

the city of Recife. Authorities feared that his activities were part of a broader conspiracy among Brazilians of color to overthrow white rule. The life stories of Daniel and Agostinho reveal the racial tensions that continued to permeate Brazilian society after Independence.

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Daniel Gomes de Freitas

Liberal Conspiracy in the Early National Period

HENDRIK KRAAY

In part because of Portuguese military weakness and British diplomatic support for an independent Brazilian state, the battles to liberate Brazil from Portuguese rule were not nearly as bloody or as drawn out as those fought in Spanish America for independence. But as Professor Hendrik Kraay argues, battles and conspiracies to shape the nature of Brazil's independence continued for decades after 1822. The preservation of the monarchy certainly helped to smooth the transition, and the monarchy lent legitimacy to the authority of the central government, but this authority was strenuously contested by Brazilians influenced by liberal ideals that called for greater equality, at least for respectable free men. Still, no regional revolt succeeded in toppling the central government in Rio de Janeiro, although Pedro I was impelled to abdicate his throne in favor of his young son in 1831. Only an army coup in 1889 brought an end to the Brazilian Empire and the monarchy by promulgating the Republic. The relative stability of Brazil's government contrasts starkly to most Spanish American nations, where rebel factions succeeded in toppling regimes repeatedly in the decades after Independence. But as Professor Kraay points out, historians too often overlook the many changes that independence wrought in Brazilian society by stressing instead continuities with the colonial period.

Brazil's separation from Portugal in 1822 meant different things to different participants and onlookers, and many conflicting visions of what society in an independent Brazil would be like. Professor Kraay explores these different perspectives by focusing on the life story of Daniel Gomes de Freitas, a man of middling social status who made his career as an army officer in Bahia's provincial capital, Salvador. Like some other men of his times and his background, Daniel was inspired by leveling liberal ideals that sought to guarantee advancement based on merit rather than on birth or connections. For Daniel and others, they wanted equal access with the landed elite to government jobs and political posts. They also sought to limit the rights of the Portuguese-born living in Brazil to participate in retail and overseas commerce (sectors of the economy that they dominated) as well as in government jobs. Still, the vision of how inclusive the new Brazilian national community would be was limited in the minds of Daniel and many others like him, who sought to distinguish themselves from

freedmen and slaves. The type of leveling that Daniel envisioned excluded these members of Brazilian society, but many freedmen and slaves had found inspiration in the news of the successful slave revolt that founded the first black republic of Haiti in 1804 and abolished slavery. Also, the liberating rhetoric of Brazil's rebel conspirators encouraged their active participation in the conspiracies and insurgencies that occurred from the 1820s through the 1840s. Daniel Gomes de Freitas's life demonstrates the many contradictions that rebels with limited views of liberation faced in the slave society of postcolonial Brazil.

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Brazilian independence is often presented as a peaceful process, in sharp contrast to the violent struggles that wracked Spanish America, and many historians stress that very little changed as a result. Brazil remained a monarchy—the son of the king of Portugal proclaimed independence on September 7, 1822—and major features of the colonial regime persisted long after Independence. Slavery lasted until 1888, while racial discrimination, latifundia, and economic dependence still endure. However, people who lived through the independence years in Brazil would likely have perceived many changes in their lives, although some felt that the changes did not go far enough. Certainly this must have been the case for Daniel Gomes de Freitas, who, as a young army cadet, played a part in the fighting for independence in the province of Bahia and deeply embroiled himself in the violent struggle for liberal reform after Independence.

Daniel Gomes de Freitas was born on September 15, 1806, in Santana, a downtown parish of Salvador. A city of perhaps 50,000 people, it was then one of the largest in the Americas. It was a bustling commercial and bureaucratic center, the capital of the Portuguese captaincy (colonial province) of Bahia, the seat of the archbishop and the appeals court, and the principal entrepôt for trade with its sugar-plantation hinterland, the Recôncavo. There, tens of thousands of mostly African slaves cut and processed sugarcane, as they had done for 250 years, to supply sugar to European markets. Their owners, the *senhores de engenho* (literally, “lords of the sugar mills” but more commonly translated as “sugar plant-

ers”), constituted Bahia's aristocracy. The Recôncavo also produced tobacco, which found a ready market in West Africa, where it was traded for the 6,000 or so slaves brought each year to Salvador. Somewhat more than one-third of the city's population consisted of slaves, who worked in every conceivable occupation. In the year after Daniel's birth, African slaves led the first of dozens of rebellions that wracked Salvador and its hinterland until 1835, when African Muslims staged the largest urban slave revolt in the Americas.

The existence of slavery profoundly shaped the rest of the society into which Daniel was born. Complex racial hierarchies structured this society, with the minority of creole (American-born) slaves generally having privileges over Africans. By 1800, the number of free Afro-Brazilians almost equalled the number of slaves, and only a minority of the population was classed as “white” in the scattered censuses taken during these years. The latter dominated Bahian society, but some of them were becoming concerned about the rise of the “classes of color,” as they sometimes put it. Not only did the slave revolts threaten to turn Bahia into another Haiti, the French sugar plantation colony devastated by a slave rebellion in the 1790s, but free blacks and mulattoes also had been involved in a 1798 conspiracy whose stated goals included the ending of racial discrimination among the free. (The plotters did not actually call for an end to slavery.) Moreover, in 1808, Britain ended the slave trade to its colonies and began putting pressure on other countries, including Portugal, to end the trade, which would have devastated Brazil's economy. Living and working conditions on sugar plantations were so harsh that slave populations failed to reproduce themselves and had to be sustained by imports.

Less than two years after Daniel's birth, the city of Salvador hosted Queen Maria I (by then completely insane) and João, her son and the prince regent, along with the entire court. They had fled from Lisbon in late 1807, just ahead of the French invaders. During his stay in Salvador, João issued an important decree opening Brazil's trade to all friendly nations, which effectively ended the Portuguese commercial monopoly (and a key element of Brazil's colonial status). Unfortunately for the Bahian elite, João resolved to move on to the viceregal capital of Rio de Janeiro, where he established a full government apparatus for the entire Portuguese Empire. In 1815 he raised Brazil to a political status equal to that of Portugal. On the death of his mother in 1816, he finally became King João VI.

Little Daniel knew nothing about these larger changes taking place around him, and his parents were probably more preoccupied with his poor health. Fearing for his life, Luiz José Gomes and Rosa Maria do Espírito Santo had the boy baptized at home, rather than in the parish

church. They were unmarried, which meant that Daniel was a "natural" child, a condition halfway between legitimate and bastard. That he bore neither his mother's nor his father's surname is not surprising, for Brazilian naming practices were highly flexible. His parents probably married subsequently, by which he became "legitimated." This status can be inferred from the fact that he later became an army cadet, for which legitimacy or legitimation was required. We know little else about his father or mother, except that they had many children. In 1826, for example, Daniel referred to two sisters and three brothers whom he helped support, along with his mother, grandmother, and by then elderly father. The copy of his baptismal certificate in the army archive omits one piece of information usually included in such documents: an indication of his race. He may well have had some African ancestry, for the custom of using devotional surnames (his mother's last name means "Holy Spirit") was common among Afro-Brazilians, but the army never kept racial information on its officers and treated them all as unmarked white men.

On August 1, 1821, claiming to be fifteen years old, Daniel volunteered to join the army. He enlisted in Salvador's artillery regiment; sometime in September he was recognized as a second cadet. This clue tells us about his father because, according to the law that revised the requirements for cadetship in 1820, the rank of second cadet was awarded to sons of militia officers or army officers up to the rank of major. (Sons of nobles and more senior army officers became first cadets.) Unfortunately, I have located no army or militia officer by the name of Luiz José Gomes in Salvador during this time, but he may have held a commission in the suburban militia. That Daniel became a cadet also indicates that he had learned to read and write and that he had mastered basic arithmetic. Few children received primary schooling at the time, and his literacy suggests that Daniel's family might be classed as members of Salvador's small middle class (although they probably ranked near the bottom of it).

Daniel likely chose the artillery because of its educational opportunities. Since the mideighteenth century, engineering (fortifications) and mathematics courses were offered in that regiment so that its cadets and noncommissioned officers could acquire the technical training needed to operate artillery. Some historians thus see the artillery as a branch of the army that facilitated upward social mobility. Daniel probably did not have much time to study in the 1820s, but he did attend class in the mid-1830s, and he claims in his memoir to have taken the qualifying examination for promotion to first lieutenant. Having enlisted in the local garrison, Daniel expected to stay close to his family. In the previous 150 years, Salvador's troops had only left Bahia once, for a brief stint in Rio de Janeiro to reinforce the viceregal capital during a war scare with Spain. In many ways regular officers and enlisted men were, for lack of a better

word, part-time soldiers. They worked in artisanal trades during their spare time, while officers often had business ventures on the side. Indeed, Daniel probably lived at home and only stayed in the barracks when he was assigned to specific duties.

When Daniel joined the army, dramatic political changes were sweeping through the Luso-Brazilian world. In late 1820 a liberal revolution in the city of Porto, Portugal, ended the absolute rule of João VI. The liberals' ideals of constitutional rule, press freedom, and equality of rights (for free men) appealed to many in Brazil, and in February 1821 artillery officers led a rebellion that overthrew the governor and the garrison commander, proclaiming Bahia's loyalty to the Portuguese liberal regime. The new junta pledged to send deputies to the parliament, or Cortes, that would write a new constitution for the Portuguese nation, seen as consisting of all of the king's subjects, whether they lived in Portugal, Brazil, or any of the colonies in Africa and Asia. Both the locally raised troops (which included the artillery) and a Portuguese infantry regiment stationed in Salvador since 1819 strongly supported the liberal regime, but by the time that Daniel enlisted, relations between Bahians and Portuguese were deteriorating rapidly.

The larger context for this state of affairs was set by the many interests in Portugal who thought that the mother country had been reduced to the status of a colony of Brazil. The liberals ordered João to return to Lisbon, which he did, and they envisaged a unitary government for the entire Portuguese Empire, which meant that many of the institutions of government established in Brazil since 1808 would be dismantled. Because most of these were in Rio de Janeiro (and not Salvador), those Bahians who sought local autonomy were not initially concerned. But relations between Bahian and Portuguese troops, the latter reinforced by contingents from Lisbon during 1821, were increasingly tense. Portuguese troops snubbed their Brazilian counterparts, often insulting them with racial slurs, which Brazilians reciprocated by mocking the Portuguese soldiers' high opinion of their whiteness. A key figure in the garrison's politics at this time was Lieutenant Colonel Manoel Pedro de Freitas Guimarães. He had been the artillery's second-in-command in February 1821, but because of his key role in the coup, he was catapulted into the post of garrison commander by popular acclamation. Freitas Guimarães (no relation to Daniel) was a charismatic figure who reportedly encouraged enlistments into the artillery from men who shared his political views, particularly his dislike of the Portuguese and his advocacy of greater autonomy for Bahia (or Brazil). But Freitas Guimarães suffered from periodic bouts of mental illness (he was in fact declared legally insane in the 1820s), and this handicap hampered his political activism.

Matters came to a head in February 1822, when the liberal government in Lisbon, consistent with its goal of establishing a single government for the Portuguese world, exercised its power to name garrison commanders and ordered Freitas Guimarães to be replaced by the commander of the Portuguese regiment, Inácio Luiz Madeira de Melo. The many supporters of Freitas Guimarães would have none of this, and efforts to conciliate the two parties failed. On February 19, 1822, fighting broke out between Bahian and Portuguese troops in Salvador. Civilian patriots joined the artillery regiment, quartered in Fort São Pedro, where they held out for two days. Before the fort capitulated, most of the patriots, Daniel included, escaped into the Recôncavo. Freitas Guimarães was captured and shipped in chains to Lisbon.

