial component: stimulating the rivalry between the two groups stemmed from a fight for market niches. But was that all? He even cites the resumption of “communist clichés” in his discourse against the growing adherence to the guitar, clearly revealing the bias implicit in this attitude, very much in keeping

6 It is Mário who says in his *Ensaio sobre música brasileira* [Essay on Brazilian music] (1928), “Brazilian popular music is the most complete, most fully national, strongest creation of our race until now” (Andrade apud Napolitano; Wasserman, 2000, p.169).

with the climate of demonstrations, in which the tone was openly nationalist and against the resurgence of authoritarianism.⁷

Even those who defend the existence of a genuinely Brazilian popular music – whatever that may be and even if it is possible to define such a thing – would not risk protesting against an instrument that has long been used to by local bands, whether they play rock or not.

Therefore, we have an ambiguous phenomenon which rallies ideology, but that may not have had the same force and repercussion if it had not had the support of the media. Thus, to try to understand or at least glimpse some hypotheses that could explain how the issue of national identity arises in this refusal of the guitar – an instrument that represents “Yankee imperialism” –, we must advance on two fronts: one explains the recurrence of the issue of “popular national” identity in our historiography, which is certainly echoed in the approach of groups against the electric guitar; the other is an understanding of its articulation with the consolidation of a media culture in Brazil, in this very specific context of globalisation (in world terms) and political dictatorship (in national terms).

Popular, popularesque: identity and popular music

The idea of authentic and pure can be characterised as a romantic concept, which evokes the habit of antique collecting

7 As Arnaldo Daraya Contier (1998) argues, it is possible to establish a relationship between the so-called “protest music” performed by musicians like Edu Lobo and the nationalist discourse advocated by Centro Popular de Cultura (CPC), which united left-wing intellectuals and artists who were sympathetic to a popular revolutionary art. He also observes in footnote 3, together with Mark Napolitano, the ambiguity of the meaning of the march, which was simultaneously ideological and commercial.

and an idealisation of the past (Ortiz, 1992, p.17-22). All vestiges gain exacerbated importance and even the most insignificant object becomes the subject of veneration. Its importance is linked to its purity, causing an unbridled search for origins in which the more remote they are, the more they are valued and the more likely to be idealised they are. As exemplified by Peter Burke, in his masterly work *Popular Culture in Early Modern Europe* (2010), scholars of popular culture “were preoccupied with the study of the origins at the expense of what these rituals meant [...]” and “They accepted too easily the myth of an unchanging popular culture” (2010, p.123). What ultimately legitimises certain devices as “truly” original is a set of forces of representations that elect a particular social memory (Chartier, 2010; 1988).

National sentiments have been systematically erected within this logic, in which the concept of “nation” can only be understood as a collective expression that appeases differences in class, creed, race, age or gender to unite the “people” in a single notion of belonging.

German romantic philosopher Herder even went as far as distinguishing language as central to these “archives of nationality” (Ortiz, 1992, p.26), which seems quite obvious to us, since the idea of nation is conveyed by the sharing of a territory given to a population whose origin is assumed to be common, and by sharing the same language, laws, rules and other attributes.

More than any other component of the concept of nation, language is central to the construction of the notion of identity because it translates “the character of a people” (Ortiz, 1992, p.22). Among language’s most important expressions is poetry or folksong, presumed to record the lost “origin” (Burke, 2010, p.26), which is a “poetry of nature” that is different from the “poetry of culture”; the latter possesses neither the spontaneity nor the intuition of the former.

And while the “original” and then “national” verses were an expression of all people, cultured poetry was merely an expression of the individual. Recited from memory, verses of “original” poetry ought to be recovered before the modernisation process of the cities extinguished their guardians. This taste for archaic survivals persists in the allegedly scientific approach to the field of folklore, which saw popular habits as an expression of tradition.

Such a concept of popular culture appears in the notion of Brazilian music that prevailed during the campaign against the electric guitar.

The exclusion of certain cultural expressions at the expense of others is part of the power game that constructs memory, and with MPB it was no different. The epistemological problems arising from this lack of definition regarding what “original” Brazilian music is have been well explored in the work of Brazilian specialists.

Alvaro Neder (2010) observed how various fields of strength rival each other in the combat that aims to elect a “true” or “authentic” Brazilian popular music. In our view, within the notion of the guitar as an imperialist agent, the concept of a music of the “people” prevails, which can be understood based on the romantic categories as discussed above, contemplating the notion of regional and/or traditional music, far from urban “civilisation” and, therefore, hardly “corrupted” and more “authentic”. It is consolidated as resistance to modernisation.

Neder attributed the stigma that “popularesque” Brazilian music endured, an expression Mário de Andrade used to designate music oriented to the market, to the predominant – and, according to him, misguided – interpretation of the critique perpetrated by this modernist author.

Despite this and other evidence, however, the dialectic of Andradian thought was not always considered by his followers,

resulting, in any event, in a somewhat unfavourable vision of “popularesque music”.

This seems to be, perhaps, one of the important reasons for the lack of prestige of popular music (as we understand it today, in all its contradictions – not only “sophisticated” music like that of Tom Jobim, but also “tacky” music like that of Lindomar Castilho and many others) within the Brazilian institutional academic space of music. This concern is made explicit by musicologist Sean Stroud, indicating, from the unfamiliarity of his foreign vision, the visible contradiction between society and academia in this country (Neder, 2010, p.184).

Although we have seen that the group of artists against the electric guitar was also inserted in the culture industry market, including fighting for an audience on a TV station, they laid claim to this concept of MPB that identifies it with purity, with “natural song” preferred at the expense of everything that they considered foreign or simply “popularesque”, to use the expression of Mário de Andrade.

Napolitano and Wasserman (2000, p.168) divided the historiographical currents dedicated to debating the question of the “origin” of Brazilian popular music into two: one that seeks authenticity and the other that questions the very notion of origin (in which the authors include themselves).

To analyse how the question of origins – understood as a founding moment that delimits a perennial core identity – is considered in Brazilian popular music, we can focus primarily on two major historiographical currents: the first relates to the discussion concerning the “search for origins”, that is, the root of “authentic” Brazilian popular music. The second historiographical current seeks to criticise the very question of origin, thereby underlining the various formative vectors of Brazilian musicality, without nec-

essarily seeking the most authentic one. (Napolitano; Wasserman, 2000, p.168)

Strictly speaking, if the features of what is called Brazilian music have already been defined since the eighteenth century (*lundus, modinhas*), it is not possible to clarify their specificity. Whether you use an academic or technical-musical approach to the analysis, the definition of what is “popular music” is so polysemic that defining what “Brazilian Popular Music” is becomes an impossible task, since what makes it unique is the fusion of several elements that are too intricate to be precisely characterised. During the twentieth century, *maxixe* and samba gained popularity in the urban environment, while the “folkloric” or dramatic dances (Napolitano; Wasserman, 2000, p.168) expressed rural Brazilian music, composing this musical framework that identifies itself as Brazilian.

The commercialisation of musical artefacts, however, now moves at some pace, and in 1950 we could perceive an intense process of internationalisation of the Brazilian music market. Alongside Carnival marches, Mexican boleros, Argentinean tangos and American jazz were increasingly played on the radio, which fosters a movement of reflection concerning the preservation of Brazilian popular music.

It is here that samba enters the centre of the debate, becoming a symbol of a genuinely Brazilian identity (Napolitano; Wasserman, 2000, p.174). The *Revista de Música Popular* [Magazine of popular music] (1954-1956) took upon itself the task of reflecting and exalting samba as an expression of “Brazilianness”. Even bossa nova, whose identity is now so intimately linked to samba, was seen as a modernising threat to “samba de raiz” (literally roots samba). José Ramos Tinhorão seems to have been one of its leading critics, particularly in his opposition to the internationalising elements that new trends have brought to Brazilian

popular music, considered by him to be attempts at cultural domination (Napolitano; Wasserman, 2000, p.79). Thus, Noel Rosa or Tom Jobim were as much villains of Brazilian music as an industry increasingly dominated by multinational record companies.

Recent studies have attempted to show how the success of samba has had less to do with a white usurpation of an originally black popular expression than with an “invention of tradition” in the sense proposed by Hobsbawm (Hobsbawm; Ranger, 1984); taking advantage of a musical genre that was already disseminated among several social strata to forge it as a national symbol, as the “true” Brazilian music. As Hermano Vianna explains:

Like any process of national construction, the invention of “Brazilianness” begins to define as pure or authentic that which was the product of a long negotiation. The authentic is always artificial, but to have “symbolic efficacy” it must be seen as natural, that which has “always been that way”. The recently invented samba-de-morro has come to be seen as the purest rhythm, uncontaminated by alien influences, which must be preserved (removing any possibility of more obvious change) with the aim of also preserving the “soul” of Brazil. (Vianna, 1995, p.152-153)

It is worth adding one last reflection concerning the concept of popular music in general, the universe of which MPB is but a part. We have discussed how distinct concepts fit the designation of “popular music”: primitive expression as opposed to classical or folkloric music; oriented toward the masses as opposed to music of the elite (Birrer, 1983, p.104 apud Neder, 2010, p.185); or simple, easy, accessible music, as opposed to the sophistication of classical music. And almost always defined as pairs of opposites, such as: rural/urban, slum/street, periphery/centre, purity/miscegenation, national/foreign, popular/

middle class, popular/classical, handcrafted/commercial. In the best hypotheses, its “primitive” component is sanitised by “good” popular music – that which when worked in a scholarly manner nullifies the remnants of *naïf*.

By contrast, popular music is understood as “accessible”, “simple” and “easy”. However, many pieces that are commonly understood as scholarly (the “Hallelujah” chorus by Handel, many of Schubert’s songs, many of Verdi’s arias) possess qualities of simplicity. Likewise, it hardly seems that the Sex Pistols’ recordings are “accessible”, that the work of Frank Zappa is “simple” or that Billie Holiday’s is “easy”. (Neder, 2010, p.185)

Like José Ramos Tinhorão, there are even those who defend the thesis of the dichotomy between folkloric and popular music, the first being a collective, anonymous and traditional expression, while the second involves assumed authorship, enjoying a space among diffusion apparatus, mediated by technology and characterised, therefore, as a product of the culture industry, which would strip it of its legitimacy as representative of a national identity.⁸

The concept of “popular culture” articulated by the notion of – popular national – identity, which dominates the sphere of reflection concerning Brazilian music, was clearly felt in this episode in which the electric guitar was the protagonist.

8 In this regard, the comment that follows is enlightening: “Under this lens [the opposition between folkloric and popular music], there is a concern to separate what is popular and what is folkloric: folkloric music is that of an unknown author, transmitted orally from generation to generation; in contrast, popular music is composed by known authors and publicised by recorded media (i.e., by recording and selling albums, sheet music, tapes, films, etc.), whose social places are industrialised cities” (Napolitano; Wasserman, 2000, p.179).

Even authors who propound to question this simplistic treatment of complex factors of national/foreign articulations still seek the “original”, focusing on the issue of reception, an “active appropriation, transformation and incorporation by the popular classes of something that comes to belong to them in fact and by right – like the harmony in samba, in *cururu*, in *moda de viola* and in a lot of other traditional music” (Neder, 2010, p.186). Thus, even if the emphasis is on dialogue and negotiation, rather than on the influence of external, so-called imperialist factors that combat the originality of national music, in theoretical terms, it is still conceived as a cultural exchange that acquires a unilateral sense – it always comes from outside and is reappropriated. The “popular classes” are always cast in the role of recipients and re-creators, but not of creators, because contact with the exterior somehow modifies them in a game of acceptance and refusal.

However, in the case of the electric guitar, does what comes from outside necessarily always dominate? Does it always corrupt – or modify – that which is in a “pure” state? Must this appropriation and incorporation always occur as resistance, in the measure that there is some modification? Or is it better to speak of cultural exchange, even if this is not symmetrical?

This is reminiscent of the essay “Nacional por subtração” [National by subtraction], by Roberto Schwarz, in which, with his usual ironic prose, he explains this refusal of importations so well:

In 1964, when the right-wing nationalists denounced Marxism as alien, perhaps they imagined that fascism was a Brazilian invention. On this point, while reserving their differences, the two nationalist strands coincided: they expected to find what they sought through the elimination of that which is not native. The residue of this operation to subtract is the authentic substance of the country. (Schwarz, 1997, p.33)

At this point, the critic observes how the theme of the “*false, inauthentic, imitated*” character of the cultural life we live” (Schwarz, 1997, p.29) is a constant not only in Brazilian, but also in Latin American thought. The inadequacies⁹ would be numerous if the perception concerning the foreign was always oriented by the bias of *copy* or *influence*. They would sound as unreasonable and as threatening imitations to our identity as the importation of the glacial figure of Santa Claus to the tropics, for example, or the adoption of the electric guitar. As he says: “From the perspective of a traditionalist, the electric guitar in the country of samba is another (example of inadequacy)” (Schwarz, 1997, p.29).

Even Roberto Schwarz did not let this weird moment from our cultural life escape him, especially when glimpsed from a context of intense globalisation:

What would a national economy be without mixture? From 1964 till now, internationalisation of capital, commercialisation of social relationships and the presence of the media have advanced so much that these issues have lost verisimilitude. However, only twenty years ago [written in the late 1990s] they still agitated the intelligentsia and occupied the order of the day. (Schwarz, 1997, p.32)

As a good Lukcasian, despite the fact that he considers the “American mechanisms of domination” as central, Roberto Schwarz does not fail to perceive how these same “mechanisms” served a “mystification of the Brazilian community, the object of patriotic love and removed from class analysis that in turn makes it problematic” (Schwarz, 1997, p.32).

In another moment of great lucidity, he explains a generational mechanism that exposes the force of reception, highlighting the presence of television as an important event in the Brazilian cultural scene: if for the nationalists imperialism was

⁹ In another essay, the theme is more forcefully argued as “ideas out of place”.

imbued in the American signs present on television, for example, for the generation born into the new cultural setting “it is nationalism that seems aesthetically archaic and provincial. For the first time, to my knowledge, the sense that defending national singularities against imperialist uniformity is an empty topic enters into circulation” (Schwarz, 1997, p.33).

Let us not forget that the author criticises the opposite trend as well, one that defends, with a liberating and optimistic air, a supposed “universalist world” paved by medias with universal scope. Similarly, the French sociologist *Éric Maigret* (2010) includes the pessimistic trend in the current “Marxist rationalists”, who consider themselves the heirs of the Enlightenment, and equally questions the optimism of proponents of the existence of a free, democratic “global village”.

Thus, our challenge in this essay is, first of all, to open the discussion concerning the mechanisms of interaction between these cultures regarding the issue of Brazilian identity.

Cultural exchanges in the culture industry

In the case of the electric guitar, what predominates is a pessimistic view of cultural exchanges with foreign countries; those that were more common, as we have seen, at the time and even decades after the introduction of this instrument were subject to mockery within the Brazilian music scene. In contrast, the resistance of some groups to the electric guitar and, consequently, to the Anglo-Saxon mould of rock possessed this critical and pessimistic sense that perceived, in the limited sphere, the importation of a strange instrument to our national popular tradition as Americanisation and imperialism, while in the general sphere it possessed a sense of combating the expansion of the culture industry and its artefacts, which were considered alienating.

It seems pertinent, then, to assert that this view is present in the discourse of these groups who elected the introduction of the electric guitar onto the national art scene as a sign of Yankee imperialism, a sign that, according to this point of view, becomes a symbol of market society that undermines ideology and favours the manipulation of public opinion, making it the finished expression of an atomised mass.

The most ironic thing about all this is that these same critics of the culture industry in Brazil – including all the consequences of a media culture in expansion, such as standardisation – were also linked to entertainment. They were, perhaps without knowing it, criticising the very medium that they came from.

However, this reception was not homogeneous, as can be concluded from the testimony of Nelson Motta, or by the reaction of Nara Leão and Caetano Veloso. Not to mention, of course, rockers – those responsible for introducing the instrument and the direct target of the infamous march.

