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**Brotherhoods of Their Own: Black Confraternities and Civic Leadership in
São Paulo, Brazil, 1850-1920**

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M.A., University of Kansas, 2003

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An abstract of
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Abstract

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By Alicia L. Monroe

This dissertation investigates the issue of social relations among slaves, freed people, and free people of color based on analysis of records from Afro-Brazilian confraternities and black secular associations from 1850 to 1920 in São Paulo, Brazil. The project seeks to examine the circumstances and social values that governed patterns of interaction among those who participated in predominantly Afro-Brazilian associational life. Confraternities, known in Portuguese as *irmandades* and *confrarias*, functioned as devotional and mutual aid societies, which connected Africans and Brazilian born blacks in networks of mutuality beyond family ties. Nineteenth century Catholic devotional societies and post-abolition secular societies which included a Masonic lodge, an emancipation commemoration group, and beneficence societies served as unique social and institutional spaces where segments of the local African diaspora population collectively created alternative modes of blackness that went beyond the negative racial stereotypes associated with African origins. Afro-Brazilians utilized these institutional spaces to challenge their marginalization by performing their belonging in the Catholic Church and in wider civil society. Black confraternity participation in state, civic commemorations as well as religious holidays emphasized black belonging to the local municipality, the province, and ultimately the nation. Voluntary Afro-Brazilian religious and secular associations became critical sites of socialization where corporate black identities could be imagined and fashioned in ways that supported aspirations of social autonomy and societal inclusion.

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TRANSLATION

All translations from Portuguese to English are my own unless otherwise noted. I have selected to maintain the orthography of individual and corporate names as given in original documentation in this text. Throughout this dissertation, São Paulo refers to the city, not the province unless otherwise noted.



Brotherhoods of Their Own: Black Confraternities and Civic Leadership in São Paulo, Brazil, 1850-1920

That which I remember, I have.

---author, João Guimarães Rosa¹

Bondspeople who stepped into Catholic churches in eighteenth and nineteenth century Brazil for baptisms, funerals, or daily masses were immediately surrounded by a multitude of figures. Whether they crossed church thresholds in the service of their masters or of their own volition, they saw gold embossed cherubs, a tortured dying Christ, and a plethora of likenesses of saints, as incense wafted through the air. Four particular saints, out of the many, went on to inspire the devotion of generations in the city of São Paulo, Brazil. Our Lady of the Rosary, an incarnation of Mary the mother of Jesus, Saint Benedict, Saint Efigênia, and Saint Elesbão served as patron saints for three Afro-Brazilian confraternities by the end of the eighteenth century. Slaves, *libertos*, and free people of color gathered and shared precious financial resources to honor and venerate these patrons in the Brotherhood of Our Lady of the Rosary of Black Men (Irmandade de Nossa Senhora do Rosário dos Homens Pretos de São Paulo) established in 1711;² the Brotherhood of Saint Efigênia and Saint Elesbão of Black Men of São Paulo (Irmandade de Santa Efigênia e São Elesbão de Homens Pretos de São Paulo)

¹ João Guimarães Rosa, (O que lembro, tenho). This quote is taken from the series introduction of the Applause Collection (Coleção aplauso) written by Hubert Alquéres, Director, Imprensa Oficial de São Paulo in Roberto Nogueira, *A Carroça do sonho e os saltimbancos: memória da carroça de ouro* (São Paulo: Imprensa Oficial de São Paulo, 2010), 8.

² Raul Joviano de Amaral, *Os pretos do Rosário de São Paulo: subsidios históricos*, 2nd ed. (São Paulo: João Scortecci Editora, 1991), 72; and Arquivo da Curia Metropolitana de São Paulo, Compromisso da Irmandade de Nossa Senhora do Rosário dos Homens Pretos de São Paulo, 1778, 01-03-08. In subsequent references the Arquivo da Curia Metropolitana de São Paulo is cited as (ACMSP).

established in 1758;³ and the Brotherhood of Saint Benedict of São Paulo (Irmandade de São Benedito de São Paulo) established in 1772.⁴

The men and women who participated in these devotional associations called *irmandades* (brotherhoods) or *confrarias* (confraternities) came from diverse backgrounds.⁵ In the black brotherhoods of São Paulo, sodality leaders and members had a range of experiences that reached from enslavement to freedom and from poverty to privilege. The leadership of black confraternities, as one might expect, came from sectors of the Afro-Brazilian population that had come to obtain some degree of financial security, since holding a leadership position required the payment of fees that equaled at least three to four times the amount paid by general members. In the year 1875, for example, the Brotherhood of Saint Benedict required a \$640 réis entrance fee and annual dues in the amount of \$320 réis for regular members. Members who joined the executive board of the sodality paid 2\$000 mil-réis at the time of entry into the position and 1\$000 mil-réis for annual dues.⁶

³ ACMSP, Uncatalogued Folder, Santa Efigênia, Nsra da Conceição, No. 2, Compromisso 1859.

⁴ Arquivo de Estado de São Paulo, Sociedades Civis, Estatuas/Compromissos, Irmandade de São Benedito da Cidade de São Paulo, (1861), 1/02/1896, C10388. In subsequent references the Arquivo do Estado de São Paulo is cited as (AESP).

⁵ In Portuguese *irmandades* and *confrarias* are synonyms. *Novo dicionário aurélio da língua portuguesa*, 3rd ed. (Curitiba: Editora Positivo, 2004). Brotherhoods or confraternities are distinguished from Third Orders, which may also have lay members, but which usually have more stringent member requirements for comportment and which are usually linked to first or second orders of avowed priests of a monastery or convent. For discussion of lay organization relations to church hierarchy in Brazil see Thomas Bruneau, *The Church in Brazil: Politics of Religion* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1982), 11-15; and for Spanish America see John Chance and William Taylor, "Cofradías and Cargos: An Historical Perspective on Meso-American Civil-Religious Hierarchy," *American Ethnologist* 12:1 (February 1985): 1-26. For third order guideline examples see, AESP, Sociedades Civis, Estatuas/Compromissos, Ordem Terceira de Nossa Senhora do Carmo de São Paulo, 14/10/1893, C10372; Sociedades Civis, Estatuas/Compromissos, Venerável Ordem Terceira de São Francisco, 07/07/1894, C10387.

⁶ AESP, Sociedades Civis, Estatuas/Compromissos, Irmandade de São Benedito da Cidade de São Paulo, (1861), 1/02/1896, C10388. Executive committee members of the Brotherhood of Saint Benedict could also opt to pay a one-time fee of 20\$000 mil-réis to serve a perpetual member of the board, which exempted them from any additional dues. Capitulo 1, Art.3, (Se quiserem ser Irmãos ordinarios, pagarão de entrada 640 réis e 320 réis d'annual; se quiserem ser Irmãos de Meza perpetuos, pagarão 2\$000 d'entrada e 1\$000 d'annual...Se porem quiserem ficar totalmente remidos d'annuaes e encargos, darão 20\$000 réis por uma

The Brotherhood of Saint Ephigênia and Saint Elesbão had the lowest cost membership fees of a black sodality in the city. The association simply required \$480 réis upon entry, and \$480 réis in annual dues.⁷ The Brotherhood of Our Lady of the Rosary represented the most expensive black confraternity in the city to join. The sodality required an entrance fee of 1\$000 mil-réis and annual dues of \$640 réis; board members did not have a special entrance fee cost, but they paid 10\$000 mil-réis in annual fees.⁸ The disparity between the fees paid by regular members and executive officers was significant, as was the variance of the dues charged by each sodality.

In São Paulo, a segment of the Afro-Brazilian population chose to congregate with others across lines of wealth in order to build social and civic spaces under the auspices of black confraternities, where members could participate in and patronage religious and cultural activities. The financial outlays required of sodality leaders indicates that black brotherhoods linked wealthier Afro-Brazilians to the wider black populace in the urban enclaves where the associations met. Historian A.J. R Russell-Wood noted that “Statutes of black and mulatto brotherhoods...usually ruled that all members of the governing body be freedmen...” since it was felt “...they [freedmen]

só vez.) The entrance fee of 2\$000 mil-reis paid by executive committee members represented the equivalent of a daily wage for skilled artisans providing specialized manual labor. For discussion of lower sector wage earning in the 1860s and 1870s, see Thomas Holloway, *Policing Rio de Janeiro: Repression and Resistance in a Nineteenth-Century City* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1993), 235; and Sandra Lauderdale Graham, *Caetana Says No: Women's Stories from a Brazilian Slave Society*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 130-131. Graham details the inventory of Ignacia Delfina Wernek in 1858 and states that 1\$000 réis equaled .52 U.S. dollars in 1861.

⁷ ACMSM, Uncatalogued Folder, Santa Efigênia: Nsra da Conceição, No. 2, Compromisso 1859, Capítulo 1, (Todas as pessoas que quiserem ser Irmãos ou Irmãs desta Santa Irmandade deverão dar de entrada huma pataca e meia de annuaes.) A pataca is a silver coin worth 320 réis.

⁸ ACMSM, Compromisso da Irmandade de Nossa Senhora do Rosário dos Homens Pretos de São Paulo, 1871, microfilm, 2002, Capítulo 1, Art.2.1, (Uma vez aceitos na Irmandade inscriptos todos os irmãos são indistinctamente obrigados: A pagarem no acto da inscrição uma joia de um milréis; como annuaes...a quantia de seiscentos e quarenta réis...) Capítulo 7, (Aos Irmãos de Meza incumbe...pagarem uma joia de dez mil réis no acto de serem empossados de seus cargos.)

would be better able to exercise authority over their colleagues, but also they would be in a better position to bear the financial responsibilities of public service.”⁹

Three men who participated in black confraternities in nineteenth century São Paulo exemplified this pattern. One officer, Marcelino Alves da Cruz,¹⁰ owned a small transportation business consisting of various carts and coaches in addition to a shop on the Rua dos Bambus where he sold groceries.¹¹ Another, Aleixo Penteado Leite, a former slave,¹² sold “*tabaco cangica*,” a sweetened tobacco product used for smoking and chewing that was extremely popular along the coast of West Africa, in his shop on the Rua de São José in the city center.¹³ A final leader, Raimundo José Guilherme,¹⁴ whose

⁹ A.J.R. Russell-Wood, *The Black Man in Slavery and Freedom in Colonial Brazil* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1982), 140; for a suggestive individual example of this pattern see Zephyr Frank, *Dutra’s World: Wealth and Family in Nineteenth Century Rio de Janeiro* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico, 2004), 124; Antonio Dutra, the subject of Frank’s study, was a member and signer of the 1831 organizational charter (*compromisso*) of the Brotherhood of Our Lady of the Rosary and Saint Benedict of Rio de Janeiro.

¹⁰ Marcelino Alves da Cruz served as the organizational president of the Brotherhood of Our Lady of the Rosary of Black Men of São Paulo in 1844 and 1854; see Amaral, *Os pretos do Rosário*, 2nd ed., 156. He also served as a board member of the Brotherhood of Santa Efigênia and Saint Elesbão in 1864 and 1868. See ACMSP, Irmandade de Santa Efigênia e Santo Elesbão, Livro de Atas, 1862-1885, 04-02-28.

¹¹ See Maria Luzia Ferreira de Oliveira, *Entre a casa e armazém: relações sociais e experiência da urbanização, São Paulo, 1850-1900* (São Paulo: Alameda, 2005), 40-41, for evidence of Cruz as the owner of a small transportation business; and Antonio José Baptista de Luné, *Almanak da Provincia de São Paulo para 1873* organizado e publicado por Antonio Jose Baptista de Luné e Paulo Delfino da Fonseca (São Paulo: Imprensa Oficial do Estado; Arquivo do Estado, 1985), 127; (Marcellino Alves da Cruz was listed under the category of “Armazens de Molhados e Generos do Paiz”). The transportation business ownership information for Cruz found in the work of Oliveira is taken from her data set of post-mortem inventories.

¹² Aleixo Leite Penteado joined the Brotherhood of Saint Benedict in 1851 as a slave and by 1860 had gained his freedom, in addition to serving as a board member of the confraternity. See ACMSP, Irmandade de São Benedito, Livro de Assentamento dos Irmãos, 1846-1896, 02-02-07. He also served as the organizational president of the Brotherhood of Our Lady of the Rosary of Black Men of São Paulo in 1860 and 1870; see Amaral, *Os pretos do Rosário*, 2nd ed., 157. Finally, he belonged to the Brotherhood of Santa Efigênia and Saint Elesbão where he acted as an executive board member in 1864 and 1868. See ACMSP, Irmandade de Santa Efigênia e Santo Elesbão, Livro de Atas, 1862-1885, 04-02-28.

¹³ Luné, *Almanak da Provincia*, 126; (Aleixo Leite Penteado was listed under the category of “Fabricas de Tabaco Cangica”). *Tabaco cangica* served as a commodity for trade to secure slaves and was especially popular on the West African coast; see Michiel Baud and Kees Koonings, “A lavoura dos pobres: Tobacco Farming and the Development of Commercial Agriculture in Bahia, 1870-1930,” *Journal of Latin American Studies* 31, no. 2 (May 1999): 288.

¹⁴ Raimundo José Guilherme joined the Brotherhood of Saint Benedict in 1839 as a regular member and he served as the “King” (Rei) of the patron saint’s festival in 1852-1853; see ACMSP, Irmandade de São Benedito, Livro de Assentamento dos Irmãos, 1846-1896, 02-02-07. He belonged to the Brotherhood of Santa Efigênia and Saint Elesbão where he acted as an executive board member beginning in the 1860s; ACMSP, Irmandade de Santa Efigênia e Santo Elesbão, Livro de Atas, 1862-1885, 04-02-28. Guilherme

profession is unknown, managed to garner high standing among his peers, evidenced by the fact he served as godparent for at least five enslaved children between the years of 1838 and 1858.¹⁵ While these men undoubtedly spent hours of their time and portions of their resources to sustain their livelihoods, they also dedicated time and funds to support black confraternities in the city from the 1850s to the 1870s.¹⁶ These men committed significant amounts of hard earned money to participate in religious societies dedicated to the worship and veneration of patron saints.

These three brotherhood leaders, who shared the luxury of achieving a measure of financial security for themselves came from extremely varied backgrounds. Cruz, the grocer, was born to a married freed black couple in São Paulo. His mother, Paula Fernandes and his father, João Alves Torres lived in the parish of Saint Ephigênia, the second most populous parish in the city.¹⁷ Leite, the cigarette and cigar maker, was born as a slave in the hinterland of the city in the rural parish of Nossa Senhora do Ó (Our Lady of Ó) to Maria Penteado who was from Macahé, a rural town situated in the northern part of the neighboring province of Rio de Janeiro.¹⁸ He was owned by a local priest, Manoel Joaquim Leite Penteado and acquired his freedom by the 1860s.¹⁹ Finally,

also served as a board member for the Rosary Brotherhood's revised organizational statute written in 1870 and approved in 1871. See ACMSP, *Compromisso da Irmandade de Nossa Senhora do Rosário dos Homens Pretos de São Paulo*, 1871, microfilm, 2002.

¹⁵ ACMSP, *Livros de batismo, Sé, Escravos*, 03-02-13; (1838-Raimundo, Antonio; 1841-Maladias; 1842-Benedito, 1858-Rosa).

¹⁶ Confraternity members participated in sodalities across the city. The Brotherhood of Our Lady of the Rosary of São Paulo and the Brotherhood of Saint Benedict were located in the center of the city in the parish of Sé from (1711-1906) and (1772-1905) respectively. The Brotherhood of Saint Ephigênia and São Elesbão (1758-1890) was located in the parish of Our Lady of the Conception of Saint Ephigênia (Nossa Senhora do Conceição de Santa Ephigênia), which sat adjacent to the parish of Sé to the west.

¹⁷ ACMSP, *Livro de casamentos, Santa Efigênia*, 05-03-29, (19 de janeiro de 1845).

¹⁸ ACMSP, *Livro de casamentos, Sé*, 03-02-17, (9 de dezembro de 1872).

¹⁹ ACMSP, *Irmandade de São Benedito, Livro de Assentamento dos Irmãos*, 1846-1896, 02-02-07; and *Livro de Assentamento dos Irmãos (cativos)*, 1846-1878, 02-02-18.

Raimundo José Guilherme, the godfather favorite, had African origins. He was born in Africa, and church records note him as having “Congo” origins.²⁰

The men of our story emphasize the variety of circumstances and places of origin from which black confraternity leaders came. In their lifetimes, these men, like millions of other people dispersed through or as a result of the African diaspora, crossed barriers of language and culture, often oceans, provinces, parishes, and ultimately lines of status as they assembled as freemen with the enslaved.²¹ This study of the social context and activities that brought the poor and the more privileged together in black confraternities will also work to document the ways wealth factored into patterns of interaction among self-designated blacks in voluntary associations through individual and collective experiences of slavery and freedom in post-colonial Brazil.

Colonialism and Slavery in Brazilian Historiography

African bondspeople and their progeny provided the labor, which fueled the expansion of colonial enterprises across the Americas.²² After the Portuguese first arrived

²⁰ ACMSP, Livro de casamentos, Santa Efigênia, (6 de junho de 1840), 05-02-35; Livros de batismo, Sé, Escravos, 1851-1871, 03-02-03; also see the baptismal entry for Gabriella (7 de janeiro 1853) in which Guilherme was identified as “Congo.”

²¹ For more on the concept and methodological challenges of African diaspora studies see Joseph E. Harris, “Introduction” in *Global Dimensions of the African Diaspora*, ed. Joseph E. Harris, 2nd ed. (Washington, DC: Howard University Press, 1993), 3-10; Colin Palmer, “Defining and Studying the Modern African Diaspora,” *Perspectives* [American Historical Association] 36, no. 6 (September 1998): I, 22-25; Michael A. Gomez, “African Identity and Slavery in the Americas,” *Radical History Review* 75 (Fall 1999): 111-120; Kim Butler, “From Black History to Diasporan History: Brazilian Abolition in Afro-Atlantic Context,” *African Studies Review* 43, no. 1, Special Issue on the Diaspora (April 2000): 125-139; Kristin Mann, “Shifting Paradigms in the Study of the African Diaspora and of Atlantic History and Culture,” in *Rethinking the African Diaspora: The Making of a Black Atlantic World in the Bight of Benin and Brazil*, ed. Kristin Mann and Edna G. Bay (Portland: Frank Cass, 2001), 3-21; Ben Vinson III, “Introduction: African (Black) Diaspora History, Latin American History,” *Americas* 63, no.1 (July 2006): 3-14; Paul Tiyambe Zeleza, “Rewriting the African Diaspora: Beyond the Black Atlantic,” *African Affairs* 104, no. 414 (January 2005): 35-68; and “African Diasporas: Toward a Global History,” *African Studies Review* 53, no. 1 (April 2010): 1-19.

²² David Eltis, *The Rise of African Slavery in the Americas* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000); Gwendolyn Midlo Hall, *Slavery and African Ethnicities in the Americas: Restoring the Links* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005), 19-21; and John Thornton, *Africa and Africans in the Making of the Atlantic World, 1400-1800*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 152.

in Brazil in 1500,²³ colonists began to settle the territory, which included attempts to direct, coerce, and allot indigenous labor.²⁴ By the late sixteenth century, however, indigenous populations decreased as a result of “intermittent warfare” with encroaching Europeans and due to the diseases that accompanied foreign settlers.²⁵ As the usage of Amerindian laborers waned in the Northeast, the region’s coastal shores began to receive trans-Atlantic slaving vessels, which disembarked shiploads of African laborers headed to sugar plantations, the colony’s primary revenue generator, along the littoral. Slaves provided labor for all kinds of tasks beyond fieldwork, and economic productivity hinged on their exertion. African enslavement, however, quickly evolved into more than just a simple means of fostering production.²⁶ Slaves brought to Brazil entered a world where the color of their skin functioned as a nearly definitive mark of servitude, as manual labor became conceptually linked with African bondage.²⁷ Historian Stuart Schwartz noted, “The word ‘negro’ itself had in medieval Portuguese become almost a synonym for slave, and certainly by the sixteenth century it carried implications of servility.”²⁸

²³ John Hemming, *Red Gold: The Conquest of Brazilian Indians* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1978), 1-2; and Alida C. Metcalf, *Go-betweens and the Colonization of Brazil, 1500-1600* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2005), 17-56.

²⁴ Hemming, *Red Gold*, 34-39; Metcalf, *Go-betweens*, 129-130; and 157-158; and Elizabeth Johnson, “Ora et Labora: Labor Transitions on Benedictine and Carmelite Properties in Colonial São Paulo” (PhD diss., John Hopkins University, 2008), 80-109.

²⁵ Stuart B. Schwartz, *Sugar Plantations in the Formation of Brazilian Society: Bahia, 1550-1835* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 53.

²⁶ See Eltis, *The Rise of African Slavery*, 3, 15, and especially chapter 2 for work grappling with the question of why sub-Saharan Africans were primarily shipped to and utilized as chattel slaves in the Americas after the 1650s.

²⁷ A.C. Saunders, *A Social History of Black Slaves and Freedmen in Portugal, 1441-1555* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 62-63, and 166-175; Emilia Viotti da Costa, “The Portuguese-African Slave Trade: A Lesson in Colonialism,” *Latin American Perspectives* 12, no.1 (Winter 1985): 41-61; and James Sweet, “The Iberian Roots of American Racist Thought,” *William and Mary Quarterly* 54, no.1 (January 1997): 143-166.

²⁸ Schwartz, *Sugar Plantations*, 52.

While the body of scholarship dedicated to explorations of African slavery in Brazil is justifiably voluminous,²⁹ several lines of investigation have been dominant. Historians have devoted studies to quantify the economic impact of enslavement on Brazilian development as well as to understand how African slaveholding shaped the formation of Brazilian society.³⁰ Researchers have also given significant attention to the demography of slavery and, in recent years, re-assessment of the volume of the trans-Atlantic slave trade to Brazil.³¹

The social experiences of enslaved Africans and their Brazilian-born descendants have figured as central issues for historians largely since the 1950s and 1960s. Pioneering historical sociologist Clovis Moura chronicled the numerous ways slaves wrestled to

²⁹ For excellent historiographical overviews of the study of slavery in Brazil see Stuart B. Schwartz, "Recent Trends in the Study of Slavery in Brazil," *Luso-Brazilian Review* 25, no.1 (Summer 1988): 1-25; *Slaves, Peasants, and Rebels: Reconsidering Brazilian Slavery* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992); and Herbert S. Klein and Francisco Vidal Luna, *Slavery in Brazil* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

³⁰ See Fernando Henrique Cardoso, *Capitalismo e escravidão no Brasil meridional: O negro na sociedade escravocrata do Rio Grande do Sul* (São Paulo: Difusão Européia do Livro, 1962); Celso Furtado, *The Economic Growth of Brazil: A Survey from Colonial to Modern Times*, trans. Ricardo W. de Aguiar and Eric Charles Drysdale (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1963); Jacob Gorender, *O escravismo colonial*, 2nd ed. (São Paulo: Editora Atica, 1978); Caio Prado Jr., *História econômica do Brasil* (São Paulo: Brasiliense, 1979); B.J. Barickman, *A Bahian Counterpoint: Sugar, Tobacco, Cassava, and Slavery in the Recôncavo, 1780-1860* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998); Laird W. Bergad, *Slavery and the Economic and Demographic History of Minas Gerais, Brazil, 1720-1888* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999); and Francisco Vidal Luna and Herbert S. Klein, *Slavery and the Economy of São Paulo, 1750-1850* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003) for critical works analyzing the impact and centrality of slavery to Brazil's economic development and patterns of social formation.

³¹ For classics in the field see Pierre Verger, *Flux et reflux de la traite des nègres entre le golfe de Bénin et Bahia de Todos os Santos, du dix-septième au dix-neuvième siècle* (Paris: La Haye, Mouton, 1968); Philip Curtin, *The Atlantic Slave Trade: A Census* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1969); Herbert Klein, *The Middle Passage: Comparative Studies in the Atlantic Slave Trade* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978); Robert Slenes, "The Demography and Economics of Brazilian Slavery: 1850-1888" (PhD diss., Stanford University, 1976); Joseph C. Miller, *Way of Death: Merchant Capitalism and the Angolan Slave Trade, 1730-1830* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1997); and Manolo Florentino, *Em costas negras: uma história do tráfico de escravos entre a África e o Rio de Janeiro (séculos XVIII e XIX)* (São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 1997). For the most recent assessments of the overall trade and the trade to Brazil see David Eltis, "The Volume and Structure of the Transatlantic Slave Trade: A Reassessment," *William and Mary Quarterly* 58, no.1 (January 2001): 17-46; and David Eltis and David Richardson, "A New Assessment of the Transatlantic Slave Trade," in *Extending the Frontiers: Essays on the New Transatlantic Slave Trade Database*, ed. David Eltis and David Richardson (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008), 6-8 and 13-22.

exercise more control over their lives in his 1959 publication *Rebeliões da senzala* (Rebellions in the Slave Quarters).³² Another watershed moment in the study of Afro-Brazilian history emerged with the publication of Katia Mattoso's work, *To Be a Slave in Brazil: 1550-1888*, first published in French in 1979 and translated as an English language edition in 1986.³³ The text represents a significant contribution, since it analyzes the scope of daily tasks and life events African captives and their enslaved descendants encountered in a single volume synthesizing multiple types of evidence including inventories, tax records, baptismal records, press accounts, criminal court proceedings and state legislation. Works focused squarely on the experiences of slaves and freed people of color before and/or after abolition ballooned in and after the 1980s and have remained an active subfield of Brazilian history. The most heralded and comprehensive examples of these works include A.J. R. Russell Wood's *The Black Man in Slavery and in Freedom*, Mary Karasch's *Slave Life in Rio de Janeiro, 1808-1850*, and Sidney Chalhoub's *Visões da liberdade: uma história das últimas décadas da escravidão na corte* (*Visions of Liberty: A History of the Last Years of Slavery in the Court City of Rio de Janeiro*).³⁴

An especially engaging way scholars have approached the study of Afro-Brazilian experience during and beyond the slave regime is through analysis of the religious

³² Clovis Moura, *Rebeliões da senzala* (São Paulo: Edições Zumbi, 1959).

³³ Katia M. de Queirós Mattoso, *To Be a Slave in Brazil, 1550-1888*, trans. Arthur Goldhammer (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1986).

³⁴ Russell-Wood, *The Black Man in Slavery and Freedom*; Mary Karasch, *Slave Life in Rio de Janeiro, 1808-1850* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987); and Sidney Chalhoub, *Visões da liberdade: uma história das últimas décadas da escravidão na corte* (São Paulo: Companhia das letras, 1990). For other important works see João José Reis, *Slave Rebellion in Brazil: The Muslim Uprising of 1835 in Bahia* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University, 1993); Maria Helena Pereira Machado, *Crime e escravidão: trabalho, luta, e resistência nas lavouras paulistas, 1830-1888* (São Paulo: Brasiliense, 1987); and Silvia Lara, *Campos da violência: escravos e senhores na capitania do Rio de Janeiro, 1750-1808* (Rio de Janeiro: Paz e Terra, 1988).

practices of Africans and their descendants. Studies of African diaspora popular religiosity in Brazil have primarily been investigated through examinations of Inquisition cases³⁵ or confraternities. Reliance on Inquisition cases presents a variety of methodological challenges,³⁶ but historians focused on Latin America have repeatedly combed through Inquisition documents with great success to see how plebeians attempted to use spiritual power to negotiate and manipulate the circumstances of their daily lives.³⁷ Inquisition studies underscore the expansion of the historical gaze primarily from labor to social experience. Focused efforts to chronicle plebian religious thinking and practice provide a vantage point, which effectively decenter slave owners in order to better place bondspeople and free people of color in the foreground.

³⁵ See James H. Sweet, *Domingos Álvares, African Healing, and the Intellectual History of the Atlantic World* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011); and *Recreating Africa: Culture, Kinship, and Religion in the African Portuguese World, 1440-1770* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003); Stuart Schwartz, *All Can be Saved: Religious Tolerance and Salvation in the Iberian Atlantic World* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008), chapter 7; Laura de Mello e Souza, *O Diabo e a terra de Santa Cruz: feitiçaria e religiosidade popular no Brasil colonial* (São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 1994); Luiz Mott, "Cotidiano e vivência religiosa: entre a capela e o calundu," in *História da vida privada no Brasil: cotidiano e vida privada na América portuguesa*, ed. Laura de Mello e Souza, Vol. 1, (Rio de Janeiro: Companhia das Letras, 1997), 155-220; and *Rosa Egípcia: uma santa africana no Brasil* (Rio de Janeiro: Bertrand Brasil, 1993); Ronaldo Vainfas, *Trópico dos pecados: moral, sexualidade, e Inquisição no Brasil* (Rio de Janeiro: Editora Campus, 1989); and for the most important studies of popular religion, which either include or focus on the religious experiences of Afro-Brazilians through and beyond an orthodox Catholic framework using records from the Portuguese Inquisition.

³⁶ Inquisition records rely on witness accounts and defendant statements gathered under conditions, which typically included torture for those on trial. Statements gathered under such circumstances make it difficult to decipher if confessions were admissions of guilt for the practice of non-Catholic religious traditions or appeasements given to end violent interrogations. For more on the standard practices developed in colonial Inquisition trials and candid discussion analyzing the challenges of utilizing Inquisition records see Irene Silverblatt, *Modern Inquisitions: Peru and the Colonial Origins of the Civilized World* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2004), chapter 2, "Inquisition as Bureaucracy," and 229-233.

³⁷ For recently published examples see Joan Bristol, *Christians, Blasphemers, and Witches: Afro-Mexican Ritual Practice in the Seventeenth Century* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2007); Laura A. Lewis, *Hall of Mirrors: Power, Witchcraft, and Caste in Colonial Mexico* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003); Javier Villa-Flores, " 'To Lose One's Soul': Blasphemy and Slavery in New Spain, 1596-1669," *Hispanic American Historical Review* 82, no. 3 (August 2002): 435-468; Martha Few, *Women Who Live Evil Lives: Gender, Religion, and the Politics of Power in Colonial Guatemala* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2002); Kathryn Joy McKnight, "Blasphemy as Resistance: An African Slave Woman before the Mexican Inquisition," in *Women in the Inquisition: Spain and the New World*, ed. Mary Giles (Baltimore: John Hopkins University, 1997), 229-253.

Historians examining Brazilian sodalities have used at least three distinct analytical frameworks, which are best described as cultural history, studies of class, and studies of race. The most compelling and convincing example of a cultural history approach is exemplified by João José Reis's *Death is a Festival: Funeral Rites and Rebellion in Nineteenth-Century Brazil*.³⁸ The author recounts the shifting sounds, sites, and rites of burial as part of his analysis of a revolt instigated by municipal officials demanding changes in the locales of burial in Salvador, the capital of the northeastern state of Bahia. In his research, Reis consulted *irmandade* statutes, wills, and other sources to chronicle shifting patterns of devotion and piety in nineteenth century Salvador. He also recounts how secularization and post-Enlightenment thinking by reformers attempting to ban burial in the city and under altars in the church conflicted with the forces of tradition embodied by lay brotherhoods and the wider populace across lines of race.³⁹ The work of Reis is a magnificent example of the depth and detail a cultural history approach can yield.

Historians have also utilized brotherhood documentation to study class by focusing on the ways members used the organizations to exert social and political influence on fellow upper echelon members, in addition to noting how elite participants used sodality membership to affirm their status, wealth, and privilege.⁴⁰ Typically, these

³⁸ João José Reis, *Death is a Festival: Funeral Rites and Rebellion in Nineteenth-Century Brazil* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003). For a discussion of cultural history methodologies and research agendas see Lynn Hunt, ed., *The New Cultural History*, (Berkeley: University of California Press), 1989.

³⁹ Reis, *Death is a Festival*, chapters 8 and 9.

⁴⁰ A.J.R. Russell-Wood, *Fidalgos and Philanthropists: The Santa Casa da Misericórdia of Bahia, 1550-1755* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1968); Laima Mesgravis, *A Santa Casa da Misericórdia e São Paulo (159?-1884): Contribuição ao estudo da assistência social no Brasil* (São Paulo, Conselho Estadual de Cultura, 1974); Marcelo de Almeida Toledo, *Santa Casa de Misericórdia de São Paulo* (São Paulo: Imprensa Oficial do Estado, 1975); Glauco Carneiro, *O poder da misericórdia: irmandade da Santa Casa na história social e política da cidade de São Paulo, 1560-1985, Vol.1-2* (São Paulo: Irmandade de

studies of class focus on the exclusively white Santa Casa de Misericórdia. This vein of research emphasizes the role of elites in local, social, and economic development.⁴¹

Organizational documentation, especially executive committee records, as well as wills and testaments provide a way to understand social networks among the white elite, who often used brotherhoods as a space to demonstrate their class standing through donations and executive committee service.

Historians also approach lay brotherhoods as a way to explore ethnic and racial identities among Africans and African descendants in Brazil.⁴² These studies focus on black brotherhoods as ethnic enclaves in the eighteenth century, which later transition to race based organizations. The strength of this literature is that by triangulating *irmandade* member registries, baptismal records, and reports from church officials, scholars are able to highlight ethnic identity claims and enclaves in the colonial period (1550-1822).⁴³ The major limitation of the scholarship is that most studies focus exclusively on the eighteenth century. Historian Zephyr Frank, who focuses on wealth holding in the

Santa Casa de Misericórdia de São Paulo, 1986); and Jeffrey Needell, *A Tropical Belle Époque: Elite Culture and Society in Turn of the Century Rio de Janeiro*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 87-89.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Ethnic identities typically correspond with broad geographic, linguistic, and cultural areas or ports of departure on the African coast. It should be noted that the delineation of ethnicity among slaves in the Americas remains a highly contested topic. See Walter Hawthorne, *From Africa to Brazil: Culture, Identity, and an Atlantic Slave Trade, 1600-1800* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 6-12, for a synopsis of debates regarding the study of ethnic identity in the African diaspora.

⁴³ See A.J.R. Russell-Wood, "Black and Mulatto Brotherhoods in Colonial Brazil: A Study in Collective Behavior," *Hispanic American Historic Review* 54 (1974): 567-602; Julita Scarano, *Devoção e escravidão: a Irmandade de Nossa Senhora do Rosário dos Pretos no distrito diamantino no século XVIII*, (São Paulo: Conselho Estadual de Cultura, 1975); Antonia Aparecida Quintão, *Lá vem o meu parente: as irmandades de pretos e pardos no Rio de Janeiro e em Pernambuco (século XVIII)* (São Paulo: Annablume: FAPESP, 2002); Celia Maia Borges, *Escravos e libertos nas irmandades do Rosário: Devoção e solidariedade em Minas Gerais-Séculos XVIII e XIX* (Juiz da Fora: Editora UFJF, 2005); Mariza de Carvalho Soares, *People of Faith: Slavery and African Catholics in Eighteenth-Century Rio de Janeiro*, trans. Jerry D. Metz (Durham: Duke University Press, 2011); Elizabeth Kiddy, *Blacks of the Rosary: Memory and History in Minas Gerais, Brazil* (University Park, Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2005); and Mieko Nishida, *Slavery and Identity: Ethnicity, Gender, and Race in Salvador, Brazil, 1808-1888* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2003).

nineteenth century, notes how standard colonial and modern periodization influence research agendas leading to under-exploration of particular time periods and topics in Brazilian and Latin American history. As Frank suggests, colonial scholars, including those who write about *irmandades* as ethnic or race based groups, rarely venture into the nineteenth century, much less the twentieth century.⁴⁴ As a result, while a deep and nuanced picture of eighteenth century confraternities exists, in a certain respect, our collective knowledge of these institutions is frozen in time.⁴⁵ Changes in Catholic Church policies and broader social transformations that influence organizational patterns and shifting facets of identity formation are left underexplored.

Few scholars have examined the history of black brotherhoods in the province of São Paulo. The reasons why brotherhoods have not been studied in economically dynamic nineteenth and twentieth century São Paulo remain unclear.⁴⁶ While the study of the black presence in São Paulo remained an important and pivotal question for sociologists seeking solutions to and comprehension of the problem of black marginalization, historians failed to imagine urban blacks as having a social or cultural

⁴⁴ See Frank, *Dutra's World*, 2.

⁴⁵ For exceptions to this eighteenth-century periodization focus see Kiddy, *Blacks of the Rosary*, 103-173; Nishida, *Slavery and Identity*; and Antonia Aparecida Quintão, *Irmandades negras: outro espaço de luta e resistência (São Paulo: 1870-1890)* (São Paulo: Annablume, 2002).

⁴⁶ The majority of studies of lay Catholic brotherhoods focus on the southeastern state of Minas Gerais or the northeastern states of Bahia or Pernambuco. Even Rio de Janeiro, the cultural capital of the nation, has seen scant analysis; only two book length studies treating black brotherhoods in the city exist. For works analyzing Rio de Janeiro see Soares, *People of Faith*; and Quintão, *Lá vem o meu parente*. For works analyzing Minas Gerais, see Caio Cesar Boschi, *Os leigos e o poder: Irmandades leigos e política colonizadora em Minas Gerais* (São Paulo: Editora Ática, 1986); Kiddy, *Blacks of the Rosary*; Scarano, *Devoção e escravidão*; Borges, *Escravos e libertos nas irmandades do Rosário*; Anderson José Machado de Oliveira, *Devoção negra: santos pretos e catequese no Brasil colonial* (Rio de Janeiro: Quartet: FAPERJ, 2008); all focus on black brotherhoods in Minas Gerais, while Soares, *People of Faith*; and Quintão, *Lá vem o meu parente* document brotherhoods in Rio de Janeiro. For studies of research focused on black brotherhoods in Bahia and Pernambuco again see Quintão, *Lá vem o meu parente*; and Russell-Wood, *Black Man in Slavery and Freedom*, chapter 5; and “Black and Mulatto Brotherhoods in Colonial Brazil: A Study in Collective Behavior.” Finally Patricia Mulvey conducted research that covered Brazil as a whole, but most her examples focus on Bahia, Minas Gerais, and Pernambuco; see Patricia Mulvey, “Black Brothers and Sisters: Membership in the Black Lay Brotherhoods of Colonial Brazil,” *Luso-Brazilian Review* 17, no. 2 (Winter 1980): 253-279.

history in the city that might compete with the rich historical legacies so evident in the popular culture and daily life of Salvador, Bahia or Rio de Janeiro. The core of historical scholarly production focused on Africans and Afro-Brazilians in urban São Paulo repeatedly focused on black exclusion or on blacks in the popular imagination of whites utilizing sensationalized, racist descriptions of blacks in the press, in songs, or in popular sayings.⁴⁷ Not until the late 1980s did historians studying urban blacks in São Paulo take a more balanced approach, which documented discrimination against Africans and African descendants, but which also chronicled Afro-Brazilian social and cultural experiences during and after slavery.⁴⁸

Only two books treat black brotherhoods in São Paulo as the primary theme of analysis. The first was written by Raul Joviano Amaral who served as an editor and writer for two black newspapers -- *A Voz da Raça* (*The Voice of the Race*) from 1933-1937, which was the newspaper for the Frente Negra Brasileira (Black Brazilian Front), Brazil's first and only Afro-Brazilian political party (1931-1937), and *Alvorada* (*Dawn*) from 1945-1948 under the direction of one of the most famous black activists, José

⁴⁷ See Oracy Nogueira, "Atitude desfavorável de alguns anunciantes de São Paulo em relação aos empregados de cor," *Sociologia* 4, no.4 (1942): 328-358; Richard Morse, "The Negro in São Paulo, Brazil," *Journal of Negro History* 38, no.3 (1953): 290-306; Suely Robles Reis de Queiroz, *Escravidão negra em São Paulo: Um estudo das tensões provocadas pelo escravismo no século XIX* (Rio de Janeiro: 1977); Célia Maria Marinho de Azevedo, *Onda negra, medo branco: O negro no imaginário das elites-- século XIX* (Rio de Janeiro: Paz e Terra, 1987); and Lilia Moritz Schwarcz, *Retrato em branco e negro: jornais, escravos, cidadãos em São Paulo no final do século XIX* (São Paulo: Círculo do Livro, 1987).

⁴⁸ Iêda Marques Britto, *Samba na cidade de São Paulo, 1900-1930: um exercício de resistência cultural* (São Paulo: FFLECH-USP, 1986); George Reid Andrews, *Blacks and Whites in São Paulo, Brazil* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1991); Kim Butler, *Freedoms Given, Freedom Won: Afro-Brazilians in Post-Abolition São Paulo and Salvador* (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1998); Maria Cristina Cortez Wissenbach, *Sonhos africanos, vivências ladinas: escravos e forros no município de São Paulo, 1850-1880* (São Paulo: Hucitec, 1998); Quintão, *Irmandades negras*; and Paulina Alberto, *Terms of Inclusion: Black Intellectuals in Twentieth-Century Brazil* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011). Also see Maria Odila Leite da Silva Dias, *Quotidiano e poder em São Paulo no século XIX* (São Paulo: Brasiliense, 1984) for a book focused on gender, but which also includes substantial discussion of African and African descent women in nineteenth century São Paulo.

Correia Leite.⁴⁹ Amaral served in a host of administrative positions in the Brotherhood of Our Lady of the Rosary of Black Men and he utilized his position and access to association archives as part of the documentation for the book *Os pretos do Rosário de São Paulo: subsídios históricos (Blacks of the Rosary of São Paulo: Historic Information)*, which he published in 1954, the same year as the 400th anniversary of the founding of the city.⁵⁰

Amaral designed the book to serve as an organizational history and a testimonial chronicling the activities of an important black enclave in the city. Amaral did not consistently use citations to the degree a professional historian would prefer, but he often incorporated entire letters or documents in their original form in the book, so his sources can be verified in various archives. Amaral utilized ecclesiastic, state, and municipal archives, in addition to the work of city chroniclers to supplement evidence from associational records. He compiled a list of organizational presidents who served from 1806 until the time of the book's publication, and he also recorded the names and offices held by executive board members from 1885 to 1953.⁵¹ Amaral also produced a member index which included the names and offices held by associates. The book serves as a wonderful reference source and narration of the association's history. Amaral worked to publish a modified second edition to be released in 1988, on the centennial of slave emancipation in 1888, but he became ill and the publication and release of the new edition waited until 1991.

⁴⁹ Amaral, *Os pretos do Rosário*, 2nd ed., 8; and Butler, *Freedoms Given, Freedoms Won*, 8, 57, 97-102. Amaral began as an editor at the *A Voz da Raça* beginning on June 3, 1933.

⁵⁰ Raul Joviano de Amaral, *Os pretos do Rosário de São Paulo: subsídios históricos* (São Paulo: Alarico, 1954).

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, member index, (unpaged back matter).

The second text analyzing the Brotherhood of Our Lady of the Rosary and the dissolution of the Brotherhood of Saint Efigênia and Saint Elesbão was first written as a master's thesis by historian Antonia Aparecida Quintão who titled the work *Irmandades negras: outro espaço de luta e resistência, São Paulo: 1870-1890 (Black Brotherhoods: Another Source of Struggle and Resistance, São Paulo, 1870-1890)*.⁵² In the book, Quintão argues that black brotherhoods served as spaces for black community development, and that despite their lack of individual juridical personality, confraternities struggled to maintain their autonomy from the local diocese to protect their cultural heritage.⁵³ A critical shortcoming of the work is the brief length of the period she studied; her work covers only twenty years of organizational life. The brevity of the period analyzed and the underdevelopment of critical concepts that she employs, especially ethnicity and race, left numerous and important questions about black life in São Paulo's sodalities unanswered.

To date rich and important scholarly work has chronicled the rise in popularity of black political activism and social organizing in São Paulo predominantly after 1920 and through the rest of the twentieth century. Pioneering Brazilian sociologist, Florestan Fernandes was the first to systematically document black civic associations and social clubs in São Paulo in the fourth section of his classic study, *A integração do negro na sociedade de classes (The Integration of the Negro in Society)*.⁵⁴ He described the expansion of black associational organizing as a response to marginalization in the labor

⁵² Quintão, *Irmandades negras*.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 38-43.

⁵⁴ Florestan Fernandes, *Integração do negro na sociedade de classes*, vol.2 (São Paulo: Dominus, 1965), 33-95.

market and in everyday social interactions.⁵⁵ Fernandes argues that blacks did not integrate into the labor market and society because of deficiencies of capital, illiteracy, and a lack of non-coerced work experiences among other socially acquired ills due to experiences of enslavement.⁵⁶ His argument suggests that the experience of bondage created a racial underclass unprepared for participation in capitalist society, though subsequent research has shown that preferences for white immigrant laborers, not social vices nor vagrancy explained the tenuousness of black employment after emancipation.⁵⁷ Despite these shortcomings, the study marked an important moment in the study of race relations in Brazil, because the author searched for explanations to account for the lack of black social and economic mobility in terms that did not rely on essentialist, racist arguments.

Historian George Reid Andrews, among several scholars whose research has collectively worked to refute the Fernandes thesis,⁵⁸ explored the topic of black associational life in the capital and surrounding cities in two chapters of his book, *Blacks and Whites in São Paulo, Brazil 1888-1988* as he analyzed the influence of race in the work and social lives of African descendants in the city.⁵⁹ In relation to associational life, Andrews argued that the economic insecurity caused by unfair hiring practices in the job market, combined with the insulting discrimination blacks faced in public services and in

⁵⁵ Ibid., 12-14.

⁵⁶ Ibid., 71-171.

⁵⁷ Stolcke, *Coffee Planters*, 16-19; Thomas Holloway, *Immigrants on the Land: Coffee and Society in São Paulo, 1886-1934* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 1980), 63; Dean, *Rio Claro*, 172-173; and Andrews, *Blacks and Whites*, 66-75.

⁵⁸ Ibid; Carlos Hasenbalg, *Discriminação e Desigualdades Raciais no Brasil* (Rio de Janeiro: Graal, 1979); Octavio Ianni, *Escravidão e Racismo*, 2nd ed. (São Paulo: Hucitec, 1988); and Nelson do Valle Silva, "Updating the Cost of Not Being White," in *Race, Class, and Power in Brazil*, ed. Pierre-Michel Fontaine (Los Angeles: University of California, 1985), 42-55.

⁵⁹ Andrews, *Blacks and Whites*, chapters 5 and 7; for an additional scholarly refutation of the Fernandes thesis, see Carlos Hasenbalg, "Race and Socioeconomic Inequalities in Brazil," in *Race, Class, and Power in Brazil*, ed. Pierre-Michel Fontaine (Los Angeles: University of California, 1985), 25-41.

personal relationships led them to create new types of social and civic organizations designed to foster collective action for racial uplift.⁶⁰ Andrews noted that black associations had a long history extending back to the colonial era in confraternities, *candomblés*, and *capoeiras* in the city,⁶¹ however, the bulk of his evidence for the chapters on associations relied on twentieth century mainstream and black press sources.⁶²

Kim Butler's *Freedoms Given, Freedoms Won: Afro-Brazilians in Post-Abolition São Paulo and Salvador* ably demonstrates that Afro-Paulistanos created racial uplift programs, which mobilized shared black identities.⁶³ Butler convincingly argues that the black printing enclaves which emerged largely after 1915 were products of a community of educated writers and liberal professionals who collectively engaged in the process of re-imagining and re-defining their race and the national vision of blackness.⁶⁴ Despite the advances made by this research, her coverage of the immediate years of post-emancipation life in São Paulo proved more difficult, since her reliance on black newspapers meant that her research extended further into the twentieth century rather than going back to the nineteenth. A new work by Paulina Alberto focused on the development of black intellectual communities in twentieth century Brazil highlights the rich, nuanced thinking expressed by black writers on issues of collective action, race, and social mobility.⁶⁵ However, this work like those discussed above, does not cover the earliest years of post-emancipation society and experience among blacks since her

⁶⁰ Andrews, *Blacks and Whites*, 137-139.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 139.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 140-218; one exception is the evidence he provides of social organizing as early as 1904 with the Luvas Pretas (Black Gloves) society discussed on page 141.

⁶³ Butler, *Freedoms Given, Freedoms Won*, 48; 57-58; and 78-87.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, chapter 4.

⁶⁵ Alberto, *Terms of Inclusion*, 33-56. It should be noted that Alberto situates her project in the twentieth century and, thereby, technically avoids the problem of sources.

scholarship solidly rests on black press sources,⁶⁶ which date in their majority from 1915 to 1960. Only *O Baluarte* (1903-1904), published in Campinas covered the period before 1915.⁶⁷ Though the use of the black press serves as an important source for early twentieth century Afro-Brazilian experience in São Paulo, it is clear that additional sources must be used to complement black press documentation. Reliance on black press source material will do little to facilitate access to the immediate period after emancipation.

Race Relations in Urban Nineteenth-Century Brazil

While research documenting relations among Afro-Brazilians before the twentieth century remains an area meriting further exploration,⁶⁸ more is known about the general practice of slaveholding in the provincial capital and its urban environment.⁶⁹ In the city of São Paulo, like other sites of urban slavery, bonded people experienced a freedom of movement generally unprecedented for slaves in plantation zones.⁷⁰ However, the physical mobility of slaves did not undermine society's commitment to or dependence on the institution. The slave regime in cities relied on the same kinds of punishment and extreme violence found in rural settings. Slaves faced brutal punishments especially lashings at public whipping posts called *pelourinhos* in cities throughout the country. Bonded people labored without end on tasks large and small in cities, and neither slaves nor owners confused the particularities of urban slavery with freedom.

⁶⁶ Ibid., 19-20.

⁶⁷ Ibid. See page 356 for a comprehensive list of black newspapers and their dates of publication.

⁶⁸ Butler, *Freedoms Won, Freedoms Given*, 9-10 and 15.

⁶⁹ For examples see Luna and Klein, *Slavery and the Economy*; Oliveira, *Entre a casa e o armazém*, chapter 2; and Johnson, *Ora et Labora*, chapter 5.

⁷⁰ Karasch, *Slave Life in Rio*, 81 and 325; and Richard Wade, *Slavery in Cities: The South 1820-1860* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1964), 29 and 80-82, for the pathbreaking book on urban slavery, which addresses the issue of slave mobility in cities in the United States.

Despite the systematic violence involved in controlling forced labor,⁷¹ Brazil's high rates of manumission⁷² and the Catholic Church's protection of the right to marriage for the enslaved, among other protections, helped substantiate notions that slavery in the nation did not completely destroy goodwill between slaves and masters.⁷³ In 1883, abolitionist Joaquim Nabuco wrote, "slavery to our good fortune, never embittered the slave's spirit toward the master, at least collectively, nor did it create between the races that mutual hate which naturally exists between oppressors and oppressed."⁷⁴ In the thought of Brazilian elites, race relations in the country were never characterized by harsh and vitriolic racial violence and programs of separation characteristic of Anglo-America.⁷⁵

Though Gilberto Freyre is often cited as codifying the idea that the Portuguese easily accepted non-European women as intimate partners and thereby created a racially "mixed" society devoid of racial discrimination,⁷⁶ he was not the first scholar to make such claims. Nearly a century before the publication of Freyre's work, foreign visitors often described racial mixture as a defining characteristic of Brazil's population. For

⁷¹ Lara, *Campos da violência*; Leila Mezan Algranti, "Slave Crimes: The Use of Police Power to Control the Slave Population of Rio de Janeiro," *Luso-Brazilian Review* 25, no.1 (Summer 1988): 27-48; and Nancy Priscilla Naro, *A Slave's Place, A Master's World: Fashioning Dependency in Rural Brazil* (New York: Continuum, 2000), 130-132.

⁷² For quantification and discussion of manumission patterns for Brazil and wider Latin America see Kathleen Higgins, *'Licentious Liberty' in a Brazilian Gold Mining Region: Slavery, Gender, and Social Control in Eighteenth-Century Sabará, Minas Gerais* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1999), 147-174, especially note 5 on page 147; Douglas Cole Libby and Afonso de Alencastro Graça Filho, "Notarized and Baptismal Manumissions in the Parish of São José do Rio das Mortes, Minas Gerais (c. 1750-1850)," *Americas* 66, no.2 (October 2009): 211-240; Herbert Klein, *African Slavery in Latin America and the Caribbean* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), 227; and Christina Hünefeldt, *Paying the Price for Freedom, Family and Labor among Lima's Slaves 1800-1854* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), 91-92.

⁷³ Frank Tannenbaum, *Slave and Citizen: The Negro in the Americas* (New York: Vintage Books, 1946), 112.

⁷⁴ Joaquim Nabuco, *O abolicionismo* (London: 1883), 22-23 cited in Skidmore, *Black into White*, 23.

⁷⁵ *Ibid*; Skidmore, *Black into White*, 23-24; and Andrews, *Blacks and Whites*, 7 and 129.

⁷⁶ See Gilberto Freyre, *Masters and the Slaves: A Study in the Development of Brazilian Civilization*, trans. Samuel Putnam, 2nd rev. ed. (New York: Knopf, 1966), xxix; and *New World in the Tropics: the Culture of Modern Brazil* (New York: Knopf, 1959); and Skidmore, *Black into White*, 23-24.

example, Karl Friedrich Philipp von Martius, a botanist who traveled to Brazil as part of an Austrian and Bavarian scientific expedition in 1817, wrote of the nation's human diversity years later. He contributed to a special edition of the Brazilian Historical and Geographical Institute's society journal in 1844 designed to spur discussion of Brazilian history.⁷⁷ For Martius, acknowledging the diversity of Brazil was central to understanding the empire's history. He wrote,

Anyone who undertakes to write the history of Brazil, a country which *promises so much* should never lose sight of the elements which contributed to the development of man there. These diverse elements come from the three races, namely: the copper-colored, or American; the white or Caucasian; and the black, or Ethiopian. Because of the reciprocal and changing relationship of the three races, the present population consists of a novel mixture, whose history therefore has a very particular stamp.⁷⁸

For Martius, racial mixture characterized all Brazilians, including elites who thought of themselves as racially pure. He asserted,

I know very well that there will be whites who will charge that such a linking of these races disparages their ancestry. But, I am also certain they will not be found among those seeking to write a philosophic History of Brazil. On the contrary, the most enlightened people will discover from this investigation that the Indian and Ethiopian races have been and still are involved in the historic development of the Brazilian people... We will never be permitted to doubt that providential will predestined this mixture for Brazil...the highest class of the Brazilian population is made from this mixture. For centuries this mixture has had a powerful influence on the elevated classes and transmitted to them that historical activity for which the Brazilian Empire is noted.⁷⁹

Even segments of the upper elite within the nation exhibited traces of a multi-racial heritage for European and North American visitors. Unlike Martius, not all visitors and men of letters considered that legacy in such favorable terms.

⁷⁷ Karl Friedrich Philipp von Martius, "How the History of Brazil Should be Written," in *Perspectives on Brazilian History*, ed. E. Bradford Burns (New York: Columbia University Press, 1967), 21-22.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 23, (emphasis added).

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 23-24.

Swiss scientist Louis Agassiz who visited Brazil in 1865 wrote, “Let any one who doubts the evil of this mixture of the races, and is inclined...to break down all barriers between them, come to Brazil. He cannot deny the deterioration consequent upon an amalgamation of races, more wide-spread here than in any other country in the world, and which is rapidly effacing the best qualities of the white man, the Negro, and Indian, leaving behind a mongrel, nondescript type, deficient in physical and mental energy.”⁸⁰ French diplomat Arthur de Gobineau was unyielding in his criticism and repudiation of racial mixture in his “*Essai sur l’inegalite des races humaines*” (Essay on the Inequality of Human Races) published in 1853.⁸¹ Unsurprisingly, he found Brazilian society repugnant based on the racial mixture of Europeans, Africans and Indians visibly prevalent in the nation. In the eyes of de Gobineau, all classes and social sectors in Brazil had been sullied by race mixture. He wrote even “the best families have crossed with blacks and Indians...” and therein produced “...particularly repugnant creatures...”⁸²

Afro-Brazilians and indigenous people living in the late nineteenth century faced new currents of justifications for their marginalization as scientific racism became more prevalent, though bias against these groups was a deeply entrenched part of racial thinking in both Portugal and Brazil since the establishment of the colony.⁸³ The

⁸⁰ Louis Agassiz, *A Journey in Brazil* (Boston: Ticknor and Fields, 1868), 293.

⁸¹ Arthur de Gobineau, *The Inequality of Human Races*, trans. by Adrian Collins (London: William Heinemann, 1915).

⁸² Skidmore, *White into Black*, 30; and Arthur de Gobineau, “A Caroline de Gobineau, 19 de abril de 1869” cited in George Raeders, *O inimigo cordial do Brasil: O conde Gobineau no Brasil*, trans. Rosa Freire D’Aguiar (Rio de Janeiro: Paz e Terra, 1988), 90-91, quote on page 90. (As melhores famílias têm cruzamentos com negros e índios. Estes produzem criaturas particularmente repugnantes...)

⁸³ For discussion of autochthonous bias in Brazil see “Introduction,” 7, note 27. For more on degeneration in Brazilian discourse in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, see Dain Borges, “‘Puffy, Ugly, Slothful, and Inert’: Degeneration in Brazilian Social Thought, 1880-1940,” *Journal of Latin American Studies* 25, no.2 (May 1993): 235-256; Skidmore, *Black into White*, chapter 2; Lilia Moritz Schwarcz, *Spectacle of the Races: Scientists, Institutions, and the Race Question in Brazil 1870-1890*, trans. Leland Guyer (New York: Hill and Wong, 1999), 64-70; and Nancy Leys Stephan, *The Hour of Eugenics: Race, Gender, and Nation in Latin America* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991), 44-46 and 153-162.

Brazilian government even sponsored European immigration to replace Afro-Brazilian laborers in an effort “to improve” the nation by whitening society through a process called *embranqueamento*.⁸⁴ Government officials heralded programs designed “...to bring to the tropics a flow of lively, energetic, and healthy Caucasian blood...”⁸⁵ The march of time did little to modify the negative characterizations associated with African origins, and during the life cycles of the vast number of people discussed in this project, even well into the twentieth century, having mixed race origins would do little to alleviate the systematic racial prejudice and discrimination African descendants faced.⁸⁶ Only in the early twentieth century did cultural nationalist movements such as the regionalist movement based in Recife and the modernist movement generated in São Paulo and Rio begin to tenuously reframe African cultural influence and reassess the African presence in more positive and inclusive ways.⁸⁷

⁸⁴ Skidmore, *Black into White*, 24.

⁸⁵ Nabuco, *O abolicionismo*, 252 cited in Skidmore, *White into Black*, 30.

⁸⁶ Scholarship has indicated that non-whites of African descent face severe disadvantages in terms of wages, educational attainment, and even choice in terms of potential marital partners. For discussion of these findings see Stanley R. Bailey, *Legacies of Race: Identities, Attitudes, and Politics in Brazil* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009); Robin Sheriff, *Dreaming Equality: Color, Race, and Racism in Urban Brazil* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2001); Michael Hanchard, ed., *Racial Politics in Contemporary Brazil* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1999); France Winddance Twine, *Racism in a Racial Democracy: The Maintenance of White Supremacy in Brazil* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1998); Charles Wood and José Alberto Magno de Carvalho, *The Demography of Inequality in Brazil* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1988); Silva, “Updating the Cost of Not Being White,” 42-55; Hasenburg, “Race and Socioeconomic Inequalities,” 25-41; *Discriminação e desigualdades*; and John Burdick, *Blessed Anastácia: Women, Race, and Popular Christianity in Brazil* (New York: Routledge, 1998), chapter 1.

⁸⁷ See Gilberto Freyre, *Manifesto regionalista*, 4th ed. (Recife: Instituto Joaquim Nabuco de Pesquisas Sociais, 1967); and *Masters and the Slaves: A Study in the Development of Brazilian Civilization*, trans. Samuel Putnam, 2nd rev. ed. (New York: Knopf, 1966); for more on the complicated process of reframing and repositioning African and Afro-Brazilian cultural expression within Brazilian national identity see Hermano Vianna, *The Mystery of Samba: Popular Music and National Identity in Brazil*, trans. and ed. John Charles Chasteen (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999); William Rowe and Vivian Schelling, *Memory and Modernity: Popular Culture in Latin America* (New York: Verso, 1991), 128-137; Florencia Garramuño, *Primitive Modernities: Tango, Samba, and Nation*, trans. Anna Kazumi Stahl (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2011); Michael Hanchard, “Introduction,” in *Racial Politics in Contemporary Brazil*, ed. Michael Hanchard (Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 1999), 4; and Darién Davis, *Avoiding the Dark: Race and Forging of National Culture in Modern Brazil* (Brookfield, Vermont: Ashgate, 1999), 8. The decades between the 1910s to the 1940s represented a transitional

Sources and Methodology

To give balance to the rich historical work exploring Afro-Paulistano life after the turn of the twentieth century, this examination begins to illuminate black associational life in the period before and immediately after abolition. The research chronicles the collective activities of sodalities as slave emancipation gradually unfolds, and thereby uses an under-utilized data set as a means of understanding a critical juncture for Afro-Brazilians maneuvering their way through a world, which no longer used legal prescriptions to order society or to enforce race based captivity. The changing routines of life in towns and cities as slavery declined and finally ceased continue to demand historical attention, since these environments encompassed such a diverse range of associations and institutions, labor activities, and patterns of stratification.⁸⁸

The investigation relies on textual analysis of qualitative data and incorporates a variety of sources. Association meeting minutes and most importantly organizational charters called *compromissos* collectively illuminate how Afro-Brazilians ordered themselves within groups. I examine organizational statutes, for example, to provide a

period, where racial and cultural diversity moved from being officially vilified to valorized by political and cultural leaders in Latin America; see Lawrence A. Clayton and Michael L. Conniff, *A History of Modern Latin America* (Austin: Harcourt and Brace, 1999), 352-357.

⁸⁸ For classic urban histories of the period see June Hahner, *Poverty and Politics: The Urban Poor in Brazil, 1870-1920* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1986); and Chalhoub, *Visões da liberdade*; and *Trabalho, lar, e botequim: o cotidiano dos trabalhadores no Rio de Janeiro da belle époque* (Campinas: Editora Unicamp, 2001). In rural environments, historian Hebe Maria Mattos has argued that former slaves were able to access land through purchase or rental without impediment and were, thus, well integrated into a peasantry in which color had little significance. See Hebe Maria Mattos, *Ao sul da história: lavradores pobres na crise do trabalho escravo*, 2nd ed. (Rio de Janeiro: Editora FGV; Faperj, 2009); Hebe Maria Mattos de Castro, *Das cores do silêncio: os significados da liberdade no sudeste escravista, Brasil, século XIX* (Rio de Janeiro: Arquivo Nacional, 1995); and “Beyond Masters and Slaves: Subsistence Agriculture as a Survival Strategy in Brazil during the Second Half of the Nineteenth Century,” *Hispanic American Historical Review* 68, no. 3 (August 1988): 461-489. In recent years, this thesis has faced new challenges. For research refuting the idea that color had no significance among rural laborers, see Naro, *A Slave’s Place, A Master’s World*, 117, 161, and 163-164; Mary Ann Mahony, “Afro-Brazilians, Land Reform, and the Question of Social Mobility in Southern Bahia, 1880-1920,” *Luso-Brazilian Review* 34, no.2 (Winter 1997): 59, and 73-74; and Karl Monsma “Symbolic Conflicts, Deadly Consequences: Fights between Italians and Blacks in Western São Paulo, 1888-1914,” *Journal of Social History* 39, no.4 (Summer 2006): 1123-1152.

picture of general membership and leadership criteria. Organizational statutes provide precise information about the financial and ceremonial responsibilities of officers including those who sponsored festivals for patron saints, which represented the most important event in a sodality's calendar year besides Holy Week.

Compromissos reveal a great deal about organizational prerogatives and intentions, but do not necessarily indicate how sodalities behaved. Other types of records such as meeting minutes (*atas*) do that job. Unfortunately, confraternity records are notoriously fragmented and collection documents from black sodalities in São Paulo are piecemeal at best. Associations rarely handed over complete sets of member records to their local diocese to be archived. If records did remain with the confraternity and not in the homes of officers, the materials the associations forwarded to local archives generally left out as much as they passed on, since associational leaders were reluctant to dismantle their records and historical patrimony.⁸⁹ For example, the only black brotherhood that had member entry records available in the ecclesiastic archive was the Brotherhood of Saint Benedict. In order to conserve paper, however, association secretaries reused pages of member entry books at various times and with different levels of legibility leaving the membership data in a state of disarray.⁹⁰ Several secretaries indicated the dues members paid and the offices members held beside their initial, entrance record, while other scribes did not. Lack of consistency in record keeping patterns, a common problem which plagues use of institutional records, represented a challenge in this study.

⁸⁹ Mariza Soares et al., "Slavery in Ecclesiastical Archives: Preserving the Records," *Hispanic American Historical Review* 86, no.2 (May 2006): 337-338.

⁹⁰ Assessing the number of members who joined each year for the Brotherhood of Saint Benedict did not represent a research priority, since I would not be able to compare it to other black confraternities in the city. No primary membership records for these sodalities were available in the church archive. Additionally, though I was able to distinguish between slaves and free members, there was no way to disaggregate what percentage of free members were free people of color since only former slaves would have been identified in records among the free.

The Brotherhood of Saint Ephigênia and São Elesbão represented the only confraternity records, which included meeting minutes for the nineteenth century in the church archive. Other documents in the church archive unique to the Brotherhood of Saint Ephigênia and São Elesbão included a single inventory and three receipt books.⁹¹ As in the case of the Brotherhood of Saint Benedict, recording secretaries did not practice the same level of standardization over the years, and toward the end of the 1880s the level of detail maintained in the account books fell precipitously. The church archive also included single uncatalogued folders for each confraternity included in the study. The folder of the Brotherhood of Saint Ephigênia and São Elesbão held the most useful material, because the file held documentation collected as part of an ecclesiastic trial between the sodality and the diocese in 1890. With the exception of the Brotherhood of Saint Ephigênia and São Elesbão, the uncatalogued folder material generally consisted of correspondence dating from the late 1890s to 1930 between the brotherhoods and the diocese requesting permission to hold patron saints festivals and Holy Week commemorations.

Fortunately, every confraternity and secular association included in the study had at least one organizational charter available for review, and more source materials complement sodality sources. Baptism and obituary records, for example, provide demographic information about confraternity leaders and the overall slave and free population. Reports from diocese officials, local newspapers, travel writings, and publications by local city chroniclers work in tandem to enrich our knowledge of Afro-Brazilian participatory patterns in church life and civic ritual in São Paulo. Later chapters

⁹¹ ACMSp, Irmandade de Santa Efigênia e Santo Elesbão, Caixa, 1852-1909, 04-02-08, Receitas e Despesas, 04-02-29; and Receitas e Despesas, 07-03-41.

of the dissertation rely on organizational charters from secular black associations, which include a predominantly black chapter of the Masons, an emancipation commemoration society, and two beneficence groups. The secular groups analyzed include the Luiz Gama Chapter Masonic Lodge (Maçonica Loja Capitular Luiz Gama) named after the noted Afro-Brazilian abolitionist Luiz Gama (1830-1882) established in 1894;⁹² the Thirteenth of May Club of Black Men of São Paulo (1902); the Beneficent Society of Men of Color (1906) and the Federated Center of Men of Color (1914).⁹³

Examinations of newspaper articles, almanacs, baptismal records, and obituaries from the city have helped generate and flesh out biographical sketches for as many confraternity leaders as possible. The varied source materials provide clues to better indicate the status of individual lay brotherhood members within their social milieu, while concurrently bringing attention to the details of their lives. Atlantic world scholarship⁹⁴ has reached a juncture where historians have begun to privilege the practice of collecting life stories or microhistories for the single or multiple subjects of their

⁹² AESP, Sociedades Civis, Estatuas/Compromissos, Sociedade Maçônica Loja Capitular Luiz Gama, 10/4/1897, C10389. The identifying dated listed as 10/4/1897 indicates the date on which the provincial government approved the group's organizational statutes, not the association's date of establishment.

⁹³ AESP, Sociedades Civis, Estatuas/Compromissos, Club 13 de Maio de Homens Pretos, 17/10/1902, C10393; Sociedades Civis, Estatuas/Compromissos, Sociedade Beneficente dos Homens de Cor, 8/1/1909, C10401; and Sociedades Civis, Estatuas/Compromissos, Centro da Federação dos Homens de Côr de São Paulo, 28/08/1914, C10414.

⁹⁴ The idea of the Atlantic world emphasizes the predominant inter-relations between the Americas, Africa, and Europe. The movement of people, ideas, and products across the Atlantic characterize and greatly influence life on all three continents from the fifteenth century to the present. From an Africanist perspective, the Atlantic world conceptualization attempts to dismantle Eurocentric versions of modern history by emphasizing and framing Europe as a powerful, though not unaccompanied actor in the processes leading to modernization, which hinge on movements of labor and goods from both Africa and various parts of the Americas. For further explanation and exploration of the concept of the Atlantic world, see Thornton, *Africa and Africans*, 1-42; Hawthorne, *From Africa to Brazil*, 1-2; for critiques of Atlantic history see Alison Games, "Atlantic History: Definitions, Challenges, and Opportunities," *American Historical Review* 111, no.3 (June 2006): 741-757; Jorge Cañizares-Esguerra, "Entangled Histories: Borderland Historiographies in New Clothes?" *American Historical Review* 112, no.3 (June 2007): 787-789; Peter Coclanis, "Atlantic World or Atlantic/World?" *William and Mary Quarterly*, Third Series, 63, no. 4 (October 2006): 725-742; and "Drang Nach Osten: Bernard Bailyn, the World-Island, and the idea of Atlantic History," *Journal of World History* 13, no.1 (Spring 2002): 169-182.

research.⁹⁵ Historian Lara Putnam explains that this focus at the micro level is not simply an attempt to use individuals to humanize the narratives developed by previous generations. She argues that this focus raises novel questions and opens new areas of inquiry, because the shift in perspective from the macro to the micro challenges “...our understanding of the processes themselves.”⁹⁶

Quantitative data analyses, while used sparingly, worked to provide several rudimentary characterizations of black confraternity members in the nineteenth century. For example, utilization of church obituaries, which served as official records of death in the city of São Paulo until 1858, facilitated cultivation of a basic profile of the people buried under the auspices of each black confraternity in the city. In regard to the living, I used membership data generated by Raul Joviano Amaral in the organizational history of the Brotherhood of Our Lady of the Rosary of Black Men of São Paulo to develop a precursory sense of the gender ratio among participants and to develop an incipient profile of confraternity leaders.