Little is known about what happened during the next five months. The patriots carried their anti-Portuguese struggle to the countryside, while Madeira fortified himself in Salvador. For sugar planters, this conflict was deeply worrisome, given the potential for disorder. In late June and early July 1822 a group of planters organized a provisional Council of Government, pledged their loyalty to Pedro I (who by then was about to turn himself into emperor of Brazil), and organized what they called the Pacification Army to besiege Salvador and, judging by the name, to bring order to the countryside. The soldiers and officers who had dispersed in February soon congregated in Cachoeira, where the Council met, and Daniel reported there on July 7. The creation of the Pacification Army was a difficult task because the patriots had few arms and equipment, for which no amount of enthusiasm could compensate. They won an early victory by preventing a Portuguese naval force from landing at Cachoeira and gradually tightened the siege lines around Salvador. Pedro I sent weapons, a contingent of troops, and a French general, Pierre Labatut, to command the patriots. Shortly after Labatut and the Rio de Janeiro troops took up their position outside of Salvador, Madeira launched an attack. The Battle of Pirajá (November 8, 1821) was a close-run affair, and the tide only turned, according to a widely repeated story, when a bugler on the patriot side incorrectly played the signal for a cavalry charge. The Portuguese, fearing the worst, hastily retreated to their fortifications. About 300 men died in the battle—insignificant casualties by European standards, but a shocking loss of life to Brazilians who had never experienced war on this scale. Daniel must have distinguished himself that day because eight days later, he was commissioned a second lieutenant by Labatut, who liberally handed out promotions in late November.

For the rest of the war, Daniel dropped out of sight, but he must have witnessed all of the changes that the conflict brought. It involved a popular mobilization on a scale hitherto unknown in Bahia, as some

15,000 men came under arms by July 1823. There was much talk of fighting for freedom, which, of course, meant different things to different people. Numerous slaves took advantage of the confusion to flee from their masters, and some found their way into the patriot forces. Labatut took it upon himself to draft slaves confiscated from Portuguese owners into the army (much to the annoyance of the Council, which considered this highly dangerous); after the war, the Brazilian government arranged for the freeing of these men by paying compensation to their masters. Anti-Portuguese rhetoric reached extreme levels during the war, and there was much loose talk of radical reform in the patriot camps, focusing on buzzwords of equality before the law and the rights of citizenship. For the sugar planters who dominated the Council, all of this wrangling was worrisome, and occasionally they ordered the arrest of whomever they perceived to be troublemakers, including an army surgeon, Francisco Sabino Álvares da Rocha Vieira. Labatut's imperiousness and his failure to respect the prerogatives of Bahia's sugar planters led to his overthrow at the hands of senior officers in May 1823, and he was replaced by the commander of troops from Rio de Janeiro.

On July 2, 1823, the Portuguese were down to just enough food to stock their ships for the voyage to Lisbon, and they evacuated Salvador. The bedraggled patriots marched into the city that afternoon, and in September, officials demobilized the Pacification Army and organized a peacetime force. Daniel was assigned to the artillery where, as a second lieutenant, he must have busied himself with the routine tasks of running his company and overseeing garrison duties, which mostly involved manning guard posts throughout the city. By many measures, the seventeen-year-old Daniel had done well for himself. He had survived the war and had won an officer's commission, which meant that he would be paid a salary for the rest of his life. Back in the 1810s, it had taken an average of seven to ten years to rise through the noncommissioned ranks to second lieutenant. But Daniel and many of the other officers in the garrison who had received battlefield promotions were not satisfied with their relative good fortune.

To be sure, independence had been won, but this success marked only the beginning of a struggle to define the nature of the new state and the new society that many envisaged. Most of the important issues had not been addressed in 1822 and 1823. What, for example, would be the nature of Emperor Pedro I's relationship to the Brazilian people? Who should be part of the nation? And what rights should citizens have? Pedro convened a constitutional convention but abruptly closed it in late 1823 when it appeared to be producing a draft not to his liking. In March 1824 he granted his own constitution, a document that upheld many of his prerogatives, including a so-called moderating power that gave the

monarch the right to close the parliament and call new elections. But the charter also contained an extensive bill of rights for the country's free citizens, including provisions for equality before the law and equal access to government posts on the basis of merit alone—two provisions that were extremely rare in contemporary constitutions elsewhere. Of course, such provisions did not apply to slaves, and the document almost entirely ignored the existence of slavery, except in a few clauses that restricted the political rights of freedmen. Despite having granted the constitution, Pedro proved himself to be a poor constitutional monarch and continually squabbled with the parliament.

Many of the more arcane details of the constitution mattered little to ordinary Brazilians, but the clauses granting equality before the law and equal access to government jobs became something of a touchstone for a sector of upwardly mobile free nonwhite men who used these clauses to challenge the discrimination that they faced. Other issues addressed by the constitution also figured in popular politics. The charter granted Brazilian citizenship to all Portuguese who had not fought against independence, but many Brazilian patriots wanted to rid the country of residents of the former mother country. In the army, many of Daniel's junior-officer cohort, most of whom had been promoted during the war, wanted to remove Portuguese-born officers from the corporation, which would have made promotion more rapid.

Anti-Portuguese feeling also had a more mundane but very important source: natives of Portugal dominated the retail trades and they gained a reputation as gouging shopkeepers, becoming the targets of food rioters during periods of unrest. The constitution had established a centralized system of government, but many people believed that a more decentralized or, as Brazilians called it, federal system of government would be more responsive to local interests, not to mention offer greater opportunities for Bahians not connected to court elites. Complaints about taxation that only served to support courtiers in Rio de Janeiro also figured in radical liberal discourse. After Independence, slave unrest continued in Bahia, with periodic major rebellions led by Africans. Many observers reported that all of the talk about gaining freedom from Portuguese rule had been interpreted by slaves to mean that they should be free of their masters. A worried Spaniard calculated that within three years, "the white race will be finished off at the hands of the other castes and the province of Bahia will disappear from the civilized world."¹

Where Daniel stood in the political ferment of the early 1820s is difficult to determine. His name does not turn up in the principal chronicles of the political events of these years; perhaps because of his youth, he was more a follower than a leader at this time. He avoided the

fate of about a half-dozen lieutenants who were expelled from the army in 1824 on the grounds that they were too undisciplined and too politicized. The garrison commander, Colonel Felisberto Gomes Caldeira, made himself unpopular by such measures, and on October 25, 1824, the soldiers and junior officers of one infantry battalion mutinied. This battalion, the so-called Periquitos ("Parakeets," after the yellow and green trim on their uniforms), included a significant number of the slaves who had been freed after the war for their military service. Their principal demand was for the return of a popular commandet, a man who had a reputation for radical political ideas, but the brutal murder of Caldeira may have unnerved the conspirators, and the mutiny degenerated into a standoff between the Periquitos and a growing contingent of regulars who retreated from Salvador. After about a month, the mutineers gave up and the government quickly removed the troublesome soldiers from Bahia.

Daniel was sufficiently associated with the mutineers that military authorities had him court-martialed, but he claimed that the charges were due mostly to the dislike that some officers and cadets nurtured for him. Two infantry officers—a major and a second lieutenant—served as scapegoats and were publicly executed in early 1825. Daniel avoided their fate but his case dragged on through military and civilian courts until February 29, 1828, when he was finally acquitted, as were most of those officers arrested. At this time, Brazil was at war with the Argentine Confederation over control of what eventually became the independent republic of Uruguay. Daniel hastened to join his unit, now designated the Seventh Artillery, but he did not see combat (much later, another officer insulted Daniel by saying that he had only served in "prison ships [*presingans*] and fortress dungeons [*abobadas*] during the war).² Judging by his personnel file, Daniel had other pressing professional concerns. Back in 1826, while he had been in prison, Emperor Pedro I had visited Bahia where he issued a general promotion of one-half grade to all of the province's officers (except those who were in jail). Because of his acquittal, Daniel judged that he also deserved this promotion, with the appropriate retroactive seniority. Without it, he would rank behind his entire cohort when it came to promotion, given the importance of seniority in the Brazilian army. Some officers received retroactive promotions in the 1820s, but Daniel's case dragged on until 1831, when a special commission charged with investigating all such outstanding cases ruled that he should get the promotion.

Meanwhile, the war went badly for Brazil, and late in 1828 the British government brokered a peace that resulted in the creation of Uruguay. The Bahian troops likely looked forward to returning home, but

Pedro I retained them in Rio de Janeiro and other garrisons in the south of the country, while Salvador received contingents of troops from other provinces. He apparently hoped that this move would weaken officers' ties to their home provinces and make them more loyal to the imperial regime, but it may well have had the opposite effect. Officers and their families suffered considerable hardship and many complained that they could not properly manage their households while stationed away from Bahia. Since the war was over, they could not see any reason to be kept away from home.

The year 1831 brought sudden changes to Brazilian and Bahian politics. Facing increasing opposition from moderate liberals in the parliament and radical liberals who occasionally took to the streets in Rio de Janeiro, Emperor Pedro I abruptly abdicated on April 7, 1831. A moderately liberal parliamentary government took power in Rio de Janeiro in the name of Emperor Pedro II, then only five years old, and instituted numerous changes in Brazilian society, among them an important devolution of power to the provincial governments and significant reforms to army organization. The liberal Regency government reduced the size of the army, returned its battalions to their home provinces, and created a civilian militia, the National Guard, as a way to empower citizens and to replace the army-controlled militia. Sometime in the middle of 1831, Daniel and the artillery arrived back in Salvador, a city going through a period of unrest. Around the time of the abdication, there had been large-scale anti-Portuguese riots, which had forced the provincial president (governor) and garrison commander to resign. Several radical liberal newspapers had appeared in the city, fanning the anti-Portuguese flames and calling for federalism and equality before the law. Cipriano José Barata de Almeida, one of Brazil's best-known advocates of liberal reform, had just been arrested on trumped-up charges of fomenting African slave revolt.

The return of Bahia's troops and particularly officers like Daniel, still under suspicion because of their role in 1824, worried provincial authorities. They kept the artillery in its traditional quarters in Fort São Pedro and tried to limit the soldiers' contact with civilian society. This treatment greatly upset enlisted men, who naturally wanted to see their friends and family in the city, and on the night of August 31, 1831, they mutinied, declaring that they no longer would sleep in the barracks, eat in the mess, or wear leather uniform collars, adding that they wanted to be discharged. Apparently, Daniel sympathized with his soldiers' demands, for he was arrested the next day for complicity in the mutiny. Daniel's timing could not have been worse. On that very day, the commission investigating disputes about seniority and promotions had ruled that

Daniel should be promoted and regain the seniority that he had lost during his imprisonment in the 1820s. When this good news reached Salvador, Daniel was in jail facing a court-martial and thus could not be promoted. While in prison, Daniel no doubt heard about two other radical liberal rebellions, an abortive rising of an infantry battalion in October 1831 and a short-lived federalist revolt that briefly held the town of Cachoeira in early 1832. Eventually, all of those arrested for complicity in the various liberal and federalist revolts, including Daniel, were transferred to the round fort located in Salvador's harbor, the most secure prison in the province.