To analyse adhesion to the electric guitar, therefore, we must necessarily abandon the view perpetrated by a discourse of the age – that of the resistance, which saw it as a threatening symbol to the “genuinely” Brazilian musical identity. Eduardo Visconti found this resistance as early as the 1930s, when references to the electric guitar appeared in disc booklets, but the instrument was often confused with an electrified acoustic guitar. This was not a technical issue, but one of refusal to acknowledge the foreign instrument:

One perceives that the emergence of the electric guitar in Brazilian music was accompanied by a certain “stigma”, possibly due to its strong identity with American music. This instrument was also identified in reference to modernity, a fact that bothered some critics and journalists concerned about the “tradition” of the acoustic guitar. (Visconti, 2009)

The author quotes an article from *Revista de Música Popular* (1954, n.1 apud Visconti, 2009), which confessed repudiation for the instrument called an “electrified acoustic guitar”, but that Visconti identifies as an electric guitar. Regardless, we have the electric guitar being used by Brazilian musicians since the 1930s, with names like Garoto, Laurindo de Almeida and Zé Menezes among the pioneers, though clearly its use was sporadic and generally conformed to the logic of the acoustic guitar.

In some sense, even today, resistance to the electric guitar in Brazilian music prevails. Watching a Brazilian music show of abroad is generally marked by the stereotypes consolidated by this point of view; for example, rarely would we see someone associate the rock made in Brazil in the 1960s or 1970s with what is understood as Brazilian popular music. The scarcity of studies on Brazilian rock bands from the 1950s to the 1970s is another symptom of the same resistance.

Thus, in order to glimpse the effects of the introduction of the electric guitar in the discussion of Brazilian identity, it is necessary to cast an eye on that which also privileges interactions, the cultural exchanges that existed and that have materialised in the changing features of Brazilian popular music, understanding the latter as the expression of a multitude of artistic expressions that cannot simply be reduced to that of the “popular national” mode.

We therefore look at the Brazilian rock of the 1960s and 1970s, the era when the electric guitar emerged as an instrument in Brazil.

A universal style

While abandoning the simple idea of appropriation, we consider the case of shared space, as we affirmed, a space that is part of the media culture. Appropriation exists, that cannot be

denied, but we would suggest that reflection on the introduction of the electric guitar in Brazil follows this approach of abandoning the defence of national singularities, as Schwarz suggests.

Rather than asking: what remains Brazilian in all this? What do we do with what you give us? How can we resist? And where are these resistances? Issues that are not uncommon hold an implicit power relationship between the two parties, inherited from the colonial condition and renewing the centre-periphery concept, which we wish to abandon here in favour of studying the overlaps between national cultural spaces (Espagne, 2012). We might risk interjecting other questions: is there something in common between this Brazilian youth and the rest of the world? Does this have any impact on the music they make and listen to?

This is not about resuming approaches that privilege miscegenations in defining the Brazilian character; after all, as we have argued, what prevailed in these attempts to define was the concept of “national by subtraction”. The “cannibalism” of local modernism knew well how to answer questions of appropriation, a line resumed by, among others, Tropicália. It seems that there were three types of reception to the electric guitar: *rejection*, clearly represented by the march against the electric guitar; *absorption* by those who, despite using the instrument, adapted it to play music like samba, in which the musical structure differs from rock or jazz, as did, for example, Caetano Veloso; and full *acceptance*, including the type of music that the new instrument had in tow – rock.

This last group includes bands whose repertoire is very commercial (Jovem Guarda in the 1960s, pop-rock of the 1980s), even among those who presented very sophisticated and original readings of Anglo-Saxon themes.

However, before we restrict ourselves to these different groups, it should be noted that criticism of rock and the guitar was not exclusively Brazilian.

In 1965 in the USA, the reaction to the first appearance of Bob Dylan (then considered the emblem of the folk genre with the music *Blowin' in the Wind*) with an electric guitar caused a scandal and wounded the pride of country music as a representative of American identity – this was only two years before the Brazilian march against this instrument.

This year, 1965, he would give the performance to end all performances at the folk festival. After a night of rehearsals and a nervous sound check in the late afternoon, Dylan donned a black leather jacket and strapped on a sleek, solid-bodied Fender electric guitar for the main, climatic concert on Sunday night. [...] Dylan mounted the main stage in the company of blues guitar wunderkind Mike Bloomfield, organist Al Kooper, pianist Barry Goldberg, bass player Jerome Arnold and drummer Sam Lay. The crowd was taken by surprise, wondering if it was a joke, but they weren't given much time to wonder. The band blasted off with "Maggie's Farm", the guitar riffs sending squeals and squawks through overloaded, faulty amplifiers. Dylan was a panther in the parish cat show. The volume was earsplitting. People began to shout and scream and boo. Oscar Brand said, "The electric guitar represented capitalism, people who were selling out". (Epstein, 2012, p.175)

Resistance against the with an electric guitar guitar still holds the condemnation of rebellion associated with rock, which caused problems for its adherents not only in the context of the Brazilian military dictatorship, in which individuals outside the standards of the average worker were constant targets of suspicion, but it also caused a widespread reaction in countries around the world that immediately saw a Faustian and Dionysian species of incarnation in rockers.

The emergence of youth as a category – the adolescent – in the post-war period questioned the authority of adults who saw in this new category, created by advertisers, a threat not only

to their status quo, but to a whole host of beliefs to which they were attached. Thus, it was not long before an association was made between the factors that led to these social tensions and the supposed manipulative power of the media, such as records, radio, cinema, idol magazines and all sorts of products from the phonographic industry, including, of course, the music itself – rock – and the electric guitar, its instrument par excellence, with its exciting, spectacular, deafening and maddening amplified sound. In the search for a scapegoat, to justify the new cultural rearrangements occurring in society, the products of media culture have been repeatedly perceived as guilty, as we know, and with rock it was no different.

Anxieties surrounding youth multiply every time there is questioning regarding adult/child/adolescent relationships that have their origins, in reality, outside the media. The mass diffusion of comics coincides with the emergence of the child as a consumer who is less dependent on his or her parents. The advent of rock coincides with adolescent emancipation, itself caused by mass emancipation and development of hedonism in this age group (due to the increased amount of free time and financial resources and the social latency period in which it is possible to devote oneself to a festive life...). (Maigret, 2010, p.80)

Therefore, it was not a phenomenon exclusive to Brazil, nor the association of rock (and its symbolic instrument) with rebellion, nor the reception of the guitar in the cantons of resistance against the corruption of authentic popular music, much less the expansion of rock as a genre. As early as the 1950s, rock bands were spreading not only throughout the northern hemisphere, but also in Africa and Latin America, including Brazil. The reception in Brazil also obeyed this logic and can only be understood in this context.

The emergence of a new sensibility in the post-war period affected much of the planet. Regarding the Brazilian context, the short democratic period that preceded the events of 1964 was central to youth participation. Public protests demanding a new social order also found space in the most varied of artistic expressions; from protest music to the rebellious rock 'n' roll style. The dictatorship appears as a repressive factor in this effervescent climate, but cannot completely change the direction of cultural integration promoted by the diffusion of media culture.

We have seen that there was a division within the group that identified itself as a representative of MPB: those who not only resisted the guitar, but who also protested openly, and those who absorbed it, swallowing it cannibalistically, assimilating it into MPB itself.

The first posture included an element more closely linked to the ideological issue and to the fight for markets. Certainly, it found huge support among the public because it united very popular names in music that were widely disseminated by radio and TV, and because fertile ground already existed in the resistance to the rocker attitude, not only in Brazil, but worldwide.

The second group included names of those who had achieved fame in the Brazilian culture industry as representatives of MPB, like the Bahian musicians who had become part of a kind of Brazilian musical pantheon.

The last group, which accepted and adopted the guitar as an instrument, and rock as their music and lifestyle, became polarised, either associated with a commercial style or with the underground.

National or foreign?

Before we begin to divide successive artistic-musical movements into a few large groups that can be associated with the

introduction of rock in Brazil, we would like to clarify what we understand as rock.

Very broadly, besides the musical rhythm that originates from American blues that is accelerated and amplified while playing, rock also emanates an outsider, rebellious and anti-social lifestyle. There is no doubt that it has been absorbed by the culture industry and has become mainstream, nullifying its sense of contention and rebellion. It could be argued that the same type of mechanism can be observed with blues and jazz (Hobsbawm, 1990, p.86) and later with rap and punk rock,¹⁰ as well as other musical events that share some of the same ideals and are oriented by resistance and rebellion, but that become mere entertainment, emptied of their oppositional meaning.

Likewise, we would like to situate ourselves chronologically, since, in the memory of rock in Brazil, the version of a winning generation has widely prevailed, as indeed happens whenever one discusses the construction of memory. The predominant version places the first major outbreak of national rock in the 1980s, which we do not agree with. The role of the intellectual is to question, and not to simply accept, interviews and testimonials as the truth. Instead of problematisation, however, what we have seen is a certain glamorisation of a generation who were children or had not even been born when the first rock bands appeared in Brazil in the 1950s. In the 1960s and 1970s, they multiplied and the genre gained more space to the point that it generated resistance, like the march to which we refer.

10 While we are not in complete agreement with the analysis of punk rock presented by Stewart Home, some of the points raised in his book seem very relevant, such as the link between the punk movement and counterculture and its absorption by the market in the late 1970s: "One of the problems faced by the *blank generation* – that sixties youth did not have to overcome – was an institutionalised youth, and 'post-youth', culture. [...] Thus the broad social base that might have developed was, instead, weakened and destroyed" (Home, 1999, p.131).

At first, some groups sang in English and reproduced a more commercial style. But with the passage of time, numerous bands emerged with a more underground approach and with very Brazilian features: themes, attitudes and even peculiarities in style, defending the existence of a Brazilian rock. If these are largely ignored by the general public and by academic criticism even today, without doubt, it is less to do with their inclination for rebellion than with the predominant version that rock in Brazil only gained popularity in the 80s generation. However, what we perceive is that this so-called rock, which in the 1980s had gained access to radios, magazines, auditorium programmes and other spaces and that had maintained some of its representatives in evidence in the media, is nothing but a phase in which rock is already popularised; it had become pop and had largely lost its power of rebellion.¹¹

Clearly it is not this rock that interests us, but rather that of the bands which, by adopting the guitar, had to take a defensive attitude towards the unfavourable scenario that ranged from the technical precariousness of the time (making access to tools, equipment and imported records difficult) to social resistance, marked by the dictatorship and moral sensitivity, which inevitably permeated the campaigns of groups like those who were against the electric guitar, all the while remaining conscious that they were making Brazilian music, albeit the fruit of Anglo-Sax-

11 Moreover, this memory of the “80s rock” generation seems to have succeeded in denying not only manifestations of 1960s and 1970s rock, but also the more radical contemporary bands playing punk and heavy metal. Some of these bands, like *Legião Urbana*, abundantly used the argument that they began as a “punk band” as a defence against charges of having “sold out” to the cultural industry. Used as a mechanism of legitimisation, the “original act” of this and other bands is always marked by a mythical underground past that almost never corresponds to reality.

on inspiration, which at this point could well be denominated universal music, given its extraordinary expansion.

Although the bands of the 1950s and 1960s provided the electric guitar with its second moment in the history of Brazilian music, it was groups from the 1970s who explored all of its potential as an electrically amplified instrument; the markedly more rebellious attitude of their members concretised in their nonadherence to the market, as occurred with the Jovem Guarda. Based on its original references, i.e., American and English songs, rock began to be played in Brazil while constantly enduring censorship due to the fact it was not “authentically” Brazilian.

Another factor that should be highlighted is the growing professionalisation of the music industry, with the entrance of major labels that change the landscape of the music industry (Janotti Jr, 2003, p.61). The majority of the rock groups to which we refer were outside this circuit, and this factor is important to bear in mind, since an entire parallel scene was formed despite support from the major labels, which were more interested in pleasing the public than in taking risks venturing into shaky terrain. Examples of these 1970s bands include: Fevers, Joelho de Porco, Secos e Molhados, Tutti Frutti, Mutantes (various songs of theirs dialogue with Tropicália, a movement they definitely are part of, but others are entirely rock), Terço, A Bolha, Terreno Baldio, O Som Nosso de Cada Dia, O Peso, Casa das Máquinas, Rita Lee and others too numerous to mention.

It was a movement that was attuned to what was happening outside Brazil, even with all the difficulties imposed by the technical constraints of the media and the political moment, and as such it was a precursor of a trend that soon proved to be inevitable and unavoidable: globalisation. This required a certain sophistication that is not normally attributed to rock.

Below is the transcript of the testimony of journalist Chico de Assis, also extracted from the documentary *Uma noite em 67*:

I participated in a march against the electric guitar alongside Gilberto Gil. Gil was here and I was here: “No more electric guitars! No more electric guitars!” We didn’t want the electric guitar. I actually understood why I didn’t want it. I knew the sound of the electric guitar; behind it came a ton of trashy American rock ready to disembark in Brazil. This was no Zappa nor Zeppelin, it was something else.

Chico de Assis, *Uma noite em 67* (2010)

What he highlights is the commercial component of the rock then played in Brazil, “the American trash”, citing progressive rock bands as their counterexamples. One of the bands that seemed to have responded to such criticisms is Casa das Máquinas, formed in 1974 with members who were part of the Jovem Guarda, like Pique, who played the organ for Roberto Carlos, Pisca, who played in Som Beat,¹² from 1965, and Aroldo and Netinho, from the group Os Incríveis,¹³ a band formed in the early 1960s. Their drummer, Nenê, in turn, had played in one of the first Brazilian rock bands, The Rebels (who also sang in English), from 1959; he gained his nickname (Nenê, literally Tot or Baby) because he started playing when he was 12 years old and was the youngest member of the band.

On Casa das Máquinas’ album entitled *Casa de Rock*, from 1976, the cover contained the warning “Brazilian Rock”, as if its Brazilian identity was required. The song “Londres”, for example, is a hard rock track with all the elements of the English style, which chronicles the experience of a Brazilian who is in London for the first time:

12 Listen to the song “Sou tímido assim” here: <<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4DuUBlpI4Mg>>. On the same 6” single, the group’s only release recorded in 1967, is a version of the song “My Generation” originally by the famous English rock band The Who (Fróes, 2000).

13 Listen here: <<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TBppY779y24>>.

When I arrived in London the fog covered the entire city
 I never imagined so much craziness at such a young age
 The sound of rock on every corner
 Lord Lady crazy in the subway
 It's an evil that contaminates
 This privilege makes me feel like a king
 Lord Lady crazy in the subway
 London proclaims, London proclaims
 It's rock all night and all day
 London proclaims, London proclaims
 Rock on every corner
 You have no idea
 I inherited a new attitude
 London proclaims, London proclaims
 Rock all night and all day¹⁴

These cultural exchanges do not only occur with people travelling and importing a style, “inheriting” a new attitude – new in relation to what was happening in Brazil, both regarding Brazilian music known as MPB and the rock played here, which, as we have discussed, was very commercial. And contrary to what Chico de Assis says, the song that starts with a marked solo guitar, besides being sophisticated, certainly dialogued with the progressive rock that he referred to as good quality. This was the type of reaction Brazilian bands had about the idea that the electric guitar could not be present in Brazilian popular music. In this case, we clearly perceive how this condition is vindicated, since the lyrics are in Portuguese and speak of the experience of a Brazilian in London.

14 The translation of these lyrics is naturally subjective and open to other interpretations, and as such is an attempt to show the imagery of Brazilian rock music. Listen to the song here: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ugk4MHk_uA>.

Another example is the band Made in Brazil. Beginning with the name, which proudly asserts its Brazilian identity, just like Casa das Máquinas, even though it is in English. One of their albums, called *Pauliceia desvairada* [literally City of São Paulo unhinged], is an explicit reference to modernism and the attitude of appropriation in this globalised culture. Formed in the neighbourhood of Pompeia in São Paulo in 1967, their repertoire shifted to Portuguese in 1973. The song “O rock de São Paulo” on the album *Jack o estripador*, from 1976, speaks of the acclimatisation of American rock in Brazil:

I'm not from Memphis and I've never been there
 But I like Chuck Berry and everything he does
 Him and Jerry, Jerry Lee Lewis
 It's a swing like you've never heard...