⁹⁵ For examples of canonical works of microhistory see Carlo Ginzburg, *The Cheese and the Worms: The Cosmos of a Sixteenth-Century Miller* trans., John and Anne Tedeschi (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1980); Natalie Zemon Davis, *The Return of Martin Guerre* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1983); and Giovanni Levi, *Inheriting Power: The Story of an Exorcist*, trans. Lydia G. Cochrane (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988). For microhistorical works framed in an African diaspora/Atlantic world context see Lisa Lindsay and John Wood Sweet, ed., *Biography and the Black Atlantic* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013); Roquinaldo Ferreira, *Cross-Cultural Exchange in the Atlantic World: Angola and Brazil during the Era of the Slave Trade* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 2-3; Sweet, *Domingos Álvares*; and Jon F. Sensbach, *Rebecca's Revival: Creating Black Christianity in the Atlantic World* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2005). For discussion of microhistory methodology see Lara Putnam, “To Study the Fragments/Whole: Microhistory and the Atlantic World,” *Journal of Social History* 39, no. 3 (Spring 2006): 615-630; Rebecca J. Scott, “Small-Scale Dynamics of Large-Scale Processes,” *American Historical Review* 105, no. 2 (2000): 472-479; and Jill Lepore, “Historians Who Love Too Much: Reflections on Microhistory and Biography,” *Journal of American History* 88, no.1 (June 2001): 129-144.

⁹⁶ Putnam, “To Study the Fragments,” 615.

The Construction of Race and Space

Exactly who were black confraternity members? Knowing precisely how individuals classified themselves in terms of color, ethnicity, and race at every moment of their lives is not possible, and the bulk of confraternity records do not reveal individual thoughts and sentiments in writing about how members understood black identity. Without a corpus of slave narratives or autobiographies produced by slaves or former bondsmen in Brazil, certain aspects of their self-conceptions will remain forever unknown.⁹⁷

Additionally, the standards used by scholars to discuss identity vary both by discipline and practitioner.⁹⁸ Therefore, I take an intentionally cautious approach to making definitive claims about identity in the study. Scholarship focused on people moved in or as a result of the African diaspora have been especially difficult to untangle in terms of self-conception, since institutional documentation rarely indicate if designations provided in secular or ecclesiastic records were assigned by scribes or given by the individuals themselves. There has also been extensive debate over whether ethnic identifiers represented autochthonous, locally or regionally derived frameworks of

⁹⁷ For discussion of non-fiction writings produced by and on behalf of Afro-Brazilians see Robert Krueger, "Brazilian Slaves Represented in their Own Words," *Slavery and Abolition* 23, no.2 (September 2002): 169-186; Sandra Lauderdale Graham, "Writing from the Margins: Brazilian Slaves and Written Culture," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 49, no. 3 (2007): 611-636; and Robert Conrad, *Children of God's Fire: A Documentary History of Black Slavery in Brazil* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983), 23-28. For discussion of the unrecoverability of certain aspects of historical experience especially for non-elite subjects, see Gayatri Spivak, "Can the Subaltern Speak?" in *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*, ed. Cary Nelson and Lawrence Grossberg (Urbana, Illinois: University of Illinois Press, 1988), 271-313; and Florencia Mallon, "The Promise and Dilemma of Subaltern Studies," *American Historical Review* (December 1994): 1491-1515.

⁹⁸ For criticism of lack of uniformity and analytical rigor in utilizations of the term identity, see Frederick Cooper and Rogers Brubaker, "Beyond Identity," *Theory and Society* 29, no. 1 (February 2000): 1-2 and 5-16.

belonging or if such designations simply reflected ports of captive departure.⁹⁹ The meanings of these various designations have generated more debate than consensus.¹⁰⁰

On the other hand, documents that record provenance or color should not be wholly dismissed when existent sources that reference Afro-Brazilians are so fleeting.¹⁰¹ Black sodality participants clearly slipped in and out of ecclesiastic records in quick glimpses that can sometimes be retraced in baptismal, marriage, and obituary records. Yet again, even when church vital statistic records can be located, the scholar and reader must not forget that the terms of preference in racial designations, like in all language, changed over time, so that the mulatto of the 1750s was displaced by the *pardo* of the 1850s in church records.¹⁰²

⁹⁹ See Midlo Hall, *African Ethnicities*, 5-21; Peter Caron, “‘Of a Nation Which Others Do Not Understand’: Bambara Slaves and African Ethnicity in Colonial Louisiana, 1718-60,” *Slavery and Abolition* 18, no.1 (1997): 98-121; James H. Sweet, “The Quiet Violence of Ethogenesis,” *William and Mary Quarterly* 68, no.2 (April 2011): 210-211; and “Mistaken Identities? Oluadah Equinao, Domingos Álvares, and the Methodological Challenges of Studying the Africa Diaspora,” *American Historical Review* 114, no. 2 (April 2009): 279-306; Vincent Carreta, “Response to Paul Lovejoy’s ‘Autobiography and Memory: Gustavus Vassa, Alias Oluadah Equinao, the African,’” *Slavery and Abolition* 28, no.1 (May 2007): 115-119; Paul E. Lovejoy “ ‘Autobiography and Memory: Gustavus Vassa, Alias Oluadah Equinao, the African,’ ” *Slavery and Abolition* 27, no. 3 (December 2006): 317-347; David Northrup, “Becoming African: Identity Formation Among Liberated Slaves in Nineteenth-Century Sierra Leone,” *Slavery and Abolition* 27, no.1 (April 2006): 1-21; and “Igbo and Myth Igbo: Culture and Ethnicity in the Atlantic World, 1600-1850,” *Slavery and Abolition* 21 (June 2000): 1-20; and Douglas B. Chambers, “The Significance of Igbo in the Bight of Biafra Slave-Trade: A Rejoinder to Northrup’s Myth Igbo,” *Slavery and Abolition* 21 (2002): 101-120; Robin Law, “Ethnicity and the Slave Trade: ‘Lucumi’ and ‘Nago’ as Ethnoyms in West Africa,” *History in Africa* 24 (1997): 205-219; and J. Lorand Matory, “The English Professors of Brazil: On the Diasporic Roots of the Yoruba Nation,” *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 41, no. 1 (January 1999): 72-103.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

¹⁰¹ Butler, *Freedoms Given, Freedoms Won*, 9-10, and 15.

¹⁰² See Richard Jenkins, “Categorization: Identity, Social Process, and Epistemology,” *Current Sociology* 48, no.3 (July 2000): 7-25. Also see Eliana Maria Rea Goldschmidt, *Casamentos mistos: liberdade e escravidão em São Paulo colonial* (São Paulo: Annablume, 2004) for evidence of the usage of more descriptive terms of color in ecclesiastic records for the colonial period in São Paulo. For evidence of the predominance of categorical racial terminology in church records in the nineteenth century, which relied nearly exclusively on use of the words “preto” and “pardo” see *Africanos na Santa Casa de Porto Alegre: óbitos dos escravos sepultados no Cemitério da Santa Casa (1850-1885)* (Porto Alegre: EST, 2007); ACMSP, Livros de batismo, Sé, Escravos, (1795-1803), 03-01-41; and Livros de batismo, Sé, Livres, (1799-1804), 02-03-39. For discussion of the preference for particular racial designation terms in institutional records such as the census, see Melissa Nobles, *Shades of Citizenship: Race and Census in Modern Politics* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000), 89, 104, and 107.

It must be remembered that the Catholic Church's institutional preference for categorical rather than descriptive racial terminology in ecclesiastic sources did not erase popular patterns of racial identification, which relied heavily on descriptions of color, facial features, and hair texture.¹⁰³ Lilia Moritz Schwarcz analyzed newspaper advertisements of runaway slaves and of bondsmen that were for sale; her work has shown that those submitting advertisements tended to include precise descriptions of color to facilitate ease of identification.¹⁰⁴ The difference in identification patterns between the church and populace emphasized the different ways that race or color could be rendered at the same historical moment in disparate sources. While institutional record keepers showed preference for a less complicated classification system,¹⁰⁵ the general populace maintained innumerable descriptions of color.¹⁰⁶ The different approach to categorization taken by individuals and the Catholic Church points directly to the flexibility intrinsic to the process of establishing racial categorization criteria and the varied ways racial classification could be assessed. Notions of race and color exhibited malleability precisely because the concepts and their boundaries are unfixed social constructions, which involved prevailing social discourse, but also subjectivity.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰³ See Harry W. Hutchinson, "Race Relations in a Rural Community in the Bahian Recôncavo" in *Race and Class in Rural Brazil*, ed. Charles Wagley (Paris: UNESCO, 1952), 16-46 for discussion of the combination of criteria used in assigning racial nomenclature.

¹⁰⁴ Schwarcz, *Retrato em branco em negro*, 128-156.

¹⁰⁵ Hutchinson, "Race Relations in Rural Community," 29; the author noted, "Pardo is a term not often used in speech. It is one of the official classifications used in the census and on identification papers."

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.; and Marvin Harris "Race Relations in Minas Velhas, a Community in the Mountain Region of Central Brazil" in *Race and Class in Rural Brazil*, ed. Charles Wagley (Paris: UNESCO, 1952), 57-58.

¹⁰⁷ Henry Louis Gates Jr., "Writing 'Race' and the Difference it Makes," in "'Race,' Writing, and Difference," ed., Henry Louis Gates, special issue, *Critical Inquiry* 12, no.1 (Autumn 1985):1-20, especially 4-5; Harris, "Race Relations in Minas Velhas," 57-58; Kathryn Burns, "Unfixing Race," in Laura Gotkowitz, ed., *Histories of Race and Racism: the Andes and Mesoamerica from Colonial Times to the Present* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2011), 57-71; Sinclair Thomson, "Was There Race in Colonial Latin America? Identifying Selves and Others in the Insurgent Andes," in Laura Gotkowitz, ed., *Histories of Race and Racism: the Andes and Mesoamerica from Colonial Times to the Present* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2011), 72-91; Joanne Rappaport, "'Asi lo paresce por su aspeto': Physiognomy and

The concept of race should be understood as a narrative driven social construction, which has no “social significance” on its own “...but which operates as a shuttle between socially constructed meanings and practices, between subjective interpretation and lived, material reality.”¹⁰⁸ Though scholars overwhelmingly agree that categories of race are arbitrary and do not denote biological difference,¹⁰⁹ the tropes associated with particular groups contain value-laden and hierarchically imbued social meaning. Therefore, though race is simply an idea, it has had clear effects on patterns of social and labor organization in the Americas and across the Atlantic world.¹¹⁰

The term space is another important concept used in this study, since I argue in several instances that the churches where confraternities met served as important sites

the Construction of Difference in Colonial Bogotá,” *Hispanic American Historical Review* 91, no. 4 (November 2011): 601-631; Robert C. Schwaller, “‘Mulata, Hija de Negro y India’: Afro-Indigenous Mulatos in Early Colonial Mexico,” *Journal of Social History* 44, no. 3 (Spring 2011): 889-914; and Nancy E. van Deusen, “Seeing Indians in Sixteenth-Century Castile,” *William and Mary Quarterly* 69, no. 2 (April 2012): 205-234.

¹⁰⁸ Michael Hanchard, *Orpheus and Power: The Movimento Negro of Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo, Brazil, 1945-1998* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), 4 and 14; and Howard Winant, “Race and Race Theory,” *Annual Review of Sociology* 26, (2000): 172; and Gates, “Writing ‘Race,’” 4-5.

¹⁰⁹ Edouard Machery and Luc Faucher, “Social Construction and the Concept of Race,” *Philosophy of Science*, 72, no. 5 (December 2005): 1208-1209; and Ron Mallon, “‘Race’: Normative, Not Metaphysical or Semantic,” *Ethics* 116, no. 3 (April 2006): 525-551; for analysis of critiques of the concept of race as a social construction see Lisa Gannett, “The Biological Reification of Race,” *British Journal for the Philosophy of Science* 55, no. 2 (June 2004): 323-345; John Hartigan Jr., “The End of Social Construction: What Comes Next?” *Social Analysis* 49, no. 2 (Summer 2005): 205-212; also see Ann Morning, *The Nature of Race: How Scientists Think and Teach about Human Difference* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2011), 7-8 for an assessment and argumentation that there is no consensus among medical or social scientists regarding the nature of race.

¹¹⁰ For critical works in the historiography on race in the Americas see Marvin Harris, *Patterns of Race in the Americas* (New York: Walker, 1964); Richard Graham, ed., *The Idea of Race in Latin America* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1990); Nancy Leys Stephan, *The Hour of Eugenics’: Race, Gender, and Nation in Latin America* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991); Nancy Appelbaum, Anne Macpherson, and Karin Alejanda Roseblatt, ed., *Race and Nation in Modern Latin America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 2003); Ben Vinson III, *Bearing Arms for His Majesty: The Free Colored Militia in Colonial Mexico* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001), chapter 6 and 226-228; Maria Elena Martinez, “The Black Blood of New Spain: Limpieza de Sangre, Racial Violence, and Gendered Power in Early Colonial Mexico,” *William and Mary Quarterly* 61, no.3 (July 2004): 479-520, especially 483-486; and for historiographical discussion of concepts of race in Brazil see Hanchard, *Orpheus and Power*, 14-25; and Butler, *Freedoms Given, Freedoms Won*, 49-66. Also see Jeffrey Lesser, *Negotiating National Identity: Immigrants, Minorities, and the Struggle for Ethnicity in Brazil* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1999) for work focused on non-European immigration to Brazil, which complicates and challenges a singular focus on black/white identity paradigms.

where cultural articulations of black identities could be configured and communally performed. I utilize the term space because the points of assembly in which black Baroque Catholicism arose could and did move. The Church of Our Lady of the Rosary, for example, had part of its churchyard expropriated by the city in 1872, several decades before the entire church was knocked down and relocated by the municipal government to make way for a public plaza in 1904.¹¹¹ Sites of black assembly, even formal institutions such as churches, were vulnerable to dislocation, which threatened their viability, visibility, and permanency in the built environment of the city.¹¹²

Theorist Edward Soja warns against approaching space as “fixed, dead, and undialectical.”¹¹³ What is encompassed in a given territory has a history and is not simply a neutral, natural occurrence anywhere, but especially in urban environments. Soja’s intellectual predecessor, Henri Lefebvre, places great emphasis on the idea of social spaces as products generated through human activity and events. In his seminal text, *The Production of Space*, Lefebvre noted,

“In reality, social space ‘incorporates social actions, the actions of subjects both individual and collective ... From the point of view of these subjects, the behavior of their space is at once vital and mortal: within it they develop, give expression to themselves, and encounter prohibition; there they perish, and that same space contains their graves... All ‘subjects’ are situated in a space in which they must recognize themselves or lose themselves, a space which they may enjoy or modify.”¹¹⁴

¹¹¹ Martins, *São Paulo antigo*, 322, and 325-329.

¹¹² For more on the idea of cities as built environments in general and as applied to Brazil see Denise L. Lawrence and Setha M. Low, “The Built Environment and Spatial Form,” *Annual Review of Anthropology* 19 (1990): 453-505; James R. Curtis, “Praças, Place, and Public Life in Urban Brazil,” *Geographical Review* 90, no. 4 (October 2000): 475-492; Anton Rosenthal, “Spectacle, Fear, and Protest: A Guide to the History of Urban Space in Latin America,” *Social Science History* 24, no.1 (Spring 2000): 33-73; and Axel Borsdorf, “The Latin American City and the Symbolic Impact of Built Environment,” *GeoJournal* 15, no.1 (July 1987): 57-62.

¹¹³ Edward Soja, *Postmodern Geographies: The Reassertion of Space in Critical Social Theory* (New York: Verso, 1989), 7.

¹¹⁴ Henri Lefebvre, *The Production Space*, trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith (Malden, Massachusetts: 1991), 33-34.

The gathering of people who self-designated as blacks and the activities they conducted in the various sites they used as meeting places, which included chapels, graveyards, procession routes, and homes became the “social product” or the “stuff” that fleshed out black identities in the context of confraternities. While donning the colors of favored saints, performing recitations of creeds, drumming and dancing at festivals in public plazas may seem mundane or unimportant in the face of a system of enslavement, these activities affirmed the humanity of participants deemed as chattel property. Confraternity activity linked the enslaved and the free and incorporated association members and leaders into the civic and religious life of the city. Sodalities served as important sites for slaves and free people of color wherein they could avoid “social death” and the racial stigma and marginalization that persisted even after their enslavement ended.¹¹⁵

Definition of Terms

In this dissertation, I use the term “black” (*preto*) based on its usage in original archival documentation. Two confraternities established in eighteenth century São Paulo identified their associations as collectives of “homens pretos” (black men).¹¹⁶ The words *preto* and *negro* can both be translated as black in English, but in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries the word *preto* was a more neutral term used to describe Africans or African descendants. The term *preto* signified that the person in discussion had dark skin and physical appearance that would not be construed as having multi-racial origins. The word *preto* served as a more polite way to refer to dark skinned Africans or African

¹¹⁵ See Orlando Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death: A Comparative Study* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1982).

¹¹⁶ ACMSP, Compromisso da Irmandade de Nossa Senhora do Rosário dos Homens Pretos de São Paulo, 1778, 01-03-08; and Uncatalogued Folder, Santa Efigênia, Nsra da Conceição, No. 2, Compromisso 1859.

descendants, since by the sixteenth century the term *negro* was employed in a way that became almost synonymous with the word “slave.”¹¹⁷

I refer to freed slaves in this project as *libertos or forros*. The term *livre* refers to persons of African descent born free in Brazil, unless otherwise noted. From 1830 onward, the term *Africanos livres* begins to appear in ecclesiastic records in São Paulo, and this term refers to Africans who were set free by courts after 1831, when the slave trade to Brazil became illegal as a result of international treaties with the British. These free Africans are also known as *emancipados*.¹¹⁸

The word *pardo* refers to persons of African and European ancestry, whose phenotypical expression visually indicated a multiracial heritage.¹¹⁹ The term is often used synonymously with the word mulatto. In Brazil, physical traits that were considered biological expressions of a multi-racial African and European heritage included light brown to white skin, loosely curled to straight hair, as well as a host of other physical and facial traits.¹²⁰

I use the term white to refer to persons of Portuguese or European lineage. However, the category of white should be considered as complicated and convoluted as other designations. For example, it is clear that during early colonization, Amerindian women were vulnerable to sexual coercion, concubinage, and rape, though they sometimes voluntarily partnered and married Portuguese and other European settlers. The children of these unions, called *mamelucos*, could become members of white society especially during the colony’s early settlement depending on the level of wealth and

¹¹⁷ Karasch, *Slave Life in Rio*, 5.

¹¹⁸ Robert Conrad, *Destruction of Brazilian Slavery, 1850-1888*, 2nd ed. (Malabar, Florida: Krieger Publishing Company, 1993), 23 and 26.

¹¹⁹ Karasch, *Slave Life in Rio*, 6.

¹²⁰ Hutchinson, “Race Relations in a Rural Community,” 29.

influence of individual mothers or fathers and on imperial Portuguese population agendas or initiatives.¹²¹ As such, those who fell into the category of whites exhibited a varied range of phenotypical expression.¹²² Even with its diversity, whiteness was absolutely understood as a marker of economic privilege, social rank, and good health.¹²³

Finally, and most importantly, I use the term “black” and “Afro-Brazilian” in a manner which generally subsumes African born and Brazilian born African descendants, though there are moments when I distinguish between these groups based on the location of birth. The moments where I distinguish among “blacks” or “Afro-Brazilians” are clearly marked or articulated in the text. Finally, I also occasionally employ the term “free coloreds,” which I take from the work of demographic historians Francisco Vidal Luna and Herbert S. Klein. “Free coloreds” refer collectively to people born free with at least one parent of African heritage or of African descent. It also includes liberated slaves.¹²⁴

Dissertation Objectives

This study provides a long range examination of the three black confraternities in São Paulo from 1850 to 1920 to better understand how wealth influenced social relations among Afro-Brazilians and to better grasp the bonds which linked free confraternity members to those still in bondage. The research highlights the internal organization of the

¹²¹ Timothy Coates, *Convicts and Orphans: Forces and State Sponsored Colonizers in the Portuguese Empire, 1550-1755* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001), 81; Boxer, *Race Relations*, 93-95; and Maria Luiza Marcílio, *A cidade de São Paulo: povoamento e população, 1750-1850* (São Paulo: Pioneira; Universidade de São Paulo, 1974), 32-33.

¹²² Marcílio, *A cidade de São Paulo*, 32-33; Hutchinson, “Race Relations in a Rural Community,” 28; and Mattoso, *To be a Slave*, 198-199.

¹²³ Skidmore, *Black into White*, 39-40, and 44; Kirsten Schultz, *Tropical Versailles: Empire, Monarchy, and Portuguese Royal Court in Rio de Janeiro, 1808-1821* (New York: Routledge, 2001), 121; and Stanley E. Blake, *The Vigorous Core of Our Nationality: Race and Regional Identity in Northeastern Brazil* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2011), 100-101.

¹²⁴ Luna and Klein, *Slavery and the Economy*, 158.

various Afro-Brazilian confraternities in the city and illuminates the written and unwritten criteria members used to select executive and ceremonial officers. Investigation results suggest that confraternities served as attractive institutions and spaces of belonging based on their ability to provide individuals and the collective corporate membership opportunities to serve as patrons and to participate in collaborative and communal beneficence activities. Synthesis and analysis of executive leader life histories suggest that financially secure people of African descent did not consistently choose to forsake black identities, despite access to wealth as historiography has suggested.¹²⁵ Africans and African descendants did not find “buying” symbolic whiteness as their only alternative.¹²⁶

Recent publications have demonstrated that conceptual frameworks, belief systems, and ritual practices from various indigenous African religions flourished in Brazilian society among the enslaved and the free.¹²⁷ Like the rest of the population,

¹²⁵ Ann Twinam, *Public Lives, Private Secrets: Gender, Honor, Sexuality, and Illegitimacy in Colonial Spanish America* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999), 44, 114, and 307-313, for analysis of purchasing whiteness through the “*gracias al sacar*” in colonial Spanish America. Brazilianist scholarship has also widely argued that if blacks could access wealth, they were likely to distance themselves from other blacks to confirm and demonstrate their class mobility. See Charles Wagley, ed. *Race and Class in Rural Brazil* (Paris: UNESCO, 1952); Octavio Ianni and F.H. Cardoso, *Cor e mobilidade social em Florianópolis: aspectos das relações entre negros e brancos numa comunidade do Brasil meridional* (São Paulo: Companhia Editora Nacional, 1960), 183; Skidmore, *Black into White*, 40 and 44; Jerry Dávila, *Diploma of Whiteness: Race and Social Policy in Brazil, 1917-1945* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003), 6-7; and Sales Augusto dos Santos and Laurence Hallewell, “Historical Roots of the “Whitening” of Brazil,” *Latin American Perspectives* 29, no. 1 (January 2002): 61-82. For the most noted example of the “mulatto escape hatch” argument see Carl N. Degler, *Neither Black nor White: Slavery and Race Relations in Brazil and the United States* (New York: The MacMillian Company, 1971), especially 15-107. For work refuting the Degler thesis see Silva, “Updating the Cost of Not Being White in Brazil,” 42-55; and Wood and Carvalho, *The Demography of Inequality in Brazil*.

¹²⁶ For evidence of financially secure freedmen participating in black identified spaces see Frank, *Dutra’s World*, 122-125 and 135-138; and also see Eduardo Silva, *Prince of the People: The Life and Times of a Brazilian Free Man of Colour*, trans. Moyra Ashford (New York: Verso, 1993).

¹²⁷ The works documenting the practice of African religion in Brazil are too numerous to cite. For important examples relying on historical evidence see Sweet, *Domingos Álvares*; and *Recreating Africa*; Hawthorne, *From Africa to Brazil*, chapters 5 and 6; Mello e Souza, *The Devil and the Land of the Holy Cross*; Rachel Harding, *Refuge in Thunder: Candomblé and Alternative Spaces of Blackness* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2000); Reis, *Domingos Sodré, um sacerdote africano: escravidão, liberdade, e*

black sodality members in the nineteenth century participated in a larger sphere where African cultural influence was present and prominent, though maligned,¹²⁸ and it influenced their collective ongoing encounter with Catholicism. African and Afro-Brazilian confraternity members, like those beyond the fold of the church, used drumming and bodily movement, for example, beholden to their non-European origins to celebrate the lives of the saints. Old ways showed up even in newly adopted rituals, and the study provides modest preliminary data documenting religious customs performed by black confreres in the city of São Paulo in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century.

The research data also breaks new ground by demonstrating connections between leaders of black confraternities and the development of black secular civic groups focused on racial uplift and mutual aid in the first thirty years after abolition. The project is unique in its capacity to link pre-emancipation social relationships to post-emancipation secular organizations. By tracing the development of formally organized

candomblé na Bahia do século XIX (São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 2008); and “Candomblé in Nineteenth Century Bahia: Priests, Followers, Clients,” in *Rethinking the African Diaspora: The Making of a Black Atlantic World in the Bight of Benin*, ed. Kristin Mann and Edna Bay (London: Frank Cass, 2001), 116-134; J. Lorand Matory, *Black Atlantic Religion: Tradition, Transnationalism, and Matriarchy in the Afro-Brazilian Candomblé* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005); Roger Bastide, *African Religions in Brazil: Towards a Sociology of the Interpenetration of Civilizations*, trans. Helen Sebba (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University, 1978); Robert Slenes, “Great Porpoise-Skull Strike: Central African Water Spirits and Slave Identity in Early-Nineteenth-Century Rio de Janeiro,” in *Central Africans and Cultural Transformations in the American Diaspora*, ed. Linda Heywood (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 183-210; and “‘Malungo ngoma vem!’,” 48-67. For important recent historical works documenting the influence of West and West Central African spiritual systems and practices in the wider Atlantic see Ras Michael Brown, *African-Atlantic Cultures and the South Carolina Lowcountry* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012); Jason R. Young, *Rituals of Resistance: African Atlantic Religion in Kongo and the Lowcountry South in the Era of Slavery* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2007); Linda Haywood, ed., *Central Africa and Cultural Transformations in the American Diaspora* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002); and Philip A. Howard, *Changing History: Afro-Cuban Cabildos and Societies of Color in the Nineteenth Century* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1998), chapters 2 and 3.

¹²⁸ For discussion of the prominence and prejudice directed toward African culture in the province of São Paulo in the nineteenth century, see Moritz Schwarcz, *Retrato em branco e negro*, 109-112, 120-123, and 222-224; Dias, *Quotidiano e poder*, 241-242; Slenes, “‘Malungo ngoma vem!’,” 48-67; Machado, *O plano e o pânico*, 99-125, especially 114-120; Moraes, *Arranjos e timbres*, 590-592 and 599-601; and Wissenbach, *Sonhos africanos*.

social networks and associative spaces before and after slave abolition, I am able to provide a longer perspective and deeper analysis of the types of socialization patterns which prevailed among blacks in associations as well as the types of organizational strategies participants used to negotiate and subvert their marginalization across periods of slavery and freedom.

In chapter one of the dissertation, I explore the presence and analyze the levels of religious penetration achieved by Christians and Muslims in West and West Central pre-colonial Africa. Knowing as much as possible about African engagement with non-indigenous religions on the continent helps clarify how Africans framed and understood conversion experiences in the Americas. I argue that Baroque Catholicism's emphasis on collective expressions of devotion as well as the presence of African saints allowed Africans and African descendants to view Catholic saints almost as ancestors, who would earnestly act as special protectors and patrons. I continue the chapter by providing organizational histories for the three black brotherhoods existent in the city and by presenting hagiographies for each organizational patron saint. Individual saint hagiographies are included to serve as a reference section for English speaking students and scholars interested in African diaspora religious history, since most of the scholarly analysis of these saints come from non-English sources.

Chapter two retells the history of São Paulo's settlement and chronicles the conditions that made African slave importation feasible in the capital city and the province. I recount the timetable of slave arrivals to the southeastern region and I identify the agricultural and urban sectors in which bondspeople labored. I outline the contours of life for urban slaves in the provincial capital, especially for those who had their labor

hired out, called *escravos de ganho*, and hence, pay special attention to wages and the cost of living. Wage information is provided to help put the fees and dues associated with confraternity participation for general members and officers in context. In the second section of the chapter, I analyze how black confraternal congregation and utilization of space transformed physical sites in the city. The churches built and administered by black confraternities and their adjoining plazas (*praças*) became coded by Afro-Brazilians and the rest of the populace as locales of black sociability and came to function as “alternative spaces of blackness.”¹²⁹ Analysis of the ways black sodalities celebrated religious and civic festive occasions strongly suggests that blacks used the physical and symbolic space of the brotherhood to imagine and present themselves in a public way that went beyond the bounds of servitude and brutishness associated with blacks and African culture in the Brazilian imagination.¹³⁰ I end the chapter by utilizing obituary records from the city center to show how important black brotherhoods were in the funeral rites and burial ceremonies that linked the living to the dead in the broad Afro-Brazilian population.

Chapter three of the dissertation explores the lives of black brotherhood leaders and officers to better understand their origins, economic activities, marriage patterns, and when possible self-identification. The chapter aims to go beyond the category of “black” to capture the diversity brotherhood leaders and members represented. The chapter addresses women’s participation in black confraternities by exploring the roles of and contributions made by female leaders and members in the face of a hierarchical

¹²⁹ For more on the concept of “alternative spaces of blackness” see Harding, *Refuge in Thunder*, 14, 105-107, 116, 121, and 123.

¹³⁰ See Azevedo, *Onda negra, medo branco*, especially 251-58; and Moritz Schwarcz, *Retrato em branco e negro*, 108-123 and 255.

organization predicated on male authority and leadership. Brotherhoods were not spaces where every individual had an equal say, but despite these differences of power the institutions remained popular sites of assembly and association. Brotherhoods connected Africans and Brazilian born blacks in networks of mutuality beyond family ties, and a continuous segment of the slaves, freed people, and free people in the city of São Paulo forged ties with each other to extend mutual aid among themselves.

In chapter four, I examine a case which details why one black confraternity active for two centuries reached its demise in 1890, by focusing on a nearly two year long dispute between the parish priest, José Camargo de Barros, and the Brotherhood of Saint Ephigênia and Saint Elesbão. Arguments between the priest and the confraternity over who would control the Church of Saint Ephigênia captured the fierce sense of ownership confraternities had over the church property they built. Disagreement about authority in and access to the church led to an ecclesiastic trial and diocese officials dissolved the brotherhood. Before the dissolution decision, however, the leadership of the black brotherhood fought to preserve what they considered to be their property and their right to exist as a church organization. The group hired a lawyer and presented their case to the court of public opinion in a series of newspapers articles, which outlined why they were the legitimate corporate owners of the church. In the end, Catholic Church officials denied the sodality's proprietorial claims, but not before the brotherhood articulated its case and leaders fought to retain their association.

In chapter five of the dissertation, I establish links between black brotherhoods and emergent black civic societies, which organized from 1894-1920. In the immediate post-emancipation period, black brotherhoods served as models for new secular, civic

associations, which utilized and emphasized the mutual aid tradition confraternity members enjoyed. Black confraternity leaders also helped lead new black secular associations. For example, Theophilo Dias de Castro, a brotherhood leader of Our Lady of the Rosary of Black Men of São Paulo for over three decades was also the highest officer of the Luiz Gama Masonic Lodge when it formed in 1894.¹³¹ He and other Rosary Brotherhood members also provided financial backing for the Thirteenth of May Emancipation commemoration society organized in 1902.¹³² In addition to the Luiz Gama Chapter Masonic Lodge (1897), and the Thirteenth of May Club of Black Men of São Paulo (1902), secular post-emancipation civic society pioneers established the Beneficent Society of Men of Color (1906) and the Federated Center of Men of Color (1914).¹³³

Before the 1920s in São Paulo, black secular organizing represented a decidedly male endeavor and organizational charters specifying member admission criteria demonstrated a masculine centered vision of civic participation. The chapter offers preliminary evidence to suggest that Afro-Brazilians used these new associations to articulate new versions of black masculinity and manhood before and at the turn of the twentieth century.¹³⁴ The end of legal bondage for Africans and their descendants meant

¹³¹ AESP, *Sociedades Civis, Estatutos/Compromissos, Sociedade Maçônica Loja Capitular Luiz Gama*, 10/4/1897, C10389; Amaral, *Os pretos do Rosário*, unpagged appendix, and Amaral, *Os pretos do Rosário*, 2nd ed., 124 and 157-168.

¹³² *Ibid.*, and AESP, *Sociedades Civis, Estatutos/Compromissos, Sociedades Civis, Club 13 de Maio de Homens Pretos*, 07/10/1902, C10393.

¹³³ AESP, *Sociedades Civis, Estatutos/Compromissos, Sociedade Maçônica Loja Capitular Luiz Gama*, 10/4/1897, C10389; *Sociedades Civis, Estatutos/Compromissos, Club 13 de Maio de Homens Pretos*, 07/10/1902, C10393; *Sociedades Civis, Estatutos/Compromissos, Sociedade Beneficente dos Homens de Cor*, 8/1/1909, C10401; and *Sociedades Civis, Estatutos/Compromissos, Centro da Federação dos Homens de Côr de São Paulo*, 28/08/1914, C10414. The identifying dated listed indicates the date on which the provincial government approved the group's organizational statutes, not the association's date of establishment.

¹³⁴ See Peter Beattie, "Measures of Manhood: Honor, Enlisted Army Service, and Slavery's Decline in Brazil, 1850-1890," in *Changing Men and Masculinities in Latin America*, ed. Matthew C. Gutmann

that hegemonic ideas about race, gender, and family that existed under the slave regime could be collectively and publically maintained or redefined, and Afro-Brazilians utilized black civic associations as important forums for figuring out and articulating what models of manhood and womanhood would entail.

I conclude by discussing how scholars might re-evaluate the kinds of information black brotherhood records can reveal to researchers about everyday life, processes of conversion, and black civil society. The dissertation shows that the African and African descendants who participated in black identified brotherhoods came from a variety of circumstances and included mixed race and even non-black participants, though the spaces remained sites of heritage and aesthetics that valued non-Western concepts of kinship, music, and dance.¹³⁵ Black confraternal life functioned as a two way passage; it allowed in beliefs and symbols from various West and West Central African cultures, as it more deeply familiarized members with Catholicism.

Sodalities also worked to confirm the privileged status a segment of the African and Afro-Brazilian population achieved. Though public acknowledgement as a white person was a desirable option for many multi-racial people,¹³⁶ it was not the only choice people made nor was it the only option that provided advantages. Afro-Brazilian confraternity participants dedicated themselves to saints, the sharing of resources, and to

(Durham: Duke University Press, 2003), 234-251; “The House, the Street, and Barracks: Reform and Honorable Masculine Space in Brazil,” *Hispanic American Historical Review* 76, no.3 (August 1996): 439-473; and Matthew C. Gutmann, “Introduction,” in *Changing Men and Masculinities in Latin America*, ed. Matthew C. Gutmann (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003), 1-4, for examinations of the concepts of masculinity and manhood in Brazil and Latin America.

¹³⁵ ACMSP, Irmandade de São Benedito, (Centro), Livro de Assentamento das Irmãs, 1803-1854, 02-02-10; Índice das Irmãs – Sem Data, 05-02-25.

¹³⁶ Skidmore, *Black into White*, 39-40 and 44; and Dávila, *Diploma of Whiteness*, 6; and Twinam, *Public Lives, Private Secrets*, 44, 114, 307-313.

spaces of black sociability in eighteenth, nineteenth and twentieth century São Paulo, Brazil.

Chapter 1- African Conversion, Baroque Catholicism, and the Formation of Black Devotions in São Paulo

When African arrivals to the Americas moved through the harrowing conditions intrinsic to the Atlantic slave trade saw statues of ebony hued saints in Catholic churches how did they respond and interpret their presence? Did Catholic priests use saints of African origin as part of their efforts to convert bonded people? Would such a strategy work? This chapter begins by exploring how Portuguese missionaries and Brazilian colonists approached the conversion of Africans in their homelands and in the Americas. The second section of the chapter examines how baroque Catholicism shaped the ritual life of black brotherhoods in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in Brazil. The discussion addresses the factors that made Christianity an attractive and viable spiritual tradition for bondspeople. While African slaves brought to Dutch, English, French, Portuguese, and Spanish territories converted and participated in Christian rituals in both Protestant and Catholic nations alike,¹ I suggest that baroque Catholicism's understanding of "sacred immanence" and its emphasis on access to divinity through

¹ For an introduction to the literature focused on conversion and the development of African diaspora Christian traditions across the Americas see Sensbach, *Rebecca's Revival*; Sylvia Frey and Betty Wood, *Come Shouting to Zion: African-American Protestantism in the American South and British Caribbean to 1830* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998); Mechal Sobel, *Trabelin' On: The Slave Journey to an Afro-Baptist Faith* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1979); Albert Raboteau, *Slave Religion: The 'Invisible Institution' in the Antebellum South* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978); Herman L. Bennett, *Africans in Colonial Mexico: Absolutism, Christianity, and Afro-Creole Consciousness 1570-1640* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2003); Bristol, *Christians, Blasphemers, and Witches*; Mott, *Rosa Egipciaca*; Terry Rey, "Kongolese Catholic Influences on Haitian Popular Catholicism: A Socio-Historical Exploration," in *Central Africans and Cultural Transformation in the American Diaspora*, ed. Linda Heywood (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 265-286; and John K. Thornton, "On the Trail of Voodoo: African Christianity in Africa and the Americas," *Americas* 44, no.3 (January 1988): 261-278.

ritual offerings, corporate devotion, and communal pageantry² played a critical role in facilitating African conversion.

Baroque Catholicism included elements of practice and notions of piety that did not inherently disrupt belief in animist or traditional African religion. Baroque Catholicism established fertile ground for individual and generational transitioning to Christianity by ordering a world filled with saints who responded to prayers and gifts, much like the spirits of African ancestors, and where rosary beads, for example, had the potential to protect one from evil in a similar fashion to Mande *bolsas de mandinga* or to Muslim *gris-gris*.³ African spiritual traditions may have been disrupted very little by the adoption of Catholic saints, and the amorphous nature of baroque Catholicism made it the perfect vehicle for ongoing, decentralized, lay driven conversion processes.

Though baroque Catholicism is most often associated with eighteenth century religious expression, I argue that baroque Catholicism continued at least through the

² Baroque Catholicism generally references the period beginning after the last session of the Council of Trent (1545-1563) in which Bishops aimed to regain the status and prestige lost by the Catholic Church during the emergence of Protestantism during the Reformation. The reforms implemented by Catholic leaders sought to contrast the austere worship centers and experiences of non-Catholics through use of intricately and lavishly adorned built environments for worship, as well as elaborate liturgies, which included music to inspire awe and to renew devotion to God and the Church. For discussion of baroque Catholicism in Europe and the Americas see Marc R. Forester, *Catholic Renewal in the Age of the Baroque: Religious Identity in Southwest Germany, 1550-1750* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001); Jill R. Fehleison, "Appealing to the Senses: The Forty Hours Celebrations in the Duchy of Chablais, 1597-98," *Sixteenth Century Journal* 36, no.2 (Summer 2005): 375, 376, and 380-389; Reis, *Death is a Festival*, 39; Pamela Voekel, *Alone Before God: The Religious Origins of Modernity in Mexico* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2002), 17-42, especially page 19; David A. Brading, "Tridentine Catholicism and Enlightened Despotism in Bourbon Mexico," *Journal of Latin American Studies* 15, no.1 (May 1983): 4-6; Brian Larkin, *The Very Nature of God: Baroque Catholicism and Religious Reform in Bourbon Mexico* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2010); and Jesus A. Ramos-Kittrell, "Music, Liturgy, and Devotional Piety in New Spain: Baroque Religious Culture and the Re-evaluation of Religious Reform during the 18th Century," *Latin American Music Review* 31, no.1 (Spring/Summer 2010): 80-100.

³ Reis, *Death is a Festival*, 52; Kiddy, *Blacks of the Rosary*, 23; Hawthorne, *From Africa to Brazil*, 222-224; George E. Brooks, *Eurafricans in Western Africa: Commerce, Social Status, Gender, and Religious Observance from the Sixteenth to the Eighteenth Century* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2003), 27; and Matt Schaffer, "Bound to Africa: The Mandinka Legacy in the New World," *History in Africa* 32 (2005), 321-323. *Bolsas de mandinga* and *gris-gris* are amulets and talismans used to protect the wearer from evil or misfortune and to ensure safety and well-being.

1850s in Brazil. Baroque Catholicism persisted as the hegemonic framework dictating appropriate expressions of piety well into the nineteenth century, because Catholic reform movements emerged and were implemented late when compared to the countries of Spanish America.⁴ Hence, in São Paulo and the rest of Brazil, black brotherhoods and perhaps all brotherhoods, retained ritual practices and intellectual frameworks characterized by baroque sensibilities that continued until the ultramontane reform movement began its work in the 1840s and 1850s to re-Romanize both the laity and Catholic Church leadership.⁵

African Conversion

Though agricultural and commercial exchange existed between Africa, Asia, and Europe before the trans-Atlantic slave trade, in terms of day-to-day life, the impact of contact with Europe mattered minimally for non-elite, sub-Saharan Africans in terms of cultural practices.⁶ While North African traders introduced and spread Islam across West Africa after the 1000s with varying degrees of success in local societies,⁷ sustained Christianization and evangelization efforts did not begin until the 1500s, about sixty

⁴ For discussion of Catholic reform movements in Spanish America see Margaret Chowning, "Convent Reform, Catholic Reform, and Bourbon Reform in Eighteenth-Century New Spain: The View from the Nunnery," *Hispanic American Historical Review* 85, no.1 (February 2005): 1-37; Larkin, *The Very Nature of God*, 119-153; Voekel, *Alone Before God*; Matthew D. O'Hara, *A Flock Divided: Race, Religion, and Politics in Mexico, 1749-1857* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2010), 56-69.

⁵ See De Groot, *Brazilian Catholicism*, 36, 40-62; Quintão, *Irmandades Negras*, 52-62; and *Catolicismo em São Paulo: 450 anos de presença da Igreja Católica em São Paulo*, org. Ney de Souza (São Paulo: Paulinas, 2004), 342-360.

⁶ John Iliffe, *Africans: The History of a Continent*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 49-52 and 54; George E. Brooks, *Landlords and Strangers: Ecology, Society, and Trade in Western Africa, 1000-1630* (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1993); 13, 23, and especially chapters 3 and 4; Judith A. Carney and Richard Nicholas Rosomoff, *In the Shadow of Slavery: Africa's Botanical Legacy in the Atlantic World* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009), 1-64.

⁷ Brooks, *Landlords and Strangers*, 115-119; Robert M. Baum, *Shrines of the Slave Trade: Diola Religion and Society in Precolonial Senegambia* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 80-81; Daniel F. McCall, "The Cultural Map and Time-Profile of the Mande-Speaking Peoples," in *Papers on the Manding*, ed. Curtis Hodge (Bloomington: Africa Series, Indiana University, Vol. 3, 1971), 27-98; and "Islamization in the Western and Central Sudan in the Eleventh Century," in *Aspects of West African Islam*, ed., Daniel F. McCall and Norman R. Bennett (Boston: African Studies Center, 1971), 1-30.

years after European explorers first began exploration of West and West Central African coasts in the 1440s.⁸ Europeans controlled very little territory on African coasts outside of the trading posts they secured and maintained through formal relations with local rulers.⁹

Missionary endeavors usually emerged after long-term trade relations facilitated permanent ties. For example, while Senegambia and Upper Guinea were the first areas European explorers visited along the West African coast in the 1440s, it was not until the first decade of the 1600s that Portuguese missionaries arrived to evangelize local populations.¹⁰ Jesuits and later Franciscan missionaries had a small degree of success in establishing Christian communities in Upper Guinea, but the practice of local indigenous religion continued even among those participating in Catholic Church rituals. Catholic visitors intermittently “bemoaned the state of Christianity” along the coast, but had few means of changing the situation since few priests arrived in the area and the few that did were accused of placing greater emphasis on “slave trading and womanizing” than conversion.¹¹ The institutional Catholic Church had a weak presence, but Catholic saints and images of the Virgin Mary and Christ were familiar enough to become roughly equated to indigenous concepts.¹² Upper Guineans understood Catholic saints as akin or

⁸ Alvise Cadamosto, *The Voyages of Cadamosto and other Documents on Western Africa in the Second half of the Fifteenth Century*, ed. and trans. by C.R. Crone (London: Hakluyt Society, 1937); Linda Heywood and John K. Thornton, *Central Africans, Atlantic Creoles, and Foundation of the Americas, 1585-1660* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 61-67; and Hawthorne, *From Africa to Brazil*, 226.

⁹ Eltis, *Rise of African Slavery*, 154 and 155; and Thornton, *Africa and Africans*, 67; Brooks, *Eurafricans in West Africa*, 49. Lançados were Portuguese men who settled in African communities and adopted the local customs of their host societies. They typically cohabited with or married local women and lived as traders and often translators for foreign and African merchants. Lançados fell under the jurisdiction of the local communities and rulers where they lived; they rented land and paid taxes to local rulers.

¹⁰ Hawthorne, *From Africa to Brazil*, 226.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 229.

¹² Wyatt MacGaffey, “Dialogues of the Deaf: Europeans on the Atlantic Coast of Africa,” in *Implicit Understandings: Observing, Reporting, and Reflecting on the Encounters between Europeans and Other*

equivalent to their ancestral spirits which they called *nkita* or *tchinas*, and chapels and other sites of Catholic devotion were understood in reference to local spirit shrines called “funcos, bobobas, valboa, enaati, bekin, boekine, and fram” in various coastal communities.¹³

Coastal African people engaged in international commerce had limited but repeated exposure to Christian symbols, though neither Portuguese traders nor missionaries achieved deep penetration into interior African environs until the late nineteenth century in most villages or cities.¹⁴ The largest exception to this general pattern was the Kingdom of Kongo. There the Portuguese state and Catholic Church officials became part of the Kongo cultural fabric as early as the seventeenth century.¹⁵

John Thornton asserts in the sixth chapter of his groundbreaking book *Africa and Africans in the Making of the Atlantic World, 1400-1800* that most scholars interested in the conversion of African people mistakenly begin on American shores. He suggests that while the percentage of Christian Africans arriving in the Americas was small, Catholic priests would have chosen those people to teach other Africans the precepts of the faith. Thornton further argues “...we should consider the conversion of Africans as a continuous process, commencing in Africa and carrying it over to the New World. Moreover, we should understand that it was not entirely dependent upon the slave condition or slave sociology, for at the end, many of the converts were free and even

Peoples in the Early Modern Era, ed. Stuart Schwartz (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 264.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 231; Brooks, *Eurafricans in West Africa*, 25; and Baum, *Shrines of the Slave Trade*, 42-43.

¹⁴ Eltis, *Rise of African Slavery*, 154; Baum, *Shrines of the Slave Trade*, 131; and also see note 9.

¹⁵ Heywood and Thornton, *Central Africans, Atlantic Creoles*, especially chapter 2; John Thornton, *Kongolese Saint Anthony: Dona Beatriz Kimpa Vita and the Antonian Movement, 1684-1706* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998); and Anne Hilton, *Kingdom of Kongo* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985).

powerful.”¹⁶ To support his claims, Thornton focuses on the Kingdom of Kongo where Christian saints, the Virgin Mary, and symbols of the cross were integrated into indigenous belief systems and became popularized even beyond the political leadership.¹⁷ Thornton builds the case for his argument on various missionary and travel accounts combined with the work of historical anthropologists such as John Janzen and Wyatt MacGaffey.¹⁸ In the work, *Religion and Society in Central Africa*, for example, MacGaffey explained similarities in Bakongo and Christian thought and iconography. For example, the cross associated with Christianity for Europeans was similar to the symbol, which separated the worlds of the living from the dead and day from night in Bakongo cosmology.¹⁹

For Thornton, conversion did not equal African cultural decimation and converts did not blindly yield to coercive missionaries. Among Bakongo communities, incorporation of Christian symbols and saints into religious thought did not shatter traditional beliefs. Nor did Portuguese language terms replace Kikongo as an intellectual framework. Capuchin priests, for example, were known among the Bakongo people as *nganga* as were traditional healers and magicians.²⁰

Colors also had different significance for Africans and Europeans that could be easily interpreted and/or misinterpreted in different ways. For example, in Bakongo

¹⁶ Thornton, *Africa and Africans*, 254.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Georges Balandier, *Daily Life in the Kingdom of Kongo from the Sixteenth to the Eighteenth Century*, trans. Helen Weaver (New York: Pantheon Books, 1968); Wyatt MacGaffey, *Religion and Society in Central Africa: The Bakongo of Lower Zaire* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986); and John Janzen, *Lemba, 1650-1930: A Drum of Affliction in Africa and the New World* (New York: Garland Publishing Company, 1982).

¹⁹ MacGaffey, *Religion and Society in Central Africa*, 44-45; and *Art and Healing of the Bakongo Commented by Themselves: Minkisi from the Laman Collection*, Kikongo texts trans. and ed. by Wyatt MacGaffey (Stockholm: Folken Museum-Etnografiska, 1991), 22.

²⁰ MacGaffey, “Dialogues of the Deaf,” 260.

culture white skin was a marker of the dead, who were thought to possess clairvoyance and spiritual power.²¹ The new dead were thought to have skin that "...is white, like bone, or like manioc after it has been soaked and peeled, or like chalk, *mpemba* which is also the name of the underworld."²² As such, the adoption of and devotion to the pale-skinned saint, Our Lady of the Rosary may not have simply signified acceptance of European aesthetic values that placed "white over black" among Africans and their progeny.²³ Rather the popularity of Our Lady of the Rosary among the Bakongo and others noted the ease with which Catholic saints were integrated into indigenous understandings of the world, especially since like *bakulu* or ancestral spirits, Our Lady of the Rosary resembled and had powers associated with the dead.

Part of the explanation for patterns of African religious and cultural continuity in Latin America relate to the weakness of conversion programs in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The mass importation of African slaves did not spur the creation of large-scale, systematic programs organized to convert and catechize the enslaved untutored in Catholicism. This lack of systematic conversion programs was not unique to Brazil. In 1789, the Spanish crown re-articulated directives from the Compilation of the

²¹ Thornton, *Kongolese Saint Anthony*, 27; and MacGaffey, *Religion and Society in Central Africa*, 52 and 73.

²² MacGaffey, *Religion and Society in Central Africa*, 52.

²³ For a classic treatment of the concepts of white and black as tropes of race in Western culture see Winthrop Jordan, *White Over Black: American Attitudes towards the Negro, 1550-1812* (Chapel Hill: Institute of Early American History and Culture at Williamsburg, Va., by the University of North Carolina Press, 1968), chapter 1; Sweet, "Iberian Roots of American Racist Thought," 143-166; and Saunders, *A Social History of Black Slaves*, 166-175.



Figure 1 - Our Lady of the Rosary, date unknown. The second adult figure in the picture is Saint Francis (São Francisco). His presence acts to draw further attention to the extreme whitewashed appearance of the female saint's skin. Church of Our Lady of the Rosary of Black Men, São Paulo (capital). Photograph by author.

Laws of the Indies (*Copilación de Las Leyes de Las Indias*) in the *Spanish Black Code* (*Código Negro Español*), specifying that all owners of slaves "... instruct them [slaves] in the principles of the Catholic religion and in the true necessities in order that they be baptized within one year of their residence."²⁴ This legal code emerged in response to slave owners attempting to avoid proselytization, because they had no desire to devote money to the innumerable fees paid to priests for baptisms, burials, and any other services rendered to estate slaves.²⁵ Catholic Church administrators sided with owners and agreed not to require plantations to have chaplains "...since the fees collected were

²⁴ Joseph Murphy, *Santería: An African Religion in America* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1988), 28.

²⁵ Gwendolyn Midlo-Hall, *Social Control in Slave Plantation Societies: A Comparison of St. Domingue and Cuba* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1971), 43.

not being passed on to the Church.”²⁶ As such, conversion activities fell predominantly from the hands of clergy on rural estates precisely when slave importation rates to Cuba surged.²⁷ Programmatic missionary outreach efforts in the rural places where slaves lived ended precisely when more African slaves began to arrive to Cuban plantations after 1790. The combination of increased African importation rates and decreasing instances of clergy visits to plantations partly works to explain the conditions, which contributed to the continuance of diverse African religious traditions in Cuba.²⁸

In Brazil, church law obligated both the clergy and masters to instruct bondspeople in the faith. The guidelines mandating the proselytization of forced laborers stated that slaves were in dire need of Christian instruction “...because of their ignorance.”²⁹ The directive mandated slave owners teach “Christian doctrine” and send bondspeople to church to learn the articles of faith, the *Pater Noster* and *Ave Maria*, the commandments of God and the Church, mortal sins, virtues that they should follow, the seven sacraments, and Christian prayers, “... so that they were educated in all that related

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Eltis and Richardson, *Atlas of the Transatlantic Slave Trade*, 230 and 275; *Voyages: The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database*, <http://slavevoyages.org/tast/assessment/estimates.faces?yearFrom=1501&yearTo=1866&disembarkation=701> (Accessed March 7, 2012). From settlement to 1790, less than 15,000 enslaved Africans disembarked in Cuba. However from 1791 to 1800 more than 41,000 bondsmen arrived and even this dramatically increased workforce was dwarfed by the 720,000 souls who entered between 1800 and 1866.

²⁸ See Eugenio Matibag, *Afro-Cuban Religious Experience: Cultural Reflection in Narrative* (Gainesville: University of Florida, 1996); Jorge Castellanos and Isabela Castellanos, *Cultura Afrocubana: Las religiones y las lenguas*, vol.3, (Miami: Ediciones Universal, 1992); Lydia Cabrera, *El Monte: Igbo, finda, ewe, orisha, vitií nfinda* (Miami: Colección del Chicherekú, 1971) and *La sociedad secreta Abakuá* (Miami: Ediciones Universal, 1970); Miguel Barnet, *Biography of a Runaway Slave*, trans. W. Nick Hill, (Willimantic, Connecticut: Curbstone Press, 1994), for analysis and presentation of the diversity of African religious traditions in Cuba.

²⁹ Sebastião Monteiro da Vide, *Constituições Primeiras do Arcebispado da Bahia* (1707: repr., São Paulo: Editora Universidade de São Paulo, 2010), Título 2, 126; (Mandamos a todas as pessoas, assim eclesiásticas como seculares, ensinem or façam ensinar a doutrina cristã a sua familia e especialmente a seus escravos que são os mais necessitados desta instrução pela rudeza...)”

to their salvation.”³⁰ While masters shared responsibility with the clergy for teaching slaves about the Catholic faith, low literacy rates among lay free people contributed to an environment where most slave owners could hardly provide rigorous religious instruction.³¹

The mandate that Brazilian slave owners send slaves to church was difficult to accomplish, especially in rural areas where priests visited small villages and plantations infrequently, since they had so many parishioners to serve over large areas. In the colonial era, Catholic priests, missionaries, and secular officials constantly petitioned for more clergymen to minister to the entire populace, but especially to slaves.³² A.J.R. Russell-Wood noted that the governor of São Paulo and Minas Gerais from 1717-1721 requested that “... lay clergy should be made to attend Jesuit colleges and learn West African languages...” for the purpose of providing religious instruction to forced African laborers.³³ However, the governor’s request for multi-lingual priests and a more focused conversion effort never came to fruition in the province of São Paulo.³⁴

How did Africans respond to catechism and participation in baptismal rites? Did enslaved people who were baptized in brief mass ceremonies before embarkation on slave ships conceive of the rite in ways that converged with or differed from bondspople participating in ceremonies as individuals or in small groups? If the presence and practice

³⁰ Ibid., 127 (...mandando-os a igreja para que o pároco lhes ensine os artigos da fé...o padre-nosso e ave maria...os mandamentos da lei de Deus e da Santa Madre Igreja, e os pecados mortais...as virtudes para que sigma; e os sete sacramentos ...e as mais orações da doutrina cristã, para que sejam instruidos em tudo o que importa a sua salvação.”

³¹ De Groot, *Brazilian Catholicism*, 30; and Graham, *Patronage and Politics*, 115-116; in 1872, twenty-one percent of free people were literate. See Elizabeth McHenry, *Forgotten Readers: Recovering the Lost History of African American Literary Societies* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2002), 7; and Carl Kaestle and et al., *Literacy in the United States: Readers and Reading since 1880* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1991), xiv for discussion of the difficulty of assessing literacy historically.

³² Sweet, *Recreating Africa*, 198-200; and De Groot, *Brazilian Catholicism*, 29.

³³ A.J.R. Russell-Wood, “Black and Mulatto Brotherhoods in Colonial Brazil: A Study of Collective Behavior,” *Hispanic American Historical Review* 54, no.4 (November 1974): 570.

³⁴ De Groot, *Brazilian Catholicism*, 28.

of varied African religious systems continued in the Americas, why did Christianity become an attractive alternative? Under what circumstances did forced African laborers actually learn tenets of the faith? To address these questions, one should begin with the rite of baptism.

Baptism

Several scholars have found evidence suggesting that since baptism was associated with wealthy missionaries, traders, and foreigners several coastal African societies considered the rite as a mark of privilege.³⁵ In the capital city of Mbanza Kongo the unconverted requested baptism, which they described as eating salt. Eating salt was desirable, since residents of the region thought it would ward off evil spirits and evil people.³⁶ Hence, even orthodox Catholic rituals held multi-layered, cross-cultural meanings for Africans on the continent and in the Americas.

It is clear that the association between baptism and eating salt did in fact cross the Atlantic. The guidelines for baptism established by the archbishop of Bahia in the eighteenth century, which remained in use as a template for the process in the nineteenth century, included several questions, one of which asked un-aculturated Africans if they wished to eat salt. Each of the questions priests posed before the baptism of adult slaves is listed below.

Do you want to wash your soul in Holy Water?
Do you want to eat the salt of God?
Do you repent of all your sins?
Will you sin no more?
Do you want to be a child of God?
Do you send the devil from your soul? ³⁷

³⁵ Brooks, *Landlords and Strangers*, 240; and 308-309; and Hilton, *Kingdom of Kongo*, 98.

³⁶ Thornton, *Kongolese Saint Anthony*, 17.

³⁷ Vide, *Constituições Primeiras*, Título 19, 146; (E so se farão de mais aos sobreditos boçais as perguntas que se seguem: Queres lavar a tua alma com água santa? Queres comer o sal de Deus? Bota fora de tua

Baptism could occur at various points in a bondsperson's journey to the Americas. While slaves were usually baptized *en masse* before departure especially on Iberian ships, some slaves received the rite of baptism only after they settled in their destination cities.³⁸ Priests baptized hundreds of slaves in the city of São Paulo over the centuries and African born slaves represented a segment of the bondspeople receiving the rite of baptism until the 1850s.³⁹ In the central parish of Sé between 1850-1858, an average of 82 slaves received the rite of baptism per year,⁴⁰ and in the neighboring parish of Santa Ephigênia approximately 40 slaves were baptized per year in the same period.⁴¹ The last African born adults receiving the rite of baptism in the parish of Sé did so in 1856.⁴² The absence of newly arriving adult Africans to the baptismal font after the late 1850s is easily explained since any slaves entering Brazil after 1850 were brought to the country illegally and they could be legally emancipated if they could prove they entered the country after international treaties ended the trans-Atlantic slave trade to the nation.⁴³

While the number of adult Africans who were baptized declined after 1856, the African presence in the city did not disappear. Of 52 enslaved children born in Sé in 1858, 13 had at least one African born parent, which represented 25 percent of enslaved children baptized that year.⁴⁴ Most of the African born parents listed were generically categorized as "African" though four parents had broad provenance areas of origin attached to their children's birth records. One mother was identified as "of the Mina

alma todos os teus pecados? Não há de fazer mais pecados? Queres ser filho de Deus? Bota fora da tua alma o demônio?)

³⁸ Hawthorne, *From Africa to Brazil*, 99; and Karasch, *Slave Life in Rio*, 256-257.

³⁹ Mattos, "De Cassange," 94-109.

⁴⁰ ACMSP, Livros de batismo, Sé, Escravos, 03-02-03.

⁴¹ ACMSP, Livros de batismo, Santa Ephigênia, Escravos, 05-03-32 and 06-02-16.

⁴² ACMSP, Livros de batismo, Sé, Escravos, 03-02-03. The year 1856 was also the last year in which a slave ship arrived in Brazil directly from Africa. David Eltis, Personal Communication, March 5, 2013.

⁴³ Conrad, *World of Sorrow*, 166.

⁴⁴ ACMSP, Livros de batismo, Sé, Escravos, 03-02-03.

nation” (de nação Mina) and another was classified as “of the Moçambique nation” (de nação Moçambique). Both women were unmarried. A priest designated one father as “Benguella” and this parent had formally married his “creoula” or native-born Afro-Brazilian wife.⁴⁵ Ten years later in 1868, only 8% of enslaved children in Sé had African born parents and only one legitimately married couple had ethnic designations attached to their child’s birth record. The couple was identified as “Benguella.”⁴⁶ African bondsmen arriving in São Paulo came from diverse locations and undoubtedly held varied perspectives on Christianization. Despite this diversity confraternities became important and valued spaces of black religious society and sociability.

Africans, African Descendants, and Confraternity Participation in São Paulo

While no records authored by individual Africans and Afro-Brazilians articulate what made confraternity participation desirable, scholarly research has reached a degree of consensus about factors motivating black interest in confraternities. The tradition of mutual aid, the assurance of a proper ritualized burial and the desire to have a space of socialization spurred confraternity participation.⁴⁷ Confraternities helped members navigate and negotiate the problem of civil status as slaves and social discrimination against Africans and their descendants.

White confraternities often displayed their devotion to God by serving the poor.⁴⁸ Elite brotherhoods such as the Santa Casa de Misericórdia established the first hospitals and orphanages in colonial Brazil. For elite white brotherhoods charity was directed

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Russell-Wood, *Black Man in Slavery and Freedom*, 129-162; Soares, *People of Faith*, 126-128; 148; Kiddy, *Blacks of the Rosary*, 89, 97-99; and Borges, *Escravos e libertos nas irmandades*, 94-96, and 165.

⁴⁸ Maureen Flynn, *Sacred Charity: Confraternities and Social Welfare in Spain, 1400-1700* (London: MacMillian Press 1989); Russell-Wood, *Fidalgos and Philanthropists*; and Mesgravis, *A Santa Casa de Misericórdia de São Paulo (1559?-1884)*.

outwardly and worked to confirm the status and patron roles held by priests, merchants, and colonial officials.⁴⁹

Black brotherhoods used organizational resources to extend charity, but they directed those resources to the less fortunate among their own members. In most cases, slave status locked bondspeople into a life of impoverishment. Even slaves who were hired out and hence retained a portion of their earnings struggled to house, clothe, and feed themselves, never mind the costs of trying to buy one's freedom. Therefore, members of the Brotherhood of Our Lady of the Rosary of Black Men pledged to help members finance the completion of the administrative process required to secure liberty for slaves who had positioned themselves to purchase their own freedom or to be granted freedom by owners.⁵⁰ Mutual aid extended to the process of securing freedom for those able to underwrite the bulk of the costs associated with the process.

Illness represented another serious issue for enslaved people and the less fortunate among free people of color. The financial inability of slaves and the free poor to seek medical help due to disease or ailment represented a significant problem. Slaves who became ill were often freed and abandoned so that slave masters would not have to bear the financial burden of acquiring medical attention for the captive.⁵¹ Without family or kin, long term or even temporary illness could lead to destitution and black brotherhoods provided a modicum of a social safety net for indigent members. Among the offices created by the association's leadership in their organizational statutes in 1778 was a nurse

⁴⁹ Reis, *Death is a Festival*, 42.

⁵⁰ Karasch, *Slave Life in Rio*, 259; and ACMSP, Compromisso da Irmandade de Nossa Senhora do Rosário dos Homens Pretos de São Paulo, 1778, 01-03-08, Capítulo 21, (Todas as vezes que qualquer Irmão dessa Irmandade que por seu bon servicios que fizer a seus senhores alcancar carta de alforria e liberdade, havendo quem ha queira incontrar ao do Irmão, não tendo com que correr pleito para a (da?) sua liberdade e se valer da Irmandade, será obrigada a dar lhe todos o adjutorio que para (atal?) atalaiar? liberdade for necessario.)

⁵¹ Karasch, *Slave Life in Rio*, 126; and Soares, *People of Faith*, 126.

for the sick.⁵² Confraternity members extended care and assistance to each other in sickness, in health, in life, and at death.

Organizational statutes left no doubt that a critical function of the brotherhood was to provide appropriate rituals for the defunct at the hour of death. Poor brotherhood participants would have the cost of funerals covered by black confraternities. The Brotherhood of Saint Benedict covered funeral expenses for the children of members up until the age of twelve, while the Brotherhood of Saint Ephigênia and Saint Elesbão extended funeral rights to all legitimate children of male and female members up to age seven.⁵³ In the nineteenth century, Our Lady of the Rosary Brotherhood also covered burial expenses for wives of married male members in addition to children.⁵⁴ Brotherhoods would say masses for the soul of the departed and future generations would remember the brethren and their kin forever by continuing to pray for their souls.⁵⁵ Securing a proper burial in a context where an individual could easily have no relatives to be responsible for internment contributed to the significance of black brotherhoods for African and African descendant populations.⁵⁶ The idea that members would also be

⁵² ACMSP, Compromisso da Irmandade de Nossa Senhora do Rosário dos Homens Pretos de São Paulo 1778, 01-03-08, Capítulo 6, (...E depois Mezarrio ha um sachristã para assistir as Missas e num infemeiro [sic] para assistir aos infermos [sic] quando algum Irmão se tiver doente.)

⁵³ AESP, Sociedades Cívicas-Estatuas/Compromissos, Irmandade de São Benedito da Cidade de São Paulo, 1861, 1/02/1896, C10388, Capítulo 1, (Terão sepultura para si e seus filhos até a idade de 12 annos); ACMSP, Uncatalogued Folder, Santa Efigênia: Nsra da Conceição, No. 2, Compromisso 1859, Capítulo 13, (...por seus fallecimentos se dirão por suas almas seis Missas na Capella e Altar da mesma Santa celebrada pelo Capellão da Irmandade e igualmente terão sepulturas para nella serem sepultados e juntamente serão acompanhados com aparato competente e da mesma forma se acompanhara a qualquer filho de algum irmão ou irmã que fallecer até a idade de sete annos sendo filho legitimo.)

⁵⁴ Quintão, *Irmandades negras*, 47; ACMSP, Compromisso da Irmandade de Nossa Senhora do Rosário dos Homens Pretos de São Paulo, 1871, microfilm, 2002, Capítulo 15, (Todas às vezes que morrer a mulher de algum irmão, ou filho os acompanhara a Irmandade com todo o aparato, e se lhe dará sepultura, e lhe mandaro dizer as sete missas pela alma da dita mulher.)

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Reis, *Death is a Festival*, 13 and 185-186.

remembered and honored in a way at least symbolically similar to their forbearers undoubtedly had great appeal.

Finally, the desire to participate in ritual space with people from shared language groups and common experiences increased the desirability of confraternity involvement and engagement. The sights and sounds of confraternity festivities and their general activities must have conjured an air of familiarity for participants and observers. The use of polyrhythmic, percussion-centered drumming and dance known as *batuque* during funerals and festivals,⁵⁷ and the leadership of male and female elders and patrons on special occasions in black brotherhoods could only feel familiar to those from cultures which held special reverence for the aged.⁵⁸ While elements of cultural specificity were likely to be missing or incomplete for every provenance group of free and enslaved people in São Paulo, most African captives and their progeny likely would have found some feature of their cultures of origin present in and around churches administered by black brotherhoods.

Baroque Catholicism marked the religious world bondspeople entered from 1700 to 1900 in Brazil. Black brotherhoods retained ceremonial and liturgical patterns, aesthetics, and organizing principles based on baroque theological precepts and principles well past the mid-nineteenth century. While brotherhoods were not static, ahistorical organizations, they maintained certain traditions that both concurrently facilitated and threatened their collective survival and organizational continuity. In the pages that follow, I will analyze baroque Catholicism and baroque Catholic epistemology in order to

⁵⁷ Bruno, *História das tradições*, 388; Antonio Egydio Martins, *São Paulo antigo 1554 a 1910* (1911/1912; repr., São Paulo: Editora Paz e Terra, 2003), 328; and Moraes, “Arranjos e timbres,” 590-592.