In early 1833, Daniel appeared for the first time as one of the leaders of a revolt when the prisoners took over the fort, apparently as part of a larger liberal-federalist plot to gain control of Salvador. For three days the prisoners exchanged artillery fire with land batteries; few men were killed but there was considerable property damage. When they realized that their position was hopeless, they raised a white flag of surrender to replace the blue and white banner of federalism that they had designed. The detailed rebel proclamation found afterward indicates that the insurrectionists had given much thought to the new society that they envisioned. The elderly Cipriano Barata likely had a hand in this document, for he was by far the most intellectual of the radical leaders. (He did not, however, take part in the fighting.) Speaking in the name of the people against the aristocrats, they called for the establishment of a provisional government, the election of the provincial president, the release of political prisoners, and full freedom of the press. Like previous radical liberal manifestoes, this one contained anti-Portuguese clauses seeking to exclude them from retail commerce and civil service jobs. It also pledged to improve food supply to Salvador and to eradicate the counterfeit currency and black marketeering that particularly hurt the poor.

The rebels also envisioned more fundamental economic reform, calling for the end of entails (rare in Brazil) and the redistribution of land to Brazilian patriots who would put it to productive use. Perhaps because they had experienced prison conditions firsthand, penal reform figured prominently in the manifesto, as did judicial reform, in which they stressed the importance of eliminating favoritism, instituting equality before the law, and making courts accessible to the poor by eliminating the fees and emoluments that plaintiffs paid. But Pedro I, should he dare to return to Brazil, would receive no due process from the rebels, who authorized any Brazilian to kill him on the spot. The manifesto, however, had its limits. Nowhere did it mention slavery, and racial discrimination was only addressed implicitly in the calls for equality before the law. In this sense, Daniel and his companions spoke for the free, not for slaves; by

stressing the importance of equality and due process, they were seeking to consolidate and extend the opportunities that the 1824 constitution had offered them.

Within two and one-half years, Daniel was out of prison and being considered for assignment to one of the vacant posts in Bahia's artillery battalion. In this case, the garrison commander named a more junior officer to the post, but in 1836, as the most senior unemployed second lieutenant, Daniel was assigned to another vacancy in the Third Artillery. This sudden reversal of fortune was due both to the lax legal system, which almost always acquitted "middle-class" conspirators like Daniel after they had spent a few years in prison, and to army officers' corporate loyalty to one another. No officer wished to set a precedent for cashiering his colleagues, for under different political circumstances, such a precedent might be turned against him. Daniel's difficulty in finding employment after his release from prison also reflected another feature of officers' life in the 1830s. Given the army cutbacks early in the decade, there was a great surplus of officers; while these men were paid, they had little to do, and they did not gain the salary supplements that officers serving in battalions received. Moreover, given the surplus of officers and tight budgets, the government suspended promotions. Not surprisingly, army officers complained a great deal about these cutbacks and came to nurture deep grievances against the regency government. The civilian National Guard added insult to injury, especially since the old militia had been under army control and a place where many army officers spent part of their career. Earlier in the decade (while Daniel was still in prison), they formed the Sociedade Militar (Officers' Club) to lobby for their interests and published a newspaper, *O Militar* (The Officer), that expressed their concerns. By the time that Daniel was released, both the club and the newspaper were moribund, but officers' professional concerns remained.

Army officers' grievances and the long tradition of radical liberal and federalist agitation merged in the Sabinada Rebellion that, for a brief time, catapulted Daniel to prominence. The origins of this rebellion, which broke out on the night of November 6-7, 1837, remain obscure. Moreover, Daniel's memoir of the rebellion is missing its beginning pages, removed in all likelihood to destroy incriminating evidence. As a result, we know nothing of Daniel's role in the preparations, but it must have been significant, for he took the post of war minister in the rebellion's government. The Sabinada officially justified itself as a response to the Regresso, the conservative turn of the imperial government in September 1837, promising to address radical liberals' concerns. Both of Salvador's army battalions supported the movement, while the National Guard mounted only ineffective opposition. Once in control of the city,

the rebels convened a meeting of the city council at which they proclaimed a republic and declared Bahia to be completely independent of Rio de Janeiro. Like the federalists of 1833, they promised elections and a constituent assembly. That day, the rebels also addressed military grievances, promoting the principal conspirators (Daniel vaulted four grades from second lieutenant to lieutenant colonel) and promoting all officers by two ranks. Generous salary increases were awarded to officers and men. They also established a civilian government, which was dominated by Francisco Sabino Álvares da Rocha Vieira, who officially held the post of government secretary. Like Daniel and Sabino (who lent his name to the movement), other members of the rebel cabinet had long histories of involvement in radical politics, including a briefly lucid Manoel Pedro de Freitas Guimarães, who served as navy minister.

Four days later, the rebels had a change of heart and revised their declaration of independence to limit it to the remaining period of Pedro II's minority, expected to end in 1844 when he turned eighteen. This curious decision, which drew much mockery from the rebellion's enemies, reflects the durability of the monarchy, its symbolic importance, and perhaps also a hope that Pedro II would reverse the Regresso when he came to rule directly. For the rest of November, the rebels gradually defined their political aims. They talked a great deal, condemning the domination of Brazil by the imperial government in Rio de Janeiro and stressing their love of order and their determination to protect private property. Anti-Portuguese rhetoric once again came to the fore. The government abolished the National Guard and called up officers and men of the old army-controlled militias.

Although the Sabinada had triumphed in Salvador, it failed to carry the Recôncavo. There, much as they had in 1822, sugar planters mobilized their forces and laid siege to the city. The imperial government, already facing rebellions in two other provinces, sent the troops that could be spared and imposed a naval blockade on Salvador. As war minister, Daniel had overall responsibility for the defense of Salvador and, more important, for offensive operations, for he and other rebel leaders recognized that if they were confined to the city, they would share the fate of the Portuguese troops in 1823. Unfortunately, the rebel forces were singularly unsuccessful in extending the rebellion's reach. An attack on Itaparica island, opposite Salvador, failed. Only late in the war did they manage to launch a significant expeditionary force into the Recôncavo, but it was soon dispersed. Both the besiegers and the rebels dug themselves in, and the war quickly turned into a stalemate that the rebels could not win.

Early in the rebellion, Daniel suffered from erysipelas, an unpleasant skin inflammation, which made it difficult for him to inspect the

front lines. Rather, he busied himself with overseeing the all-important production of ammunition. The city's arsenals were well equipped for the manufacture of cartridges, and large quantities of supplies were on hand. According to Daniel, he managed to increase output so that the rebels' troops never suffered shortages. Daniel's memoir also hints at disagreements among the rebel leadership over military strategy, squabbles over seniority, and disputes over policy toward those who wished to flee the city and toward those who wanted to continue trade with the Recôncavo. Looking at these problems from a tactical and strategic angle, Daniel was willing to permit the emigration of women, children, and the elderly, but not that of able-bodied men and slaves who could be put to use. He complained bitterly about the issuance of licenses to export food from the besieged city.

Two major problems bedeviled Daniel in early 1838. As the city's position became increasingly hopeless, the lower classes became more and more restive, with violent attacks on individual Portuguese taking place and sporadic attempts to burn the properties of Sabinada enemies or those who (worse yet for the plebeians) deserted the cause. Daniel was horrified by these outbursts of popular violence by what an English doctor called the "infuriated black and mulatto mob,"³ and he repeatedly detached troops to keep order and to protect property.

Slavery posed a more complex problem for Daniel and the rest of the rebel leadership. Initially, they gave it little thought, except to declare that they considered abolition to be "supine stupidity," possibly an attempt to deflect the inevitable accusations that they were fostering slave rebellion.⁴ They hired the slave porters who usually worked on the docks to carry supplies to the trenches and likely intended nothing more than using slaves in such support roles. By the end of December, it became clear from masters' complaints that some rebel commanders were admitting slaves into their units. Daniel repeatedly ordered that such slaves be returned to their owners, especially since their enlistment was causing problems in the ranks because some free men refused to serve alongside them. Daniel opposed the solution that the civilian government found in early January—the creation of a battalion of Brazilian-born black freedmen, whose owners would be compensated by the receipt of half of their former slaves' salary. Late in February the rebel government went one step further, proclaiming the freedom of all Brazilian-born slaves who would take up arms in the Sabinada's defense. Daniel vigorously protested this measure as well, declaring that he took no responsibility for the outcome and implementing it with extreme reluctance.

The refusal of free soldiers to associate with slaves and freedmen reflects one of the major fissures in nineteenth-century Brazilian society, as does the Sabinada government's decision to free only creole slaves.

Creoles were only a minority of Salvador's slaves, two-thirds of whom were Africans. While the rebels could conceive of Creoles as part of their defense forces, they did not see Africans as even potentially part of the Brazilian community. The great 1835 slave rebellion, led by African Muslims, reinforced this view, and when the Sabinada's enemies accused the rebels of enlisting Africans, one of its newspapers declared that "the simple fact that we are Bahians, and free Bahians," belied the imputation.⁵ Africans were simply not part of the "nation" as the rebels envisaged it, and many had doubts about creole slaves as well.

While Daniel's memoir of the Sabinada is an invaluable historical source, it is strikingly devoid of political content. He did not, for instance, comment on the racial politics of the revolt. As the white upper classes fled Salvador in November and December, outside observers came to see the Sabinada as a race war: "Appearances are materially changed since the commencement of the insurrection and . . . are at present more those of a war of color than anything else," wrote the British vice consul in January 1838.⁶ Rebel newspapers expressed the frustrations of upwardly mobile men of color for whom the constitution's provisions of equality were insufficient protection against discrimination. One declared of the Sabinada's enemies: "They are warring against us because they are whites, and in Bahia there must be no blacks and mulattoes, especially in office, unless they are very rich and change their liberal opinions."⁷ Supporters of the Sabinada were also divided over racial questions, with some calling for radical solutions. Late in the revolt, a black militia officer, José de Santa Eufrásia, declared "that he was [all too] used to being ruled by whites" and that "blacks should govern the Republic."⁸ Where Daniel stood on these issues is impossible to determine from his memoir, but his silence about race is consistent with army policy toward officers—they were assumed to be white men—and with the views of an upwardly mobile elite of "men of color" who sought integration into the upper class on the basis of full equality, which meant that they avoided explicit discussions of race.

Daniel's memoir resembles, as Paulo Cesar Souza has put it, the report of a "zealous functionary" rather than that of an ideologically motivated rebel leader.⁹ He once noted that enthusiastic civilians took out a field gun amid shouts of "Long live liberty!" and "Death to the [Portuguese] rogues!" but most of the passage is devoted to criticism of the officer who permitted them to take the weapon that they did not know how to use.¹⁰ In another passage, he expresses his disgust at fellow officers who continued to accept slaves in their units, despite explicit orders to the contrary, wondering what would happen to a government "whose orders were mocked at every turn by those who called themselves leaders of the Revolution fighting for equality and [proper] execution of the

law."¹¹ By contrast, Daniel considered himself to be an exemplary and upright servant of the republic: "I resolved never to tolerate immorality and crime, having delinquents punished with the sanctions that were within my competence, as soon as they were convicted of their evil-doing, as is well-known [and evidenced] by the numerous decrees and orders transcribed in the newspapers."¹² For Daniel, adherence to law, due process, and correct procedure constituted the way to a better society.

On the morning of March 13, 1838, Daniel and another officer set out in a launch to inspect the escarpment along the city's west side with an eye to improving the defenses against seaborne assault. When they returned to the docks, disastrous news greeted them. Enemy forces had breached the city's defenses on the north side and were rapidly advancing toward the downtown, with Sabinada troops retreating even faster. At this point, the focus of Daniel's memoir narrows to that which he experienced personally, as soldiers' recollections of combat typically do. He hastened to Fort São Pedro, on the city's south end and close to the arsenal, where he oversaw the supply of munitions to those rebel troops still under discipline. Perhaps because of his distance from the fighting, he reported nothing about the massacres of defenders. However, the official report by the commander of imperial forces put the number of rebel dead at 1,091 against only 40 government soldiers, and there were later numerous allegations of murders and atrocities committed by the victorious soldiers, especially against black defenders of the Sabinada.

