

History 533: Multi-Racial Societies in Latin America: Brazil

TTH, 9:30-10:45, Humanities 1217

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Course Objectives:

Brazil is the largest and most populous country in Latin America. It is also the most racially heterogeneous. For the better part of a century, Brazil has been celebrated for its embrace of racial and ethnic diversity, so much so, that until recently the country was widely understood to be a “racial democracy.” The purpose of this course is to introduce students to the histories of the various peoples who have comprised this society, from the Tupinamba and Aimore of the fifteenth century, to the Minas and Angolas in the eighteenth century, to the Japanese immigrants of the twentieth century. The course will follow a rough chronology but will be thematically driven, concentrating on the interactions, exchanges, and transformations of Brazil’s diverse population across time. Ultimately, we will analyze how these various racial and ethnic streams contributed to the formation of *Brasilidade*.

Procedures and Requirements:

- 1) The course will ask you to concentrate your efforts on weekly reading, writing, and discussion. As such, students will be expected to attend every class session and to participate actively in discussions. Students are allowed one unexcused absence during the course of the semester. All unexcused absences beyond the first one will result in one point off of the final grade for each class missed.
- 2) Students will turn in weekly one-page (double-spaced) response papers, based on the questions raised on the syllabus. These responses should summarize and critique the debates/questions raised by the weekly readings and lectures. Students should refer to the questions on the syllabus for guidance in writing these responses. The responses will be graded on a pass/fail basis and will form a significant part of your overall grade. These papers will be due at the end of class after each Thursday discussion. The only exceptions to the weekly response papers are in weeks 6 and 11. In these weeks, students will write lengthier response papers, as outlined on the syllabus. For those students wishing to take this course for honors credit or for four hours of credit, you may opt to write a five-page response paper for one extra week. You will also be asked to launch the discussion for that week. Students wishing to take either of these options should consult with the professor during the first week of class to sign up for the week you will write and discuss.

- 3) The final grade will be determined as follows: 3-hour students: map quiz (10%), paper 1 (20%), paper 2 (15%), paper 3 (30%), class participation (25%); 4-hour students: map quiz (5%), paper 1 (20%), paper 2 (15%), paper 3 (30%), extra paper/discussion (10%), class participation (20%).

Required Readings:

James H. Sweet, *Recreating Africa: Culture, Kinship, and Religion in the African Portuguese World, 1441-1770* (UNC, 2003)

Kim D. Butler, *Freedoms Given, Freedoms Won: Afro-Brazilians in Post-Abolition São Paulo and Salvador* (Rutgers, 1998)

Jeffrey Lesser, *Negotiating National Identity: Immigrants, Minorities, and the Struggle for Ethnicity in Brazil* (Duke, 1999)

Carolina Maria de Jesus, *Child of the Dark* (Signet, 1983)

Robin E. Sheriff, *Dreaming Equality: Color, Race, and Racism in Urban Brazil* (Rutgers, 2001)

Coursepack

Course Outline:

Week 1: Introduction

1/18—Introduction—Go over syllabus. Introduction to Brazil: geography, major historical watersheds, etc.

1/20—Map Quiz. Lecture: The Tupinambá and their Neighbors Prior to 1500

Week 2: Portuguese, Native Brazilians, and the Beginnings of Multi-Racial Brazil?

Reading: John M. Monteiro, “The Crises and Transformations of Invaded Societies: Coastal Brazil in the Sixteenth Century,” *The Cambridge History of the Native Peoples of the Americas* vol. 3, pt. 1 *South America* (Cambridge, 1999), 973-1024.

1/25—Lecture: Portuguese Colonization and its Impacts on Native Populations: Caramuru, João Ramalho, Hans Staden. Film Clip: The Mission

1/27—Discussion: What were the reactions of Portuguese to Amerindians? Amerindians to Portuguese? How should we characterize Caramuru and João Ramalho? Did early race mixing lead to the formation of a uniquely Brazilian population?

Week 3: Transitions: Indians and Africans in Brazil

Readings: Stuart B. Schwartz, “First Slavery: From Indian to African,” in Schwartz, *Sugar Plantations in the Formation of Brazilian Society, Bahia, 1550-1835* (Cambridge, 1985), 51-72; Alida O. Metcalf, “Millenarian Slaves? The Santidade of Jaguaripe and Slave Resistance in the Americas,” *American Historical Review* 104 (1999), 1531-1559.

2/1—Lecture: Slavery, Slave Labor, and Indian/African Relations

2/3—Discussion: Why did the Portuguese shift from Indian to African labor? Why were Africans considered more valuable workers? During this transition period, how would you characterize the relationship between Africans and Indians? Did these relationships/exchanges result in a more authentically “Brazilian” population? How?