⁵⁸ Dias, *Quotidiano e poder*, 120 and 241; and Igor Kopytoff, “Ancestors as Elders in Africa,” *Africa: Journal of the International African Institute* 41, no. 2 (April 1971): 131-132.

demonstrate how this framework influenced black brotherhood faith practices in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Power, Meaning, and Material Culture in Baroque Catholicism

Material culture constituted important elements involved in the practice of religion by pre-modern, non-literate societies. Catholic priests and missionaries relied on crosses, rosaries, relics, and images of saints on a daily basis as they sought to instruct people in their own lands as well as non-Christians in the tenets of the faith.⁵⁹ While baroque Catholic Church leaders considered religious paraphernalia to be symbols of the power of God, lay people especially understood religious objects to hold actual spiritual power.⁶⁰

Jennifer Scheper Hughes brilliantly illustrates how material culture was seen as a source or repository of spiritual power for baroque Catholics. In her book, focused on the history of a statue of the *Cristo Aparecido* (the Appeared Christ), Hughes argues that for the indigenous and mestizo devotees of Totolapan, Morelos, Mexico, the Christ figure she studied functioned as more than a symbol of the life and suffering of Christ. Devotees considered the Cristo Aparecido to be a powerful, almost living being who could intervene in their lives based on their requests. She noted, “For them, the Cristo Aparecido is not a statue but instead their beloved patron saint, *a manifestation of the divine*, around which their collective spiritual life is organized and finds its focus.”⁶¹ Her

⁵⁹ See William A. Christian Jr., *Local Religion in Sixteenth-Century Spain* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981), 127-141 and 182-184; Susan Verdi Webster, *Art and Ritual in Golden-Age Spain: Sevillian Confraternities and the Processional Sculpture of Holy Week* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998), 28 and 89-99; MacGaffey, *Religion and Society*, 206 and 210; Sweet, *Recreating Africa*, 205 and 207, for discussion of the material culture used in general religious instruction and in Catholic conversion processes.

⁶⁰ Larkin, *The Very Nature of God*, 4, 6, 29, and 53.

⁶¹ Jennifer Scheper Hughes, *Biography of a Mexican Crucifix: Lived Religion and Local Faith from the Conquest to the Present* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), vii; emphasis added.

text skillfully narrates local notions that “Christian images, including crucifixes, have been for the Indians a protection, buffer, and ‘shield of arms’ against the most damaging consequences of colonization...” As such, the supplication, care, and continued devotion of Totolapanos combined with the “...signs of life and *animus* it [the Cristo Aparecido] has shown...” contributed to the community’s view of the figure as continuing to possess miraculous power to intervene in terrestrial affairs or daily life.⁶² The crucifix did not simply become a pedagogical tool explaining the sacrifice made by Christ; for devotees the object took on the qualities of the figure it represented, which included possession of miraculous restorative powers.

The care Totolapan devotees provided included ceremonies and processions inside and outside of the church. These rituals of the church community all point to the living heritage of what I describe as baroque Catholic sensibilities that be can easily found throughout Latin America, in Mexico as well as Brazil, usually discussed under the rubric of popular Catholicism or popular religiosity. Like Scheper Hughes, I reject popular Catholicism as an analytical framework because the term lacks precision.⁶³ Conceptually popular Catholicism has no temporal bounds, and any performance of piety or ideas held by the laity are by definition popular. For my purposes, I see the category of baroque Catholicism as a much more cogent, time and culturally specific concept and framework.

Two features of baroque Catholicism as outlined by Brian Larkin in his text *The Very Nature of God: Baroque Catholicism and Religious Reform in Bourbon Mexico City* addressed characteristics that made the precept engaging for African descendants in

⁶² Ibid., 14.

⁶³ Ibid., 6 and 15.

Brazil, as well as for indigenous and African communities in New Spain. The collective nature of devotion and worship was unquestionably part of what made confraternities desirable institutions that blacks wanted to join. The second idea that made baroque Catholicism an attractive alternative for blacks was its conceptual reliance on the power of physical objects for spiritual means.⁶⁴

The collective and communal nature of baroque devotion attracted African captives and African descendants who undoubtedly yearned to create new community links. In baroque Catholicism, access to spiritual power relied on a numerous community of believers. Helping a deceased person's soul travel through purgatory depended on multiple prayers by multiple people. Larkin explains, "The baroque Catholic never stood alone before God...baroque Catholicism privileged collective devotions. Of course, Catholics could and did worship individually, but the rites and institutions of baroque Catholicism fostered a collective subjectivity."⁶⁵ The collective nature of worship in brotherhoods would have been similar to the communal and kinship based religious practices of West and West Central Africa where families, lineages, or villages worked together to assure appeasement of important deities and lesser spirits. Displaced African slaves and marginalized Afro-Brazilians considered confraternities as desirable institutionally sanctioned spaces to build community and ritual kin precisely because baroque Catholicism placed strong emphasis on the power of collective devotion.

The second feature of baroque Catholicism that would have been similar to a variety of beliefs and practices followed by adherents of local ancestral worship traditions in Africa was the cult of the saints and ideas of sacred immanence. As indicated in earlier

⁶⁴ Larkin, *The Very Nature of God*, 6-7.

⁶⁵ *Ibid*,

sections of the chapter, West Central Africans would have had an especially easy time incorporating black and white saints alike into their spiritual retinue,⁶⁶ since white saints could be read as ancestral spirits and black saints may have been rendered as powerful spiritual leaders or healers. These understandings of saints would not have been far from Portuguese views since saints were thought to heal and invoke the sacred. Larkin explains,

“The sacred for baroque Catholics was immanent . . . the sacred could inhere within the physical world and thus was proximate and palpable. God and saints manifested themselves physically in three ways . . . certain objects were sacredly charged . . . images of saints made the essence of the saints they depicted present in the world . . . baroque Catholics conjured sacred manifestations within the world through ritual action . . .”⁶⁷

For baroque Catholics and the Africans who observed their worship, objects held spiritual power. Images of saints, crosses, and even seemingly mundane articles such as candles and incense could provide an instant connection to the spiritual power of the Christian God. Catholics venerated and sought contact with images of saints and the Eucharist, not out of a mechanical sense of piety, but because these items bridged the gap between the sacred and the profane and introduced the holy into the physical world.⁶⁸

Baroque Catholicism’s emphasis on outward expressions of faith also contributed to the development of a religious environment where gestures and adornment could demonstrate devotion just as well as verbal articulations. “Catholics gave gifts to adorn sacred space and enhance the liturgy because church interiors were microcosms of the heavenly kingdom that mystically situated Catholics within the divine realm . . .”⁶⁹ The prevalence of such a sensibility meant that Afro-Brazilians could easily and fully

⁶⁶ Thornton, *Africa and Africans*, 268.

⁶⁷ Larkin, *Very Nature of God*, 5.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 4 and 5.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

participate in Catholic devotional acts across barriers of language and with little difficulty as newcomers to Catholic culture.⁷⁰

Afro-Brazilian Devotion and Material Culture

Scholars who have studied wills and estate inventories in mid-nineteenth century Brazil have noted the gifts left to churches and the poor as charity and as expressions of piety.⁷¹ While the total number of wills and hence gifts left to churches, brotherhoods, and saints at death decreased through the nineteenth century,⁷² the general practice of offering gifts to saints during life did not dissipate. It remained common for the faithful and those who sought spiritual favors to bring a variety of articles to decorate churches, the altars of the saints, and the figures of the saints themselves.⁷³

Research analyzing the material culture associated with black devotions in São Paulo has been nearly non-existent. To date no records of gift giving from the nineteenth century have been identified in church or secular archives. However, organizational records from the 1950s from the Brotherhood of Our Lady of the Rosary of Black Men can provide some clues, since giving or donating decorative objects for saints and their altars as well as providing objects with different kinds utilitarian functions in the church and for the liturgy persisted.⁷⁴ For example, in November of 1952 one donor provided an “opulent” bell for the main altar and “the dear Brother Benedict Eugenio Pinto” provided

⁷⁰ See Bristol, *Christians, Blasphemers, and Witches*, 23 and 63-65, for evidence of forced migrants from various regions of Africa participating in Catholic communal life in seventeenth century Mexico.

⁷¹ For examples of individual wills see Lauderdale Graham, *Caetana Says No*, 159-169. For analysis of patterns of estate division in Brazil, which include Africans and African identified descendants see Frank, *Dutra's World*, especially 130-146; and Hendrik Kraay, *Race, State, and Armed Forces in Independence Era Brazil: Bahia 1790s-1840s* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001), 92-95.

⁷² Muriel Nazari, *The Disappearance of the Dowry: Women, Families, and Social Change in São Paulo, Brazil, 1600-1900* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1991), 217, note 25.

⁷³ Julita Scarano, *Fé e milagre: Ex-votos pintados em madeira: séculos XVII e XIX* (São Paulo: Editora Universidade de São Paulo, 2004); and ACMSP, Irmandade de Nossa Senhora do Rosário dos Homens Pretos de São Paulo, Livro 11-Diversos-Contabilidade, microfilm, 2002.

⁷⁴ ACMSP, Irmandade de Nossa Senhora do Rosário dos Homens Pretos de São Paulo, Livro 11-Diversos-Contabilidade, microfilm, 2002.

a vestment for the Altar of Saint Benedict, his namesake, housed in the Rosary church. Bells, candleholders, and other decorative materials for altars represented common gifts.⁷⁵

Some offerings stood out among those given based on value. For example, a gift bestowed by a small group of associational leaders who organized the festival for the patron saint for the 1952-1953 calendar year, emphasized that even in modern contexts grand expressions of devotion continued. The festival King (Rei) Elesbano de Barros, Queen (Rainha) Terezinha de Moraes, and board officer (juiza) Ana dos Santos gave the confraternity a thirty watt amplifier "...valued at \$2,000.00 (*cruzeiros*), three microphones, two speakers, and two pedestals totaling \$3,910.00 *cruzeiros*." In the twentieth century, those with financial means provided new kinds of objects that allowed members and parishioners to worship and connect with God and the saints with the accouterments of modernity.⁷⁶ The culture of gift giving and patronage among confraternity officers remained active over the centuries, and the items and gifts members pledged could encapsulate tradition as well as emphasize modernization by documenting Afro-Brazilian utilization of changing technologies.

⁷⁵ Ibid. (The donation entries read "Aos dezesseis dias do mes de Novembro de milnovecentos e cincuenta e dois, o Illmo. Snr. Dr. Conti faz oferta a Veneravel Irmandade de Nossa Senhora do Rosário uma rica campanha para o Altar Mor; and "O prezado Irmão Benedito Eugenio Pinto (festeiro?) no corrente ano, faz oferta á Irmandade para o Altar de São Benedito uma belissima toalha aos 23 de Novembro de 1952."); and see Catherine Whistler, *Opulence and Devotion: Brazilian Baroque Art* (Oxford: University of Oxford; BrasilConnects; Ashmolean Musuem, 2001), 62-63, for examples of seventeenth and eighteenth century pieces used to decorate altars.

⁷⁶ ACMSP, Irmandade de Nossa Senhora do Rosário dos Homens Pretos de São Paulo, Livro 11-Diversos-Contabilidade, microfilm, 2002. (Aos des dias de Janeiro de mil novecentos e cincuenta e treis (sic), ano de Nascimento de Nosso Senhor Jesus Christo, os Irmãos Festeiros de Nossa Senhora do Rozário da Festa da Oraga do mesmo ano Elesbano Barros (Rei) e Terezinha de Moraes (Rainha) e Sra Ana dos Santos (Juiza) doaram á Irmandade um (1) amplificador de 30 Watts, no. 4057 mod. 006, no valor de CrX 2.000,00; 3microfones de "5" de valor " " "870.00-2 altofalantes "8" " " "2 pedestaes Studio 810,00-tudo no valor total de Cr.X 3.910,00; A mesa rensibilirada agradece o para cantar, lavrei o presente (?) que assino, São Paulo, 25 de Outubro de 1953. Signed Maria da Costa.)

Baroque Catholicism had the capacity to adapt and incorporate new technological elements without changing the understandings of piety or the epistemological framework in which adherents of the faith acted. As Scheper Hughes argued, “Although in theory Roman Catholicism is an exclusive religion (and the Christian god a jealous god) in practice and on the ground in Latin America and in other colonial settings it has been proven to be surprisingly expansive, inclusive, and accommodating; not only to encompass and absorb religious practice external to the tradition, but also relatively pliant and available for religious innovation from within.”⁷⁷ The characteristic flexibility of Catholicism, in general, combined with baroque sensibilities in particular, help address why African and Afro-Brazilians found confraternities compelling institutional spaces for several centuries.

Favored Saints

The cult of the saints also represented a compelling feature of and set of intercessors for African migrants and their Brazilian born counterparts. The saints who served as associational patrons varied from town to town and city to city across Latin America,⁷⁸ but in Brazil devotions to Our Lady of the Rosary and Saint Benedict were most popular.⁷⁹ A host of other saints inspired Afro-Brazilian devotees in colonial and post-colonial Brazil and the most commonly known included Saint Ephigênia, Saint Elesbão, Saint Anthony, and King Balthazar, one of the magi from the east who offered

⁷⁷ Scheper Hughes, *Biography of a Mexican Crucifix*, 6.

⁷⁸ Nicole Von Germeten, *Black Blood Brothers: Confraternities and Social Mobility for Afro-Mexicans* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2006), 14-15, 17-22, and appendix; and Margaret Cormack, ed., *Saints and Their Cults in the Atlantic World* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2007); and Jean Paul Charney, “A Sense of Belonging: Colonial Indian Cofradías and Ethnicity in the Valley of Lima Peru,” *Americas* 54, no.3 (January 1998): 379-407.

⁷⁹ Borges, *Escravos e libertos nas irmandades*, 60; Giovanna Fiumi, “St. Benedict the Moor: From Sicily to the New World,” in Margaret Cormack, ed., *Saints and Their Cults in the Atlantic World* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2007), 16-19; and Mulvey, “Black Brothers and Sisters: Membership in the Black Lay Brotherhoods of Colonial Brazil,” *Luso-Brazilian Review* 17 no. 2 (Winter 1980): 277.

gifts to the newborn Christ.⁸⁰ In São Paulo, four of these saints served as patrons for three brotherhoods.

Our Lady of the Rosary came to be beloved across the population. In addition to the African and African descendant devotees who sang her praises, the saint was also popular among white devotees. In São Paulo, a segment of the white devotees in the city venerated the patroness in their own segregated confraternity called the Confraternity of Our Lady of the Rosary of White Men.⁸¹ For centuries, Mary served as one of, if not the most honored, effective, and beloved intercessors in terrestrial affairs for Catholics.⁸² Across most of the Catholic world the Dominican order encouraged and spread her devotion.⁸³ Dominican missionaries had a presence in Portuguese Africa, but they did not establish monasteries in colonial Brazil, so the popularity of the devotion to Our Lady of the Rosary was spread by Jesuits, Capuchins, and lay people.⁸⁴

By the end of Europe's Middle Ages, the term rosary came to encompass both a set of prayers or meditations, and a set of beads used in order to help supplicants keep track of the multiple *Ave Marias* or Hail Mary recitations needed to complete the ritual designed to foster closeness to or spiritual union with God.⁸⁵ The complete rosary involved 150 recitations that included the Hail Mary in sets of tens called decades, the Lord's Prayer, also known as the *Pater Noster* or "Our Father," and the creed.⁸⁶ The

⁸⁰ José Ramos Tinhorão, *As festas no Brasil colonial* (São Paulo: Editora 34, 2000), 96.

⁸¹ Clóvis Moura, *Dicionário da escravidão negra no Brasil* (São Paulo: Edusp, 2004), 110; Martins, *São Paulo antigo*, 265 and 333. For direct evidence of the sodality for the late nineteenth century see AESP, Sociedades Civis, Estatuas/Compromissos, Confraria de Nossa Senhora do Rosário dos Homens Brancos, 16/03/1899, C10390.

⁸² Anne Winston-Allen, *Stories of the Rose: The Making of the Rosary in the Middle Ages* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1997), 111-129.

⁸³ Borges, *Escravos e libertos nas irmandades*, 49.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 50-51.

⁸⁵ Winston-Allen, *Stories of the Rose*, 15.

⁸⁶ Kiddy, *Blacks of the Rosary*, 16-17.

rosary devotion had great acceptance by church leadership and even greater popularity among the populace. In popular thought in colonial Brazil, the rosary was renowned for its ability to heal and cure ailments. The populace also considered the rosary to be a device which could attract financial wealth, since the Virgin was thought to be especially moved by and committed to granting intercession for the poor.⁸⁷

Our Lady of the Rosary had tremendous appeal for Africans and African descendants based on her patronage of the poor and disposed. Yet, the appeal Our Lady of the Rosary had even greater specificity for blacks, since the rosary itself became associated with actual and metaphorical freedom from slavery. In 1633, Jesuit preacher Antonio Vieira preached to a black brotherhood in Bahia, “That Our Lady of the Rosary is able to free people from the slavery of the body has been seen in the countless examples of those who, finding themselves captives in an infidel land, were freed through devotion to the rosary, and after offerings to the altars of the same Lady the broken chains and fetters of their captivity, as trophies to her power and charity ...”⁸⁸ While no sermons from eighteenth century or nineteenth century São Paulo mentioning Our Lady of the Rosary have survived, Africans and their descendants became acquainted with the saint’s likeness and legends quickly based on the early emergence of a sodality in her honor.

The multi-cultural meanings of Mary’s appearance have already been discussed earlier in the chapter. However, it is worth repeating that African engagement with the white skinned saints associated with European Catholicism need not be simply interpreted as Africans conceding to the power of a racially and culturally different and

⁸⁷ Ibid., 23.

⁸⁸ (Padre) Antonio Vieira, “ ‘Children of God’s Fire’: A Seventeenth-Century Jesuit Finds Benefits in Slavery but Chastises Masters for their Brutality in a Sermon to the Black Brotherhood of Our Lady of the Rosary,” cited in Robert Conrad, ed., *Children of God’s Fire: A Documentary History of Black Slavery in Brazil* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), 169.

superior foreign God. Africans clearly sought out likenesses of themselves as they engaged Catholicism. In fact, most of the saints who figured as patrons for black confraternities had purported African origins and/or brown and black skin as conveyed by their visual representations. Both Saint Ephigênia and Saint Elesbão had origins attributed respectively to ancient Ethiopia.⁸⁹ According to sources, Saint Ephigênia was an Ethiopian princess who converted to Christianity after being evangelized by Saint Matthew who traveled to Ethiopia to spread of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Saint Matthew miraculously resurrected her deceased brother, at which time Ephigênia converted to Christianity and founded a monastery of virtuous virgins.⁹⁰

Devotees considered Saint Ephigênia to have special powers related to fire based on her hagiography. In colonial and imperial Brazil, like other cities across the world at the time, fires could have devastating effects on urban neighborhoods where houses, which stood close together, were made of clay and thatched straw roofs. Controlling fires represented a constant concern for the free and forced laborers who worked over open flames in small city dwellings and in makeshift food preparation spaces often outside in the elements.

Saint Ephigênia's hagiography indicated that she received divine protection from a malicious fire set by an unwanted suitor. After her father's death, Saint Ephigênia attracted the attention of the new King Hircutas, who wished to marry her due to her

⁸⁹ Anderson José Machado de Oliveira, *Devoção Negra: santos pretos e catequese no Brasil colonial* (Rio de Janeiro: Quartet: FAPERJ, 2008), 99-100.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 102 and 108-144; and Self Ruled Antiochan Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America, "St. Ephigenia of Ethiopia," Orthodox Church in America, <http://www.antiochian.org/node/17199>.

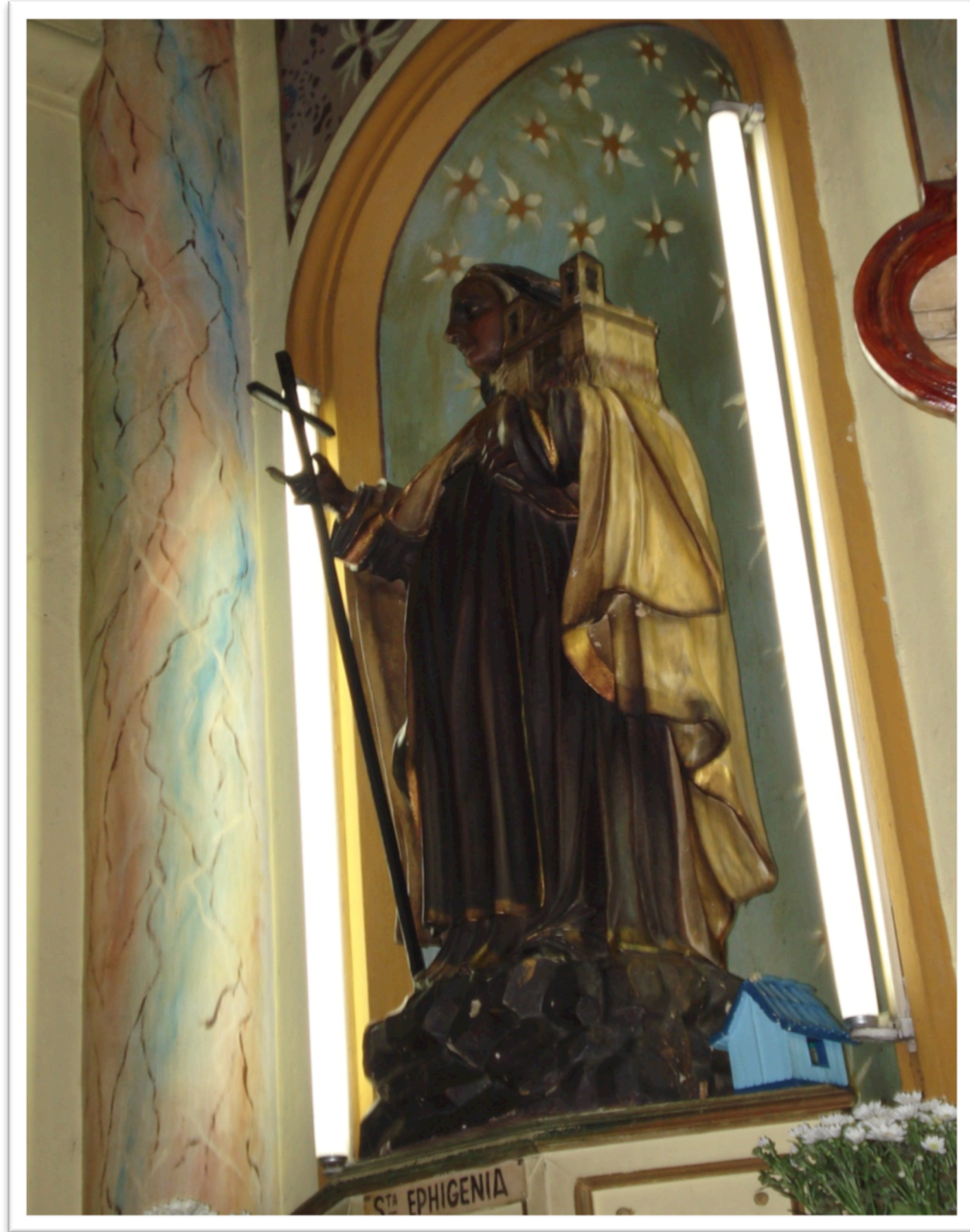


Figure 2 – Saint Ephigênia (Santa Ephigênia), date unknown. Church of Our Lady of the Rosary of Black Men, São Paulo (capital). Photograph by author.

royal lineage, despite the fact that she lived as a nun. After her refusal of proposals of marriage, Hircutas sent men to burn down the convent where Ephigênia and her community of nuns resided. After the convent was ignited, Saint Matthew appeared to the women and the fire was turned away from the monastery and was directed toward the

royal palace where Hircutas dwelled. The royal palace burned to the ground, but the king managed to escape. He went directly to the grave of Saint Matthew, confessed his sins, and asked for forgiveness. Divine providence protected Saint Ephigênia from the fire caused by her maddened suitor, and she became known as a guardian able to repel fire.⁹¹

Her counterpart, Saint Elesbão, sometimes rendered as Saint Elesbaan in English, also had special protective powers as well as Ethiopian origins. It is no coincidence that these two saints had origins in the same part of Africa. For centuries Ethiopia had been the favored area of origin for biblical and holy figures of African extraction. Saints of Ethiopian extraction typically were of noble birth, which probably worked to counter their African heritage.⁹² Despite the location of his birth, Saint Elesbão lived in Arabia in the 6th century. Dunaan, a Jewish leader, persecuted believers and followers of Jesus Christ, and Saint Elesbão went to defeat Dunaan of his own initiative. Saint Elesbão declared war on the oppressor, but lost the military campaign due to reliance on self, instead of reliance on God. He then consulted a hermit who reminded Saint Elesbão that God said that he would secure vengeance for his people. Saint Elesbão then vowed to devote his life to service of God in a religious community if he was granted the power to defeat the oppressor of the Christian church. Saint Elesbão returned to the battlefield having to cross the Red Sea along the way. He then defeated and executed Dunaan, after which he relinquished his throne and spent the rest of life fasting and praying in communion with God.⁹³

⁹¹ Ibid.,123-127; and “St. Ephigênia of Ethiopia.”

⁹² Machado de Oliveira, *Devoção Negra*, 106-128; and 150-151.

⁹³ Orthodox Church in America, “Blessed Elesbaan the King of Ethiopia: Commemorated on October 24,” <http://www.ocafs.oca.org/FeastSaintsLife.asp/FSID=103048>.

For church leaders, the emphasis of the story likely fell on the power of devotion rather than Elesbão's armed resistance, since the Catholic Church never encouraged enslaved people to resist their bondage through violence. Yet in his representations, the brown and sometimes black skinned Saint Elesbão is depicted as trampling a white skinned Dunaan--such an image must have been both striking and intriguing to those bound in a race based slave regime. Exactly how residents of colonial Brazilian interpreted the saint's image will have to remain a mystery. However, Saint Elesbão first became a saint of note in the Iberian world, because he safely crossed the Red Sea on his way to and from battle, and as such became a favored intercessor based on his reputation for serving as an advocate assuring "safe travels" and protection against "...the dangers of the sea."⁹⁴

For believers, Saint Ephigênia and Saint Elesbão intervened in the daily lives of their devotees in other ways than the protective powers mentioned above. In 1735, Friar José Pereira de Santana catalogued the miracles performed by Saint Elesbão and Saint Ephigênia in the colony. Both of the saints cured fevers, respiratory diseases, and skin disorders. Saint Elesbão healed serious ailments such as renal disease and more common issues such as headaches based on the records of Friar Santana. He also helped recover lost objects. Saint Ephigênia cured a larger variety of ills and problems. She resolved menstrual problems, difficulties in conception, liver disease, sight disorders, and non-health related issues such as unjust imprisonment and questions involving employment. Most impressively, the saint was credited with responsibility for the resurrection of a child.⁹⁵ Saint Ephigênia's miracles demonstrated a particular interest in and advocacy for

⁹⁴ Machado de Oliveira, *Devoção negra*, 150.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 157.

the assistance of females, and she undoubtedly garnered followers who needed healing for problems related to reproductive issues and childbearing.



Figure 3 – Saint Elesbaan (São Elesbão) defeating Dunaan, date unknown. Church of Our Lady of the Rosary of Black Men, São Paulo (capital). Photograph by author.

Saint Benedict

Saint Benedict was the final black saint for which devotees organized a confraternity in São Paulo. Saint Benedict had a large following inside and outside of confraternities in Brazil and other parts of the Catholic world including Peru, Mexico, and Venezuela in Latin America. According to Catholic history, Saint Benedict the Moor (*São Benedito o Mouró*) or Saint Benedict the Black (*São Benedito o negro*) was born in Sicily to enslaved parents in 1526.⁹⁶ Though he was born a captive, his master granted him liberty as a young man. He developed a relationship with a group of Franciscan hermits living near Palermo and he eventually came to serve as their leader, though he could neither read nor write. He began by working as an assistant in the kitchen, but was later selected by the brothers of the hermitage to lead the group. He served in the role of the monastery superior, even though he was a lay person. After serving as a model of devotion and humility as a monastic leader, he returned to work in the kitchen by his choice. He died in 1589 and his reputation for holiness and humility continued past his lifetime.⁹⁷

Devotees considered Saint Benedict to be the patron of the kitchen, based on his years of service as a kitchen assistant during his monastic life. Food reportedly miraculously multiplied in his hands and he was known to perform small acts of charity at every opportunity. Saint Benedict was said to have the power to read the minds of others, but he was also described as having an uncanny ability to interpret scriptures, despite his lack of literacy. He became sought after as an advisor for the powerful and a

⁹⁶ See Fiumi, "Saint Benedict the Moor," 16-19.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 18; Bastide, *African Religions in Brazil*, 113; and Kiddy, *Blacks of the Rosary*, 220-221.

curer of the sick. In 1611, Spain's King Phillip II donated a new shrine for Benedict's remains in Palermo and in 1743 Pope Benedict XIV beatified the saint.⁹⁸



Figure 4 - Contemporary standard bearing the image of Saint Benedict (São Benedito). Brotherhood of Saint Benedict of Praia Grande, São Paulo at the Church of Our Lady of the Rosary of Black Men of São Paulo (capital). Photograph by author.

⁹⁸ Fiumi, "St. Benedict the Moor," 16-17.

Artists and the faithful have depicted Saint Benedict in two main ways in visual representations. He either stands holding various loaves of bread reinforcing his connection to food and the kitchen,⁹⁹ or he is shown holding a small, white child in his arms, which he has just healed. Saint Benedict is known to carry the ill through sickness and ailments metaphorically enfolded in his arms. In the eighteenth and nineteenth century, he became especially favored for his ability to heal the wounds of the injured and people of all colors sought his relief.¹⁰⁰

While Saint Benedict had popularity across social sectors, Catholics considered him to be particularly sensitive to the needs of the vulnerable and poor, especially blacks. Traveler and missionary Daniel Kidder observed that an elderly man of African origin responded with delight in the city of Rio de Janeiro as an effigy of Saint Benedict passed in a procession. The man reportedly shouted “Lá vem o meu pariente” which literally means “There comes my relative” or “There comes my kin”; however, the translation into English fails to convey the connotations of deep connection, community belonging, and kinship the phrase renders in colloquial Portuguese.¹⁰¹ Saint Benedict existed in the midst of daily experience for blacks and other devotees as he linked the faithful to spiritual power and notions of kinship.

Conclusion

The Africans forced onto slave ships and who survived the Middle Passage came to the Americas with experiences and histories of their own. If captured people lived near areas where locals and foreigners engaged in trade, they likely had exposure to Christian

⁹⁹ Whistler, *Opulence and Devotion*, 76.

¹⁰⁰ Scarano, *Fé e milagre*, 65-67.

¹⁰¹ Daniel P. Kidder, *Sketches of Residence and Travels in Brazil Embracing Historical and Geographical Notices of the Empire and its Several Provinces in Two Volumes with Illustrations*, Vol.1 (Philadelphia: Sorin and Ball, 1845), 231; Reis, *Death is a Festival*, 46-47; and Quintão, *La vem o meu pariente*, 39.

and Muslim emblems of faith and occasionally to the theological concepts, which undergirded the symbols. While there is ample evidence that Africans continued to practice versions of the religions of their home communities in Latin America,¹⁰² Africans and their descendants also adopted the cult of the saints with vigor and participated in black confraternities with enthusiasm in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Baroque Catholicism's emphasis on communal supplication of the saints undoubtedly appealed to a population eager to build social relationships and a sense belonging. Baroque Catholicism's preference for outward displays of devotion also meant that Africans and their descendants could readily participate in Catholic devotional activities by performing public prayers, offering gifts to the saints, and holding festivals and processions for their selected celestial benefactors.

Baroque churches, even in the relatively poor province of São Paulo, did in fact awe Africans, if not with their splendor and pageantry, as sites of divine power. Of course, various African religions also generated wonderment and captivation as evidenced by Luso-Brazilian policing of *calundus* and even of batuques associated with black confraternity activity.¹⁰³ The desire to manipulate spiritual forces worked in many directions and segments of the Afro-Brazilian population enthusiastically participated in lay Catholic traditions. Even in the spiritual world, however, race, color, and origins mattered, for Africans largely depended on black saints as their communal intercessors.

¹⁰² Sweet, *Domingos Álvares; and Recreating Africa*; Todd Ramón Ochoa, *Society of the Dead: Quita Manaquita and Palo Praise in Cuba* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010); Harding, *Refuge in Thunder*; Leslie Gérald Desmangles, *Faces of the Gods: Vodou and Roman Catholicism in Haiti* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1992); and Monica Schuler, *'Alas, Alas Kongo': A Social History of Indentured African Immigration to Jamaica, 1841-1865* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University, 1980).

¹⁰³ For evidence of attempts to restrict this religious and recreational practice see Moraes, "Arranjos e timbres," 599; Harding, *A Refuge in Thunder*, 55 and 68; José João Reis, "Batuque: African Drumming and Dance between Repression and Concession, Bahia, 1808-1855," *Bulletin of Latin American Research* 24, no.2 (2005): 203-209; and Holloway, *Policing Rio*, 221-222.

The chapter which follows opens by examining the demographic impact of African slavery on urban life in São Paulo and is followed by analysis, which explores how the confluence of baroque Catholicism, black saints, and African worship styles produced a wondrous combination of devotional activity that attracted a range of followers and left an indelible stamp on popular culture and religiosity across Brazil.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰⁴ For discussion of the influence of confraternities on popular festivals and culture see Roberto da Matta, *Carnivals, Rogues, and Heroes: An Interpretation of the Brazilian Dilemma*, trans. John Drury (Notre Dame: University of Norte Dame Press, 1991), 44; Britto, *Samba na cidade*, 42-46 and 48-56; Reis, "Batuque: African Drumming and Dance," 211-212; and Scott Ickes, "'Adorned with the Mix of Faith and Profanity that Intoxicates the People': The Festival of the Senhor do Bomfim in Salvador, Bahia, Brazil, 1930-1954," *Bulletin of Latin American Research* 24, no.2 (2005): 181-200.

Chapter 2 – Urban Slavery and Afro-Brazilian Sodalities as Physical and Symbolic Spaces of Blackness

The city of São Paulo came to house a significant African born and African descent population beginning in the eighteenth century. African arrivals gradually replaced Amerindians as the new face of the city's workforce and that pattern only intensified over the next hundred years. In 1798 and 1836, slaves respectively represented 28.5 percent and 24 percent of the total population, which remained steady at a little more than 21,000 people.¹ When the slave population is combined with an estimated population of free people of color, which generally represented 25 percent of the free populace it becomes clear that Africans and their descendants ranged conservatively from one-third to a little under one-half of the total population in the nineteenth century.² Approximately 9.3 percent of the total population of the city came from African polities and kingdoms in the last year provincial officials commissioned a census in 1836.³

Captive workers had lives that involved more than labor alone. The early founding date of the Brotherhood of Our Lady of the Rosary of Black Men of São Paulo in 1711 suggests that African engagement with Catholicism began almost as soon as bondspeople were imported into the region and the city. No large scale conversion effort emerged as a result of the city's changing demographics. Therefore, the efforts of a few

¹ Marcílio, *A cidade de São Paulo*, 129.

² Luna and Klein, *Slavery and the Economy*, 134-135 and 161-162; and Oliveira, *Entre a casa e armazém*, 99-100. At a national level, the black and brown population of São Paulo was moderate compared to Salvador, Bahia, which had a population of slaves and people of color, which reached approximately seventy one percent of the total population by 1836. João José Reis, *Slave Rebellion in Brazil: The Muslim Uprising of 1835 in Bahia* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1993), 5 and 6.

³ See Luna and Klein, *Slavery and the Economy*, 135; and Daniel Muller, *Ensaio d'um quadro estatístico da provincia de São Paulo: Ordenando pelas leis provinciais de 11 de abril de 1836 e 10 de março de 1837*. 3rd ed. fac-similada (São Paulo: Governo do Estado de São Paulo, 1978), 158-159. In 1836, of the 5,495 slaves in the city 1,984 bondsmen or 36 percent of the enslaved population in the city were born in Africa; additionally, 57 freed (*libertos*) people born on the continent lived in the capital.

self-selected priests combined with peer to peer instruction most probably explains how interest and engagement with Catholicism occurred at an individual level, since it is difficult to imagine slave owners had any interest in sending new captives to the edge of town for worship, even if it was to honor Our Lady of the Rosary. Free, freed, and even bonded people, joined sodalities of their own volition, using their own money, and for their own ends. The urban environment allotted that possibility.

The first half of this chapter chronicles the expansion of the African presence in the city, and examines the source of earnings, which funded black fraternal associations. The second part of the chapter focuses on processions, festivals, and funerals to more fully comprehend the expressions of popular religiosity configured and performed in black sodalities. The diverse people who came together in black confraternities built colonial churches and cultivated festive modes of expression the city had never seen.

The Foundation of São Paulo

A small band of Jesuit priests founded the settlement of São Paulo dos Campos de Piritinga in southeastern Brazil quite early in the colony's history in the year 1554. The settlement sat perched on a hilltop, forty-five miles away from the Atlantic port city of Santos, an area inhabited by Tamãios and Tupinakin Amerindians.⁴ São Paulo became Brazil's first inland settlement and by 1600 had become a town, which housed more than 2000 people.⁵ Inhabitants survived based on small-scale subsistence agriculture and petty commerce.⁶ Free and forced indigenous laborers foraged and farmed the plateau

⁴ Richard Morse, *From Community to Metropolis: A Biography of São Paulo, Brazil* (Gainesville, University of Florida Press, 1958), 5-8, and 10; and Elizabeth Anne Kuznesof, *Household Economy and Urban Development: São Paulo, 1765 to 1836* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1986), 14.

⁵ Morse, *From Community to Metropolis*, 11; and Hemming, *Red Gold*, 245.

⁶ Muriel Nazzari, "Transition toward Slavery: Changing Legal Practice regarding Indians in Seventeenth Century São Paulo," *Americas* 49, no.2 (October 1992):136.

cultivating a span of products in the temperate climate and acidic soil of the region.

Manioc, tea, corn, and oranges, among other fruits and vegetables, grew in abundance.⁷

From settlement until the early eighteenth century, indigenous people dominated labor sectors in the capital city and the province. Free and enslaved Amerindians worked the land and provided servile labor for households. Indian enslavement formally ended in 1755 due to pressure from the church and the crown.⁸ However, Indians and *mamelucos* continued to constitute a significant sector of laborers in the capital and its hinterlands.⁹

The Rise of African Slavery in the Capital and the Captaincy/Province

While Africans and their dependents undoubtedly came with the first settlers, they represented a miniscule part of the population.¹⁰ Profits from mining and regional agriculture provided the funds used to import a greater number of African slaves to the province and to the capital. Before the development and participation of *paulistas* in regional markets,¹¹ enslaved Africans had been costly and out of reach for agriculturalists of the region. Servicing the mining industry in neighboring Minas Gerais had the overall effect of immensely increasing the wealth and growth of São Paulo.¹²

Captives from Africa flowed into São Paulo through the trans-Atlantic and internal slave trades principally after 1700. Bondsmen arriving directly from African shores predominantly entered southeastern Brazil through the port city of Rio de

⁷ Morse, *From Community to Metropolis*, 6 and 24-25; and Hemming, *Red Gold*, 245.

⁸ Goldschmidt, *Casamentos mistos*, 15.

⁹ Mamelucos are children of Amerindian and European heritage. For analysis of indigenous labor in São Paulo see Nazzari, "Transition toward Slavery," 132-133 and 137; Luna and Klein, *Slavery and the Economy*, 15; John M. Monteiro, *Negros da terra* (São Paulo: Editora Schwarcz, 1994); and Schwartz, *Sugar Plantations*, 52 for discussion of the term "negros da terra."

¹⁰ *Ibid*; and Hemming, *Red Gold*, 246.

¹¹ Paulistas are inhabitants of the captaincy/province/state of São Paulo. Paulistanos are inhabitants of the city of São Paulo, which is the capital of the captaincy/province/state.

¹² Luna and Klein, *Slavery and the Economy*, 17 and 19.

Janeiro.¹³ From 1601 to 1700, slave ships brought 221,083 arrivals directly from Africa to southeastern shores.¹⁴ The importation rate to the region grew tremendously in the eighteenth century. From 1701 to 1800, the number of African bondsmen arriving in the southeast region more than tripled—at least 756,561 arrived.¹⁵ The 756,561 slaves who entered the Southeast in the eighteenth century came close to matching the total number of slaves arriving in Bahia in the same period.¹⁶ In fact, African importation to southeastern Brazil was on par with importation rates for Saint Domingue at the height of sugar production before the Haitian Revolution (1791-1804).¹⁷ The southeast region, which included Rio de Janeiro, Minas Gerais, and São Paulo, would be the dominant importer of slaves in the nineteenth century in the world.

The southeast region received approximately 1,281,500 enslaved Africans between 1801 and 1866, which represented a quarter of the estimated five million

¹³ David Eltis, *Economic Growth and the Ending of the Transatlantic Slave Trade* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987, 195; Manolo Florentino, “The Slave Trade, Colonial Markets, and Slave Families in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil ca. 1790-ca.1830,” in *Extending the Frontiers: Essays on the New Transatlantic Slave Trade Database*, ed. David Eltis and David Richardson (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008), 278; and Herbert Klein, “The Internal Slave Trade in Nineteenth-Century Brazil: A Study of Slave Importations into Rio de Janeiro in 1852,” *Hispanic American Historical Review* 51, no. 4 (July 1971): 567-569. The city of Santos received ships transporting slaves directly from Africa and from other regions within the nation throughout the nineteenth century. However, the city became more important after 1831 as illegal trans-Atlantic slave trading persisted and as interprovincial trading volumes rose. For a description of slave trading networks and the trade of captives in Santos see Ian Read, *Hierarchies of Slavery in Santos, Brazil, 1822-1888* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2012), 63-69. For discussion and debates about the volume of the internal slave trade in Brazil to the southeast region see Klein, “The Internal Trade,” 567-569 and *The Middle Passage*, 98-99; Karasch, *Slave Life in Rio de Janeiro*, 51; Richard Graham, “Another Middle Passage? Internal Slave Trade in Brazil,” in *The Chattel Principle: Internal Slave Trades in the Americas* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004), 292 and 294; and Luna and Klein, *Slavery and the Economy of São Paulo*, 17.

¹⁴ *Voyages, The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database*, <http://slavevoyages.org/tast/assessment/estimates.faces?yearFrom=1501&yearTo=1866&disembarkation=804.805.801.802.803> (Accessed July 27, 2011).

¹⁵ *Voyages, The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database*, <http://slavevoyages.org/tast/assessment/estimates.faces?yearFrom=1501&yearTo=1866&disembarkation=804.805.801.802.803> (Accessed July 27, 2011).

¹⁶ *Voyages, The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database*, <http://slavevoyages.org/tast/assessment/estimates.faces?yearFrom=1501&yearTo=1866&disembarkation=804.805.801.802.803> (Accessed July 27, 2011). Bahia still outpaced the importation rate of the southeast region. Estimates suggest that approximately 75,000 more captives landed in Bahia than in the Southeast.

¹⁷ *Voyages, The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database*, <http://slavevoyages.org/tast/assessment/estimates.faces?yearFrom=1501&yearTo=1866&disembarkation=804.805.801.802.803.402.403.401.404.405> (Accessed July 27, 2011).

enslaved Africans brought to Brazil overall.¹⁸ The slave population in the province of São Paulo experienced an overall increase between 1820 and 1860,¹⁹ and this occurred despite increasing international pressure, especially from the British government to end the trans-Atlantic traffic in slaves.²⁰ In fact, prohibitions against slave importation within the nation had the effect of making ownership of captives even more desirable as an indicator of wealth since prices for bondpeople rose, as it became increasingly clear that the supply of African laborers would not be indefinite.²¹ In fact, from 1821-1850, more slaves arrived on the Rio de Janeiro coastline “...than in the rest of the Americas put together.”²² Only Cuba, with the rapid growth of sugar plantations, brought in comparatively large numbers of slaves between the 1840s and 1860s.²³

The African slaves who arrived in rural São Paulo worked in two main areas of agricultural production in the nineteenth century—sugar and coffee. These two profitable

¹⁸ Voyages, *The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database*, <http://slavevoyages.org/tast/assessment/estimates.faces?yearFrom=1501&yearTo=1866&disembarkation=804.802> (Accessed July 27, 2011).

¹⁹ Stein, *Vassouras*, 295; and Luna and Klein, *Slavery and the Economy*, 108.

²⁰ In 1826, Dom Pedro I of Brazil signed a treaty with Great Britain establishing an end date for the transatlantic slave trade to Brazil. The treaty signatories intended the measure to go into effect in 1830 in Brazil, but the treaty passed into Brazilian law in November 1831. Despite the legislation, the importation of bondpeople brought directly from Africa did not stop until a new measure was introduced to permanently and effectively abolish the trade in 1850. For further discussion of treaties and efforts by the British to end the international slave trade see Miller, *Way of Death*, 642; David Eltis, “Was Abolition of the U.S. and British Slave Trade Significant in the Broader Atlantic Context?” *William and Mary Quarterly* 66, no. 4 (October 2009): 729-730; Leslie Bethell, *Abolition of the Brazilian Slave Trade: Britain, Brazil, and the Slave Trade Question, 1807-1869* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970), 27-61, and 311-341; Jeffrey Needell, “The Abolition of the Brazilian Slave Trade in 1850: Historiography, Slave Agency and Statesmanship,” *Journal of Latin American Studies* 33, no. 4 (November 2001): 681-682 and 686; and *The Party of Order*, 140; and Mathew Mason, “Keeping Up Appearances: The Politics of Slave Trade Abolition in the Nineteenth-Century Atlantic World,” *William and Mary Quarterly* 66, no. 4 (October 2009): 814.

²¹ Conrad, *World of Sorrow*, 66-67; and *Destruction of Brazilian Slavery*, 7; Needell, “The Abolition of the Brazilian Slave Trade,” 685-686; and Oliveira, *Entre a casa e o armazém*, 104-105. The pressure to end the trade to Brazil was countered by strong demand for labor and pro-slavery lobbying especially from coffee planters. For discussion of the role of coffee planters in the persistence of the international trade in slaves to Brazil, see Dean, *Rio Claro*, 50; Conrad, *Destruction of Brazilian Slavery*, xi; and Needell, “The Abolition of the Brazilian Slave Trade,” 684-686.

²² Eltis, *Economic Growth*, 195.

²³ *Ibid.*, and Rebecca Scott, *Slave Emancipation in Cuba: The Transition to Free Labor, 1860-1899* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1985), 10-11.

commodities spurred increased economic production and expansion within the province. In the first part of the nineteenth century sugar cultivation and processing facilitated and consolidated changes in productive capacity and after 1850 coffee production drove growth in the province and national economy.²⁴

Sugarcane production in São Paulo did not begin as an export oriented toward the world market. The mills in São Paulo produced *rapadura* (unprocessed brown sugar), molasses, and cane alcohol known as *cachaça* for regional consumption. Sugar estates also produced other crops to be used for foodstuffs and to be sold in the local, urban market.²⁵ Sugar estates did require intensive labor, but in large part *paulista* sugar estates did not use work organization patterns involving gang labor when the crop was introduced to the region. By 1829, the average sugar plantation held thirty-one slaves, while agriculturalists cultivating coffee owned on average ten people.²⁶ Even on the biggest farms the number of slaves held was smaller than the number of enslaved people found on plantations in the sugar producing Caribbean, for example, where average holdings in Cuba or Jamaica could range from 200-500 people on large plantations. While sugar production led to an increase in the total number of African slaves brought to the province, bondsmen worked under varied arrangements not just in gang labor regimes.²⁷

²⁴ Luna and Klein, *Slavery and the Economy*, 90-95.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 29.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 120.

²⁷ For discussion of the variety of labor organizational patterns used for sugar cultivation which included gang labor and free contract labor see Scott, *Slave Emancipation*; and Gwendolyn Midlo Hall, *Social Control in Slave Plantation Societies: A Comparison of St. Domingue and Cuba* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1971).

Afro-Brazilians and Urban Labor

Laborers of African origin had a visible presence in the city by the turn of the nineteenth century. In São Paulo, the enslaved constantly worked as ambulant peddlers or street vendors, often around bridges connecting sections of the city. Maria da Silva Dias indicated in her work *Quotidiano e poder em São Paulo no século XIX (Daily Life and Power in Nineteenth Century São Paulo)* that older residents saw the change in the population and “... had difficulties accustoming themselves with Africans in the streets...” though small ambulant commerce was not a new feature of urban life.²⁸

African and Brazilian born slaves worked across economic sectors in the capital. Slaves worked both directly for their owners in the household or for others. Forced laborers who had their labor rented out were called *escravos de ganho*. Owners either rented the slave’s labor out on a contract basis, which they arranged, or the laborer worked independently for others and submitted a portion of their earnings to their masters. Hired out slaves could live within their master’s household, though more commonly they lived in housing, which they arranged and paid for themselves.²⁹ Slaves working independently of their masters clearly had a greater range of movement and autonomy than their counterparts working on farms and plantations. However, urban slaves typically worked in the lowest status work tasks possible, essentially any manual labor, so while they had a certain degree of freedom of movement their labor activities marked them as un-free and left them constrained by poverty.

Gender determined the kinds of work laborers performed in the urban economy. Female slaves worked as producers of rough and finer textiles, as household servants, as

²⁸ Dias, *Quotidiano e poder*, 121.

²⁹ For discussions of slaves hiring out their labor themselves or by their owners see Frank, *Dutra’s World*, 47-50.

washerwomen, and as *quitandeiras* or small-scale sellers of agricultural goods or prepared foods including sweets in local markets and in neighborhood plazas. One street in São Paulo, the *Rua de Quitanda*, even took its name from the goods and sundries sold by the itinerant peddlers who worked in the area.³⁰ Law and custom did not permit women from any class to work as clerks or shop assistants, in Portuguese called *balconistas*, so though women were quite visible as small scale vendors they existed firmly on the margins of the market commerce that so dominated the local urban economy.³¹ *Quitanderias* included poor and impoverished women from various backgrounds; African and Brazilian born slaves, freed women, and whites all fell within their ranks.³²

Enslaved men provided a wide range of labor for their owners. They transported people and goods using sedans and carts as well as with pack animals such as mules and horses.³³ Males also served as household staff members and personal servants for male owners.³⁴ Even young law school students sometimes brought enslaved manservants to attend them while they attended São Paulo's Law School.³⁵ Male slaves also worked as skilled artisans and semi-skilled laborers in metalworking, carpentry, and masonry.³⁶

Owning slaves was not inexpensive, and having slaves gave status to owners. Demographic historians Herbert Klein and Francisco Vidal Luna found that in the province of São Paulo, just as in Rio de Janeiro, slave ownership "...was the crucial form

³⁰ Morse, *From Community to Metropolis*, 27; Dias, *Quotidiano e poder*, 23; and Luna and Klein, *Slavery and the Economy*, 154-155.

³¹ Dias, *Quotidiano e poder*, 23.

³² *Ibid.*, and 77.

³³ Karasch, *Slave Life in Rio*, 188-192.

³⁴ Dias, *Quotidiano e poder*, 131.

³⁵ Andrew J. Kirkendall, *Class Mates: Male Student Culture and the Making of a Political Class in Nineteenth-Century Brazil* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2002), 65; and Bruno, *História e tradições*, 682.

³⁶ Dias, *Quotidiano e poder*, 131.

of wealth available in colonial and imperial Brazil.”³⁷ In the province of São Paulo, one third of households owned slaves in 1829. Slave owners were predominantly male and on average older than non-slave holding heads of households. The average age of owners was 47 for men and 52 for women, or five years older since most female owners were widowed.³⁸ The overwhelming majority of slave owners were white, but in 1829 of the 10,308 owners whose color was known 568 or approximately 5.5 percent were classified as *pardos* and 38 or less than half a percent were categorized as black. The proportion of Africans and African descendants who owned slaves in the São Paulo was small compared to the neighboring province of Minas Gerais, where in 1831, 30 percent of those enslaved had non-white owners.³⁹

As would be expected, the provincial capital region had a higher ratio of slaves involved in non-agricultural work than in rural areas. Thirty to forty percent of slave owners in the capital region engaged in non-agricultural professions.⁴⁰ Slave owners in the province’s cities, essentially São Paulo and Santos, worked in liberal professions as lawyers, magistrates, professors, and priests. Individuals working in the areas of commerce and transport also held slaves in their employ.⁴¹

The wealthy owned higher numbers of slaves, but most owners in the urban setting held few bondsmen. “In 1804 and 1829, slave owners who held 5 slaves or less represented the majority of all owners, and median holding was just 3 slaves in both years... Those owners holding more than 20 slaves were few in number (6 percent of all

³⁷ Luna and Klein, *Slavery and the Economy*, 109; Dias, *Quotidiano e poder*, 122-129; Frank, *Dutra’s World*, 3; and Karasch, *Slave Life in Rio*, 346.

³⁸ Luna and Klein, *Slavery and the Economy*, 112.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 113.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 117.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 117-119.

owners in 1829)...”⁴² Historian Maria Luiza Ferreira de Oliveria explains that in the wills and inventories she gathered dating from the years 1874-1884, 36.3 percent of those leaving testaments owned slaves.⁴³ Slightly under half of those slave owners, 47.2 percent held between 1 and 2 slaves and 28.3 percent owned between 3 to 4 people. Only 9.4 percent of those leaving wills owned more than 9 slaves. After the closing of the trans-Atlantic slave trade, the prices of slaves rose and “...the possession of a slave came to signify social distinction and wealth...” even more than it had earlier in the nineteenth century.⁴⁴

The urban slaves who served their masters had diverse origins, and ecclesiastic sources, testaments, and inventories have registered a variety of designations of African ethnicities in São Paulo in the nineteenth century. However, it must be noted that ethnic identifiers may obfuscate as much as they reveal. It remains unclear if given “ethnic” designations only represented the port of a given slave’s embarkation⁴⁵ or if the designation encapsulated or reflected contemporaneously recognized socio-political polities and/or socio-cultural communities.⁴⁶ Overly broad categories of ethnic identification also make it difficult to know where exactly certain people came from even within a given ethnic designation. For example, the category of “Mina” was used in the nineteenth century in reference to people from the entire stretch of the Mina Coast (Costa da Mina) which spanned the southern areas of the modern countries of Togo, Benin, and eastern Nigeria; however, earlier in the slave trade the term referenced a particular

⁴² Ibid., 121.

⁴³ Oliveira, *Entre a casa e o armazém*, 100.

⁴⁴ Ibid., 103.

⁴⁵ See Caron, ““Of a Nation Which Others Do Not Understand,”” 98-121.

⁴⁶ Hall, *Slavery and African Ethnicities in the Americas*, 32-54; and Hawthorne, *From Africa to Brazil*, 8-11.

Portuguese trade post along the Gold Coast in modern day Ghana called São Jorge da Mina.⁴⁷ Ethnic designations changed as geopolitical entities rose and fell and knowing if captured people were from conquering societies or smaller culturally distinct neighboring groups problematizes exactly what scholars can know with certainty in respect to African ethnic designations recorded in source materials.

While considering the aforementioned limitations, ethnic identifiers can nevertheless reveal some sense of an individual's region of origin, which can be useful in myriad ways. Data regarding regions of origin have been used by scholars focused on Angola and Benguela to think about the familiarity non-elites had with Catholicism, compared to royals and nobles who converted early after developing formal state relationships with the Portuguese. Regional designations also have proven to be useful to scholars who have connected African agricultural and technical knowledge with particular crop cultivation or skilled tasks exemplified by rice production and processing in the Carolina and Georgia Lowcountries⁴⁸ and cattle husbandry in the Caribbean.⁴⁹

While slave owners did demonstrate preferences for particular people from particular regions, local kings, statesmen, and traders along African coasts had more

⁴⁷ Soares, *People of Faith*, 4; Karasch, *Slave Life in Rio*, 25 and 26; and Rebecca Shumway, *The Fante and the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade* (Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press, 2011), 23.

⁴⁸ For evidence of the Black rice thesis which suggests that ethnic African Upper Guineans contributed specialized knowledge to the successful cultivation of rice in the Americas see Judith Carney, *Black Rice: The African Origins of Rice Cultivation in the Americas* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001); Edda L. Fields-Black, *Deep Roots: Rice Farmers in West Africa and the African Diaspora* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2008); for revisions and criticism of this theory see Walter Hawthorne, "From Black Rice to 'Brown': Rethinking the History of Rice Culture in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Century Atlantic," *American Historical Review* 111, no.1 (February 2010):136-150; and David Eltis, Philip Morgan, and David Richardson, "Black, Brown, or White? Color-Coding American Commercial Rice Cultivation with Slave Labor," *American Historical Review* 115, no.1 (February 2010): 164-171.

⁴⁹ Carney and Rosomoff, *In the Shadow of Slavery*, 172; and Andrew Sluyter, "The Role of Black Barbudans in the Establishment of Open Range Cattle Herding in the Colonial Caribbean and South Carolina," *Journal of Historical Geography* 35 (2009): 330-349.

influence in determining the make-up of slave shipments.⁵⁰ Prevailing winds and ocean currents also influenced the development of relationships between particular ports,⁵¹ since longer voyages equaled higher mortality rates for the Africans transported.⁵² Rio de Janeiro traders and shippers received more imports from West Central Africa over the course of the slave trade, because the transport time was shortest between Rio and Luanda (Angola) and Rio and Benguela.⁵³ Of course European government policy, prerogatives, and treaties influenced trading patterns, but quickest transport times, prevailing winds, and relations among merchants had great influence on trade relations.

West Central Africans arriving through the Port of Rio represented the largest identified regional source of slaves in the city of São Paulo;⁵⁴ this was similar to the pattern of West Central African numerical dominance in the larger southeastern region. West Central Africans included people designated as Kongo, Cabinda, Benguela, Rebolo, Cassange, and “of Angola” (de Angola).⁵⁵

West Africans were the next most populous regional cluster of ethnic Africans in nineteenth century São Paulo.⁵⁶ West Africans included people largely designated as “Mina” or “of the Mina coast” (da costa Mina), though the term “Calabar,” also appears in records. Those deemed as from the Mina Coast embarked on slave ships leaving from

⁵⁰ Eltis, *The Rise of African Slavery*, 146-147; Kristen Mann, *Slavery and the Birth of an African City: Lagos, 1760-1900* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2007), 51-59; and Florentino, “The Slave Trade, Colonial Markets,” 222.

⁵¹ David Eltis and David Richardson, *Atlas of the Transatlantic Slave* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010), 8.

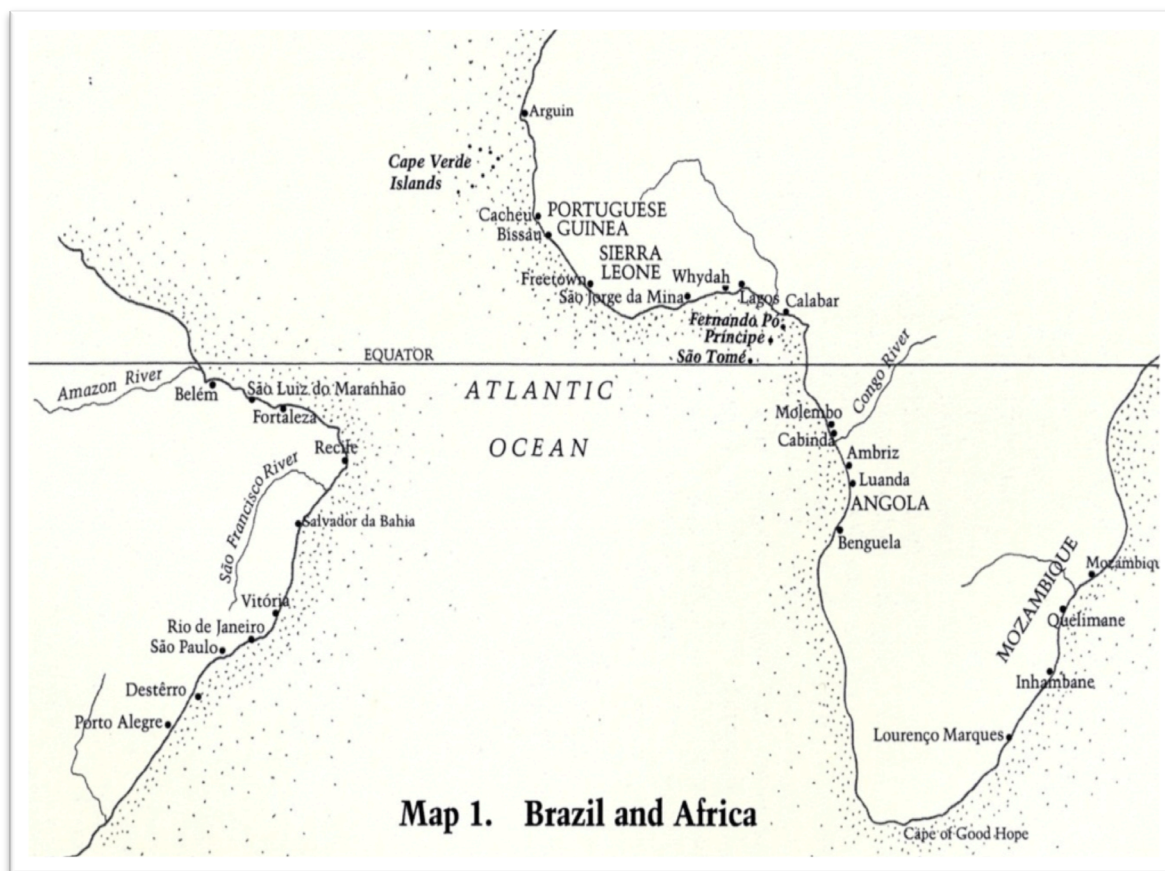
⁵² Conrad, *World of Sorrow*, 36; and Klein, *Middle Passage*, 86-87.

⁵³ Florentino, “The Slave Trade, Colonial Markets,” 282 and 291.

⁵⁴ Regiane Augusto de Mattos, “De cassange, mina, benguela a gentio da Guiné: Grupos étnicos e formação de identidades africanas na cidade de São Paulo 1800-1850 (MA thesis, Universidade de São Paulo, 2006), 89-91; and 108.

⁵⁵ Karasch, *Slave Live in Rio*, 13-21; and Flavio Gomes, “‘Atlantic Nations’ and the Origins of Africans in Late-colonial Rio de Janeiro: New Evidence,” *Colonial Latin American Review* 20, no.2 (2011): 218-220; and table on page 222.

⁵⁶ Mattos, “De Cassange,” 90 and 97.



Map 1. Brazil and Africa

From Robert Conrad, *World of Sorrow: The African Slave Trade to Brazil* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1986), 27.

Upper and Lower Guinea south through to Gabon.⁵⁷ East Africans identified as Mozambique, Quilimane, and Inhambe represented the smallest regional/ ethnic cluster of captives in São Paulo.⁵⁸ This differed slightly from patterns in Rio de Janeiro where West Central Africans represented the overwhelming majority of the diaspora population followed by East Africans. For Rio, West Africans represented the smallest segment of African transplants.⁵⁹

São Paulo's enslaved population overwhelmingly resided in the parish of Sé. Of the 2722 slaves enumerated in the 1872 census, 1909 or approximately 70 percent of

⁵⁷ Karasch, *Slave Life in Rio*, 25-28.

⁵⁸ Mattos, "De Cassange," 90 and 97.

⁵⁹ Karasch, *Slave Life in Rio*, 21-25; and Conrad, *World of Sorrow*, 27.

bondspeople were registered as residents of Sé, the oldest and most prosperous parish of the city. The remaining 813 bondspeople, approximately 30 percent of captives in the city, lived dispersed in the parishes of Santa Efigênia, Bras, Penha, and Consolação. Slaves, of course, represented only a section of the Afro-Brazilian population and freed and free people of color likely represented a quarter of the total population of 17, 069 persons resident in São Paulo.⁶⁰

Brazil contained an impressive number of free people of color in the nineteenth century. “By the early nineteenth century Brazil had the largest free-colored population of any slave society in the Americas.”⁶¹ Natural reproductive population growth and manumission contributed to the expansion of this sector of the populace. “Whereas in the United States the free population was more than 95 percent white, whites tended to comprise less than half the free population in most of Brazil... At the time of Brazil’s first national census in 1872...free colored—all of whom came from slave origins—number 4.2 million persons, compared to just 1.5 million slaves. These free colored were, in fact, the largest single racial/status group with Brazil itself.”⁶²

Despite the growth of free coloreds as a sector of the populace, their economic advancement and social status did not improve significantly in the nineteenth century. Social prejudice and later preference for European immigrants as laborers interfered with their incorporation into the upper echelons of society. There were, of course, individuals who did improve their financial security and social standing in their lifetimes, but overall African descendants continued to be economically and socially disadvantaged well into

⁶⁰ Oliveira, *Entre a casa e o armazém*, 99.

⁶¹ Herbert S. Klein and Francisco Vidal Luna, “Free Colored in a Slave Society: São Paulo and Minas Gerais in the Early Nineteenth Century,” *Hispanic American Historical Review* 80, no.4 (November 2000): 915.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 914-915.

the twentieth century. Free people of color entered a society through birth or manumission where their African origins remained associated with enslavement, manual labor, degeneracy, and a host of other negative tropes. Despite their free status, free people of color faced innumerable barriers in their social and professional lives due to the denigration of manual labor, scientific racism, and broadly held negative assessments of Africa and those of African descent.⁶³

Despite the discrimination free coloreds faced, they were well distributed in the population and a quarter of all household units had free people of color as heads of household.⁶⁴ Free people of color were, on average, younger than slaves and the group had a larger percentage of females than the enslaved population. As in other urban slave holding cities such as Lima, Peru or Rio de Janeiro women had higher rates of manumission than men.⁶⁵ In São Paulo, where 40 percent of all households were led by women, free women of color probably represented more than 20 percent of the total number of heads of household in urban districts.⁶⁶

The labor market for free people of color involved many of the same labor tasks performed by those who were enslaved. If data taken from the 41 counties in the province of São Paulo described the capital then richer free people of color headed households involved in farming.⁶⁷ Farmers of African descent like other small agriculturalists likely held property in rural districts and in the city. Artisans comprised the second most important arena of employment for free people of color; in fact, farmers and artisans

⁶³ Russell-Wood, *Black Man in Slavery and Freedom*; Mortiz Schwarcz, *Retrato em branco e negro*, 189-247; Peter Beattie, *A Tribute of Blood: Army, Honor, Race and the Nation, 1864-1945* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2001); and Borges, ““Puffy, Ugly, Slothful and Inert,”” 235-256.

⁶⁴ Luna and Klein, *Slavery and the Economy*, 163.

⁶⁵ Hünefeldt, *Paying the Price of Freedom*, 92-93; and Karasch, *Slave Life in Rio*, 345-346.

⁶⁶ Kuznesof, *Household Economy*, 181.

⁶⁷ Luna and Klein, *Slavery and the Economy*, 169.

together “...accounted for two-thirds of the 561 free-colored slave owning households.”⁶⁸

Working as day laborers constituted the next significant arena of employment for free people of color, and these jobs represented lower status vocations. As Luna and Klein noted, “...The free colored, while found everywhere and participating in all occupations, were nevertheless at the lower end of the social and economic scale in their majority.”⁶⁹

Free women of color tended to work in the crafts. While 59 percent of the free men of color who headed households farmed, 29 percent of free women of color did the same. Thirty-one percent of the free women of color counted in census data were listed as crafts persons and they tended to work with spinning and weaving textiles. Thirty-three percent of free women of colored enumerated in 1829 data were classified as poor or beggars compared to 7 percent of all households falling in that category for the total number of heads of household.⁷⁰ Perhaps those females among the “poor” and “beggars” worked in the informal economy as ambulant street vendors; it certainly is a possibility since the only other category that might have included *quitandeiras* was the designation of day laborer, which listed only 62 women compared to 782 women described as poor/beggars.⁷¹

Prejudice against African descendants was strong and overwhelmingly limited occupational options and social ascendancy possibilities for all people of African descent regardless of free or enslaved status. However, in São Paulo, Afro-Brazilian opportunities for wealth accumulation, like the rest of the population, failed to match the potential for wealth building characteristic for the mining area of Minas Gerais or the port cities of Rio

⁶⁸ Ibid., 172.

⁶⁹ Ibid., 171.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ Ibid.

de Janeiro and Salvador in the eighteenth and first half of the nineteenth century. São Paulo's comparatively late and measured development shaped a society where overall wealth generation for free people of color was more difficult than in neighboring provinces until the mid-nineteenth century.⁷²

Housing and Costs of Urban Life

The difficulty of wage earning affected the housing and living arrangements of city inhabitants. The patriarchal model of family headed by the oldest male, female dependents, and a house full of servants was not the arrangement, which characterized most households; only elites lived in such arrangements.⁷³ In fact, women were heads of household in forty-five percent of all units in 1804, and most households were composed of nuclear family members and unrelated non-dependents who lived in the places where they worked.⁷⁴ Co-housing especially prevailed for small slave holders and non-slave owners,⁷⁵ and the majority of households had tenants or non-related non slave dependents residing in their dwellings.⁷⁶ In the late 1830s, Daniel Kidder noted during his travels to São Paulo that household residents typically lived in the compartmentalized upper floors of homes, while lower stories generally served as shops, carriage houses, and stables.⁷⁷

Agregados or non-related household members became a feature of *paulistano* and wider Brazilian society, especially for single women.⁷⁸ *Agregados* often included *escravos de ganho*, former slaves, household servants, and orphans who also served as

⁷² Ibid., 162.

⁷³ Kuznesof, *Household Economy*, 171.

⁷⁴ Ibid., 160 and 171.

⁷⁵ Luna and Klein, *Slavery and the Economy*, 109 and 121. On average one-third of households owned slaves in the province and in Brazil in general. The median holding was three slaves.

⁷⁶ Kuznesof, *Household Economy*, 87-90; Dias, *Quotidiano e poder*, 162; See discussion of housing structures and an outline of household composition for Rio de Janeiro see Frank, *Dutra's World*, 33-36.

⁷⁷ Kidder, *Sketches*, 231.