From the fort's parapets, Daniel saw many downtown buildings ablaze, as the arsonists whom he could not contain took revenge on their enemies. Much to his disgust, he witnessed the breakdown of discipline, as retreating soldiers broke into stores and got thoroughly drunk instead of facing the enemy. Worse yet, he saw rebel officers in civilian dress abandoning their posts, and watched another wander around the fort in a stupor, perhaps because he had tried to poison himself (the man eventually recovered). By March 15, the situation around the fort was desperate, with government troops only a few blocks away. Daniel and a few other officers considered organizing a retreat up the coast, hoping to break through thinly held enemy lines, but they found that they had insufficient slaves to carry their supplies. (That they might carry their own supplies apparently did not occur to them!) Finally, at 4:00 P.M., Daniel and a small party, including a few officers and soldiers, abandoned the fort, successfully eluding the government forces closing in from the south and east.

At this point, Daniel's narrative ends abruptly, giving no indication of how he managed to avoid arrest for three years. He only resurfaced in 1840, after the prematurely crowned Pedro II issued an amnesty to all those who had taken part in rebellions against his reign. Rumors occa-

sionally placed him in other provinces, but none was confirmed. During that time, authorities charged him with numerous offenses. No court-martial records from the Sabinada have come to light, but civilian authorities threw the book at him, charging him with everything from destroying the independence and integrity of the Empire, offending the constitution and the royal family, and attacking the regent to fraud, piracy, murder, bribery, and assault. Probably the most serious indictment was that of fomenting slave insurrection, defined as participating in a violent movement of twenty or more slaves to win their freedom. This crime carried the death penalty (as did the murder charge). But the wheels of justice turned slowly in imperial Brazil, and in 1840 the charges against those of Daniel's companions who had been captured were still being appealed. All of them survived to claim the benefits of the amnesty in 1840.

Little is known about the rest of Daniel's life. By the amnesty's terms, he was ordered to reside in São Paulo, where he again tried to resume his army career. He had the nerve to request back pay for the time that he had been in hiding, noting that he had already reimbursed the salary that he had illegally drawn during the Sabinada (since he had been acquitted of all crimes, he judged that he had the right to the salary that he would have otherwise received). This argument had little legal merit and was rejected out of hand. In 1842, Daniel apparently took part in the brief liberal rebellion in São Paulo, after which he disappeared, reportedly joining the remnants of the Farrroupilha Rebellion, a republican movement in the extreme south of Brazil.

Second Lieutenant Daniel Gomes de Freitas was only thirty-six when he dropped out of sight. In his short life (or at least the part of it that we know about), he experienced all of the complex and difficult issues that Brazilians struggled with after Independence. The numerous rebellions in which he participated clearly demonstrate that Independence was not a peaceful, consensual process and underscore the fact that Brazilians were deeply divided over fundamental issues. Independence, as far as Daniel was concerned, settled little or nothing; rather, it opened up Brazilian society to a broad debate over the form of the state and the nature of society. His adherence to liberal ideals may seem naive to us today, but it highlights just how powerful and attractive concepts of equality before the law were at that time. Of course, slavery was always a stumbling block for liberals, and it was difficult for them to envisage slaves (and especially Africans) as part of the nation. Effective liberal reform would have opened Brazilian society and satisfied many of the aspirations of men like Daniel, for whom Independence offered the prospect of social mobility and a greater say in the organization of their state and their nation.

NOTES

1. Francisco de Sierra y Mariscal, "Idéas geraes sobre a revolução do Brasil e suas consequências," *Anais da Biblioteca Nacional* 43-44 (1920-21): 65.
2. Daniel Gomes de Freitas, "Narrativa dos sucessos da Sabinada," *Publicações do Arquivo do Estado da Bahia* 1 (1937): 275.
3. Robert Dundas, *Sketches of Brazil* . . . (London: John Churchill, 1852), 395.
4. Proclamation, November 14, 1837, *Jornal do Comércio* (Rio de Janeiro), November 27, 1837.
5. *O Sete de Novembro* (Salvador), November 25, 1837.
6. Vice consul to minister to Brazil, Salvador, January 13, 1838, Great Britain, Public Record Office, Foreign Office 13, vol. 143, fol. 187v.
7. *Novo Diário da Bahia*, December 26, 1837.
8. Freitas, "Narrativa," 341.
9. Paulo Cesar Souza, *A Sabinada: A revolta separatista da Bahia (1837)* (São Paulo: Brasiliense, 1987), 49.
10. Freitas, "Narrativa," 269.
11. *Ibid.*, 277.
12. *Ibid.*, 286.

SUGGESTED READINGS

The principal sources on Daniel Gomes de Freitas are his petitions file in Rio de Janeiro's Arquivo Histórico do Exército (D-5-135) and his memoir of the Sabinada Rebellion, "Narrativa dos sucessos da Sabinada," in *Publicações do Arquivo do Estado da Bahia* 1 (1937): 261-333. There are numerous additional references to him scattered through archives in Rio de Janeiro and Salvador and the contemporary press. On the Sabinada see Paulo Cesar Souza, *A Sabinada: A revolta separatista da Bahia (1837)* (São Paulo: Brasiliense, 1987); and Hendrik Kraay, "As Terrifying as Unexpected: The Bahian Sabinada, 1837-38," *Hispanic American Historical Review* 72:4 (November 1992): 501-27. Three English-language monographs provide the essential context for the society in which Daniel lived: Hendrik Kraay, *Race, State, and Armed Forces in Independence-Era Brazil: Bahia, 1790s-1840s* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001); João José Reis, *Slave Rebellion in Brazil: The Muslim Uprising of 1835 in Bahia*, trans. Arthur Brakel (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993); and Roderick J. Barman, *Brazil: The Forging of a Nation, 1798-1852* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1988). Hebe Maria Mattos's suggestive essay, *Escravidão e cidadania no Brasil monárquico* (Rio de Janeiro: Jorge Zahar Editor, 2000), also influenced this chapter.

Agostinho José Pereira

The Divine Teacher*

MARCUS J. M. DE CARVALHO

The story of the Divine Teacher (*Divino Mestre*), Agostinho José Pereira, pairs well with the preceding biography of Daniel Gomes de Freitas. Whereas Daniel might have been a light-skinned mulatto and was from a relatively privileged family, authorities described Agostinho as "black" and, even though he was a freeman, from more humble social origins. Whereas Daniel represented the aspirations of many Brazilians from the middle sectors of urban society, Agostinho gives us a rare glimpse of how some Brazilians of African descent understood events and the language of liberty, equality, and brotherhood that Independence, regional rebellions, and late-eighteenth-century revolutions had evoked. It should be emphasized that the views of these individuals and their compatriots should not be construed as typical of all free poor Afro-Brazilians or middle-class "whites," but they probably did reflect the sentiments of many who shared their backgrounds. Although a variety of viewpoints existed in these communities, certain events or issues could galvanize or split them. For instance, fear of the Portuguese, or Lusophobia (an important component of early Brazilian national identity, much like fear of the British in the United States), could unite the Brazilian-born across racial lines. Fear of slave rebellion or a race war, however, tended to bring Portuguese- and Brazilian-born whites together.

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*Translated by Peter M. Beattie.

Juca Rosa

Spiritual Leader and Healer

GABRIELA DOS REIS SAMPAIO

Juca Rosa drew his authority not from science but from the creole traditions of Brazil's African, indigenous, and European heritages of popular religion, medicine, and magic. In this realm, Juca's black skin enhanced his authority because most Brazilians assumed that people of African descent were by nature closer to the spirit world of magic, which white authorities associated with pagan savagery. A growing number of public officials resented and feared the renown of Juca's practice; they also probably relished, consciously or unconsciously, the fact that he seemed to confirm many of the racist stereotypes that Afro-Brazilians were disbonest, libertine, and superstitious. On his part, Juca sought to use some of these very prejudices as tools to improve his own circumstances while defying other stereotypes that whites held about blacks.

Juca provided services for a wide variety of problems. He not only treated his clients' health but his practice also embraced their emotional, carnal, and worldly desires. Juca's following consisted largely of poor, mostly nonwhite women with dubious claims to respectability, but as his reputation as a faith healer (especially known for his love incantations) grew, ladies from the more privileged classes came to consult him. His very success as a faith healer and reputedly as a lady's man eventually led to his downfall. Accusations that he had seduced white women of high rank brought about a criminal investigation of Juca Rosa. Keep in mind that in the post-Reconstruction U.S. South, such an accusation against a black man would likely lead to a public lynching. In Rio, authorities sought to enforce lines of racial and social status and separation by less violent means. They likely hoped that the public investigation would discredit Juca as a charlatan and shame his wealthy clients for being hoodwinked and seduced by a black man. It would be a lesson for those members of the elite who sought out the services of faith healers.

While this turn of events was a misfortune for Juca, it is a rare bounty for social historians. The testimony of Juca and his followers and the sensationalist newspaper coverage of the scandal provide unique information about the lives, beliefs, and practices of poor Brazilians and how they interacted with members of the elite. They also reveal the sexual, gender, racial, social, and cultural tensions that riveted Brazil as the institution of

slavery began to decline after the end of the international slave trade in 1850. The story reveals both the fascination and revulsion that members of the white elite felt toward Afro-Brazilians and popular cultural practices in an age when scientific reason and method became international touchstones of civilized Western worldviews.

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José Sebastião da Rosa, or Juca Rosa, as he was popularly known, was one of the most important folk healers (*feiticeiros*) in nineteenth-century Brazil. His African-born mother gave birth to Juca in Rio de Janeiro in 1834. He probably learned from her many of the religious rituals he conducted at his house. He lived in downtown Rio, the capital of Brazil's monarchical empire, and grew up amid the city's large population of slave and free people of African descent. Rosa's house became a place where mostly nonwhite members of Rio's working poor went to look for help with problems related to money, love, and illness. But Juca was no stranger to many rich white men and women who showed up at the faith healer's home for advice, spells, and medicines.

In 1870 officials accused Rosa of sexual involvement with a number of rich white women and charged him with charlatanism. He was the favorite subject of the press for months and, due to these newspaper reports as well as courtroom testimony, we can learn much about this intriguing character, the people who sought out his services, and the officials who prosecuted him. This essay will tell his story in relation to the important political, social, and economic transformations of his times.

A PUBLIC SCANDAL

In the last months of 1870 the newspapers of Rio de Janeiro published articles denouncing the mysterious and immoral activities of a famous black *feiticeiro* who had a large number of followers. Under headlines such as "Witchcraft" or "Dark Mysteries," they described the ceremonies held at his house, where, according to reporters, women danced naked to the sound of drums, the leader entered into a trance and spoke in African dialects, and animals were sacrificed during strange rituals. Even worse for journalists was the allegation that Rosa seduced white

women, some of whom were members of important families. Reporters accused the black necromancer of menacing women with his poisons, charlatanism, and bad influence. In their words, lust, immorality, and vices learned from the "barbarian" people of Africa had violated the "sacred" houses of "decent white people."