These guys are wicked, they even make the devil dance...
 I'm not from Memphis, but I like to rock
 I'm from Pompeia, the fringe of the city...
 We play a ton of rock to excite everyone
 It's rock from São Paulo, which makes the deaf hear

These guys are wicked, they even make the devil dance...¹⁵

The reference here is the United States and the birthplace of blues and rock, Memphis. Again from the perspective of a Brazilian who wants to be recognised as a rocker even though he is not American (or English, like in the previous case), the track speaks of a “Paulistano”¹⁶ rock. Made in São Paulo, played by Paulistas, but no less legitimate a musical expression, nor any

15 Again, the translation of these lyrics is open to other interpretations. Listen to the song here: <<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yyL8ydyk4Pg>>.

16 Of or pertaining to the city of São Paulo.

less Brazilian. Without aspiring to an expressly Brazilian singularity in their artistic expression, such musicians also do not present themselves as someone who merely copies foreign elements: they perceive themselves as an integral part of a broader movement, one that surpasses the boundaries of nationality, ratifying the character of the fusion of elements that have always been characteristic of local music.

Other examples could also be presented, but the two above are sufficient both to dispute the classification of Brazilian rock and the adoption of the electric guitar by its musicians using the key that excludes from “national” all that is not native.

Final considerations

Is there, then, a shared space between Anglo-Saxon and Brazilian culture (or, more broadly, global youth culture) regarding these rock bands, or is everything merely copying? Is the creation of a common space one effect of globalisation or is it just another importation of “gringo culture”?

We argue that if we discard the “myth of origin” that is so present when reflecting on popular culture, our only answer can be that which sees, in these cultural artefacts, results of an intense interaction, which, in addition to appropriation, reveals a common space that surpasses national borders.

Further exploration of the issue of youth as a universal category in the post-war period is necessary, as is situating these cultural expressions – including music – more clearly within this perspective, not only to understand what the singularities of the Brazilian case are, but also what it has in common with what is occurring globally, while to some extent leaving aside tensions created by asymmetric relationships generated within international contacts in order to privilege the places where they overlap.

Definitely, international music has a profound impact on Brazilian music, not only on its contemporary expressions, but above all due to its technical qualities. And if the defence of singularities comes to be an “empty topic” due to the process of internationalisation, as explained by Roberto Schwarz, we are left with unveiling the process that enables interactions.

At the same time, we must rid ourselves of that commonplace confusion between technology and product, as has occurred between the electric guitar and rock. Thus, it is true that the electric guitar symbolises the irreversibility of contact with a culture that continues to become increasingly hegemonic, but it is one that has penetrated the Brazilian market and Brazilian minds. This contact then constitutes a phenomenon to be observed by culture scholars.

Here, the march against the electric guitar remains a symbol of resistance to all that is foreign, registered in the concept of “national by subtraction” that seems to survive not only in the minds of those who still see Brazilian rock as just a copy of a foreign cultural form, within everything that is foreign to our “traditional” or “authentically Brazilian” culture (understood as superior, more sophisticated, more mature, more engaging, etc.). This rationale seems to find broad resonance in criticism, an object we have hardly addressed, as in investigating the Brazilian identity, as if this could only be homogeneous or, in the best hypothesis, mestizo, but never universal.

Brazil: three projects of religious identity

Artur Cesar Isaia¹

Introduction

The object of human sciences is always a constructed reality, in which cultural heritages are never immobile, regarding the many forms of sociability to which men and women are subject. In this construction, we appeal, above all, to operations of naming reality, which are always historical, ephemeral, contrary to the illusion of freezing time. Thus, identities are seen as constructions, as projects, in which the temporal course betrays the dream of the impression of an indestructible seal held by its agents. Projects concerning the naming of reality that are immune to diachrony do not exist; they are always showing that voluntaristic fixity is counterposed to the temporal course, to historical transformations.

Religious identities do not escape this historical fluidity, as opposed to the illusory fixity of identity projects. This duality between reductive projects of reality and historical transforma-

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tion is particularly visible in the contemporary world, which is characterised by the simultaneity of information and the dilution of borders of identity projects. Particularly in the West, marked by an accentuated march of religious pluralism, the current multiplication of the possibilities of religious questioning and personal arrangements capable of deepening the religious subjectivism proposed by Dumont (1983), or the “*religiosité flottante*” proposed by Champion (1993), is evident. These nullifying processes of fixed religious identity projects are perhaps the contemporary accentuation of an enduring reality, the catalysing of oppositions that characterised discourses (particularly Abrahamic monotheisms) of salvation, of election, of prophecy becoming religion, against the presence of those who are not swayed or converted. This was a process that opposed identity in the West, grounded both in formal logic and the principle of abstraction of reality and creation of knowledge, concerning the project of medieval Christianity, as opposed to the multiple experiences of faith, which, far beyond the Protestant reformation, contradicted the design of a completely hegemonic church in which the canonical norms impose themselves as social norms (Ginzburg, 1987; 1977; Sell; Brüseke, 2006).

The arrival of the project of Christianity in Brazil and the implementation of the old colonial system accentuated the coordinates of the opposition, established in Europe, between the fixity of the Catholic identity project and a markedly pluralistic sociocultural reality. Particularly in the Iberian Peninsula, Gilberto Freyre showed the contradiction between the project of Christianity and the multiplicity of shared meanings, further accentuated by African expansion and interaction with blacks, Jews, Moors and gypsies. Cultural experiences came to present phenotypic characteristics, marking miscegenation as a physical and cultural reality (Freyre, 2007).

In reference to Spanish America, Canclini emphasises what he called hybridisation as a phenomenon capable of generating

an “interclassist miscegenation” responsible for “hybrid formations in all social strata” (Canclini, 1992, p.71). Similarly, regarding Spanish America, Todorov shows that notions of stable identities preclude a historically rationally formed self, impossible to understand without resorting to symbolic and axiological universes that can assist in overcoming pure, simple alterity (Todorov, 1982).

Extricating essentialism from the idea of identity, Bourdieu’s studies clearly conform to a construction, an identity project, integrating naming operations of reality that mark the “legitimate” division of the social world. While referring to the social construction of geographical or sociocultural boundaries, Bourdieu states:

Nobody would want to claim today that there is a criterion capable of founding “natural” classifications on “natural” regions, separated by “natural” frontiers. The frontier is never anything other than a division which can be said to be more or less based on “reality” [...] But that’s not all: *“reality”, in this case, is social through and through and the most “natural” classifications are based on traits which are not in the slightest respect natural* and which are to a great extent the product of an arbitrary imposition, in other words, of a previous state of the relations of power in the field of struggle over legitimate delimitation. (Bourdieu, 1996, p.109-110; emphasis added)

Likewise, Berger and Luckmann argue that human reality can only be understood when we take into account the historical character on which it is built, whether through considering apparently “objective” data or the symbolic world. Thus, identities as creations should be understood as social constructs and, above all, human. Referring to the human object of sociology and its interactions with history and philosophy, Berger and Luckmann defended “this object is society as part of a human

world, made by men, inhabited by men, and, in turn, making men, in an ongoing historical process” (Berger; Luckmann, 2011, p.239). Thus, they endorse Bourdieu’s concept concerning character as simultaneously structuring and structured by symbolic systems. In this sense, identities as symbolic systems integrate the project to establish a true gnoseological order, or rather a form that wants to “legitimise” the perception and classification of the world (Bourdieu, 2001, p.9), which should give way to historical-sociological reflection.

Herein, we prioritise religion as a discourse that tries to institute identity projects within the national reality. To achieve this we chose three projects, three narratives to institute a religious identity in Brazil: the Catholic, Umbanda and Pentecostal projects. They are clearly emphatic discourses, not only in their attempt to qualify the identity of Brazil from a religious bias, but also in their attempt to “read” national history from a providentialist bias, capable of endorsing and legitimising the identity effort.

The project of a Catholic Brazil: the ecclesiastical hierarchy of the first half of the twentieth century

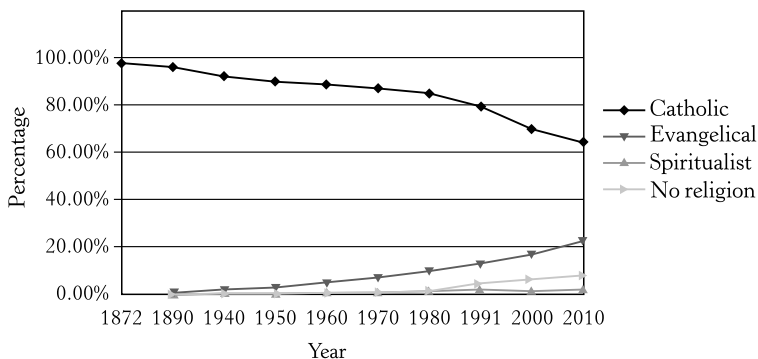


Figure 1: Religious distribution of the Brazilian population since 1872

Source: Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE)

The project of a Catholic identity for Brazil was greatly facilitated by the existing religious unanimity until the first half of the twentieth century. The first census conducted in Brazil, in 1872, indicated this situation of extreme convenience in the religious field, in which 99.7% of the population claimed to be Catholic. Since the creation of the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE) in 1936, this unanimity began to suffer the incursion of other agents in the Brazilian religious field, in which Catholic numbers decreased to represent 89.9% of the population by 1980, a number that plummeted rapidly in the decades that followed, falling to 64.6% in the 2010 Census (IBGE, n.d.).

The first half of the twentieth century leaves no doubt that religious diversification began accentuating in the predominantly Catholic Brazilian population. We precisely chose this time span to focus on the Catholic project of attack against the process of religious diversification in progress, thereby trying to deepen the idea of a Catholic “essence” for Brazil. Our *corpus* for this study is centred mainly on documentation of the hierarchy and laity of the Catholic Church during this period. In many of these documents, we find an idea that is repeated: the linearity that unites Brazil to Portugal through the Catholic faith. One of these documents is the *Carta Pastoral Coletiva de 1922* [Collective pastoral letter of 1922], published on the centenary of Brazilian independence. Bishops read the discovery of Brazil as a stage in the Portuguese effort to expand Christianity in an environment that is hostile to it and that would culminate in the Protestant Reformation of the sixteenth century. Brazil emerged as a stronghold in the Catholic Church’s onslaught against its enemies, trying to expand the church militance by converting the heathen. Portuguese America appeared in history through the first mass and, thus, through the Eucharistic sacrifice, capable of bringing Christ himself in body, blood, soul and divinity, “in-

tegrum Christum”,² to the “Land of the Holy Cross”. Brazilian bishops wrote that the cross erected by the Portuguese for the first mass marked the beginning of the Christian “ownership” of Brazil: “Here stands the discoverer of Brazil, raising the glorious standard for perpetual memory of the divine possession that for twenty centuries marks the conquests of the Son of God” (Brazilian episcopate, 1922, p.4). In the vision of the bishops, the erection of the cross for the Eucharistic sacrifice marked the true *uti possidetis* of Catholicism over Brazil. Thereafter, the country would be thought of as Catholic, with this bond ratifying its history. Through the discourse of providential obviousness of a “Catholic Brazil”, the hierarchy undertook the project envisioned by Bourdieu of “making someone see what they are” (Bourdieu, 1996, p.97-106), a project that was still feasible in Brazil for the first half of the twentieth century, due to the wealth of the symbolic accumulation of the church and the situation of convenience that it enjoyed across the Brazilian religious field. This symbolic operation appeared to Dom Carlos de Vasconcelos Motta as a “providential predestination”, coming from “its mystical birthplace, which was in the Eucharistic bosom of the first mass in Porto Seguro” (Motta, 1955, p.235).

However, the Brazilian Catholic identity was assumed, reconciling it with the triadic view of nationality, proposed since the nineteenth century by Varnhagen, a vision in which the recognition of blacks and indigenous peoples as moulders of nationality combined with the coordinating role of Portuguese ethos (Isaia, 2011, p.31). In agreement, in another work we referred to in the period studied as “fully assuming the formative vision of nationality based on the idea of the three races, under the preponderance of the white Portuguese, the pronouncements of the clergy

2 The expression appears in the Canon 3 of the Council of Trent. See Giraud, 2003, p.444.

and laity are numerous” (Isaia, 2003, p.243). This is particularly important at a time when identity and nationality were being reappraised, appealing to syncretism as an analytical tool. The work of Gilberto Freyre is highly emblematic of this rethinking of nationality, in which the persistence of the triadic vision and Portuguese ascendancy itself showed an evident linearity with Varnhagen’s vision, endorsed by a part of the Brazilian Historical and Geographical Institute, at the same time that it departed from the racist and pessimistic representations of the late nineteenth century (Isaia, 2012, p.2). The Portuguese ascendancy over the “three races” that mould nationality appeared in the discourse of the Brazilian ecclesiastical hierarchy even in the mid-twentieth century, beckoning to the fiction of an ethnic and religious purity in the Portuguese past. Thus, for Cardinal Motta, Brazil had “a noble and eugenic origin, a son who is wellborn, the Catholic Portuguese lineage of the heroic civilisers and evangelists ‘in whom the faith and the empire were expanded’ in each of their achievements, across seas and continents” (Motta, 1955, p.235). Dom Aquino Correa had already emphasised not only the disseminated triadic representation of Brazilian nationality, in the manner of Varnhagen, via the expulsion of Dutch “heretics” from northeastern Brazil in the seventeenth century as a prelude to the national historical formation, but also the black and indigenous peoples fighting under the command of the Portuguese. The expulsion of the Dutch from the northeast had acquired epic overtones, such that the archbishop sought in the classical world a model capable of providing meaning for both Portuguese and Brazilian history. In the “national Iliad”, the representations of a Catholic Brazil, which was linearly linked to Portugal, were reinforced:

Thou shalt see it in Brazil, a people suited to the harshest habits. The ethnic elements that moulded them are of tough and austere temper. The Indian was always a warrior in arms. [...] Well

known is the suffering of African resistance. And the Portuguese, finally, was, as you know, the only people in the world whose heroism inspired so true and national an epic as *The Lusíads*, for which was missing, indeed, a second volume no less epic and glorious, here traced by this people of strength, over the mysterious seas and hinterlands of the west. And it was in the fighting, in the Dutch War, in the national Iliad of the seventeenth century that these races, represented by Poti, Henrique Dias and Fernandes Vieira, have merged in the fire of battle, preparing in history the advent of the Brazilian man. (Correa, 1944, p.163)

In the 1920s, the Catholic intellectual Jônatas Serrano sang of the “redemption” of indigenous peoples via catechesis in a poem dedicated to the fiftieth anniversary of the sacerdotal ordination of Dom Joaquim Arcoverde Albuquerque Cavalcanti, Archbishop of Rio de Janeiro and the first Latin American cardinal. In this poem, Serrano created a fictional time in which Dom Joaquim Cavalcanti coexisted with two Christianised indigenous individuals: Arariboia and Jaguarari. The Christianisation of these individuals, the erasure of their tribal, polytheistic past, the acceptance of Catholicism and the willingness to fight for the Portuguese cause emerged as factors capable of “lifting them” to a “superior condition” (Serrano, n.d., p.143-144).