⁷⁸ Kuznesof, *Household Economy*, 87 and 169; and Dias, *Quotidiano e poder*, 110 especially notes 90 and 91.

domestic laborers. Agregados labored inside and outside of households to pay for their housing; they often participated in co-housing arrangements to facilitate productive activities such as cloth and apparel construction.⁷⁹ The high cost of property contributed to a pattern of urban residence characterized by high levels of integration across economic sectors and color. While a few black enclaves developed such as Liberdade and Caguassu, later known as Bexiga, most Africans and African descendants were dispersed throughout the city.⁸⁰

Wages in the city exhibited great variance based on the task performed. Daily take home pay varied from between \$250 to \$500 *réis* for the best paid unskilled occupations for men in the 1830s. In 1836, the municipal government paid \$360 *réis* per day to employ slave day laborers, called *jornaleiros*. Slaves working as shoemakers earned from \$400 to \$700 *réis* depending upon skill, “acculturation” and “temperament,” while “... cabinet makers, carpenters, and tailors” earned a little more.⁸¹ Newspaper advertisements offered between \$350 and \$500 *réis* a day for “strong slaves” to provide labor for the transport of heavy goods or for ambulatory sales. For women, advertisements offered between \$250 to \$500 *réis* for skilled cooks and skilled saleswomen. Washerwomen typically earned between \$100 and \$200 *réis*, while textile spinners and seamstresses salaries ranged between \$280 and \$300 *réis* per day.⁸²

Savings constituted an important goal for both the free and *escravos de ganho* who wished to purchase their own freedom or the freedom of enslaved loved ones. For example in 1836 an able bodied male cost \$500 *réis*, while in 1870, the price of a similar

⁷⁹ Kuznesof, *Household Economy*, 156-157 and 160 and 161.

⁸⁰ Oliveira, *Entre a casa e o armazén*, 128; and Butler, *Freedoms Won, Freedoms Given*, 76.

⁸¹ Dias, *Quotidiano e poder*, 131.

⁸² *Ibid.*, 131-133.

bondsmen reached \$2,000 *mil-réis* in São Paulo.⁸³ Self-purchase became more difficult as the nineteenth century progressed, especially for men. However, the costs of meeting basic sustenance needs also increased and the informal economy remained of importance, since comestibles and finished products had lower costs in the informal economy than in propertied store fronts. Minimal foodstuff expenditures varied between \$50 and \$100 *réis* per day in 1836 and by 1850 in São Paulo prices for daily rations required between \$300 and \$400 *réis* per day.⁸⁴

Participation in street markets represented one of the “best paid” types of employment for unskilled black female wage earners. Traveler accounts suggested that a top seller might earn between \$250 to \$500 *réis*.⁸⁵ However, high wages were not the only attractive factors for self-employment as an ambulant peddler. Women and men from lower echelon backgrounds formed friendships on the streets, around fountains, and in *praças* (city squares). Interestingly, Afro-Brazilian earned wages did more than supplement their diets and enrich their material lives. Beyond the primary goal of self and relative manumission, earnings and micro savings contributed to and supported black community formation. As historian Maria da Silva Dias noted, “Small quantities of \$120 to \$200 *réis* per week were essential for the survival of slaves, because they...constituted the initial base of their community organizations and mutual aid societies such as *irmandades*.”⁸⁶

⁸³ Ibid., 133.

⁸⁴ Ibid., 130.

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ Ibid., 132. (Pequenas quantias de 10 a 200 réis por semana eram essenciais para a sobrevivência dos escravos ...e constituíam o quinhão inicial de suas organizações comunitárias e de auxílio mútuo, como as próprias irmandades.)

The slaves and free people who participated in brotherhoods used hard earned wealth from fairly low paying employment to cover entrance fees and monthly dues in addition to other cash outlays to finance organizational festivals. For women whose work brought in lower remuneration compared to men, participation in brotherhoods equaled a greater financial burden; however, women and men continuously sought membership in black confraternities and considered it a privilege to serve as officers and patrons. The value of the funds that general members, but especially associational leaders, contributed again underscores the social distinction sodality members placed on acting as administrative and spiritual leaders. The following section recounts when black devotions began to shape the city's physical and social landscape through church construction and public assembly.

Black Brotherhoods in the City of São Paulo

The first black confraternity established in the hamlet of São Paulo began in the early 1700s. The Brotherhood of Our Lady of the Rosary of Black Men was founded on January 2, 1711 by a secular priest and an assembly of Africans slaves.⁸⁷ During the Rosary Brotherhood's early years from 1711 to 1725, the sodality did not have a church of its own. Brotherhoods without independent churches met in *capelas*, which referred to side altars in larger churches or small one room chapels. The organizational history of the Rosary Brotherhood indicates that devotees met in the distant outskirts of the city "... in a rustic and very poor chapel on vacant land."⁸⁸

Local historian and city chronicler Francisco Nardy Filho suggested that in 1721 the Rosary Brotherhood sent a petition to the King of Portugal to request permission to

⁸⁷ACMSP, Livro de Tombo, Freguesia de Sé, 1747, 02-02-17; and Amaral, *Os pretos do Rosário*, 2nd ed., 36.

⁸⁸ Amaral, *Os pretos do Rosário*, 2nd ed., 36.

build a church, since the group wished to celebrate the mysteries of the rosary. The superintendent of agriculture of Santos, Timoteo Correia de Gois purportedly delivered the request to the king.⁸⁹ Unfortunately, the church archive in São Paulo holds no documentation which can corroborate exactly who delivered the request to erect the church.

What is certain is that Domingos de Mello Tavares, a Catholic priest, facilitated the founding of the Brotherhood of Our Lady of the Rosary of Black Men. Mello Tavares ministered to the Rosary brotherhood members for seven years at the outside chapel, which must have more closely resembled a shrine, because he reportedly found the location of their assembly to be so crude and the members to be so poor that he “...resolved to collect or beg for money to erect a more adequate church.” His fundraising activity continued for five years in the captaincy of São Paulo and Minas Gerais, and he collected “ten thousand cruzados” in an effort to make the worship space of the black brotherhood members decent and dignified enough “...to not impede the zeal of the supplicant...”⁹⁰ Historian Kathleen Higgins noted that by 1705 it was common for priests to collect alms for various causes in Minas Gerais during the years of the mining gold rush. In fact, residents of mining areas registered so many complaints against swindling priests that in 1711, the Portuguese crown responded by prohibiting unauthorized clergy from entering mining zones.⁹¹ Hence, the organizational account of how the confraternity accessed funds to build their church is even more convincing.

⁸⁹ Arroyo, *Igrejas de São Paulo*, 17.

⁹⁰ ACMSP, Livro de Tombo, Freguesia de Sé, 1747, 02-02-17; and Amaral, *Os pretos do Rosário*, 2nd ed., 37.

⁹¹ Higgins, “*Licentious Liberty*,” 102.

Even with permission from the crown, local bishops had to give their approval for the establishment of new religious entities in their diocese. Based on these conventions, Mello Tavares, the priest leading the Rosary brotherhood, wrote to Bishop Antonio de Guadalupe in order to begin construction of the new church for the confraternity's worship.⁹² At the time of the request, Guadalupe questioned both the collection methods and accounting practices of Father Mello Tavares, and in a November 5, 1725 letter, Guadalupe indicated he planned to send a priest as an official visitor/auditor (*visitador*) to ensure appropriate usage of funds for church construction.⁹³ While documentation indicating the precise day when church construction began and ended is lacking, residents of the city provided some clues. Witness accounts indicated that by the 1730s the project to build the rosary church had been undertaken.⁹⁴

While the donations collected by Mello Tavares paid for materials, the members likely provided the labor for church construction themselves. Blacks provided the labor for all kinds of laborious tasks, so no other sector of the population was more likely to do such work. The new church edifice was built at the site of the existing makeshift chapel, which came to be known as the intersection of Avenida São João and the Travessa do Rosário (Rosario Alley), which today is the Praça Antonio Prado.⁹⁵ The church of the Rosary Brotherhood, which began as a site beyond the bounds of the city came to occupy prime real estate as the city of São Paulo expanded.

⁹² Amaral, *Os pretos do Rosário*, 2nd ed., 37-38. Before 1745, the captaincy of São Paulo and Minas Gerais represented a single ecclesiastic unit, which fell under the jurisdiction of the bishop of Rio Janeiro. The establishment of the diocese of São Paulo was approved in April 1745 and was civilly erected in December 1745. See Vasco Smith de Vasconcellos, *História da província eclesiástica de São Paulo* (São Paulo: Oficinas Gráficas de Saraiva, 1957), 13-14; and Souza, *Catolicismo em São Paulo*, 128-146.

⁹³ ACMSP, Livro de Tombo, Freguesia de Sé, 1747, 02-02-17; and Amaral, *Os pretos do Rosário*, 2nd ed., 38-40.

⁹⁴ Arroyo, *Igrejas de São Paulo*, 176.

⁹⁵ Bruno, *Historia e tradições*, unpagged annex, "Mappa da capital da provincia de S. Paulo-Ano de 1877).

Despite all the effort required to raise the new church, its structure failed to impress passersby. Azevedo Marques described the church in 1745 as “... a little and poor chapel supported by devotees...” that “... had existed for around ten years.”⁹⁶ While the assembly space may have indeed been quite modest, the church became an orienting landmark in the area. The church gave its name to the surrounding neighborhood, the adjacent street, and the adjoining praça.

By 1850, the Church of Our Lady of the Rosary of Black Men was a two story high edifice with a four story high belfry on the right side of the structure. White or light colored stucco composed the temple’s exterior walls. Churches dedicated to Our Lady of the Rosary were customarily trimmed with blue paint, since the colors associated with the patron saint were white and blue. In the 1800s, the church towered above the residences, which surrounded it, but by the turn of the twentieth century storefronts and the individual residences of shopkeepers among others matched the height and scale of the church. Only the church bell, which marked the hours and the church steeple rose above the rest of the skyline. Massive wooden doors allowed entrance to the sanctuary and a series of three windows on the facade of the chapel allowed light to stream in for illumination.⁹⁷

African and African descendant devotees of Our Lady of the Rosary became active in the religious life of the municipality. In 1768, a subgroup of Rosary confraternity participants established the Brotherhood of Saint Ephigênia and Saint

⁹⁶ Arroyo, *Igrejas de São Paulo*, 176.

⁹⁷ Bruno, *Historia e tradições*, 787; and Amaral, *Os pretos do Rosário*, 2nd ed., 247 and 249.

Elesbão of Black Men of São Paulo.⁹⁸ These devotees met for decades in the Church of Our Lady of the Rosary using a side altar to celebrate their patron saints. Despite the fact the Brotherhood of Saint Ephigênia and Saint Elesbão met in the church of Our Lady of the Rosary, the organization had “[ecclesiastical] personality and distinct functions” from that of the Rosary brotherhood.⁹⁹

In 1794, the confraternity transferred statues of Saint Ephigênia and Saint Elesbão from the Church of Our Lady of the Rosary to a small chapel that became the site of their own church. The small chapel underwent years of additional work, but in 1801 the structure came to serve as the main church for the parish by decree of the Prince Regent of Portugal.¹⁰⁰ Though the church and the parish were officially called Our Lady of the Conception (Nossa Senhora do Conceição) of Saint Ephigênia by church authorities in written documentation, in popular parlance the church and parish became known simply as Saint Ephigênia.¹⁰¹

The fact that a church affiliated with a black brotherhood became the *igreja matriz* or the main church for parish activities was not uncommon in colonial Brazil.¹⁰² However, the designation as the parish center meant that the black brotherhoods who administered these churches often found themselves in situations of great conflict when church authorities sought to reassert greater control of centers of worship in the mid to late nineteenth century,¹⁰³ especially in São Paulo. Diocese leaders had little interest in accepting directives from black confraternity leaders, while white confraternities had

⁹⁸ Several printed sources dated the establishment of the brotherhood to November 14 1758, but documents from the church archive indicated the incorporation date of the brotherhood as November 14, 1768; see ACMSP, Uncatalogued Folder, Santa Ephigênia: Nsra da Conceição, No. 2, Compromisso 1859.

⁹⁹ Amaral, *Os pretos do Rosário*, 2nd ed., 53.

¹⁰⁰ ACMSP, Uncatalogued Folder, Santa Ephigênia: Nsra da Conceição, No. 2.

¹⁰¹ Ibid., and Morse, *From Community to Metropolis*, 122.

¹⁰² Reis, *Death is a Festival*, 40.

¹⁰³ Ibid.

politically and economically elite members who were much better able to stave off encroachment. In May 1888, the Brotherhood of Saint Ephigênia and Saint Elesbão was dissolved by the diocese of São Paulo, and the church built by and for the brotherhood was ripped from their control after a two year long public dispute with diocese officials.¹⁰⁴ This defining moment in the organizational life and death of the Brotherhood of Saint Ephigênia and Saint Elesbão will be explored and analyzed in chapter five.

The final predominantly black brotherhood established in São Paulo was located in the parish of Sé, in the city center. The Brotherhood of Saint Benedict was founded in 1772 by Franciscan priests who arranged for organizational meetings to occur at the Convent of São Francisco on the 22nd of October.¹⁰⁵ Franciscans often established brotherhoods to honor Saint Benedict, since the saint was affiliated with the Franciscan order during his life.¹⁰⁶ However, Franciscan orders were not the only congregations who established confraternities in the saint's honor; individual church memberships could and did create brotherhoods to honor Saint Benedict without monastic support or participation.¹⁰⁷ São Paulo's confraternity honoring Saint Benedict was one of at least eleven sodalities in Brazil dedicated to the saint.¹⁰⁸ The organization instituted in the Convent of São Francisco continued to meet in the same location until at least 1905.¹⁰⁹ The brotherhood dissolved in the early twentieth century, and in 1941, a new group of

¹⁰⁴ ACMSP, Uncatalogued Folder, Santa Ephigênia: Nsra da Conceição, No. 2.

¹⁰⁵ AESP, Sociedades Civis-Estatuas/Compromissos, Irmandade de São Benedito da Cidade de São Paulo, (1861), 1/02/1896, C10388.

¹⁰⁶ Fiumi, "Saint Benedict the Moor," 16-20.

¹⁰⁷ Reis, *Death is a Festival*, 40.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 277.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*; and ACMSP, Uncatalogued Folder, Irmandade de São Benedito, Irmandades XXXIV. It should be noted that Saint Benedict the Moor or "the black," a Franciscan, (ca. 1529-1589) is to be distinguished from Saint Benedict of Nursia (ca.480-547) who created a popular model for monastic living, which became known as the "Rule of Benedict" after his death. See Fiumi, "Saint Benedict the Moor," 16-51; and for more on Saint Benedict of Nursia see Gregory I, *The Life of Our Most Holy Father Saint Benedict* (London: Christian Classics Ethereal Library; Thomas Baker 1898).

devotees founded a new chapter of the Brotherhood of Saint Benedict in the Casa Verde area of the city of São Paulo.¹¹⁰

The Brotherhood of Saint Benedict represented an anomaly in the patterns of black sodality organization in São Paulo. The brotherhood continued to have white elites as members, patrons, and occasionally as executive board officers into the twentieth century mainly based on the fact that the group continued its devotion in the Church of São Francisco, a community of worshippers filled with the city's wealthy, governing elites. However, white participation did not necessarily mean that the confraternity did not share important organizational features that characterized other black brotherhoods. For example, certain offices in the Brotherhood of Saint Benedict were only filled by blacks. The role of King and Queen of the festival of Saint Benedict were always held by black members.¹¹¹ Furthermore, the role of *Capitão do mastro*, a male officer selected to lead the Festival of the Holy Spirit celebrating Pentecost, was an office only found in black brotherhoods by the middle of the nineteenth century.¹¹²

While the lack of associational membership records make it difficult to enumerate participants with precision, it is clear that the Brotherhood of Saint Benedict had hundreds of enslaved members throughout the nineteenth century. Organizational scribes listed enslaved members in books separate from free members. Interestingly, the books of free members also help corroborate that many slaves acquired their freedom over the course of their life, since they started in books with lists of enslaved persons and had their

¹¹⁰ Conselho nacional das irmandades do São Benedito do Brasil, "Boletim informativo do conselho nacional das irmandades de São Benedito," Ano 11: Edição 25, [http://www.conisb.com.br/imagens/jornais/Edição 25-Junho11.pdf](http://www.conisb.com.br/imagens/jornais/Edição%20-Junho11.pdf). (Accessed July 5, 2012.)

¹¹¹ ACMSP, Irmandade de São Benedito, Livro de Assentamento das Irmãos (cativos), 1846-1878, 02-02-18.

¹¹² Ibid. Also see chapter 2, page 136 for more on the office and role of the *Capitão do mastro* within black confraternities.

names transferred to member lists enumerating free brotherhood members.¹¹³ For example, Benedito Coutinho entered the sodality as a captive, but had his name transferred to the book of the free in 1853 after attaining his liberty. He was not alone. Another man, Bento Lucas de Barros, former slave of Rodrigo Monteiro Barros, had his name moved from the book of captives based on his status as a freedman (*liberto*) in 1853. In his first year as a freedman he paid the cost of one year worth of fees and by the next year he paid the dues for four annual years at a cost of \$320 réis for each year.¹¹⁴

Finally, the white members who joined the Brotherhood of Saint Benedict tended to be the most powerful of the elite. Provincial governor and priest Dr. Vicente Pires da Motta belonged to the Brotherhood of Saint Benedict, as did the fervent and famed abolitionist Antonio Bento. Military men including Lieutenant José Domingue Frade and Captain Isidoro José Pereira belonged to the brotherhood's administrative board along with the ennobled Baron of São João and Rio Claro in 1873.¹¹⁵ The membership of white men and white women in the Brotherhood of Saint Benedict signaled their undisputed elite status although it did not necessarily preclude sincere devotion for the saint. Nineteenth century elite culture still required patronage of the poor,¹¹⁶ and belonging to a confraternity of predominantly enslaved members was designed to emphasize the humility and charity of the privileged, especially among traditionalists.

¹¹³ ACMSP, Irmandade de São Benedito, Livro de Assentamento das Irmãos, 1759-1855, 02-02-01; Livro de Assentamento das Irmãos (cativos), 1846-1878, 02-02-18; and Livro de Assentamento das Irmãos, 1846-1896, 02-02-07.

¹¹⁴ Ibid; See ACMSP, Irmandade de São Benedito, Livro de Assentamento das Irmãos, 1804-1848, 02-02-28; and Irmandade de São Benedito, Livro de Assentamento das Irmãos, 1846-1896, 02-02-07.

¹¹⁵ Ibid., and Luné, *Almanak da provincia de São Paulo*, 109.

¹¹⁶ Richard Graham, *Patronage and Politics in Nineteenth Century Brazil* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1990), 25; June E. Hahner, *Poverty and Politics: The Urban Poor in Brazil, 1870-1920* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1986), 35-36; and Dain Borges, *The Family in Bahia, Brazil 1870-1945* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1992), 202.

White involvement in the Brotherhood of Saint Benedict did not destroy the association's capacity to serve as a meaningful devotion for blacks. The location of the sodality in the Church of São Francisco meant that the brotherhood did not create a spatially autonomous site for black assembly. However, the brotherhood's participation inside of the wealthy church meant that the association incurred few costs related to maintenance, which left funds to be used almost exclusively for festive activities. Association members also interred confreres in the brotherhood's tomb inside the church, so funerals for blacks took place in a marvelously outfitted sanctuary that ushered even the humble into the afterlife in plush surroundings—a requirement for a good death according to baroque Catholicism.

Funerals, festivals, and processions represented important matters for all, but especially for black confraternities. For Afro-Brazilians who sought to challenge their marginalization and dehumanization, confraternities offered multiple possibilities. Confraternities provided assurance that blacks could leave this world with dignity at death, and that they could experience a measure of pleasure and solidarity in life, no matter how ephemeral. Confraternities contributed to Afro-Brazilians establishing a sense of belonging grounded in cultural expression, but which was also highly related to place and civic life. Confraternities incorporated Africans and their Brazilian born descendants in the Catholic realms and civic spheres where they lived, and in São Paulo lay Catholic brotherhoods came to function as institutions where self-identified blacks could demonstrate their inclusion in the civic body of the municipality and the province during the Brazilian empire (1822-1889).

Afro-Brazilian Confraternities as Physical and Symbolic Alternative Spaces of Blackness

Churches founded by black confraternities functioned as assembly points for African and Brazilian born African descendants from all walks of life. Sodalities and the churches and altars which housed them functioned as physical and symbolic spaces where African immigrants and their Brazilian born descendants blended African aesthetics and baroque Catholicism as they did the work of utilizing and mixing existant Catholic practices with the emergent expressions of faith they would employ. Blacks also utilized the participatory space of confraternities to publically demonstrate their presence in the cities where they lived and in the congregation of God.

Black confreres used devotion as a way to build bonds with each other and to incorporate themselves into an important sphere of civic performance. Sodalities represented one of the few sites of independent Afro-Brazilian assembly which white Brazilian society encouraged, since the instruction of captives in issues of faith constituted a church and state objective.¹¹⁷ As historian Julita Scarano noted during the colonial period, “Religious brotherhoods of the kingdom looked to integrate all of the population including representatives of exotic races such as Moors, Blacks, and even Indians.”¹¹⁸ Historian João José Reis provides the most thorough evidence and analysis of black confraternities participating in the wider civic/religious life of a Brazilian city. In Salvador, Bahia during the Cemetery Revolt of 1836,¹¹⁹ he describes blacks as well as whites hurling stones amid cries of “Death to the Cemetery” as brotherhood members and

¹¹⁷ Ibid., and Kiddy, *Blacks of the Rosary*, 15.

¹¹⁸ Scarano, *Devoção e Escravidão*, 26. (As irmandades religiosas do Reino procuraram integrar toda a população, inclusive os representates das raças exóticas, como mouros, pretos, e ate índios...)

¹¹⁹ Reis, *Death is a Festival*, 4, 45, 51-56. For evidence of black participation in festivals or events other than feasts for their patron saints in São Paulo, see Kidder, *Sketches*, 232, 234-235; and Martins, *São Paulo antigo*, 320 and 326.

the general populace protested the ban of burial inside of churches.¹²⁰ On this occasion and many others, sodalities brought blacks into the Catholic world's sphere of influence, and in São Paulo, as in Salvador, brotherhoods seized the traditions of Catholic pageantry and infused them with performances of self, which integrated movement, music, and aesthetics shaped by their societies of origin.

Festivals, Processions, and Catholic Pageantry

Religious commemorations played a central role in the civic and ceremonial life of all urban centers throughout Brazil. Regular and lay church leaders led and facilitated the ceremonial life of the state, and this role constituted no small task, since municipal, provincial, and national holidays were routinely celebrated with special masses and processions during the empire when the church and state were unified.¹²¹ The regular participation of black brotherhoods in civic rituals in honor of holy days such as Easter and national political commemorations such as the seventh of September, the day of Brazilian Independence, regularly brought black brotherhoods into the streets for civic celebrations along with their non-black counterparts.¹²² In these processions, black confraternity leaders demonstrated their intra-community status as governing board members by leading their organizational brethren in public rituals.

Wide swathes of the population across Brazilian cities viewed processions. The wealthy typically watched from upper level balconies with great enthusiasm, if they were

¹²⁰ Ibid., 4 and 6.

¹²¹ Luné, *Almanak da Provincia de São Paulo*, 2-35, especially 34; Mello Moraes Filho, *Festas e tradições populares do Brasil*, 3rd ed. (Rio de Janeiro: H. Garnier, 1946); also see Hendrik Kraay, "Between Brazil and Bahia: Celebrating Dois de Julho in Nineteenth Century Salvador," *Journal of Latin American Studies* 31 no.2 (May 1999): 255-286; and Martha Abreu, *O Império do Divino: festas religiosas e cultura popular no Rio de Janeiro, 1830-1900* (Rio de Janeiro: Nova Fronteira, 1999) for a broader discussion of holidays and popular festivals in Brazil in the nineteenth century.

¹²² Ibid.

not processing in one of their own brotherhoods.¹²³ All households were obliged to prepare the facades of their dwellings for parades of the faithful. In 1820 for the Feast of Corpus Christi, the Municipal Council of São Paulo issued an edict ordering all inhabitants of the city to have “...their houses and walls whitewashed and their yards clean and swept...” City residents were also required “... to throw leaves and flowers along the streets where the procession is said to pass, with each resident having his doors and windows decorated as is proper under penalty of a six mil-réis fine...and thirty days in prison.”¹²⁴ City authorities commanded the rich and the poor to create an environment of splendor by cleaning and beautifying typically dirty city streets. By the imperial period, such compulsory edicts disappeared and custom rather than law drove the local inhabitant’s decorative sensibilities.

Holidays occurred frequently and the processions and festivals, which accompanied them served as a chief form of recreation and diversion for the populace. Holidays were divided into *Dias santos de guarda*, on which it was unlawful to work, and *Dias santos dispensados* when ecclesiastic law required attendance at mass, but permitted labor.¹²⁵ Religious holidays where no work was allowed numbered from “twenty to twenty-five,” while those requiring attendance of mass numbered “ten to fifteen.”¹²⁶ Rural and urban slave owners were encouraged to follow church guidelines and make holidays days of rest. In 1847, Lacerda Werneck, a successful plantation owner in Rio, published a plantation management manual, where he encouraged slave owners to

¹²³ Morse, *From Community to Metropolis*, 42.

¹²⁴ Ibid.

¹²⁵ Kidder, *Sketches*, 144.

¹²⁶ Ibid.; American missionary and traveler Daniel Kidder noted that number of holidays in Brazil conformed to the religious calendar established by Pope Urban VIII in 1642 with the addition of holidays set aside for the patron saints of each province, city, town, and parish.

keep Sundays and holidays as free days so that slaves could receive religious instruction.¹²⁷

Every city and town had its own patron saint and every year lay and religious officials led celebrations to commemorate their patron and benefactor. The 25th of January was the day set aside to celebrate the conversion of Saint Paul. The prescribed features of the celebration included "... mass, preaching, a public procession, and the kissing of relics."¹²⁸ English traveler Thomas Ewbank noted the ubiquity of expressions of popular religiosity across the nation. He wrote,

In Brazil, religion, or that which is so called, meets you everywhere; you can do nothing, observe nothing, without being confronted by it in one shape or another. It is a leading feature of public and private life. Festivals constitute the chief amusements of the masses—are their principle sports and pastimes, which the saints themselves come out of their sanctuaries, and with padres and people take part in the general frolic. To pass by them would be omitting the most popular acts, and neglecting the favorite actors in the national drama.¹²⁹

While people of all classes and of all colors participated in religious festivities, several travelers considered Afro-Brazilian participation particularly noteworthy. In the late 1830s during his travels in Brazil, Protestant missionary Daniel Kidder reported, "No class enters into the spirit of these holiday parades with more zeal than people of color."¹³⁰ On a visit to the city of São Paulo from Rio de Janeiro Kidder attended the annual noonday mass at the Cathedral of Sé in honor of Saint Paul. At mass, he found a

¹²⁷ Francisco Peixoto de Lacerda Werneck, *Memoria sobre a fundação e custeio de uma fazenda na provincia do Rio de Janiero, sua administração e epocas em que se devem fazer as plantações, suas colheitas, etc., etc.* (Rio de Janiero: Typographia Universal de Laemmert, 1847), 16-18 cited in Robert Conrad, ed., *Children of God's Fire: A Documentary History of Black Slavery in Brazil* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), 77.

¹²⁸ Kidder, *Sketches*, 233.

¹²⁹ Thomas Ewbank, *Life in Brazil: or a Journal of a Visit to the Land of the Cocoa and the Palm; with an appendix containing Illustration of Ancient South ...* ([New York]: 1856), vi-vii, in *Sabin Americana*, Gale Cengage Learning, <http://galenet.galegroup.com.proxy.library.emory.edu/serlet/Sabinaf=N&ae=CY1000052117&srchtp=a&ste=14> > (Accessed April 6, 2012).

¹³⁰ Kidder, *Sketches*, 150.

largely female audience seated on the floor covered "...with their dark and graceful mantillas..." Even though Kidder and his companions had just left Rio, a city with a larger population of Africans and African descendants, Kidder noted his French companions were struck by the racial diversity of those assembled in the cathedral, and they audibly murmured in surprise as they counted "... so large a proportion of colored faces..." among church attendees.¹³¹

Kidder himself observed Afro-Brazilian participation in the procession for Saint Paul which occurred later the same evening. After the ringing of the cathedral bells announced the 5 p.m. procession the city was "...on the alert to witness the expected parade..." with every window and veranda "...thronged with eager spectators... Two brotherhoods, the first colored, the second white composed the train; each individual bearing a lighted wax candle of sufficient length to serve for a staff, and having upon his shoulder a white, red, or yellow scarf, (*capa*) indicating the order to which he belonged." The Virgin Mary, Saint Peter, and Saint Paul formed the host of religious images drawn through the street followed by the bishop and a band of martial music.¹³²

The Brotherhood of Our Lady of the Rosary was likely the "colored" confraternity leading the procession since the group typically carried an image of the Virgin Mary, the patron saint of the sodality. The white *capas* also point to the Rosary brotherhood's participation since their organizational paraphernalia, including *capas* were blue or white. The clothing and regalia used by the "colored" confraternity must have been typical fare for such proceedings since Kidder made no remarks which distinguished among the "colored" and "white" brotherhoods based on the quality of

¹³¹ Ibid., 233-234.

¹³² Ibid., 234-235.

clothing or decorum. Apparently, both confraternities met standard expectations. This neutral view of the sodalities stands in relief to his rendering of the military band, which he described as a group of “apologies for soldiers.”¹³³ Kidder paid close attention to each group’s corporate self-presentation, and while the public display of the military recruits was found to be lacking cohesion and grace, black and white confraternity members moved through the streets with the dignity expected of their associations.

Afro-Brazilians participating in processions and festivals marched themselves through city streets dressed in their finest garments. The clothing they used to dress themselves matched the formality of the processions and other holiday celebrations in which they participated. Traveler and city chronicler accounts suggests that African and African descendants utilized clothing and adornment to demonstrate their social inclusion and social standing in broader society, and to counter images of black degradation with presentations of black respectability. For my purposes here, in the context of a discussion of self-adornment, black respectability specifically refers to visual self-fashioning through clothing, jewelry, and footwear in addition to hair arrangement designed to convey financial security and status for a public audience.¹³⁴

¹³³ Ibid., 235.

¹³⁴ Slaves were traditionally omitted from studies of honor as protagonists in Latin American history due to their dependent status and their theoretical inability to exert revenge on an owner or their employee who might insult or harm them. However, since the late 1990s, scholars have begun to interrogate how African diaspora people engaged Iberian ideas of honor and respectability. For general works analyzing concepts of honor among slaves and plebeians see Lyman Johnson, “Dangerous Words, Provocative Gestures and Violent Acts” *The Disputes of Plebian Life in Colonial Buenos Aires*, in *Faces of Honor: Sex, Shame, and Violence in Colonial Latin America*, eds. Lyman Johnson and Sonya Lipsett-Rivera (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1998), 128 and 142; Richard Boyer “Honor among Plebeians,” in *Faces of Honor: Sex, Shame, and Violence in Colonial Latin America*, eds. Lyman Johnson and Sonya Lipsett-Rivera (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1998), 156-176; Sandra Lauderdale Graham, “Honor among Slaves,” in *Faces of Honor: Sex, Shame, and Violence in Colonial Latin America*, eds. Lyman Johnson and Sonya Lipsett-Rivera (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1998), 201-229; and Beattie, *Tribute of Blood*, 8-10.

Clothing was of the utmost importance in assessments of honor, and a lack of clothing or ragged garments absolutely confirmed dependent/slave status.¹³⁵ For example, Africans and African descendants being sold in slave markets were typically depicted in written texts with little clothing.¹³⁶ For Brazilians and foreign travelers their nakedness conveyed their lack of control over their bodies and their persons. Africans also saw other Africans as stripped of the material culture including clothing and jewelry, which connected individuals to kinship lines and local communities.¹³⁷ As such, among diasporic slaves and free people of color, possessing and wearing fine articles of clothing or multiple garments, in general, was intended to convey financial accumulation and well-being.¹³⁸

The possession of fine clothes and jewelry by Africans and African descendants became so common however, that elites and visitors alike began to disregard dress and self-adornment as a reliable indication of status for people of color in general terms and especially in processions. Kidder wrote,

¹³⁵ For analysis of the cross-cultural meanings of being dressed and undressed see Barbara Sommer, "Wigs, Weapons, Tattoos and Shoes: Getting Dressed in Amazonia and Brazil," in *The Politics of Dress in Asia and the Americas*, ed. Mina Roces and Louise Edwards (Portland: Sussex Academic Press, 2007), 203-204; Philippa Levine, "States of Undress: Nakedness and the Colonial Imagination," *Victorian Studies* 50 no. 2, (Winter 2008): 189-219; and Helen Bradley Foster, *New Raiments of Self: African-American Clothing in the Antebellum South* (New York: Berg, 1997), 21-25.

¹³⁶ Karasch, *Slave Life in Rio*, 35; and Maria Graham, *Journal of a Voyage to Brazil and Residence There, During Part of the Years 1821, 1822, 1823* (London, 1824), 170; and Robert Walsh, *Notices of Brazil in 1828 and 1829*, vols.2 (London: Frederick Westley and A.H. Davis, 1830), 323-328 in Robert Conrad, ed., *Children of God's Fire: A Documentary History of Black Slavery in Brazil* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), 49.

¹³⁷ Stephanie E. Smallwood, *Saltwater Slavery: A Middle Passage from Africa to American Diaspora* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2007), 60.

¹³⁸ For works analyzing honor in relation to clothing see Tamara J. Walker, "'He Outfitted his Family in Notable Decency': Slavery, Honour, and Dress in Eighteenth-Century Lima, Peru," *Slavery and Abolition* 30, no.3 (September 2009): 383-402; Silvia Lara, "'Customs and Costumes: Carlos Julião and the Image of Black Slaves in Eighteenth Century Brazil,'" *Slavery and Abolition* 23, no. 2 (2002): 126-146; and "'The Signs of Color: Women's Dress and Racial Relations in Salvador and Rio de Janeiro, ca 1750-1815'" *Colonial Latin American Review* 6, no.2 (December 1997): 205-224; Rebecca Earle, "'Two Pairs of Pink Satin Shoes!': Clothing, Race, and Identity in the Americas, 17-19th Centuries," *History Workshop Journal* 52 (2001): 175-195; and Alexandre Bergamo, *A experiência do status: ropa e moda na trama social* (São Paulo: Editora UNESP, 2007).

“...Elegance of dress is by no means an index of condition or character in Brazil. The lower classes exhaust the avails of their industry in holiday ornaments, and mistresses take pride in adorning their slaves. In certain instances the gold and jewelry purchased to shine in the drawing-room, are seen glittering in the streets, in curious contrast with the ebony skin of domestics who are humble, though temporary representatives of the wealth of the family.”¹³⁹

While Kidder suggested that the opulent clothing Afro-Brazilians wore mainly belonged to the wealthy household occupants whom they served, slaves and free people of color likely accessed clothing in other ways.

French traveler Jean Baptiste Debret produced scores of images of life in the city of Rio de Janeiro, which included lithographs of black women in a variety of clothing styles.¹⁴⁰ Several scenes of market women selling prepared comestibles among other foodstuffs document black women wearing patterned dresses, long skirts, ruffled blouses, shawls, and sometimes capes. These women also wore necklaces, bracelets, earrings, and African styled head scarves as they sold their wares. Even lower sector working women who labored in cities as food peddlers acquired fanciful clothing that expressed personality.

One lithograph in particular suggests that free black women participated in the purchase of imported clothing from Europe. The image “Free Black Women Living by their Work” depicted four Afro-Brazilian women near the entrance of a French boutique. On the left in the foreground of the image, a young, Afro-Brazilian woman exits the store identified by a placard saying “French Fashions” (Modas Francez [sic]) bedecked in a pleated, sleeved, light colored dress with detailed embroidery around the garment’s

¹³⁹ Kidder, *Sketches*, 321.

¹⁴⁰ Jean Baptiste Debret, *Viagem pitoresca e histórica ao Brasil*, vol.1-2, trans. and notes by Sergio Milliet 3rd ed. (São Paulo: Martin Editora, 1954), [originally published as *Voyage Pittoresque et Historique au Brasil*, 3 vols. (Paris: Firmin Didot, 1834-1839)].

hemline. Another woman, a bit older than the first enters the store wearing slippers with bow details, stockings, an embroidered dress, a cape, and earrings, in addition to several combs or headbands, which embellished her hair. Two other women who conversed on a sidewalk near the shop were wealthy enough to don dainty slippers, though the styles of their clothing differed enough from each other to indicate that self-adornment encapsulated a plurality of tastes. All of these women, who dressed in multiple layers of clothing in the painting, stand in relief to a shoeless and shirtless young adult male fruit seller making his way down the street. The myriad images of daily life captured by Debret strongly suggest black females of various levels of financial means desired and purchased clothing and jewelry to visually signal personal pride, femininity, and wealth accumulation.¹⁴¹ As Tamara Walker noted in her study of dress among the African diaspora population in late-colonial Lima “...for many slaves ... elegant clothing was a key tool with which they negotiated their status, displayed their attitudes about masculinity and femininity, and attended to conceptions of honor and status in ways that not only reflected, but could also in fact modify, the dominant norms.”¹⁴²

While clothing and ornamentation could be interpreted or willfully dismissed as an indication of status, in São Paulo, Afro-Paulistanos also attempted to use adornment to indicate their station in life on a daily basis and during festive occasions. In the last

¹⁴¹ Debret, *Viagem Pitoresca*.

¹⁴² Walker, “He Outfitted his Family in Noble Decency,” 385.



Figure 5 - "Free Black Women Living from their Work." Lithograph from Jean Baptiste Debret, *Voyage Pittoresque et Historique au Bresil*. (Paris: Firmin Didot, 1834-1839).



Figure 6 - "Black Merchants of Angou." Lithograph from Jean Baptiste Debret, *Voyage Pittoresque et Historique au Bresil*. (Paris: Firmin Didot, 1834-1839).

quarter of the nineteenth century city chronicler A.E. Martins noted that a "...popular and esteemed man of color Aleixo de Paula Penha (*Aleixo Barbeiro*) ...always walked in a

top hat and wore a black cloak...” as a former barber turned small shop owner.¹⁴³ The research of Richard Graham in his work *Feeding the City: From Street Market to Liberal Reform in Salvador, Brazil, 1780-1860* suggests that Paula Penha was not alone and that store owners typically used clothing to show their wealth and indicate their more privileged station in life. Graham wrote, “Store owners carefully dressed in keeping with their position. In the 1840s they wore waist-length gray linen or striped cotton jackets, and gray linen or nankeen pants... On special days they wore a tie, but only the very rich wore a frock coat.”¹⁴⁴

The capacity to adorn one’s self in a way to elicit favorable public response crossed lines of gender and age. Parents and caregivers especially reveled in dressing up their children for special festivities and days set aside for leisure. Martins again noted “The little children of black Africans, accompanied by their mothers, also attend the festivals, presenting themselves well-dressed...”¹⁴⁵ The accessories, even more than the garments confraternity members used for dressing themselves and their children, call attention to the multicultural reality sodalities represented. Female festival attendees and their little ones reportedly wore rosaries of “red and gold and a large number of other amulets such as jaguar teeth, *figas* of ebony and gold, *olho de cabra* and *pacová* about their necks to shield the little children of the same Africans from the evil eye or of

¹⁴³ Martins, *São Paulo antigo*, 272. (...o popular e estimado homen de cor Aleixo de Paula Penha (*Aleixo Barbeiro*), que andava sempre de cartola e trajava um capote preto...)

¹⁴⁴ Richard Graham, *Feeding the City: From Street Market to Liberal reform in Salvador, Brazil, 1780-1860* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2010), 50.

¹⁴⁵ Martins, *São Paulo antigo*, 325. (Os filhos de menor idade dos pretos Africanos, acompanhados de suas mães, também assistian às mesmas festas, apresentando-se bem vestido...)

another *quiçaça*, *matirimbinbi* or *picuanga...*” described collectively by the author as witchcraft (*feitiçarias*).¹⁴⁶

The observations and accounts of Martins, if they are to be trusted, suggest that for Africans and their offspring dressing up included wearing charms and religious paraphernalia that fell beyond the bounds of orthodox Catholicism even in Catholic celebrations. Several historians have indicated that rosaries, devices designed to help supplicants keep track of the number of recitations made during prayer and meditation, were understood by Luso-Brazilians and Africans across lines of color and class to protect the wearer from evil and misfortune.¹⁴⁷ However, festival attendees also wore objects and articles rarely used by non-blacks in the region. *Figas*, for example, were charms in the shape of a human fist with the thumb placed between the middle and index fingers worn in the city of São Paulo and across the diaspora to ensure good luck.¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁶ Ibid. (...um rosário de contas vermelhas e de ouro, com um grande número de bugigangas, tais como dentes de onça, figas de guiné e de ouro, olho-de-cabra, pacová, etc., sendo que tudo isso era pra livrar os pequenos filhos dos mesmos pretos Africanos algum mau olhar ou de outra qualquer *quiçaça*, *matirimbinbi* ou *picuanga* (feitiçarias).

¹⁴⁷ For more on the perceived protective aspects of rosary beads see Saunders, *A Social History of Slaves and Freedmen*, 152; Reis, *Death is a Festival*, 52; and Sweet, *Recreating Africa*, 207. One scholar has found evidence suggesting that Afro-Brazilian healers in the province of São Paulo used rosaries as part of divination ceremonies related to Yoruba religious practice. See Machado, *O plano e o pânico*, 118, note 52. (Em ambos casos-de Santiago e Galdino- o rosário notado parece ser aquele utilizado para fins adivinatórios, denominado de opelê-ifá.)

¹⁴⁸ *Figas* are charms in the shape of a human fist with the thumb placed between the middle and index fingers associated with good luck and protection from evil. For further discussion of the figure and its appearance in both the Brazil and the United States see Melville J. Herskovits, “The Southernmost Outposts of New World Africanisms,” *American Anthropologist* 45, no. 4, Part I (October-December 1943): 500; Lauderdale Graham, *House and Street*, 87; Robert Voeks, *Sacred Leavess of Candomblé: African Magic, Medicine, and Religion in Brazil* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1997), 107; Larry Mckee, Summary Report on the 1991 Field Quarter Excavation, Report submitted to the Hermitage, TN; and “The Earth is Their Witness: Archeology is Shedding Light on the Secret Lives of American Slaves,” *The Sciences* (March/April 1995): 40; Aaron E. Russell, “Material Culture and African-American Spirituality at the Hermitage,” *Historical Archeology* 31, no. 4 (1997): 65-66; Laurie A. Wilke, “Secret and Sacred: Contextualizing the Artifacts of African-American Magic and Religion,” *Historical Archeology* 31, no. 4 (1997): 96; and Charles E. Orser Jr., “Archeology of African American Slave Religion,” in *Southern Crossroads: Perspectives on Religion and Culture*, ed. Walter Conser (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2008), 50-51.

Not every charm that was used in Africa could be reproduced in Brazil, and those attempting to use or reference cultural artifacts from their homelands often had to replace materials that were not available in Brazil. Various sub-Saharan societies, for example, considered leopards to be symbols of leadership, authority and stealth power, and wearing pelts or teeth from the animal conveyed status.¹⁴⁹ The use of the leopard, especially its teeth, remained a symbol of authority until at least the early twentieth century in West Central Africa. An English missionary in 1914 reported the use of teeth from leopards among other animals used as adornment for *nganas* or medicinal healers/priests during curing ceremonies among the Bakongo people. The clothing and adornment of *ngangas*, designed to create spectacle and reference spiritual power, included "...softened skins of wild animals, either whole or in strips, feathers of birds, dried fibers and leaves, *ornaments of leopard*, crocodile, or rat's teeth, small tinkling bells, [and] rattling seedpods..."¹⁵⁰

Leopards (*Panthera onca*), however, would not have been accessible to those moved in the trans-Atlantic slave trade to the Americas, since the natural habitat of leopards extends across sub-Saharan Africa, Central Asia, India and China only.¹⁵¹ The jaguar (*Panthera pardus*) whose native habitat extends across North and South America was the closest relative to the leopard in the Atlantic forest region that served as the new

¹⁴⁹ For further discussion of the leopard as an emblem of leadership, royalty, intelligence, and stealth power see Edna Bay, *Wives of the Leopard: Gender, Politics, and Culture in the Kingdom of Dahomey* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1998), 72, 74, and 242; Joseph Nevadomsky, "Kemwin-Kemwin: The Apothecary Shop in Benin City," *African Arts* 22, no. 1 (November 1988): 81; Paula Ben-Amos, "Men and Animals in Benin Art," *Man*, New Series, 11, no.2 (June 1976): 246-247; Robert Farris Thompson, *African Art in Motion* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1974), 18; and Maude Southwell Wahlman, "African Symbolism in Afro-American Quilts," *African Arts* 20, no.1 (November 1986): 72.

¹⁵⁰ See Wyatt MacGaffey, *Astonishment and Power: The Eyes of Understanding, Kongo Minkisi* (Washington: National Museum of African Art by the Smithsonian Institution, 1993), 51-54; emphasis added.

¹⁵¹ Alexander Gavashelishvili and Victor Lukarenskiy, "Modelling the Habitat Requirements of Leopard *Panthera Pardus* in West and Central Asia," *Journal of Applied Ecology* 45, no. 2 (April 2008): 579-580.

homeland for enslaved Africans and their descendants in eastern Brazil.¹⁵² Therefore, people moved as part of the African diaspora modified the material culture objects according to their new environment. The replacement materials nevertheless evoked symbols prevalent in Africa. The use of jaguar teeth, in the place of those from the leopard, suggests that charms worn in São Paulo during festivals for Catholic saints embraced symbols of authority, leadership, and power common in sub-Saharan Africa.¹⁵³

The use of *pavocá* as an ornament during festivals at the Church of Our Lady of the Rosary of Black Men serves as another indication that West Central African beliefs continued among African and Afro-Brazilian Catholics in the city. *Pavocá* (pacova)¹⁵⁴ is a wild plantain plant belonging to the genus Musaceae, which encompasses several species including the sweet eating bananas as well as plantains that require cooking for consumption.¹⁵⁵ Across Central Africa, residents associated genus Musaceae vegetation with “the cycle of generations” and reproductive capacity.¹⁵⁶ Anthropologist Wyatt MacGaffey notes that “[t]he new shoot (n’sanga) of a banana is synonymous with ‘offspring’ or ‘a woman capable of renewing the lineage...A grove of sweet bananas (tiba), which can survive fire and pests indefinitely, symbolizes the matrilineage...”¹⁵⁷

¹⁵² Carlos De Angelo, Agustín Paviolo, and Mario Di Bitetti, “Differential Impact of Landscape Transformation on Pumas (*Puma concolor*) and Jaguars (*Panthera onca*) in the Paraná Atlantic Forest,” *Diversity and Distributions: A Journal of Conservation Biogeography* 17, no.3 (May 2011): 422-424.

¹⁵³ Indigenous groups in Brazil revered jaguars and wore necklaces of the animal’s teeth which they associated with courage and strength. This shared reverence among indigenous and African people may have reinforced the ritual value of jaguar teeth and explained their availability. See Nicholas J. Saunders, “Architecture of Symbolism: The Feline Image,” in *Icons of Power: Feline Symbolism in the Americas*, ed. Nicolas J. Saunders (New York: Routledge, 1998), 26.

¹⁵⁴ For discussion of the Guarani origins of the term pacová and for corresponding Latin terms see Robert Langdon, “The Banana as a Key to Early American and Polynesian History,” *Journal of Pacific History* 28, no.1 (June 1993): 15-35, especially 23; and Stanley J. Kays and João C. Silva Dias, “Common Names of Commercially Cultivated Vegetables of the World in 15 Languages,” *Economic Botany* 49, no.2 (April-June 1995): 125.

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, and Carney and Rosomoff, *In the Shadow of Slavery*, 34-37, and 40-43.

¹⁵⁶ MacGaffey, *Religion and Society in Central Africa*, 130.

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

Female confraternity members attaching *pavocá* to themselves and their children in the city of São Paulo suggests the possibility that these mothers used the most important festival day among Africans and Afro-Brazilians to indicate public acknowledgement and celebration of their reproductive capacity. Even as celebrants praised Catholic saints, knowledge and beliefs from their cultures of origin emerged as part of the regalia for special occasions, in addition to serving as a tool of healing in home medicinal troves.¹⁵⁸

Other locally resourced materials also became part of the retinue of adornments worn by rosary devotees. *Olho de cabra* (*Ormosia arborea*), which are red and black seeds from a tree with the same common name were woven or strung together and worn about the necks of confraternity festival participants.¹⁵⁹ The seeds may have been gathered and worn based simply on aesthetics and/or previous use by local indigenous people;¹⁶⁰ however, it seems most likely they became favored due to the ritual significance of the color red, which dominates the *olho de cabra*'s seedcoat. According to ethnographic reporting from Kongo and Angola red represented a ritually charged color. Red represented both "...blood and danger, but more generally it signifies the mediation

¹⁵⁸ The rhizomes of genus Musaceae plants are edible and can be used as food in times of famine. They can also be used fresh or dried to treat hepatitis. The sap from the base of the leaves was used to treat toothache, while the unripe fruit was used to treat stomachache and diarrhea. The term *pacová* appeared in advertisements for homeopathic medicines in the city of São Paulo in the late nineteenth century, and its popular medicinal uses likely explain why city chronicler A.E. Martins could easily identify the plant. For more on the medicinal uses of the plant see Isabel Basualdo, Elsa Zardini, and Mirtha Ortiz, "Medicinal Plants of Paraguay: Underground Organs," *Economic Botany* 45, no.1 (January-March 1991): 88. The plant was advertised as a "digestive elixir" (*elixir digestivo de pacová*) in various editions of the *Provincia de São Paulo*. For more advertisements and references to the plant's medicinal qualities see *A Provincia de São Paulo*, May 18, 1883; *A Provincia de São Paulo*, June 8, 1883; *A Provincia de São Paulo*, November 11, 1884; and *A Provincia de São Paulo*, May 10, 1887.

¹⁵⁹ *Olho de cabra* (*Ormosia arborea*) is a bicolored seed with a red seed coat and a black hilum. The large tree grows throughout the Atlantic forest in eastern Brazil and the nuts were and continue to be used as beads for necklaces and other jewelry. See Claude Lévi-Strauss, "The Use of Wild Plants in Tropical South America," *Economic Botany* 6, no.3 (July-September 1952): 260; and Domingos Benício Oliveira Silva Cardoso, José Eduardo Meireles, and Haroldo Cavalcante de Lima, "A Remarkable New Species of *Ormosia* (Leguminosae: Papilionoideae: Sophoreae) from the Bahian Atlantic Rain Forest, Brazil," *Brittonia* 61, no.1 (2009): 22-27, especially 25.

¹⁶⁰ Lévi-Strauss, "The Use of Wild Plants," 260.

of the powers of the dead to the living for both affliction and cure.”¹⁶¹ The color may have also been associated with childbirth and motherhood, since many maternity figures and statues from Mayombe were typically cast in clay made from a reddish hue.¹⁶²

City chronicler A.E. Martin’s recollections of Rosary brotherhood festivals beautifully illustrate that Afro-Brazilian inclusion in the Catholic world did not preclude reliance on non-Christian material culture and spiritual technologies. For Africans and their descendants social integration in the Catholic sphere was not predicated on total acceptance of European and Christian derived culture, religion, values, or epistemology. Africans in the Rosary Brotherhood celebrated feast days in fancy clothes and various non-Catholic charms. Belonging to the public Catholic sphere did not require Africans celebrating with other Africans and African descendants to put away all beliefs that did not conform to orthodox Catholicism.

Afro-Brazilian Confraternities as Urban Spatial Markers and Sites of Assembly

Irmandades and the chapels and churches they erected came to serve as key orienting markers for all parishioners living in São Paulo, and attraction to organizational festivities likely contributed to their popularity. Patron saint festivals increased the visibility of sodalities and were critical to helping put black confraternities on the conceptual map for city inhabitants who lived beyond the neighborhoods where these churches were located. Festivals served many functions.

The locations of churches built by black confraternities also help explain their ongoing presence in the life of the city. Though these structures typically stood on marginal lands when they were initially erected, by the nineteenth century as the city

¹⁶¹ MacGaffey, *Astonishment and Power*, 62.

¹⁶² Janzen, *Lemba*, 254.

grew black churches came to occupy prime real estate in the city's urban core. Black brotherhoods left their marks on the city center. For example, the Brotherhood of Saint Ephigênia and Saint Elesbão gave its name to the area of the city where it stood. Not only did the adjacent street take the name of the Rua de Santa Ephigênia, but the neighborhood and the parish itself became known in popular parlance as Santa Ephigênia, though the formal name of the parish is Nossa Senhora de Conceição de Santa Ephigênia.¹⁶³

Black confraternities attracted participants who came from neighborhoods throughout the city, since most urban residential areas in São Paulo, like the rest of Brazil, would have had a multiracial character.¹⁶⁴ However, certain spaces in the city of São Paulo and other provincial capitals had neighborhoods or areas within parishes where Africans and African descendants resided in notable concentrations¹⁶⁵ and where blacks congregated informally.¹⁶⁶ In the early to mid-nineteenth century, for example, the parish of Santa Ephigênia was heavily wooded in certain areas, and elite city inhabitants argued that sections of the parish served as hideouts where individual runaway slaves lived in the woods, but were still close enough to get supplies from relatives and friends.¹⁶⁷ Black paulistanos developed various permanent and more itinerant locales that came to be known and to function as “alternative spaces of blackness.”¹⁶⁸ Some black spaces, like

¹⁶³ Arroyo, *Igrejas de São Paulo*, 163.

¹⁶⁴ For analysis of the distribution of slaves in São Paulo see Oliveria, *Entre a casa e o armazém*, 99; for Rio see Frank, *Dutra's World*, 31-33; and Lauderdale Graham, *House and Street*, 26.

¹⁶⁵ See Wissenbach, *Sonhos africanos*, 136-137 for discussion of residential concentrations of blacks generated by analysis of data from criminal cases. For analysis of black residential patterns in Rio, see Frank, *Dutra's World*, 31-33.

¹⁶⁶ See Dias, *Quotidiano e poder*, 120-121; Wissenbach, *Sonhos africanos*, 204 and 206; and Bruno, *História e tradições*, 785-786.

¹⁶⁷ Bruno, *História e tradições*, 738.

¹⁶⁸ See Harding, *Refuge in Thunder*, 108-126. Historian Rachel Harding, who studied *candomblé* in late nineteenth century Salvador, Bahia, should be credited with the term “alternative spaces of blackness.” She perceptively notes that *candomblés* were not unique in their capacity to serve as spaces of black assembly and empowerment. In the seventh chapter of *Refuge in Thunder* entitled, “Networks of Support, Spaces of Resistance: Alternative Orientations of Black Life in Nineteenth-Century Bahia” the author argues that

runaway slave havens in the woods, sought to completely avoid the slave system, while other black spaces were associated with labor. Water carriers and domestics, for example, met on a daily basis at local fountains, which became coded as sites of slave and black assembly.¹⁶⁹

Black spaces, however, were not completely oriented around providing or avoiding labor and punishment. Poor blacks and freed slaves resided in several small houses adjacent to the cemetery and Church of Our Lady of the Rosary of Black Men, some of which the confraternity owned and rented.¹⁷⁰ Generations of blacks lived in these houses until 1872 when the church cemetery and the adjacent properties were expropriated by the city in order to widen the Rua do Rosário and the Rua de São Bento.¹⁷¹

Before 1874, the church plaza and adjacent streets became centers for small-scale market commerce. The slaves and ex-slaves who lived in the houses next to the Rosary church sold food and diverse wares at fixed stands along with quitadeiras who utilized the Rua do Rosário as a point of sale. Permanent and ambulant vendors sold “sweets, jellies, fruits, beans, green vegetables and herbs, sweet potatoes, [and] manioc”...among fresh comestibles. African and Afro-Brazilian market women also sold “...cooked sweet corn...peanuts, fish stew, fried fish, and small cakes of fresh water prawns made of manioc or corn flour.”¹⁷² The church and surrounding streets became known as spaces of

families, urban worksites, and confraternities functioned as important social collectives where Africans and African descendants came together to offer mutual support to each other. Also see Juliana Barreto Farias and et al., *Cidades negras: africanos, crioulos, e espaços urbanos no Brasil escravista do século XIX* (São Paulo: Alameda, 2006) for further discussion of black spaces in urban areas.

¹⁶⁹ See Dias, *Quotidiano e poder*, 120; and Wissenbach, *Sonhos africanos*, 191.

¹⁷⁰ Martins, *São Paulo antigo*, 325; and ACMSP, Uncatalogued Folder, Nossa Senhora do Rosário do Homens Pretos de São Paulo, Irmandades XXVI.

¹⁷¹ *Ibid.*, and Amaral, *Os pretos do Rosário*, 2nd ed., 72-73.

¹⁷² Martins, *São Paulo antigo*, 325.

confluence for slaves as well as freed people and the brotherhood helped define and delineate an urban space marked by an African and Afro-Brazilian presence in the city center. Scholar Christina Wissenbach asserted that “The patio of the Rosary was the black territory par excellence of São Paulo...” due to the presence of the church and as a result of the food and other goods Africans and African descendants sold in the stands they set up outside of their residences.¹⁷³

Scholar Garrett Fesler, among others, has argued that even within the confines of the slave system and plantations, Africans spatially organized the performance of household tasks in ways that replicated patterns found in housing compounds across varied African cultures. Domestic tasks tended to be performed in exterior spaces. Food preparation, the cleaning of clothes, and other personal tasks were performed in communal spaces shared by kin and non-kin groups.¹⁷⁴ While the literature focuses largely on the shared “yard” in slave quarters,¹⁷⁵ the Rosary Church presents an arresting case where housing, improvised markets and eateries, the *praça*, and the churchyard met. The prevalence of blacks in public spaces is certainly not a new idea in Brazilian history,¹⁷⁶ but the suggestion that this exterior orientation was informed by cultural

¹⁷³ Wissenbach, *Sonhos africanos*, 206. (O pátio do Rosário era o território negro por excelência de São Paulo, não apenas pela igreja e práticas religiosas da irmandade, mas também porque em torno delas habitavam negros que viviam de vender quitandas pelas ruas da cidade.)

¹⁷⁴ Garrett Fesler, “Excavating the Spaces and Interpreting the Places of Enslaved Africans and their Descendants,” in *Cabin, Quarter, Plantation: Architecture and Landscapes of North American Slavery*, ed. Clifton Ellis and Rebecca Ginsburg (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010), 31-32; Barbara J. Heath and Amber Bennett, “‘The Little Spots Allow’d Them’: The Archaeological Study of African-American Yards,” *Historical Archaeology* 34, no.2 (2000): 40-44; Sidney Mintz, *Caribbean Transformations*, 2nd ed. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1989), 243-247; and Leland Ferguson, *Uncommon Ground: Archaeology and Early African America, 1650-1800* (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1992), 68 and 71.

¹⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁶ Dias, *Quotidiano e Poder*; 22-27; DaMatta, *Carnivals, Rogues, and Heroes*, 64-73; Beattie, *Tribute of Blood*, 8-9; Alberto Heráclito Ferreira Filho, “Desafricanizar as ruas: elites letradas, mulheres pobres e cultura popular em Salvador (1890-1937),” *Afro-Ásia* 21-22 (1998-1999): 239-256. For inversion of DaMatta’s house/street paradigm see Lauderdale Graham, *House and the Street*, 4.

preferences, and not only or simply structural forces that limited personal space for bonded people offers an interpretation of black space organization that has yet to be explored or acknowledged.

The small-scale commerce begun by quitandeiras on the Rosary praça in São Paulo did in fact establish a pattern of commercial activity on the street. The selling of fresh and prepared foodstuffs and wares attracted laboring people seeking hot meals and low cost sustenance. However, as the nineteenth century progressed the Rua do Rosário developed into an even more important and established commercial area, as small-scale shop owners opened stores on the adjoining streets of the Rua de São Bento and the Rua Direita.¹⁷⁷ In fact, the prime location made the areas adjacent to the church a target of city redevelopment in the 1870s and shortly after the turn of the twentieth century.¹⁷⁸ In 1906, the Rosary church was relocated and reopened in the less central neighborhood of Paissandu, and has remained open and active in the same location until today. The churches Afro-Brazilian confraternities built became known by city inhabitants as points of black association with concrete spatial dimensions.

Ritual Life in Afro-Paulistano Churches

The churches black confraternities built served all Catholics in the parish, even though Afro-Brazilians largely ran and administered the churches autonomously. Sodalities and individuals contracted priests to perform baptisms, weddings, and funerals, so clergy did not control or even have access to churches on a daily basis.¹⁷⁹ For decades,

¹⁷⁷ See Martins, *São Paulo antigo*, 271 and 328-330 for descriptions of businesses on the Rua do Rosário and the Rua do São Bento respectively; also see Gerald M. Greenfield, "Patterns of Enterprise in São Paulo: Preliminary Analysis of a Late Nineteenth-Century City," *Social Science History* 8, no. 3 (Summer 1984): 298-300; and Oliveria, *Entre a casa e o armazém*, 221, 269, and 275.

¹⁷⁸ ACMSP, Uncatalogued Folder, Nossa Senhora do Rosário do Homens Pretos de São Paulo, Irmandades XXVI; and Amaral, *Os pretos do Rosário*, 2nd ed., 120-128.

¹⁷⁹ De Groot, *Brazilian Catholicism*, 32.

the Brotherhood of Santa Efigênia and Saint Elesbão had little input from their parish priest; no church official showed up at administrative meetings for over twenty-five years.¹⁸⁰ Brotherhood leaders provided funds for church maintenance with little to no help from the diocese.¹⁸¹

Black churches that became parish centers served the faithful of the populace in addition to being used as sites of state power. In the imperial period, for example, the registration process for voting and elections occurred in parish churches. Richard Graham suggested that “Locating elections in churches linked the social order to a holy one reaching to God, and the repeated performance of church rituals further heightened the sacredness of the civil drama.”¹⁸² Priests gave sermons and performed a mass before voting began. As such, black churches were linked into the exercise of citizenship and of governance in a variety of ways. Black churches were not marginal spaces. They were tied into the functioning of institutional Catholicism and the locality’s civic world.

Beyond acting as sites of state power, churches established by black confraternities functioned as locales for communal expressions of religiosity and cultural preferences, which harkened to the origins of participants. While almost no detailed accounts of paulistano religious ceremonies from the eighteenth or nineteenth centuries exist, the Church of Our Lady of the Rosary of Black Men had the reputation of being a space where African influenced rituals co-existed with Catholicism. Leonardo Arroyo, the author of a history of churches in São Paulo, described the Rosary Brotherhood as a “...splendid expression of the religious syncretism of old slaves and their beliefs in

¹⁸⁰ ACMSP, Irmandade de Santa Efigênia and Saint Elesbão, Livro de Atas, 1862-1885, 04-02-28; and Irmandade de Santa Efigênia and Saint Elesbão, Livro de Atas, 1885-1890, 07-03-44.

¹⁸¹ ACMSP, Irmandade de Santa Efigênia and Saint Elesbão, Livro de Atas, 1885-1890, 07-03-44.

¹⁸² Graham, *Patronage and Politics*, 115.

totems with the refinement of a more spiritualized religion...¹⁸³ Though Arroyo considered Catholicism a more refined and superior spiritual system, he acknowledged what he considered to be foreign elements in Rosary brotherhood worship traditions.

While little is known about the totems Arroyo mentioned, the churches established by black confraternities did house a multitude of black and non-black saints. Existent organizational inventories indicated exactly which saints members of the Brotherhood of Saint Ephigênia and Saint Elesbão sought for their needs and favors. In 1859, the brotherhood's church housed stone carved images of their patron saints Saint Ephigênia and Saint Elesbão, in addition to images of Jesus Christ known as "The Lord of the Good End" (*Senhor do Bom Fim*), Our Lady of the Conception (*Nossa Senhora da Conceição*), and Our Lady of the Rosary.¹⁸⁴ The Brotherhood of Saint Benedict possessed a single altar with an image of Saint Benedict, which belonged to them, since the confraternity never built its own church and continued assembling in the Church of Saint Francis (*Igreja de São Francisco*). Of course, Saint Francis was the most prominently displayed saint in the building, since he served as the patron for the church.

There is no way to know which saints had altars in the original Rosary church. However, the saints which adorned the main chapel of the church after 1906 included Our Lady of Rosary, Saint Ephigênia, Saint Elesbão, and Our Good Lord Jesus (*O Senhor Bom Jesus*). In 1938, a saint of Polish origin, Santa Edwiges, was introduced to and installed in a church altar as part of the re-Romanization and re-Europeanization effort of church authorities. Saint Edwiges had the reputation of serving as a fierce protector of the poor and the indebted, and the economic hardships Afro-Brazilians faced

¹⁸³ Arroyo, *Igrejas de São Paulo*, 172.

¹⁸⁴ ACMSP, Irmandade de Santa Ephigênia and Saint Elesbão, Livro de Inventário de Bens, 1859, 07-03-46.

undoubtedly contributed to her popularity.¹⁸⁵ Today the Rosary Church holds images of Our Lady of Rosary, Saint Ephigênia, Saint Elesbão, Saint Benedict, Santa Edwiges, and Our Good Lord Jesus.¹⁸⁶

Festivals dedicated to organizational patron saints were the most important annual events for sodalities besides Easter and the feast of Corpus Christi.¹⁸⁷ Africans infused cultural elements common to their native lands in Catholic festivals as they made the celebrations their own. The famous “congada” that is contemporaneously associated with Minas Gerais,¹⁸⁸ occurred as part of the festivities for the feast of Our Lady of the Rosary before the twentieth century in São Paulo.¹⁸⁹ It should be noted that organizational statutes themselves rarely described the feasts of the saints as congadas or festivals of the King of Kongo. As Elizabeth Kiddy notes, “...this title [Kings and Queens of Kongo] did not emerge in the brotherhood documentation until very late in the colonial period and did not appear in the *compromissos* in Minas Gerais until the late twentieth century.”¹⁹⁰ Other types of evidence verified the presence and election of festival kings and queens however. Kiddy found that member entry books identified several members in the eighteenth century as “Queen of the Congo” and “King of the Congo” and Célia Borges located at least two Rosary Brotherhood inventories in colonial Minas Gerais

¹⁸⁵ Amaral, *Os pretos do Rosário*, 2nd ed., 51-53.

¹⁸⁶ Personal observation, Igreja de Nossa Senhora do Rosário dos Homens Pretos, October 8, 2008.

¹⁸⁷ Abreu, “Popular Culture, Power Relations, and Urban Discipline: The Festival of the Holy Spirit in Nineteenth Century Rio de Janeiro,” *Bulletin of Latin American Research* 24, no.2 (2005): 168.

¹⁸⁸ Kiddy, *Blacks of the Rosary*, 127, 131, and 160-164.

¹⁸⁹ See Martins, *São Paulo antigo*, 324-325 for references to Kings and Queens of Kongo in São Paulo for the Rosary festival; also see Moraes, “Arranjos e timbres,” 589, for description of Rosary patron festival rituals.

¹⁹⁰ Kiddy, *Blacks of the Rosary*, 126.

which listed a “...crown of silver that serves the King of this brotherhood...” among associational possessions.¹⁹¹

In São Paulo, the organizational compromissos of the Rosary Brotherhood never described an office as the King of Kongo, but the group did annually elect a King and Queen of the festival to honor their patron saint. The evolving criteria used in the selection of the King and Queen of the Rosary festival emphasizes the changing terms of boundaries of social belonging for leaders. While in 1778, the King and Queen were required to be “blacks from Angola,” by 1871, the king and queen were only required to be “black.”¹⁹² Brotherhood members traditionally elected the King and Queen of the festival on the first Sunday after Christmas,¹⁹³ and the elections of festival kings and queens were important enough that they were sometimes disputed. In 1860, according to Ernani Silva Bueno the *Correio Paulistano* documented a fight over the office of festival king. Two candidates vied for the position of “King of Congo”¹⁹⁴ and Mestre Pedro Congo de Morais Cunha won the ceremonial office. Member João Rodrigues contested the election, because he claimed Morais Cunha should not have been allowed to hold the

¹⁹¹ Ibid., 127; and Borges, *Escravos e libertos nas irmandades do Rosário*, 233-234. (Dentre os bens da Irmandade do Rosario de Itabira do Campo constam uma coroa de prata que serve ao rei desta irmandade...)

¹⁹² ACMSP, Compromisso da Irmandade de Nossa Senhora do Rosário dos Homens Pretos de São Paulo (1778), 01-03-08, chapter 22 (Capítulo 22), mandates selection of a King and Queen for the Festival of Our Lady of the Rosary, where officers were required to be “Pretos de Angola.” (Nessa Santa Irmandade se farão todos os annos hum Rey, e sua Rainha, os quaes serão “**pretos de Angola**,” e serão de bom procedimento). In 1871, the Rosary Brotherhood drafted a new compromisso and the festival king and queen positions remained; however, in the new constitution any “black” members could hold those offices. See ACMSP, Compromisso da Irmandade de Nossa Senhora do Rosário dos Homens Pretos de São Paulo 1871, microfilm, 2002, Capítulo 2, Artigo 7.4, (...A eleição dos Juizes e Reis que devem fazer a festa da oraga os quaes so podem ser escolhidos dentre os “**Irmãos de côr preta**”...) Emphasis added.

¹⁹³ ACMSP, Compromisso da Irmandade de Nossa Senhora do Rosário dos Homens Pretos de São Paulo 1871, microfilm, 2002, Capítulo 9, Artigo 14, (... que a meza administractiva [sic] designar na primera desempedida [sic] depois do dia de Natal.)