Week 4: Africans in Brazil: Demography, Family, and Labor

Readings: Sweet, 1-83

2/8—Lecture: The Slave Trade, African Origins, Labor, and Family in Brazil

2/10—Discussion: From what parts of Africa did slaves arrive in Brazil over the course of the slave trade? How were Africans employed? To what extent were Africans able to maintain family and kinship ties in Brazil? How should we define “family” in African slave communities? Does this definition have any resonance, impact today?

Week 5: Responses to Slavery: Resistance

Readings: Sweet, 87-188

2/15—Lecture: Religion, Runaways, and Rebellion: Resistance in Brazil. Palmares, Malê Rebellion of 1835, etc. Clips from film: “Quilombo”

2/17—Discussion: How were African religious rituals transformed from Africa to Brazil? How were they utilized differently? To what extent did African rituals mix with Catholic, Native beliefs? Does the film “Quilombo” give an accurate portrayal of Palmares in the seventeenth century? Why or why not?

Week 6: Africans Become Brazilians: The Emergence of Brazilian Identity?

Reading: Sweet, 188-230; Herbert S. Klein and Francisco Vidal Luna, “Free Colored in a Slave Society: São Paulo and Minas Gerais in the Early Nineteenth Century,” *Hispanic American Historical Review* 80 (2000), 913-941; Stuart B. Schwartz, “The Formation of Colonial Identity in Brazil,” in *Colonial Identity in the Atlantic World, 1500-1800*, eds. Nicholas Canny and Anthony Pagden (Princeton, 1987), 15-50.

2/22—Lecture and Discussion: Mestiços, Mulattos, Mamelucos, and Pardos: The Mixed Races of Colonial Brazil. What impacts do African beliefs have on the Catholic Church? What impacts do Catholic beliefs have on Africans? How do we summarize the racial matrix of colonial Brazil?

PAPER (8 pages). DUE ON TUESDAY 3/1: During the colonial period, how and when do Africans, Indians, and Portuguese become Brazilian? What defines “Brazilianness” in the colonial period? Do there continue to be distinct African, Indian, and Portuguese identities, even after the emergence of a culturally and racially mixed “Brazil”? How do these distinct identities interact with the “Brazilian”? Be sure to use evidence from the readings to support your answer.

2/24—No class. Work on papers.

Week 7: Order, Progress, and Racial Democracy

Readings: Emilia Viotti da Costa, “The Myth of Racial Democracy: A Legacy of Empire,” in *The Brazilian Empire*, 234-246; Butler, 1-66

3/1—Lecture: The African and African Descended Impetus Toward Freedom and Abolition. Film Clip from: “Abolição.” PAPERS DUE at the beginning of class.

3/3—Did Brazilian slaves claim their freedom or was it granted to them? What were the opportunities for former slaves in the aftermath of abolition? What were their responses to these limited opportunities? What was the Brazilian government’s position toward the former slaves?

Week 8: Afro-Brazilian Strategies: São Paulo

Readings: Butler, 67-128

3/8—Lecture: Scientific Racism and Black Responses. Legal and Medical approaches, etc.

3/10—Discussion: How did Afro-Brazilians in São Paulo address their marginal place in society? Were the institutions they created effective in addressing racism and discrimination? Were they effective in addressing black economic problems? Why? Why not?

Week 9: Afro-Brazilian Strategies: Salvador

Readings: Butler, 129-227

3/15—Lecture: Candomblé: Cosmology and Praxis. Film clip: “Africa and Bahia”

3/17—Discussion: How did Afro-Brazilians in Salvador address their marginal place in society? How was this different than their counterparts in São Paulo? Did ethnic heterogeneity impact Afro-Brazilian unity in Salvador? Were Salvadoran strategies effective? How effective were they when compared with those of Afro-Brazilians in São Paulo? Can we speak of an Afro-Brazilian unity?

Week 10: Whitening the Nation through Immigration?

Readings: Lesser, 1-12, 81-173

3/29—Lecture: “Whitening” and Immigration in (Re)-Shaping Brasilidade

3/31—Discussion: Were Japanese immigrants considered “white”? How? How did Brazilians integrate the Japanese into their understandings of race and history? Did nativist reaction transform Japanese attitudes toward Brazil? How? Describe the division of Japanese immigrants during WWII. What were the causes of Shindo Renmei and its violence? How do Nikkei fare when they return to Japan?