At the time of his arrest, the healer Juca Rosa was thirty-six years old. His imprisonment had been prompted by an embittered, 20-page, anonymous denunciation that detailed information about him and his followers, including their names and addresses. The chief of police read the unknown author's report and then went to Rosa's house and arrested him without hesitation. However, Juca was a well-known figure. He had been practicing as a healer for many years, at least since the beginning of the 1860s, without being bothered by any authority. It was said that he was protected by important people, powerful politicians, and even some police officials. But in 1870 something happened, or probably many different things happened, and his peaceful existence as a respected healer ended.

The first and most obvious cause of his fall from grace was his reputed sexual liaisons with the wife of an important person, probably a member of the parliament. This unknown political figure became upset enough to denounce Rosa in writing, and he was powerful enough to make sure that the chief of police would put the healer in jail. He also chose the right police officer for the job: Miguel Tavares had become famous for headline law enforcement, especially in cases related to slaves. A scrappy public official whose post gave him police powers as well as those of a public prosecutor, Tavares had even threatened to prosecute masters and mistresses who profited by leading their young female slaves into work as prostitutes. Based on the chief's record, we can believe that any important patron whom Juca Rosa may have had would not easily suborn the ambitious Tavares, a practice that was not uncommon in Brazil at the time. Tavares himself conducted the investigation and instigated criminal proceedings. He kept Juca Rosa in jail during the eight long months of the investigation and trial.

The criminal case resulted in a more than 400-page document, with testimonies from several of Juca's followers. This extraordinary court document makes it possible to learn a lot about the healer's ceremonies, rituals, and mysterious cult. It also provides other clues as to why he was jailed and put on trial. It is important to remember the fundamental importance of the political moment during which the case became a public scandal. Broader changes in Brazilian society shaped the development of Juca Rosa's arrest and trial. By placing his story in this context the historian can put together the different pieces of this complicated puzzle. But

let us start by going to Rosa's house to attend a ceremony and by trying to understand why this Afro-Brazilian healer attracted so many followers from different races and classes.

JUCA ROSA'S CEREMONIES AND HIS FOLLOWERS

On the night of August 14, 1870, a big initiation celebration took place at the house of one of Juca Rosa's most loyal followers, Henriqueta. Like most of Juca Rosa's devotees, Henriqueta was a woman of color. The authorities recorded the race of the women whom Juca Rosa referred to as his "daughters" as "black" or "brown." Henriqueta, however, was also the mother of two children sired by the healer. Records reveal only one white disciple in Juca's coterie, a Portuguese woman named Mariquinhas da Europa. While few white women became part of Juca's inner circle of devotees, various witnesses noted that many white women often went to Rosa's house for consultations and believed in his power. There were also some men who regularly helped Rosa in the ceremonies, played musical instruments, or just attended the rituals. To become a "daughter," each woman had to swear an oath promising to give to the "Father" (Juca Rosa) the guardianship of her spirit as well as her body. These female initiates had to perform certain rituals that included taking herbal baths and making animal sacrifices. They also had to pay a monthly fee to Juca, bring candles and offerings (usually animals and food) to the saints, and give occasional presents to Rosa. This last requirement was not asked for directly by Juca Rosa but was implicit, and the "daughters" would tell every new member that it was necessary, in order to please the "Father."

The August 14 celebration was held for the initiation of Leopoldina into Juca Rosa's ritual family. Leopoldina had visited Rosa a week before at his home to ask him to bring back a sailor whom she was in love with but who had left her. Leopoldina had been directed to consult with Juca Rosa by a fellow seamstress, Mariquinhas da Europa, who happened to be Rosa's favorite "daughter." According to her, Rosa had "as much power as God" and the "ability to get anything that people asked from him." One of Rosa's specialities was love spells, and he told Leopoldina that he could solve her problem, but she would have to become an initiate of his cult first. She agreed and testified that the healer's presence and manners had impressed her. According to Leopoldina and other witnesses, Juca Rosa was a strong, tall black man with lively, penetrating eyes. She and others admitted that they found Juca very attractive. He dressed well, wore jewelry, and had a fancy watch and chain. The mystery that surrounded him aroused in Leopoldina a mix of fear and respect. She had

met several healers before, who were common in Brazil at that time, but none had made her feel the way that Juca did. She started to believe the rumors about him.

When she arrived at Henriqueta's, around thirty people, mostly black and brown women, filled the house. At the end of the living room was an altar covered with a lace tablecloth. On the altar there were images of the Virgin Mary, the Senhor do Bonfim (literally, the lord of the good death, a popular Catholic designation for God), and a crucifix, all lit by candles. In the center of the altar a vase held a root: on getting closer, she saw five or six small daggers stabbed in the big root, in all directions. Later she asked another "daughter" what the root was for, and she was told that it was a spell to make a man sexually impotent. On the same altar, there were also containers and pots filled with different liquids and powders, a large decorated pipe, leaves, talismans, stones, and all kinds of strange objects. In another room, Leopoldina saw some women sitting around a big table where there were glasses of sugarcane brandy and wine; in that room she spied some hens, roosters, pigeons, and a sheep.

After a while, the ceremony really started. Some black men began to play and sing: Joaquim shook a tambourine; Lúcio, Juca Rosa's main assistant, played drums; João Maria scratched a long wooden instrument called a *macumba*. Juca Rosa's followers called him "the chief of the *macumbas*." Another black man led the dancing. When Rosa showed up, everyone made a circle, singing, dancing, and clapping. The "daughters" were barefoot, and some reports claimed they were naked. Leopoldina did not know the words to the songs—to her they sounded like African dialects—but she felt comfortable enough to join in and feel part of the group. Rosa, dressed ceremonially, wore blue velvet pants, a short-sleeved shirt, a velvet hat, but no shoes. Suddenly, he fell down and everybody stopped dancing. He entered into a trance, shaking his body and speaking words that Leopoldina did not understand. The others explained that Juca Rosa had been possessed by spirits who would speak through him. He had "the saint in his head."

In that state, after all of those present had kissed his hands and bowed to him, Rosa turned to Leopoldina. That was a moment of astonishment for her. Impressed by all she had seen and full of respect, she told Rosa her problems and desires. The healer told her to take good care of her body because that would help her "keep all men around" and "make her lover give her everything she wanted." He also gave her a root to always carry with her, worn on her chest, and told her to bring offerings to the spirits: two chickens, a sheep, candles, and oil. She then swore an oath and became an initiate of the cult. She promised to keep secret everything that happened there, to trust the "Father" in all circumstances, and to give him guardianship over her spirit and her body. In return, Juca

Rosa would give her protection against all evil. Later, after being part of the cult for some time, Leopoldina felt stronger and safer; she had a deep faith in the "Father" and tried to do exactly what he told her. She also realized that all the other "daughters" were, like her, Rosa's lovers.

Juca Rosa's incarceration led many of his "daughters" to tell the police much more than their oath to him would have allowed. Very few had the courage to deny their activities to the police chief, and even when they did, they could not sustain the denials for very long. During the interrogations, all of the "daughters" admitted that they were Rosa's lovers—except for one, Mariquinhas, the woman who had introduced Leopoldina to the cult and the only "white" initiate who gave testimony to the court. Her race may have helped Mariquinhas, who probably had the money and influence to resist the pressures of the police inquiry. Later in the case, officials accused all of the "daughters" of being prostitutes, including Mariquinhas, and Juca Rosa of being their pimp. When Leopoldina testified that Rosa had told her to take care of her body in order to "keep all men around," the prosecution concluded that this phrase alluded to prostitution. All of the "daughters" declared that they were seamstresses, the profession most prostitutes claimed when the police arrested them.

For most doctors and lawyers, women such as Leopoldina, Mariquinhas, Henriqueta, Leocádia, Júlia, Emília, and others who gave testimony in the case were certainly "prostitutes," because they were either single or married but not living with their husbands. (Divorce was not legally recognized at the time.) All of these women had lovers. It was clear, moreover, that the "daughters" expected presents and money from their lovers, and that the money was, in most cases, their principal income. But that admission does not necessarily mean that they were not dressmakers too or that they considered themselves prostitutes. These women may have accepted money for sexual favors from time to time, but even some of the men who were their lovers testified that they were not prostitutes. No doubt, standards and practices of morality and status were different among the free poor than among the white elites.

Were the "daughters" prostitutes or dressmakers? This is not the most important question even if we could answer it. Although the interrogation reveals how the poor—both white and especially nonwhite—in the 1870s lived, survived, and loved, few sources reveal what the Brazilian free poor believed, how they resolved problems, and what their values were like. In a racist society based on slave labor dominated politically and economically by a few rich white men, poor free people had to fight hard to survive and to assert their freedom. They searched for ways of avoiding the authorities, who persecuted them and who considered the poor inherently "dangerous." But they also had lighthearted moments,

when they would share with partners their beliefs and construct identities and solidarity.

Juca Rosa's cult demonstrates the importance of religion and faith in the life of African descendants in Brazil. Faith in the spiritual leader made the "daughters" and many others continue to go to Juca's house even when his spells or prayers did not heal them or when their lovers did not return—although many times his magic did work, according to their testimonies. Under police pressure, many of the "daughters" admitted that they were attached to Rosa only because of their fear of their "Father." But their testimony belies their tenacious faith in Rosa. They told the police that despite any fights or disagreements with Rosa, they would always go back to him if they had any problems, physical or emotional. They would follow his prescriptions, pay the fees, and bring the offerings—in short, they would trust him.

Religion, for many African descendants in Brazil, was an essential part of their social life, and it is important to understand that fact in order to better understand the society and the relations between different social groups. For black and poor people in Brazil as well as in many societies in Africa—especially from West Central Africa, the homeland of most Brazilian slaves—religion was a foundation of sociability. It was also how people understood their daily life; it was where they looked for relief from their pains, for cures for their diseases, and for solutions to their problems. In that context, the healer or spiritual leader had a vital role, not only to solve individual problems but also to answer social questions. Such was the case in many societies in Africa and then in Brazil where different religious traditions came together. Belief in magic and witchcraft helped people to shape their understanding of the world and their relationship to others. This strong faith helps us to understand the power of Juca Rosa's influence. His power and fame became so strong that even white people sought his advice. The cultural life of blacks, browns, and whites influenced each other.

Some elements of the experience described by Leopoldina and other "daughters" illuminate the confluence of African and European cultures. In the rituals led by Juca Rosa we find crucifixes and references to Catholic saints, the Virgin Mary, and Senhor do Bonfim as well as roots, stones, powders, liquids, daggers, and alcohol. Europeans had colonized parts of Africa long before they came to America, and Catholic priests had been trying to convert Africans long before they became slaves in Brazil. Thus, when black Africans arrived in Brazilian cities, many already had had some familiarity with the saints and other Catholic traditions. They created new creole habits and rituals that can only be understood within the social and political contexts in which they lived. Understanding something of African and Portuguese religions is a start, but only the context

of cultural transformations that took place in Brazil gives us a clearer picture of what all these things meant to different individuals. For example, court testimony reveals the importance of drums and dance for Juca's trance. In some parts of Africa, drums were fundamental to sorcery, and healers wore hats similar to the one Juca used during his religious rites. Clearly, the "Africanness" of Juca's magic lent it greater legitimacy, but it also borrowed from Iberian Catholic traditions to enhance its potency.

The role of love spells and other necromancy to make men important, so central in Rosa's cult according to his "daughters," is related to the environment in which all those women lived. Men dominated Rio's society, and poor women had very few employment opportunities that enabled them to maintain a household on their own. Respectable Brazilians considered most women wanton who did not live under the protection of a husband, father, or other male relative. They viewed women who married but who later separated from their husbands and lived on their own the moral equivalents of prostitutes.