¹⁹⁴ Bruno, *História e tradições*, 789. (Em vários números do *Correio Paulistano* de 1860 pode-se acompanhar a polêmica que se travou entre dois candidatos ao pôsto de **Rei de Congo** para as festividades de Nossa Senhora do Rosário); Emphasis added.

office. Rodrigues claimed that “the principle of blood” had not been followed and that the inappropriately elected king planned to re-erect the influence of “*a escola mandingueira*.”¹⁹⁵

Rodrigues’ use of the phrase “*a escola mandingueira*,” which has no good, direct translation in English, but can be rendered as “the Mandinga School” represented a suggestive and inflammatory claim. Rodrigues not so subtly suggested that his opponent went outside of orthodox Catholic traditions in matters of spirituality. A *mandinguero* was a manufacturer of *bolsas de mandinga*, a device originating from West Africa, used by people along the wide stretch of land from Sierra Leone to northern Nigeria. The bolsa was a pouch made of cloth or leather that incorporated Christian or Muslim prayers, sticks, rock, soil, hair, and herbs all for the purpose of protecting the wearer from misfortune, mistreatment, or abuse.¹⁹⁶ By claiming the Morais Cunha composed *bolsas*, Rodrigues presented his opponent and fellow brotherhood member as a skilled and knowledgeable practitioner of West African religious practices. He also suggested that Morais Cunha had no blood kin ties to Angola and as such had no right to serve in the honorary position. It seemed his fellow brotherhood members either saw the allegations as untrue and or they already knew of the background of Rodrigues’ opponent, which in no way disqualified him, since he retained the position. In general in São Paulo, Africans crossed lines of origin easily in sodalities, but when it came to positions of honor in celebratory festivals coveted offices could be a source of conflict.

¹⁹⁵ Ibid. (João Rodrigues não se conformou com o resultado, escrevendo então que a eleição só cabia nos casos em que não houvesse ‘principes de sangue,’ e que o rei que acabava de ser eleito não era congo e pretendia reerguer a ‘escola mandingueira.’)

¹⁹⁶ Sweet, *Recreating Africa*, 179.

Festivals were elaborate, all day affairs, regardless of sponsors. Organizational charters outlined the essential components of celebrations. The ceremonies commenced with "... a sung mass, a sermon, an afternoon procession and other solemnities that the festival judges rule convenient..." After processing to and from the church, association guidelines indicated that there would also be another 'festa' (party) on the patio [of the church] to be given by the members the administrative board designated, with the names of King and Queen..." Kings and Queens paid for the festivities out of their own pockets. If they held the office, but did not have time to organize the event they were obligated to pay the amount of "fifty thousand réis," so that the festivities could be realized.¹⁹⁷ In São Paulo, throughout the nineteenth century financial records indicate that the Brotherhood of Saint Ephigênia and Saint Elesbão also held celebratory festivals similar to the "congada" for their patron saint. They, however, called their feast sponsors Emperor and Empress after they amended their compromisso in 1859;¹⁹⁸ leaders were clearly influenced by the changing titles of royalty in the nation of Brazil.¹⁹⁹

While the cost of festivals for patron saints represented a great expense, those elected to rule over the proceedings undoubtedly took pride in producing extravagant events. Festivities moved through the city in public streets, churches, private homes, and public squares. Either before or after the procession for the saint, an elegantly attired king

¹⁹⁷ ACMSP, Compromisso da Irmandade de Nossa Senhora do Rosario dos Homens Pretos de São Paulo, 1871, microfilm, 2002, Capitulo 9, Artigo 15, (Álem desta festa que será celebrada com missa cantada, sermão, procissão a tarde e outro solemnidades que os Juizes festeiros julgarem conveniente, haverá ainda festa do patêo que será feita pelos Irmãos que a Meza designar, com os nomes de Rei e de Rainha que serão obrigadas a pagar a quantia de cincuenta mil reis quando não queiram fazel-a.)

¹⁹⁸ ACMSP, Uncatalogued Folder, Santa Ephigênia: Nsra da Conceição, No. 2, Compromisso, Irmandade de Santa Ephigênia e São Elesbão, 1859, Capitulo 4, (O imperador e Imperatriz darão de joia de quatro mil reis, cada um e fazer a festa a São Elesbão...)

¹⁹⁹ In the colonial period, the King and Queen of Portugal ruled the colony of Brazil. In 1808, King João VI relocated the court to Rio de Janeiro to avoid Napoleonic invasion, and in 1822, his son Emperor Pedro I served as the first ruler of the newly formed independent state of the Empire of Brazil. See Roderick J. Barman, *Citizen Emperor: Pedro II and the Making of Brazil, 1825-91* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999), 1-19.

and queen led invited guests to their homes where they offered dinner and drinks to attendees who traded friendly toasts.²⁰⁰ While no particular dishes or recipes have been recorded in relation to the festivities in São Paulo, the meals the courts hosted were described as sumptuous affairs that included meats and sweets not eaten on a daily basis.²⁰¹ All facets of the festivities involved grandeur and affirmed the high status of festival sponsors and their patron saints. Festivals gifted those who labored arduously in a denigrating slave regime with a shared respite and an opportunity for revelry.

The festive dancing and drumming, which took place at festival proceedings attracted the notice of city inhabitants. In addition to the "... batuques, sambas e mocambiques..." of the 1860s, studied by music scholar José Geraldo Vinci de Moraes,²⁰² A.E. Martins reported festive music related to the commemoration of the patron saint at the Rosary Church patio. The city chronicler recounted the presence of a "numerous" band of African musicians playing "Tambaque (a type of Zé Pereira), singing and dancing in pairs, donned in white cloth which they wrapped around their heads, a bracelet of silver, and a rosary of red and gold around the neck fastened to the dress."²⁰³ A *Zé Pereira* referred to a group of percussionists playing various types of drums of African extraction called *atabaque* and/or *ngoma* and European style martial bass and snare drums first associated with carnival celebrations in Rio de Janeiro in 1846. The *Zé Pereira* purportedly took its name from the original group's bandleader, José Pereira; however, by the 1870s, groups using a combination of African and European

²⁰⁰ Martins, *São Paulo antigo*, 324-325. (O Rei e Rainha, logo que chegavam em casa ofereciam... a sua corte... um opíparo jantar, durante o qual trocavam-se amistosos brindes entre os convivas...)

²⁰¹ Ibid., and Scarano, *Devoção e escravidão*, 93 and 151.

²⁰² Moraes, "Arranjos e timbres," 593 and 599.

²⁰³ Martins, *São Paulo antigo*, 323. (...em frente à mesma igreja... um numeroso bando de pretos africanos, que executavam... a célebre música denominada Tambaque (espécie de Zé Pereira) cantando e dançando com sua parceiras, que, adornadas de rodilha de pano branco na cabeça, pulseira de prata e rosário de contas vermelhas e ouro ao pescoço pegavam no vestido...)

percussion instruments in carnival celebrations became common in the provinces of Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo. The groups, which evolved into the drum sections of carnival schools called *baterias* came to be accompanied by dancers who reveled in the streets where the groups played.²⁰⁴ Generally however, the dances mentioned by city chroniclers hide as much as they reveal since throughout the nineteenth century in Brazil, batuque and samba, for example, were often used as a generic way to refer to all Afro-Brazilian drumming and dancing.²⁰⁵ Mocambiques were a bit more unique according to Moraes who described the movements as a dance of African origin initially performed by slaves in the parlors of their masters that became transformed into a dramatic step movement where dancers wore belted tunics, white wool hats, and various ribbons creating visual sweeps of colorful circles as they moved.²⁰⁶

The dances Martins mentioned would have had West Central African influences.²⁰⁷ For example, though samba has come to be thought of as a secular dance form most associated with the nationalized spectacle of Brazilian carnival,²⁰⁸ the linguistic origins of the term can be traced to Kongo and/or Angola. One school of thought is that the term samba is a corruption of the Angolan word “semba” or seed and

²⁰⁴ John Charles Chasteen, *National Rhythms, African Roots: The Deep History of Latin American Popular Dance* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2004), 36, 39, and 43; also see Clarence B. Henry, *Let's Make Some Noise: Axé and the African Roots of Brazilian Popular Music* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2008), 59-66, for more on the African regional origins of the drums used in Brazilian religious and secular music.

²⁰⁵ Chasteen, *National Rhythms*, 43; Harding, *Refuge in Thunder*, 68; Abreu, “Popular Culture, Power Relations,” 168; Reis, “African Drumming and Dance,” 201-213; and Moritz Schwarcz, *Retrato em branco e negro*, 222-223.

²⁰⁶ Moraes, “Arranjos e timbres,” 599; and Bastide, *African Religions of Brazil*, 347. Bastide contends slave owners and authorities approved of mocambiques more than other dances because they were “less African.”

²⁰⁷ Slenes, “Malungo ngoma vem!,” 57.

²⁰⁸ Chasteen, *National Rhythms, African Roots*, 6 and 8-9; and Hermano Vianna, *The Mystery of Samba: Popular Music and National Identity in Brazil*, trans. John Charles Chasteen (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999).

hence started as a fertility dance.²⁰⁹ Other researchers argue that in Kikongo samba means to pray and to invoke; as such the movement could be viewed as having a narrower religious connotation. Benjamin Hebblewhite, a scholar of Haitian vodun suggests that “sanba or sanmba” is a “Kikongo word that refers to a singer, dancer, composer, and musician who has the ability to open the gates between the living and ancestors.”²¹⁰

Regardless of the term’s origin, dance movements associated with African bodily expression, were often read by non-Africans as sexually suggestive or inviting sexual interest. Martins noted that during the Rosary festivals those who danced “... made swaying movements with their hips being cheered for this with a round of applause by attendees.”²¹¹ African dance seemed either incomprehensible or simply lewd based on normative European dance forms which typically involved holding the torso in a straight vertical position and foot motion, but almost no movement of the body’s mid-section.²¹² One of the reasons that authorities found the celebrations of black confraternities so disturbing besides the drumming was related to this African centered expressive movement that oriented the entire body toward the ground or to the sky with the lower torso flexing in either angular positions toward the knees or in loose, unstructured bodily shifts.²¹³

²⁰⁹ Urbano, *Carnaval e samba*, 95; Other scholars consider semba to be an Angolan term meaning navel; for this explanation see William Rowe and Vivian Schelling, *Memory and Modernity: Popular Culture in Latin America* (New York: Verso, 1991), 123.

²¹⁰ Benjamin Hebblewhite, *Vodou Songs in Haitian Creole and English: Chante Vodou an kreyòl ayisyen ak angle* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2012), 288.

²¹¹ Martins, *São Paulo antigo*, (...faziam requebrados, sendo por isso vitoriados com uma salva de palmas pela numerosa assistência;).

²¹² Chasteen, *National Rhythms, African Roots*, 12-13; and Barbara Glass, *African American Dance: An Illustrated History* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland and Company, 2007), 16.

²¹³ Ibid.; Peter Wood, “ ‘Gimme de Kneebone Bent’: African Body Language and the Evolution of American Dance Forms,” in *The Black Tradition in American Modern Dance* (Durham: American Dance Festival, 1998), 7-8; and Omofolabo Ajayi, *Yoruba Dance: The Semiotics of Movement and Body Attitude in a Nigerian Culture* (Trenton, New Jersey: Africa World Press, 1998), 35-36.

Black confraternities observed many other feast days, in addition to the celebrations for their patron saints, as members of the local Catholic world. The Festival of the Holy Spirit represented a popular holiday for Afro-Brazilians.²¹⁴ The Festival of the Holy Spirit is a celebration of Pentecost, which in Catholic tradition, occurs fifty days after Easter. Pentecost marks the day when the Holy Spirit descended to earth to accompany the faithful in the absence of Jesus. The Holy Spirit, the third member in the holy trinity, came to give peace, comfort, and counsel to believers and to fill them with a spirit of righteousness and holiness. The Holy Spirit is depicted and imagined as both a dove denoting peace and prosperity and as a rushing wind throughout various Christian countries. The Holy Spirit was universally beloved since it came to apostles like a “mighty rushing wind” of tongues of fire. The “gift of tongues of fire” allowed communication with people of all nations and so the Holy Spirit emphasized universality and inclusion among all Catholics. Additionally, in nineteenth century Brazil, the Holy Spirit received such favor because Catholics from the upper and lower classes thought the Holy Spirit protected believers against disease and plagues.²¹⁵

The elite white Brotherhood of the Divine Holy Spirit headed many events for the festival. Besides the standard sermons, masses, and processions, festivities included grand firework displays “...theatrical dances, bandstands...and also food, drinks, and gaming stalls.”²¹⁶ In the eighteenth century white brotherhoods elected children of important members to serve as king and queen for the festive proceedings, and in a

²¹⁴Abreu, “Popular Culture, Power Relations,” 168; and Mello Moraes Filho, *Festas e tradições populares do Brasil*, 3rd ed., (Rio de Janeiro: Garnier, 1946), 179-181.

²¹⁵ Abreu, “Popular Culture, Power Relations,” 168-170.

²¹⁶ Ibid; and see Edilece Souza Couto, *A puxada do mastro: transformações históricas da festa de São Sebastião em Olivença (Ilhéus-BA)* (Ilhéus: Editora da Universidade Livro do Mar e da Mata, 2001), 63-70 for analysis of similarities to and the European origins of the Festival of the Divine Holy Spirit. For background about the festival in the southeast region, see pages 70-79.

special ceremony in honor of the Holy Spirit the court sat in special chairs to reign over the mass.²¹⁷ It is unclear if black brotherhoods selected children to preside over their ceremonies for the Divine Holy Spirit since honorific positions were usually reserved for adults; however, it is clear that confraternity members selected from among themselves an overseer to organize the occasion. This position was called the *Capitão do Mastro*.²¹⁸

During the Festival of the Holy Spirit members of black confraternities erected a *mastro*, the trunk of mature tree, on which they placed a silver embossed dove to indicate that the Holy Spirit had arrived and festivities could begin.²¹⁹ Before celebrations commenced, men carried the large pole, which they set up as a group while being followed by drummers and singers who accompanied the installation. After the *capitão do mastro* placed an artificial dove on top of the pole or a living bird was released and then sat on the pole, the confraternity held celebratory services, which they followed with communal dancing and communal feasting. Based on existent rituals, which still occur in the state of Maranhão, black sodalities would travel and visit neighboring confraternities through the period of Pentecost celebrating and feasting with each other.²²⁰

Festivals established and reinforced links of friendship and fellowship among black confraternity participants. Even non-confraternity participants enjoyed the diversion and public space for African music and dance these commemorations opened on a regular basis. Organizing and holding festivals cemented the importance and status

²¹⁷ Martha Abreu, *O império do divino: festas religiosas e cultura popular no Rio de Janeiro 1830-1900* (Rio de Janeiro: Nova Fronteira; São Paulo: Fapesp, 1999), 61. In some years, adults reigned over the festival court, though it was more common for children to hold the ceremonial offices.

²¹⁸ ACMSP, Irmandade de São Benedito, Livro de Assentamento dos Irmãos, 1846-1896, 02-02-007. One member from the portion of records I collected held this position. (Mattheus— entrou a primero de maio de 1853 e pago até 1855--Eleito Capitão do Mastro para o anno de 1870 a 1871; sachristã em 1872 e 1873.

²¹⁹ Moraes Filho, *Festas e tradições*, 181.

²²⁰ Marise Barbosa, *Umas mulheres que dão no couro: as caixeiras do divino no Maranhão* (São Paulo: Empório de Produções & Comunicação, 2006), 19-22 and 34-37.

of black patrons in black confraternities as they eagerly sought to sponsor events where they could hold court, be seen, and broadly welcome brethren of their race among others. Anthropologist J. Lorand Matory, building on an under-analyzed argument by French ethnographer Pierre Verger, suggests that class diversity was and continues to be an overlooked and underexplored factor explaining the success, resilience, and persistence of African and African derived religious and cultural practices.²²¹ Matory argues that “Many authors assume that poor and isolated black populations are the most likely to practice ‘African-inspired cultures’...” He asserts that scholars are misguided to conceive of African religions and their social contexts as “communalistic and class-free...”²²² Matory suggests that particular African diaspora traditions gain prominence partly because they have participants who come from a privileged class and who go on to sponsor and elevate the practices for audiences beyond the membership. Though Matory’s comments explicitly deal with Bahian Candomblé, he underscores an important point, which I will apply more broadly here---that black religious expressions survived to the degree that they were conceived of as relevant to daily life and received sponsorship from those who acquired enough wealth and wanted the privilege of serving as organizational patrons. Festival kings, queens, and organizers used their financial security to link to and incorporate themselves in black identified religious institutions in gift exchange processes that provided them with public, communal acknowledgement of their prosperity, racial and religious identities, origins, and honor.²²³

²²¹ Matory, *Black Atlantic Religion*, 90.

²²² Ibid.

²²³ See Kenneth S. Greenburg, *Honor and Slavery: Lies, Duels, Noses, Masks, Dressing as a Woman, Gifts Strangers, Humanitarianism, Death, Slave Rebellions, the Pro-Slavery Argument, Baseball, Hunting, and Gambling in the Old South*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996), xiii, 25, 32-43, for discussion of gift exchange; and see Lauderdale Graham, “Honor Among Slaves,” 202-206, for discussion of honor among slaves and free people of color in the nineteenth century; finally see Sueann Caulfield, *In Defense of*

In Brazil, festive occasions were not the exclusive purview of the living. The deceased had the end of their lives marked with prayers, masses, music, and communal meals. In the following section, an examination of funeral rites will demonstrate how sodalities functioned as a critical space of belonging and memorialization among black identified brotherhood participants.

Death, Funerals, and Festivities in Black Sodalities

Commemoration of the dead by their nuclear and extended family as well as by non-kin associates is nearly universal among human societies. Across cultures, those who handle the remains of the deceased perform special ritual procedures to mark the person's separation from the family, the household, and the community.²²⁴ According to Arnold van Gennep's classic work, ceremonies for birth, marriage, and death constitute the most important rites of passage for humans, and successful funeral rites issue the dead into their own world separate from the living.²²⁵ In pre-modern thought, those who received no ritual burial existed in limbo, since they were unable to transition into the afterlife for an eternity of unconscious rest or for an afterlife filled with activities that mirrored the land of living. The lack of a ritual burial constituted a perilous fate for any corpse.

Death Rites in Africa

While people across diverse regions of Africa performed community specific burial customs for their dead, general funeral practices included ritual washing of the

Honor: Sexual Morality, Modernity, and Nation in Early Twentieth-Century Brazil, (Durham: Duke University Press, 2000), 3-9 for discussions on honor in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century in Brazil.

²²⁴ See Jack Goody, *Death, Property, and the Ancestors: A Study of the Mortuary Customs of the Lodagaa of West Africa* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1962), 36-42 for a conceptual discussion of the term ritual. For extensive case studies of death ritual procedures see pages 49-155.

²²⁵ Arnold van Gennep, *The Rites of Passage*, (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1960), 160 and 164.

body, communal mourning, collective dance, and communal feasting.²²⁶ Anne Hilton summarizes the basic features of Kongo region death rituals. I will include several large passages of text describing death rites in areas where African migrants to Brazil originated, and I pay special attention to the Kongo/Angola region, since West Central Africans arrived in the greatest numbers to São Paulo and had tremendous influence in formulations of black religious experience in southeastern Brazil.²²⁷ Among the Bakongo people, Hilton asserts,

“...there was usually a period of mourning of eight days (two Kongo weeks) during which cognates, affines, friends, and slaves of the dead person wept, and eulogies were made. For three days the father, son, and spouse were ritually immobilized. In the Mbanza Kongo region this period ended when the principal wife conducted the relatives to the nearest river. There she cut the belt that her husband had worn in life and threw it in the river. This ‘carried it away’ together with the sadness for the lost one...During the eight days the men had worn a white cloth whenever they approached the corpse, white being the color of mourning, of the dead, and of the other world. Now the women smeared their faces with charcoal, black being ‘a preservative and antidote of the dead. In the case of nobility the corpse was shrouded first in white cloth and then in black. The poor were shrouded in rough cloth of the country and then covered with a mat. It was considered so important that the body be completely covered that poor pleaded cloth from passers-by, the governors, and even the King.”²²⁸

Among the Kongo graves were sites where the living communicated with the dead and graves were located “...in special woods or thickets called *infinda*.”²²⁹ Communication between the dead and living continued after the deceased transitioned to world of the ancestors, because in Kongo religious thought, the dead could bless or curse the living.²³⁰

In West Africa, Mande influence created some degree of commonality in death rituals throughout the region. Early European travelers were “... impressed by the display

²²⁶ Goody, *Death, Property, and the Ancestors*, 55-60, 81-85, and 99-104.

²²⁷ Slenes, “Malungo ngoma vem!,” 55-56.

²²⁸ Anne Hilton, *The Kingdom of Kongo* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985), 10.

²²⁹ *Ibid.*

²³⁰ *Ibid.*, and MacGaffey, *Religion and Society*, 73.

of privilege and wealth at Senegambian funerals.”²³¹ A notable feature of burial was that bodies were not interred in the ground; this society used above ground tombs, which again emphasizes the diversity of African ritual practice. European explorer André Álvares de Almada noted in Senegambia that, “Their cemeteries are besides the villages in which they live: but when they die they are not buried in the earth as we are. A wooden framework is built like that of a two-story house and within this they fix a plank on which a bed is made. Here lay the dead person covered with his black and white cloths. They close the door, and using spades cover the wooden frame with a large quantity of earth.”²³²

Senegambians continued to acknowledge the deceased as an extension of the village by leaving offerings of food and wine at graves. Almada recounted, “When they [villagers] go by these cemeteries they salute the dead, by kneeling down and saying certain words.” The living performed long and elaborate rituals for the deceased which Almada detailed. He noted,

“The wake lasts many days. They assemble large quantities of provisions, (especially) meat and wine, and those who come to the wake also bring food. When they are all gathered together, an old woman or an old man in a high voice begins to praise the deceased and recite his deeds, and when this is finished all join in loud wailings in distorted voices. This goes on for several days, as long as provisions last. For a whole year the grave of the deceased is covered with a white cloth, and at the end of the year they assemble provisions and renew the wake. But this lasts only a few days, and finally they have a great feast, and dance to the sound of drums and cymbals. They call this ‘removing the grief.’”²³³

²³¹ Brooks, *Landlords and Strangers*, 206.

²³² André Álvares de Almada, *Brief Treatise on the Rivers of Guinea (c. 1594)* (Liverpool: Department of History, University of Liverpool, 1984), 35. <http://digital.library.wisc.edu/1711.dl/AfricanStudies.Almada01> (accessed November 7, 2013).

²³³ *Ibid.*, 35-36. <http://digital.library.wisc.edu/1711.dl/AfricanStudies.Almada01> (accessed November 7, 2013).

The accounts and depictions of Kongo and Mande death rites allow one to identify a few commonalities among varied societies in Africa, while concurrently emphasizing ritual diversity. Both the Kongo and Mande had wakes lasting for an extended period, usually a minimum of eight days, which incorporated communal wailing by the living and eulogies for the dead. Though the Kongo description above does not mention drumming and communal feasting, these too were an important part of Kongo death rituals for commoners and “dignitaries.”²³⁴ Historical sociologist George Balandier noted that during Kongo funeral rituals, “The women wept and sang ‘songs of the house of the dead’ or songs of tears’; the men performed songs, or *mbembo*, accompanied by drums, hammered iron bells, and ivory horns.”²³⁵ White constituted the color of the dead across the two societies and in both traditions the rich and the poor used different quality grave cloths as a way to note the status individuals achieved in life. Both societies also found ways to honor the deceased after they transitioned to the land of ancestors to keep the dead appeased and to win their favor, since it was widely believed among Africans that the dead influenced the world of the living. Death did not completely destroy linkages to the world of the living in either society.

The Portuguese death rituals Africans arriving in Catholic Brazil witnessed would have been comprehensible, if not familiar. Africans saw Luso-Brazilians carry their dead to churches on open biers dressed in and covered with white or black grave clothes, usually monastic habits, in processions. Church bells rang, relatives, neighbors, and associates assembled, and hired professional wailers made sounds of mourning as the

²³⁴ Hilton, *Kingdom of Kongo*, 95.

²³⁵ Georges Balandier, *Daily Life in the Kingdom of Kongo: From the Sixteenth to the Eighteenth Century*, trans. by Helen Weaver (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1968), 251.

dead were carried through the streets to the church.²³⁶ While the material culture and language clearly differed on the African continent and in colonial Brazil, the scenes of funeralization were no mystery.

For Catholics, like African migrants, death did not constitute an irrevocable separation of the living and the departed. When a person died, the number of prayers spoken and the number of masses performed were thought to have a direct effect on the amount of pardon or punishment the deceased confronted in the afterlife. A large outpouring of *suffragios* sped the departed through purgatory. For Luso-Brazilians and African Catholics death did not remove the deceased from the community. The eighteenth and early nineteenth century practice of burying Catholics in churches under high altars served to link the defunct to the grace of God by locating them nearer to God, the saints, and the constant prayers of the faithful.²³⁷

Africans observing the death rituals of Luso-Brazilians gazed at rituals of mourning that mirrored their own at least in terms of the importance such rites had. Africans arriving in Protestant colonies saw much more muted funerals. However, even on slave ships Africans might mourn the deaths of their shipmates, called *malungos*.²³⁸ While scholar Vincent Brown emphatically notes that memorialization of Africans who died during the Middle Passage was very uncommon,²³⁹ he brings attention to an account from the 1786 voyage of the *Hudibras* in which sailor William Butterworth recalls a

²³⁶ Reis, *Death is a Festival*, 110-113; and Amanda Aparecida Pagoto, *Do Âmbito sagrado da igreja ao cemitério público: transformações fúnebres em São Paulo (1850-1860)* (São Paulo: Arquivo do Estado: Imprensa Oficial do Estado do São Paulo, 2004), 48.

²³⁷ Reis, *Death is a Festival*, 190.

²³⁸ Slenes, "Malungo ngoma vem!," 51-53.

²³⁹ Vincent Brown, "Social Death and Political Life in the Study of Slavery," *American Historical Review* 114 (December 2009): 1232.

“universally esteemed,” but unnamed “orator” or “songstress” dying.²⁴⁰ The captives being transported demanded to see the woman’s remains and when sailors brought an assembly of women to the deck they began “... a ‘loud, deep, and impressive’ rite of mourning, often speaking softly to the corpse in the belief that the woman’s spirit would hear and acknowledge their wish ‘to be remembered to friends in the other country.’”²⁴¹ After being forced back below deck the women began to protest, and fearing an insurrection the captain allowed several women to witness the woman’s corpse being lowered into the water “...with the observance of rather more decency in the manner of doing, than generally appeared in the funeral of a slave.”²⁴² The recollections of sailor William Butterworth convey the deep desire of the enslaved to provide some semblance of appropriate death rituals for shipmates, despite their deplorable station in the hull of a slave ship.²⁴³

When slaves were able to establish some semblance of patterns of normalcy and autonomy, especially in urban contexts, it is not surprising that the ability to secure a decent burial figured as an important objective and provided strong motivation for confraternity participation. Captives themselves had to ensure that their remains would be funeralized with dignity, since masters had little motivation to pay for the administration of Catholic death rites and burial for their human commodities. Complaints of slaves being sent away from the houses of their masters upon sickness or at death left those without family or friends to face dying in the streets.²⁴⁴ In the early nineteenth century in

²⁴⁰ William Butterworth, *Three Years Adventures of a Minor, in England, Africa, the West Indies, South Carolina and Georgia* (Leeds, 1822), 93-96 cited in Brown, “Social Death,” 1231.

²⁴¹ Ibid.

²⁴² Ibid.

²⁴³ Ibid., 1231-1232.

²⁴⁴ Reis, *Death is a Festival*, 155; and Soares, *People of Faith*, 126-127.

Bahia a master threw a dying Christian bondsman named Matias on the streets “...without any sacraments...” and the man’s corpse remained in the street “... so that dogs and vultures ate him outside the door of the said master.”²⁴⁵ While the account of the death of Matias may seem like a sure exaggeration, the occurrence was so deplorable that it became “public and notorious.”²⁴⁶ Indeed, so many of the ailing and indigent were left in the streets and in charity hospitals that the elite white Brotherhood of the Santa Casa de Misericórdia provided meager funds to bury the unclaimed dead in cities across Brazil.²⁴⁷ Not all masters abandoned their slaves at death however.²⁴⁸ In São Paulo, death registers occasionally noted a slave buried in an elite white church. For example in 1850, a single enslaved person, a nine month old infant named João, was interred in the *Igreja do Carmo of São Paulo*, the church where the clergy and the city’s elites rested for eternity.²⁴⁹

In general, death did not constitute a social equalizer for nineteenth century paulistanos. The status a person acquired during life influenced the pomp or frugality of their funeral services, though in the mid to late nineteenth century burial rites underwent dramatic transformations. For example, by 1860, throngs of hired wailers no longer attempted to outcry each other in staged demonstrations of grief as they did in the eighteenth century for elites. For the wealthy, however, it remained customary to leave a

²⁴⁵ Reis, *Death is a Festival*, 155.

²⁴⁶ Ibid.

²⁴⁷ Pagoto, *Do âmbito da sagrado*, 62; *Africanos na Santa Casa de Porto Alegre*, 19; Júlio César Medeiros da Silva Pereira, *À flor da terra: o cemitério dos pretos novos no Rio de Janeiro* (Rio de Janeiro: Garamond: IPHAN, 2007), 36-37.

²⁴⁸ Reis, *Death is a Festival*, 155.

²⁴⁹ See Pagoto, *Do âmbito do sagrado*, 38-39 for discussion of the churches elites preferred for interment; for evidence of a slave burial in an elite church see ACMSP, Livro de óbitos, Sé, Livres e Escravos, 1844-1853, 03-02-07. (João—parvulo escravo-Aos vinte e tres de agosto faleceu de nove meses de idade, filho natural de Vitória, solteira escrava do Capitão Joaquim Lopes Guimarães. Foi sepultar-se na Igreja do Carmo desta parochia.)

portion of their estate to be distributed to the poor. In 1851, José da Silva Monteiro “...left three *dobras* to be given as alms to the poor...” and in the same year, twenty-nine year old Escolastica Amelia Pereira de Araújo left her clothes to be disturbed among the less fortunate.²⁵⁰

In the late colonial period, funerals and internments were held during the day and night, though the municipal government prohibited night burials in 1852 due to the “profane” activities said and thought to occur during these rituals.²⁵¹ Night burials were often targeted because Africans and Afro-Brazilians internments reportedly involved loud communal singing and drumming as part of the ceremonies.²⁵² However, night burials were not the exclusive purview of blacks. Church obituary records indicate that white elites also continued to disobey laws banning night burial. As late as 1870, seventy-eight year old Dona Gertrudes Maria D’Annunção was “...carried at night ... by six of the poor...,” for whom she left eight mil-réis as requested by her last will and testament.²⁵³ Even the devices used to carry bodies changed over time. In the eighteenth century, the deceased were laid on open biers as they were processed to churches; however, by the 1790s and 1800s coffins became more commonly used to contain the dead.²⁵⁴

Few accounts of Afro-Brazilian funerals outside of church obituary registers exist, and even the records generated by parish priests do not generally provide the same amount of detail found in the record of Dona Gertrudes, for example. Parish priests did not record a single testament of an African or Afro-Brazilian in obituary records

²⁵⁰ ACMSP, Livro de óbitos, Sé, Livres e Escravos, 1844-1853, 03-02-07. Dobras are gold coins.

²⁵¹ Atas da Camara, 1850 and 1852; and Morse, *From Community to Metropolis*, 101.

²⁵² Martins, *São Paulo antigo*, 328.

²⁵³ ACMSP, Livro de óbitos, Sé, Livres e Escravos, 1864-1871, 03-01-39. (Dona Gertrudes Maria D’annunção ---Ao dous de junho de 1870 nesta Freguesia...com setenta e oito annos de idade...carregada a noite ...por seis pobres, cada um dos quaes se deo a quantia de oito mil reis na forma recommendada em seo testamento).

²⁵⁴ Reis, *Death is a Festival*, 132.

between 1850-1858, the years I surveyed. Additionally, historian Maria Luiza Ferreira de Oliveria who collected and studied testaments from 1874-1882 and 1894-1901 located wills for only three Afro-Brazilians.²⁵⁵ Given the dearth of documentation regarding the final wishes for funerals of black inhabitants, city chroniclers and travelers once again serve as the best source of data related to Afro-Brazilian burials.

The single extended account of Afro-Brazilian funerals in São Paulo comes from reminiscences of the city by A.E. Martins. After a two-page discussion noting the involvement of the Brotherhood of Our Lady of the Rosary of Black Men in the city, Martin provides a description of the group's burial practices. Martins noted that "black Africans" buried their dead in churches and contiguous cemeteries, and he remarked that Rosary Brotherhood members used a single coffin in which they carried deceased members to their graves.²⁵⁶ Individual members were too poor to purchase coffins. After removing the corpse from the organizational pall and laying them in their tomb "... they covered the cadaver with earth which they pounded with a large pestle..."²⁵⁷ Martins recorded a chant he claimed to be common at Rosary burials. The refrain included the following words---"Eye that saw so much, Mouth that spoke so much, Mouth that ate and drank so much, Body that worked so much, Leg that walked so much, and Foot that trod so much..."²⁵⁸

This chant recorded by Martins suggests that cross-cultural African funeral traditions did in fact survive in nineteenth century São Paulo. The tradition of speaking to

²⁵⁵ Oliveira, *Entre a casa e o armazém*, 124.

²⁵⁶ The practice of carrying bodies in the same coffin can be confirmed. In 1859, the Brotherhood of Saint Ephigênia and Saint Elesbão owned a new and an old coffin, which they used for carrying bodies to burial sites. See ACMSP, Irmandade de Santa Efigênia e São Elesbão, Livro de Inventário de Bens, 1859, 07-03-46.

²⁵⁷ Martins, *São Paulo antigo*, 328.

²⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 328.

and not simply about the dead at funerals occurred in a variety of African societies. The excerpt of Senegambian death rituals mentioned earlier in the chapter indicated that when the living passed graves they saluted the dead by kneeling and saying “certain words.”²⁵⁹ On the slave ship *Hudibras* discussed by Vincent Brown, sailor William Butterworth recounted that in addition to wails of mourning, that the other women spoke “... softly to the corpse in belief that the woman’s spirit would hear and acknowledge their wish ‘to be remembered to their friends in the other country...’”²⁶⁰ Anthropologist Jack Goody, who conducted ethnographic research among the LoSaala people, documented funeral speeches where the living publically addressed the dead and recounted activities they did together. Goody includes an address a family friend bellows to a newly deceased villager. The friend cries,

I’ve come for no bad reason; just that you and I were inseparable
and went everywhere without any trouble. But it was God’s will
that this morning people say you were dead. But you and I
used to walk together and all men knew it. Then God came to take you.
So I said to myself I would bring you a pot of beer. Thus we used to do
for everyone to see, So I brought along this beer to give you
to drink have a good journey and may nothing trouble you...²⁶¹

The short snippet of “incantation” Martins recounts suggests that the broadly based African tradition of speaking to the dead survived the Middle Passage, and represented a unique component of African and Afro-Brazilian burial practice even in a secondary city of African slave dispersal.²⁶²

²⁵⁹ Brooks, *Landlords and Strangers*, 206.

²⁶⁰ Brown, “Social Death,” 1231.

²⁶¹ Goody, *Death, Property, and the Ancestors*, 134.

²⁶² Morse, *From Community to Metropolis*, 40. Historian James Sweet also includes a report of slaves in Pernambuco speaking and shouting to the deceased as part of burial rites in the 1680s. See Sweet, *Recreating Africa*, 178.

Rituals like speaking to the dead may have continued because, while funeral masses were public, the burials of slaves and free people of color were likely insular affairs attended only by kin and associates---essentially the social equals of the defunct. Across the Americas, masters did not typically attend the funerals of slaves or any other person they considered below their own station in life.²⁶³ Images of the funerals of African descendants in Brazil rarely show any white elites, other than priests, in attendance. Africans and other people of color constituted the attendees. In fact,



Figure 7 - "Interment of Black Women." Lithograph from Jean Baptiste Debret, *Voyage Pittoresque et Historique au Bresil...* (Paris: Firmin Didot, 1834-1839).

across Anglo-American localities such as Virginia, New York, South Carolina, Antigua, and Jamaica governments attempted to ban slave funerals or limit the number of people in attendance fearing that slaves and African descendants would use the occasions to

²⁶³ Vincent Brown, *The Reaper's Garden: Death and Power in the World of Atlantic Slavery* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2008), 74; and Suzanne E. Smith, *To Serve the Living: Funeral Directors and the African American Way of Death* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2010), 25.

organize slave rebellions.²⁶⁴ In Brazil, Catholic priests did perform masses for slaves in churches, but they did not typically accompany funeral parties to the sites of burial, especially in cases where the dead went to cemeteries for paupers.²⁶⁵



Figure 8 - "Internment of a Black Man." Lithograph from Johann Moritz Rugendas, *Voyage Pittoresque dans le Bresil*. (Paris: Engelmann, 1835).

While the church forbade any person from interfering with the free choice of any individual in the selection of their place of rest in the *Constituições Primeiras*,²⁶⁶ most burial sites had heavy concentrations of people from the same status and color groups.²⁶⁷

²⁶⁴ Brown, *The Reaper's Garden*, 63 and 74; and Erik R. Seeman, *Death in the New World: Cross-Cultural Encounters, 1492-1800* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010), 196-198.

²⁶⁵ Soares, *People of Faith*, 159-160; Pereira, *À Flor da terra*, 59; Robert Walsh, *Notices of Brazil in 1828 and 1829*, Vol. 1, (Boston: Philadelphia: Carey and Hart; Boston Press, 1831), 219-220, in *Sabin Americana*, Gale Learning Center, <http://galenet.galegroup.com.proxy.library.emory.edu/servlet/Sabin?af=RN&ae=Cy110683581&srchtp=a&ste=14> (accessed April 7, 2012).

²⁶⁶ Vide, *Constituições Primeiras*, Título 54, 442-443, (Sendo livre a cada um eleger sepultura em que seja enterrado, justamente é prohibido por direito impedir-se modos ilícitos esta liberdade.)

²⁶⁷ Pagoto, *Do âmbito da sagrado*, 36-38; See Moacyr Flores, *Africanos na Santa Casa de Porte Alegre: óbitos dos escravos sepultados no cemitério da Santa Casa (1850-1885)* (Porto Alegre: EST, 2007); and

A limited review of obituary records dating from selected years of the decade from 1850 to 1860 provide a preliminary glimpse of the geography of death in São Paulo's mid nineteenth century city center.²⁶⁸ Slaves and free people of were interred in tombs inside of churches, in adjoining graveyards, and in the Cemetery of the Afflicted (*Cemeterio dos Aflitos*) in São Paulo before 1858.²⁶⁹ The Cemetery of the Afflicted opened in 1775 to serve as a place of burial for the expanding non-elite segment of the populace. Prisoners, indigents, slaves and other non-whites were interred in the cemetery. According to Maria Amélia Salgado Loureiro, the first cadaver buried in the Cemetery of the Afflicted was that of a free *parda* woman named Maria. Her interment occurred on October 3, 1775 and by November the graveyard had become commonly referred to as the "public cemetery" following the pattern established by the parish priest recording obituaries in Sé.²⁷⁰ Despite the cemetery's unofficial designation, it was not supported by the municipality. The diocese, not the municipal council, financed the care and administration of the graveyard.

In 1779, the diocese erected a small *capela* named the Chapel of the Afflicted, which still stands today in the neighborhood of *Liberdade*, though the graveyard has long been removed. While priests began calling the Cemetery of the Afflicted the first "public cemetery," that language is best reserved for the Cemetery of Consolação (*Cemetério da*

Júlio César Medeiros da Silva Pereira, *A flor da terra: o cemitério dos pretos novos no Rio de Janeiro* (Rio de Janeiro: Garamond: IPHAN, 2007).

²⁶⁸ I selected to document two years of obituary registers in the parish of Sé before the opening of the public cemetery in 1858. I chose years before 1858, because after that year parish priests did not record locales of burial since everyone was interred in the public cemetery. Priests also discontinued the practice of indicating which brotherhood or religious institution accompanied the dead at their funeral and burial.

²⁶⁹ Maria Amélia Salgado Loureiro, *Origem histórica dos cemitérios* (São Paulo: Secretaria de Serviços e Obras, 1977), 47-52; and ACMSP, Livro de óbitos, Sé, Livres e Escravos, 1844-1853, 03-02-07; Livro de óbitos, Sé, 1853-1875, 03-01-23; Livro de óbitos, Santa Ephigênia, Livres e Escravos, 1852-1860, 05-03-33.

²⁷⁰ Loureiro, *Origem histórica dos cemitérios*, 51; from 1775 to June of 1858, any reference to the public cemetery signified the Cemetery of the Afflicted.

Consolação), which was built in response to public health concerns that began to be debated in São Paulo around the turn of the nineteenth century.²⁷¹ Municipal and church officials opened and consecrated the historic graveyard, which then sat on the margins of city and which remains open on the busy corridor that is the Rua da Consolação today.²⁷² In the first years of the cemetery's opening, city officials interred the dead from all social sectors together in the new graveyard,²⁷³ but as early as the 1900s the cemetery became the exclusive resting place for wealthy elites including immigrant industrialists who erected spectacular mausoleums and funerary art.²⁷⁴

The Cemetery of the Afflicted, the tomb of Saint Benedict, and the church grounds of Our Lady of the Rosary served as the most common burial sites for blacks in the city before the opening of the Municipal Cemetery. In 1850, the Cemetery of the Afflicted recorded by priests as the “public cemetery” held 45 percent or 24 of 53 enslaved adults who died that year; the Rosary church entombed 23 percent or 12 persons; and the tomb of Saint Benedict held 13 percent or 7 people. The Church of Santa Ephigênia interred 6% or 3 adult slaves, and the remainder of the other adult slaves had burials in either the *Igreja da Boa Morte* (Church of the Good Death), the *Igreja de Nossa Senhora dos Remedios* (The Church of Our Lady of the Remedies), the *Igreja de São Antonio* (The Church of Saint Antonio), and the *Igreja de São Francisco* (Church of Saint Francis).²⁷⁵

²⁷¹ Loureiro, *Origem histórica dos cemitérios*, 51-52; and Morse, *From Community to Metropolis*, 73.

²⁷² The first person was interred in the public cemetery on August 15, 1858; ACMSP, Livro de óbitos, Sé, Livres e Escravos, 1853-1875, 03-01-23.

²⁷³ Mirtes Timpanaro, “A morte como memória: imigrantes nos cemitérios da Consolação e do Brás” (master’s thesis, Universidade de São Paulo, 2006), 78.

²⁷⁴ Timpanaro, “A morte como memória,” 69-74.

²⁷⁵ Ibid.

In 1850, dying adult slaves who were born in Africa were those most likely to be buried in the Cemetery of the Afflicted. Fourteen or more than half of the twenty-four people interred there were African born. Nine of the twelve people buried at the Rosary Church had continental African origins. As such, 75 percent of the people the Rosary Brotherhood interred in 1850 traveled from Africa to Brazil in their lifetimes. The Brotherhood of Saint Benedict buried five Brazilian born or creole slaves which represented 71 percent of the people they buried that year. For burial, when enslaved Africans could choose they seemed to prefer the Rosary Brotherhood while Brazilian born slaves showed preference for the Brotherhood of Saint Benedict. However, the collective obituary data for 1850 shows all black identified brotherhoods included Africans and Brazilian born adult slaves. The Brotherhood of Saint Ephigênia and Saint Elesbão buried the smallest number of people for a black confraternity. Two Africans and one Brazilian born African descendant were buried with this confraternity. Finally, only two of the enslaved adults who died were identified by the priests as mixed race *pardos*; Joaquina, a single woman was funeralized by the Brotherhood of Saint Ephigênia and Luis, the twenty-year old pardo son of a “black freedwoman” (preta liberta) was entombed with the Brotherhood of Saint Benedict.²⁷⁶

Examination of the death records of children born to at least one enslaved parent, usually a mother, reveals that family ties made a clear difference in the location of

²⁷⁶ Ibid. (Joaquina- Aos vinte e tres de dezembro nesta freguesia faleceo de molestia interna, Joaquina, parda, solteira de treinta annos de idade, pouco mais ou menos, escrava de Dona Gertrudes Baruel...desta paroquia. Foi sepultada na Igreja de Santa Ephigênia) and (Luis escravo-Aos desesse de agosto nesta freguesia faleceo de molesta classificada typho-solenemente absolvido e unguido com cerca de vinte annos de idade, Luis, filho de Josefa, preta liberta, escravo do Doutor Joao Carlos da Silva Telles desta Parochia. Encommendada foi sepultar-se no jazigo da Irmandade de São Benedito.)

internment for minors.²⁷⁷ Of the 23 children who died, parents secured burial in a church or in a brotherhood tomb in 83 percent of cases.²⁷⁸ Parents clearly preferred their children



Figure 9 - "Funeral Convoy of Black Children." Lithograph from Jean Baptiste Debret, *Voyage Pittoresque et Historique au Bresil*. (Paris: Firmin Didot, 1834-1839).

to be buried with the pomp customary for religious associations. Thirty percent of children under the age of twelve had burials performed by the Rosary Brotherhood, and the Brotherhood of Saint Benedict buried funeralized another 30 percent of infants and children born to enslaved mothers. The *Igreja da Boa Morte* funeralized two children, the *Igreja de São Antonio* buried a five-year old slave child, and the *Igreja do Carmo* funeralized an infant. Two children had no burial information given and two others were

²⁷⁷ In my survey of obituary registers, I classified those under the age of twelve years of age as children. It should be noted that the concept of childhood varied across cultures and differed during the colonial period and the Brazilian empire based on free and slave status. For analysis of the contradictions of the concept of childhood as it applied to slaves see Ondina González, "Introduction," in *Raising an Empire: Children in Early Modern Iberia and Colonial Latin America* ed. Ondina González and Bianca Premo (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2007), 2-11; Elizabeth Kuznesof, "Slavery and Childhood in Brazil (1550-1888)" in *Raising an Empire: Children in Early Modern Iberia and Colonial Latin America* ed. Ondina González and Bianca Premo (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2007), 188-218; and Bianca Premo, *Children of the Father King: Youth, Authority, and Legal Minority in Colonial Lima* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005), 43-59 and especially chapter 7.

²⁷⁸ ACMSP, Livro de óbitos, Sé, Livres e Escravos, 1844-1853, 03-02-07.

buried in the Cemetery of the Afflicted. Tellingly, one of the children buried in the cemetery was already bereaved; nine-year old Benedita had been preceded in death by her mother. Only one listed parent, the *parda* mother of 1.5 year old Maria José had a child interred in the public cemetery. Parents of enslaved children overwhelmingly buried their young ones in the churches of black brotherhoods and occasionally they secured burial for their progeny in white churches likely with the assistance of a patron.

While Afro-Brazilians were buried all over the city in 1850, black brotherhoods served at least 40 percent of the total African and African descendant populace who died that year.

Conclusion

Africans and Brazilian born African descendants embraced the Catholic world in life and at death as they struggled to make an inhospitable host society and culture their own. Black confraternity participants seized the traditions of Catholic pageantry and infused them with performances of self and of their ancestral home societies, when feasible, as they integrated movement, music, and aesthetics into celebratory activities, which included processions, festivals, and funerals. Blacks utilized the opportunities fostered by religious and civic commemoration days to incorporate themselves in society as full members regardless of whether or not society embraced them. Self-identified Africans and their descendants resisted their dehumanization and organized themselves as best as possible when funds permitted to march and move in the streets with dignity and to bury each other with decency. Afro-Brazilians guarded and nurtured the associational spaces Catholicism granted them and leaders used the organizations to build relationships with state power, but more importantly with each other.

While nineteenth century dominant culture defined blackness in terms of paganism, intellectual inferiority, unattractiveness, servility, licentiousness, and laziness,²⁷⁹ Afro-Brazilians in Rachel Harding's narrative and in this project rejected these notions. The practice of both African religions and versions of Catholicism that incorporated African aesthetics in terms of adornment, music, and movement emphasizes that blacks did not allow themselves to be defined by the racial prejudices of slave owners and larger society. Black confraternity leaders, like *mães* and *pães de santo*, ruled their associations with little to no anxiety about whether they were qualified to lead their organizations. They even quarreled over who would fill prominent positions; self-doubt hardly represented a problem. Black confraternity leaders were clearly industrious, since they were able to earn sufficient wages to take care of themselves and to devote discretionary spending to the upkeep of sodalities. Black confraternity leaders created lives for themselves, which defied the negative stereotypes affiliated with African origins.

While the traditions of various African societies did not change the liturgy of Brazilian Catholic mass, the presence of those hailing from areas in and near Kongo, Angola, Benguela, Dahomey, and Mozambique among myriad other places left an indelible stamp on Brazilian and paulistano popular religiosity. As forced African migrants and generations of their children held torch lit marches through city streets to honor Christ and the black saints who granted them favor, they shaped a culture of devotion, sociability, and celebratory expression. Even death itself could be a festival,²⁸⁰ and funeral rites under the auspices of a black identified confraternity represented an

²⁷⁹ See Moritz Schwarcz, *Retrato em branco e negro*, 95-224; Butler, *Freedoms Given, Freedoms Won*, 33 and 35; Harding, *Refuge in Thunder*, xvi-xvii; and Skidmore, *Black into White*, 24 and 48-63.

²⁸⁰ Reis, *Death is a Festival*.

attractive option for African diaspora people in Brazil who sought to ensure communal ritual commemoration for themselves or for loved ones as life ended. A lack of appropriate death rituals did not just shame the dead. It created uncertainty for the living, since a famous MuKongo proverb noted, “ ‘Where your ancestor does not live, you cannot build your house.’ ”²⁸¹ Festivals and funerals integrated blacks into the Catholic world, while they concurrently emphasized and gave African diaspora people opportunities to connect with each other on a basis situated in their difference in terms of epistemology, cultural heritage, and marginalization. Slaves and free people of color in nineteenth century São Paulo utilized processional culture, festivals, and funerals to make themselves a world.²⁸²

²⁸¹ Balandier, *Daily Life in the Kongo*, 253.

²⁸² The phrase “make themselves a world” references a famous poetic verse by James Weldon Johnson, “The Creation,” in *God’s Trombones: Seven Negro Sermons in Verse* (New York: Viking Press, 1927), 17, and inverts the premise of the historical work of Mechal Sobel, *The World They Made To Together: Black and White Values of Eighteenth Century Virginia* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989).

Chapter 3 - Black Leading Men: Gender, Family, and Confraternity Leadership

On October 13, 1887, the chair of the female executive board of the Brotherhood of Saint Ephigênia and Saint Elesbão, Rufina Maria de O, gave 100\$000 mil-réis to help fund the celebration honoring the sodality's patron saints. In addition to the money, she promised to provide an orchestra to play music at the festival and for the *Te Deum Laudamas*, which would begin the afternoon procession.¹ Her pledge matched that of the organizational president and superseded donations of 60\$000 mil-réis given by both the festival Empress and Emperor. All of the funds would have been quite welcome, since the year before the leaders of the confraternity were unable to raise an amount of money they considered sufficient to sponsor the annual festival.² Though the donation Rufina Maria do O gave brought the total pledges to 320\$000 mil-réis, which the organizational president considered enough "... to have a very good *feira* and afternoon procession," after making this generous contribution she did not utter another word as the meeting continued.³

¹ ACMSP, Irmandade de Santa Efigênia e Santo Elesbão, Livro de Atas, 1885-1890, 07-03-44. (Aos dias 13 de outubro... A Sra. Juiza Dona Rufina Maria do O declarou que da parte della dava a joia de 100:000 e a orquestra para fazer a festa e o Teo Deo Laudamas a tarde na entrada da procissão.) The 100\$000 mil-réis donation represented a low wage monthly salary. Historian Thomas Holloway noted that Urban Guards, a poorly remunerated police force organized by the provincial government to patrol the capital, earned a salary of 60\$000 mil-réis per month in the city of Rio de Janeiro in 1873; see Holloway, *Policing Rio*, 235.

² ACMSP, Irmandade de Santa Efigênia e Santo Elesbão, Livro de Atas, 1885-1890, 07-03-44. (Aos dias 16 de dezembro de 1886...O juiz interino para fazaer a festa o mesmo declarou não podia fazer a festa muito boa pela razão das Joias serem poucas. Foi terminado a festa para o dia 9 de janeiro de 1887.) Between 1860 and 1880 the annual budget of the confraternity ranged from 476\$160 to 2:116\$233 mil-réis. However, between 1883 and 1888, annual budgets, which excluded money pledged exclusively for patron festivals plummeted, and never again surpassed more than 320\$000 mil-réis.

³ ACMSP, Irmandade de Santa Efigênia e Santo Elesbão, Livro de Atas, 1885-1890, 07-03-44. (Aos dias 13 de outubro...O Sr. Juiz declarou em meza que com 320:000 faria uma festa muito boa e procissão a tarde.) See Amaral, *Os pretos do Rosário*, unpagged back matter; and Quintão, *Irmandades negras*, 44, for more on the executive offices held by of Rufina Maria do O in the three black brotherhoods in São Paulo.

Male executive officers carried out organizational meetings without the participation of women, except when female officers like Rufina Maria do O came to make financial pledges for festivities.⁴ Though black lay Catholic brotherhoods accepted male and female members and even named female executive officers,⁵ male leaders functioned as the decision makers for the associations. Male board members (*irmãos mesários*) and the directorate composed of the president, the secretary, the treasurer, and an organizational trustee administered property owned by the sodality, made all financial decisions for the group, and established the calendar of events to be commemorated during the year.⁶ Black men ran confraternities and the churches they housed.

While those who ruled and administered black confraternities exhibited gender uniformity, other types of diversity characterized association leaders. The signatures board members affixed to meeting minutes at the end of administrative sessions emphasized the different levels of literacy exhibited by brotherhood officers. For example, in an 1874 meeting of the Brotherhood of Saint Ephigênia and Saint Elesbão eight board members attended. Aleixo Leite Penteadó, Raymundo José Guilherme, João Ignacio Esteves, Benedito Salomé Cardim, and Benedito Marques de Lima signed their

⁴ For discussion of female members and officers as sources of general funding and patron saint festival donations see Soares, *People of Faith*, 165, 167, 170 and 198; Germeten, *Black Blood Brothers*, 55-57, and 62; Borges, *Escravos e libertos*, 90-91; and Kiddy, *Blacks of the Rosary*, 158.

⁵ ACMSP, Compromisso da Irmandade de Nossa Senhora do Rosário dos Homens Pretos de São Paulo, 1778, 01-03-08; and Compromisso da Irmandade de Santa Efigênia e Santo Elesbão, 1813, 19-02-42.

⁶ ACMSP, Irmandade de Santa Efigênia e Santo Elesbão, Livro de Atas, 1862-1885, 04-02-28; Irmandade de Santa Efigênia e Santo Elesbão, Livro de Atas, 1885-1890, 07-03-44; Uncatalogued Folder: Santa Ephigênia: Nrsa da Conceição, No. 2. For discussion of male authority in sodalities see Reis, *Death is a Festival*, 50-51; Kiddy, *Blacks of the Rosary*, 93-94, and 157-158; Soares, *People of Faith*, 142 and 166; and "Can Women guide and Govern Men? Gendering Politics among African Catholics in Colonial Brazil," in *Women and Slavery: The Modern Atlantic*, ed. Gwyn Campbell, Suzanne Miers, and Joseph C. Miller (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2008), vol. 2:79, 86-91. For discussion of female challenges to male authority see Soares, "Can Women Guide," 86-95; and Germeten, *Black Blood Brothers*, 57-59, and 70. Nicole van Germeten chronicles female participation within eighteenth century Afro-Mexican confraternities and finds women active as leaders and aggressively working to defend their access to full participation in the life of the confraternity. However, she also observes women experiencing an overall decline in power as the eighteenth century ended.

own names to the secretary's meeting minutes, while three of their brethren, Benedito de Sousa Aranha, João Mariano, and Joaquim Barboza, had to have another member sign their name on their behalf.⁷ Confraternity leadership involved literate and non-literate members, but in most cases those with some formal education outnumbered those without it. Not knowing how to read or write did not disqualify men for leading positions, and as a result confraternity administrators represented a heterogeneous picture in terms of basic literacy in Portuguese. Unsurprisingly, not a single female signatory affixed her name to the meeting minutes in the nineteenth century for the Brotherhood of Santa Ephigênia and Saint Elesbão, and no black confraternity had an organizational charter which female board members signed before the twentieth century.⁸ Black confraternities like other mixed gender Catholic institutions severely restricted female participation, even though women made up approximately forty percent of total members for the Rosary Brotherhood in the nineteenth century.⁹

Despite the concentration of administrative power in the hands of male leadership, black confraternities had gender specific offices to which they elected women. Every year each black confraternity selected twelve women to serve as female board members (*irmãs mesárias*).¹⁰ Though the title of the position *irmãs mesárias* appeared to be the

⁷ ACMSP, Irmandade de Santa Efigênia e Santo Elesbão, Livro de Atas, 1862-1885, 04-02-28.

⁸ Ibid.; ACMSP, Compromisso da Irmandade de Santa Efigênia e Santo Elesbão, 1813, 19-02-42; Compromisso da Irmandade de Nossa Senhora do Rosário dos Homens Pretos de São Paulo, 1778, 01-03-08; Uncatalogued Folder: Santa Ephigênia: Nrsa da Conceição, No. 2, Compromisso 1859; and AESP, Irmandade de São Benedito da Cidade de São Paulo (1861), 17/02/1896, C10388.

⁹ Historian Elizabeth Kiddy notes that women represented approximately one-third of the overall membership in two confraternities in Mariana and Barbacena, Minas Gerais in the nineteenth century and historian João José Reis reported that women represented 48.6 percent of the members of the brotherhood of Our Lady of the Mulattos at Boqueirao in Bahia. See Kiddy, *Blacks of the Rosary*, 154; and Reis, *Death is a Festival*, 50.

¹⁰ Ibid.; ACMSP, Compromisso da Irmandade de Nossa Senhora do Rosário dos Homens Pretos de São Paulo, 1778, 01-03-08; Uncatalogued Folder: Santa Ephigênia: Nrsa da Conceição, No. 2, Compromisso 1859; and AESP, Sociedades Civis, Estatutos/Compromissos, Irmandade de São Benedito da Cidade de São Paulo (1861), 17/02/1896, C10388.

Nineteenth Century Membership Patterns for the Brotherhood of Our Lady of the Rosary of Black Men of São Paulo (1833-1899)

	Number of Members	Percentage Of Total Members
Regular Female Members	473	38.51%
Female Officers	40	3.25%
<u>Total Estimated Female Members</u>	513	41.77%
Regular Male Members	641	52.19%
Male Officers	74	6.02%
<u>Total Estimated Male Members</u>	715	58.22%
<u>Total</u>	1228	99.99% of Members

Source: Raul Joviano Amaral, *Os pretos do Rosário*, 1st ed., unpagged appendix.

equivalent of their male counterparts (*irmãos mesários*), the responsibilities of female officers were not the same.¹¹ In 1871, the Rosary Brotherhood made it clear in its organizational statute that gender represented an impediment for its female board members. The statute of their newly reformed *compromisso* indicated that, “The Sisters of the Board *due to their sex, which impedes the rendering of other services*, have the responsibility of paying dues of 10\$000 mil-réis and dressing as an angel in order to accompany the procession on the day of the festival of the Organ through the streets of the city.”¹² Male board members, in contrast, were required to “Attend all the meetings convened, to vote on all questions in which the board deliberates, and to pay dues of 10\$000 mil-réis at the act of possession of the office.”¹³

¹¹ Soares, *People of Faith*, 142 and 165-166; Reis, *Death is a Festival*, 50-51; and Kiddy, *Blacks of the Rosary*, 157-158.

¹² ACMSP, *Compromisso da Irmandade de Nossa Senhora do Rosário dos Homens Pretos de São Paulo*, 1871, microfilm, 2002, Capítulo 8, Artigo 13, (Das Irmãs de Meza--As irmãs de meza em razão de seu sexo que as impede de prestar outros serviços a Irmandade incumbe, Pagarem uma joia de dez milréis e a vestirem em anjo para acompanharem a procissão que no dia da festa da oraga percorres as ruas da cidade.) Emphasis added.

¹³ ACMSP, *Compromisso da Irmandade de Nossa Senhora do Rosário dos Homens Pretos de São Paulo*, 1871, microfilm, 2002, Capítulo 8, Artigo 12, (Dos Irmãos de Meza—Aos Irmãos de Meza incumbe—

The female board members of the Rosary Brotherhood were not unique in terms of their lack of access to participation in decision-making meetings, while being asked to provide financial contributions at the same level as men. In 1899, the Brotherhood of Saint Benedict endowed its honored female board members with quite domestic responsibilities. While the association required female board members to be “... married women of renowned faith...” their duties included “... cleaning the cloth items used to ornament altars for the liturgy, to adorn the church with flowers and other decorations, and to give a donation never less than 5\$000 mil-réis for the expenditure of the Brotherhood.”¹⁴ The formal roles and responsibilities of male and female board member officers could not have been configured in terms that more expressly connected men with authority and power and women with secondary support responsibilities.

In São Paulo, the only offices where male and female members had roughly equivalent duties and responsibilities were those of the festival king and queen. Organizational statutes mandated the king and queen to donate the same amount of money to sponsor the revelry for the organizational patron saint. In 1859, the hosts of the festival called the emperor (*o Imperador*) and empress (*o Imperatriz*) for the Brotherhood of Saint Efigênia were to pay “4\$000 mil-réis each” to hold the office in addition to paying for the festivities. If the emperor and empress did not wish to organize the festival

Assistir a todas as reuniões para que forem convocadas, votarem em todas as questões sobre que a Meza deve deliberar, e pagarem uma joia de diez mil-réis no acto de serem empossados de seus cargos.)

¹⁴ ACMSP, Uncataloged Folder, Irmandades XXXIV, Irmandade de São Benedito, Compromisso de Irmandade de São Benedito da Cidade de São Paulo, Capitulo 4, Artigo 19, (Irmas de mesa, sendo senhoras de reconhecida piedade, cabe: SS.1-Tractar do asseio e limpeza de toda a roupa da Igreja, confeccionando flores e mais enfeites, conforme sua devoção lhes inspirer, e darão tambem uma esmola, annualmente nunca inferior a cinco milréis, para auxilio das despezas da Irmandade, bem como todas as vezes que preciso para o esplendor do Culto e Festividades.)

each of them was to pay 8\$000 mil-réis, so that the celebration could still be executed by the administrative board.¹⁵

Women actually had a greater role in the organization of the festival for the patron saint than men in the Brotherhood of Saint Ephigênia and Saint Elesbão. In addition to the fees the emperor and empress paid, a second female officer, the *juiza* (a female judge), was obligated to arrange one carriage and the empress was to arrange a second carriage presumably to transport the ceremonial court.¹⁶ In 1874, the Juiza paid 60\$000 mil-réis for the “*feita* and the priest” while the emperor and empress pledged 40\$000 mil-réis each.¹⁷ The next year the Juiza Romana Francisca Guilherme pledged 70\$000 while the empress pledged 52\$000 thousand to the emperor’s 40\$000 mil-réis.¹⁸ These female festival patrons were not elite women, since most had no honorific titles attached to their names. Preliminary evidence strongly suggests that women shouldered the bulk of responsibility for financing and organizing confraternity festivities in the nineteenth century.¹⁹ Working women bore the majority of the costs of celebrating saints.

As prescribed by values of baroque Catholicism, churches needed to be visually stunning during saint day observations. Organizational statutes required churches to be “arranged” for the festival and this responsibility fell to female members to plan and

¹⁵ ACMSP, Uncatalogued Folder: Santa Ephigênia: Nrsa da Conceição, No. 2, Compromisso 1859, Capitulo 4, (O imperador e Imperatriz darão de joia de quatro milréis, cada um e fazer a festa a São Elesbão, não querendo fazer a festa darão oito milréis, cada um...)

¹⁶ Ibid. (... a Juiza terá obrigação de arrumar uma charota, a Imperadora outra.)

¹⁷ ACMSP, Irmandade de Santa Efigênia e Santo Elesbão, Livro de Atas, 1862-1885, 04-02-028.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ For discussion of women as a source of financing for confraternity patron festivals see Soares, *People of Faith*, 170; and Kiddy, *Blacks of the Rosary*, 158. For evidence and discussion of women as organizational, ceremonial, and financial leaders and contributors for religious and political festivals across cultures in West and West Central Africa see Susan Herlin Broadhead, “Slave Wives, Free Sisters: Bakongo Women and Slavery c. 1700-1850,” in *Women and Slavery in Africa*, ed. Claire C. Robertson and Martin A. Klein (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1983), 173-174; John K. Thornton, “Elite Women in the Kingdom of Kongo: Historical Perspectives of Women’s Political Power,” *Journal of African History* 47, no.3 (2006): 441-442; and Bay, *Wives of the Leopard*, 211-213.

execute. Candles, flowers, incense, and music were used in celebrations to stimulate the senses and to evoke awe among participants. Patron festivals also included a shared meal for the festival court, and female members undoubtedly helped with food preparations since meal planning and preparation would have been considered women's work.²⁰ Even though today the celebration of the patron saint involves a fraction of the activity that characterized nineteenth century festivities, the distribution of bread by female members still occurs and confraternity sisters and brothers share a communal meal as part of the closing events.²¹ Female officers carried out critical roles in the ceremonial life of brotherhoods and likely had more influence and input in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries than organizational documents convey.

Black Leading Men

While festivities for the organizational patron saint involved significant female participation, most of the year men not women headed associational activities. The section that follows analyzes the biographies of several men who served as directorate or board members to begin to develop a nuanced preliminary profile of male confraternity leaders. It is already clear that these men acquired financial resources that allowed them to pay the moderately priced fees associated with holding offices in the confraternities they joined. The records compiled work to document the occupations or kinds of economic activities in which these leaders engaged to better understand what middling status looked like for blacks in São Paulo. Africans and African descendants participating in irmandades built their own social world, and this section presents qualitative data to

²⁰ See Lauderdale Graham, *House and Street*, 5, 6, and 46-48.

²¹ Personal Observation, Igreja de Nossa Senhora do Rosário dos Homens Pretos de São Paulo, Festival for Our Lady of the Rosary, October 8, 2008.

better explore locales of origin, patterns of family life, and their connections to the self-selected, socio-religious communities they forged.

In 1952, Rosary Brotherhood member and leader Raul Amaral (1914-1988) compiled a list of men who served as organizational presidents dating from 1806 to 1986, and this list of leaders became a guide as I searched for leadership biographical data.²² Based on this list, I located marriage records in the ecclesiastic archive, since marriage entries have centralized indexing organized by the last name of the man and the parish where he lived. As such, men who never married or who married outside of the parish of Sé and Santa Ephigênia are therefore admittedly underrepresented in this preliminary data, though they may well have represented the majority of leaders. I was also able to locate partial information about organization leaders from member entry registries from the Brotherhood of Saint Benedict. Member entry registries were particularly helpful since, they noted changes in status for members who started as slaves and who went on to secure their freedom. Finally, as I collected birth and death records for the parish of Sé to analyze godparent relationships and death rituals, and I occasionally located baptismal and death records for organizational leaders, which provided detailed information about specific individuals, their social relationships, and patterns common to confraternity leaders as a whole.

Marcelino Alves da Cruz was the earliest Rosary Brotherhood president whose life story emerged from church records. In 1844, Cruz served as the executive trustee (*provedor*) of Our Lady of the Rosary of Black Men and ten years later in 1854, he served a second, year-long term in the same position.²³ Alves da Cruz was active in

²² Amaral, *Os pretos do Rosário*, 2nd ed., 186-187.

²³ *Ibid.*

black identified brotherhoods in the city for at least twenty-five years. He served as an active board member in the Brotherhood of Saint Ephigênia and Saint Elesbão until at least 1868 and he served as a board member of the Rosary Brotherhood until at least 1870, when he served as a signatory for the group's revised *compromisso*.²⁴

Cruz was born to legitimately married, freed, black parents in the parish of Santa Ephigênia.²⁵ Indeed, according to studies of provincial censuses, 90 percent of free colored men married at least once, while 57 percent of free colored women married at least once between 1777 and 1829.²⁶ While overall, free people of color did not have marriage rates that matched free white women and men (more than 90 percent of whom were married), their propensity to enter legal, church marriages in São Paulo was unusually high for slave societies in the Americas.²⁷

In the province of São Paulo those who remained in bondage married frequently too. On average 41 percent of adult slave women who lived between 1777 and 1829 married at least one, while 26 percent of enslaved adult men were married or widowed according to provincial census lists.²⁸ Historians Francisco Luna and Herbert Klein have demonstrated that “[i]n terms of access to and use of legal marriage, the figures for legal slave marriages within the São Paulo slave population are most unusual and are the highest of any recorded for large slave populations, not only in Brazil, but throughout the Americas...”²⁹ The authors also noted that creoles (Brazilian born slaves) and Africans

²⁴ ACMSP, Irmandade de Santa Efigênia e Santo Elesbão, Livro de Atas, 1862-1885, 04-02-28; and ACMSP, Compromisso da Irmandade de Nossa Senhora do Rosário dos Homens Pretos de São Paulo, 1871, microfilm, 2002.

²⁵ ACMSP, Livro de casamentos, Santa Efigênia, 05-03-29, (19 de janeiro de 1845).

²⁶ See Luna and Klein, *Slavery and the Economy*, 140-143, for discussion of the term “free colored.”

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 143.

²⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁹ *Ibid.*

married at similar rates.³⁰ From the late eighteenth through roughly the first third of the nineteenth century, the possibility of being born into a household shared by a married mother and father was more common in the province of São Paulo than neighboring provinces and regions for Afro-Brazilians.