Week 11: The Impacts of Poverty: Unemployment and Urban Life

Reading: Carolina Maria de Jesus (all)

4/5—Lecture and Discussion: Measuring the Impacts of Immigration in the Industrial Workplace: Germans, Italians, and Afro-Brazilian Exclusion. Afro-Brazilians Left Behind. Favelas, statistics. Impacts on Women, childhood—Nancy Scheper-Hughes. How does Carolina Maria de Jesus survive?

PAPER (5 pages). DUE ON TUESDAY 4/12: Critically analyze the impact of poverty on Carolina’s role as a black woman. How are categories like gender, race, family, and childhood transformed by grinding poverty? What is her relationship with the men in her life? With her children? What are her views on race?

4/7—No class. Work on papers.

Week 12: The Silences of Racism

Reading: Sheriff, 1-149

4/12—Lecture: Black Cinderellas, Color, and the Realities of Blackness in Brazil. Movimento Negro. Film: “Cidade de Deus” or “Bus 174.” PAPERS DUE at the beginning of class.

4/14—Finish film. Discussion: Describe some of the “silences” of racism in Brazil. How are these similar/different than racism in the US? Are Brazilians conscious of racism? Why or why not? Is Brazil’s racial (or non-racial) terrain preferable to that of the US? Why or why not?

Week 13: Silencing Afro-Brazilian Culture

Readings: Maya Chvaicer, "The Criminalization of Capoeira in Nineteenth-Century Brazil," *Hispanic American Historical Review* 82 (2002), 525-547; Ben Bollig, "White Rapper, Black Beats: Discovering a Race Problem in the Music of Gabriel o Pensador," *Latin American Music Review* 23 (2002), 159-178

4/19—Lecture: Calundús, Candomblés, Batuques, and Sambas: Evolution and Erasures in Brazilian Dance. Listen to selections of Brazilian music, video of Capoeira.

4/21—Discussion: How are African cultural forms erased in Brazil over time? Are these intentional erasures? Why? How should we assess the co-opting of African and Afro-Brazilian cultural forms by other Brazilians? Are Brazilians stealing the cultural patrimony of Afro-Brazilians? Or, is this simply an expression of "Brazilianness"?

Week 14: The Yanomami, Human Rights Abuses, and the Landless Movement

Reading: Alcida R. Ramos, "Reflecting on the Yanomami: Ethnographic Images and the Pursuit of the Exotic," *Cultural Anthropology* 2 (1987), 284-304; Maria Guadalupe Moog Rodrigues, "Indigenous Rights in Democratic Brazil," *Human Rights Quarterly* 24 (2002), 487-512.

4/26—Lecture: The Yanomami, Anthropological Crisis, and the MST. Video: "Contact: The Yanomami Indians of Brazil."

4/28—Discussion: How have anthropologists portrayed the Yanomami? What impacts do these portrayals have on the Yanomami? On broader world opinion? Have anthropologists treated the Yanomami in humane ways? What obligations do scholars have toward so-called "primitive" peoples? Describe the human rights abuses of indigenous peoples in Brazil. Why is land distribution so difficult?

Week 15: To the Future: An American Model of Brazilian Race Relations?

Readings: Thomas Skidmore, "Bi-racial U.S.A. vs. Multi-racial Brazil: Is the Contrast Still Valid?" *Journal of Latin American Studies* 25 (1993), 373-86; Mala Htun, "From 'Racial Democracy' to Affirmative Action: Changing State Policy on Race in Brazil," *Latin American Research Review* 39 (2004), 60-89.

5/3—Lecture: Multi-Racial Models v. Bi-Racial Models: Contradictory Evidence from the United States and Brazil. Categories, statistics, etc.

5/5—Discussion: Is contemporary Brazil a predominantly multi-racial society or a bi-racial society? And the United States? Are the two countries moving in opposite directions, Brazil toward a bi-racial and the US toward a multi-racial? Which of these

models can most effectively address continued discrimination? In Brazil's new attempts at affirmative action, who is defined as black? Is this a sufficient measure?

Conclusions: How do we define "Brasilidade"?

Final Paper—Due during exam period (10-12 pages): Compare and contrast the experiences of Afro-Brazilians, Amerindians, and Nikkei under Brazil's "racial democracy" (1889- present). Implicit in your analysis should be a clear delineation of the shifting nature of *Brasilidade* (Brazilianness) during this 100+-year period. Who was included/excluded at various junctures? Why? Within racial/ethnic groups were there uniform responses to exclusion? (i.e. Did all Afro-Brazilians respond similarly to social exclusion? All Nikkei?) How has "racial democracy" silenced opposition to discrimination? Is this pattern changing?