The limited opportunities for respectable female independence reveal the importance of a leader such as Juca Rosa, and they help to explain why so many of his followers struggled to keep on paying their fees to Juca Rosa. Some "daughters" committed petty crimes to be able to do so. Leocádia, for instance, sold some furniture in her charge that belonged to a rich family. Mariquinhas was sued by a shop for goods bought on credit that she never paid for, and Miguel had almost all of his few belongings taken by the police for not paying rent for several months. In this last case, Miguel was saved at the last minute: his landlord, after seeing how poor he was—and perhaps under one of Rosa's spells—dropped the complaint. These followers of Rosa lived under difficult conditions in which they had little power or room for negotiation, but they still did what they could to pay their obligations to the leader in order to have the "Father's" protection and approval.

FROM THE CASE TO THE CONTEXT

In the mid-1860s, when Juca Rosa was at the height of his fame and had many clients and followers, most of Rio de Janeiro's population was of African descent. Slavery still existed, even though the international slave trade had been abolished in 1850, but most of Rio's black population was composed of free men of color (*pretos livres*) and freedmen (*libertos*). Since 1860 there had been an increase in the number of manumissions in Rio, and the number grew after 1867 as a result of the Paraguayan War. The government had bought slaves at market prices and freed them on the

condition that they serve in the armed forces and fight at the Paraguayan front. Some patriotic masters donated bondsmen to the war effort. After completing their service contracts, these former slaves would become free Brazilian citizens.

In 1849 slaves constituted almost 42 percent of Rio de Janeiro's population: 110,602 slaves out of 266,466 residents. At the time, Rio had the largest urban slave population in the Americas. There were still around 10,800 freedmen, plus around 30,000 *pardos* (brown Brazilians of mixed African and European descent) as well as *pretos livres*. In 1872 the population had only a modest increase from 266,466 to 274,972. However, the number of slaves had diminished dramatically: they formed only 17 percent of the city's population.

This high number of free and freed black people lived mostly in the city's center, the "black city." There, free black and brown Brazilians could afford cheap rented rooms in crowded tenements, called *cortiços* or beehives, where many slaves also lived. Many urban slaves in Brazil lived on their own and paid their masters a regular part of their earnings. It was often very difficult to tell whether most people of color were free or slave in the city's black borough by the way they dressed and looked or by their lifestyle. It was an ideal hiding place for runaway slaves, and members of the mostly white elite considered the "black city" vice-ridden, dirty, and dangerous. Urban reformers at the end of the 1800s and the beginning of the 1900s, yielding to "white fear," targeted major urban reform projects in and around the "black city" to displace these mostly poor black and brown residents from the city's downtown.

The majority of Juca Rosa's followers was composed of blacks who, like him, lived in the "black city." This gritty but lively borough of Rio encompassed the largest concentration of cheap and unsanitary tenements, gambling houses, *bordellos*, and places of Afro-Brazilian worship (*candomblés*). Many *capoeiras*, or men who practiced the uniquely Afro-Brazilian martial arts and who often belonged to urban gangs, also called the "black city" their home. Alongside these street toughs, strumpets, grifters, and shamans dwelt most of the city's poorly paid day laborers who lived in this sector because it was the only housing that they could afford. Among these people were the followers of the city's most renowned faith healer, Juca Rosa.

It is interesting to note that close to that depressed part of town were the cafés, theaters, elegant shops, and even residences of wealthy families and important politicians. Besides the extreme social and economic inequalities that separate groups and social classes, the proximity of the space they occupied at times led to conflicts but at other times to cultural mixing. In Juca Rosa's case, as noted earlier, many rich and elegant ladies frequented his house. There were also some important men

who visited Rosa, a fact that should not surprise us. Similarly, the strong ties between some *capoeiras* and politicians (particularly members of the Conservative Party) were public knowledge. *Capoeiras* served as bodyguards and paramilitary thugs during elections where voting sometimes became a contact sport.

The fears of prosperous and mostly white Rio residents of the danger represented by the strong concentration of blacks in the cities, especially in Rio itself, was ever present during the nineteenth century. Although rich whites interacted with blacks in their everyday lives—especially with black servants living in their homes—at the same time the threat of slave rebellions was constant. This fear prompted the authorities to regulate bondspersons whenever they were not under the watchful eyes of their masters or overseers. It was against the law, for example, for blacks to hold meetings lest they might plan sedition. For this reason, the police often repressed parties, dances, or religious rituals that concentrated large numbers of blacks. The ghost of “Haitianism” had terrified mostly white elites for years and had been an inspiration for many blacks. Slaveholders in Brazil observed with concern many of the efforts made by slaves to obtain their freedom from running away to riots, criminal activity, and everyday strategies of resistance. It was in these years when slavery in Rio had entered a phase of rapid decline that Juca Rosa became rich and powerful.

Politicians discussed the growing pressure of the slaves for their freedom after the Paraguayan War when many ex-slave-veterans came to reside in Rio at war's end. Moreover, the 1871 Free Womb Law would free the children born of slave mothers. For the first time the end of slavery seemed real, and all the dangers and stereotypes that white people had associated with blacks and their presence in society became magnified. The debates about the end of slavery that took on new vigor after the Paraguayan War also were related to Brazil's economic future. What would happen to agriculture without slave labor? Who would work in the fields? How could immigrants be brought in to work on the farms and plantations? And what should be done with the immense number of newly freed blacks, considered immoral and inferior by most white intellectuals and physicians? How could officials manage them when they were released from slavery and able to act without the control of their masters?

Brazilian society was undergoing a crucial moment of change when the police jailed Juca Rosa. To justify the idea of black racial inferiority, new scientific theories were gaining more acceptance. Among the theories of “scientific racism,” North Atlantic social Darwinists apologized for European imperialism by arguing that there was a natural hierarchy of races, which, in most instances, placed northern Europeans on top

and black Africans on the bottom. Social Darwinists tried to explain the inferiority of the black race and in turn justify the repression, discrimination, and subjugation of nonwhites in Brazil and other parts of the world. If slavery was no longer a stable marker of inferior status in Brazil, then scientific racism provided a new way to justify bigotry against blacks. Most advocates of scientific racism believed that miscegenation or race mixture weakened both races by tainting an imagined racial purity. Brazil's long history of race mixture was criticized by a number of North Atlantic travelers who believed that it had condemned this colonial nation to backwardness. These views clouded the hopes of even fervent Brazilian nationalists that their country would one day be united and modern.

This climate of self-doubt about Brazil's racial composition may have heightened interest in the scandal surrounding Juca Rosa. The faith healer's sexual dalliances with rich white women, and especially the wife of an important but unnamed politician, are certainly what initiated the case. But this reason alone does not explain why he was kept in jail for eight months during the investigations, or why the case aroused so much discussion in the newspapers. The Juca Rosa scandal even became the subject for a play. In 1870 the very presence and influence of blacks in the cultural life of whites were being questioned and criticized in new ways. Even for those who defended the end of slavery in the parliament, the press, and the street, the case of an important black man who had influence over not only blacks but also prominent whites (especially women) became much bigger than it would have otherwise.

WHAT HAPPENED TO JUCA ROSA AND WHY?

The parliament approved the 1871 Free Womb Law in the same year that Juca Rosa was condemned for charlatanism. Apparently, he had been operating for many years with police tolerance, as one newspaper reported. He had earned the respect of powerful white men who had protected him from prosecution. His condemnation at that particular moment is certainly related to the intellectual and political debates of his day. Juca Rosa embodied what many whites feared that a society without slavery could bring about. As a socially mobile black man who dressed well and wore expensive jewelry, Juca Rosa defied the stereotypes of black men as poor, unrefined, humble, and pliable. But he had acquired his money and influence by defying conventions important to an emerging generation of police officials, intellectuals, and physicians who were eager to prove scientific theories of racism correct. Juca Rosa's power derived from his reputation as a faith healer who relied on African-influenced

religious practices. All this was bad enough in the eyes of many privileged Brazilians, but his sexual involvement with white ladies was the last straw. His scandal became an explicit example of the bad influence of the "lustful and evil black nature" that many white intellectuals preached against. These authorities fought to preserve white supremacy by trying to eliminate African cultural, social, and genetic influences in Brazil at a time when slavery's decline seemed poised to erode cherished standards of status.

During the second half of the 1800s, most of Brazil's intellectual elites stepped up attacks against what they considered to be the immoral and corrosive influence of black and uneducated people in the realm of customs and habits. Physicians, jurists, writers, politicians, police officials, and others fought to eradicate popular practices that they considered barbaric. One example was the *entrudo*, the rowdy horseplay and mockery associated with pre-Lenten Carnival celebrations that often involved dousing passersby with liquids, including urine. Despite police attempts to end this practice, some members of the elite continued to participate in the *entrudo*—the equivalent of "slumming" to enjoy the thrill of the forbidden and exotic. The police also attempted to suppress Afro-Brazilian *capoeiras*, but many wealthy and influential politicians employed these street-fighting toughs. Many African-influenced religious practices—especially those connected to African traditions such as *festas* (popular street festivals), *batuques* (Afro-Brazilian drums and dance), or Afro-spiritist cults like Juca Rosa's—were suppressed. Measures to stop those practices ranged from the police's direct repression to denunciations in journals, church sermons, and parliamentary speeches.

In the same way, practices of healing that were different from the official "scientific" medicine of Brazil's medical schools came under attack from physicians and public health officials who justified their sometimes more deadly treatments on the basis of "science." Most Brazilians had long relied on faith healers, midwives, and barbers to treat their ailments and attend in dangerous procedures such as childbirth, but in 1850 the government created a special unit—the Junta Central de Higiene Pública—to deal with problems of public health. The entire country, and especially the capital, suffered many serious epidemics, among them yellow fever and cholera. Rio's international insalubrious reputation was bad for business because the city was Brazil's major port. It also deterred foreign immigrants from moving to Brazil and to Rio in particular. During the 1870s, politicians, merchants, and plantation owners began to lobby for government subsidies to attract European immigrants to work in the fields, factories, and shops. This policy dovetailed well with the elites' desire to "whiten" their "national race" in order to ensure that

Brazil's modernization and future would not be blemished by its heritage of race mixture.

After 1850, fighting problems of public health increasingly became synonymous with solving social problems, and physicians played a very important role. Areas where poor and black people lived, like Rio's "black city," tended to attract the habits and diseases that the authorities wanted to eradicate. This was a classic case of blaming the victim for the poverty and misery that racism thrust upon most brown and black Brazilians and those whites too poor to live or make a living elsewhere, but to public health officials it was more a crusade for national salvation. With the support of "science," these officials felt empowered to act in the name of vague ideals of "civilization" and "progress" in order to free the Brazilian nation from the sins of the colonial past. In the 1890s they destroyed tenement housing without providing any alternative for thousands of people and built in their stead parks and broad Paris-style avenues. They attacked the traditions and habits of the population's majority and attempted to force them to adapt to imposed standards of public health. One of the pivotal conflicts was the 1904 Vaccine Revolt, when the parliament passed a law making smallpox vaccination obligatory for all citizens. The law's passage resulted in a citywide riot in Rio, but ultimately the conflict furthered the government's efforts to condemn the practices of popular healers and medicines.