Alves da Cruz entered the world with whatever advantages his mother and father could bestow. Though it is unclear who taught him, he learned to read and write, and he always signed his name with elegant, cursive flourishes at the end of meeting minutes.³¹ This entrepreneur, who remained in the parish of his birth into adulthood, owned a small grocery and spirits shop in addition to carts and a wagon, which he undoubtedly used to transport the goods he sold from his home.³² Possessing a means of transport for goods and objects ensured solid careers for many muleteers, cart, and coach owners that facilitated their climb into middling sectors, though upper elites considered such work, like all manual labor denigrating.³³ Besides the transport of goods, other uses for wagons arose from time to time. After a December rainstorm, a municipal official contracted Cruz to work as a street cleaner. The storm had left paper and other trash in the streets and Cruz earned 3\$500 réis for his day's work.³⁴ Cruz, like other people of color and whites in the transportation business, created a life for himself that kept abject poverty at

³⁰ Ibid., 147. Historian Manolo Florentino found that in rural Rio de Janeiro Africans had higher marriage rates from 1790 to 1830 than Brazilian born slaves. From 1790 to 1830, Africans represented from 56 to 67 percent of all married bondspeople. Florentino suggests that African arrivals were older than locally born slaves, which partially explains their higher incidence of marriage. See Florentino, "The Slave Trade, Colonial Markets and Slave Families," 304-309, especially 305.

³¹ ACMSP, Irmandade de Santa Efigênia e Santo Elesbão, Livro de Atas, 1862-1885, 04-02-28.

³² Oliveira, *Entre a casa e armazém*, 40-41, for evidence of Cruz as the owner of a small transportation business; and Luné, *Almanak da Provincia de São Paulo*, 127, for evidence of Cruz as a small grocer.

³³ See Graham, *Patronage and Politics*, 33, for discussion of muleteers as having middling economic status but low prestige among upper elites.

³⁴ Oliveira, *Entre a casa e armazém*, 40-41.

bay. At the time of his death in July 1879, he lived in his own stucco house, and he owned five horses and mule.³⁵

Cruz had one adult son, Antonio Alves da Cruz, and he left a will and a tutor to make sure his son inherited his property after his debts were paid.³⁶ Cruz married at least once; he wed a Brazilian born freed black woman named Felizarda in 1845,³⁷ but she had abandoned him “years ago” at the time of his death. He was well connected enough to have the famous abolitionist Luiz Gama serve as the executor of his will.³⁸ Upon his death as a former board member in various black confraternities, many sodality members in the city would have assembled at his funeral and burial to offer prayers for his soul.

Like Cruz, other small business owners were prevalent among those who held offices in black brotherhoods. Aleixo Leite Penteadó, an organizational president of the Rosary Brotherhood in 1860 and 1870, who was also mentioned in the introductory chapter, owned a tobacco shop by 1873.³⁹ Leite Penteadó was born as a slave to his owner, Reverend Father Manoel Joaquim Leite Penteadó in the parish of Nossa Senhora de Ó, a rural agricultural district.⁴⁰ The priest owned a house in the city,⁴¹ and Aleixo likely dwelt in the residence at some point in his life. Leite Penteadó joined the Brotherhood of Saint Benedict in 1851 and a few years later his name was transferred from the Book of Captives to the book, which listed free men in 1853, the same year of his former master’s death. Leite Penteadó paid 1\$000 réis to join the administrative

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ ACMSP, Livro de casamentos, Santa Ifigênia, 05-03-29, (19 de janeiro de 1845).

³⁸ Oliveira, *Entre a casa e armazém*, 40-41.

³⁹ Luné, *Almanak da Provincia de São Paulo*, 126; and Amaral, *Os pretos do Rosário*, 2nd ed., 157.

⁴⁰ ACMSP, Livro de casamentos, Sé, 03-02-17, (9 de decembre de 1872).

⁴¹ ACMSP, Livro de óbitos, Sé, 03-01-25, (4 de octubre de 1853), Rev. Manoel Joaquim Leite Penteadó.

board as a perpetual member, and he later went on to serve as an executive board leader in every black brotherhood in the city.⁴²

Several Afro-Brazilian entrepreneurs joined black confraternities. Benedito Innocenio da Silva, João Antonio Paes, and José Maria dos Anjos, all members of the Brotherhood of Saint Benedict, owned small grocery shops in the city.⁴³ Barbers were also among the small business owners who participated in black confraternities. Benedito Severo Gomes, who entered the Brotherhood of Saint Benedict as a slave and gained his freedom by the 1860s, earned his living as a barber.⁴⁴ João Ignacio Esteves, a board member for the Brotherhood of Saint Efigênia and Saint Elesbão in 1874, worked as a barber, but he also had another source of income.⁴⁵ In addition to his hair dressing business, Esteves owned a store specializing in decorative objects and materials used for parties and *festas*.⁴⁶ He was likely able to manage both enterprises through the efforts of his wife, Benedita Maria das Dores Esteves, a perpetual member of the board of the Rosary Brotherhood, and his children.⁴⁷

Men who worked in skilled trades also belonged to the leadership of black confraternities. José Germano do Carmo, who worked as a master carpenter in the city, joined the Brotherhood of Saint Benedict in 1856 where he served as board member in

⁴² ACSMP, Irmandade de São Benedito, Livro de Assentamento dos Irmãos, 1846-1896, 02-02-07; and Livro de Assentamento dos Irmãos (cativos), 1846-1878, 02-02-18; ACMSP, Irmandade de Santa Efigênia e Santo Elesbão, Livro de Atas, 1862-1885, 04-02-28; and Amaral, *Os pretos do Rosário*, 2nd ed., 157.

⁴³ ACSMP, Irmandade de São Benedito, Livro de Assentamento dos Irmãos, 1846-1896, 02-02-07; and Luné, *Almanak da Provincia de São Paulo*, 121-122, (Armazens de molhados e generos do paiz).

⁴⁴ ACSMP, Irmandade de São Benedito, Livro de Assentamento dos Irmãos, 1846-1896, 02-02-07; and Livro de Assentamento dos Irmãos (cativos), 1846-1878, 02-02-18; and Luné, *Almanak da Provincia de São Paulo*, 124, (Barbeiros).

⁴⁵ ACSMP, Irmandade de Santa Efigênia e Santo Elesbão, Livro de Atas, 1862-1885, 04-02-28; and Luné, *Almanak da Provincia de São Paulo*, 124, (Barbeiros).

⁴⁶ Luné, *Almanak da Provincia de São Paulo*, 124, (Armadores de Gala para festividades).

⁴⁷ Benedita Maria Dores was noted as the wife of João Ignacio Esteves and as a member of the perpetual board for the Rosary Brotherhood after having joined in 1850. See Amaral, *Os pretos do Rosário*, 1st ed., unpagged back matter; and *A Provincia de São Paulo*, obituary announcement for Benedita Maria Esteves, March 13, 1893.

the 1860s and as the King of the Festival of Saint Benedict in 1870-1871.⁴⁸ Germano do Carmo's membership represents an interesting case, because though he served as king in the Brotherhood of Saint Benedict, a position reserved for blacks, he also served as the *procurador* and *zelador* for the Brotherhood of the Good Death (*Irmandade da Boa Morte*).⁴⁹ The Brotherhood of the Good Death has not been studied in depth for the city of São Paulo, but the association has been described as an assembly of *pardos*.⁵⁰ My preliminary search of materials in the church archive yielded no information to corroborate the color/status of participants, so the sodality did not meet criteria to be analyzed as a black identified confraternity for this study.⁵¹

Not all black identified brotherhood officers were business owners. Working as a public functionary also represented a path to the type of financial stability that allowed African descended men to gain the capital necessary to serve as officers in black confraternities. Brotherhood member Benedito Joaquim Taborda exemplified this pattern. Taborda served as the organizational president for the Rosary Brotherhood in 1857 and in the same role for the Brotherhood of Saint Benedict in 1861.⁵² He also served as the organizational secretary/scribe and as an administrative board member for the

⁴⁸ Luné, *Almanak da Provincia de São Paulo*, 125, (Carpinteiros mestres de obras); and ACSMP, Irmandade de São Benedito, Livro de Assentamento dos Irmãos, 1846-1896, 02-02-07.

⁴⁹ Luné, *Almanak da Provincia de São Paulo*, 109, (Irmandade de Nossa Senhora da Boa Morte, procurador e zelador, José Germano do Carmo.)

⁵⁰ Arroyo, *Igrejas de São Paulo*, 224-229; and Butler, *Freedoms Given, Freedoms Won*, 78.

⁵¹ Author Leonardo Arroyo, *Igrejas de São Paulo*, 224, notes two city chroniclers Antonio Egídio Martins and Jacinto Ribeiro citing a 1728 compromisso which included the identifier "Homens Pardos" in the corporate title of the Brotherhood of the Good Death, though in the 1813 compromisso that language no longer remained. It should also be noted that while in Salvador and Cachoeira, Bahia, two Brotherhoods of the Good Death were all female Afro-Brazilian confraternities, the composition of the group in São Paulo clearly included men. This difference emphasizes the variability of associations of the same name in different locales across Brazil. For more on the Brotherhood of the Good Death in Bahia see Shelia S. Walker, "The Feast of the Good Death: An Afro-Catholic Emancipation Celebration in Brazil," *Sage* 3, no.3 (1986):27-31; and Stephen Selka, *Religion and the Politics of Ethnic Identity in Bahia Brazil* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2007), 5.

⁵² Amaral, *Os pretos do Rosário*, 2nd ed., 157; and AESP, Irmandade de São Benedito da Cidade de São Paulo (1861), 17/02/1896, C10388.

Brotherhood of Saint Ephigênia and Saint Elesbão in 1862 and 1864 respectively.⁵³

Taborda knew how to read and write, and his note taking as a secretary indicated a high level of literacy. Taborda was active in every black sodality in the city for at least a decade.

Taborda worked as the jailer for the municipality from 1858 to 1870, the year of his death,⁵⁴ and he owned property in the city, not far from the local jail.⁵⁵ Though Taborda lived and served as a public functionary his occupation likely held little esteem for elite white society. Employees who worked in jails and prisons included rank and file soldiers and National Guard members who were usually conscripted into service, faced terrible living conditions, and hence, often deserted. They were considered the dregs of society.⁵⁶ Both military and laypersons working in jails and prisons had the reputation of being “ignorant and coarse” even among their administrative superiors.⁵⁷ While Taborda’s work would have disqualified him from being seen as a man of stature among propertied, white elites, among forced laborers his free status and work for the government was undoubtedly seen in a more favorable manner.

At the age of forty-six or forty-seven in the year 1843, Taborda married his wife Maria das Dores Lustoza.⁵⁸ Well before his marriage he was sought out to serve as

⁵³ ACMSP, Irmandade de Santa Efigênia e Santo Elesbão, Livro de Atas, 1862-1885, 04-02-28.

⁵⁴ Benedito Joaquim Taborda was identified as the jailer in a baptismal record in 1858 where he served as godparent for a slave sentenced to the perpetual galley. He was also noted as the jailer in his obituary record. See ACMSP, Livros de batismo, Sé, Escravos, 02-03-03, 6 de julho de 1858; and ACMSP, Livro de óbitos, Sé, Livres e Escravos, 03-01-39, 2 de janeiro de 1870.

⁵⁵ *Registro de Terras de São Paulo: Freguesia de Santa Ifigênia* (São Paulo: Arquivo do Estado/Imprensa Oficial, 1999) 5:131 and 165.

⁵⁶ Beattie, *Tribute of Blood*, chapters 1 and 2.

⁵⁷ Flávia Maíra de Araújo Gonçalves, “Cadeia e Correção: sistema prisional e população carcerária na cidade de São Paulo” (master’s thesis, Universidade de São Paulo, 2010), 99, and 101-102. (Entretanto, o chefe de polícia atentou para o fato de que, geralmente, este cargo era ocupado por ‘pessoas rudes e ignorantes’...)

⁵⁸ ACMSP, Livro de casamentos, Sé, Brancos e Libertos, 01-02-13, (12 de fevereiro de 1843).

godparent for several slave children born to enslaved mothers in 1838 and 1839.⁵⁹ Taborda had social relationships and interactions with those who lived in bondage, though he was free. Interestingly, not a single ecclesiastic record, which include documentation of his baptism, marriage, and death ever provide a description or racial category for Taborda, though he had at least one parent of African descent. In his marriage record, his mother was identified simply as Eva. She had to be either enslaved or a newly liberated former captive since the priest recorded only a single name designation. She definitely was not a woman of high status since the scribe did not use the word *Dona*, as was the custom for elites. Though church records consistently rendered Taborda as raceless or without language denoting his African heritage, he joined and actively participated in every black sodality in the city in addition to serving as a godparent for several enslaved children. The lack of a racial designation assigned to Taborda by Catholic clergy did not match the social reality in which he lived, nor did it reflect the social engagements he cultivated.

The case of Benedito Joaquim Taborda and the other men and women like him document a subsection of free people of color, identified without racial designations in church records, who self-identified as blacks and chose to participate in confraternities and spaces of socialization where free and un-free Africans and African descendants mingled and established allegiances to each other. Not every person of African heritage of means tried to dissociate themselves from black spaces and black institutions. A portion of the African and African descendant population found the few black institutions

⁵⁹ ACMSP, Livros de batismo, Sé, Escravos, 03-02-13, (Josepha, novembre 1839); and (Marcelina, maio 1844).

that existed desirable environments and collectives and willingly chose fellowship organized around shared devotions, forms of cultural expression, and black identities.

Taborda was not the only person of African descent to participate in multiple black confraternities, though church vital statistics records never noted their African parentage or heritage. Marcellino Pinto de Rego, an officer in the Rosary Brotherhood and the Brotherhood of Saint Benedict, was born free to an unidentified father and to an enslaved mother--Escolastica, who was owned by Sargent Major Antonio Pinto de Rego. At his birth in 1827, his mother's unmarried owner served as his godfather.⁶⁰ While it is tempting to speculate that Marcellino was likely freed, because he was the son of the Sargent, no direct evidence can confirm the claim. However, that fact that the sargent granted the newborn liberty and served as the godfather does suggest that he had some affinity for the child.

Marcellino Pinto de Rego, though the son of slave woman, accumulated enough wealth to marry twice in his life. After his first bride died, he married for the second time in 1850. On the occasion of his second marriage his race was not mentioned nor was the race of his bride. However, like Pinto de Rego, his marriage partner, Eva Maria do Espirito Santo had a mother who was either a slave or possibly an *agregada* since she was noted simply as "...Anna of the house of Dona Maria Innocencia de Souza."⁶¹ Though in official church documentation Rego he chose to participate in multiple black sodalities. In the year of 1873, Rego served as the Procurador for the Rosary Brotherhood

⁶⁰ ACMSP, Livros de batismo, Sé, Brancos e Livres, 03-02-09, (3 de janeiro de 1827).

⁶¹ ACMSP, Livro de casamentos, Sé, 01-02-13, (6 de outubro de 1850). (...e esta filha de pai incognito e de Anna da casa de Dona Maria Innocencia de Souza.)

and as a board member for the Brotherhood of Saint Benedict.⁶² Both Taborda and Pinto de Rego demonstrate that freeborn Brazilians of African parentage rendered without racial designations by Catholic officials found black confraternities desirable spaces of spirituality and socialization.

Besides enacting black identities through participation in confraternities, brotherhood leaders shared other commonalities related to their economic security—marriage. Marriage appears to have been common among organizational leaders, and several leaders married more than once. Between 1854 and 1860, four of the eight Rosary organizational presidents married in the parish of Sé.⁶³ The wealth that brotherhood administrative officers used to cover fees in sodalities probably made them attractive marital partners, and they undoubtedly tapped those same financial resources to incur the costs of marriage. São Paulo as discussed earlier in the chapter had high marriage rates from 1777 to 1829 among slaves and free people of color.⁶⁴ The marital rate for Afro-Brazilians remained high compared to other areas of the country, although it declined for both slaves and free people of color later in the century. While in 1804 and 1829 respectively, 34 and 57 percent of the slave population legally married according to provincial census data in the province of São Paulo,⁶⁵ by 1872, at the time of the first national census only 23.8 percent of slaves and 32.7 percent of free people of color (including pretos and pardos) in the province of São Paulo were either married or

⁶² Amaral, *Os pretos do Rosário*, 2nd ed., 157; and ACSMP, Irmandade de São Benedito, Livro de Assentamento dos Irmãos, 1846-1896, 02-02-07.

⁶³ The organizational presidents who married included Marcelino Alves da Cruz, Benedito Joaquim Taborda, Bento Lucas de Barros, and Aleixo Leite Penteado. For their terms in office see Amaral, *Os Pretos do Rosário*, 2nd ed., 156-157. For marriage dates, respectively see ACSMP, Livros de casamentos, Santa Ifigênia, Cruz, 05-03-29, (19 de janeiro de 1845); Livro de casamentos, Sé, (Branços e Livres) Taborda, 01-02-13, (12 de fevereiro de 1843); Barros, 05-03-29, (16 de maio de 1845); and Pinto do Rego, 01-02-13 (6 de outubro de 1850).

⁶⁴ Luna and Klein, *Slavery and the Economy*, 140, and 143-144.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 142.

widowed.⁶⁶ The percentage of slaves and free people of color who married in the neighboring province of Rio de Janeiro was even smaller. Only 10.7 percent of slaves and 19.1 percent of free people of color in the province married.⁶⁷ Robert Slenes suggests that São Paulo's priest to parishioner ratio contributed to the church being more "present" in the city and likely influenced greater conformity in terms of establishing legal marriages in the province and its capital.⁶⁸

Confraternity members living in São Paulo's provincial capital entered legal marriages in a variety of circumstances. In 1865, Fortunato Antonio Peixoto served as president of the Rosary Brotherhood.⁶⁹ Only three years earlier, at the beginning of the year on January 9th, he married Benedita Maria das Dores, a native of Cotia, in the province of São Paulo. The priest who performed the ceremony listed Peixoto as a native of the parish of Sé and both partners were described as freed blacks. They married in the Chapel of Consolação at dusk, and Peixoto and his wife began their marital union conforming to Catholic convention.⁷⁰

Other leaders did not always follow traditional protocol. The previously mentioned Rosary Brotherhood leader Aleixo Leite Penteado, the tobacco shop owner, exposes the caveats that marriage could entail. Leite Penteado, for example, like most professed Catholics outside of the landed elite in the nineteenth century, cohabited with his partner, Maria, before receiving the sacrament of marriage. He shared a home with

⁶⁶ Robert W. Slenes, *Na senzala, uma flor: esperanças e recordações na formação da família escrava, Brasil sudeste, século XIX* (Rio de Janeiro: Editora Nova Fronteira, 1999), 89.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

⁶⁸ *Ibid.* (...os negros e mulatos livres do Rio casavam-se na Igreja menos do que os escravos de São Paulo! Ao mesmo tempo, São Paulo tinha proporcionalmente muito mais religiosos seculares do que Rio: 3,3 (3.3) contra 1,7 (1.7) para cada 10,000 pessoas livres e escravizadas. As duas constatações sugerem uma Igreja bem mais 'presente' em São Paulo nessa época do que no Rio, em termos do número de seus efetivos e da penetração do sacramento de matrimônio na população mais pobre.)

⁶⁹ Amaral, *Os pretos do Rosário*, 2nd ed., 157.

⁷⁰ ACMSP, Livro de casamentos, Santa Ifigênia, 05-03-34, (9 de janeiro de 1862).

Maria, perhaps for years, before he married her on December 9, 1872 in his house at seven in the evening on her deathbed. Two women, Dona Gertrudes Maria Baruel and Claudia Eugenia das Dores served as witnesses to the marriage performed with verbal authorization by the parish priest.⁷¹ Neither Leite Penteadó nor his wife had any impediments to their marriage and the presence of at least one woman of status as a marital witness indicated that their union was likely long standing and publically known. Another sodality officer, Demetrio da Costa Nascimento who served as a board member for the Brotherhood of Santa Ephigênia and Saint Elesbão and the Brotherhood of Saint Benedict married Maria das Dores in 1860 as she lay “in grave danger of death” in his house in the parish of Santa Ephigênia.⁷² Brotherhoods leaders did not necessarily conform to Catholic Church standards of propriety in matters related to marriage, though they still served as active leaders in their religious communities.

Through confraternity leaders had a mixed record when it came to conforming to the strictest guidelines governing marriage, as did the rest of the population,⁷³ the Catholic notion of god parentage or *compadrazgo* became an important way for Afro-Brazilians to make notions of fictive kin prevalent among African diaspora descendants official and consecrated through the Catholic rite of baptism.⁷⁴ Two different

⁷¹ ACMSP, Livro de casamentos, Sé, Brancos e Livres, 03-02-17, (9 de dezembro de 1872).

⁷² ACMSP, Irmandade de Santa Efigênia e Santo Elesbão, Livro de Atas, 1862-1885, 04-02-028; Irmandade de São Benedito, Livro de Assentamento dos Irmãos, 1846-1896, 02-02-07; and Livro de casamentos, Santa Ifigênia, 05-03-34, (2 de maio de 1860).

⁷³ See Twinam, *Public Lives, Private Secrets*; Muriel Nazzari, “Concubinage in Colonial Brazil: the Inequalities of Race, Class and Gender” *Journal of Family History* 21 no.2 (April 1996): 107-124; Elizabeth Anne Kuznesof, “Sexual Politics, Race, and Bastard Bearing in Nineteenth-Century Brazil: A Question of Culture or Power?” *Journal of Family History* 16 no.3 (July 1991): 241-260; Higgins, ‘*Licentious Liberty*’, 126-129; Dain Borges, *The Family in Bahia, Brazil 1870-1945* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1992), 120-121, for discussion of illegitimacy across social sectors and parental legal recognition of children born out of wedlock before marriage.

⁷⁴ For analysis of African diaspora participation in the tradition of baptism and of the practice of naming godparents (padrinhos) in Brazil see Karasch, *Slave Life in Rio*, 104; Kuznesof, “Slavery and Childhood in Brazil,” 198-199; and Stephen Gudeman and Stuart B. Schwartz, “Cleansing Original Sin: Godparenthood

confraternity leaders repeatedly emerged in baptismal records in the parish of Sé as popular choices for the role of godfather. The jailer, Benedito Joaquim Taborda served as a godfather for at least four people.⁷⁵ Sodality member Raymundo José Guilherme, who was never an organizational president, but who served as a festival King for the Brotherhood of Saint Benedict in 1851, and a board member for each black brotherhood in the city in the 1850s and 1860s had five godchildren.⁷⁶ *Compadrazgo* represented an important forged relationship.

Origin or place of birth likely influenced the probability of being selected as an organizational president in the Rosary Brotherhood. Twenty presidents led the Rosary Brotherhood between 1840 and 1870; unfortunately, I was only able to locate records identifying places of origin for eight leaders. Of those eight, five of the organizational presidents were born in Brazil and three were African born. None of the men were slaves when they held the group's highest office, though at least four of the eight were former slaves who had purchased their freedom. Three of the former slaves, as could be expected, were African born.

The nineteenth century Rosary Brotherhood presidents born in Africa came from varied regions of the continent. In 1828, a man presumably from West Central Africa served as the organizational leader of the Rosary Brotherhood. João Rodrigues da Cruz Congo clearly retained a nominal identifier that reflected familiarity with and acknowledgement of Kongo origins.⁷⁷ Another African born Rosary Provedor named

and the Baptism of Slaves in Eighteenth-Century Bahia," in *Kinship Ideology and Practice in Latin America*, ed. Raymond T. Smith (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 1984), 44-45 and 54-55.

⁷⁵ ACMSP, Livros de batismo, Sé, Escravos, 03-02-13, (1838-Israel, Antonio; 1839-Josepha; 1844-Marcelina; 1858-Manuel, adult).

⁷⁶ ACMSP, Livros de batismo, Sé, Escravos, 03-02-13, (1838-Raimundo, Antonio; 1841-Maladias; 1842-Benedito, 1858-Rosa).

⁷⁷ Amaral, *Os pretos do Rosário*, 2nd ed., 156.

Zacarias João Ramalho, president for the year 1868,⁷⁸ had an ethnic/regional origin designation registered in marriage records that suggested West African origins. In August 1866, Ramalho married Luiza Fortunato Lopes and both Ramalho and his bride were described as “Of the Mina Nation,” though he had been baptized in the “City of Bahia” and she had received baptismal rites in the parish of Santa Ephigênia.⁷⁹

Several years before Ramalho married for the first time he began his ascent in black confraternities. Though Ramalho was African born, and therefore brought to Brazil as a slave, when he entered the sodality in 1863, he was already a free man. When he joined the Brotherhood of Saint Benedict he paid 2\$000 mil-réis to serve as a perpetual member of the board of directors, and he paid member dues for the years 1864-1870.⁸⁰ Ramalho had already accumulated wealth, in addition to his freedom, before he sought out formal membership with any confraternity.

While the space of the black confraternity represented a broad mix of people in terms of origins, in Ramalho’s closest personal relationships, his marriages, he chose female partners from a similar cultural background to his own. Ramalho married a second time, on September 14, 1889 very late in life after his first wife died. The priest who recorded his second marriage described Ramalho and his bride Maria Itelvina as “blacks from the Mina nation older than sixty years old and parishioners of Sé...”⁸¹ The fact that Ramalho married women from a background similar to his own was not unusual. While

⁷⁸ Ibid., 157.

⁷⁹ ACMSP, Livro de casamentos, Santa Ifigênia, 05-02-35, (25 de agosto de 1866). (...Zacharias João Ramalho e Luiza Fortunata Lopes, fregueses desta Parochia, e de Nação Mina, aquelle baptisado na Cidade da Bahia [Salvador da Bahia], e esta na Freguesia de Santa Ifigênia.

⁸⁰ See ACSMP, Irmandade de São Benedito, Livro de Assentamento dos Irmãos, 1846-1896, 02-02-07.

⁸¹ ACMSP, Livro de casamentos, Penha, 04-03-23, (14 de setembro de 1889), (...pretos de nação Mina, mairões de sessenta anos, fregueses de Sé de São Paulo....)

scholars have shown marriage was not universal,⁸² when church sanctioned partnerships did occur they were “... mostly endogamous...” since “...men were expected to marry women who were either their equals or their superiors, especially in wealth.”⁸³ For example, among the free Africans who worked and lived under state tutelage in São Paulo at an iron factory owned by the provincial government, racial endogamy was the rule. Scholar Enidelce Bertin noted in her review of free African marital unions occurring at the iron factory that of the 18 free African men who married, 10 married slaves and 8 married other free Africans. Of 10 free African women, all married other free Africans.⁸⁴ Marriages for slaves and free people of color typically involved those of the same or very similar social status and racial/color categories.⁸⁵ Interracial relationships, while thought of as historically popular in the Brazilian national imagination, rarely resulted in marriages in the colonial period after early settlement.⁸⁶

Marriage, while clearly important, was not the only way that confraternity leaders and the wider Afro-Brazilian populace defined or established kinship relations. Several confraternity leaders and officers had family members live near them and they regularly interacted with their genetic kin. The ability to maintain family relations in the context of slavery was difficult at best and understanding exactly how forced migrants from different cultural backgrounds conceived of family under the stress of enslavement is no simple task.

⁸² Linda Lewin, “Natural and Spurious Children in Brazilian Inheritance Law from Colony to Empire: A Methodological Essay,” *The Americas* 48, no.3 (1992): 351-396; and Elizabeth Anne Kuznesof, “Sexuality, Gender, and the Family in Colonial Brazil,” *Luso-Brazilian Review* 30, no. 1 (1993): 119-131.

⁸³ Nazzari, “Concubinage in Colonial Brazil,” 107.

⁸⁴ Bertin, “Os meia-cara,” 198.

⁸⁵ Florentino, “Colonial Markets,” 305 -306.

⁸⁶ Higgins, “*Licentious Liberty*,” 10; and Nazzari, “Concubinage in Colonial Brazil,” 107-108.

The case of Bento Lucas de Barros highlights the complicated and sometimes nebulous way Africans and African descendants approached kinship relations.

Bento Lucas de Barros served as the Provedor of the Rosary Brotherhood in 1859 and as king of the festival for the group's patron saint in 1860.⁸⁷ He appeared in the records of the Brotherhood of Saint Benedict in the Books of Slaves in the 1840s. In 1841, he was recorded under the name of Bento, slave of Dona Maria Marcolina Prado Monteiro. That year he paid to join the Meza Perpetua, while still enslaved in addition to paying his regular membership fees until 1846 with each year costing \$320 réis.⁸⁸ Twelve years later in 1853, Bento reappeared in the member registry book as a freed man and he adopted the name of Bento Lucas de Barros.⁸⁹ One can be sure that Bento and Bento Lucas Barros is the same individual for two reasons. First, the last name Lucas de Barros was added to the entry where he was listed as a slave sometime later than when the record was first entered since the scribe's handwriting differed from the original entry. Second, before he gained his freedom he was inherited by and served Senhor Rodrigo Monteiro de Barros as a slave and his new and last owner was listed in the second record where he was identified as a freed person.⁹⁰

Bento Lucas de Barros managed to arrive in São Paulo from the African coast with either a genetic relative or an adopted family member in tow. He initiated a case with the *Juiz de Orphães* (Justice of Orphans) in February of 1850 claiming that his nephew Paulo, who was born to his late sister Rita, should be returned to his tutelage

⁸⁷ Amaral, *Os pretos do Rosário*, 2nd ed., 156; and Amaral, *Os pretos do Rosário*, unpagged back matter.

⁸⁸ ACSMP, Livro de Assentamento dos Irmãos (cativos), 1846-1878, 02-02-18.

⁸⁹ ACSMP, Irmandade de São Benedito, Livro de Assentamento dos Irmãos, 1846-1896, 02-02-07.

⁹⁰ ACSMP, Livro de Assentamento dos Irmãos (cativos), 1846-1878, 02-02-18; and ACSMP, Irmandade de São Benedito, Livro de Assentamento dos Irmãos, 1846-1896, 02-02-07.

since he was the nearest living relative.⁹¹ The minor in question, Paulo, lived in the household of Demetrio da Costa Nascimento, who owned several slaves, and who was a fellow member of the Brotherhood of Saint Benedict and the Brotherhood of Saint Ephigênia and Saint Elesbão.⁹²

When Barros opened the case, he asked the court to allow him to take Paulo so that he might have “...an honest means of subsistence...” as an adult, since under the power of Nascimento “... the nephew only served the defendant as a companion/farm hand in order to drive cattle to the country.”⁹³ Barros wanted to provide Paulo with “a regular means to support himself in the future” and he planned to teach him his trade as a mason in addition to bringing Paulo to live “... in the house of his relatives.”⁹⁴ Barros suggested he always acted as the father and the mother of the said nephew and that he wished to take action because of his “... love and estimation ...” of the child knowing that it was preferred to have a relative in the role of tutor for a minor.⁹⁵

As the case proceeded Barros revealed he was from the coast of Africa, had been a captive, and was now free. He did not know his age, but the scribe guessed him to be in

⁹¹ AESP, Juiz de Orphaes, Autos de Diligencia, Autor, Bento Lucas de Barros, 1850, Ordem C05359, Processo 07993.

⁹² For evidence of Demetrio da Costa Nascimento as a slave owner see ACSMP, Livro de Assentamento dos Irmãos (cativos), 1846-1878, 02-02-18 (Irmão Bernardo, escravo de Demetrio da Costa do Nascimento, 1846); ACMSP, Livros de Baptizados, Sé, 03-02-04, Paula (Aos vinte de Junho de 1858 baptisi a Paula, nascida a oito dias, filha de pai incognito e de Marcellina Florinda, preta liberta de Nação Mina. Padrinhos Pedro e Maria, solterios e fregueses de Santa Ifigênia, *escravo de Demetrio da Costa Nascimento*, ella freguesa do Braz, escrava de Dona Miguelina e mais desta Parochia. (Emphasis added). For Nascimento as a member of various confraternities see ACMSP, Irmandade de São Benedito, Livro de Assentamento dos Irmãos, 1846-1896, 02-02-07; and ACMSP, Irmandade de Santa Efigênia e Santo Elesbão, Livro de Atas, 1862-1885, 04-02-28.

⁹³ AESP, Juizo de Orphãos de São Paulo, Autos de Diligencia, Autor, Bento Lucas de Barros, 1850, Ordem C05359, Processo 07993. (Deseja ensinar ao dito seu sobrinho...hum meio honesto de subsistencia. No poder do referido Demetrio não serve o sobrinho...mais do que camarada para tocar gado no campo, o que não lhe pode dar para o futuro hum meio regular da vida.

⁹⁴ Ibid. (No poder do referido Demetrio não serve o sobrinho...mais do que camarada para tocar gado no campo, o que não lhe pode dar para o futuro hum meio regular da vida, sendo que o mesmo sobrinho de Supplente desja emprregar-se no dito officio de pedreiro e ficar em casa de seus parentes.)

⁹⁵ Ibid. (...porque lhe tinha amor e estimava.)

his late twenties. When asked to provide documentation demonstrating his kinship to Paulo, also referred to as Paulino, Barros responded saying that he could not prove it with a document, but that his kin relation to the child was “public knowledge among his equals.”⁹⁶ As the case continued Barros modified his claim and suggested that Paulo was actually his cousin not his nephew, but that he was still the closest relative and deserved to care for the minor.⁹⁷ How the case resolved is unclear, but as of the second of August of the same year, Paulo remained with Nascimento.

The desire of Barros to bring the son of his alleged kinswoman’s offspring into his home may have gone beyond simple familial affinity. If Barros came from a matrilineal society, common among various people in West and West Central Africa, he would have considered himself to have a legitimate claim on the boy’s labor and allegiance. In matrilineal societies, descent and inheritance is traced through “...the female line from mother’s brother to sister’s son.”⁹⁸ Anthropologist John Janzen explains that “Normally, a free male child (mwana) goes to live with his mother’s brothers at puberty...” in such societies. This arrangement allows local clans “...to retain its children, either as allies scattered throughout adjacent communities, or as continuing residents in their birthplace...” if land or other means of support can be issued to such children.⁹⁹ The point of such a system was to create as large a clan network as possible, because one way people assessed wealth was derived from the number of dependents or

⁹⁶ Ibid. (...e que parentesco e de notoriedade pública entre os seus eguaes [sic] mas que não podia provál-o com documento...)

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ Claire Robertson, “African into the Americas? Slavery and Women, the Family, and the Gender Division of Labor,” in *More than Chattel: Black Women and Slavery in the Americas*, ed. David Basrry Gaspar and Darlene Clark Hine (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1996), 10-11. For precise definitions and further discussion of the differences between matrilineality, matrifocality, and matriarchy see Robertson, “African into the Americas?” 10-13.

⁹⁹ Janzen, *Lemba*, 41.

clients, including wives and relatives, a man might have. Wealth resided not principally in land, but in the capacity to control labor, described as “‘people wealth’ (*bantu mbongo*)” and usually rendered in English as “wealth in people.”¹⁰⁰ Bento Lucas Barros may have well been operating in a kinship framework determined by his homeland of origin even though he explained his kin relationship to Paulino in terms that he considered persuasive and compelling for the audience of his elite Brazilian case arbiter.

The judge deciding the case likely became suspicious of the account Bento Lucas de Barros gave since he initially claimed to be have a closer kin tie than that actually revealed as the case continued. Was Barros the child’s cousin or uncle and to what extent did the degree of kinship matter for the judge and for those Barros considered to be equals? Since it is well-documented that Africans who were shipmates on the Atlantic crossing, referenced by scholars as *malungos*, referred to each other using familial terms such as aunt, uncle, and father, when Barros suggested that he was Paulo’s uncle did he mean to describe an actual or assumed relation?¹⁰¹ While we may never know exactly how he defined his relationship to the child’s mother, in the interior city of São Paulo Africans who crossed the Atlantic as shipmates and as fictive and actual kin continued relationships with each other that they fought to defend.¹⁰²

¹⁰⁰ Ibid, 41-42; and Sweet, *Domingos Álvares*, 55. Joseph Miller utilizes the concept but also offers a critique of the notion. See Miller, *Way of Death*, 43-44; for further exploration and critique of the concept see Jane I. Guyer, “Wealth in People and Self-Realization in Equatorial Africa,” *Man* 28, no.2 (June 1993):243-265; and Mann, *Slavery and the Birth*, 3-4.

¹⁰¹ Slenes, “Malungo ngoma vem!,” 53-54; Wissenbach, *Sonhos africanos*, 112; and Maria Sylvia de Carvalho Franco, *Homens livres na ordem escravocrata* (São Paulo: Ática, 1974), chapter 1. For evidence of this pattern in the Anglo-American territory see Barry Higman, “Terms for Kin in the British West Indian Slave Community: Differing Perceptions of Masters and Slaves,” in *Kinship Ideology and Practice in Latin America*, ed. Raymond T. Smith (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1984), 59-81, especially charts on pages 72-75.

¹⁰² Wissenbach, *Sonhos africanos*, 110-112; and Bertin, “Os meia-cara,” 123, 184, and 196-197.

Family relations, of course, were not always so difficult to untangle. On the 20th of November 1870, an eighty-seven year old father died “in the company of his son...” in the Gloria neighborhood of “cerebral congestion” most likely a stroke.¹⁰³ His son managed to call a priest to the sick father’s bedside and the dying man was absolved and anointed before he died. The father named Antonio Paes lived with his married son, João Antonio Paes, in his old age.

The son, João Antonio Paes, was born as a child of a legitimate marriage and like his father Antonio, João married as a young man, at the age of twenty-five years old.¹⁰⁴ Though neither the son’s marriage record nor his father’s death record listed a racial designation, the son João Paes served as the festival king for the Brotherhood of Saint Benedict, a position held only by blacks.¹⁰⁵ João joined the confraternity as a regular member in 1855 at approximately thirty-two years of age and during mid-life, at approximately fifty-five years of age, he served as the highly honored king for the festival of Saint Benedict. João Paes spent his entire adult life as a dues paying confraternity member and continued his membership until 1896, when he reached seventy-three years of age. This free man of color rendered without racial classification in church vital statistics moved in social circles where he affirmed his heritage and performed public ceremonial roles based on the racial identity he shared with his organizational brethren. Paes, a small shop owner,¹⁰⁶ chose to engage in spaces of black Catholic

¹⁰³ ACMSP, Livro de óbitos, Sé, Livres e escravos, 03-01-39, (20 de novembro de 1870). (Aos 20 de novembro de 1870 nesta Freguesia faleceu de congestão cerebral com oitenta e sete anos de idade, absolvido e ungido, Antonio Paes desta Paróquia, casado, viúva em companhia de seu filho João Paes no bairro da Gloria...)

¹⁰⁴ ACMSP, Livro de casamentos, Sé, 01-02-13, (16 de novembro de 1848).

¹⁰⁵ ACMSP, Irmandade de São Benedito, Livro de Assentamento dos Irmãos, 1846-1896, 02-02-07.

¹⁰⁶ Luné, *Almanak da Província de São Paulo*, 121. (Armazens de molhados e gêneros do paiz).

sociability, and like other Africans and African descendants in the city he belonged to a family unit, which he actively supported and engaged.

Not every familial relationship that emerged in the fragments gathered from leader biographies painted a picture of domestic tranquility. The trajectory of Benedito Antonio da Motta held a surprisingly violent end. For part of his life, da Motta lived and worked as slave for the provincial president, Father Vicente Pires da Motta. In July of 1846 he joined the Brotherhood of Saint Benedict as a regular member, and he served as a board member in 1851 and 1862-1865.¹⁰⁷ In addition to these responsibilities, he was elected as the organizational president of the Rosary Brotherhood in 1861.¹⁰⁸ In 1860, da Motta married Jesuina Maria de Jesus, an eighteen-year old resident of Sé who was born as the legitimate daughter of Pedro de Moraes Cunha and Joanna Vaz de Cunha, who died before the occasion of her daughter's marriage.¹⁰⁹ Unlike most weddings, which took place in the parish church, da Motta managed to marry in the Church of Our Lady of the Rosary of Black Men with special permission.¹¹⁰ Perhaps his former association with an important state authority gave him access to special favors. Da Motta, whose age is never given, was probably at least 20 years old when he joined the Brotherhood of Saint Benedict, so in 1860 he was approximately thirty-four years old, at least twelve years older than his bride. Regardless, some ten years later, the social prestige da Motta created for himself crumbled after he was charged and jailed for killing his wife in November of 1870. The church obituary recorded for his wife indicated that she was

¹⁰⁷ ACSMP, Irmandade de São Benedito, Livro de Assentamento dos Irmãos, 1846-1896, 02-02-07. (Benedito Antonio da Motta—escravo do Dr. Vicente Pires da Motta. Aos 12 de Julho de 1846, alistou nesta Irmandade. Meza 1850-1851/1862-1863. Pagou \$320 réis.)

¹⁰⁸ Amaral, *Os pretos do Rosário*, 2nd ed., 157.

¹⁰⁹ ACSMP, Livro de casamentos, Sé, 01-02-13, (29 de abril de 1860).

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

assassinated and died immediately without any sacrament at the age of twenty-eight.¹¹¹ Exactly what prompted the killing was unclear, since the file of his criminal case was incomplete. When da Motta died, he would not have received any of the usual rituals ushering deceased members into their place of final rest, as a known and justly accused murderer.

Generally speaking the lives of organizational leaders ended without the dramatic events that marred the life of Benedito Antonio da Motta. In every instance, associational leaders were working people who labored in semi-skilled and skilled sectors. Brotherhood leaders generally demonstrated a preference for occupations where they could work for themselves, and their ability to be able to control their own labor must have been a source of great pride and a sense of accomplishment even if such labor generated modest wealth by the standards of upper elites. In several cases confraternity leaders were former captives not far removed from the sites of their enslavement, while other leaders entered the world as free people. Brotherhood leaders included Brazilian born African descendants and a minority of Africans brought to the city as chattel property. In most cases the social distance that separated black confraternity presidents from the enclaves they led was not very great, though the financial resources held by leaders and members may have been substantial as evidenced by differences in general member and officer dues and donations.

Organizational presidents were not always the most well known members of the confraternities they led. For example, Tomás das Dores Ribeiro, a Rosary Brotherhood

¹¹¹ ACMSP, Livro de óbitos, Sé, (28 de novembro de 1870). Aos 28 de novembro de 1870 nesta Freguesia faleceu Jesuina Maria de Jesus, assassinada por seu marido Benedito Antonio da Motta cuja morte foi instantânea e por isso não alcançou nenhum sacramento. Tinha vinte e oito anos de idade. Encomendado foi sepultado no cemitério público.)

secretary, was described as a “...amiable citizen, inoffensive friend, known by all of old São Paulo...” who acted as an ambassador for the associations he served.¹¹² Ribeiro, who worked as a notary for the Provincial Treasury, belonged to the Rosary Brotherhood beginning in 1827 and he joined the Brotherhood of Saint Benedict in 1854.¹¹³ He served as the secretary for the Rosary Brotherhood under the presidency of Aleixo Leite Penteado in 1872 until 1876, when president João de Deus led the organization.¹¹⁴ Ribeiro helped organize various religious activities in the city, and was particularly involved in processions to honor Our Lady of Penance (*Nossa Senhora da Penha*), the saint that the municipal council and citizens of the city petitioned during “...outbreaks of measles and drought.”¹¹⁵ Does was an “obligatory figure” of sacristies, brotherhoods, processions, and church festivals.¹¹⁶ Does was known informally in the city as Tomás Rabada. The assignment of nicknames in Brazil was quite common, but such an informal designation suggests he was not a member of the upper elite, since his nickname was based seemingly on a food, a dish made of stewed oxtails or pigtails, most associated with the lower classes.¹¹⁷

Even among those who never served as organizational leaders, standouts emerged in the view of association secretaries seemingly based on the employment of those members. While the overwhelming majority of sodality members and even leaders did

¹¹² Amaral, *Os pretos do Rosário*, 2nd ed., 155; and Martins, *São Paulo antigo*, 64. (Esse bondoso cidadão, inofensivo amigo e conhecido de todo de antigo São Paulo.)

¹¹³ Amaral, *Os pretos do Rosário*, 2nd ed., 155-156; ACSMP, Irmandade de São Benedito, Livro de Assentamento dos Irmãos, 1846-1896, 02-02-07; and Luné, *Almanak da Provincia de São Paulo*, 51 (Thesouro Provincial-contadoria-Cartorario-Thomaz das Does Ribeiro, r. da Boa-Vista, 22).

¹¹⁴ Amaral, *Os pretos do Rosário*, 2nd ed., 155.

¹¹⁵ Martins, *São Paulo antigo*, 64. (Por motivo de epidemia de varíola ou de seca, a autoridade eclesiástica mediante pedida da Câmara Municipal, como immediate represenante do povo, ordenava...a trasladação da imagem de N.S. da Penha para a Matriz do Bras e desta igreja para a da Catedral...realizou-se uma pomposa festa e procissão...)

¹¹⁶ Martins, *São Paulo antigo*, 64-65. (...foi notabilissimo como homen de sacristias, irmandades, procissões e festas de igrejas, tornando-se, por isso figura obrigada ...)

¹¹⁷ The tail of the oxen or pig would have been a cast off piece of the animal utilized by popular sectors.

not have their occupations listed in member registries as recorded by Raul Amaral, a few participants did. Exactly why organizational secretaries noted the employment of these members is unclear, but perhaps secretaries and members held these jobs in high regard. Organizational scribes noted at least five musicians among regular members active in the group between 1858 and 1860. Three of the musicians, Francisco Antonio Barbosa, Francisco Xavier das Chagas, and João Cancio de Azevedo Marques joined in 1858, so the assembly may have been a band or at least acted as one for the purposes of the sodality's celebrations.¹¹⁸ One of the musicians, Azevedo Marques who was recorded as a regular member of the Rosary Brotherhood, served as a board member for several years in the Brotherhood of Saint Ephigênia.¹¹⁹ Musicians, who played for black and white audiences, likely accumulated quality clothing or at least formal garments, which they used for their performances¹²⁰ and, as such, people in sodalities could see visible markers of the material assets musicians earned. This material culture benefit likely affirmed musicians as men of stature, and this undoubtedly increased their proclivity to join the ranks of confraternities and to receive special notice in them.

Men who worked at more traditional skilled labor tasks also caught the attention of organizational scribes. Benedito Antonio de Nascimento, a shoemaker (*sapateiro*), and Manoel José Carneira, a carpenter (*carpinteiro*) had their professions noticed in member registries.¹²¹ Another member, José Sebastião Pereira, served as a member of the *Guarda Urbana*, a police force commissioned by the Municipal Council (*Camara Municipal*) to

¹¹⁸ Amaral, *Os pretos do Rosário*, unpagged back matter.

¹¹⁹ Ibid., and ACMSP, Irmandade de Santa Efigênia e Santo Elesbão, Livro de Atas, 1862-1885, 04-02-028.

¹²⁰ Antônio Carlos dos Santos, *Os músicos negros: escravos da Real Fazenda se Santa Cruz no Rio de Janeiro (1808-1832)* (São Paulo: Annablume; Fapesp, 2009), 100-102; and Karasch, *Slave Life in Rio*, 204.

¹²¹ Amaral, *Os pretos do Rosário*, unpagged back matter.

patrol the provincial capital.¹²² Not surprisingly businessmen also formed part of the regular membership for black sodalities. Three male members were noted as businessmen, though no precise indication of the type of commerce in which they engaged was noted.¹²³ Historian Antonia Aparecida Quintão noted several other members of black brotherhoods listed in the *Almanak of São Paulo*, and the participants she documented included shopkeepers, a painter who served as an organizational president, a baker, a café owner and one man of clear elite status, Dr. Ignacio de Araújo, who earned income as a wine maker.¹²⁴

Analysis of regular member lists also indicates that people who retained ethnic/regional designations for use as last names belonged to the Rosary Brotherhood. Identities organized around regional areas of provenance in Africa remained a cogent and meaningful identifier in late nineteenth century São Paulo.¹²⁵ Between 1848 and 1870, three members of the Rosary Brotherhood used the term “Cabinda” as a last name.¹²⁶ The term Cabinda references the coastal port city of the same name, which was an active slaving depot from the seventeenth through nineteenth centuries. Cabinda is a part of the modern Democratic Republic of the Congo, and became a favored area of slave embarkation especially after the British began to apply pressure to end the slave trade in the first decades of the nineteenth century. The patrolling of international waters by

¹²² For more on the *Guarda Urbana* and the *Companhia de Urbanos* which replaced it in 1875, as well as other police force organizations in the province and capital city of São Paulo, see Bruno, *Historia e tradições*, 742, 745-750; Gonçalves, “Cadeia e correção,” 99-102; André Rosemberg, “Polícia, policiamento, e o policial na provincial de São Paulo, no final do Império: a instituição, pratica cotidiana e cultura” (PhD diss., Universidade de São Paulo, 2008), 46-56. For more on the *Guarda Urbana* throughout Brazil see Holloway, *Policing Rio*, 158, and 231-241; and Brown, “ ‘A Black Mark on Our Legislation,’ ” 99.

¹²³ Ibid.

¹²⁴ Quintão, *Irmandades negras*, 81-82. (Only two people, João Ignacio Esteves, a barber, and Marcelino Alves da Cruz, the shop owner, were common to the list she and I compiled.)

¹²⁵ See Sweet, “The Quiet Violence of Ethnogenesis,” 210-211, for a short synopsis of theoretical discussions analyzing why regional ethnic identities and identifiers persisted in the Americas.

¹²⁶ Amaral, *Os pretos do Rosário*, unpagged back matter.

British vessels pushed slave gathering ships further south along the West Central African coastline and Cabinda became a preferred port, since the city and surrounding areas had decentralized states and a large, productive hinterland that made supplying slaving ships relatively easy compared to other coastal areas.¹²⁷

Seven regular members of the Rosary Brotherhood had “Congo” as their last name in the mid to late nineteenth century.¹²⁸ The surname “Congo” strongly suggests provenance from West Central Africa, however, the term obfuscates as much as it reveals since those who used such nomenclature could have been from the south of modern day Democratic Republic of Congo or northern Angola-- a vast territory.¹²⁹ However, across the African diaspora forced migrants and their progeny adopted or were given “Congo” as a surname.¹³⁰ Evidence suggests that even in urban São Paulo retention of the use of the term Congo may have survived until the twentieth century, since one member, Mateus Antonio Congo, participated in the Rosary Brotherhood quite late in the nineteenth century, beginning in 1882.¹³¹

West Central Africa served as the source for more than one surname indicting the importance of regional origin designations among Afro-Brazilians. In 1842, Caetana Rebolo enrolled in the Rosary Brotherhood thereby documenting her southern roots in

¹²⁷ Karasch, *Slave Life in Rio*, 16-17; and Miller, *Way of Death*, 399-400.

¹²⁸ Amaral, *Os pretos do Rosário*, unpagged back matter.

¹²⁹ Karasch, *Slave Life in Rio*, 18-19. Also see Joseph C. Miller, “Retention, Reinvention, and Remembering: Restoring Identities through Enslavement in Africa and under Slavery in Brazil,” in *Enslaving Connections: Changing Cultures of African and Brazil during the Era of Slavery*, ed. José C. Curto and Paul E. Lovejoy (Amherst, NY: Humanity Books, 2004), 87, for additional analysis of the difficulty in assessing place of origin for those designated as Congo.

¹³⁰ For examples see Miguel Barnet, *Biography of a Runaway Slave*, trans. W. Nick Hill (Willimantic, Connecticut: Curbstone Press, 1994), 19; Robert Farris Thompson, *Flash of the Spirit: African and African-American Art and Philosophy* (New York: 1983), 101-160; and John Thornton, “Central African Names and African-American Naming Patterns,” *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd Series, 50, no.4 (October 1993): 727-742.

¹³¹ Amaral, *Os pretos do Rosário*, unpagged back matter.

what is today the southern part of modern Angola.¹³² At least one person of West African origin appeared in the Rosary Brotherhood rolls of regular members--“Abel de nação Minas.” Abel joined the group in 1866 and in 1872 he served as the king of the festival, the second year when the role of festival king was officially opened to all blacks not just Angolans.¹³³ Finally, Joana, Joaquina, and José all had Moçambique as their surname when they joined the Rosary Brotherhood in 1848, 1861, and 1840 respectively.¹³⁴ These members referenced East African origins as part of their public “transcripts.”¹³⁵ In the nineteenth century, regional origin designations still conveyed meaning among the Afro-Brazilian population and remained in circulation even though African diaspora people could and did overwhelmingly adopt Latin surnames.

Non-Afro-Brazilians also joined black confraternities as regular members. Father Antonio José joined the Rosary Brotherhood in 1858 as a regular member, though he was the Chaplain of the Cathedral of Sé.¹³⁶ European immigrants can also be documented as black brotherhood members, though it is difficult to determine how frequently they joined. In 1854, Quirino Merier, described as “German” (*alemão*), joined the Rosary Brotherhood as a regular member in addition to a “Portuguese businessman,” Manoel Luiz Martins Pinho, who joined in 1875.¹³⁷ Children also joined sodalities. Two minors, Leopoldo Carlos and Francisco Christo, were listed as Rosary Brotherhood members, while Candido Balbino da Silva, son of a Senhora Cabral joined the Brotherhood of Saint

¹³² Ibid.; Karasch, *Slave Life in Rio*, 13 and 19; and Mattoso, “De Cassange,” 56-57 and 96.

¹³³ Amaral, *Os pretos do Rosário*, unpaginated back matter, and chapter 2, note 192.

¹³⁴ Amaral, *Os pretos do Rosário*, unpaginated back matter.

¹³⁵ Karasch, *Slave Life in Rio*, 21-25; and Scott, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance*, 13-16.

¹³⁶ Amaral, *Os pretos do Rosário*, unpaginated back matter.

¹³⁷ Ibid.

Benedict as a minor in 1854.¹³⁸ Organizational statutes permitted the participation of minors as members, but only a handful of those designated as minors appear on member entry lists.¹³⁹ Finally, while it is already clear that *pardos* or people of multiracial heritage joined black brotherhoods several pardo members, a total of less than ten, had this color designation recorded by organizational secretaries.¹⁴⁰

The majority of Rosary Brotherhood members probably lived as enslaved people. Less than 10 individuals were listed in the category of former slaves (*forros*) among regular members. Liberated slaves were unquestionably under-counted overall, since inclusion of organizational presidents alone among regular members would have at least doubled the figure of freed blacks in the association.¹⁴¹ Why free or slave status was recorded so irregularly in the Rosary Brotherhood, especially compared to the Brotherhood of Saint Benedict, which carefully and consistently delineated an individual's status might suggest that when Afro-Brazilians ran and ruled organizations without white elite supervision in white churches, as was the case for the Brotherhood of Saint Benedict, the importance given to the status of a person, in relation to slavery, may have been purposefully de-emphasized.

The ability to generate a conclusive profile of the lives of general members, who never had the money or perhaps desire to serve as an organizational president or festival king and queen, represents a challenging task. However, the Rosary Brotherhood member list compiled by Raul Joviano Amaral helps facilitate our knowledge of the social

¹³⁸ Ibid., and ACMSP, Irmandade de São Benedito, Livro de Assentamento dos Irmãos, 1846-1896, 02-02-07.

¹³⁹ For example see AESP, Irmandade de São Benedito da Cidade de São Paulo (1861), 17/02/1896, C10388, Capitulo 1, Art.3, (...Poderão ser admitidos todos os que professarem a Religião Catholica Apostolica Romana e forem moralizados sem distincão d'idade, sexo, ou condição.)

¹⁴⁰ Amaral, *Os pretos do Rosário*, unpagged back matter.

¹⁴¹ Not a single organizational president for whom I located biographical data held their office while enslaved.

characteristics members shared. Those who did not make large donations or who did not serve in leadership positions remain largely in the dark; however, even the cursory data scholars can accumulate will do a great deal to provide a more detailed and intimate look at the lives and experiences of nineteenth century Afro-Brazilians as part of the larger African diaspora.¹⁴²

Conclusion

This chapter has endeavored to recover the life stories of brotherhood leaders to extrapolate the official and unspoken criteria confraternity members used as they elected those they wished to govern their sodalities and as they self-selected to pay to serve as executive board leaders. Black confraternity members consistently selected black entrepreneurs and low-level government officials to lead their organizations. While literacy was a preferred trait, it was not required to become a man or woman of stature in associations. For female officers, great piety served as a prerequisite, and for men, the capacity to act as a decision maker for the group prevailed as a highly desirable quality. Gender mattered in important ways as leaders divided organizational officer responsibilities.

Despite all the challenges to the authority and autonomy of bondsmen and free men of color in Brazil's slave society, in confraternities, gender hierarchies provided men of African descent the opportunity to serve publically as leaders in a non-labor oriented, collective space. Sodalities may have been attractive to male participants for more than the ability to affirm one's economy security. For men, confraternities may have had

¹⁴² For more on the challenges and increasing importance of biography and microhistory methods in the study of African diaspora history see Lindsay and Sweet, *Biography and the Black Atlantic*; Putnam, "To Study the Fragments/Whole," 615-630; and Sweet, "Mistaken Identities?" 279-306. For important examples of such methodology see Silva, *Prince of the People*; Frank, *Dutra's World*; Sweet, *Domingos Álvares*; Reis, *Domingos Sodré*; and Senbach, *Rebecca's Revival*.

strong appeal because they afforded black men communities and spaces where they could act as patriarchs unfettered by their origins or color.

Black male leadership was, of course, never seen in a completely neutral fashion by those interacting with confraternities. The chapter which follows indicates just how threatening Afro-Brazilian governance in brotherhoods and churches could be in the imagination of Catholic Church authorities, and demonstrates just how important institutions were to their leadership. The case of the conflict between the diocese of São Paulo and the Brotherhood of Saint Ephigênia and Saint Elesbão emphasizes the determination one black religious association exhibited in order to legally preserve the corporate exercise of power in the church their organizational predecessors built for themselves and their saints.

Chapter 4 - To Govern the Church: Autonomy and the Consequences of Self-Determination for the Brotherhood of Saint Ephigênia and Saint Elesbão in São Paulo, Brazil, 1888-1890

On May 14, 1890, Joaquim A. dos Santos Delfino, the doorman (*porteiro*) for the Bishop of São Paulo delivered letters to seventeen church leaders in the city. Twelve confraternity helmsmen, the parish priests of Sé, Braz, and Consolação, and the directors of the two monastic communities present in the provincial capital received dispatches officially notifying them that the Brotherhood of Saint Ephigênia and Saint Elesbão of Black Men of São Paulo no longer existed.¹ The confraternity had been officially dissolved in an ecclesiastic court sentence issued by the vicar general (*vigário geral*) of the diocese.² Why would church leaders interfere with the veneration of two popular saints in the city and on what basis had a 132 year old Catholic devotional society been permanently disbanded?³

The answer is a complex one involving systemic changes in the devotional lives of practicing Catholics across the globe and on the ground in São Paulo. Diocese officials beginning with Bishop Antônio Joaquim de Melo (1852-1861), the first *paulista* to lead the diocese of São Paulo, discouraged long standing expressions of popular religiosity as

¹ See ACMSP, Uncatalogued Folder: Santa Efigênia: Nrsa da Conceição, No. 2, (Certifico que entreguei as cartas intimatorias da...sentença que dissolveo a irmandade de Santa Ephigênia e Santo Elesbão, erecta na igreja parochial de Nrsa de Conceição de Santa Ephigênia, desta capital... São Paulo, 14 de Maio de 1890. Signed by Joaquim A. dos Santos Delfino)

² See ACMSP, Uncatalogued Folder: Santa Efigênia: Nrsa da Conceição, No. 2, (A Dissolução da Irmandade de Santa Efigênia e Santo Elesbão...As justificativas apresentadas para dissolver a Irmandade...São Paulo-10 de Maio de 1890-Padre Adelino Monteiro). Father Adelino Jorge Montenegro served in the position of interim vicar general in 1890 under the leadership of Bishop Dom Lino Deodato Rodrigues de Carvalho who lead the diocese as bishop from 1873 to 1894. A vicar general serves as an administrative deputy for a Roman Catholic bishop. For evidence of the tenure of Bishop Carvalho see Souza, *Catolicismo em São Paulo*, 301-303.

³ The founding date of the Brotherhood of Saint Ephigênia and Saint Elesbão of Black Men of São Paulo was November 4, 1758. See ACMSP, Uncatalogued Folder, Santa Efigênia, Nrsa da Conceição, No. 2, Compromisso 1859; and Amaral, *Os pretos do Rosário*, 2nd ed., 53.

part of a larger reform movement in the Catholic Church referred to as the ultramontane movement.⁴ The ultramontane movement, also called Romanization, was part of a global effort by the Papacy to create greater conformity in ritual, liturgy, and belief.⁵ Catholic authorities worked to centralize the power of bishops and to increase the prestige of the clergy through more uniform education and stricter enforcement of guidelines for the conduct of priests.⁶ Ultramontane reformers also sought to increase the total number of clergymen leading and ministering to congregations.⁷

A dearth of priests in the early and mid-nineteenth century⁸ had left parishioners underserved and sodalities to essentially rule themselves.⁹ When ultramontane priests began to reassert their presence accompanied by reformed theological precepts, long

⁴ Morse, *From Community to Metropolis*, 101-102; Wernet, *A Igreja Paulista no século XIX*, 182; and De Groot, *Brazilian Catholicism*, 1.

⁵ For discussion of the models and implementation of the ultramontane movement in Brazil see De Groot, *Brazilian Catholicism*, 1, 6-9, and chapter 4; Serbin, *Needs of the Heart*, 55-60; Quintão, *Irmandades negras*, 52-53; Marjo de Teije, “‘Brotherhoods Throw More Weight around Than the Pope’: Catholic Traditionalism and the Lay Brotherhoods of Brazil,” *Sociological Analysis* 51, no.2 (Summer 1990): 194; and Lisette van den Hoogen, “The Romanization of the Brazilian Church: Women’s Participation in a Religious Association in Prados, Minas Gerais,” *Sociological Analysis* 51, no.2 (Summer 1990): 173. For discussion of the ultramontane movement in Europe and the United States, see Peter Raedts, “The Church as Nation State: A New Look at Ultramontane Catholicism (1850-1900),” *Dutch Review of Church History* 84 (2004): 488-492 and 494-495; Jeffrey von Arx, ed., *Varieties of Ultramontanism*. (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1998); Austin Gough, *Paris and Rome: The Gallican Church and the Ultramontane Campaign, 1848-1853* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986); Patricia Byrne, “American Ultramontanism,” *Theological Studies* 56, no.2 (June 1995): 302-326; and Ann Taves, “Context and Meaning: Roman Catholic Devotion to the Blessed Sacrament in Mid-Nineteenth Century America,” *Church History* 54, no.4 (December 1985): 486-488.

⁶ *Ibid.* For discussion of the general conditions in which priests lived and social behaviors that undermined their credibility as moral authorities, see De Groot, *Brazilian Catholicism*, 32-34.

⁷ Serbin, *Needs of the Heart*, 114. Serbin reports an increase in the total number of priests in Brazil from 2,363 in 1872 to 6,056 in 1920. Despite the overall increase in the total number of priests, the ratio of inhabitants per priest increased from 4,279 to 5,059 respectively, as the Brazilian population more than tripled from 10,112,061 in 1872 to 30,635,605 in 1920.

⁸ Historian C.F.G. de Groot reports that in 1872 a total of 261 secular priests had appointments in the province of São Paulo, compared to a total of 211 in Rio de Janeiro and 566 in the province of Minas Gerais based on reported national census data. Fifteen parishes in the province of São Paulo housed four or more secular priests per parish. For further discussion of the scarcity of secular priests and analysis of priest per inhabitant ratios in Brazil, see De Groot, *Brazilian Catholicism*, 29 and 45-46; and Serbin, *Needs of the Heart*, 113. The city of São Paulo had an especially notable clerical presence as the seat of the diocese and the site of the Episcopal Seminary (*Seminário Episcopal*), which opened November 9, 1856, to train clergyman. However, even the provincial capital saw unfilled clerical appointments. See Souza, *Catolicismo em São Paulo*, 280 and 304-305.

⁹ For a similar assessment for Minas Gerais see Theije, “‘Brotherhoods,’” 193.

standing collective public devotional practices declined. City residents would no longer sing and watch with anticipation as devotees carried statues and images of Our Lady of Penance (Nossa Senhora da Penha) along São Paulo's streets in order for the beloved saint to show favor on the people and end a measles outbreak or drought.¹⁰ Diocese officials could easily discontinue these processions by no longer granting permission for parade requests outside of the saint's September 8th calendar feast day.¹¹ The diverse religious festivals for patron saints that had so enthralled city residents came under increasing scrutiny as Catholic authorities worked to reorient devotion.

Diocese officials across the country were committed to curbing the revelry, which accompanied religious celebrations to create greater orthodoxy in devotional expression and practice. Church leaders embarrassed by the excesses of festive commemorations pressured police to curb the public social drinking, dancing, and firework displays which traditionally accompanied religious celebrations.¹² City chronicler Antonio Martins noted the suppression of activities for the Festival of the Divine Spirit (*Festa do Divino Espirito Santo*) in São Paulo in 1878 based on directives

¹⁰ Martins, *São Paulo antigo*, 64 and 381-382. (Por motivo de epidemia de varíola ou de seca, a autoridade eclesiástica, mediante pedido da Câmara Municipal, como imediata representante do povo, ordenava, bem contra a vontade dos respectivos vigários da freguesia, a trasladação da imagem de N.S. da Penha para a Matriz do Brás e desta igreja para a da Catedral, onde pela ultima vez, realizou-se uma pompa festa e procissão em honra da mesma santa...com grande acompanhamento de povo...Tanto na vinda como na ida da milagrosa imagem os moradores da Estrada da Penha, em homanagem à mesma santa, mandavam levantar, em frente as suas chacaras, belos arcos, enfeitados de murta e flores naturais...) Martins reports an outbreak of smallpox (varíola), but most likely the virus he refers to was measles. The term varíola (smallpox) and bexigas (measles) were used interchangeably, though incorrectly in nineteenth century Brazil. The outbreaks ravaged the city on various occasions and historian Luis Camargo located various solicitations and one petition signed by 136 citizens submitted to the Municipal Council seeking to have a procession featuring Our Lady of Penitence to ease the effects of measles (bexigas) outbreaks respectively in 1845, 1847, and 1858. See Camargo, "Viver e morrer," 259-260.

¹¹ See Martins, *São Paulo antigo*, 102-103.

¹² *Ibid.*, 104-105. For discussion of the repression of religious festivals in the 1870s see Abreu, "Popular Culture, Power Relations, and Urban Discipline," 177-178; De Groot, *Brazilian Catholicism*, 1, 82-85, and 92; and Serbin, *Needs of the Heart*, 58-59.

from the chief of police initiated by talks with ecclesial authorities.¹³ The suppression of religious expression was not applied equally across social sectors. Kenneth Serbin suggested that while the ultramontane movement generally had a mixed impact on the religious expression of the populace overall “...black irmandades stagnated as Romanization combated the autonomy of lay organizations and cast suspicion over their customs and festivals.”¹⁴

This chapter chronicles the intense discord created by the church hierarchy’s commitment to reassert its presence in the Church of Saint Ephigênia, long administered by the Brotherhood of Saint Ephigênia and Saint Elesbão of Black Men. When the diocese sent a new cleric to lead parochial life, conflict followed. The story of the demise of the Brotherhood of Saint Ephigênia and Saint Elesbão, partially expressed in the words of black members, highlights how significant the reinsertion of curates could be to parish life. It also emphasizes how fragile the maintenance of freedom and autonomy could be for sodalities, particularly for Afro-Brazilians with limited means, when a given church functioned as the center of parish activities, or the *igreja matriz*.¹⁵

In March 1888, seemingly the matter of a simple open window led to a maelstrom of dispute over property ownership of the Church of Santa Ephigênia. A confrontation and the resulting legal case between the Brotherhood of Saint Ephigênia and Saint Elesbão of Black Men of São Paulo and the diocese highlights the ways in which race

¹³ Martins, *São Paulo antigo*, 105. (...O Dr. Joaquim de Toledo Piza e Almeida, chefe de polícia, diz ne seu relatório apresentado ao governo provincial em 1878, que deu ordens a todas as autoridade policiaes da antigo Província para que proibissem aquela especulação [festa do Divino Espirito Santo], cingindo-se o mesmo chefe de polícia à Pastoral de 12 de janeiro de 1857, do Bispo D. Antonio Joaquim de Melo...)

¹⁴ Serbin, *Needs of the Heart*, 112.

¹⁵ The *igreja matriz* refers to a church that has been formally and legally designated as the headquarters for the parish from which curates perform mass and Catholic rites such as baptism, marriage, and funerals. For discussion of conflicts between Afro-Brazilian sodalities and parish priests over command and use of churches in the colonial and post-colonial period see Reis, *Death is a Festival*, 40; Kiddy, *Blacks of the Rosary*, 108-122; and Quintão, *Irmandades negras*, 91-99.

and wealth figured in the approach taken by church authorities pursuing and prosecuting the purported misdeeds of the group and its leadership. The conflict, ecclesial trial, and final dissolution of the Brotherhood of Saint Ephigênia and Saint Elesbão illuminate the ways confraternity members understood their relationship to the church they administered and how diocese officials sought to exercise greater control over both lay parishioners and property.