In contrast, the indigenous individual resistant to catechesis, rebellious against the Catholic religion and the Portuguese crown, is represented as possessing the worst attributes of contumacious heresy. Thus, according to the Pastoral Coletiva de 1922, the bishops modernised the project of a Catholic identity born of the first mass, thereby deepening the association of alterity with the foreign “heretic”. This individual was the bearer of an anti-reality, in opposition to the plans of divine providence. As a consequence, analysing the French invasion of Rio de Janeiro and, within it, the salient Calvinist presence, the bishops counterposed images in which both the “affirmation”

of God's will through the Portuguese victory and the demoralisation of the enemies of the Catholic faith clearly came to the fore. Reinforcing alterity with the invader, fictionally dramatising and simplifying reality (Boia, 1998), the bishops showed St. Sebastian interceding victoriously with God, while the invaders were in retreat, advised by an Indian woman. It was an "undeniable" ratification of the Brazilian Catholic identity:

In 1567, when the city of Rio de Janeiro was born [...], Nobrega and Anchieta presided over the company, already advising fearless warriors, already demanding naval reinforcements from Mem de Sá and men for a decisive victory against the tireless heathen in the service of the foolhardy French usurper. Thus, to animate the soldiers locked in combat against the French and Tamoios with his presence, he accompanied Dom Pedro Leitão, our second bishop. With an ardent, constant invocation on his lips to the martyr St. Sebastian on the day of battle, 20th of January, the Portuguese and faithful Indians fought heroically, and at the same time, as tradition represents to us, on his knees, hands clasped, a Christian praying for the victory of the arms of Portugal and a female Tamoio calling out to theirs to flee, because they were vanquished; it also shows us, hovering over the canoes, commanding the fight and protecting our own, the beautiful, robust, young patron saint of the glorious day. (Brazilian episcopate, 1922, p.13)

The saint, who capitalises on familiarity with God as well as the possession of the moral and aesthetic standards so dear to Portuguese Catholic expansionism (beautiful, robust, young), is counterbalanced with an individual who is symbolically deficient due to her ethnicity and sex, announcing the defeat of the indigenous people who dare to collude with the "heretic invader". The discourse of the Catholic hierarchy persists in this identification in which the State, Catholicism and people should cohabit in a nebula, capable of dividing projects and enemies.

Likewise, the words of Dom Sebastião Leme, at the inauguration of the statue of Christ the Redeemer, resound clearly. His words are a warning to Getúlio Vargas that the “Brazilian people” would not tolerate institutional affronts that could offend Catholicism:

Banned from the councils of the nation, God [...] will always have a refuge in the heart of the people, but the State and, therefore, its rulers will be forsaken of all spirit of order, respect and discipline: it can never be based on a fruitful and lasting peace, because it is without a foundation in love and consideration of the governed. (Message from the episcopate, 1931)

It is interesting that this representation of the Brazilian people is “naturally Catholic”, compared with an elite who were indifferent to religious matters and who need to “convert” to approximate to the values of the people, was not restricted to the Neo-Christianity project.³ For Pierucci, since the proclamation of the Republic, the Catholic hierarchy had insisted on contrasting the elite, who were lukewarm in faith and obsessed in appearing modern, and the people, seen as faithful to Christian and Catholic principles (Pierucci, 1996). Likewise, Sell and Brüseke emphasised this persistence, which was capable of affecting the very discourse of liberation theology in Brazil. For these authors, the conservative content of liberation theology in Brazil resided precisely in this inability to recognise that a single Catholic language is a project of identity construction, far removed from empirical reality, marked by a sharp process of religious pluralisation (Sell; Brüseke, 2006).

3 This deals with the project of the insertion of Catholicism into national life, marked by the quest to turn their religious norms into social norms institutionally recognized by the State. On the other hand, it was based on the mediation of the State and the elite to achieve their *desiderata*. In this respect, see Isaia (1998).

The intellectuals of Umbanda and the announcement of a Brazilian religion

The project of identity creation of an Umbandist Brazil is linked to the efforts of its early spokespersons in primarily affirming Umbanda as a Brazilian religion. The recurrent argument was that, in contrast to both the most common religion of the population and Protestantism and Spiritualism, Umbanda was born in Brazil, thus establishing itself as a national religion.

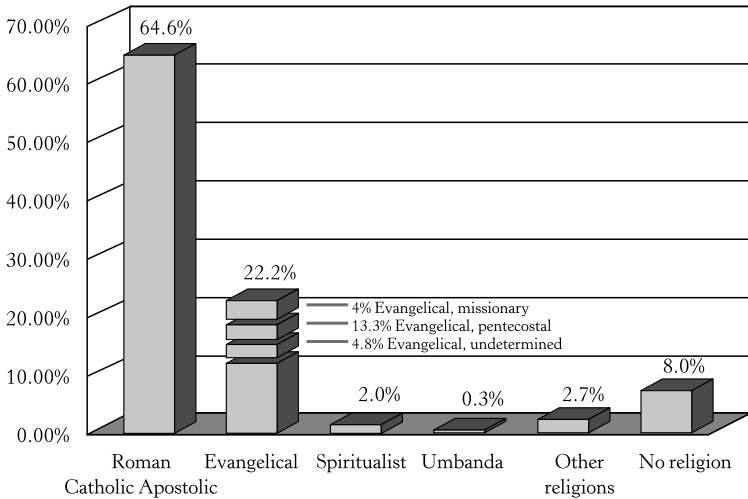


Figure 2: Distribution of religions in Brazil

Source: IBGE Census (2010)

The figures collected by the IBGE for the 2010 *census* show a very small population that declares itself believers of Candomblé or Umbanda (0.3%). Therefore, we face an identity project that at present is lacking adequate social credentials, at least in regard to numbers. Studies by Ortiz (1988), Brown (1985) and Negrão (1996) reveal that the increase in believers of Umbanda occurred mainly between the mid-1920s and the 1970s. The figures col-

lected by Renato Ortiz show considerable growth in Umbanda *terreiros*⁴ founded in Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo and Rio Grande do Sul between the 1920s and the 1960s, reaching a peak in the mid-1960s, when they began to decline; in Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo the fall was evident, while in Rio Grande do Sul the numbers continued to grow, but at a much more modest pace (Ortiz, 1988, p.56-61). This increase in Umbanda houses⁵ accompanies the doctrinal effort and identity project of its early leaders and writers, in order for the religion to achieve symbolic accreditation.

The first Umbanda spokespersons echoed the miscegenated representation disseminated by the Brazilian intelligentsia of the first half of the twentieth century. The modernist movement of the 1920s, particularly the anthropophagic proposal (Queiroz, M., 1988) and the theoretical dimension achieved with the discourse of syncretism by Gilberto Freyre, is an emblematic moment of this projection of a mulatto, syncretic Brazil marked by cultural and ethnic conjunctions. These characteristics also appear in the writings of these early spokespersons of Umbanda, for whom the inherent qualities led to the very constitution of the new religion. One of the intellectual pioneers of Umbanda, writer Leal de Souza, expressed himself in this regard in an interview published in the 1950s:

The Linha Branca [literally White Line] of Umbanda is actually the national religion of Brazil, because through its rites and ancestral spirits the fathers of the race guide and lead their descendants. The precursor of the Linha Branca was the Caboclo⁶ Curuguçu,

4 A yard or house, considered a temple, where Umbanda cults are held and wherein guides (spirits) incorporate in mediums to assist people. Incantations, offerings and praises to the Orixas are also made as part of the natural ritual of the religion.

5 See note 4.

6 A person of white and indigenous descent, a mestizo; in this case, the spirit of a *caboclo*.

who worked until the advent of the Caboclo das Sete Encruzilhadas, who organised, that is, was commissioned by the higher guides that govern our psychic cycle, to accomplish on Earth the conception of space. (apud Trindade, 1991, p.56)

In the words above, Leal de Souza mentions a foundation myth of Umbanda in Brazil, according to which, in 1908, the spirit of an Indian, Caboclo das Sete Encruzilhadas [literally Caboclo of the Seven Crossroads], announced or established Umbanda in Brazil. Zélio Fernandino de Moraes was the medium through which many Umbanda adepts believe this entity manifested. Briefly, the myth narrates the serious illness that affected Zélio and his healing through the action of Caboclo das Sete Encruzilhadas. It also narrates what is considered to be the first “manifestation” of Caboclo das Sete Encruzilhadas, on the 15th of November, 1908, in the town of Nevis, in the countryside of the State of Rio de Janeiro, during his seance.

This narrative is accepted by many believers as evidence of the “foundation” or “announcement” of Umbanda in Brazil. For Giumbelli, however, this narrative only acquired visibility in the second half of the twentieth century, principally after the death of Zélio, in 1975 (Giumbelli, 2002). More than the pursuit to date its generalisation, what matters in this work is the mythical richness of this narrative. Like the mythic narrative of the “birth” of Brazil through the first mass, the myth of Caboclo das Sete Encruzilhadas lends itself to the effort of thinking not only about religion, but about national history itself (Isaia, 1998). Like the Catholic narrative, the Umbanda myth points to a miscegenated representation, based on the triad black, indigenous and white, in which, in some aspects, the presence of the ascendancy of the last element is evident (Isaia, 2011, 2012).

Federal Law no. 12644, of the 16th of May, 2012, established the National Day of Umbanda. An interesting feature of a graphic

composition commemorating the law,⁷ inside a map of Brazil, at the centre a “*gira*” of Umbanda is shown, and below, to the left and right, respectively, the representation of Preto Velho,⁸ a photograph of Zélio Fernandino de Moraes and a painting that evokes Caboclo das Sete Encruzilhadas. These three significant figures are rigorously inserted in the Umbanda tradition, representing respectively the three moulding “races” of nationality, endorsing long-term meanings that are very dear to religion. At the end of the 1950s, one of the historical Umbanda leaders, José Álvares Pessoa, affirmed the following concerning the formation of the religion:

Some 40 years ago, more or less, taking advantage of the huge acceptance of spiritualistic phenomena by Brazilians, the entities that preside over the spiritual destiny of the race decided to move forward with the arduous task of providing them a religion that was genuinely Brazilian. Because, for the child of three races – white, black and indigenous –, it was not fair that the Brazilian had to conform to, by imposition, a religion that was 100% imported, whichever it was, and that did not unite the aspirations of the three races which belonged to it. The religion that was destined for them should be an eclectic religion [...]. (Azevedo, 1960, p.63)

In contrast, the founding myth regarding Zélio Fernandina de Moraes specifically referred to the formation of a national religion, in which spirits of blacks and ex-slaves, who could not find a home in the Kardecist variant of Spiritualism in Brazil, could finally speak freely. In a statement from the 16th of No-

7 Available at: <<http://ecaruanda.blogspot.com.br/2012/06/dia-nacional-da-umbanda-para-noooooossa.html>>. Accessed on: 1st of July, 2013.

8 Pretos Velhos are the spirits of old African slaves, who are considered to be wise, peaceful and kind and know all about suffering, compassion, forgiveness and hope.

vember, 1971, Zélio de Moraes recorded the moment considered by this tradition to be the original foundation for Umbanda in Brazil, corroborating the triadic representation of the new religion:

Beside me is Caboclo das Sete Encruzilhadas, here to tell you that this Umbanda, so dear to us all, was 63 years old yesterday, in the Kardecist Federation of the State of Rio, presided by José de Souza, known as Zéca, surrounded by old people, men with gray hair, one St. Augustine's day, *my instrument*⁹ called me, called, called me to sit at his bedside. He brought an order, though a Jesuit at that moment, called Gabriel Malagrida. *At that moment he was going to create the law of Umbanda*, where black and caboclo could manifest because he was not in agreement with the Kardecist Federation, who did not receive blacks or *caboclos*, but really what existed in Brazil were *caboclos*, were natives. Here in Brazil, those who came to explore Brazil, brought here to work, to aggrandise this country were the blacks from the coast of Africa, so how can a Spiritualist Federation not receive *caboclos* or blacks? *So I said, said the spirit: "Tomorrow at the house of my instrument, 30 Floriano Peixoto Street, a spirit tent will be inaugurated in the name of Our Lady of Mercy, to be called the Umbanda tent, where the Black and Caboclo can work"*. (Moraes, n.d.; emphasis added)¹⁰

The speech of Zélio Fernandino de Moraes provides us with important clues to understand the symbolic richness of the narrative considered to be foundational or the harbinger of Umban-

9 In the vocabulary of mediumistic religions, the term refers to the medium, in this case, Zélio Fernandino de Moraes.

10 Note that, in Zélio de Moraes's speech, there is confusion in the enunciation of the message, oscillating between a human narrator, himself, and another with a spiritual identity, Caboclo das Sete Encruzilhadas: "my instrument called me, called, called me"... "So I said, said the spirit:...").

da by some believers of the religion. The nationalist component appears in the forefront of this identity project. This nationalism has a feature that is unapologetically faithful to the narrative of the triadic origin of the nation. It projects a new religion capable of celebrating the moulding of nationality, indicating an inter-discourse that is very similar to that disseminated by both the Brazilian Historical and Geographical Institute, through Varnhagen, and that which was assumed by the Catholic hierarchy in the first half of the twentieth century (Isaia, 2011). It also contains the prominent place of the white race in the narrative, present in the Jesuit Gabriel Malagrida, who is even capable of endowing the new religion with a very important symbolic credit for acceptance among the elite, that of literacy. Thus, Caboclo das Sete Encruzilhadas appears with the attributes of the former guardians of the land in Brazil and is represented differently, referring to one of his incarnations as Malagrida.

In this foundational or harbinger narrative of Umbanda, the role of Malagrida is primordial. He appears as a resource capable of “assuring” the “truthfulness” of the message of Caboclo das Sete Encruzilhadas in the face of an environment resistant to the cultural universe of blacks and indigenous peoples, in a society where the remnants of estate status are evident. Consequently, the first “manifestation” of Caboclo das Sete Encruzilhadas occurred in a Kardecist seance, thus appears the dialogue between him and a “clairvoyant”¹¹ present at it:

[...] Why do you speak in this manner when I see that, right now, I address a Jesuit and does your white robe reflect an aura of light? And what is your name, brother?

If you judge the spirits of blacks and Indians as backward, I must tell you that tomorrow I'll be at the home of this instrument, to

11 For further details concerning this dialogue, see Oliveira, n.d., p.46-48.

initiate a service in which these blacks and the Indians will be able to impart their messages and thus fulfil the mission that the Spiritual Plane has entrusted to them. It will be a religion that speaks to the humble, symbolising the equality that should exist between all brothers and the disincarnated. And if you wish to know my name, then let it be this: Caboclo das Sete Encruzilhadas, because there will be no paths closed to me. (Oliveira, J. A., n.d., p.40)

As a narrative force for instituting a Brazilian identity for Umbanda, the myth of Caboclo das Sete Encruzilhadas assumes an option that is clearly directed towards the reality of the majority of the Brazilian population as the foundation or announcement of the new religion. It corroborates the connection with the humble, those unassisted by the State, whom, like Kardecist Spiritism, they privilege in their charitable work. However, unlike Spiritism, this foundational or harbinger narrative of Umbanda poses dispossessed segments of the social hierarchy as protagonists, through an inversion ritual, capable of celebrating them in a Brazil as yet predominantly rural and markedly unequal. Through a compensatory narrative operation, the former guardians of the land and blacks abandon their position of subjection and, in the Umbanda pantheon, become the central cultic figures.

The project of an Umbanda adhering to Brazilian nationality is reiterated in numerous publications and initiatives, some innate to the institutions of the religion. Among these media, the *Revista Espiritual de Umbanda* [Umbanda Spiritual Magazine] stands out, since it produced an extremely significant imagetic composition of this project. It concerns an invitation to the “solemn session formalising the 1st National Congress of Umbanda”,¹² held in the Council Chambers of the city of São Paulo on the 17th of August, 2013.

12 Available at: <<http://www.radiotoquesdearuanda.com.br/index.php/evento.php?id=172>>. Accessed on: 30th of September, 2013.

No matter what census numbers show, adepts of an explicitly minority religion appear to be either forming the national flag or blossoming from it, this constituting the Brazilian people. Thus, in this graphical solution, the image seems to seek the identification of Umbanda, not only with Brazilian nationality, but also with the Brazilian people. The image and the written discourses that refer to an identity are clearly projects of social actors that are not subject to mere mimesis. Particularly in relation to images, the disseminated reductionisms and simplifications (Paiva, 2002, p.104) are very important clues to understanding this project of the institution of reality.