After 1850 the power of physicians started to grow inside the government, and they started a crusade against all kinds of practices, especially those used by poor people, calling everything charlatanism. All over the country, the law subjected different kinds of healers—*curandeiros* and *benzedeiros* (faith healers), *espíritas* (spiritualists), *barbeiros* (barbers), *boticários* (apothecaries), and even foreign doctors without valid diplomas—to legal prosecution and forbade them to practice. Still, the state did not possess the power to enforce these laws. Many Brazilians successfully pressured the authorities to release faith healers who had been arrested, and many local officials refused to carry out these laws because they respected the power of traditional healers. In this context, the presence of a leader such as Juca Rosa in Brazil's capital seemed particularly threatening to the authority of physicians who were trying to persuade their patients of their superiority over their rivals, the "charlatans." The fact that Juca Rosa was prosecuted for charlatanism rather than for pimping is telling in this regard.

As stated in newspapers of the time, Juca Rosa was well known throughout Brazil and even in Europe. For some of his adherents, he had the power to do whatever people asked him, including to cure disease. Many people of that time—blacks and whites, poor and rich—had

faith in Juca's powers and believed that he was capable of performing miracles. Some publicly testified that Juca had cured them of strange illnesses or helped them to ensnare rich lovers or get old lovers back. Others, like Leopoldina, did not have their desires fulfilled. Her lover in the navy never came back to her, but she never lost her faith in the "Father." The "daughters" found ways to pay the fees and attend the ceremonies. Ironically, we know less about how wealthy white ladies viewed Juca Rosa because they had enough influence to avoid testifying about their relationship with the black healer in a public venue. Still, many had risked their names and positions to go to Juca Rosa's house and ask for his advice, and many probably sought out other faith healers after Juca Rosa's arrest. In newspapers, memoirs, chronicles, and other documents, witnesses reported the presence of many rich white ladies in the black healer's house. While their reasons for seeking a black healer's advice were certainly different from those of the poor blacks who were culturally more connected to the practices of Juca Rosa, it is undeniable that the influence of black practices and beliefs reached all classes of Brazilian society. There was no pure "black" culture or "white" culture in Brazil, although some historical actors may have believed that they existed. In Brazil, a mix of African, indigenous, and European beliefs and customs had come together over the centuries.

Even with all his power—Rosa's magic spells, the expensive lawyer he hired for his dramatic courtroom defense, the appeals to the emperor—the "Father" was found guilty. He spent six years in jail and, after his conviction, disappeared from the available documentation. What became of him is a mystery. But his imprisonment was not enough to undermine the importance of black healers or Afro-Brazilian spiritual leaders (*país de santo*), who today still have followers from all social classes.

SUGGESTED READINGS

For more about Juca Rosa and his world, see Gabriela Sampaio, "A história do feiteiro Juca Rosa: Cultura e relações sociais no Rio de Janeiro imperial" (Ph.D. diss., Departamento de História do IFCH/UNICAMP, São Paulo, 2000). On disease and Afro-Brazilian culture, see Sidney Chalhoub, *Cidade febril: Corrições e epidemias na Corte imperial* (São Paulo: Cia das Letras, 1996). On working-class sexuality and the state, see Martha Abreu Esteves, *Meninas perdidas: Os populares e o cotidiano do amor no Rio de Janeiro da Belle Époque* (Rio: Paz e Terra, 1989); Luis Carlos Soares, *Rameiras, Ilhoas, Polacas . . . A prostituição no Rio de Janeiro do século XIX* (São Paulo: Ática, 1992); and Susann Caulfield, *In Defense of Honor: Sexual Morality, Modernity, and Nation*

in *Early-Twentieth-Century Brazil* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2000).

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recognition and support for his efforts to preserve the historic treasures of the colonial boomtown, Ouro Prêto. Soon, however, federal officials, annoyed by Vicente's criticisms, forced out this local preservationist and asserted the authority of the national government over historic sites. Norma and Vicente's vignettes demonstrate how individuals participated in and shaped the cult of Brazilian nationalism.

Geraldo Pereira

Samba Composer and Grifter

BRYAN McCANN

Manifestations of Afro-Brazilian culture evoked starkly ambivalent responses from the mostly white and light-skinned Brazilian authorities and business leaders who dominated the dissemination of cultural products to the broader public. Tolerance and even a nativist appreciation for aspects of Afro-Brazilian religion, dance, martial arts, music, and folkways (mostly practiced on the margins of formal institutions and commerce) gave way from time to time to violent repression. Many Europhile republican officials and intellectuals associated these manifestations of African culture with savagery and backwardness, which needed to be eradicated for Brazil to progress. For them, the complexion of the population not only needed to be "whitened" by subsidizing European immigration, but the tone of the national culture needed to be bleached as well.

During the 1920s and 1930s, a new appreciation of Africa's contributions to the development of a uniquely Brazilian national culture became fashionable among white intellectuals, artists, and consumers. Samba, based on African rhythms, descended from the slums in the hills surrounding Rio to its wealthy downtown. Instead of trying to suppress African cultural influences, political leaders such as President Getúlio Vargas used government funds to promote Carnival parades and the samba music that accompanied them as tourist attractions. The city of Rio was Brazil's cultural and political axis, and its influence increased under Vargas. It is no accident that samba, a musical genre that took its definitive form in Rio, became identified as Brazil's "national" music. Samba was not only good music, but its success was buttressed by federal support and the new technologies of radio and the recording industry, which were centered in the capital. Brazil had a wealth of other musical genres that could have been selected over samba for promotion as the national sound, but these genres mostly came to be identified as "regional" musical traditions.

Geraldo Pereira came from a provincial city to Rio as a young man, in search of a better life. He became celebrated as an archetypical Cartoca (resident of Rio), the malandro (streetwise hustler), and an innovative samba composer. As Bryan McCann's biography of Pereira shows, he never managed to make a fortune from his hard-won fame. As a dark-skinned man from the slums, Pereira's recording career was stunted. Instead, the

mostly white performers who crowned Pereira's catchy tunes and the recording moguls who produced their records enjoyed the financial rewards of his labors. Pereira led the life of a malandro to the hilt: hard drinking, womanizing, fast talking, and street fighting. He often lived from hand to mouth but never failed to dress elegantly. Pereira's life and songs helped to define the iconic image of the malandro and the uniquely Cartocia flavor of Brazil's "national" music.

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Malandros are like sharks of the asphalt: if they stop moving, they die. During the peak years of their circulation, from the 1920s through the early 1950s, they moved in the interstices of Rio de Janeiro, sliding back and forth between the underworld and the world of law-abiding citizens, between poverty and the middle class, between night and day. They gathered in the dancehalls, cafés, and corner bars of the city and scattered in the back alleys of its red light zones. Dressed in the most dashing attire—a pressed linen suit, a natty straw hat, patent leather shoes with spats—they moved with rhythm, grace, and flair. They strove to remain one step ahead of the police who hounded them, the women who suffered for their broken promises, and the creditors who held their worthless debts. Geraldo Pereira was the model of a *malandro*, and this was his world. As he cruised the streets of the city he wrote, sang, and peddled sambas that translated this world into rhythm and melody, revealing its intricacies and its dilemmas with perfect economy and arresting insight. At the age of thirty-seven, a single punch from a rival *malandro* knocked him cold on the sidewalk outside a downtown bar. He died days later.

To backtrack a little: the *malandro*, or rogue, is an iconic figure of modern Brazilian life. The term apparently comes from an Italian word for petty thief or brigand. In the early decades of the twentieth century in Rio, it came to signify a man who lived on the margins of the law, surviving by his wits in the brothels and gambling dens of the city. The stereotypical *malandro* was black or of mixed race and a sharp-dressed, heart-breaking hustler. He was associated with samba from the early stages of the genre's growth. As samba evolved in the 1920s from a ludic, impromptu form played by amateurs for a group of onlookers into a commercial, composed form played by professionals for a paying audience, sambas about *malandros*, or in the voice of *malandros*, became a staple of

the genre. Indeed, it was samba that turned the *malandro* from mere stereotype into cultural icon. It was also samba that gave the *malandro* his ambiguity—he was disdained by elites and bureaucrats and alternately feared and admired by the members of the lower orders. To residents of the city's growing *favelas*—the hillside shantytowns that were spreading rapidly over Rio's sheer granite peaks—the *malandro* could be a powerful symbol of the evasion of authority, a feat much to be admired among the illegal squatters who were generally treated as natural criminals by the authorities.

To a young man who had traded rural poverty for urban poverty, who could not suppress his vaulting ambition to move in higher circles, and who discovered in himself a marvelous inclination for samba, the *malandro* was an enormously seductive figure. This pull goes a long way toward explaining Geraldo Pereira's studied *malandragem*, or *malandro* practices. Pereira was not a natural-born *malandro*—that creature does not exist. Instead, he sought to give flesh to the icon of the period's sambas, including his own. In the process, he drank, danced, and hustled himself into an early grave, but not without leaving behind some seventy sambas, including a dozen that figure among the genre's all-time greats and that marked an important stage in its evolution.

TO THE METROPOLIS

Geraldo Pereira was born in Juiz de Fora, Minas Gerais, in 1918. Today, Juiz de Fora is one of Brazil's leading provincial industrial cities, but at that time it was a dusty rural outpost largely controlled by local land barons. Pereira's family was of the kind who depended on such patrons for sustenance and security and who pledged their labor and their votes in return. Pereira later recounted that in his childhood he worked as a *candeieiro de boi*, or cattle drover, leading the herd from corral to pasture on the dirt paths of Minas. If he attended school in Juiz de Fora, he had little to show for it. By all accounts, he was illiterate when he arrived in Rio de Janeiro.¹

He came sometime between 1929 and 1931, following his older brother Mané, his mother's child from a previous union, who had migrated to the city years earlier. Mané had established himself in Mangueira, a *favela* just north of downtown and one of the early strongholds of samba (a distinction it still maintains). He arrived at a moment when Mangueira, the city surrounding it, the genre of samba, and Brazil itself were undergoing transformations that would mark them profoundly. In the realm of high politics, Getúlio Vargas in 1930 led a coup that brought to a close a long-running political confabulation between the

landowners of São Paulo and Minas Gerais and that initiated Vargas's own long chokehold on the presidency. He would remain in office until 1945, presiding over the dictatorial Estado Novo between 1937 and 1945, and would later return as elected president from 1950 until his suicide in office in 1954. Vargas brought a centralizing, industrializing energy to his long tenure, attempting to transform Brazil from agricultural exporter into modern industrial giant. His efforts in this regard did not entirely succeed, but they did help to modernize Rio—the capital until 1959—and make it more than ever the bureaucratic and cultural center of the country.

Rio failed utterly to reckon with the unforeseen consequences of its modernization—the unplanned, unregulated *favelas*, populated primarily by rural migrants such as Pereira who were drawn to the city by its promise of opportunity. Upon arrival, they found that employment was hard to come by, and the pay insufficient to fulfill any aspirations of an apartment in the city when they could find it. Mangueira, for example, was surrounded by a glass factory, a hat factory, and a ceramic factory, all of which depended on the labor of the *favelados* and none of which paid common workers enough to live anywhere else. The *favela* became almost a captive labor pool for such industries as well as for the unskilled occupations of the growing city's service sector—delivery boy, seamstress, shoeshine boy, *para para qualquer obra* (jack of all trades).

Samba, in the meantime, was going through its own transformation, and it drew on the same pool of talent. In the late 1920s a group of young, untrained *sambistas* from the neighborhood of Estácio, just across the valley from Mangueira, tinkered with the samba rhythm, emerging with an infectious 2/4 swing that lent itself to syncopated percussion and brief, catchy melodies. Their sambas were simple enough to be learned, played, and sung by almost anyone, making them perfect for Rio's many *blocos*, or informal Carnival parade bands. At the same time, the Estácio composers decided to turn their own *bloco* into something more formal and permanent and founded the samba school of Deixa Falar, or Let Them Talk. Other neighborhoods began their own samba schools, and these became the principal attractions of the city's increasingly spectacular Carnival parade. Mangueira's foremost samba school, Estação Primeira da Mangueira (First Station of Mangueira), quickly became one of the largest and best organized.