Confraternities and the Clergy

While in the colonial period (1500-1822), Brazilian church leaders considered sodalities to be critical tools of proselytization and Christian instruction,¹⁶ in the last decades of the nineteenth century Catholic Church officials came to see brotherhoods as a nuisance and strongholds for lay superstition. Church officials imagined sodality members and leaders as largely devoid of faith. Historian C.F.G de Groot noted the vitriol directed toward sodalities finding that Dom Pedro Maria de Lacerda, bishop of Rio de Janeiro from 1868 to 1890, described brotherhoods as “...enemies of the soul,” while another church leader and administrator, Dom Duarte Leopoldo e Silva, a priest ordained in 1883 and the first archbishop of São Paulo (1908-1938) considered sodality members only nominal believers and regarded them as “Catholics only with their lips...”¹⁷ Catholic reformers saw confraternities as archaic institutions that had outlived their usefulness as tools of conversion or as spaces of peer-to-peer religious instruction.

¹⁶ See chapter 1.

¹⁷ Dom Pedro Maria de Lacerda quoted in De Groot, *Brazilian Catholicism*, 90; and Dom Duarte Leopoldo e Silva quoted in De Groot, *Brazilian Catholicism*, 90. For more on Dom Lacerda as bishop of the diocese of Rio de Janeiro see Hans Jürgen-Prien, ed., *Christianity in Latin America*, trans. Stephen Buckwalter, rev. ed. (Leiden: Brill, 1984), 352-354; also see Souza, *Catolicismo em São Paulo*, 363, for more on Dom Leopoldo e Silva’s tenure as bishop (1907-1908) and the first archbishop of São Paulo (1908-1938).

The vilification of the laity including confraternities was not a new phenomenon, nor was it particularly surprising, since a clear lack of consensus about how faith should be performed separated priests from lay groups and priests from other priests.¹⁸ Doubt about the sincerity and orthodoxy of the faith of Catholic believers was not only questioned in regard to black parishioners and black confraternities. Lay people and priests alike expressed skepticism regarding the theological beliefs held and precepts practiced by their countrymen. Protestant missionary Daniel Kidder recounted an exchange in the 1830s when a Catholic priest informed him in a discussion about religion in Brazil “...that there was scarcely anything of the spirit of religion among either priests or people.”¹⁹

Not all priests spoke of Catholicism as a lost cause, nor did they look upon confraternities and other expressions of popular faith with harsh displeasure. Father Júlio Maria, an advocate for the poor, publically castigated fellow clergy for their disdain of and disinterest in non-elites, in addition to their dogged reliance on pomp and empty rituals. Father Maria asserted,

The Brazilian church has still not practically accepted the teachings of the Pope [Leo XIII] (1878-1903). The clergy live separated from the people; almost [to the extent] that the people do not know them. The clergy contents itself with a certain aristocracy of devotees. Their aspirations can almost be reduced to seeing churches well-decorated, the choir well taught, and in the midst of lights and flowers their vestments gleaming. All the activity of the clergy is nearly summed up in this—festivities for the living and ostentatious funerals for dead.²⁰

¹⁸ Geraldo Silva, “Da festa barroca,” 8-11; and Soares, *People of Faith*, 141 and 143.

¹⁹ Kidder, *Sketches*, 315.

²⁰ Maria, *Catolicismo no Brasil*, 250-251. (Não, a igreja brasileira não aceitou ainda praticamente os ensinamentos do papa. O clero vive separado do povo; quase que o povo não o conhece. O clero contenta-se com uma certa aristocracia de devotos. Quase a sua aspiração se reduz a ver os templos bem enfeitados, o côro tem ensaído, e meio de luzes e flores os seus paramentos bem reluzentes. Toda a atividade do clero quase que se resume-nisto-festas para os vivos e pompas fúnebres para os mortos.)

Catholic reformers from a variety of political persuasions saw the baroque Catholic sensibilities that continued to characterize liturgies as archaic, and evidence of the changes the church needed to make.

In addition to bemoaning baroque sensibilities, priests often lamented what they perceived as their low status and lack of influence. Priestly authority rarely had the absolute character or universal acceptance prelates desired. Historian Kenneth Serbin reports of the mid nineteenth century that “...ecclesiastics of different ideological stripes agreed that a pastoral crisis afflicted the Church. The bishops as well as the government believed that priests failed in the most important duty: the spiritual and moral guidance of the masses.”²¹

Priests ministering to congregations constantly complained about the degree of independence and lack of deference exhibited by the laity, and especially brotherhoods.²² A pointed example comes from the coastal town of Parati in the province of Rio de Janeiro. In this picturesque colonial town, conflict erupted when a sodality refused to give a duplicate key to a priest, claiming that the curate repeatedly meddled in the organizational affairs of the confraternity. The brotherhood members reportedly made it known that in their church not even the Pope ruled. C.F.G. de Groot reports that the fiercely independent sodality settled the dispute between the association and the local priest thanks to a rich merchant who offered property and building materials to be used for the construction of a new parish church, which left the existing church used by the sodality free from direct supervision by parish authorities.²³ Brotherhoods defended their

²¹ Serbin, *Needs of the Heart*, 46.

²² *Ibid.*, 92; Borges, *Escravos e libertos*, 74-75; and Kiddy, *Blacks of the Rosary*, 107.

²³ De Groot, *Brazilian Catholicism*, 92 and 181, note 47.

autonomy and independence with vigor using whatever resources they could muster, and priests lodged complaints again and again to church authorities.²⁴

The parish of Santa Ephigênia saw its own set of conflicts before the events that led to the confraternity's ecclesiastic trial and dissolution in 1890. Members of the Brotherhood of Saint Ephigênia and Saint Elesbão utilized church grounds in ways that generated notice and indignation from at least one local resident and diocese officials. Several scattered references suggest that the brotherhood may have employed the church yard as a place to cultivate a small garden,²⁵ in order to provide income for the brotherhood or as a way to supplement the food available for consumption at patron saint festivals.²⁶ An organizational receipt book from the Brotherhood of Santa Ephigênia and Saint Elesbão indicates that in 1882 the sodality paid to have an area of their grounds "plowed or tilled."²⁷ In Portuguese the verb "carpir" denotes more than just cutting the grass; the word means to prepare the soil for planting.²⁸ As part of the 1890 investigation of the brotherhood's activities, former parish chaplain Antonio Guimarães Barroso

²⁴ Ibid., 91-92; Geraldo Silva, "Da festa barroca," 8-11; Borges, *Escravos e libertos*, 74-75; and Kiddy, *Blacks of the Rosary*, 107.

²⁵ In Brazilian Portuguese *roças* generally referenced plots of land cultivated on plantations or small farms used for subsistence or to supplement sundries purchased from markets. These garden plots, which were used by slaves and free people, were predominantly located in rural and outlying semi-urban parishes. For more on provision grounds, see Luis dos Santos Vilhena, *Recopilação de notícias soteropolitanas e brasileiras contidas em XX cartas da cidade de Salvador, Bahia de Todos os Santos, escreve hum a outro amigo em Lisboa* (Salvador: Imprensa Official do Estado, 1921-1922), II, 187-189, in Conrad, *Children of God's Fire*, 61; B. J. Barickman, "'A Bit of Land, Which They Call Roça': Slave Provision Grounds in the Bahian Recôncavo, 1780-1860," *Hispanic American Historical Review* 74, no.4 (November 1994): 649-687; and Carney and Rosomoff, *In the Shadow of Slavery*, 125-135. For more on small, urban agricultural plots and activities see Kuznesof, *Household Economy*, 86; and Karasch, *Slave Life in Rio*, 186-187.

²⁶ For evidence of confraternities using landholding, rural land sales, and animal husbandry to provide income for confraternity purchases see Murdo J. MacLeod, "Indian Confraternity Lands in Colonial Guatemala, 1660-1730: Some Uses and Trends," *Ethnohistory* 50, no.1 (Winter 2003): 151-159. I know of no instances in the confraternity literature for Latin America where confreres used church grounds for animal rearing on a temporary or permanent basis. For evidence of feral animals on church grounds see Heather McCrea, "On Sacred Ground: The Church and Burial Rites in Nineteenth-Century Yucatán, Mexico," *Mexican Studies/ Estudios Mexicanos* 23, no. 1 (Winter 2007): 34-35.

²⁷ ACMSP, Irmandade de Santa Efigênia e Santo Elesbão, *Receitas e Despesas*, 07-03-041. (Carpio o quintal.)

²⁸ *Novo dicionário aurélio da língua portuguesa*, 3rd ed. Curitiba: Editora Positivo, 2004.

recalled that the confraternity "...planted manioc on church grounds and sold it...two times in the year..." at least once during his tenure as curate.²⁹

In 1877, a reader of the *Provincia de São Paulo* satirically identified as the Sacristy of the parish church of Santa Ephigênia de Conceição ran a notice in the paid classifieds section of the newspaper criticizing the Brotherhood of Saint Ephigênia and Saint Elesbão for using the church's old graveyard as a place to raise animals.

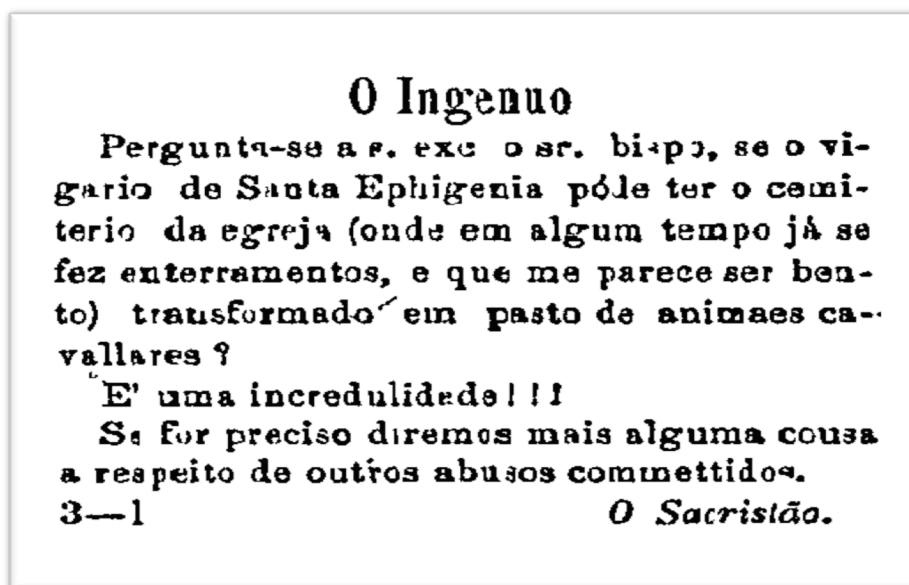


Figure 10 – *A Provincia de São Paulo*, January 13, 1877. (The Free Born Child of Slaves: It is asked of the Excellent Bishop, if the vicar of Santa Ephigênia can have the cemetery of the church (where some time ago burials were held and that seems to me blessed) transformed into a pasture of equine animals? It is unbelievable (incredulity)! If necessary, we will say more about other abuses committed. The Sacristan.)

The notice, addressed to the bishop of the diocese, expressed disbelief that the parish priest permitted the cemetery, which closed nearly twenty years before in 1858 to be transformed into a plot for animal husbandry.³⁰

²⁹ ACMSP, Uncatalogued Folder, Santa Ephigênia: Nossa Senhora da Conceição, No. 2, Antonio Guimarães Barroso, Conego Honorario da Sé Cathedral da Diocese do Rio de Janeiro, Antiga Capella Imperial e Conego Effectivo da Sé desta Diocese, (Declaro mais do que no tempo do meu parochiato, funcionado a Irmandade de Sta. Iphigênia...no edifice até plantava capim no terreno dependente da igreja e vendendo-o ...duas vezes isto nos anos de 1863 a 1864.)

The satirical advertisement, which ran in the Sunday and Monday paper, was not the only indication that brotherhood members utilized the church grounds to pasture animals.³¹ Father Adelino Jorge Montenegro, who served as an interim priest for the parish of Santa Efigênia before Father José Camargo Barros was named to the post on April 12, 1887,³² provided a statement testifying that the confraternity had used their private entrance area to "... raise goats on the side of the patio that the brotherhood occupies as the brotherhood considers it to be in their right."³³ The land use practices of the confraternity brought critical attention to parish officials that undoubtedly created tension between the diocese and the sodality, though there is no indication of how the conflicts were resolved. What is clear is that these unconventional approaches to church ground management were not forgotten nor forgiven by the local Catholic hierarchy and contributed to the rogue reputation of the confraternity.³⁴

Brotherhood Leadership and Administrative Assembly Records

While brotherhood members seemingly used church grounds in unorthodox ways, other facets of confraternal life, such as sodality record keeping practices adhered to normative practices. Organizational secretaries transcribed the proceedings of monthly executive council meetings utilizing formal, though unadorned language. These documents represent quite a treasure for understanding the internal organization of

³⁰ The satirical advertisement was likely published not just because it was paid, but because the editorship may have agreed with its thrust. *A Provincia de São Paulo*, established as a journal in support of republicanism in Brazil, became an increasingly conservative enterprise shortly after its establishment in 1875, which may explain why such pointed criticism of the Afro-Brazilian confraternity could be published. For more on *A Provincia de São Paulo* see Morse, *From Community to Metropolis*, 159.

³¹ The exact same text appeared in *A Provincia de São Paulo* on January 14, 1877.

³² ACMSP, José Camargo Barros, *Diário*, (1882-1895), 01-01-34.

³³ ACMSP, Uncatalogued Folder, Santa Efigênia: Nossa Senhora da Conceição, No. 2 (Diz o Padre Adelino Jorge Montenegro, vigário geral interino do Bispado... pastem cabras no pateo pertinence ao lado que a irmandade ocupava e como a irmandade pretende ser reconhecida em seu direito.)

³⁴ For discussion of unorthodox spatial organization practices according to Portuguese norms in respect to the church and plaza of the Brotherhood of Our Lady of the Rosary of Black Men of São Paulo, see chapter 2, 125.

confraternities. The records also have another value, since few documents outside of criminal records and orphan court cases capture the literal voices of blacks in Brazil with as little mediation as sodality documents before the twentieth century. *Atas*, or meeting minutes represent a unique type of document, since they comprise self-generated records of the collective actions of Africans and people of African descent. Organizational secretaries wrote these records. In the earliest black confraternities, white elites acted as the scribes, secretaries, and treasurers for the associations; however, by the 1780s, blacks themselves began to fill those roles.³⁵ In São Paulo, the Brotherhood of Saint Ephigênia and Saint Elesbão of Black Men had two books of meeting minutes dating from 1862-1890, which provided a clear picture of normative meeting procedures and practices for their association.³⁶

Meeting minutes characterized the convening of executive officers as a ritualized and largely repetitive affair. After quorum call, the presiding officer, the *juiz* (judge) indicated the order of business. Typically the agenda included preparations for Holy Week, festivals for the patron saint, or issues related to the maintenance of the church. Monetary pledges of support were presented to the board and the group decided if enough resources had been allotted to sponsor events. In the case of the Brotherhood of Santa Ephigênia and Saint Elesbão, board members favored establishing committees to resolve common and convoluted issues. In 1885, like in most other years, the board nominated a committee to plan Holy Week in February. In May, of the same year, a panel was named to examine the financial bills presented to the board by the *procurador* for Holy Week.

³⁵ Russell-Wood, *Black Man in Slavery and Freedom*, 155-156.

³⁶ ACMSP, Irmandade de Santa Efigênia e Santo Elesbão, Livro de Atas, 1862-1885, 04-02-28; and Irmandade de Santa Efigênia e Santo Elesbão, Livro de Atas, 1885-1890, 07-03-44.

Committees tended to consist of the secretary and two or three members not part of the current administrative board.³⁷

Administrative meetings must have had an air of formality. The secretary recorded meetings in a way that suggested board members utilized parliamentary procedure in their assemblies.³⁸ While the secretary/scribe may have simply rendered the proceedings in this formal fashion, it is not out of the realm of possibility that these men used such protocol, since in the 1870s at least two of the officers were employed at the Law School in São Paulo. Francisco Luis Esteves, a vocal leader in administrative meetings worked as a courier (*continuo*) at the law school and the sacristan, Bernardo Roberto da Cunha worked in an unidentified capacity in the same institution.³⁹ Meeting minutes reveal that those who held the highest offices, and those who had formerly served in those capacities, almost exclusively guided discussion during administrative proceedings.⁴⁰ Brotherhood members generally respected seniority and embraced hierarchical participatory patterns.

On March 12, 1888, the executive council of the Brotherhood of Saint Ephigênia and Saint Elesbão met for their monthly meeting. The March meeting mainly focused on planning the activities for Holy Week (*Semana Santa*). Fourteen executive council

³⁷ACMSP, Irmandade de Santa Efigênia e Santo Elesbão, Livro de Atas, 1862-1885, 04-02-028.

³⁸ Ibid. I cannot assess whether use of parliamentary procedure was unusual for black brotherhoods. In the ecclesiastic archive of São Paulo, I only had access to the meeting minutes from the Brotherhood of Saint Ephigênia and Saint Elesbão.

³⁹ Luné, *Almanak de Provincia de São Paulo*, 56; and ACMSP, Irmandade de Santa Efigênia e Santo Elesbão, Livro de Atas, 1862-1885, 04-02-28. (Aos 11 dias de abril de 1888 reunida a mesa no consistorio da irmandade de St. Ephigênia e Santo Elesbão... Ordenou-me [Luiz Ribeiro] o Snr Juiz que fosse a каза do nosso irmão sachristão da irmandade -Bernardo Roberto da Cunha e nessa mesma ocazião encontrei o irmão Sachristão... Disse elle que não podia ir essa ocazião porque estava no servico da academia...)

⁴⁰ Ibid.

members and the organizational secretary who served as the scribe were present. The local parish priest, José de Camargo Barros, also attended the meeting.⁴¹

The presence of the parish priest was quite unusual.⁴² It had been decades since a parish priest or an official from the church hierarchy paid a visit to an executive council meeting of the brotherhood. None of the meeting minutes noted the presence or participation of a priest in the twenty years before the visit by Reverend José Camargo Barros.⁴³ Camargo Barros, a native of Itú,⁴⁴ began his tenure in the role of parish priest on April 12, 1887 according to his personal diary,⁴⁵ and he arrived as the bustling Easter season began. Almost a year later, he decided to visit the brotherhood's executive meeting. Reverend Camargo Barros clearly came to the meeting for the purpose of speaking with the executive council and over the course of the discussion he made it known that he wished to request the brotherhood buy new ritual objects for the altar to be used in the masses he conducted at the Church of Saint Ephigênia.

When Reverend José Camargo Barros first spoke he told the council members that he knew the group intended to celebrate Holy Week this year, but that he could not conduct them as he would be too busy with his studies.⁴⁶ Those comments must have seemed puzzling to the members present. A member of the board responded by asking for clarification or further explanation about why the priest would be unable to perform the

⁴¹ ACMSP, Irmandade de Santa Efigênia e Santo Elesbão, Livro de Atas, 1885-1890, 07-03-44.

⁴² ACMSP, Irmandade de Santa Efigênia e Santo Elesbão, Livro de Atas, 1862-1885, 04-02-28.

⁴³ ACMSP, Irmandade de Santa Efigênia e Santo Elesbão, Livro de Atas, 1862-1885, 04-02-28; and Irmandade de Santa Efigênia e Santo Elesbão, Livro de Atas, 1885-1890, 07-03-44.

⁴⁴ Itú is a small city in the province/state of São Paulo, which lies west of the provincial/state capital.

⁴⁵ ACMSP, José Camargo Barros, Diário, (1882-1895), 01-01-34.

⁴⁶ ACMSP, Irmandade de Santa Efigênia e Santo Elesbão, Livro de Atas, 1885-1890, 07-03-44. (O Senhor Vigario tinha oido que pretendia fazer a Semana Santa este anno e como me consta que não pode fazer-la por estar ocupado com os estudos para o concurso de Vigario...)

customary Holy Week sacraments. As the *igreja matriz* and headquarters for a sodality,⁴⁷ the Church of Saint Ephigênia traditionally held a late night torch lit procession on Good Friday to mark the death of Christ and an Easter Sunday sermon commemorating the resurrection.⁴⁸

After being pressed to explain why the traditional annual Holy Week commemorations would not take place, the priest answered that his studies were not the real problem, but that he could not fulfill his usual obligations, because he thought that the church needed a new and complete set of altar cloths and ritual objects used for the liturgy.⁴⁹ He considered the ones he had been using “... so worn out that he was repulsed by the idea of using them.”⁵⁰ The priest then indicated that the refusal was not based on ill will toward the brotherhood and emphasized according to the meeting minutes that he looked favorably upon the brothers, their desire to celebrate Holy Week, and their religious sentiment.⁵¹ Reverend Camargo Barros then asked the brethren to make contributions among themselves to buy the articles for the church, because they were a necessity, and he did not think borrowing these items from another church to celebrate Holy Week was good. The priest also indicated that he was not always disposed to lend [the articles] and that he thought it better to wait for the coming year to give his service

⁴⁷ The *igreja matriz* refers to a church that has been formally designated as the headquarters for the parish from which curates perform mass and Catholic rites such as baptism, marriage, and funerals.

⁴⁸ “Serviço especial da Província,” *A Província de São Paulo*, April 10, 1887; and “Chronica Semanal,” *A Província de São Paulo*, April 12, 1887.

⁴⁹ ACMSP, Irmandade de Santa Efigênia e Santo Elesbão, Livro de Atas, 1885-1890, 07-03-44.

(Reverendo Senor Vigário foi lhe consedido declarou que não foi tanto pelos seus estudos que não faz a Semana Santa mas sim porque a Igreja não tem paramentos completos para fazer a festa da Semana Santa.)

⁵⁰ Ibid. (Elle encontrou as paramentos bastantes estragados que elle tem repugnancia de ocupa-se).

⁵¹ Ibid. (Esto bastante satisfeito com as irmãos de elles terem boas vontades de fazer a Semana Santa e conhece os sentimentos religiosos...).

for the celebration of Holy Week.⁵² The matter was put into discussion in the presence of the priest and the decision to cancel the customary Holy Week commemorations was approved. The *procurador* motioned that since funds would not be used for Easter celebrations that the money should be utilized to pay for repairs to a wall of the church. The board approved the proposal and having no more business for discussion closed the session. The session ended without upheaval and a simple agreement had been reached. Even though the executive committee wished to hold their traditional Holy Week observances, they ceded to the judgment and advice of the priest in his presence.

A Stroll down the Street

Sometime after the March 12, 1888 meeting, Luiz Antonio Ribeiro, the *procurador* of the Brotherhood of Santa Efigênia and Santo Elesbão, walked along the Rua da Conceição where he saw a window to the church offices open.⁵³ He immediately reported the problem to the organizational president who sent him to speak with the sacristan (*sacristão*) of the confraternity.⁵⁴ When the sacristan, Bernardo Roberto da Cunha, was unable to check on the church due his work obligation at the Law School, he sent Ribeiro to secure the building. When Ribeiro entered the church he saw other irregularities besides the open window. He found broken locks and later learned that Father Camargo Barros had ordered that they be changed. Ribeiro reported the damaged property to the brotherhood's leadership and the board members wanted answers

⁵² Ibid. (... Pede aos irmãos para fazerem uma contribuição entre elles para compra-lo, o paramento para Igreja que é de necessidade e o isso elle em meza que não achava muito bom as irmãos empresentarem paramentos de otra Igreja para fazer a Semana Santa. Nem sempre estou dispostos para emprestar e que elle achava bom ficasse para o anno que vem elle ajudava –nos fazer a Semana Santa.)

⁵³ A *procurador* functioned as an organizational trustee. For more on the responsibilities and variances of the office in confraternities see Reis, *Death is a Festival*, 40, 50, and 192.

⁵⁴ The sacristan, also referred to in English as a sexton, is responsible for caring for physical church property. Within a confraternity a sacristan cares for sodality meeting salons as well as associational ceremonial objects.

explaining why the parish priest authorized entry into the church by non-brotherhood members with orders for locks to be broken and changed.

Conflict ensued. The brotherhood's meeting minutes show a priest unwilling to demonstrate deference to the brotherhood's leadership and the brotherhood's executive council unwilling to bow to the parish priest when they considered his actions questionable and threatening to their organization. The sodality's record of procedure indicated that the parish priest lost his decorum after being questioned by the brotherhood members. From the view of the priest, the brotherhood was completely out of order to question his authority. The sodality leadership considered Camargo Barros to have overstepped his bounds, but when questioning the priest the officers never stopped using formal address and they relied on procedural moves to deflect and refute demands that the group hand over keys that gave them access to the church. The leaders also cited their organizational statutes as justification for their refusal. In the section which follows, I include text taken directly from the meeting minutes of the Brotherhood of Saint Ephigênia and Saint Elesbão in order to better highlight the tension and tone of interaction that made the incident so explosive and serious from the perspective of the priest and the diocese.

In their own words...

In April 1888, at the regular monthly meeting of the executive committee of the Brotherhood of Saint Ephigênia and Saint Elesbão an unusual matter topped the agenda. Before moving to the issue, the organizational president opened the meeting and noted the presence of the parish priest, Reverend José Camargo Barros. The organizational secretary provided the following account.

On the 11th day of April of 1888, the board [executive council] met in the office of the Brotherhood of Saint Efigênia and Saint Elesbão. Finding the majority of board members present, the president (o irmão juiz) presided over the board as mandated by our organizational statutes with the presence of our priest, Reverend Father José Camargo Barros. The president opened the session and declared the reason of the meeting is a request from our [procurador], Luiz Antonio Ribeiro. The same brother requested to speak [and] the floor was yielded.⁵⁵

When Luiz Antonio Ribeiro spoke he explained that he had seen an open window in the sacristy, which prompted him to contact the association's president. He noted that after entering the church, with the key from the brotherhood's sacristan, he found the chaplain of the parish priest present and asked him who had unlatched the door and window in the confraternity meeting space. The parish chaplain answered that permission to open and change the locks in question was given "...by order of the priest."⁵⁶ After Ribeiro concluded his account of the irregularities he had found, Francisco Luiz Esteves began to question the parish priest. Esteves asked

...the Reverend Vicar if he had given these orders [to change the locks] to the parish chaplain. The Reverend Vicar responded at the same instant if he [Francisco Luiz Esteves] was named for the month to serve as king? Brother Francisco Luis Esteves declared that he was not invited to serve as king but that he (the priest) needed to give an explanation as to how the door to the salon (meeting room) was broken into. The priest declared that he had consulted the head of the Church Council and therefore requested the board to turn in the keys that belonged to the brotherhood and he requested that the president (Sr. juiz) put [the request for the keys] into discussion. The President (sr. Juiz) declared the proposal of the vicar put into discussion. Our brother Francisco Luis Esteves requested the floor.

⁵⁵ Ibid. (Aos 11 dias de abril de 1888 reunida a mesa no consistorio da irmandade de St. Ephigênia e Santo Elesbão. Achando a maioria de irmãos de mesa presidio a mesa o irmão Juiz como manda o nosso compromisso com a prezencia do nosso Rvn. Snr. Vigario Pe. Je. Camargo Barros. O snr. Juiz abriu a sessão e declarou que o motivo desta reunião e um pedido do nosso irmão procurador Luiz Antonio Ribeiro o mesmo irmão pedio a palavra foi lhe concedido...)

⁵⁶ Ibid. (Subindo para a uma [lingueta] encontrei o Snr Sachristão do Rev. Snr. Vigario. Perguntei ao mesmo Sr. quem tinha arrombado a porta e a janella que estava pregada. O mesmo snr. Sachristão disse que foi por ordem do Vigario. Eu olhando para a porta que da para a torre vi que estava arrancada uma tranca de pau que foi pregado pelo otro Vigario. Pe. Joaquim Augusto Viera de Araujo e Olhei para a porta e vi a fechadura e a lingueta fora do lugar...)

The floor was yielded. The same Reverend Vicar requested the keys again. He conferred with the president. The president advised that we cannot turn in the keys without first consulting our lawyer and our organizational charter. The same vicar said that the administrative board can turn in the keys without [formal deliberation if need be]...⁵⁷

The queries posed by the longstanding member Francisco Luis Esteves enraged the vicar and he replied with a caustic response in which he questioned the authority and right of Esteves, as a lay person, to question him, an officer of the church. The clearly incensed priest indicated that he wished to have the keys to the church held by the brotherhood and that he had obtained prior permission from church authorities to make such a request. When the confraternity leadership did not yield the keys, “The Reverend Vicar declared before the board of the brethren that he did not come in order to ‘lower my dignity nor to argue...’”⁵⁸

The attempt by confraternity members to show respect for the priest’s office did not seem to meet the standard set by the curate. The meeting minutes recorded the priest responding with great indignation and anger to his perceived interrogation, though the brotherhood members continued to use honorific titles while posing their questions and even when declining to turn in the keys requested by the priest. In their eyes, they held

⁵⁷ Ibid. (Pedio a palavra o irmão Franc. Luiz Esteves. Foi conedido, Perguntou ao Snr. Vigario se era elle que tinha dado essa ordens ao Sachristão. O snr. Vigario respondeo nessa mesma ocaziao que elle foi chamado para aquella mes para elle servir de Rey o irmão Fran.Luiz Esteves declarou que elle nao foi convidado para servir de Rey mas sim para dar explicação com foi arrombado a portar do Salão. O snr Vigario declarou q. tinha consultado com Juiz consulto e por isso pedia a meza para entregar todas as chaves que pertenece a irmandade e pedio ao Snr. Juiz que possese em discussão. O snr Juiz declarou que estava em discussão a proposta do Snr Vigario pedio palavra ao nosso irmão Fran. Luis Esteves. Foi conedido o mesmo Snr Vigario (SVS?) pedir a chaves, Foi consultar com o Juiz. Consulto mas não podemos entrega-lo a chaves sem primeiro consultar como o nosso Advogado e o nosso compromisso. O mesmo Vigario disse que essa mesa administrativa pode entregar-as chaves sem ser precizo [sic].)

⁵⁸ Ibid. (Snr Vigario declarou em mesa perante ao irmãos que elle não veio a meza para se baixar a minha dignidade e nem discutir com irmãos....)

authority and stood completely within their ecclesiastic rights to question and to deny the priest the keys, though they were careful to be respectful and to honor the priest's station.

The brothers of the association almost immediately referred to the organizational statutes to defend their right to keep possession of the keys. An officer, the interim secretary, indicated that the *compromisso* did not allow the keys to be given to non-members. An additional board member asserted that the group would have to consult the organizational protector, the well-known abolitionist lawyer Dr. Antonio Bento, before considering any request to yield the association's means of access to the church.⁵⁹ The board members thought they had the legal right to have uninterrupted access to the church, which they defended through the use of their ecclesiastically approved organizational charters and if need be through an organizational lawyer. Board members had little doubt about the illegitimacy of the request made by the priest and planned to defend their interests, privileges, and means of access to the Church of Saint Ephigênia.

Brotherhood members did not act as passive agents submissive to the will of the curate. Francisco Luiz Esteves, the board member who questioned the priest, clearly felt he was acting within the bounds of propriety when he inquired about the break-in and abnormalities. Luiz Antonio Ribeiro, the member who initiated the investigation, also had a sense of ownership of the church as a brotherhood officer. His concern about the group's property led him to immediately report to the brotherhood's president when he saw the open window in the church office. He considered the leadership of the

⁵⁹ Ibid. (Francisco de Paula de Espirito Santo perguntou a Snr. Vigario se elle queria as chaves Eternamente; pedio a palavra o nosso irmão, José Benedicto de Oliveira Ramalho, e declarou o Vigario que não se lhe entregava-lhe as chaves sem primeiro consultar com o protector da irmandade Dr. Antonio Bento Souza e Castro.)

brotherhood as the responsible party for the edifice, and it is not difficult to understand why he and members of other brotherhoods took this position.

Confraternity members provided funds for the maintenance and general upkeep of the churches they built, though they could gather funds from parishioners using donation boxes.⁶⁰ Organizational receipts and expense records show that annual budgets went to finance the purchase of supplies for church ceremonies and for maintenance. Muddy unpaved streets mixed with rains and high traffic led to church walls covered in soil. Expense records indicate that maintaining church facades and orderly gardens required extensive and expensive cleanings.⁶¹ The municipal council allotted money for the parish center; however, it is difficult to see these funds circulating back to the church.⁶² The funds were either administered directly by the curate or by a parish administrator appointed directly by bishops.⁶³ Historian Eul-Soo Pang suggests that priests often entered local and state politics to be able to better appropriate funds for “material improvement” to support parish life.⁶⁴ On a day to day basis, however, it seems the immediate needs of church upkeep fell to the hands of confraternity leaders. Even Reverend Camargo Barros asked brotherhood members to buy new articles for use in the liturgy. Without brotherhoods, church maintenance and material culture would have been in an even poorer state. Brotherhood executive leaders functioned as the keepers of churches they built even after these worship centers came to serve the wider parish.

⁶⁰ ACMSP, Uncatalogued Folder: Santa Efigênia: Nrsa da Conceição, No. 2; and Irmandade de Santa Efigênia e Santo Elesbão, Receitas e Despesas, 07-03-41.

⁶¹ Irmandade de Santa Efigênia e Santo Elesbão, Receitas e Despesas, 07-03-41.

⁶² Atas da Câmara Municipal, (1848-1851), Vol. XXXVIII. For discussion of small allowances for parish churches see De Groot, *Brazilian Catholicism*, 31.

⁶³ De Groot, *Brazilian Catholicism*, 31.

⁶⁴ Eul-Soo Pang, “The Changing Role of Priests in the Politics in Northeast Brazil, 1889-1964,” *Americas* 70, no.3 (January 1974): 342.

Clergyman Camargo Barros wanted the leadership of the brotherhood to take care of maintenance issues for every facet of the edifice, though he intended to take a more active role in deciding what was needed. The curate planned to have tighter control over the physical space of the church and found himself stunned by the investigation the board launched in the April 11, 1888 meeting. After leaving the administrative session, Camargo Barros reported the meeting proceedings to diocese authorities. The priest considered the group's behavior deplorable, insulting, and criminal according to church law. Two years after the conflict began, the bishop initiated and conducted an ecclesiastic trial to determine if the brotherhood owned the church and had acted appropriately in their treatment of the parish priest. Camargo Barros also filed a civil lawsuit to prosecute the brotherhood with a charge of libel.

Civil Law Suit Resolutions

On June 5, 1888, the libel suit against the Brotherhood of Saint Ephigênia and Saint Elesbão filed by Camargo Barros was heard before two judges, who unanimously denied the petition. The court decided the confraternity had not been guilty of committing written or oral statements defaming the priest's reputation or unjustifiably conveying an unfavorable impression. The outcome of the trial was mentioned the following day in the *Provincia de São Paulo* as part of the regular reporting of adjudicated civil cases. No other article in the paper mentioned the matter.⁶⁵

The dispute between the confraternity, the parish priest, and diocese officials was just beginning, however, and lawyer and abolitionist José Fernandes Coelho defended the confraternity in the various legal procedures resulting from the conflict, which continued

⁶⁵ "Tribunal da relação, sessão em 5 de junho de 1888, julgamentos," *A Provincia de São Paulo*, June 6, 1888.

for nearly two years. Coelho attended the Law School of São Paulo and he was a confraternity member and leader himself. He served as the secretary for the elite, white Venerable Third Order of Saint Francis of Penitence (Venerável Ordem Terceira of São Francisco da Penitencia) in 1877 under the leadership of former provincial governor and priest, Dr. Vicente Pires da Motta, and again in 1884. He also served as a general member and member of perpetual board of the Brotherhood of Saint Benedict in 1874. He was well aware of the rules and conventions of confraternal life when he took on the case in 1888.⁶⁶ He was also an avowed abolitionist and colleague of attorney Antonio Bento, the group's organizational protector, which likely explains why Coelho took the case.⁶⁷

Despite the fact that Reverend Camargo Barros lost his initial libel case, the struggle between the factions persisted. The case finally found resolution in 1890 after the 2nd Vara Civil Circuit judge decided their court had no jurisdiction, since both parties were part of the institutional Catholic Church. Once civil authorities decided they could not arbitrate the case, the diocese conducted an ecclesiastic trial to decide the matter. Coelho made it publicly known that a trial conducted by the diocese would result in an outcome that had little chance of achieving impartiality. He voiced his indignation in the press, where he published a multi-part defense of the sodality and charged local Catholic authorities with wrongdoing. He used the series as a place to publicly detail the history

⁶⁶ For evidence of Coelho's participation in the elite Third Order of Saint Francis see "Veneravel [sic] Ordem Terceira de S. Francisco da Penitencia," *A Provincia de São Paulo* February 10, 1877, and "Veneravel Ordem Terceira de S. Francisco da Penitencia," March 24, 1884; also see Quintão, *Irmandades negras*, 92 for discussion of his membership in the Brotherhood of Saint Benedict.

⁶⁷ See Antônio Manoel Bueno de Andrada, "A abolição em São Paulo: Depoimento de uma testemunha," *O Estado de São Paulo*, May 13, 1918; Morse, *From Community to Metropolis*, 159-160; and Azevedo, *O direito dos escravos*, 160-166 for evidence of the radical abolitionist activities of Antonio Bento. For evidence of Bento's ties to black confraternities in the city see ACMSP, Irmandade de São Benedito, Livro de Libertos e Livres, 02-02-07. (Antonio Bento de Souza e Castro-Alistou aos 30 de dezembro de 1866 como irmão simples e pagou 640 rs. Pagou todos os annos ate 1896. Pagou 1897. Mezario em 1867 a 1868. Juiz em 1877.) Bento also served as an organizational protector for the Brotherhood of Saint Ephigênia and Saint Elesbão, see ACMSP, Irmandade de Santa Efigênia e Santo Elesbão, Livro de Atas, 1885-1890, 07-03-44. No explanation is provided to explain why Bento did not represent the sodality.

of the Church of Saint Ephigênia and he laid out his best evidence to persuade readers that the Church of Saint Ephigênia did in fact belong to the confraternity.

Coelho saw no reason to mince words and he aggressively defended the sodality understanding that the charges against the confraternity represented a substantial threat to the group's autonomy. He castigated the local seminary and the diocese for abusing their power; he excoriated Reverend Camargo Barros and his superiors within the Catholic hierarchy who supported the illegal action taken against the association. Attorney Coelho accused the Episcopal Seminary of training parochial priests, the position held by Camargo Barros, to consolidate their parochial power, an acknowledged goal of the ultramontane movement, at any cost. He asserted "The evils that the Episcopal Seminary propagated in this unhappy diocese..." can be explained by "... the ambition of rectors aiming to amass unfounded temporal or spiritual power in Brazil..." which was baseless without the right of ecclesiastical patronage.⁶⁸ The outrage that Coelho experienced, as a confraternity leader himself, was palpable and he argued that the policies pursued by the priest "... instigated disorder that had moved across the diocese and was generated to justify his illegitimate assertion of power."⁶⁹

Coelho argued that the actions designed to restrict the brotherhood's use of the entire church fell on the shoulders of the Episcopal Seminary. He suggested that in 1881 and 1882 the priest who preceded Reverend Barros also broke and changed the locks of

⁶⁸ José Fernandes Coelho, "Dinhero a Parochos VII," *A Provincia de São Paulo*, September 27, 1889. Coelho argued that ecclesiastic privilege did not exist in Brazil in the empire because the Bull of Leo XII issued was not approved by the nation's General Assembly. (Os males que o Seminario Episcopal propagou por esta infeliz diocese, não consistem somente na ambição dos parochos pretendendo accumular ao espiritual o temporal sob fundamento de que no Brasil não ha direito de padroado porque a Bulla de Leão 12 não foi placitada (placito) pela Assembléa Geral.)

⁶⁹ *Ibid.* (...as doutrinas sustendas por esse congeio lente do Seminario, são a cauza de desordem que lavra na diocese...O Seminario Episcopal no seu orgulho entretanto a nada se dobre ainda que para assim ostentar um illegitimo poder abra conflictio com o dever.)

the church after being pressured to do so by seminary leaders.⁷⁰ Coelho wrote, “The only and exclusive cause of all the troubles of this diocese is the substitution of the ecclesiastic spirit, which should predominate the Episcopal Seminary for political sentiment that degenerated that establishment of teaching into a center of partisan agitation.”⁷¹ He suggested that the Seminary had become a powerful conservative force in the city, which used the heavy-handed dealing with the confraternity as a means of suppression, in reaction to the social reforms that were expanding the freedoms of Afro-Brazilians in secular society. It seemed that allowing a parish center, a space for all Catholics, to continue to fall under the administration of Afro-Brazilians became less acceptable and more threatening as their collective social freedoms increased.

What had changed for Afro-Brazilians that expanded their freedoms? In the 1870s and 1880s, the anti-slavery movement gained momentum and received increasing support from various social sectors including women’s organizations, newly established emancipation societies, and confraternities across lines of color and status.⁷² Bondspeople dealt their own blows to the slave system by increasing the frequency of flight from and

⁷⁰ Ibid. (Por pressão do Seminário Episcopal o antecessor do Conego honorário José de Camargo Barros, mandou em 1881 ou 1882, arrombar as portas da casa da fábrica da Irmandade de Santa Iphigenia e Santo Elesbão em cuja igreja acha-se a sede da parochial de Nossa Senhora da Conceição e Santa Iphigenia...)

⁷¹ José Fernandes Coelho, “Irmandade de Santa Ephigenia e Santo Elesbão VI,” *A Provincia de São Paulo*, October 11, 1889. (A causa unica e exclusiva de todas as desgraças desta diocese, é a substituição do espirito ecclesiastico, que devia predominar ao Seminário Episcopal, pelo sentimento politico, que degenerou aquelle estabelécimento de ensino em centro de agitação partidaria.)

⁷² Machado, *O plano e o pânico*, 133-162; Morse, *From Community to Metropolis*, 146-147 and 159-161; Celso Castilho and Camillia Cowling, “Funding Freedom, Popularizing Politics: Abolitionism and Local Emancipation Funds in 1880s Brazil,” *Luso-Brazilian Review*, 47, no.1 (2010): 89-120; Camillia Cowling, “Debating Womanhood, Defining Freedom: The Abolition of Slavery in 1880s Rio de Janeiro,” *Gender and History* 22, no.2 (August 2010): 284-301; Roger A. Kittleson, *The Practice of Politics in Postcolonial Brazil: Porto Alegre, 1845-1895* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2006), 128-135; Barman, *Citizen Emperor*, 324; and Antônio Manoel Bueno de Andrada, “A abolição em São Paulo: Depoimento de uma testemunha,” *O Estado de São Paulo*, May 13, 1918.

resistance to captivity.⁷³ At a national level, legislators yielded to abolitionist pressure and devised gradual slave emancipation programs designed to chip away at the institution of forced servitude. The Rio Branco Law (Law of the Free Womb), for example, legally freed infants born to mothers who remained in bondage as of January 1, 1871,⁷⁴ and in 1885, as a concession to anti-slavery coalitions, the Saraiva-Cotegipe Law (the Sexagenarian Law) freed slaves over sixty years old.⁷⁵ The institution of slavery had been weakened.

Coelho maintained that the racial composition of the brotherhood's membership and lack of financial resources left them vulnerable to the aggressive abuses of power the diocese encouraged and permitted. On October 11, 1889, he suggested that all Afro-Brazilians needed to see the treatment of the confraternity as a matter of concern. He wrote,

The blacks of all the empire, the blacks of the province, and all their learned and less favored descendants... [should move] to have the honorary parochial priest José Camargo Barros driven out of the Catholic flock made in part of the Brotherhood of Saint Ephigênia and Saint

⁷³ Da Costa, *Brazilian Empire*, 162-163 and 168-169; Robert Brent Toplin, "Upheaval, Violence, and the Abolition of Slavery in Brazil: The Case of São Paulo," *Hispanic American Historical Review* 49, no. 4 (November 1969): 646-647 and 649; Azevedo, *O direito dos escravos*, 73-85; Conrad, *Destruction of Brazilian Slavery*, 177-193; Machado, "From Slave Rebels to Strikebreakers," 251-254; and *O plano e o pânico*, 168-230; Andrews, *Blacks and Whites*, 37-39; and Barman, *Citizen Emperor*, 324.

⁷⁴ The provisions of the Rio Branco Law declared that children born to enslaved mothers as of January 1, 1871 were legally free people. Though free by law, the children of enslaved mothers were to serve as apprentices of the mother's slave owner until the age of eight. The mother's owner could also opt to keep the child in their possession as a laborer until they reached twenty-one years of age in order to repay the expense of the child's support. Slave owners could also opt to accept a bond of \$600 mil-réis, and the child would be relieved of the apprenticeship period. For more on the "Law of the Free Womb" (Rio Branco Law), see Da Costa, *Brazilian Empire*, 165; Conrad, *Destruction of Brazilian Slavery*, ix; and Martha Abreu, "Slave Mothers and Freed Children: Emancipation and Female Space in Debates on the 'Free Womb' Law, Rio de Janeiro, 1871," *Journal of Latin American Studies* 28, no.3 (October 1996): 567-580, especially 568; and Camillia Cowling, "'As a Slave Woman and as a Mother': Women and the Abolition of Slavery in Havana and Rio de Janeiro," *Social History* 36, no.3 (October 2011): 296-297 and 300; and "Debating Womanhood," 286. For an English translation of the provision see E. Bradford Burns, ed., *A Documentary History of Brazil* (New York: Knopf, 1966), 257-263.

⁷⁵ Conrad, *Destruction of Brazilian Slavery*, 168-169; and Cowling, "Debating Womanhood," 286.

Elesbão, [for] taking from them their church constructed by the slaves that established the power of the aristocracy of this land...⁷⁶

For Coelho, the slaves who built the church deserved to have their labor and their historical patrimony remain under the control of their descendants.

The case arbiter, a diocese official, found the brotherhood guilty of ten offenses. The punishment for their crimes was the dissolution of the organization, though technically the dissolution order resulted from the association's inactivity and suspension of their directorate-- a strategy the group initially used to avoid issuing corporate responses to the priest and the diocese. The ecclesiastic judge ruled that the brotherhood behaved in a manner designed to intentionally harass the parish priest and to be disobedient. The case adjudicator also convicted the brotherhood of illegally removing items from the Church of Saint Ephigênia without the permission of diocese authorities after they suspended meetings. Most importantly, the church ruled that the brotherhood did not legally own the Church of Saint Ephigênia and had no rights to the building or its contents.⁷⁷

The decision to dissolve the brotherhood represented an unprecedented move by the church. Existing socio-religious and church histories record no other conflict between a sodality and the diocese of São Paulo generating an order of dissolution in the nineteenth century.⁷⁸ The reasons for such a severe punishment by church officials are

⁷⁶ Ibid. (Os pretos de todo o imperio, os pretos desta provincia, e toda a sua descendencia illustrada e menos favorecida das letras, já sabem á hora em que escrevo ter o parochio Conego honorario José de Camargo Barros enxotado do rebanho catholico os que fazem parte da irmandade de Santa Ephigenia e Santo Elesbão, tomando-lhes a sua igreja construida até pelos escravos que fundiram o poder da aristocracia desta terra...)

⁷⁷ ACMSP, Uncatalogued Folder: Santa Ephigênia: Nrsa da Conceição, No. 2.

⁷⁸ For church histories and historical analysis and discussion of church affairs in the diocese of São Paulo see Souza, *Catholicismo em São Paulo*; Arroyo, *Igrejas de São Paulo*; Martins, *São Paulo antigo*; Bruno, *História e tradições*; Wernet, *A igreja paulista*; Mesgravis, *A Santa Casa de Misericórdia de São Paulo*; Amaral, *Os pretos do Rosário*; Quintão, *Irmandades negras*; De Groot, *Brazilian Catholicism*; and Serbin,

not absolutely clear, but the public way the confraternity's attorney sought to secure the sodality's property and rights to it may have been the contributing factor, which inspired the wrath of the priest's superiors in the diocese.

Ecclesiastical Evidence

Two years after the explosive meeting between Reverend Camargo Barros and the administrative board of the Brotherhood of Saint Ephigênia, officials from the diocese began to gather testimony in the spring of 1890. The case file housed in the church archive included testimony from six witnesses, other than Camargo Barros. The witnesses questioned included retired priest José Dias Torres de Oliveira and the former interim priest of the parish Reverend Antonio Guimarães Barroso, in addition to four local residents. The case proceedings did not include any individual statements from any members of the brotherhood. No explanation in the case file addresses how witnesses were selected, and none of those who testified, with the exception of the parish priest, had first-hand knowledge of the conflict.

In the end, legal precedent from similar disputes in the Catholic world buttressed the arguments and justifications for dissolution reached by the deciding arbitrator. Resolutions from the final decision rested predominantly on precedent from other ecclesiastic disputes, rules from the association's organizational charters, and newspaper articles cited by the arbiter. The decision declaring the dissolution order never cited witness testimony; their contributions seemed to have had little impact on the case outcome. Though their testimony may have mattered little in the final case outcome,

Needs of the Heart. Only further research on confraternities in the late nineteenth century across the country can definitively indicate if the dissolution was as singular as it appears to be.

witnesses' statements captured the ways several local citizens saw the leadership and membership of the Brotherhood of Saint Ephigênia and Saint Elesbão during this period.

Witness Testimony

In the late nineteenth century, ecclesiastic and secular trials did not involve gathering all the involved parties with presentation of case arguments before a sitting judge. In this trial, as in others, scribes were sent to the homes of selected witnesses to record statements. Father Adelino Jorge Montenegro was in charge of coordinating the proceedings and he employed the services of Joaquim José Moreira, a local scribe, to record testimony. The scribe gathered the first statement from the retired clergyman, Reverend José Dias Torres de Oliveira, a seventy-three year old Portuguese born priest.⁷⁹ Reverend Oliveira recounted that two and a half years ago "...the referred brotherhood had struggled with the parochial priest over who [would] govern the church."⁸⁰ Father Oliveira remembered that early in 1888, almost near Holy Week, a brother from the administrative board who seemed to have been a former *procurador* was ordering things to be taken from the main altar or to have items moved around without authorization "...to show the authority of the Irmandade in that church."⁸¹

According to Father Oliveira, seating arrangements also fueled the fighting between the parish priest and the brotherhood. Camargo Barros reportedly told sodality members that their wives and children could not sit on the pews with brotherhood members, nor could the chaplain of the brotherhood bring chairs in that place to seat

⁷⁹ACMSP, Uncatalogued Folder: Santa Ephigênia: Nrsa da Conceição, No. 2.

⁸⁰ Ibid., (... quibra dois anos e meio ou menos a referida Irmandade tem andado em luta com o vigario da parochia aponto de querer governar a Igreja que é Matriz...)

⁸¹ Ibid. (... e recorda de que em principio de oitenta e oito, quais nas proximada da Semana Santa um irmao da mesa administrativa, que lhe parece era procurador, estava mandando tirar algumas coisas do altar-Mar, ou ordenou que puzesse castiças ou outros objetos em lugar de outros, facto que elle deponete presenciou, suppondo elle que aquelle Irmão practicamente acto sem autorisação do Vigario e somente para mostrar a autoridade da Irmandade naquelle Igreja.)

guests of the brotherhood. Father Oliveira said that in order to show their authority and to aggravate the priest, the brotherhood removed images of Saint Ephigênia and Saint Elesbão without ever returning them.⁸²

In the dispute between the priest and the brotherhood both the church and the material culture inside the church became a source of dissent. Not allowing members and their families to be formally seated, a privilege typically reserved for elites in the nineteenth century could only enrage members if they had secured such privilege.⁸³ Forbidding the families of brotherhood members to sit with them on pews would have been insulting and denigrating. Such a prohibition would have relegated their relations to less prestigious areas of the church. The adage “the closer to the altar, the closer to God” still prevailed.⁸⁴ Physical proximity to the pulpit and surrounding high altars was thought to inspire and convey piety, and obstructing family member access to privileged seated spaces denied them both a spatial and spiritual access that confraternity membership was to confer. Members being asked to give up the seats they had either made or purchased only added to the outrage such a prohibition would generate. If the parish priest had made such a demand, it would have constituted a serious affront to the unspoken or customary privileges of the irmandade and would have undermined the visibility of the high status that their executive positions affirmed.

Reverend Oliviera also indicated in his testimony that the vicar thought that among other things “men and women slept there in the church offices (*sachristã da*

⁸² Ibid. (...tendo retirado os mesmos Irmãos a Igreja Matriz, sob futeis pretextos as Imagens de Santa Ephigênia e Santo Elesbão, sem que ate hoje as tendo restitindo.)

⁸³ Ibid. Also see De Groot, *Brazilian Catholicism*, 26. Most Catholic Churches in Brazil, like their European counterparts, did not provide benches to be used for public seating until the early twentieth century.

⁸⁴ De Groot, *Brazilian Catholicism*, 25-26; and Reis, *Death is a Festival*, 160-161.

Irmandade) and for that reason the vicar requested the administrative board to turn in the key to that door.⁸⁵ The former priest made no judgment on the validity of the statement, but a second witness, Francisco Antonio Guerra, a forty-five year old married property owner, offered testimony that indicated brotherhood members entered the side door of the church to bring in “women after nine and ten o’clock at night.”⁸⁶ Had men and women entered the church together through the side door at hours when no church functions were being held? Had brotherhood members used administrative meeting spaces for romantic liaisons or as a place to sleep?

Unfortunately, the questions will remain unanswered. The church arbiter who decided the case, like the former priest, made no comment on the charges. If there had been public knowledge of such circumstances it is difficult to believe it would have gone unreported had these occurrences happened as frequently and obviously as reported in testimony. The suggestion that confraternity members participated in sexual misconduct in the church was designed to tarnish the association’s reputation and to utilize prejudicial stereotypes that associated black men with hyper-sexuality and disorder as a way to shame, punish, and penalize association leaders for their dogged independence and lack of deference.⁸⁷

⁸⁵ ACMSP, Uncatalogued Folder: Santa Ephigênia: Nrsa da Conceição, No. 2 (...constava-lhe que alem de outros fatos que le davão na sachristia da Irmandade allí hiao dormir homens e mulheres...)

⁸⁶ ACMSP, Uncatalogued Folder: Santa Ephigênia: Nrsa da Conceição, No. 2. (...com mulheres fora de horas de nove para dez de noite.)

⁸⁷ In Brazil, implying sexual misconduct was a common way for authorities to question an individual’s honor and to justify punishment of activities deemed inappropriate behavior. For exemplary works analyzing concepts of honor across lines of gender, which recorded denigrating stereotypes of black sexuality as well as prejudice against black men based on perceptions of sexual threat see Caulfield, *In Defense of Honor*, 164, and 173-176; Martha Abreu, “Mulatas, Crioulos, and Morenas: Racial Hierarchy, Gender Relations, and National Identity in Postabolition Popular Song: Southeastern Brazil, 1890-1920,” in *Gender and Slave Emancipation in the Atlantic World*, ed. Pamela Scully and Diana Paton (Durham: Duke University Press, 2005), 267-288; Peter Beattie, “The Jealous Institution: Male Nubility, Conjuality, Sexuality, and Discipline on the Social Margins of Imperial Brazil,” *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 53, no. 1 (January 2011):186-187; and Marc A. Hertzman, “Making Music and Masculinity in

Besides noting that brotherhood members entered the church at inappropriate times, the second witness, Francisco Antonio Guerra, also indicated that to his knowledge the conflict between the priest and the sodality started when confraternity board members responded to the priest in a disrespectful way after finding new locks in the church at which time they replaced them with their own.⁸⁸ Guerra, whose relationship to the case is not reported or explained, offered testimony recalling that the *Commandante de Urbanos*, a local police force, came and broke the locks, which the brotherhood had used to re-secure the church.⁸⁹ Guerra disapproved of the tactics the confraternity used to plead their case to the public. He considered the newspaper articles, which the confraternity used to rally support for their defense, an indication of the poor judgment exercised by the board. In Guerra's view, conflict within the church was not to be resolved in public forums.⁹⁰

All of the witnesses condemned the brotherhood for their disrespectful behavior. Though none of the witnesses who testified were present at the administrative meeting, accounts of the proceedings spread quickly and the brotherhood was seen as the offending party, at least according to the testimony of the witnesses called by the diocese investigator. As we would expect, witness testimony suggests that the priest must have been more effective in cultivating sympathy and circulating a verbal record of the inciting events. Each of the witnesses accused the brotherhood of disrespect, though the meeting

Vagrancy's Shadow: Race, Wealth, and Malandragem in Post-Abolition Rio de Janeiro," *Hispanic American Historical Review* 90, no. 4 (November 2010): 598-625.

⁸⁸ Ibid. (Os Irmãos arrombando em palavras desrespeitos ao Vigario; que depois disto o Vigario requereu do Juiz de Capellas allegando necessiada de desaijo compontimesstos pouco o exercicio das funcções parochiaes e que os Irmãos arrombavão portas mandando por novas fechaduras, provocando deste modo o Vigario e que a vista deste pedido o Juiz da Capellas, Dr. Aruda, cem infermado elle mesmo em pessoa acompanhado do Escrivão e do Mj. Manoel Antonio de Lima Viera, Comandante de Urbanos procedio a arrombamento mandado...)

⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁰ Ibid. (Disse mais que as polemicas com o actual Vigario não de encerrarão somente dentro das parades da Matriz mas pela imprensa de um modo dessabido.)

minutes from the brotherhood captured the image of an oversensitive vicar reacting explosively to an assertive but polite group of brotherhood members making inquiries they deemed appropriate and necessary.

All the witnesses also noted in their statements given in early May 1890 that the confraternity had been inactive, despite the rules of their organizational statutes. Lettered citizens knew the basic rules that governed sodalities and the general scope of their public and civic obligations. When the Brotherhood of Santa Efigênia and Saint Elesbão did not complete expected activities and civic rituals to which their organization was bound, city residents noticed. Guerra considered the members' lack of activity as proof of their lack of true religious fervor and sentiment. Guerra was not the only citizen who held the view that the group's suspension of meetings demonstrated the leadership's lack of genuine religious devotion. Another witness, Manoel Torres de Oliveira, a twenty year old law school graduate, whose relationship to the case was also not given, offered testimony in which he characterized the administrative board as a group "...of ignorant blacks, without any religious spirit..."⁹¹ If the witnesses who testified in the church trial proceedings reflected public opinion, citizens of the city did not think of the brotherhood in particularly favorable terms.

It should also be noted that while no evidence in the case suggests that the parish priest knew emancipation was eminent and preemptively planned closer supervision of the confraternity and the church, it was clear after 1871 that those who governed saw the abolition of slavery as inevitable based on increasing resistance by captives and growing

⁹¹ Ibid. (Disse mais que a Meza da Irmandade e composta de pretos ignorantes, sem espirito algum religioso...)

popular support across social sectors.⁹² Society was in the midst of drastic change and authorities entertained the issue of how to maintain extant social hierarchies to ensure order. In cities including São Paulo, policing the multi-racial, lower sector majority took on great urgency.⁹³ In such an environment, the black brotherhood's attempt to preserve their autonomous reign in the Church of Saint Ephigênia may well have been perceived as a dangerous precedent in a turbulent time of social and political change defined principally by slave emancipation on May 13, 1888, and by the declaration of the first Republic on November 15, 1889.⁹⁴ Social anxieties about black freedom and the exercise of black citizenship undoubtedly aggravated the tension in this case, though the events that put the conflict into motion began before the emancipation decree was declared. The timing of the extension of freedom to former captives and the end of organizational existence for one of the city's active black urban spaces was determined largely by serendipity; however, the uneasiness which characterized racial and social relations in the 1880s and 1890s likely played a role in the severity of the punishment.

The testimony provided by the witnesses seemed to matter little to the church arbiter, Father Adelino Jorge Montenegro. Father Montenegro did not cite witness testimony at all in the ruling, which listed the charges against the confraternity and the justifications for dissolution. In the end, the church hierarchy chose to rule against the *irmandade* based on ecclesiastical precedent. The charges of wrongdoing used to justify

⁹² For discussion of increasing slave resistance see da Costa, *The Brazilian Empire*, 168-169; Conrad, *Destruction of Brazilian Slavery*, 177-193; Machado, "From Slave Rebels to Strikebreakers," 251-254; and *O plano e o pânico*, 168-230; Barman, *Citizen Emperor*, 324; Andrews, *Blacks and Whites*, 37-39; and Chalhoub, *Visões da liberdade*. For discussion of increasing popular support for abolition see Barman, *Citizen Emperor*, 324 and 338; Morse, *From Community to Metropolis*, 146-147 and 159-161; Castilho and Cowling, "Funding Freedom, Popularizing Politics," 89-120; Cowling, "Debating Womanhood," 284-301; and Kittleston, *Practice of Politics*, 128-135.

⁹³ Reid, *Blacks and Whites*, 48-49; Fausto, *Crime e cotidiano*, 46-49; and Holloway, *Policing Rio*, 209-213.

⁹⁴ Da Costa, *Brazilian Empire*, 162-163 and 169.

the sodality's dissolution can be summarized as inactivity, interference with pastoral duties, disrespect, insubordination, and unjust claims to property. The sodality was charged with one count of inactivity, one count of interference with pastoral duties, four counts categorized as disrespect, disobedience, or insubordination and four counts of unjust claims to property.

The first charge attributed to the brotherhood was inactivity. The sodality's experienced board members understood that an inactive brotherhood could not formally respond to the priest's requests for the keys or to church authorities. Suspension of meetings represented a strategic move and this explains why trial arbiters treated the group's inactivity as an intentional offense. Criminalizing inactivity as justification for dissolution represented a unique and aggressive stance taken by ecclesiastic authority. There is no evidence in the diocese of other groups being dissolved on this charge.⁹⁵ In fact, the last amended *compromisso* of the Brotherhood of Saint Ephigênia and Saint Elesbão approved in 1859 had no statute specifying the terms of or procedures for the case of discontinuance. Without a formal prescription or set of procedures designed to address the termination of the group, the charge of inactivity should have been technically inapplicable. Charging the sodality with the crime of inactivity emphasizes just how determined the diocese was to reprimand and punish the association.

Interference with the duties of a priest constituted the second complaint directed against the brotherhood. The group's refusal to provide the key to allow unrestricted access to the church constituted the offense. However, it is easy to understand why the

⁹⁵ See Souza, *Catolicismo em São Paulo*; Arroyo, *Igrejas de São Paulo*; Martins, *São Paulo antigo*; Bruno, *História e tradições*; Wernet, *A igreja paulista*; Mesgravis, *A Santa Casa de Misericórdia de São Paulo*; Amaral, *Os pretos do Rosário*; Quintão, *Irmandades negras*; De Groot, *Brazilian Catholicism*; and Serbin, *Needs of the Heart*.

association's leaders, at that historical moment, considered refusal a legitimate possibility. Sodalities generally considered priests contracted laborers, since their own chapter chaplain would have led most of the activities of the group. Priests provided services on a paid and by need schedule, so to the brotherhood members giving the vicar access to the edifice they administered made no sense, even if he served the parish from that church.⁹⁶ Scholar C.F.G. de Groot noted that "For the brotherhoods, the priests were only employees who performed indispensable services; they definitely did not see them as the indisputable religious authorities the priests themselves professed to be. Many brotherhoods did not acknowledge the right of the Church to interfere in their affairs."⁹⁷ It is no surprise that conflicting views about the right and the need for access to the church by priests generated contentious and belligerent disagreement.

Church authorities charged the confraternity with multiple counts of disobedience and disrespect of church officials. Five of the charges in the dissolution order identified unwillingness to show appropriate deference as a crime. From the perspective of ecclesiastic arbiters, the brotherhood had clearly stepped out of its place as a group of laymen when challenging the priest. Charge five was simple disrespect, while charges three, four, nine, and ten also stemmed from what the priest and his superiors deemed lack of deference or insubordination. Church authorities deemed the active self-determination of the group as a serious offense deserving severe punishment. Their public fight to retain unencumbered rights of possession to the church absolutely figured into the severity of the decision. The church arbiter indicated the association's response to the priest and the trial it generated produced "...great scandal..." He also indicated that

⁹⁶ Theije, "Brotherhoods," 193.

⁹⁷ De Groot, *Brazilian Catholicism*, 92; Mulvey, "Black Brotherhoods of Colonial Brazil: A History" (PhD diss., City University of New York, 1976), 208-234.

as the confraternity sought to defend “...their supposed rights...” it published articles that were “...violent, disrespectful, and injurious to the parochial priest.”⁹⁸ Resistance yielded greater retribution.

The final charges declared by the diocese asserted that the brotherhood made unjust claims to the church. The unjust claims to property charges rested on the reasoning that the ownership claims made by the confraternity were unreasonable and unjustified. Charge six noted that King João had made the church the *igreja matriz* or center of parish activity, at which point the property became the possession of the Catholic Church. Charge seven argued that since funds to build the church came not just from confraternity members, but also “...from donations of the faithful” beyond the fold of the brotherhood the church could be not considered the exclusive property of the sodality.⁹⁹ Charge eight argued that the public nature of the worship services held in the church rendered the claims of rights of possession by the brotherhood null, since “...celebrating the mass daily and publically, it [the church] did not retain its destiny to be an object of possessory action.”¹⁰⁰ Even if the brotherhood facilitated the construction of the edifice, diocese officials saw the property as belonging to the larger Catholic Church and all parishioners, not the confraternity. In this case, arbiters from the church hierarchy wrestled control of

⁹⁸ ACMSP, Uncatalogued Folder: Santa Efigênia: Nrsa da Conceição, No. 2, (Considerando que produzio com esse procedimento grande escândalo... Considerando que a Irmandade tendo nomeado e constituido advogado para dar queixa contra o Rev. Parocho José de Camargo Barros e tratar de seus suppostos direitos, esta nessa qualidade tem publicado artigos violentos, desrespeitosos, e injuriosos do Rev. Parocho... Doc. A fls 13, 14, e 43.)

⁹⁹ ACMSP, Uncatalogued Folder: Santa Efigênia: Nrsa da Conceição, No. 2, (Considerando que a irmandade não caber semelhante accção porque na posse della tem estado a Igreja representada pelos parochos nem foi construida a expensas suas; mas com esmolos e doações dos fiéis...)

¹⁰⁰ ACMSP, Uncatalogued Folder: Santa Efigênia: Nrsa da Conceição, No. 2, (Considerando que mesmo quando a irmandade tivesse construido aquella igreja a sua custa, ella não lhe pertenceria, mas os todos os católicos, pois foi erecta em Matriz no anno de 1809, celebrando nella quotidiana e públicamente o Culto Divino, pelo que não pode em quanto conservar o seu destino ser objecto de accção possessoria...)

Possessory action is the initiation of a legal proceeding to recover or maintain physical possession of real property.

the church from the brotherhood and made it known that in disputes between lay people and clergy, Catholic authorities would win.

The punishment for inactivity, interference with pastoral duties, disrespect, and unjust claims to property was dissolution. No church punishment could be more severe. After the church mandated dissolution of the confraternity the decision required public notification and local heads of churches and sodalities received missives explaining the association's disbandment.¹⁰¹ Questioning the authority of and disputing mandates by priests and church authorities was not to be tolerated. Self-determination had a price and the members of the Brotherhood of Saint Ephigênia and Saint Elesbão paid for the defense of their perceived rights. If the Church of Santa Ephigênia had been a sanctuary for black autonomy by the mid nineteenth century, it no longer functioned in such a way by the end of 1890. As the nineteenth century neared its end, one less space of black collective autonomy and self-determination existed.

The progress and power of the Catholic Church in Brazil required dominance of property and space; it also demanded unfettered obedience as it sought to re-institutionalize and indoctrinate individual parishioners and lay associations. The members of the Brotherhood of Saint Ephigênia and Saint Elesbão had governed themselves for decades and associational leaders underestimated the commitment of the diocese to reassert its power over congregants as it worked to expand Romanization efforts. The brotherhood paid the ultimate corporate price as the local diocese showed the Catholic community that challenges to their authority would be dealt with harshly.

¹⁰¹ ACMSP, Uncatalogued Folder: Santa Efigênia: Nrsa da Conceição, No. 2, (Certifico que entreguei [sic] as cartas intimatorias da ... sentença que dissolveo a Irmandade de Santa Ephigênia e Santo Elesbão, erecta na igreja parochial de Nossa Senhora de Conceição de Santa Ephigênia, desta capital...14 de Maio de 1890. Joaquim A. dos Santos Delfino.)

The members of the Brotherhood of Saint Ephigênia and Saint Elesbão thought of themselves as an autonomous group. They imagined themselves as equal or more powerful than the recently installed, meddling priest who came to ask for keys to the church. They appealed to their organizational protector and hired an attorney to defend their association in ecclesial and civil court and in the public sphere. The conflict that unfolded was not just a misunderstanding about the rights of access to physical church property. The members of the Brotherhood of Santa Ephigênia saw themselves as rightful participants in Catholic society and refused to be treated as social or religious inferiors. They refused usurpation of their perceived rights and privileges and they fought for the maintenance of their self-determination. The black leaders in the Brotherhood of Saint Ephigênia did not automatically bow to authority and their high estimation of their rights and privileges and of themselves came under attack in caricatures of their morality and intelligence. The re-assertion of power by diocese officials, a goal of Romanization, contributed to the episcopate's decision to end the Brotherhood of Santa Ephigênia and Saint Elesbão as did race and access to resources.

Afro-Brazilian brotherhood members, like all other sodality participants, considered themselves to be the owners of the churches they built, where they venerated saints, and participated in the religious life of the city. From those doors they led processions holding crosses and torches as city dwellers laid down palm and orange leaves on which they walked. The churches where confraternities met became their collective home and members undoubtedly relished the autonomy, the respect, and the mutuality they established within those walls. Brotherhoods were not egalitarian spaces, but they still must have given those worn by servitude a place of rest where the saints

reflected their own physical image. Though church authorities decided that the house of worship early confraternity members established belonged to the corporate Catholic Church, not just the sodality, the attorney for and members of the Brotherhood of Santa Ephigênia and Saint Elesbão appealed to all those who would listen that the Church of Nossa Senhora de Conceição of Santa Ephigênia belonged to them.