The persistence of the identity project of Umbanda as authentically Brazilian is actualised by the power of the myth, whose discursive effect always signals a recollection of the 15th of November, 1908. This date clearly appears as the projected original moment (Chauí, 2000), assumed by some Umbanda leaders and doctrinal Umbanda publications faithful to the founding or harbinger myth of Caboclo das Sete Encruzilhadas. In 2008, the *Revista Espiritual de Umbanda*¹³ dedicated an “historical issue” to the “centenary of Umbanda”.

Moreover, this nationalist project gained importance following the endorsement, by certain Umbanda intellectuals, of the narrative of a Brazil predestined to be the “heart of the world, homeland of the gospel” (Xavier, 1998). The book, which according to Spiritualists was dictated by Humberto de Campos Francisco Cândido Xavier, divulged the representation of a “sacred history” for Brazil, whose teleology was determined by divine design (Smith, 2005, p.41).

On the other hand, the spiritualist reading of history, emphasising the idea of continuous progress and the vehement defence

13 For an in-depth study of this publication and its affiliation with the tradition of Caboclo das Sete Encruzilhadas, see Pinheiro (2009).

of the republic as evidence of human evolutionary achievements, ended up articulating itself to the reading of the history of Brazil present in the Umbanda literature of the twentieth century. Some temporal markers appear to be linearly interlinked, showing, for example, the relationship between the abolition of slavery, the proclamation of the Republic and the “birth of Umbanda”, celebrated precisely on the 15th of November (Isaia, 1998, 2012).

The Pentecostal Brazil announced by the pioneers of the Assembleia de Deus

Just like Catholicism and Umbanda, Pentecostalism¹⁴ in Brazil also resorted to a founding myth as a narrative recourse. More precisely, we will adhere to the foundational myth of the Igreja Evangélica Assembleia de Deus (IEAD) [literally Assembly of God Evangelical Church] and to their reading a history of Brazil led by the action of the Holy Spirit, capable of achieving a new Pentecost in Brazilian lands.

In the literature produced by IEAD, Brazil emerges as a place chosen by God for the professed revival that will happen in a

14 Pentecostalism can be summarised as a reading of the Bible that emphasises that, like the apostles, who received the Holy Spirit and began to speak in tongues at Pentecost, people of later times must believe in repetition of this infusion of gifts. Dreher (1999) emphasises that Pentecostalism is not homogeneous, assuming specific historical and doctrinal configurations. For example, glossolalia (the gift of speaking in tongues) is not consensually considered by all Pentecostal denominations as proof of baptism by the Holy Spirit. Here we are using the term Pentecostal in the strict soteriological and eschatological meaning proposed by the IEAD. There is baptism “in the waters” and baptism “in the Holy Spirit”, when there is a unique experience that accompanies its gifts that include glossolalia, healing, interpretation of tongues and the so-called discernment of spirits (ability to distinguish the Holy Spirit from the human spirit and evil spirits, as one reads, for example, in Matthew 12:22-37).

particularly important manner. According to this reading, the choice of God also fell on the men who should initiate this work; in this case, two Swedes, Daniel Berg and Gunnar Vingren. Arising from the Baptist Church, they immigrated to the United States. At that time, Chicago stood out as a centre that united those who accepted the fundamental principles of Pentecostalism: baptism by the Holy Spirit and the return of Jesus Christ to retrieve His church (Conde, 2011, p.38). Among North American Baptists there was acceptance of Pentecostalism. It was precisely at a convention of Baptist churches in Chicago that Gunnar Vingren met Daniel Berg. Vingren was a minister in South Bend, Indiana, about 100 miles from Chicago, and it is in this city that the founding myth of the Brazilian *Assembleia* Pentecostalism acquires its narrative force. Daniel Berg goes to South Bend to visit his new friend Gunnar Vingren. It is there that a “prophetic message” happens, revealing their mission to them. On this occasion, they heard, for the first time, a language which was strange to them both, which they later found out was Portuguese. The message of the Holy Spirit was clear: they should go to a place unknown to them, called Pará. According to Vingren’s narrative:

Among other things, the Holy Spirit spoke through this brother [Adolfo Uldin] that I should go to Pará. It was also revealed to us that the people to whom I would testify of Jesus were of a very simple social level. I should teach them the rudiments of the doctrine of the Lord. On that occasion we had the immense privilege of hearing the Holy Spirit through the language of that people, the Portuguese language. He also told us that we would eat very simple food, but that God would give us everything we needed. (Vingren, 2011, p.27)

For Joanyr Oliveira, the message of the Holy Spirit to the two young Swedes was transmitted to Adolfo Uldin in a dream, a few days after Vingren and Berg got to know each other, in 1909:

A few days went by when a believer baptised in the Holy Spirit, called Adolfo Uldin, narrated to them a dream, in which the two friends were characters and that a very strange name, which was quite legible, appeared to him: Pará. *Uldin had never read or heard such a word.* But he understood that it was a place. (Oliveira, J., 1997, p.34; emphasis added)

The narrative proceeds, reproduced in many IEAD publications, with the young adults searching in a library to find out where the land “announced by the Holy Spirit” was located. And so, according to the foundational narrative, Vingren and Berg discovered that in order to fulfil the will of God, they should leave for the north of Brazil, which was an inhospitable region, and very different from the environments to which they were accustomed. The heralds and instruments of the Holy Spirit would be in the region “chosen by God”.

It is worth noting that northern Brazil and Pará, in particular, were far from unknown in the United States or in American evangelical circles at the time. The rubber economy had integrated the region with the European and North American markets, such that the port of Belém was the largest exporting point for its production (Sarges, 2000). According to Pantoja (2012, p.110), the Protestant presence had been felt in the Amazon region since the mid-nineteenth century, appearing in documented clashes with the local ultramontane clergy, notably the Bishop of Pará, Dom Antonio de Macedo Costa. This clergy defended the idea that the arrival of the Protestants in Amazonia concealed the “machinations of the United States to take over Amazonas” (Pantoja, 2012, p.114). Among the Protestant missionaries who had been active since the nineteenth century, Pantoja cites Scotsman Richard Holden, who had studied in the United States and had been in the region in late 1860. The presence of Holden in the Amazon, according to Vieira (1980, p.164), was linked to American and European

commercial interests regarding the internationalisation of navigation along the Amazon River. Further evidence that needs to be cited to contextualise the foundational message of IEAD in Brazil concerns the prior presence of a Baptist missionary of Swedish origin, who was in Belém, at the time of Daniel Berg and Gunnar Vingren's arrival. This concerns Baptist minister Eurico (or Erik) Nelson, first baptised in the Lutheran Church and later rebaptised in the Swedish Baptist Church (Ribeiro, E., 2011, p.28-29). In a narrative in contrast to that of Pentecostalism, Nelson appears in the basement of the church welcoming Gunnar Vingren and Daniel Berg in their early days in Brazil (*O Bereano*, 2002). Interestingly, in the memoirs of both Gunnar Vingren and Daniel Berg, the nationality of Nelson is omitted. In these sources the Swedish missionaries write that, upon arriving in Belém (Bethlehem), on the first day, while in the modest hotel where they were staying, they encountered a newspaper and, among its pages, Vingren identified the name of a Methodist minister whom he had met in the United States. "Here it is, Daniel – he said –, without doubt it is God's answer showing us the right path" (Berg, 2011, p.48; Conde, 2011, p.33). It was this Methodist minister who led them to the Baptist minister. Logically, we should understand these accounts, with their omissions and silences and possible confabulations, as part of the effort to establish and reinforce a particular identity that is socially recognised. In this sense, Bourdieu (2013) shows that these accounts are marked by the logic of allocution, that is, they are proffered from a certain social position, in which the individual constructs "a collection of attributes suitable for allowing him to intervene as an efficient agent in different fields" (Bourdieu, 2013, p.82). Thus, the selection of information that orients these narratives becomes understandable. This is how the mythical narrative, of those sent by God to Brazil to enable a new Pentecost, gains consistency. Furthermore, the narrative of an originary place (Pará), chosen by God so that His promises and His gifts could spread

throughout Brazil, similarly gains consistency. Such promises and gifts updated daily in the present and it was “witnessed” at dawn on the 8th of June, 1911, when Celina Albuquerque became the first Brazilian baptised by the Holy Spirit.¹⁵

Assembleia sources reiterate the mythical narrative, according to which the instruments of God sowed the seeds of the principal Pentecostal denomination in Brazil.¹⁶ Furthermore, Brazil is seen in the Pentecostal discourse as the place in the world where, in a unique way, the message that “Jesus saves, heals, baptises with the Holy Spirit and will soon return” was established and developed “like in no other place on Earth” (Manifesto, 2010). The purpose of the IEAD showing that is so the Pentecostal vanguard of Brazil is evident, since “God made us the head and not the tail”.¹⁷

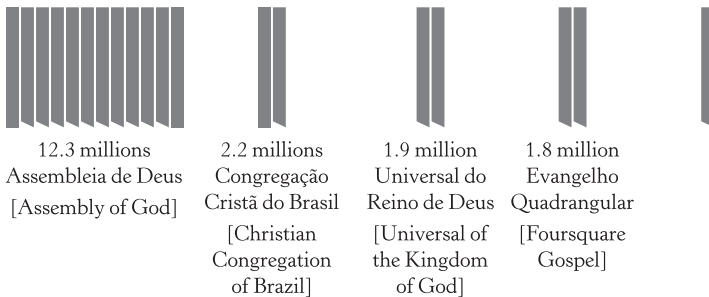


Figure 3: The Most representative evangelical Pentecostal churches, according to the IBGE 2010 Census

Source: IBGE Census (2010)

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- 15 The first baptism in the Holy Spirit in Brazilian territory, that of Celina Albuquerque, which happened the 8th of on June, 1911, appears as an important marker in the official narrative works of IEAD.
- 16 Rejected by the Baptist Church in Belém, whose minister did not accept Pentecostalism, Vingren and Berg founded the Missão da Fé Apostólica [Apostolic Faith Mission], the first name of the future Igreja Evangélica Assembleia de Deus.
- 17 The words of Minister José Wellington Bezerra da Costa, President of the General Convention of the Assembleias de Deus in Brazil (Araujo, 2011, p.V).

The main Pentecostal denomination in the country has shaped a reading of the history of Brazil that is useful to its identity effort. It needed to show its differential character against a Brazil which, at least early on during its operations in the North, still presented an unassailable Catholicism. The reading of history that the documents produced by the IEAD convey is a constitutive part of this effort. The introduction to the book by Emilio Conde (Conde, 2011), written by Claudionor Corrêa de Almeida, is emblematic. In it, the author clarifies the intention to imprint meaning, capable of making the work of the IEAD in Brazil understandable; a meaning obviously allied with the Divine plan. It reveals how the historical predominance of Catholicism is an obstacle to the propagation of the gospel, criticises the neglect of the reformers in the era of Luther and Calvin concerning preaching the word of God in Brazil and presents Berg and Vingren as the introducers of Pentecostalism in Brazilian lands, thus remaining completely silent regarding the earlier arrival of Louis Francescon, founder of the Christian Congregation of Brazil, a denomination that is equally Pentecostal. Berg and Vingren appear as representatives of one of the “greatest religious phenomena of the last few eras” (Conde, 2011, p.21).

Conde’s narrative is entirely inserted in an intra-institutional vision, assuming a project in which human facts and eschatological promises are interlinked, thereby giving meaning to the projected appointment of the IEAD as a visible reality of God’s plan to evangelise Brazil and awaken its missionary vocation.¹⁸ At every opportunity, the narrative shows the actuation of Divine rule, through prophecies and revelations, both on the individual directions of their leaders and the direction of the church itself.

18 Regarding this, while still in its infancy in Brazil, the IEAD launched its missionary expansion as early as 1913, with the departure of José Plácido Costa for Portugal, in order to evangelise that country (Conde, 2011, p.45).

The institutional importance of Conde's work in the project of affirmation of *Assembleia's* identity in Brazil can be measured in the symbology of the logo of the centenary of the IEAD.¹⁹ Here we see that the number 1 appears as a large flame representing the fire of the Holy Ghost. This representation appears in Araujo, linked to the expressions "torches of fire (how Conde's book describes the missionaries Daniel Berg and Gunnar Vingren) and 'Pentecostal flame'" (Araujo, 2011, p.537).

Two striking features that make up Conde's narrative concerning Vingren and Berg are election and sacrifice. Conde thus constructs a narrative that is extremely familiar to Christian martyrdom, enabling the founders to take advantage of the attributes necessary for social recognition. Thus, with the "God of Abraham" to protect them (Conde, 2011, p.30), Vingren and Berg, in the manner of the gospel narrative of Christ's temptations in the desert, had to face all kinds of onslaughts by the devil, aimed at dissuading them from their mission. Beginning with their first impressions of a land where poverty was chronic, in an extremely hostile geographical environment, where disease and danger proliferated, including nonbelievers, those resistant to God's word and the ferocious beasts of the forest. In the narrative of the arrival of Vingren and Berg in Belém created by Conde, the ghastly appearance of a town overrun by leprosy appears as a symptom of the diabolical action trying to thwart the emissaries of God:²⁰

19 Available at: <<http://files.celmoalmeida.com/200000751-b642fb73ce/centenario.jpg>>. Accessed on: 1st of July, 2013.

20 The description of a town overrun by leprosy and the dangers that surrounded those who dared to walk in the middle of the population appears in the Berg's memoirs. It is the same Berg who writes, "The fact that we continued strong, healthy and willing to preach the gospel there under such precarious conditions was seen as proof that God had sent us" (Berg, 2011, p.56).

It is not easy to imagine what the first impressions of the young missionaries were that afternoon in a square in Belém, feeling the sun baking them in their thick, heavy clothing. At that time, Belém did not have many attractions. Moreover, it had been invaded by crowds of lepers, even coming from nations bordering Amazonas, attracted by the news of the discovery of an herb that was said to cure the terrible disease. The poverty of the people also contrasted with the standard of living in the other America. The devil took advantage of all this to discourage newcomers. These, however, had come on the order of the King of kings: nothing would frighten them or make them retreat. (Conde, 2011, p.30)

Overcoming the natural enemies (the environment, the climate, wild animals), establishing a power that came directly from God on those who ignored or denied the fundamentals of Pentecostalism and especially triumphing over snares and demonic temptations, Gunnar Vingren and Daniel Berg appear in the official narratives of IEAD as divine instruments, cementing His plan to make His word and His promises known in Brazil. Through these discursive resources, the official documentation of the IEAD tries to rememoratively update the foundation myth, imposing itself as an authoritative narrative of an ever-present past.

In conclusion

Herein we have worked with three mythical narratives, whose effect sought to signal the qualification of religion in identity construction and its approach to national history. The Catholic Church, Umbanda and Igreja Evangélica Assembleia de Deus resorted to a mythical effort capable of showing their specificity in the face of the “market of salvation”, which was underway in

Brazil in the first half of the twentieth century. Thus, they endeavoured to emphasise a soteriological message, which was singular, legitimate and necessary to national life. This is why we find three narratives in which these components of the Brazilian religious field endeavour to clarify the superiority of symbolic goods that they place at the disposal of society. In all three cases, they sought to offer a rich narrative of socially recognised values.