The growth of the broadcasting and recording industries signalled even more profound transformations for samba. Around the same time that Geraldo Pereira arrived in Rio, the multinational recording companies RCA Victor and Odeon established affiliates in Rio. The city already had a handful of radio stations, which were quickly growing more

commercial, more professional, and more dedicated to promoting popular music. Above all, they sought talent among the young performers of the city's hottest music, samba—with one important reservation. In the 1930s and through most of the 1940s, radio and the recording studios were limited to white and nearly white Brazilians. This restriction was neither a policy nor an acknowledged practice, but the expression of a deep-seated and covert racism that limited the opportunities of black Brazilians at every turn. Dark-skinned musicians such as Geraldo Pereira and his closest peers might play on records or in radio backup bands, but they would not be stars, at least for the time being. As a result, the composers of Estácio and Mangueira were far more likely to sell their sambas to white singers than to taste fame and fortune themselves.

SANTO ANTONIO

Much was made at the time of the distinction between *cidade*, the city, and *morro*, the hill, or *favela*. The *cidade* stood for order, wealth, and work, while in the vision of most elites the *morro* stood for chaos, poverty and idleness. The racial overtones of these stereotypical characterizations were inescapable: in the discourse of *cidade* and *morro*, the *cidade* was figured as white and the *morro* as black, or more generally Afro-Brazilian. In truth, Rio's *favelas* were home to a diverse population but were certainly predominantly black and brown. If the discourse of *cidade* and *morro* tinged *favelados* with the label of idlers, it also gave them cultural capital. But the *morro*, with its all-night samba jams, its communal intimacy, its old women from Bahia—the keepers of African traditions—also stood for play, spirit, and deep cultural roots. These qualities became highly prized among *morro* residents themselves, who looked upon Carnival, and samba in general, as an opportunity to display these attributes before the stodgy lower city.

The *morro*'s separation from the *cidade* also permitted the rise of local strongmen who filled the gaps of commerce, justice, and rule. Geraldo's brother Mané was one such figure, directing local affairs in Santo Antonio, a section of Mangueira. (The *favela* itself was already the size of a bustling town, with its own discrete neighborhoods.) Mané owned a bar that served beer and *cachaça* to the residents of Santo Antonio. He built and rented out several shacks in the neighborhood. (*Favela* life, unregulated though it was, did not necessarily free residents from the burden of rent.) He loaned money, charged interest, and sent enforcers when the payments were delayed. And he mediated neighborhood disputes, encouraging reluctant grooms to keep the implicit promises they had made

to their "dishonored" conquests. In the absence of formal justice, Mané's decrees were more or less binding. Residents of his patch of turf either conformed or left.

Geraldo Pereira thus arrived in Mangueira impoverished but with a powerful patron on the hill. Mané quickly put his brother to work in the bar and to selling vegetables door to door in the neighborhood. Pereira, for his part, took every opportunity to flee from his brother's watchful eye, preferring to spend his time instead taking in the sambas performed by a local *conjunto*, or regular group. He attended elementary school, desultorily. Outside of school, however, he showed a tremendous ambition to learn, convincing neighborhood residents to teach him to read. A few years after his arrival, he also studied guitar with a local composer, quickly absorbing enough to start composing his own sambas and then leaving off his training. Guitar would remain for him primarily a composition tool rather than a means of expression.

By 1937, Pereira was spending a great deal of his time hanging out in the *quadra*—a kind of open dance floor and training space—of the samba school Unidos da Mangueira, which briefly shared the hill with the better known Estação Primeira. Unidos da Mangueira was based right in Santo Antonio, and its *quadra*, like those of most samba schools, served as a community center. Here, Pereira learned the methods of the school's composers, testing out his own first attempts at rhyming quatrains in improvised sambas.

He also undertook the far more unusual task of producing his own play in the school's *quadra*. If inventing a few samba verses was almost an expected rite of passage for the young *favelado*, writing plays was only slightly more common than playing polo. Theater in Brazil was strictly a middle-class phenomenon. Geraldo Pereira, however, produced a play set in the *favela* that spoke intimately of its conflicts. No script survives, and it seems likely that Pereira never wrote any formal dialogue, preferring to create a rough plot and to let his actors—friends from the neighborhood—improvise their parts. The sketch concerned a young *malandro* whose girlfriend, returning to the *favela* from her daily work as a maid in the city, is beaten by another man. Outraged by this affront to his honor, the *malandro* confronts his rival and shames him. Not surprisingly, Pereira took the leading role for himself.

The plot established several of the themes that Pereira would continue to explore in his samba compositions. The young woman's work takes her out of the *favela* and thus exposes her to danger. The *malandro* reacts possessively but entirely without compassion—what angers him is not that his girlfriend has been beaten, but that another man has encroached on his territory. Relying on a combination of physical force

and verbal agility, the *malandro* then asserts his power and makes his rival look like a fool.

The production in the *quadra* closed with the cast singing a Pereira samba recounting the plot, largely from the perspective of the *malandro*. Several years later, Pereira sold the samba, "Na Subida do Morro" (Going Up the Hill), to the singer Moreira da Silva, who recorded a successful version that added his own impromptu verses to Pereira's original lyrics. These lyrics are extraordinarily violent in their description of the *malandro's* confrontation with his rival, but this description is ambiguous: it is impossible to tell whether the lyrics recount a bloody beating or are merely threats and boasting. This ambiguity is itself a key to Pereira's work, which frequently alludes both to the power of language as a weapon and to its slippery nature. The *malandro's* hustle, in this work, is a confidence game that depends on his stylish and powerful image and above all on his silver tongue.²

Pereira never again tried his hand at playwrighting or production (although he did appear several times as an actor). His early venture in the theater, however, reveals his ambition to make his mark in some way. His potential avenues for success were few. It must have been clear to him that a job in one of the factories surrounding Mangueira would lead nowhere. He could become a boss on the *morro* like his brother, but the endless responsibilities of that course did not suit him. He could aim for a job in the lower ranks of the expanding civil service, an opportunity for occupational respectability. This he tried, working in the stockroom of the city administration's Schools Department, until he concluded that the job's demands of attendance and punctuality outweighed its security and benefits. Or he could attempt to parlay his musical ability and his imagination into success as a *sambista*, beyond Santo Antonio and Mangueira, in the city below.

FROM THE PRAÇA TIRADENTES TO THE CAFÉ NICE

The greater population of Rio de Janeiro never heard of Pereira's play, but in Santo Antonio it was a hit. Alerted to Pereira's growing reputation, the directors of Estação Primeira soon seduced him away from Unidos. Pereira became one of a stable of extraordinarily talented *sambistas* at the larger school, and his name would forever be linked to its tradition. Unidos dissolved several years later, essentially swallowed up by its neighbor.

Pereira's association with Estação Primeira brought him into contact for the first time with the music market. Composers such as Cartola,

one of the founders of Estação Primeira, were regularly approached by white singers with access to radio shows and to record companies who were looking for material. At times, these singers bought compositions outright, registering the copyrights in their own names. More frequently, they gave at least some credit to the real composer, registering themselves as "collaborators." This was business as usual, and no one at the time looked upon it as exploitation.

Indeed, middle-class composers occasionally engaged in the same sorts of practices, despite their greater access to the music market. For most composers, the goal was to get one's material before the public in any way possible, letting copyrights take care of themselves. This practice was a rational response to the nature of the market. Although Getúlio Vargas had done a great deal to strengthen copyright protections in Brazil, helping to make music a viable industry, the payment of royalties was still extremely unreliable. Everyone knew that only the big-name singers got rich in music, by selling tens of thousands of records and demanding high performance fees.

The relaxed attitude of many composers toward copyrights also reflected the transition of popular music from pastime to profession. Not so long ago, samba had been a collective activity and its refrains had derived from multiple, anonymous sources. As with every popular genre, many of the early recorded samba hits were slightly more polished versions of these urban folk creations. By the late 1930s samba was already well on its way to becoming an art of individual stars and established authorship, but it still retained enough of the collective spirit of its origins to make rigid adherence to the idea of individual intellectual property unlikely. For a composer on the *morro*, as a result, trading copyrights of dubious value for an immediate payment equivalent to perhaps a month's minimum salary seemed like not a bad deal at all.

Geraldo Pereira got his first break in the music market late in 1939, at the age of twenty-one, when the singer Roberto Paiva recorded "Se Você Sair Chorando" (If You Leave Crying), a samba that Pereira had co-written with Nelson Teixeira. Pereira collaborated with nearly twenty different composers over the course of his career, and that collaboration ranged from the nominal participation of famous singers to true mutual authorship. This helps to explain the lack of coherence in his work, which varies widely in subject matter, perspective, melodic approach, and quality. The best of his compositions bear the unmistakable mark of his genius for incisive portraits of daily life in the marginal neighborhoods of Rio de Janeiro, rich in the slang of the *favelas* and with a singular melodic buoyancy. "Se Você Sair Chorando" does not fall into this category—it is undistinguished and formulaic. Paiva was a second-rank singer, not

the type who could make a hit out of ordinary material, and the samba was not a great success.

Pereira was thrilled that the tune was recorded but disillusioned when it brought him neither fortune nor fame. What it gave him was an entrance into the world of samba in the *cidade* and its peculiar routines, quite different from those on the *morro*. He began hanging out around the Praça Tiradentes, a downtown plaza surrounded by nightclubs and theaters that staged musical revues. The sidewalk on one side of the plaza was known as the *calçada de fome*, or walk of hunger, a parody of Hollywood's *calçada de fama*, or walk of fame, because of the penniless composers who gathered there to peddle their sambas to singers, revue producers, and nightclub managers. Pereira became a regular on the *calçada de fome*, butonholing the star singers with whom he became increasingly familiar. Eager to come across as something other than an impoverished *favelado*, he dressed always in a pressed suit and shirt, sprinkled himself with cologne, and manicured his nails. He also continued to study the elements of writing, taking great pains to avoid the embarrassment—common among *favela* composers—of presenting a samba with spelling and grammar errors.

The popular singers, for their part, were in a much better bargaining position, but they too were always on the lookout for talent, and Pereira clearly had it in abundance. By late 1940, Ciro Monteiro and Moreira da Silva, the two men who would become Pereira's greatest interpreters, had already recorded his work. Monteiro was white, and Moreira da Silva was of mixed racial descent, with fair skin. Both had greater access to the music market than the dark-skinned Pereira, who dreamed of his own singing career. To be fair, both were also superior singers: Ciro Monteiro had a gift for hitting the perfect emphasis on Pereira's unusual melodies, playing with the beat with relaxed verve. And Moreira da Silva acted the part of the *malandro* with consummate flair, embodying the rough-and-tumble characters of Pereira's work.

As Pereira became better known in the early 1940s, he spent less time on the *calçada de fome* and more at the tables of the Café Nice, located a few blocks away on stately Rio Branco avenue, the city's main thoroughfare. The Nice was known as the samba stock exchange: it was where composers, performers, and radio producers gathered to talk shop, trade information, and collaborate. At the Nice, white middle-class composers and ambitious *favelados* such as Geraldo Pereira came together on roughly equal terms, a rarity in the context of Rio's implicit racial hierarchy.³ With his good looks, his smooth talk, and his enormous talent, Pereira did well for himself in this environment. He was soon finding singers to record his work at the rate of about four sambas per year,