Nor could it be otherwise, since these discourses aspire to the eternally attributed, recognised and never self-enunciated social legitimacy. As the main religious choice and the one closest to power, Catholicism appeals discursively to the construction of its presence at the “beginning” of the nation and the State, constructing a non-Catholic anti-reality. Whereas for adepts of Umbanda and the *Assembleia*, the mythic narrative of their histories has to appeal to a much more recent past, but one equally as capable of reinforcing the specificity of their salvation goods. The “announcement” or “foundation” of the Umbanda by Caboclo das Sete Encruzilhadas and the “fulfilment” of Assembleia’s Pentecostal prophecy in Brazil appeal to a new message. The Divine plan and its providential action in history were updated in the twentieth century, signalling symbolic goods that might overcome the majority religion. On one hand, the “announcement” of Caboclo das Sete Encruzilhadas would finally bring a religion capable of uniting and celebrating the “national soul”; on the other, the “fulfilment” of the Pentecostal prophecy in Pará would bring to Brazil the Christian promise existing in Acts: the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Beginning with the position enunciated by Halbwachs (1952, p.296), according to which society is essentially a memory, we may conclude by considering that the Catholic, Umbanda and Assembleia discourses reveal themselves as efforts in remembering, rememoratively creating in the present a mythical past. On the other hand, returning to our original idea, this mnemonic effort

clearly signals to a project, in which Catholics and practitioners of Umbanda and Assembleia Pentecostalism, at one and the same time, try to establish identities and consider their and our history. In this identity founding effort, some temporal marks represent very special moments. These occurred on the commemorations of the three centenaries: political independence in 1922, the “foundation” or “announcement” of Umbanda in 1998 and the institution of Assembleia Pentecostalism in 2011, which functioned as reinforcing moments, both regarding the respective identities and the links between the present and a mythical past that needed to be revived and remembered.

The new interpreters and an old question: what is Brazil?

Karina Anhezini¹

Ricardo Alexandre Ferreira²

Thinking about national identity during the preparations for the World Cup, a time that was concurrently immersed in protests that erupted in major cities and that spread to the four corners of the country, is, at the very least, inspiring. Inspiring and unsettling, because everywhere we look, uses of the past and definitions of enunciations emerge that desire to be historical and that make use of history to create solidarities in the midst of the so-called “days of June”. We see, with certain regularity, hundreds of people coming together for different reasons and frequently evoking, through displays of national symbols, the notion of identity that is so dear to Brazilians, but this seems frayed since the 500-year commemorations.³

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3 Celebrating the 500th anniversary of the Portuguese discovery of Brazil, which occurred in the year 2000.

While it is tempting to do so here, this essay will not deal with these events, at least it will not directly address the challenge of interpreting them even in the heat of their developments; other colleagues, who are more audacious than us, have already initiated such tasks.⁴ More modest in its intentions, this text is charged with a task that is equally arduous and, in our view, essential to contemporary historiographical reflection. We intend to map how the field of historians and other intellectuals from the humanities and social sciences have reflected on the theme of the identity of Brazil and of Brazilians in the first decade of this century.

The task of choosing the most representative works of the principal modes of interpreting and constructing our sense of identity, from the year 2000 onwards, took into account the desire to map patterns. These patterns reveal that identity is a concept that remains valid within the contemporary debate among scholars of the humanities. How the topic is being addressed is the issue we intend to maintain in the foreground of this essay. Certainly, the reader will not encounter new definitions of identity or innovative paths regarding the “formation” of national solidarities. What they will find are the two modes of addressing the issue chosen by contemporary Brazilian authors.

The first, that is very common among academics of late, focuses on various collections dedicated to uniting intellectuals who purport to reflect on the paths that Brazil has taken in the face of contemporary challenges based on the solutions provided by the most well-known and traditional interpreters. The other concerns the modifications sustained by the interpretation of a

4 We refer to the analyses of Schwartz (2013) and Žižek (2013), both published and available at: <<http://blogdaboitempo.com.br>>. The Editora Boitempo blog has announced the organisation of a book entitled *Cidades rebeldes: passe livre e as manifestações que tomaram as ruas do Brasil* [Rebel cities: free travel pass and the demonstrations that took the streets of Brazil].

single interpreter. In the second and final part, we attempt to comprehend the paths taken in recent years concerning a reflection on being Brazilian, based on changes in opinion regarding the most important work of one of the great interpreters of the construction of Brazil, Gilberto Freyre.

At the turn of the century: collections of interpreters and interpretations

A new need to review/revise the national identity seems to have arisen in the late twentieth century. Amid preparations for the commemorations of the 500th anniversary of the Portuguese discovery of Brazil, many Brazilian scholars, historians, journalists, literary critics, philosophers and sociologists were tempted or inspired to compose works that they could present to a specialised audience, as well as those less accustomed to this type of reading, focused on answering the question “What is Brazil?”. The evocation of the commemorative date led to the organisation of meanings concerning Brazil, as the main strategy for producing collections of interpreters and interpretations that discussed the territory, its people, its culture, this nation. Publishers⁵ and the public powers⁶ were never far from this restlessness; they were interested in financing, producing and publishing these “monuments of national culture” in numerous animated volumes, as part of the celebrations.

5 Illustrative of this interest is the *Coleção Retratos do Brasil* [Portraits of Brazil Collection], published by Editora Companhia das Letras: <http://www.companhiadasletras.com.br/busca.php?b_categoria=008&b_filtro=livro>.

6 Here, we refer specifically to the three volumes coordinated by Silviano Santiago, *Intérpretes do Brasil* [Interpreters of Brazil], sponsored by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

In an attempt to map these constructs of Brazil, the selection made here is based on two editorial projects: *Viagem incompleta* [Incomplete journey] (2 volumes) and *Introdução ao Brasil* [An introduction to Brazil] (2 volumes). Other compilations of the same nature could be included in this list; however, we consider that the two selected are capable of delineating the contours of the identity of Brazil for the twentieth century. From these, we preferentially borrow from, but are not limited by, the introductions that make up the prefaces, treating these as “observation points” through which we intend to seize certain historiographical projects in our treatment of the theme of identity. As François Hartog reminds us, “these observations evidently have many limitations: their own dead angles and blind spots” (Hartog, 2001, p.10). We run the risk of simplifications due to the “distance between what one says, what one wants to do and what one effectively does”, and in the case of collections, between the project editor and what was effectively accomplished, dependent on so many other authors. Thus, what we favoured was a description of these projects.

The incompleteness of the totalising voyage

Figuring among the releases published by the *Folha de S. Paulo*⁷ in April 2000 was the work *Viagem incompleta*. It was announced on Monday, 24th of April, as a work that “rethinks the 500 years” initiating with “an appraisal of how the country was conceived in these 500 years”. The emphasis of the announcement that alighted on this “reflection on Brazil” was due to the first line of the introduction to the work, “Ideas on Brazil, be-

7 “Viagem Incompleta” repensa os 500 anos. *Folha de S. Paulo*, 24th of April, 2000. Available at: <<http://www1.folha.uol.com.br/fsp/acontece/ac2404200002.htm>>. Accessed on: 1st of July, 2013.

hold the general theme of the work that the reader has before their eyes”, followed by an explanation, “the work herein examines, through studies and essays elaborated by guest experts, the meanings of the history of the civilising process in Brazil” (Mota, C. G., 2000, p.13).

Even before the introduction, we are invited to read the book in two notes, one by the editor-in-chief, the regional director of the Senac in São Paulo, and the other by the coeditor-in-chief, the Regional Director of SESC in São Paulo, bearing the same motto: “it is impossible to think about the future without knowing the past” (Mota, C. G., 2000, p.6). Using another platitude of Western culture, the journey (Hartog, 2004), the work brings together leading researchers, travellers who outline distinct times and perspectives and that, despite this, announce the incompleteness of a journey that begins long before the age of the discoveries. The cover of the two volumes that make up the work are even stamped in high relief with the 1500-2000 time frame, while the first chapter returns to a time long past with a journey to the prehistory of the Americas. The decision to initiate the narrative of the history of Brazil prior to 1500 is not new, and in order not to dwell too long on this issue, we could cite the historiographical milestone from 1907, the publication of the first chapter entitled “Antecedentes indígenas” [Indigenous antecedents] from the *Capítulos de história colonial* [Chapters of colonial history], by João Capistrano de Abreu (1853-1927) (Abreu, 2000).

The person responsible for orienting this journey is historian Carlos Guilherme Mota. Professor of Contemporary History at the Faculty of Philosophy, Letters and Human Sciences at the University of São Paulo, Mota became known for his thesis, presented in 1975 and published two years later, *Ideologia da cultura brasileira* [Ideology of Brazilian culture] (1933-1974). Luis Salgado Manoel Guimarães presents an analysis of this work:

Deeply marked by debates surrounding Brazilian culture and its independence, the work of Carlos Guilherme Mota seeks to question four decades of productions from the twentieth century beginning with the 1930s, according to the “concept of ideology”, assuming intimate relationships between this production and political ideologies articulated to social interests. In each of the five stages proposed in his work (A. Rediscovery of Brazil. B. First fruits of the University. C. Age of expansion and reformist revision. D. Radical revisions. E. Deadlocks of dependence), Carlos Guilherme proceeds with a presentation of key authors and their texts according to the proposed reading [Gramsci’s Marxism]. (Guimarães, 2005, p.39-40)

The marks of antagonism between centre and periphery, dependency and autonomy, concerns of his text from the 1970s, are still present in this *Viagem incompleta*, which seeks to “escape the fads of peripheral post-modernity and of conventionalism” through a thorough investigation in search of meanings regarding the formation of Brazil and the existence of the Brazilian people. Five centuries of what Mota denominated the “Brazilian experience”, a long, unfinished process, evaluated as incomplete by the author under the justification that much or almost everything was still to be done in *Terra brasilis* at the threshold of the twenty-first century.

In order to answer the question of identity in Brazil and delineate this diagnosis, the author organised two volumes of studies by recognised authors from Brazilian intellectualism. This is not a work regarding the interpreters of Brazil, on the contrary, it discusses periods and themes that were scrutinised by contemporary scholars. Mota presents the chosen authors of the first volume:

In the arch of time, the first volume roams from the experiences of Nova Lusitânia, masterly revisited by Evaldo Cabral de Mello,

up to the constitution, in the late nineteenth century, of a “mestizo Brazil”, under the critical lens of Roberto Ventura. Over the course of four centuries, diverse concepts of “people”, of colonisation and decolonisation, of black resistance, of identity, are examined in the interpretation of the critical writings of Stuart B. Schwartz, István Jancsó and João Paulo Pimenta, of Kenneth Maxwell, Carlos Guilherme Mota, João José Reis, Karen M. Lisboa and Francisco Alambert. (Mota, C. G., 2000, p.21)

This delineation begins with the study by Aziz Nacib Ab’Saber, who is absent from the description quoted above, and returns to the “genesis” of not only the formation of the nation, but also to the earliest traces of human life in the territory that constituted the emerging Brazil, in which Carlos Guilherme Mota’s opinion is “a remarkable revitalisation and expansion of historical studies, in search of the specificity of our formation” (Mota, C. G., 2000, p.15).

The stated intention is to avoid the theme of origins, and in its place, contingent on a long-term study, to provide readers with two new volumes of a history of Brazil. If it is no longer possible for an author to compose one single-handedly, as it was in the time of Francisco Adolfo de Varnhagen, one can still be written in a well-oriented collection of themes and contexts that define nationality.

However, the author stresses that even a long-term study, fundamental to understanding the process, our collective identity – the central theme – was delineated at the time of Independence, a period for which the author reassumes the classic characterisation of Caio Prado Júnior, in other words, Independence understood as “Revolution”. Thus, he affirms a historiographical position and a history of Brazil with few ruptures and consequently marked by continuities. He clarifies that, despite presenting a period of more than five centuries, the collection

represents an opposition to the idea, described as misguided, of a history of colonial Brazil. “From the project editor’s perspective, the history of Brazil is assuredly affirmed only in the period of Independence” (Mota, C. G., 2000, p.16).

This is because the comings and goings of “ideas of Brazil”, narrated in the studies that compose the collection, result in the diagnosis of the coexistence of “two Brazils” at the beginning of the new millennium. Based on a quote from Karl Marx, who perceived, in another time and context, the coexistence of “by-gone estates with future classes”, Mota explains that “in a region of the planet in which several unresolved pasts still remain present” and studies show “the actuation of children of colonial, inquisitorial, Philippine, Johannine, imperial, patriarchal and other remanences” (Mota, C. G., 2000, p.16), the route of the journey promises to be long.

When we turn our gaze to the introduction of volume 2 of the collection, dedicated to the twentieth century, there is a period characterised as “the big transaction”; this incompleteness is shown in histories regarding a political-cultural and political-institutional identity in analyses of the interpreters of Brazil, of literature, of the State, of law, of domestic and foreign policy and of urban planning. Great emphasis is given to the miscegenated cultural experience that has generated unprecedented and indelible interpretations in social and political thought in twentieth-century Brazil. The resumption of great interpretations is thus justified, focusing on themes of the past in search of a link with the future.

Indeed, what seems to inform the travel itinerary on the journey presented is the perception of a crisis. “The present moment”, the threshold of the twenty-first century, is described as the “end of a cycle”, the “end of history”, the “end of ideologies” and at the same time the “flowering of new historiographical fronts” (Mota, C. G., 2000, p.21) that permit the perception

of “a renewed historical consciousness” to emerge with ambiguities, “but also with not insignificant positive aspects of committed resistance and creativity” (Mota, C. G., 2000, p.14). Thus, the narrative of this incompleteness constructed in times of crisis signals its totalising pretensions as capable of orienting the journeys of the new century. The place one wants to occupy with a collection in the nexus of histories produced concerning Brazil is the bridge to the future.

A banquet of mangoes and cashews: only one entrée

Like the collection presented earlier, *Introdução ao Brasil: um banquete no trópico* [An introduction to Brazil: a banquet in the tropics] was also published by Editora Senac São Paulo as part of the commemorations of “our 500 years”. Brazil, as the editor’s note explains, is the theme that will be served to the readers without the intention of “ending the matter, because it is an introduction”; what is intended, therefore, “is to encourage direct contact with original texts. Having achieved this goal, Editora Senac São Paulo will have fulfilled its role, broadening the horizons of knowledge regarding our reality” (Mota, L., 2004, p.7).

The covers of the two separately released volumes, the first in 1999 and the second in 2000, regale the reader with this feast on Brazil with illustrations of mangoes and cashews. These fruits also occupy a privileged place in the descriptions of the journey interpreted by Sérgio Buarque de Holanda in *Visão do Paraíso* [Vision of Paradise]; they are the first attractions of the work edited by journalist Lourenço Dantas Mota.

The spirit that inspired the editorial project, presented by Lourenço Dantas Mota in the introductions, was defined in the first lines. The editor claims to have delivered to the teachers and intellectuals, gathered in the collection, the task of teaching, not in the sense of transmitting knowledge, but of “stirring

curiosity, provoking the imagination and stimulating greater things” (Mota, L., 2004, p.11). Thus, the question of how to provoke the curiosity of the readers is established. The answer is even harder when you consider the broad readership expected by the editor: all those interested in understanding Brazil, from students to “enlightened lay persons”, including teachers, who, even if they learn little from the work, can at least use it to stimulate their students.

The choice for the success of this attempt was well directed. Instead of aggregating interpretations regarding a selection of topics on Brazil, *Introdução...* gathers interpreters presented through critiques. Even better, the direction of this work conveys the clear definition that critiques “are an invitation and a useful introduction to reading, but are not the reading itself” (Mota, L., 2004, p.22).

It is not about expounding or discussing, for example, the thought of Gilberto Freyre or Sérgio Buarque de Holanda, which would require consideration of their body of works, and therefore more extensive and detailed studies, but rather to disclose what *Casa-grande & senzala* [The Masters and the Slaves] and what *Raízes do Brasil* [Roots of Brazil] are all about – their structure, the principal themes discussed and theses defended. (Mota, L., 2004, p.11)

Besides presenting an ensemble consisting of 36 works by various authors, coordinated by Lourenço Dantas Mota, it intends to offer the readers a feast “in the sense of the Platonic dialogue of the same name” (Mota, L., 2004, p.12). This inspiration seeks to gather distinct characters in an encounter that, to some extent, erases the time and places of *Os Sermões* [The Sermons] by Father Antonio Vieira and Darcy Ribeiro side by side with the work *Os índios e a civilização* [Indians and civilisation], from 1970.

Certainly, it is worth highlighting here that the authors chosen to review the works present their interpretations of the selected books. The critiques are not, and are not expected to be, impartial presentations of the works. What the editor insists on highlighting in the introduction is that, regarding the theme of the collection, i.e., Brazil, the reader finishes reading the book with a sense of dialogue between the various interpretations produced about Brazil. Dialogue sometimes related to previous interpretations, or the opposite, anticipating important arguments that will be developed at other times. Or even, more than this simple temporal relationship between before and after, a dialogue that simply arouses the reader's interest for the authors on the menu.

The introductions to the volumes present the menu, with the objective of seeking to make sense of the dialogues provided by reading the critiques. In presenting the volumes, Mota follows the order of the table of contents and uses the strategy of a weaver who chooses certain threads and skilfully weaves the arguments that are highlighted by the reviewers.

The following authors were selected for the first volume: Father Antonio Vieira, André João Antonil, José Bonifácio, Visconde de Mauá, Joaquim Nabuco, Eduardo Prado, Euclides da Cunha, Capistrano de Abreu, Paulo Prado, Gilberto Freyre, Sérgio Buarque de Holanda, Caio Prado Júnior, Vítor Nunes Leal, Oliveira Vianna, Celso Furtado, Raymundo Faoro, Antonio Candido, José Honório Rodrigues and Florestan Fernandes.

With these, the editor fashioned a text that seeks to show "how we have seen and judged ourselves throughout history". From the ensemble formed by a significant work by each of these authors, Lourenço Dantas Mota claims to have managed to raise "the big questions that we have asked – and the numerous answers we have given them – about who we are and what our place in the world is, concerning the obstacles that

hinder or delay our march and how to remove them” (Mota, L., 2004, p.21).

If the presentation of the first volume had ended here, we would have one more attempt to compose a totality of the interpretations of Brazil, which were otherwise achieved by contemporary studies of certain themes, expounded by the choice of 19 works of authors elected as significant according to the literary and historiographical canon.

When turning the page, however, the assertion that the main questions and answers concerning Brazil were contemplated in that first volume, which for a moment loses the tone of *An introduction* and assumes one of conclusion, falters and makes room for lacunas.

If the goal of the work is “to encourage contact with original texts and facilitate the access of nonexperts to create dialogue with these authors” (Mota, L., 2004, p.24), in the first volume, the reviewers indicate that some works lack other authors for dialogue and other works by the same authors for complete intelligibility of those contemplated. This is the case of three authors who had more than one of their works published. Sérgio Buarque de Holanda, who appeared in the first volume with *Raízes do Brasil*, was chosen to open the second volume with *Vision of Paradise*, Florestan Fernandes with *A integração do negro na sociedade de classes* [The integration of blacks in a class society] – *A revolução burguesa no Brasil* [The bourgeois revolution in Brazil] was the choice for the first volume – and Oliveira Vianna, presented with *Instituições políticas brasileiras* [Brazilian political institutions], gained a critique of *Populações meridionais do Brasil* [Southern populations of Brazil] in the second volume.

An Introdução ao Brasil drastically expands in this last book, because not only do other works by the same authors enter the banquet, but also other authors are invited to the dialogue: *História geral do Brasil* [General history of Brazil], by

Francisco Adolfo de Varnhagen, *História geral das bandeiras paulistas* [General history of Paulista⁸ expeditions], by Afonso d'Escragnole Taunay, *Vida e morte do bandeirante* [Life and death of the frontiersman], by Alcantara Machado, and *D. João VI no Brasil* [Don João VI in Brazil], by Oliveira Lima.

The dialogue becomes more complex and adds themes that are fundamental to understanding Brazil when it adds the father of nineteenth-century national history alongside authors who are often left in the background regarding the list of interpreters of Brazil. Incidentally, it is worth noting here that even today, Taunay and Alcantara Machado are often not included in this type of inventory. However, at the beginning of the introduction to the second volume, Lourenço Dantas Mota highlights that without them the themes of territorial expansion and *bandeirismo*⁹ would not be considered in this narrative of Brazil. Besides the dialogue between the chosen authors, it is important to emphasise that from the monumental work of Taunay, which resulted in 11 volumes published between 1924 and 1950, *História geral das bandeiras paulistas*, more than any other of the works he wrote, bears the merit of having successfully brought together the arguments and the elements that, once reconciled, proved, in his opinion and in that of many of his contemporaries, the thesis that São Paulo was a radiating centre of the “brave” frontiersmen who truly discovered Brazil, transforming a small tract of land into an almost continental nation. To successfully achieve such a feat, Taunay needed to dialogue with the production concerning the same theme, which swelled day by day. Thus, throughout the pages of *História geral das bandeiras paulistas* arguments are paraded from the main authors of the period in which the work was produced. In search for the

8 *Paulista* is an adjective that simply refers to all things deriving from the State of São Paulo.

9 History and principals of the pioneer expeditions into Brazil's interior.

modern truth, Taunay grouped the “errors” and “successes” of the most varied authors, presenting extensive bibliographic audits of the production of the period. Thus, by introducing Taunay and Alcantara Machado in particular, Lourenço Mota established a dialogue with the work of numerous authors who were not an integral part of the collection and with Capistrano de Abreu, who is critiqued in the first volume.

However, in this dialogue that integrates noncanonical writers alongside the canons of interpreters of Brazil, two authors are served as the main course, such that their trilogies are critiqued: Joaquim Nabucco with *Um estadista do Império* [A statesman of the Empire], *O abolicionismo* [Abolitionism] and *Minha formação* [My education] and Gilberto Freyre’s *Casa-grande & senzala* [The masters and the slaves], *Sobrados e mucambos* [The mansions and the shanties] and *Ordem e progresso* [Order and progress]. As the author points out, the “weight of slavery” permeated Brazilian society and these works pervade our social, political and cultural formation with the ambiguities of identity which were once European, Brazilian and African. In these works, the importance of our racial formation as a fundamental ingredient of the historical constitution of the country and its people was asserted. Freyre, as we shall see in the second part of this essay, eventually became the most discussed representative of the canon on the formation of Brazil.

The choices for an *Introdução ao Brasil* point to a multiple nation with several lines of force, and although in the introductory text the editor outlines a coherent narrative to weave the critiques together, it remains a dialogue that seeks to provide the reader with several interpretations concerning what Brazil is, many of which are conflicting, as one would expect. Indeed, the choice to present the interpreters allows for a complex and introductory vision that achieves the intention of being complete only by tasting each work offered there for a full reading.

From collections on the 500 years to studies on a great interpreter of Brazil: Gilberto Freyre

Committed to the challenge of diagnosing how Brazilian intelligentsia has dedicated itself to the study of identity, we choose to launch a more incisive view of a work that imposes itself as a mandatory stop on this perpetually incomplete journey, which is the history of the identities of Brazil in two commemorative collections of the 500 years presented above. It was also in the year 2000, on the centenary of the birth of its author, celebrated on the 15th of March, 2000, that the work *Casa-grande & senzala* received new and surprising interpretations.¹⁰

An intellectual with a vast body of work, the sociologist from Pernambuco, Gilberto Freyre, remained visible for decades, particularly among left-wing intellectuals and activists of the black cause, represented by, to use an expression by Stuart Schwartz (1988), a somewhat rosy interpretation of African slavery and Brazilian cultural formation contained in the work *Casa-grande & senzala*, originally published in 1933. According to this thesis, the writer from Apipucos, Recife, defended with conviction the idea that, due to their prior experience on the Iberian Peninsula involving contact with the Moors and Africans, Portuguese colonists – whose “ethnic, or rather cultural, background of a people undefined between Europe and Africa” (Freyre, 2002, p.80) – brought together the requisite qualities to conduct “social democratisation in Brazil”.

Conquerors, in the military and technical sense, of the indigenous populations, the absolute rulers of the Negroes imported

10 In the last decade, above all on the occasion of the centenary of his birth, the work of Gilberto Freyre has been reinterpreted in light of new historiographical concepts that compose the “valuable exceptions” mentioned here. Among others, see Araújo (1994); Falcão; Araújo (2001); Pallares-Burke (2005).

from Africa for the hard labour of *bagaceira*,¹¹ the Europeans and their descendants meanwhile had to compromise with the Indians and Africans regarding the matter of genetic and social relationships. The scarcity of white women created zones of fraternisation between conquerors and those conquered, in other words, between masters and slaves. While these relationships between white men and coloured women did not cease to be those of “superiors” with “inferiors”, and in the majority of cases were those of disillusioned and sadistic gentlemen with passive slave girls, they were mitigated by the need that was felt by many colonists to found a family under these circumstances and upon a basis such as this. A widely practiced miscegenation here tended to modify the enormous social distance that otherwise would have been preserved between the Big House and tropical forest, between the Big House and slave hut. What a latifundiary monoculture based on slavery accomplished in the way of creating an aristocracy, by dividing Brazilian society into two extremes, that of gentry and slaves, with a thin and insignificant remnant of free men sandwiched in between, was in good part offset by the social effects of miscegenation. The Indian woman and the “*mina*”,¹² or Negro woman, in the beginning, and later the mulatto, the *cabrocha*,¹³ the quadroon and the octoroon, becoming domestics, concubines, and even the lawful wives of their white masters, exerted a powerful influence on social democracy in Brazil. (Freyre, 2002, p.46)

Although not exclusively, it fell to the group of sociologists and historians led by Florestan Fernandes – in their long history

11 Literally, the place where the refuse from the sugar-cane pressing was stored, but it came to mean the general life and atmosphere of the sugar plantations in Brazil.

12 Name given to respected black slave women from Bahia who became “friends”, concubines and even housewives of their white masters. “*Minas*” were light-skinned, were considered “excellent companions” and were probably the first black women to legally marry Europeans.

13 A dark-skinned mestizo type.

of research on African slavery practiced in different areas of the Brazilian South and Southeast during the nineteenth century, conducted to scientifically articulate the causes of racism in Brazil – to identify, or rather denounce, Gilberto Freyre as being the inventor of a Brazilian racial paradise, which found no support in any empirical study concerning our slavery past. This interpretation was grouped together with allegations that Freyre might be a member of the elite descending from landed gentry of the Northeast of Portuguese America from the colonial period and could, in some ways, be sympathetic to the authoritarian regimes in Brazil and Portugal of the twentieth century.¹⁴ The quality of documentary research and the theoretical density of the criticism employed by supporters of the São Paulo School of Sociology should not, however, be reduced to mere regional or academic rivalry between “intellectuals from the University of São Paulo” and the “master from Apipucos”. Consecrated with the highest honours and intellectual recognition of the time, for several decades, *Casa-grande & senzala* became the immediate reference for comparative studies between Brazilian slavery and other regions of the Americas, principally the United States. When compared to the rigours of captivity elsewhere, in certain works published in the United States, the sugary vision of slavery in the northeastern plantations ended up effectively challenging the deleterious effect of captivity in Brazil.¹⁵

The reading of Freyre as a relativist and a racist, the father of the “Brazilian racial democracy”, the predominant reading

14 For a critical review of Freyre’s thought, see Leite, D. (2002). Within the sphere of the so-called Paulista School of Sociology, the following works regarding the debate on Freyre stand out: Bastide; Fernandes (1955); Ianni (1988); Cardoso (1977); Costa (1998); Queiroz, S. (1977). I deal with this debate more fully in my books: Ferreira (2005; 2011).

15 For a broader insight into these comparative views between slavery practiced in the southern United States and Brazil based on Freyre’s work, see Holland (1977); Queiroz, S. (1983; 1988), Schwartz, (2001).

during the 1970s and 1980s in Brazil, however, appeared in need of new inquiries in the eyes of a new generation of professional historians, formed at the height of the debates occurring during the commemorations of the centenary of the abolition of the captivity of Africans and their descendants in the country – in a period marked by the significant expansion of post-graduate programmes in history in Brazil. One question, in particular, seemed to be latent – a claim we affirm on the basis of studies on the theme that emerged in the decade that followed and that we discuss below –, what intellectual dialogues were established by Freyre in the years leading up to the publication of *Casa-grande & senzala*?

A clue to the solution of such questioning had been indicated in the academic literature of the 1960s, in Antonio Candido's famous preface to the book *Raízes do Brasil*, by Sérgio Buarque de Holanda. As it is known, the beginning of Candido's text is that of the construction of a generation, this being his own, shaped by the reading of three key works:

Casa-grande & senzala, by Gilberto Freyre, published when we were in secondary school; *Raízes do Brasil*, by Sérgio Buarque de Holanda, published when we were studying to enter university; *Formação do Brasil contemporâneo* [Formation of contemporary Brazil], by Caio Prado Júnior, published when we were at university. (Candido, 1995, p.9)

For Candido, these three works represented the survival of the “intellectual radicalism and social analysis that erupted after the 1930 Revolution” and as yet had not been silenced by the *Estado Novo*¹⁶ (Candido, 1995, p.9). Specifically regarding Freyre,

¹⁶ *Estado Novo* is the name of the Brazilian political system established by President Getúlio Vargas between 1937 and 1945, characterised by the centralisation of power, nationalism, anticommunism and authoritarianism.

Candido regrets “the course subsequently taken by the author”, but recognises “a revolutionary force, the liberating impact” that *Casa-grande & senzala* represented. In the opinion of the author of *Formação da literatura brasileira* [The formation of Brazilian literature] (1959), by bringing to the forefront the most intimate aspects of the patriarchalism that formed in Brazil, the history of the alcove and the importance of African slaves in “our mode of being intimate”, Freyre, offering robust amounts of information from sources poorly used or even ignored by previous intellectuals, endowed with the ability to improvise and with a seductive presentation technique, “coordinated data according to totally new points of view in Brazil up to that time” (Candido, 1995, p.10). Besides Caio Prado Júnior, Sérgio Buarque de Holanda and Freyre, “the work of Oliveira Vianna, both penetrating and anticipatory in so many aspects, seemed already surpassed, full of ideological prejudices and an excessive willingness to adapt the real to conventional intentions” (Candido, 1995, p.9).

Although critical, Candido recognises that, prior to these three authors of the 1930s, Francisco José de Oliveira Vianna was the most widely known interpreter regarding the formation of Brazil in academic circles. Throughout Candido’s text, other names like those of Sílvio Romero and Euclides da Cunha – devotees of determinisms specific to the European intellectual scene of the nineteenth century – are also mentioned, but Vianna is held in higher regard. According to Maria Stella Martins Bresciani, a historian who produced a detailed study on the appropriations of Oliveira Vianna by his contemporary and future readers,

[...] the care, or I would even say academic respect, with which Antonio Candido referred to Oliveira Vianna, while evincing his severe criticism, contrasts with the harsh and hardly respectful tone of the critique by Sérgio Buarque de Holanda [of Vianna’s

book] *Instituições políticas brasileiras*, in the late 1940s. (Bresciani, 2005, p.22)

Bresciani's statement, while highlighting the disrespectful tone of Sérgio Buarque de Holanda, corroborates the idea that Vianna was one of the principal targets of the 1930s generation. The author, however, emphasises that her own research was motivated by a discomfort represented by the reduction of Vianna's body of work to the aspects that were highlighted by Buarque de Holanda, since the 1930s, and perpetuated decades later, albeit more politely, in texts by Candido and by many of his readers. To a greater or lesser extent – and in some ways, as with Gilberto Freyre between 1960 and 1980 –, this sharing of opinions against Vianna condemned him to hell, a kind of intellectual banishment justified by his character, which was considered by his critics to be conservative and authoritarian. Freyre certainly contributed to the construction of such an image, and it was in his opposition to the idea of racial superiority contained in the thought of Vianna that Freyre constructed his interpretation of Brazil and Brazilians – against “Professor Oliveira Vianna, the greatest mystic of Aryanism that has as yet emerged among us” (Freyre, 2002, p.362).

Written by Oliveira Vianna in November 1918, the preface to the first volume of *Populações meridionais do Brasil (Populações rurais do Centro-Sul – Paulistas – Fluminenses – Mineiros)* was a proposal to identify the fundamental ideal types of the Brazilian people: the *sertanejo*, inhabitant of the northern Sertão, the *matuto*, inhabitant of the forests of the southern-central region, and the *gaúcho*, inhabitant of the pampas in the extreme south of Brazil. This identification had a practical character. The essays, which were eventually not fully completed, were presented as a contribution to assist the country's leaders with objective knowledge of the Brazilian people; an effective proposal, a political

project for the country. For Vianna, the issue of interracial breeding was a kind of "Achilles heel" of our historical formation.

In the author's opinion, only the "truly providential function" of "prejudices of colour and blood" (Vianna, 1987, p.103) stood against this weakness. Regarding these prejudices of colour and blood, Vianna says, "They are admirable selective devices that impede the ascension to the ruling classes of these inferior mestizos, who prick in the under layers of the population of large estates and form the basis of colonial expeditions" (Vianna, 1987, p.103). In the same *Populações meridionais do Brasil*, Vianna lingers on his considerations regarding the mulatto. According to the sociologist and jurist, the mulatto, the fruit of encounters between blacks and whites, was just an abstraction when viewed as a single type. In his opinion, it was perfectly possible to distinguish, from a very wide range of possibilities, between the inferior and superior mulatto.

As a rule, what we call mulatto is the inferior mulatto, incapable of ascension, wretched in the lowest strata of society and stemming from the crossing of white with the inferior type of Negro. There are, however, superior mulattoes, Aryans in character and intelligence or, at least, susceptible to Aryanisation, who are capable of collaborating with whites in the organisation of the civilisation of the country. They are those who, by virtue of fortuitous welding, come closest, in morality and colour, to the type of the white race. With whims of physiology, atavistic returns, in cooperation with certain anthropological laws, acting in a favourable way, generate these elite mestizos. Direct products of the intersection of white and black, they sometimes inherit all the psychic and even the somatic characters of the noble race. From the hue of the hair to the colour of the skin, from the morality of the sentiments to the force of the intelligence, they are perfectly Aryan in appearance. (Vianna, 1987, p.100)

There is no denying the importance conferred by Vianna to the role played by this upper caste mestizo in the entire process of the establishment of the Vicentino sugar plantation and the conquest of the hinterland. It can be further argued that it is to this mestizo, and not the inferior one, that Vianna dedicated the greatest number of references throughout the entire book. However, regarding the inferior mestizo, the author is decisive, condemning them to disappear due to natural selection. For Vianna, the mestizos that were in conflict with whites were hopelessly stuck in their condition, never to ascend.

The inferior mestizo, those less concealable, those easily recognisable, those stigmatised – the “*cabras*”, “*pardos*”, “*mulatos*”, “*fulos*”, “*cafusos*”, these are ruthlessly eliminated [...]. These wretches of miscegenation do not have the slightest desire to ascend or to leave their sad existence as pariahs. The centre of opposing ethnic trends that neutralise each other, their will, such as it is, dissolves. Finally, they end up in apathy. And remain eternally on the plane of the inferior race. (Vianna, 1987, p.103, 105)

To discern in Vianna a precise translation of the Brazilian universe based on a racial reading that was much in vogue in nineteenth-century Europe, and against which Freyre rebelled, is quite alluring. At first sight, this explains the reasoning of the production of an interpretation of Brazil based on miscegenation as a decisive element in the construction of Brazil and of Brazilians. But such a reading also proved limited. The pathways that specialised historiography took indicated that even by valuing miscegenation, placing the Portuguese beside the Black and the Indian as civilisers in our colonial period, Freyre could not see, in the stability of the relationships established by the races in contact in our history, the mortar used in the edification of the Brazilian.

In the last decade of the twentieth century, a new book about Freyre came to light, concerning his most well-known work and his thesis regarding what constituted us as a people, or regarding what we have called throughout this essay an identity of Brazil and Brazilians analysed according to contemporary historiography. In 1994, Ricardo Benzaquen de Araújo published what would be the first edition of *Guerra e paz* [War and peace], a book that restored *Casa-grande & senzala*, as per the subtitle, to its own time, which seized on it even before the famous American appropriations of the text. There, with a radically historical perspective, in the sense of seeking to avoid anachronisms, Freyre's work was reinterpreted in the years of its publication in the 1930s. In place of the conventional assignment of Freyre as the inventor of a Brazil constituted by harmonious race relations, captained by European plasticity represented by the Portuguese, Araújo revealed what Freyre's interpretation itself called "balanced antagonisms". The novelty was not only the reversal of the negative sense of miscegenation, as we saw earlier, a supposed dialogue with the arguments evident in Oliveira Viana and in many other scholars. Rather it was in the construction of an historical experience of the constitution of a people from distinct identities that, once in contact, mutually and successively moulded each other even through relationships marked by violence, but that did not abandon, as was believed, their own characteristics, those which made them parts of a whole. There was no stable identity, much less one devoid of conflicts, rather a constant interpenetration of cultures – that perfectly withstood slaves capable of civilising their masters, without them ceasing to be blacks and whites, Africans and Europeans, and so forth –, and that marked the action of the Portuguese throughout their colonising adventure. Despite the work of Araújo dealing with many other aspects of Freyre's theses, we believe that its new interpretation concerning the meaning of miscegenation in

Casa-grande & senzala has been the high point of the book's contributions to the debate on the peculiar identity of Brazil and Brazilians in contemporary historiography.

Another point of Freyre's work that was revisited at the beginning of the twenty-first century, concerned his intellectual trajectory. His studies, initiated in the American Baptist College of Recife, continued in the United States. First, between 1918 and 1920, the then future Master from Apipucos studied at Baylor University in Texas, and later moved to Columbia University, New York. It was at Columbia that he maintained contact with German anthropologist Franz Boas, who had settled in the United States, as he reported in the preface to the first edition of *Casa-grande & senzala*:

It was my studies in Anthropology, under the direction of Professor Boas, that first revealed to me the Negro and mulatto for what they are – with the effects of environment or cultural experience separated from racial characteristics. I learned to regard as fundamental the difference between *race* and *culture*, to discriminate between the effects of purely genetic relationships and those resulting from social influences, the cultural heritage and the milieu. It is upon this basic differentiation between race and culture that my entire plan of this essay rests, as well as upon the distinction to be made between racial and family heredity. (Freyre, 2002, p.45)

Perhaps as one of the most incisive critics of the evolutionary method, Boas gradually became an outspoken opponent of deterministic explanations, whether biological, geographic, economic or even historical in nature. Boas was also critical of the use of racism as an explanation for cultural characteristics. According to him, no study up to that point had offered convincing evidence regarding a direct relationship between race and culture. According to the author, the fundamental error of

modern social theories of the time was to extend the concept of individual heritability to that of racial heritability:

Heritability acts only in lines of direct descent. There is no unity of descent in any of the existing races, and we have no right to assume that the mental characteristics of a few selected family lines are shared by all members of a race. [...] Any attempt to explain cultural forms on a purely biological basis is doomed to failure. (Boas, 2005, p.60)

Again, it has proven tempting to simply situate Freyre in a line of rejection of racist explanations in vogue at the time, among the disciples of Boas in the United States. However, it largely fell to the work *Gilberto Freyre: um vitoriano nos trópicos* [Gilberto Freyre: a Victorian in the tropics], published in 2005 by historian Maria Lúcia Pallares-Burke, to perform an exhaustive analysis of the records from Freyre's studies in the USA, which included his correspondence, diaries and course and conference notes. Though it was not the historian's primary goal, the study ended up clarifying that Boas' presence in the education of the Pernambuco sociologist was somewhat overrated, in some cases by Freyre himself. The effective contact with Boas, developed in the early 1920s, certainly stimulated him to study Anthropology, but incorporation of the themes that had already been addressed by the German anthropologist would only appear a decade later in Freyre's writings. What predominated, according to the historian, in the decade prior to *Casa-grande & senzala*, in texts published in newspapers and in letters to friends, was the notable interest Freyre showed in analysing the importance of Europe in the trajectory that led to civilisation, including a critique, in which he detailed with some enthusiasm the violent processes of controlling slaves successfully adopted in the southern United States. The study by Pallares-Burke, however,

is not interested in replacing one truth with another, at least not in the sense of resurrecting Freyre as a racist in the moulds of the nineteenth century for the interested reader, but rather it shows the apparently irreconcilable aspects that coexisted in the trajectory of the sociologist's formation, until the notoriety achieved by his most important work immortalised him as the defender of the relationship of cultures within patriarchal families as the historical basis of our structuration as a people.

In the second decade of this century, interest in Freyre's work seems not to have dissipated, much less the desire to somehow find in this exemplary form of understanding and inventing a Brazilian identity, whose pathways have been trodden in an attempt to overcome problems that still seem so contemporary. After numerous studies interested in the academic thesis and intellectual trajectory that led to *Casa-grande & senzala*, language has also assumed – among Clío's disciples – the central place of understanding in the work of this social scientist, who is now perceived as “halfway between a poet and an historian”. In *Um estilo de história: a viagem, a memória, o ensaio: sobre Casa-grande e senzala e a representação do passado* [A style of history: the journey, the memory, the essay: on *Casa-grande & senzala* and the representation of the past] (2011), Fernando Nicolazzi thus synthesises the greatest work of the writer from Apipucos:

[...] the epic songs of heroic deeds in the early days (even as a disarranged hero, as you lay on the hammock yielding to the physiological stresses that bothered your body), without the imposing prejudice of the gods interfering in the destinies of men, but with the burden of the elements of the environment, of races, of cultures. The book thus constitutes an historical testimonial to the birth of a certain people and of a certain kind of society, the first breath of life chronicled at the very moment of its last breath. (Nicolazzi, 2011, p.451)

Emerging in the contiguity between creator and creature, the essay by the Pernambuco sociologist is seen by the researcher as a kind of birth certificate that brings together creative imagination and scientific investigation in an ongoing effort to make known to the reader, often a suspicious reader, an authentic representation of the past. What may be read in *Casa-grande & senzala* is the text of those who were there, who remember what they saw, and it demonstrates the validity of such memories with ample documentary examples, all woven together by seductively unorthodox writing, which at no time forgets to elucidate the separation between the researcher and the object of study, but which grants each Brazilian, and Brazil itself, a kind of primordial narrative, like that which Homer bequeathed to the Greeks.

Just before we close this essay, we yield the floor to one of the illustrious descendants of the generation of the 1950s and the 1960s, who, from his academic haunt in São Paulo, undertook to further add to the image of Freyre as one of the fathers of “Brazilian racial democracy”.¹⁷ Released in 2013, the book *Pensadores que inventaram o Brasil* [Thinkers who invented Brazil] introduces the reflections of sociologist and former president Fernando Henrique Cardoso on the men¹⁸ who, since the nine-

17 In the afterword he wrote for Cardoso’s work, José Murilo de Carvalho explains: “During the years 1950-1960, and even after that, he [Gilberto Freyre] was a *bête noire* for the intelligentsia at the São Paulo University, including, and confessedly for Fernando Henrique himself, for the left in general. He shared with the *fluminense* Oliveira Vianna, cursed as a reactionary, racist and elitist, the role of punching bag of the left-wing intelligentsia. Gilberto Freyre was accused of having no scientific rigour, of being conservative, nostalgic of the patriarchal slave world, creator of the myth of racial democracy and whatever else” (Cardoso, 2013, p.292-293).

18 In the work, Fernando Henrique Cardoso (2013) analyses – in texts produced over 35 years (1978-2013) for introductions, critiques, lectures and conferences – the major works of: Joaquim Nabuco, Euclides da Cunha, Paulo Prado, Gilberto Freyre, Sérgio Buarque de Holanda, Caio Prado Júnior, Antonio Candido, Florestan Fernandes, Celso Furtado and Raymundo Faoro.

teenth century, have undertaken to explain and, each in their own way, invent Brazil, while trying to explain the “formation” of the country. In his eyes, an obsession that began even at the time of Independence, when José Bonifácio ceased to declare himself Paulista or Portuguese and proclaimed himself to be Brazilian, systematically expending their energies in an effort to “understand what we Brazilians are, or rather how to make everyone, including slaves, part of the same nation” (Cardoso, 2013, p.10). Although the texts were written at distinct times and for various purposes, it is worth noting that when dealing with the contribution that Gilberto Freyre made to the invention of Brazil, Cardoso offers us two texts: “*Casa-grande & senzala* clássico” [The classic *Casa-grande & senzala*], a republication of “Um livro perene” [A perennial book], a presentation written for the reprint of *Casa-grande & senzala* in 2005, and “Gilberto Freyre perene” [The perennial Gilberto Freyre], a text that served as the basis for a conference given in August 2010, during the International Literary Festival of Paraty (FLIP), thus we have essays containing relatively recent positions by the Paulista sociologist regarding the one from Pernambuco. Concerning Freyre, there are other long phrases in the text that closes the work, a republication of a master class given by Cardoso in 1993, at the Rio Branco Institute.

The novelty of the interpretations based on Freyre’s fundamental work, in general, appears to be in the recognition of the perpetuity of his thesis on the formation of Brazil. Fernando Henrique, while critical and distanced from the academic and political landscape of the 1960s, recognises strengths in his work, in the presence of “much research”, “behind the descriptions, occasionally romanticised and even distorted”, in the pioneering analysis of the intimate life, the private dimension, of feelings and of daily life in the formation of the Brazilian, an interpretative strategy that would only become current in Brazil

much later, with the presence of French historians and social scientists among us. However, Cardoso does not fail to show that he is troubled by the interpretation that, as we have seen earlier, he values the idea of a “balance of opposites” or “antagonisms in equilibrium” as defining the type of identity that Freyre affirmed Brazilian society was composed of. For Cardoso, such an idea is not inconsistent with the work, but has its limitations. The Paulista sociologist even ends up defying someone to explain, “due to its methodological characteristics, the malaise that the work of Gilberto Freyre caused, and perhaps continues to cause, in academia” (Cardoso, 2013, p.86). After reviewing the most significant of what he called Freyre’s insights concerning the invention of Brazil, while always complimenting the quality of the narrative and critical of the argumentative oscillations of the theses of the writer from Apipucos, Cardoso ultimately concludes that the Pernambuco sociologist actually creates a founding myth, if not one of racial democracy, the myth of the balance of opposites – that does not leave much to explain about the society that produced it – responsible for designing the future of the constitutive characteristics of Brazil and the Brazilians.

Final considerations or “There is no way to examine the identities of Brazil”

Another collection, edited by João Cezar de Castro Rocha, was published initially in the United States in 2001, in a special issue of the Portuguese Literary and Cultural Studies journal, under the title *Brazil 2001: A Revisionary History of Brazilian Literature and Culture*. In a new version, translated into Portuguese and with 23 additional essays, the collection was published in 2003 with the collaboration of Valdeci Lopes de Araujo, with the provocative title *Nenhum Brasil existe* [There is no Brazil].

“‘Brazil’ does not exist, but it is the same ‘Brazil’ that refuses to surrender to attempts to translate it into substantial volumes of literary and cultural history”, like a small encyclopaedia of 1,107 pages bearing “a paradox that should not be solved” (Rocha, J. C., 2003, p.17). Inspired by the poem “Hino Nacional” [National anthem], by Carlos Drummond de Andrade, and partly dedicated to Gilberto Freyre, the mention of this *Nenhum Brasil existe* is here in the guise of a conclusion to assist in ending this essay. When looking at the first decade of this century in order to define how historians and social scientists have handled the challenge of studying the identity of Brazil, we can conclude that “There is no way to examine the identities of Brazil”, or at least the theme is not exhausted in the best collections, nor in the most astute interpretations by consecrated intellectuals, like our greatest inventors. In order to exist, we seem to be eternally engaged in the exercise of asking: What is Brazil?

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The Contemporary Challenges series – originally sponsored by the Research Deanship of the State University of São Paulo (Unesp) – aims at providing access to essays on crucial issues concerning the Brazilian society as a whole.

With the publication of those titles, which systematically avoid unnecessary academic jargon though preserving scientific rigour, the university fulfills one of its essential tasks: that of disseminating the skills and knowledge reared within its quarters.

In the present volume, focused upon sociological questions, the authors face the difficult job of grasping the intricate horizon of complexities of Brazilian identity and their presence in the current national dilemmas.