Chapter 5 – From the Sacred to the Secular: Afro-Brazilian Civic Associations in Post-Emancipation, São Paulo, 1890-1920

The dissolution of the Brotherhood of Saint Ephigênia and Saint Elesbão heralded the decline of black confraternities in the city. Romanization weakened sodalities across the nation, but had the most debilitating effects on black sodalities.¹ The relative freedom enjoyed by black confraternity leaders in terms of establishing and executing routine and special festive events undoubtedly attracted members to the association. The popularity of sodalities waned when confraternity leaders no longer autonomously guided their organizations and as church leaders discouraged public celebration of saints popular among the masses in Brazil. Catholic officials wished to encourage devotion to saints of European provenance such as Our Lady of the Sacred Heart and to magnify the spiritual importance of church sacraments, such as the Eucharist, to help facilitate uniformity of belief across the Catholic world.² As one historian noted, “Pastors Europeanized religious customs by essentially seizing control of popular Catholicism, eliminating Luso-Brazilian lay practices considered to be unorthodox...and substituting them with uniform, clerically controlled rituals.”³ Only one of the three black confraternities founded in the eighteenth century survived the twentieth century—the Brotherhood of Our Lady of the Rosary of Black Men. The Brotherhood of Saint Benedict of São Paulo, which met in the

¹ Serbin, *Needs of the Heart*, 112.

² *Ibid.*, 59 and 112; De Groot, *Brazilian Catholicism*, 7-8; de Theije, “ ‘Brotherhoods Throw More Weight around than the Pope,’ ” 194; and Byrne, “American Ultramontanism,” 308-310.

³ Serbin, *Needs of the Heart*, 59.

Church of São Francisco (Igreja de São Francisco) for more than a century, permanently discontinued assembly after 1910.⁴

Afro-Brazilians involved in associational life saw a lacuna in their social world with the decline in importance of lay, Catholic brotherhoods. Leaders were cognizant of their lack of integration into the many civic and social groups organized by white Brazilians and immigrants, which grew in number and in popularity in the last decades of the nineteenth century.⁵ From the perspective of Afro-Brazilian associational leaders, who understood their vulnerability to racial prejudice and social exclusion, organizing civic societies of their own represented the most viable means of participating in the same range of associative spaces as their non-Afro-Brazilian counterparts.

Blacks in São Paulo created secular civic organizations in the decades after abolition in a struggle to exercise the political citizenship emancipation granted them as well as to cultivate new spaces of mutual aid and sociability.⁶ Founding members established the first organization six years after emancipation, and the three other associations emerged between 1900 and 1915. As Romanization, secularization,

⁴ACMSP, Uncatalogued Folders, Irmandades XXXIV--Irmandade de São Benedito. The ecclesiastic archive holds no financial records from the sodality after 1905, and the diocese received no new requests to hold patron saint festivals after 1909 according to available uncatalogued correspondence.

⁵ For more on voluntary secular associations created by ethnic groups in nineteenth century Brazil, see Hahner, *Poverty and Politics*, 75-84; Herbert Klein, "The Social and Economic Integration of Portuguese Immigrants in Brazil in the Late Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries," *Journal of Latin American Studies* 23, no. 2 (May 1991): 327-328; and Takashi Maeyama, "Ethnicity, Secret Societies, and Associations: the Japanese in Brazil," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 21, no.4 (October 1979): 589-610. For evidence of Afro-Brazilian civic organizing initiatives outside of São Paulo see Sidney Chalhoub, "The Politics of Silence: Race and Citizenship in Nineteenth-Century Brazil," *Slavery and Abolition* 27, no.1 (April 2006): 74-75; and Butler, *Freedoms Won, Freedoms Given*, 138-139 and 158-164. For analysis of the general role of ethnicity in Brazil see Jeffrey Lesser, *Negotiating National Identity*; and *Immigration, Ethnicity, and National Identity in Brazil, 1808 to the Present* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

⁶ Historians George Reid Andrews, Kim Butler, and Paulina Alberto have chronicled the proliferation of black civic and social associations dating predominantly after 1920. Together, these works have shown that from 1920 to the 1950s Afro-Brazilians in São Paulo organized numerous and varied kinds of social and civic enterprises including newspapers, social clubs, soccer leagues, samba groups, and cultural centers. See Andrews, *Blacks and Whites in São Paulo*, 139-156 and 181-224; Butler, *Freedoms Given, Freedom Won*, 78-128; Alberto, *Terms of Inclusion*, 33-56.

immigration, and urban growth (c.a.1870-1910) weakened the primacy and viability of Afro-Catholic religious organizations, sodality members and other local Afro-Paulistano men ventured beyond the bounds of the Catholic, fraternal tradition and established the Luiz Gama Chapter Masonic Lodge (1894), documented here for the first time, the Thirteenth of May Club of Black Men of São Paulo (1902); the Beneficent Society of Men of Color (1906) and the Federated Center of Men of Color (1914).⁷

The four associations analyzed in this chapter represent a pioneering wave of black civic organizing in the city of São Paulo. Unfortunately, the absence of even a fledgling Afro-Brazilian press at the point of installation for these early associations contributed to their near historical invisibility.⁸ Afro-Paulistano men, including active and former confraternity members and leaders, built organizations to support the enactment of their citizenship after enslavement's legal end as a response to their continuing marginalization. Afro-Brazilian association leaders in São Paulo expanded their purview from the sacred to the secular world using the Catholic, mutual aid tradition as a model without the religious content and overtones of confraternities.

⁷AESP, Sociedades Civis, Estatuas/Compromissos, Sociedade Maçônica Loja Capitular Luiz Gama, 10/4/1897, C10389; Club 13 de Maio de Homens Pretos, 17/10/1902, C10393; Sociedade Beneficente dos Homens de Cor, 8/1/1909, C10401; and Centro da Federação dos Homens de Côr de São Paulo, 28/08/1914,C10414. The identifying dated listed indicates the date on which the provincial government approved the group's organizational statutes, not the association's date of establishment.

⁸ *O Menelick*, the first black newspaper published in the city of São Paulo, was established in 1915 and named after Ethiopian emperor Menelik II (144-1913) who famously repelled Italian forces in the 1896 Battle of Adwa and led Ethiopia as an independent nation free from European colonialism. The earliest newspaper for which there is evidence in the state of São Paulo began in 1903 in the city of Campinas and was named *O Baluarte*, which means fortress, fortification or refuge. For discussion of the earliest years of the black press in the city and state of São Paulo see Butler, *Freedoms Won, Freedoms Given*, 90-91 and Alberto, *Terms of Inclusion*, 33. For more on Emperor Menelik II of Ethiopia as well as analysis of his legacy across the African diaspora in North America and Haiti see Raymond Jonas, *The Battle of Adwa: African Victory in the Age of Empire* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2011), 1-2, 5-7 and especially 280-284.

Founding Leaders and Organizational Objectives

One of the first secular associations of Afro-Brazilian men organized in São Paulo began in 1894. A small assembly met and installed a Masonic lodge in the city center, which housed eighteen active lodges at the time they met.⁹ The group registered the lodge with the secretary of state (Secretaria do Governo) as required by Decree 173 of September 10, 1893 three years later.¹⁰ The association named the Luiz Gama Chapter Masonic Lodge (Maçonica Loja Capitular Luiz Gama) officially entered the public realm in 1897 and was one of two Masonic lodges approved that year.¹¹

The Masons are a voluntary fraternal order, which began in Western Europe in the eighteenth-century and spread across the Americas.¹² In Brazil, historian Celia Maria Azevedo confirms Masonic group organizing after 1820, but the association began a period of great expansion in the 1860s.¹³ Indeed, a decade later in 1870, every province

⁹ Alexandre Mansur Barata, *Luz e sombras: a ação da maçonaria brasileira, 1870-1910* (Campinas: Editora da Unicamp, 1999), 175-188.

¹⁰ AESP, Sociedades Civis, Estatuas/Compromissos, Sociedade Maçonica Loja Capitular Luiz Gama, 10/4/1897,C10389.

¹¹ Barata, *Luz e sombras*, 185. The Guilherme Dias Lodge of the Masons was founded in 1897 in the provincial capital.

¹² For an introduction to Masonic organizing in Europe see James Melton, *The Rise of the Public in Enlightenment Europe* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001), chapter 8; and for the classic work on the topic see Margaret C. Jacob, *Living the Enlightenment: Freemasonry and Politics in Eighteenth-Century Europe* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991). For analysis of Masons in the United States see Jessica Harland Jacobs, *Builders of Empire: Freemasons and British Imperialism, 1717-1927* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007); Mark Tabbert, *American Freemasons: Three Centuries of Building Communities* (Lexington, Mass.: National Heritage Museum; New York: New York University Press, 2005); Joy Porter, *Native American Freemasonry: Associationalism and Performance in America* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2011); Stephen Kantrowitz, “‘Intended for the Better Government of Man’: The Political History of African American Freemasonry in the Era of Emancipation,” *Journal of American History* 94, no.4 (March 2010): 1005-1011; Maurice Wallace, “‘Are We Men?’: Prince Hall, Martin Delany, and the Masculine Ideal in Black Freemasonry, 1775-1865,” *American Literary History* 9, no.3 (Autumn 1997), 397-424; and Peter P. Hinks and Stephen Kantrowitz, ed., *All Men Free and Brethren: Essays on the History of African American Freemasonry* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2013).

¹³ Celia Maria Mariho de Azevedo, *Maçonaria, anti-racismo e cidadania: uma história de lutas e debates transnacionais* (São Paulo: Annablume, 2010), 37-45, especially 41.

had at least one lodge and provincial capitals housed multiple groups.¹⁴ Masonic lodge founders set up associations that fell under the administrative governance of the Grand Lodge of Brazil (Grande Oriente do Brasil) established in 1822, but research also suggests that other chapters were completely independent and autonomous.¹⁵ The organizational charter of the Luiz Gama Lodge provides no evidence of affiliation with the Grand Lodge of Brazil.¹⁶

The name of the lodge served as a public homage to the famed Afro-Brazilian lawyer, Luiz Gonzaga Pinto da Gama. Gama was born in 1830 to a freed African woman in Salvador, Bahia and was illegally enslaved by his Portuguese father only to be sold into the nation's interprovincial slave trade to the southeast region.¹⁷ During his captivity in the city of São Paulo, Gama learned to read and write and in 1848 he escaped from bondage by fleeing and joining the army. After securing documents to prove his free status and working for several years as a military clerk, he attended the São Paulo School of Law, located in the provincial capital, and became a practicing attorney.¹⁸ Gama's personal travails inspired him to lead a life of activism. He headed São Paulo's abolitionist movement and used public speeches, newspaper articles, and litigation to

¹⁴ Barata, *Luz e sombras*, 175-180.

¹⁵ Azevedo, *Maçonaria*, 38.

¹⁶ AESP, Sociedades Cívicas, Estatutos/Compromissos, Sociedade Maçônica Loja Capitular Luiz Gama, 10/4/1897, C10389.

¹⁷ Hendrik Kraay, "'Shelter of the Uniform': The Brazilian Army and Runaway Slaves, 1800-1888," *Journal of Social History* 29, no.3 (Spring 1996): 646-647; Andrews, *Blacks and Whites*, 35 and 274; Conrad, *Destruction of Brazilian Slavery*, 110-111 and 117; and Alberto, *Terms of Inclusion*, 9. For more on the interprovincial slave trade in Brazil to the southeast region see Klein, "The Internal Trade," 567-585; Karasch, *Slave Life in Rio de Janeiro*, 50-54; Luna and Klein, *Slavery and the Economy of São Paulo*, 17; and Graham, "Another Middle Passage?," 291-324.

¹⁸ Kraay, "'Shelter of the Uniform,'" 646-647; Andrews, *Blacks and Whites*, 35 and 274; Conrad, *Destruction of Brazilian Slavery*, 110-111 and 117; and Alberto, *Terms of Inclusion*, 9.

secure freedom for the enslaved.¹⁹ Despite his many obligations as a lawyer and organizer, Gama was also a Mason, and he served as a founding and active member of the America Lodge (Loja Capitular América) established in 1868.²⁰

The unique feature of the Gama Lodge, which met on the Rua das Flores, only blocks away from the meeting space of the Friendship Lodge (Loja Amizade), was the racial identity multiple members shared.²¹ Three of the fifteen founding members participated in the Brotherhood of Our Lady of the Rosary of Black Men and two others were members of the Thirteenth of May Club of Black Men of São Paulo, an emancipation commemoration society.²² The highest-ranking officer, Theophilo Dias de Castro, the *venerável* or the Grand Master of the Luiz Gama Masonic Chapter also served as an executive officer of the Brotherhood of Our Lady of the Rosary of Black Men from 1904 through the 1930s.²³ These Gama Lodge members and leaders identified as black men.

Little conclusive evidence exists to document whether non-elite blacks could easily join or were consistently denied entry into Masonic lodges. Scholars of Afro-

¹⁹ Ibid; and Azevedo, *O direito dos escravos*, 78, 83 and 100-103. For evidence of the popularity of Luiz Gama for subsequent generations of Afro-Brazilians in the early twentieth century see Butler, "Up from Slavery," 188 and 192; Andrews, *Blacks and Whites*, 214; and Alberto, *Terms of Inclusion*, 45 and 106.

²⁰ "Noticario," *A Provincia de São Paulo*, January 12, 1875; and "Luiz Gama," *A Provincia de São Paulo*, November 24, 1889.

²¹ Bruno, *História e tradições*, unpagged appendix; and AESP, *Sociedades Civis, Estatuas/Compromissos, Sociedade Maçônica Loja Capitular Luiz Gama*, 10/4/1897, C10389.

²² See AESP, *Sociedades Civis, Estatuas/Compromissos, Sociedade Maçônica Loja Capitular Luiz Gama*, C10389; Amaral, *Os pretos do Rosário*, (unpagged back matter, member index); and *Os pretos do Rosário*, 2nd ed., 124, 157-168. The members of both the Rosary brotherhood and the Luiz Gama Lodge chapter were Theophilo Dias de Castro, Rufino José de Almeida, and Benedito Esteves do Nascimento. Two other officers of the Luiz Gama Lodge, João Baptista dos Santos and Bento Candido Nogueira were officers of the 13th of May Club of Black Men of São Paulo. See AESP, *Sociedades Civis, Estatuas/Compromissos Club 13 de Maio de Homens Pretos*, 17/10/1902, C10393. While I expected the overlap for the Rosary Brotherhood to be greater, literacy restrictions may have limited broader participation, since in 1890 at least three Rosary executive council members could not write their names. For examples, see ACMSP, Uncatalogued Folder, Irmandades XXVI, Nossa Senhora do Rosário dos Homens Pretos.

²³ Amaral, *Os pretos do Rosário*, 2nd ed., 124, and 157-168.

Brazilian experience in São Paulo have shown that blacks repeatedly established their own social and recreational clubs when discrimination thwarted their entry into white associations.²⁴ However, it remains unclear if Masonic groups followed this pattern, since several Afro-Brazilians who reached elite status found acceptance as participating members and chapter leaders as demonstrated by Luiz Gama in São Paulo, journalist Francisco de Paula Brito, and man of letters, Francisco Gé Acaicaba Montezuma, Viscount of Jequitinhonha, both of Rio de Janeiro.²⁵ The creation of a chapter where at least one third of the founding members were active in black identified social spaces outside of the association suggests that Afro-Brazilian inclusion in paulistano Masonic chapters was limited at best to the few blacks that arrived in white society's highest echelons.

Afro-Brazilian marginalization and exclusion from multiracial or predominantly white organizations did not lead to policies of admission that allowed universal male access. The Luiz Gama Lodge had its own restrictive criteria for potential members. The basic criteria limited the membership to men who were literate, non-dependents. Members could be Brazilian or foreign born; they could be from any profession or social class once they knew how to read and write.²⁶ The brethren who led the organization wanted to involve men of stature, and the criteria they established for member eligibility detailed the characteristics upstanding men were to possess.

²⁴ Butler, *Freedoms Given, Freedom Won*, 78-87; Andrews, *Blacks and Whites*, 138-143 especially 141; Alberto, *Terms of Inclusion*, 29 and 31; and Hahner, *Poverty and Politics*, 218.

²⁵ Azevedo, *Maçonaria*, 159-218.

²⁶ AESP, *Sociedades Cívicas, Estatutos/Compromissos*, Sociedade Maçônica Loja Capitular Luiz Gama, 10/4/1897, C10389, Título 1, Art. 1, (A sociedade maçonica Loja Capitular Luiz Gama...compõe-se de cidadãos brasileiros e estrangeiros de qualquer profissão ou classe social uma vez que saibam ler e escrever...)

The founding organizers of the Luiz Gama Masonic Lodge expected group associates to display “*bons costumes*.” The requirement signaled that only those meeting normative standards of public propriety in relation to comportment, decorum, and dress would meet standards for membership. Leaders wanted the appearance and behavior of their members to signal respectability.

The spiritual lives of members also mattered to group leaders. The association’s founding charter required potential members to profess a faith tradition, though it could be any of their choosing.²⁷ Hence, while liberal enlightenment influence may have widened the spectrum of beliefs that could garner respect in the view of the group’s leadership, upstanding men were still those who believed in God and followed programs of morality established by religious institutions according to lodge leaders. It is unclear if this requirement was common to other Masonic Lodges in Brazil around the turn of the twentieth, especially since the institutional Catholic Church had actively discouraged Masonic membership before the 1870s, though priests and Catholic parishioners alike had become active Masons across the nation.²⁸ Only further research can indicate if Masonic member statutes in Brazil commonly required participation in religious communities.

The organizational charter established by Gama Lodge founders required members to enjoy the privileges of a citizen (*cidadão*) ensured by their age, gender and

²⁷ AESP, Sociedades Civis, Estatutos/Compromissos, Sociedade Maçônica Loja Capitular Luiz Gama, 10/4/1897, C10389, Título 1, Art.1, (...adoptem uma confissão religiosa qualquer...)

²⁸ For further discussion of denouncements and persecution of Masonic activity in Brazil from various bishops and for evidence of priests and Catholic parishioners actively participating in Masonic groups in Brazil see Mary Crescentia Thornton, *The Church and Freemasonry in Brazil, 1872-1875: A Study in Regalism* (1947, repr., Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1974); Barata, *Luzes e sombras*, 91-110; Serbin, *Needs of the Heart*, 55 and 63; and da Costa, *Brazilian Empire*, 209.

literacy.²⁹ The prerequisite that members must enjoy “...the pleasure of civil rights” indicated that potential members had to be men who were at least twenty-one years of age.³⁰ Indigents and the illiterate would not be considered for member candidacy,³¹ and those with a criminal history were also disqualified as potential members.³² The requirement demanding members to be in full possession of their “civil rights” reinforced the connection between Masonry, autonomy, and exemplary citizenship. As historian Alexandre Barata notes “...to be a Mason was synonymous with being a citizen” during the Brazilian empire (1822-1889) and the First Republic (1889-1930).³³

The restrictive criteria established by founding Gama Lodge leaders presented barriers for entrance for all but privileged men. However, even privileged Afro-Paulistanos understood that the lives of their potential brethren might entail a variety of not so surprising incongruities and tensions. The literacy clause, for example, indicated that member eligibility existed “... *once* one knew how to read and write” pointing to the matter that Afro-Brazilian men and potentially foreign born immigrants could reasonably

²⁹ For discussion of changing citizenship criteria and qualification for suffrage in the nineteenth century see Graham, *Patronage and Politics*, 103-107; 191-192; and 198-202; and Caulfield, *In Defense of Honor*, 26.

³⁰ AESP, Sociedades Civis, Estatutos/Compromissos, Sociedade Maçônica Loja Capitular Luiz Gama, 10/4/1897, C10389, Título 1, Art.1, (... estejam no gozo dos direitos civis...). Constituição da republica dos Estado Unidos do Brazil: acompanhada das leis organicas publicadas desde 15 de novembro de 1889, Título IV, secção 1, art.70. Rio de Janeiro:Imprensanacional,1891.http://heinonline.org.proxy.edu/HOL/Page?men_tab=srchresults&handle=hein.cow/zzbr0032&id=13&size=2&collection=cow&terms=cidadao|CIDADAO&termtype=phrase&set_as_cursor=1#14.pdf (accessed August 25, 2013). (São eleitores os cidadãos maiores de 21 annos, que se alistarem na fôrma da lei.)

³¹ Constituição da republica dos Estado Unidos do Brazil: acompanhada das leis organicas publicadas desde 15 de novembro de 1889, Título IV, secção 1, art.70.1 and70.2. Rio de Janeiro: Imprensa nacional, 1891. http://www.heinonline.org.proxy.edu/HOL/Page?men_tab=srchresults&handle=hein.cow/zzbr0032&id=13&size=2&collection=cow&terms=cidadao|CIDADAO&termtype=phrase&set_as_cursor=1#14.pdf (accessed August 25, 2013). (Não podem alistar-se eleitores para as eleições federães, ou para as dos Estados: Os mendigos; Os analfabetos...)

³² Constituição da republica dos Estado Unidos do Brazil: acompanhada das leis organicas publicadas desde 15 de novembro de 1889, Título IV, secção 1, art.71.1b. Rio de Janeiro: Imprensa nacional, 1891. http://www.heinonline.org.proxy.edu/HOL/Page?men_tab=srchresults&handle=hein.cow/zzbr0032&id=13&size=2&collection=cow&terms=cidadao|CIDADAO&termtype=phrase&set_as_cursor=1#14.pdf (accessed August 25, 2013). (Os direitos de cidadão brasileiro só se suspendem, ou perdem nos casos aqui particularisados. Suspendem-se...b) por condennação criminal, emquanto durarem os seus efeitos.)

³³ Barata, *Luzes e sombras*, 42. (...ser maçom era sinônimo de ser cidadão.)

be expected to acquire literacy as adults, instead of during childhood.³⁴ Opening membership to those of any profession or social class, while requiring literacy meant that those forced by societal discrimination to work in jobs unequal to their education would not find their employment situation an impediment. Furthermore, though the Luiz Gama Masonic Lodge would not use national origin as a requirement for membership, the last names of the members indicated that no first generation Italian, Japanese, Middle Eastern, or Eastern European immigrants filled membership rolls.³⁵

While associational life provided new secular spaces for men, black civic associations had a less progressive record in respect to female incorporation. The Gama Lodge did not include any female members, nor did the group's leadership create a women's auxiliary association, which was a common way to provide female access to the Masonic tradition and community. There was a precedent for the creation of a women's auxiliary group in the city. The Seventh of September Chapter of the Masons, the oldest lodge in the city, established a separate, but affiliated organization for women.³⁶ The female lodge named the Seventh of September Lodge of Adoption (Loja de Adopção Sete de Setembro) had an all-female board of officers listed among the various associations or "societies" (*sociedades*) active in the provincial capital in 1873.³⁷

³⁴ AESP, *Sociedades Civis, Estatutos/Compromissos, Sociedade Maçônica Loja Capitular Luiz Gama*, 10/4/1897, C10389, Título 1, Art.1, (... *uma vez que saibam ler e escrever...*). Emphasis added.

³⁵ AESP, *Sociedades Civis, Estatutos/Compromissos, Sociedade Maçônica Loja Capitular Luiz Gama*, 10/4/1897, C10389.

³⁶ The Seventh of September Lodge was established in 1863. For evidence of the Seventh of September Lodge as the oldest Masonic association in the city of São Paulo, see Barata, *Luzes e sombras*, 175. The Lodge took its name from the day commemorating Brazilian independence. For more on the proclamation of Brazil as an independent empire separate from Portugal on September 7, 1822 see da Costa, *Brazilian Empire*, 17-20; and Barman, *Citizen Emperor*, 4.

³⁷ For evidence of the female lodge and its affiliation to the Seventh of September Lodge see Luné, *Almanak de Provincia*, 112-113. For more on women's auxiliary lodges in African American Masonry see Theda Skocpol, Theda, Ariane Liazos, and Marshall Ganz, ed., *What a Mighty Power We Can Be: African American Fraternal Groups and the Struggle for Racial Equality* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006), 69-79; and Brittney C. Cooper, " 'They are Nevertheless Our Brethren': The Order of the Eastern

The Luiz Gama Masons did not establish a lodge of affiliation for women; black civic leaders largely constructed early post-emancipation organizing as a male activity. This notion likely emerged because suffrage, which constitutes a critical performance of citizenship in modern nations, was legally restricted to men until 1932 when the Brazilian government extended voting privileges to literate women, twenty-one years of age and older.³⁸ The reduced level of involvement for females in secular black civic groups represented a reversal of previous organizing patterns common to Afro-Brazilian associational life, since women could and did freely join black lay Catholic brotherhoods.³⁹

The Beneficent Society of Men of Color, which had its statutes approved by São Paulo's secretary of state on January 8, 1909, was one of two associations in this early wave of organizing that allowed both female and male participation.⁴⁰ While women were formally permitted to join the society, founding members seemed to establish member regulations designed to intentionally limit female prospects for participation. The paragraphs that follow indicate how Beneficent Society charter drafters shaped policies designed to constrict and hamper female membership.

The Beneficent Society admitted new members based solely on nominations by existing associates. The associate proposing a new member's candidacy stood before the

Star and the Battle for Women's Leadership, 1874-1925," in Peter P. Hinks and Stephen Kantrowitz, ed., *All Men Free and Brethren: Essays on the History of African American Freemasonry* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2013), 114-130. For evidence of women's participation and exclusion in Masonic associations in early modern Europe see Jacob, *Living the Enlightenment*, 4-5 and 124-126.

³⁸ For more on formal female restriction in civic participation see Caulfield, *In Defense of Honor*, 26. Also see Besse, *Restructuring Patriarchy*, 9, 169-170 for discussion of the movement to gain and the grant of female suffrage across Brazil in 1932.

³⁹ See Reis, *Death is a Festival*, 45 and 48-50; Quintão, *Irmandades negras*, 44; and Kiddy, *Blacks of the Rosary*, 154 and 158.

⁴⁰ AESP, Sociedades Civis, Estatuas/Compromissos, Sociedade Beneficente dos Homens de Cor, 8/1/1909, C10401.

board of directors and declared the candidate's name, civil status, birthplace, profession, and current residence.⁴⁰ Potential members were to exhibit good morals and manners (*bons costumes*), to be in a perfect state of health, and to be between fourteen and fifty years old for male candidates.⁴¹ There is no detail indicating exactly what constituted a perfect state of health or which medical conditions or ailments would impede a male candidate's entrance into the association. Male candidates simply required the appearance of good health and reputable public self-presentation.

Female association candidacy involved more restrictive and stringent entrance guidelines. Only wives, daughters, and sisters of male members were eligible to become associates,⁴² a factor that underscored the patriarchal character of secular black associational life. Why were women unconnected to male participants not allowed? What kind of threat or problem did they represent in the eyes of Afro-Brazilian leaders? The problem non-kin women constituted can only be explained through gender bias, since male candidates did not need the sponsorship of a relative.

Membership criteria deviated from the general rules for female candidates in other ways as well. Admission ages for women differed slightly from those established for men. Women were to be more than fifteen years of age and less than forty years

⁴⁰ AESP, Sociedades Civis, Estatutos/Compromissos, Sociedade Beneficente dos Homens de Cor, 8/1/1909, C10401, Capitulo 2, Art.4, (Do admissão...4.0.-Para alguma sera admittido a fazer parte da sociedade um que seja previamente proposto por um socio...com declaração de nome, estado, naturalidade estado, profissão, e residenica do proposto...)

⁴¹ AESP, Sociedades Civis, Estatutos/Compromissos, Sociedade Beneficente dos Homens de Cor, 8/1/1909, C10401, Capitulo 2, Art.4.1-4.3, (Do admissão...4.1. Ser de bons costumes; 4.2. Acharem-se em estado de perfeita saúde; 4.3. Ser maior de 14 annos e menor de 50.) Exactly what founders meant in terms of the requirement of a "perfect state of health" is unclear. No further detail was given.

⁴² AESP, Sociedades Civis, Estatutos/Compromissos, Sociedade Beneficente dos Homens de Cor, 8/1/1909, C10401, Capitulo 2, Art.5, (Só podem fazer parte da sociedade, as senhoras dos socios, filhos dos socios e irmãs dos socios)

old,⁴³ while men could join the association between the ages of fourteen and fifty. Additionally, female members were only allowed to serve in the category of “effective” members, which essentially barred them from serving on any administrative or decision-making boards.⁴⁴ The final piece of gender specific criteria required of female applicants was a certificate of good health from a physician. The unique article applying only to female applicants indicated “They [female applicants] should present a certificate of good health from a board certified doctor proving themselves to be in perfect health.”⁴⁵

The more burdensome requirements and restricted membership privileges that female nominees faced were likely designed to curb their interest and entrance into the association. Subjection to medical examination to demonstrate good health forced women to incur costs that male participants did not have; the economic disincentive was significant. The requirement of health exams for women may have emerged due to concerns about female ability to recover from childbirth, since the women outlined by age requirements would have been at the height of their reproductive years. Most likely though, the prerequisite demanding female medical examination tapped into newer tensions surrounding black female bodies related to the performance of emergent middle class identities among Afro-Brazilians.

During slavery, work brought black women into public spaces where they labored selling food and other wares or where they washed household laundry at public fountains,

⁴³ AESP, Sociedades Civis, Estatuas/Compromissos, Sociedade Beneficente dos Homens de Cor, 8/1/1909, C10401, Capitulo 2, Art.5, (Só podem fazer parte da sociedade, as senhoras dos socios, filhos dos socios e irmãs dos socios ...e não serem maior de quarenta annos e menos de quinze annos.)

⁴⁴ See AESP, Sociedades Civis, Estatuas/Compromissos, Sociedade Beneficente dos Homens de Cor, 8/1/1909, C10401, Capitulo 2, Art.5 and Art.9-Art. 15. Member categories included “effectivos”; “remitidos”; “benefeitores” and “Honorarios.” Effective members paid minimal entrance fees and had minimal responsibilities in the association.

⁴⁵ AESP, Sociedades Civis, Estatuas/Compromissos, Sociedade Beneficente dos Homens de Cor, 8/1/1909, C10401, Capitulo 2, Art.5, (Unico-Deveram tambem apresentar attestado de medico do quadro, provando achar-se de perfeita saude...)

for example. Black women had little choice, but to move in spaces socially construed by elites as dirty, dangerous, and corrupting.⁴⁶ It is unclear how Afro-Brazilian men interpreted Afro-Brazilian female mobility in public space. Historian Sandra Lauderdale Graham's examination of a divorce case between a freed African woman, Henriqueta, and a freed African man, Rufino, in the city of Rio de Janeiro reveals glimpses of what might have been normative expectations between spouses in late nineteenth century, pre-abolition Brazil. Though singular and admittedly anecdotal, the trial chronicled a marriage broken by accusations of a husband's abuse and mutual disappointment from each spouse over their mate's inability to conform to their marital expectations. Testimony from the case provides preliminary evidence of what gender norms may have entailed for free Afro-Brazilian spouses. Statements from the defendants and witnesses suggest free women were expected to work outside of their homes, as servants for others or as itinerant sellers of prepared or uncooked food.⁴⁷ Though women and men would move without supervision from their marital partners during the day, a reasonable husband or wife could expect their spouse to return to their primary residence before late evening hours.⁴⁸

Afro-Brazilian free men probably expected their partners to conduct themselves as respectable women, which meant no public fighting, drinking, or attendance of social gatherings without the accompaniment of their husband.⁴⁹ These patterns likely persisted and intensified after emancipation, and may help explain why black identified, middling

⁴⁶ Lauderdale Graham, *House and Street*, 4; Karasch, *Slave Life in Rio*, 191, 206-210; and Beattie, *Tribute of Blood*, 8.

⁴⁷ Lauderdale Graham, "Honor among Slaves," 214. For further evidence of free women, but especially free women of color working see Lauderdale Graham, *House and Street*, 5; Borges, *Family in Bahia*, 212 and 214; and Dias, *Quotidiano e poder*.

⁴⁸ Lauderdale Graham, "Honor among Slaves," 221-222.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

sector, aspirant men may have felt obligated to supervise female relatives as a means of ensuring their physical safety and reputations as respectable women even among their peers at the dawn of the twentieth century.⁵⁰ As gender studies scholars Pamela Scully and Diane Paton suggest, “The promise of emancipation was, to some extent, a gendered one: that is, men were promised the entitlement of masculinity, of being head of household. Women, in contrast, were liberated into dependence.”⁵¹

The medical examination requirement also suggests that Afro-Brazilian men may have absorbed social and medical discourse that problematized non-elite, female bodies as highly susceptible to degeneration, contamination, and illness.⁵² As forced servitude began its decline in the 1870s,⁵³ controlling the bodies of poor and non-white women became a preoccupation for statesmen, policing authorities, and doctors who associated non-elite women with poverty, social vice, and contagious disease.⁵⁴ Sandra Lauderdale Graham in *House and Street* finds that abolition and contagion represented serious threats in the minds of elites and that these social “ills” were so important that they inspired local authorities to begin licensing and registering domestic servants.⁵⁵ Women without masters needed monitoring, and municipal authorities fulfilled this role. Scholarship

⁵⁰ The significant number of deflowering cases in Rio de Janeiro, approximately five hundred per year from 1920 to 1940, which included Afro-Brazilian plaintiffs, suggests that parents and other relatives of these usually poor women considered the honor of their young female relatives worth defending in public legal proceedings. For changing legal definitions of the term deflowering see Caulfield, *In Defense of Honor*, 12, 24-25 and 34-42; and for evidence of Afro-Brazilian plaintiffs seeking legal redress as victims of deflowering see 157 and 159-160.

⁵¹ Paton and Scully, “Introduction,” 17.

⁵² Borges, “Ugly, Puffy, Slothful,” 238 and 240; and Stephen, *Hour of Eugenics*, 44-45.

⁵³ Ibid. Also see Read, *Hierarchies of Slavery*, 112; Andrews, *Blacks and Whites*, 33; Lauderdale Graham, *House and Street*, 112; and Butler, *Freedoms Given, Freedoms Won*, 69.

⁵⁴ Lauderdale Graham, *House and Street*, 112-136; Stephan, *Hour of Eugenics*, 43-44 and 110; Caulfield, *In Defense of Honor*, 54-78; Alberto Heráclito Ferreira Filho, *Quem pariu e bateu, que balance! Mundos femininos, maternidade e pobreza Salvador--1890-1940* (Salvador: Centro de Estudos Baianos da UFBA, 2003), 63-65, 70-72, 94-113; and Okezi T. Otovo, “From Mãe Preta to Mãe Desamparada: Maternity and Public Health in Post Abolition Bahia,” *Luso-Brazilian Review* 48, no. 2 (2011), 161-191.

⁵⁵ Lauderdale Graham, *House and Street*, 116-117.

analyzing the work of wet-nurses (*amas de leite*), for example, chronicles local public health officials beginning to regulate the bodies of non-elite women who nursed children other than their own beginning in the 1870s and 1880s.⁵⁶

In 1876 in the city of São Paulo, a new law required wet-nurses to take and pass a physical examination in order to obtain a license indicating the applicant had no “...moral or medical reasons...” inhibiting their service.⁵⁷ In 1887 in Salvador, the city council approved a law requiring wet-nurses to undergo medical “inspection,” while any employee, free or enslaved, working in household service was required to register and receive a passbook to work in the city.⁵⁸ Non-elite working women’s bodies underwent a new level of state management and surveillance.⁵⁹ As such, in an era when the health of the nation, communities, and families were linked to women’s bodies, it is not surprising that in the Beneficent Society of Men of Color male candidates only had to have the appearance of good health, while women required scientific verification of wellness. The medical examination prerequisite captures Afro-Brazilian men attempting to exercise authority over female community members in ways that parallel official government policy. Black female bodies roused a level of scrutiny that black male bodies did not, though issues of health and wellness were never far from the minds of male Beneficent Society members.

The age requirements listed in the admission guidelines indicate and underscore an organization committed to the support of those in the midst of their working lives. The

⁵⁶ For evidence of medical inspection of wet nurses in various provinces including Bahia, São Paulo, and Rio de Janeiro, see Otovo, “From Mãe Preta,” 172-174; Robin L. Anderson, “Public Health and Public Healthiness, São Paulo, Brazil, 1876-1893,” *Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Sciences* 41 (July 1986): 297; and Lauderdale Graham, *House and Street*, 113-120, especially 117-120.

⁵⁷ Anderson, “Public Health,” 297.

⁵⁸ Otovo, “From Mãe Preta,” 172-173.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*; Anderson, “Public Health,” 297; Lauderdale Graham, *House and Street*, 116-135; and Caulfield, *In Defense of Honor*, 55-61.

elderly were excluded, since they were likely thought to require greater financial outlays associated with declining health. The Beneficent Society cultivated a narrow conception of the able-bodied that effectively excluded the elderly and women who were constructed as potential liabilities whose membership required restriction.

Though women and the elderly were undoubtedly perceived as more vulnerable to illness, the issue of how to access and retain medical care nevertheless preoccupied the minds and shaped the member benefits established by black-identified association leaders. Organizational charter drafters expressed great concern about health problems and financial disruption caused by sickness. The first objective of the Luiz Gama Masonic Lodge was to administer aid, medical help, and pharmaceuticals to associates who found themselves temporarily unable to work due to illness (*molestia*).⁶⁰ Associates in the Luiz Gama Masonic Lodge planned to have access to professionally-trained medical practitioners.⁶¹ They developed such a policy because “...medical care was difficult if not impossible...to obtain when illness struck” for the urban poor.⁶² One factor contributing to the difficulty of receiving medical treatment was the small number of doctors available. In 1873, a total of nine doctors and surgeons resided in the city of São Paulo, while seven pharmacists dispensed medicine from different locations in the

⁶⁰ AESP, Sociedades Civis, Estatutos/Compromissos, Sociedade Maçônica Loja Capitular Luiz Gama, 10/4/1897, C10389, Título 1, Art. 2.1, (Ministar subsidios pecunarios, soccoros medicos e pharaceuticos aos associados que, por motivo de molestia ficarem temporariamente impossibilitados de exercer o seu trabalho.)

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Hahner, *Poverty and Politics*, 210.

heart of the provincial capital.⁶³ A few years later in 1878, the number of doctors serving the central city expanded to nineteen practitioners.⁶⁴

According to historiography, hospitals in urban, nineteenth-century Brazil largely served the poor and indigent; people of any means received medical care in their homes.⁶⁵ Either family members or servants working in the home nursed the ill person and doctors came when called.⁶⁶ Beginning in the 1870s, social organizations began to retain the services of doctors to attend their membership and leaders of the Luiz Gama Masonic Lodge aimed to participate in this trend.⁶⁷ Reserving a doctor to deliver services for members would likely make physicians more accessible, and would ultimately help members recover and return to work more quickly.

If a Mason was unable to have his illness cured or remedied, association leaders pledged to provide financial aid for those temporarily or permanently disabled. Founding directors committed to providing a monthly pension to participating members if chronic illness or physical defects brought [the member] to a state of disability (*invalidéz*).⁶⁸ Gama Chapter masons committed to the idea of financially assisting associates no matter how long the member needed and qualified for support.

⁶³ Luné, *Almanak da Provincia*, 116.

⁶⁴ Camargo, *Viver e morrer em São Paulo*, 42. (...Em 1878, o número de médicos subiria para 19 (dezenove) mas, do mesmo modo, todos eles encontravam-se atuando na área urbana entre a Sé a Santa Ifigênia.)

⁶⁵ Ian Read, *Hierarchies of Slavery in Santos, Brazil, 1822-1888* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2012), 133; Hahner, *Poverty and Politics*, 210; Morse, *From Community to Metropolis*, 72 and 180; and Karasch, *Slave Life in Rio*, 135.

⁶⁶ Read, *Hierarchies of Slavery*, 133.

⁶⁷ Morse, *From Community to Metropolis*, 180.

⁶⁸ AESP, Sociedades Civis, Estatutos/Compromissos, Sociedade Maçônica Loja Capitular Luiz Gama, 10/4/1897, C10389, Título 1, Art 2.2, (Auxiliar com uma pensão mensal pelo tempo que fôr necessario aos socios, que por molestia chronica ou defeito physico cahirem em estado de invalidéz.)

When maladies and other circumstances led to an associate's death, the Masonic Lodge pledged to provide funerals for indigent members.⁶⁹ The need for a secular group to provide funeral assistance for poor members represented a significant shift in funerary culture, because until the 1890s in São Paulo, lay Catholic brotherhoods would have buried members, their spouses, and their legitimate children.⁷⁰ The Luiz Gama Masonic Lodge, like black and white brotherhoods in previous generations, covered the costs of securing a dignified funeral for members. Like brotherhoods, the Luiz Gama Masonic Lodge assured participants of formal, ritualized commemoration of life at their death.

The Beneficent Society of Men of Color shared concerns articulated by Luiz Gama Masonic Lodge members, though there is no evidence of membership overlap. The organizational objectives of the Beneficent Society were nearly identical to those of the Gama Lodge. Like the Gama Lodge, the first aim of the Beneficent Society was to aid their associates with medical and pharmaceutical assistance upon illness, which was matched by a second provision providing a daily income of one *mil-réis* for sick members.⁷¹ Also like the Gama Lodge, the Beneficent Society made a commitment to cover the burial costs of members. Beneficent Society association members pledged to provide "... \$120 mil-réis for the funeral and *suffragios* ..." of the deceased member.⁷²

⁶⁹ AESP, Sociedades Civis, Estatuas/Compromissos, Sociedade Maçônica Loja Capitular Luiz Gama, 10/4/1897, C10389, Título 1, Art.2.3, "[Associates will]...Hold the funeral of associates that die without resources for it."(...Fazer o funeral dos socios que falecerem sem recurso para isso).

⁷⁰ See Reis, *Death is a Festival*; ACMSP, Compromisso da Irmandade de Nossa Senhora do Rosário dos Homens Pretos de São Paulo, 1778, 01-03-08; and AESP, Sociedades Civis, Estatuas/Compromissos, Irmandade de São Benedito da Cidade de São Paulo, 1/02/1896, C10388.

⁷¹ AESP, Sociedades Civis, Estatuas/Compromissos, Sociedade Beneficente dos Homens de Cor, 8/1/1909, C10401, Capítulo 1, Art.3.1, (Socorrer os seus socios com medico e pharmacia e uma diaria de um mil-réis). The amount of assistance, while undoubtedly welcome, represented a meager replacement for a regular salary, since daily wages alone averaged between five to seven *mil-réis* for textile workers of the period. Hahner, *Poverty and Politics*, 197-199

⁷² *Suffragios* refer to prayer, almsgiving, or any other act of piety performed for the salvation of a deceased person's soul; AESP, Sociedades Civis, Estatuas/Compromissos, Sociedade Beneficente dos Homens de

The extension of mutual aid did not stop at the moment of death. The ability to ensure a decent burial for members mattered because status and respectability required particular kinds of performances during life and upon death.

Both the Masonic Lodge and the Beneficent Society pledged to furnish monthly pensions for the widows and orphans of deceased members who found themselves in need upon bereavement.⁷³ Beyond material support, these pledges again draw attention to the gender prescriptions held by founding members. For these men, the nuclear family constituted the normative familial unit, which was to be protected with temporary financial support in cases of illness or bereavement.⁷⁴ Drafters of the two organizational charters placed men at the center of family life and income earning. They projected a view of upstanding Afro-Brazilian men providing income for their families and in their absence association members took on the responsibility of alleviating the financial loss resulting from the member's death.

The pension funds set aside for widows and orphans also draw attention to another presumed member characteristic. Though organizational rules did not require participating men to be married, founding leaders associated black male respectability with formal marriage. As historian Peter Beattie notes, "Marriage remained an important badge of status in post-independence Brazil; untitled Brazilians commonly identified

Cor, 8/1/1909, C10401, Capítulo 1, Art.3.2, (No caso do falecimento do qualquer socio, dar-lhe um auxilio de cento e vinte mil-réis para o funeral e os suffragios devidos).

⁷³AESP, Sociedades Civis, Estatuas/Compromissos, Sociedade Maçônica Loja Capitular Luiz Gama, 10/4/1897, C10389, Título 1, Art.2.6, (Conceder, por tempo determinado, uma pensão mensal ás viúvas ou orphans dos socios que della necessitarem, enquanto se mostrarem merecedores). Also see AESP, Sociedades Civis, Estatuas/Compromissos, Sociedade Beneficente dos Homens de Cor, 8/1/1909, C10401, Capítulo 1, Art.3.4, (Socorrer por tempo indeterminado, com uma pensão mensal, as viúvas dos socios, quando necessitadas e que dellas forem merecedoras.)

⁷⁴ See Muriel Nazzari, *Disappearance of the Dowry: Women, Families, and Social Change in São Paulo, Brazil (1600-1900)* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1991), 168 for evidence of increasing reliance on the nuclear family in São Paulo in the nineteenth century.

themselves first as *casados* (married men) to establish their status as respectable members of a community.”⁷⁵ In Brazilian culture, marriage conferred a level of respectability on men across lines of class, race and ethnicity.⁷⁶ Afro-Brazilian men shared and adhered to the idea of marriage as an important component of manhood and social prestige in the post-emancipation period.

Afro-Brazilian men faced many difficulties in the era after emancipation, and leaders of black civic groups in São Paulo repeatedly articulated concerns about employment and arbitrary arrest. Brazilian society, from high political offices to lower sector labor positions required patron recommendations,⁷⁷ and members made a commitment to help their fraternal brethren access and retain workforce opportunities.⁷⁸ Afro-Brazilian men were cognizant of the discrimination they faced and they worked to expand the pool of contacts that could recommend and vouch for their character and qualifications. The Beneficent Society’s organizational charter, like the Gama Masons, required members to use their social connections and influence to provide access to jobs for associates. All participants pledged to “Seek honest work for associates in proportion to their power.”⁷⁹ The organizational charters of black civic groups repeatedly documented member anxieties related to labor retention and group members generated intra-community responses and strategies to alleviate employment insecurity.

⁷⁵ Beattie, “House, Street, and Barracks in Brazil,” 441. For similar arguments see Susan Besse, *Restructuring Patriarchy: The Modernization of Gender Inequality in Brazil, 1914-1940* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996), 48; Lauderdale Graham, *House and Street*, 77; and Caulfield, *In Defense of Honor*, 6.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*; Beattie, *Tribute of Blood*, 8 and 84; and Joan Mezner, “The Ranks of the Poor: Military Service and Social Differentiation in Northeast Brazil, 1830-1875,” *Hispanic American Historical Review* 72, no. 3 (August 1992): 337 and 342-343.

⁷⁷ Graham, *Patronage and Politics*, 20-31 and 251-263.

⁷⁸ AESP, Sociedades Civis, Estatutos/Compromissos, Sociedade Maçônica Loja Capitular Luiz Gama, 10/4/1897, C10389, Título 1, Art.2.4, (Promover a collação dos associados quando privados de trabalho).

⁷⁹ AESP, Sociedades Civis, Estatutos/Compromissos, Sociedade Beneficente dos Homens de Cor, 8/1/1909, C10401, Capítulo 1, Art.3.6, (Procurar trabalho honesto aos associados na medida de suas forças.)

Fear of unjust imprisonment also weighed heavily on the minds of even educated Afro-Brazilian men in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Founding leaders of the Luiz Gama Lodge pledged to assist and protect members in the case of unlawful or unjust imprisonment by authorities. One of the eight Gama Lodge group statutes called for “Protection by regular means at their disposal of associates that find themselves imprisoned or jailed for unjust or illegal motives.”⁸⁰ In this period, skyrocketing rates of arrest on charges of vagrancy made Afro-Brazilians vulnerable to unjust incarceration across the nation.⁸¹ The Beneficent Society established a similar provision to the Masons in which members pledged “To protect fellow associates when imprisoned or on trial, once it is established that the cause of these facts are not dishonest or dishonorable.”⁸² Black civic associations thus implemented corporate responses to wrongful and unjust imprisonment.

Educational improvement represented an additional issue of shared concern addressed in the early associational charters drafted by Afro-Paulistano men. Gama Masonic Lodge leaders pledged “To promote conferences and lectures about matters of scientific, philosophic, or artistic order to further the intellectual, ethical, and financial progress of associates in particular and of humanity in general,”⁸³ while the Beneficent

⁸⁰ AESP, Sociedades Civis, Estatuas/Compromissos, Loja Capitular Luiz Gama, C10389, 10/4/1897, Titulo 1, Art.2.5, (Proteger pelos meios regulares ao seu alcance aos associados que se acharem presos ou processados por motivos injustos ou illegaes.)

⁸¹ Fausto, *Crime e Cotidiano*, 45-52; Beattie, *Tribute of Blood*, xx-xxi, 129 and 140; and Graham, *Patronage and Politics*, 31.

⁸² AESP, Sociedades Civis, Estatuas/Compromissos, Sociedade Beneficente dos Homens de Cor, 8/1/1909, C10401, Capitulo 1, Art.3.7, (Proteger seus associados, quando presos ou processados, uma vez que a causa desses factos não seja deshonesto ao infamante.)

⁸³ AESP, Sociedades Civis, Estatuas/Compromissos, Loja Capitular Luiz Gama, C10389, 10/4/1897, Titulo 1, Art.2.8, (Promover conferencias ou prelecções sobre assumptos do ordem scientifica, philosophica ou artistica que possam concorrer para o progresso intellectual, ethico e effectivo dos socios em particular e da humanidade em geral.)

Society of Men of Color proposed to found primary schools for children of associates.”⁸⁴

The two groups had divergent ideas about how to spur and support educational opportunity for Afro-Paulistanos.

The Beneficent Society had a particularly ambitious vision. It aimed to establish primary schools to facilitate literacy acquisition for Afro-Brazilian youth. Historian George Reid Andrews notes “Not until the early 1900s did the state of São Paulo start to construct the rudiments of an elementary school system; secondary schools did not become a significant item in the state budget until the 1920s.”⁸⁵ In 1906, the founding year of the Beneficent Society, public schools in São Paulo did not yet serve most people of color. Even in 1934, only seven percent of the city’s nearly 85,000 public school children were black.⁸⁶ Poverty led families to push children into the workforce, and even when children were not engaged in labor, the prices for clothing and school supplies remained cost prohibitive.⁸⁷

Discrimination undoubtedly discouraged blacks from attending school. Private schools routinely denied entry to non-whites even when the cost of attendance was not the impediment.⁸⁸ Schools established with public funds from 1917-1945 did not specifically aim to prevent blacks from entering.⁸⁹ Schools were nevertheless informally hostile environments for African descendants. Historian Jerry Dávila suggests teachers of African descent became less common in the 1930s and 1940s as reformers imagined modern teachers as middle class white women. Educational reformers created policy

⁸⁴ AESP, Sociedades Civis, Estatutos/Compromissos, Sociedade Beneficente dos Homens de Cor, C10401, 08/01/1909, Capítulo 1, Art.3.5, (Fundar escolas primarias de ambos sexos para os filhos dos associados.)

⁸⁵ Andrews, *Blacks and Whites*, 73.

⁸⁶ Butler, *Freedoms Won, Freedoms Given*, 77.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸⁸ Andrews, *Blacks and Whites*, 73; and Dávila, *Diploma of Whiteness*, 1-3.

⁸⁹ Dávila, *Diploma of Whiteness*, 3.

which "...all but precluded men from gaining teacher training and created norms that made it increasingly difficult for poor or afrodescendant candidates to begin teacher training."⁹⁰ Thus the public school system did not fare particularly well in their efforts to encourage Afro-Brazilian educational attainment. When the public education system began to produce graduates, black educational achievement remained abysmally low. Reid Andrews reports that in 1940, out of a population of 862, 255 Afro-Brazilian residents, only 344 had graduated from college and 1,717 had completed high school in the state of São Paulo.⁹¹

Cognizant of the many obstacles and hindrances preventing access to schools and education for their young people, Beneficent Society founders considered the option of teaching the children of members themselves. Interestingly, while the association discouraged female membership, the founding charter considered the education of girls as important as that of boys. Any instructional enterprise they founded would serve all children of associates. Unfortunately, the charter did not elaborate on the content of the instruction to be provided. Regardless of the kind of curriculum leaders might have endorsed, organizational statutes make it clear that the Society sought to provide education for their progeny.

For reasons which we cannot know the Luiz Gama Masonic Lodge did not articulate a commitment to found schools, but the group's leaders did aim to provide another type of aid to participating associates, their families, and those outside of the

⁹⁰ For the quotation see Dávila, *Diploma of Whiteness*, 90-91. For the larger discussion of the reduction of the number of African descendants in primary and secondary instruction see Dávila, *Diploma of Whiteness*, chapter 3. Also see Carolina Maria de Jesus, *Bitita's Diary: The Childhood Memoirs of Carolina Maria de Jesus*, ed. Robert Levine, trans. Emanuelle Oliveira and Beth Joan Vinkler (Armonk, New York: M.E. Sharpe, 1998), 90-94 for a primary account of life as a student in school for a young, Afro-Brazilian woman.

⁹¹ Andrews, *Blacks and Whites*, 159.

association. Founding leaders established an associational objective designed to reach and improve the quality of life of non-members. Gama Lodge participants pledged “To contribute with that which is in your reach to lessen the suffering of those who are not associates yet demonstrate themselves worthy of your help.”⁹²

Outwardly directed charity constituted a formal part of the group’s agenda. Exactly who constituted a meritorious non-associate, however, was not explained though the use of the word “worthy” as a qualifier indicated a sort of vague consensus about the conditions and people members considered appropriate aid recipients. The organizational aim of easing the suffering of others is significant, particularly when members had so many anxieties about their own employment and financial security for their families. Organizational leaders mandated the extension of charity though they did not seem convinced there would be sufficient resources to go beyond their own needs.

Despite the many challenges and insecurities that secular association members articulated, leaders worked diligently to supersede the systemic disadvantages they faced. Theophilo Dias de Castro, an educator and a founding member of the Luiz Gama Masonic Lodge, likely embodied the aspirations of Masonic and Beneficent Society members alike. Dias de Castro was a member of the Brotherhood of Our Lady of the Rosary of Black Men and during his years as a participant, he headed a primary school in São Paulo under the auspices of the confraternity, which functioned from 1907 to 1910.⁹³ He was a literate and educated man. His position as the school principal (*director*),

⁹² AESP, *Sociedades Cívicas, Estatutos/Compromissos, Sociedade Maçônica Loja Capitular Luiz Gama*, 10/4/1897, C10389, Título 1, Art.2.7, (Concorrer com o que estiver ao seu alcance para minorar sufrimentos daquelles que comquanto não sejam seus associados se mostrarem dignos de seus socorros.)

⁹³ Amaral, *Os pretos do Rosário*, 2nd ed., 156, 157-168; and ACMSP, *Irmandade de Nossa Senhora do Rosário de Homens Pretos, Livros 13, Escola Raymundo Guilherme-Matrícula de Alunos 1907-1910*, microfilm, 2002.

appropriate use of grammar and diacritics in school documents, and handsome penmanship convey Dias de Castro's formal knowledge of written Brazilian Portuguese.

Dias de Castro and the individual teachers who provided instruction gave students the elements of a classical education. Elementary age pupils, sent to the school by parents who included cooks, housekeepers, laundresses, seamstresses, doormen, soldiers, and public sector state employees, studied various subjects including geometry, arithmetic, reading, and penmanship.⁹⁴ Though the director, Dias de Castro, had acquired an education that decidedly positioned him as a man of privilege among Afro-Brazilians, the children he served had few educational opportunities and their parents largely remained in humble occupations.

Dias de Castro, his students, and their parents indicate that middle and lower sector Afro-Paulistanos remained linked to each other in confraternal life well after enslavement ended. Memories of their African ancestors were revered. This was best exemplified by the school's name which honored Raymundo José Guilherme, an African man who arrived in São Paulo as a slave, later bought his freedom, and served as a leader in the black brotherhoods active in the city during his lifetime from the 1830s through the first years of the 1870s.⁹⁵ Dias de Castro and his confraternity colleagues paid homage to the sacrifices and memory of their institutional ancestors as they worked to forge a more promising future for their children.

⁹⁴ ACMSP, Irmandade de Nossa Senhora do Rosário de Homens Pretos, Livros 13, Escola Raymundo Guilherme-Matricula de Alunos 1907-1910; and Documentos avulsos (02 folhas), Alunos classificados no 4º Ano-1909; Lista das meninas do 1º do 2º serie, microfilm, 2002.

⁹⁵ For Raymundo Guilherme's participation in leadership roles of black irmandades see ACMSP, Irmandade de Santa Efigênia e Santo Elesbão, Livro das Atas, 1862-1885, 04-02-28; Irmandade de São Benedito, Livro de Assentamento dos Irmãos, 1846 -1896, 02-02-07. He served as the king of the festival in honor of Saint Benedict in the 1852-1853 term. He married in 1840. See ACMSP, Casamentos, Santa Efigênia, 05-02-35.

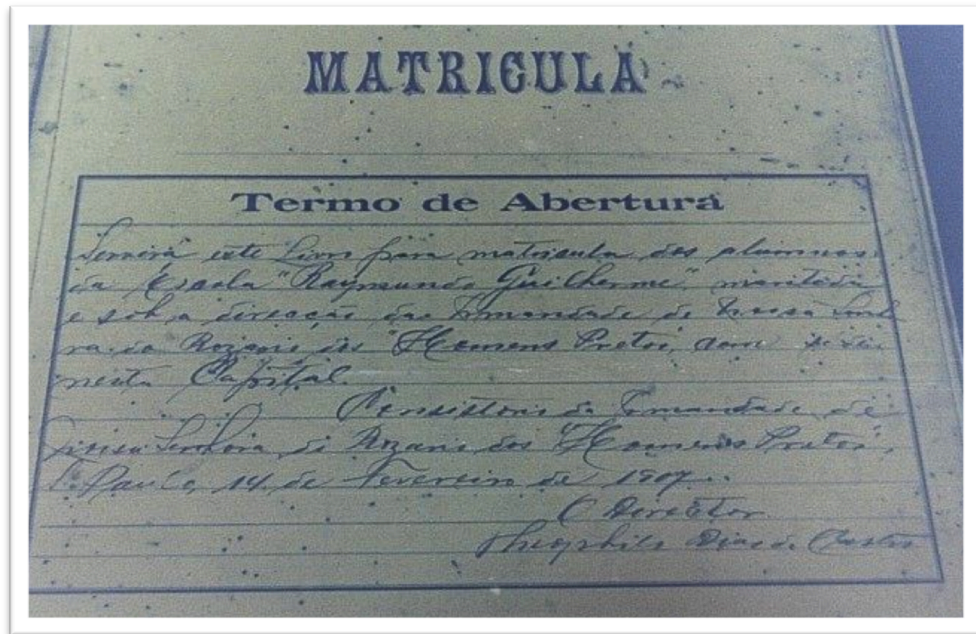


Figure 11 - Irmandade de Nossa Senhora do Rosário dos Homens Pretos de São Paulo, Escola Raymundo Guilherme, Matriculation, Opening Statement, February 14, 1907. Director, Theophilio Dias de Castro. Courtesy of Arquivo da Curia Metropolitana de São Paulo, microfilm, 2002.

Dias de Castro, who was likely well-known in his day, was one of the Afro-Paulistanos who met Robert Abbott, editor of the African American newspaper, the *Chicago Defender* in 1923 on his tour of Brazil.⁹⁶ Abbott traveled to Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo where he gave a series of lectures comparing race in the United States and Brazil as he gathered material to write a series of articles on Brazil for the *Defender*. His status as the publisher of one of the most important and widely circulated Afro-American newspapers of the time gave him the prominence and wherewithal to embark on such a journey.⁹⁷ While Abbott was received with enthusiasm by black social and civic group

⁹⁶ For more on Robert Abbott see Seigel, *Uneven Encounters*, 192-195; David J. Hellwig, "A New Frontier in a Racial Paradise: Robert S. Abbott's Brazilian Dream," *Luso-Brazilian Review* 25, no.1 (Summer 1988): 59-67; and Roi Ottley, *The Lonely Warrior: The Life and Times of Robert S. Abbott* (Chicago: Henry Regnery, 1955).

⁹⁷ David J. Hellwig, "Racial Paradise or Run-around? Afro-North American Views of Race Relations in Brazil" *American Studies* 31, no.2 (Fall 1990): 47; Seigel, *Uneven Encounters*, 192-193; and Butler, *Freedoms Given, Freedoms Won*, 101.

participants, mainstream, non-black press associations, in addition to state dignitaries,⁹⁸ the tour was not without controversy, since Abbott suggested that Afro-Brazilians were well integrated into Brazilian society across class sectors and had opportunities for social advancement not viable for blacks in the United States.⁹⁹ Despite the divergence between his views and those of his audiences, articles from the *Defender* were circulated and reproduced in Portuguese translations for Afro-Paulistano newspapers, though often the editors used the material "... as a springboard for commentary and analysis" according to historian Kim Butler.¹⁰⁰

Dias de Castro, a Rosary brotherhood and Masonic leader, likely attended one of the lectures where he must have made Abbott's acquaintance. Dias de Castro composed at least two letters to Abbott, which he wrote in English himself or had translated.¹⁰¹ In a surviving letter mailed from São Paulo to Chicago, Castro thanked Robert Abbott for the copies of the paper he had given him, referring to the *Defender* and asked about subscriptions rates, since he had friends who were interested in receiving the paper.¹⁰² Theophilio Dias de Castro was a lettered member of Afro-Paulistano society and considered himself, like Abbott, an advocate for the race.

The goals of the Luiz Gama Masonic Lodge and the Beneficent Society of Men of Color were similar to those of African American Masons and other fraternal groups, such as Black Odd Fellows and Knights and Daughters of Pythias in the United States.¹⁰³

⁹⁸ Seigel, *Uneven Encounters*, 192-193.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 194; and Butler, *Freedoms Given, Freedoms Won*, 101; Alberto, *Terms of Inclusion*, 48; and Andrews, *Blacks and Whites*, 137.

¹⁰⁰ Butler, *Freedoms Given, Freedoms Won*, 101 and 108.

¹⁰¹ Abbott-Sengstacke Papers, Box 5, Folder 5, Vivian G. Harsh Research Collection of Afro-American History and Literature, Chicago Public Library.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*

¹⁰³ See Skocpol, Liazos, and Ganz, *What a Mighty Power We Can Be*; Loretta J. Williams, *Black Freemasonry and Middle-Class Realities* (Columbia, Missouri: University of Missouri Press, 1980), 40-42

Organizational leaders of the Gama Masonic Lodge and Beneficent Society extended economic and social support primarily within their organizational bounds, though philanthropy could be extended outside in times of plenty or for deserving cases. Both societies demonstrated that Afro-Brazilians wanted to be active participants in the civic sphere with the same range of associational opportunities as their fellow Brazilians, even as they modified the organizational objectives of associative life to meet daily realities characterized by hardship and need.

The confraternity tradition undoubtedly contributed to a strong valuation of resource sharing as a means of collective action and Afro-Paulistano uplift. Popular participation in lay Catholic brotherhoods led to other discernable legacies in early black secular civic associations. Analysis of organizational charters from the Thirteenth of May Club of Black Men and the Federated Center of Men of Color highlights the ways these two Afro-Paulistano societies concerned themselves with the task of publicly demonstrating the citizenship rights of people of color. The examination also reveals how the heritage of Catholic pageantry from confraternities influenced the civic participation activities for the two associations.

Thirteenth of May Club of Black Men of São Paulo

While the new civic groups that Afro-Brazilians created in post-emancipation São Paulo aimed to foster social and political inclusion, they repeatedly documented the societal challenges Afro-Brazilian leaders considered threats to their rights as free,

and chapter 8; Jacqueline M. Moore, *Leading the Race: The Transformation of the Black Elite in the Nation's Capital, 1880-1920* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1999), 180-186; Stephen Kantrowitz, “‘Intended for the Better Government of Man’: The Political History of African American Freemasonry in the Era of Emancipation,” *Journal of American History* 96, no.4 (March 2010): 1002-1026; and Peter P. Hinks and Stephen Kantrowitz, ed., *All Men Free and Brethren: Essays on the History of African American Freemasonry* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2013).

independent citizens. The shadow and memory of enslavement never seemed far away for a generation who lived through captivity and the onset of collective freedom. Commemoration of the abolitionist struggle and of the declaration of the emancipation decree signed by Princess Isabella on May 13, 1888 remained a priority.¹⁰⁴ For certain leaders, the past and future seemed to hold equal sway as they worked to forge new links to each other while memorializing the end of African and African descendant bondage.

On July 20, 1902 an assembly of Afro-Paulistanos established the Thirteenth of May Club of Black Men. The group organized “To celebrate annually with the splendor possible, the glorious date of the 13th of May 1888.”¹⁰⁵ Emancipation day represented the end of forced servitude by African descendants and their collective entrance into political citizenship, however limited the concept and practice of citizenship may have been.

The Thirteenth of May Club was the largest black secular association formally registered as a civic organization with the Secretary of the Province before 1920. The group numbered over seventy-five members at the time it registered with provincial authorities. The organizational charter required a membership of more than twenty-five participants. If membership dipped below twenty-five members, the association would be dissolved.¹⁰⁶ The founders clearly thought that the association should be a “mass” group. All members participating at the point of installation or approval of statutes by provincial authorities were considered founding members. New members would be proposed and

¹⁰⁴ Slavery ended by legal decree on May 13, 1888. The decree was issued by Princess Isabel, the daughter of Brazilian Emperor Pedro II. For more on the emancipation decree see Butler, *Freedoms Won, Freedoms Given*, 2 and 7; Andrews, *Blacks and Whites*, 39; Barman, *Citizen Emperor*, 346; and Da Costa, *Brazilian Empire*, 169-170.

¹⁰⁵ AESP, Sociedades Civis, Estatuas/Compromissos, Club 13 de Maio de Homens Pretos, 17/10/1902, C10393, Capitulo 1, Art.1.1, (Festejar annualmente com o brilhantissimo possivel a gloriosa data de 13 de Maio de 1888); The society had its organizational statutes approved by the secretary of state of São Paulo on October 17, 1902.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

approved for admission by a general assembly of existing members. Like the participants of the Gama Masonic Lodge and the Beneficent Society of Men of Color, all members were men.

The limitation of membership to male participants, a feature the group shared with other early secular civic associations, likely emerged due to the public nature of the commemorations the association held. For example, in 1922 the Thirteenth of May Club of Black Men sponsored various activities throughout the day. The association announced they would hold a mass to pray for the souls of abolitionists in the Church of Our Lady of the Rosary of Black Men, after which club members planned to march to the tombs of the abolitionists in a procession. The day's activities continued into the evening with an 8pm "civic session," which was followed by dancing.¹⁰⁷ Exactly how middling and upwardly mobile Afro-Brazilian women would fit into public space outside of the church likely represented a complicated conundrum for Afro-Brazilian association leaders given that historically, black female movement in streets, plazas, and other public spaces served as a marker of their low social status.¹⁰⁸ Upwardly aspirant Afro-Brazilian men involved in black associational life likely wanted female relatives, companions, and friends to have the same protection and spatial signs of status white women experienced in previous eras. Ironically, the prescriptive social and spatial boundaries set for middling sector Afro-Brazilian women in associational life contracted well after elite women gained a measure of spatial mobility in commemorative activities, and despite the fact that technology such

¹⁰⁷ "Treze de Maio," *O Estado de São Paulo*, May 13, 1922. (O Club 13 de Maio de Homens Pretos promove para hoje varias solemnidades; ás 8 horas e meia na igreja do Rosário, haverá missa em acção de raças as 10 horas uma commissão de membros e directores do Club irá ao cemiterio da Consolação em romaria; ás 20 horas recepção na sede social, sessão civica e sarau [sic] dansante.)

¹⁰⁸ Lauderdale Graham, *House and Street*, 4.

as gas street lights and streetcars (*bondes*) had expanded “acceptable” spaces for privileged women.¹⁰⁹

A unique feature of the commemoration of abolition in Brazil was that while the observance of emancipation day was national in scope, local communities typically remembered the abolitionist leaders associated with their own municipalities and states. Schoolchildren from the Seventh of September School trekked to the graves of Antonio Bento and Luis Gama to leave flowers on May 13, 1922. Pupils from various grades of the school congregated in the cemetery along with members from the America Masonic Lodge that Luiz Gama helped found.¹¹⁰ The centrality of local orientation surfaced even on days of national celebration.

The Thirteenth of May Club sought a presence in the city and to participate in civic celebrations other than the commemoration of emancipation day. On October 5, 1907, the Baron of Rio Branco came from Rio de Janeiro to São Paulo to inaugurate schools in the state. The Thirteenth of May Club participated in a massive public reception to welcome the baron, filled with high ranking government officials and dignitaries including state governor Jorge Tiburicá and São Paulo’s mayor Antonio Prado. Leaders and representatives of over twenty-five different schools and civic associations assembled to mark the occasion. José Candido de Moura and Nicodemo Martins served as delegates from the Thirteenth of May Club of Black Men and stood as platform guests displaying their organizational standard.¹¹¹ The selection of the Thirteenth of May Club to participate in a ceremony in honor of the Baron of Rio Branco

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.; Wiebke Ipsen, “Patrícias, Patriarchy, and Popular Demobilization: Gender and Elite Hegemony in Brazil at the End of the Paraguayan War,” *Hispanic American Historical Review* 92, no.2 (May 2012): 303-305 and 315-323; Kirkendall, *Class Mates*, 149; and Besse, *Reconfiguring Patriarchy*, 8, and 17-33.

¹¹⁰ “Noticias Diversas,” *O Estado de São Paulo*, May 13, 1922.

¹¹¹ “O sr. Rio Branco,” *A Provincia de São Paulo*, October 5, 1907.

indicated that black civic groups could manage to make themselves visible and relevant beyond their more narrow associational goals and outside of their racial enclave. Whether via petition or invitation, the club participated in the ceremonial life of the provincial capital.

The Thirteenth of May Club utilized commemorative practices that engaged the heritage of Catholic pageantry as a way of emphasizing the actual and symbolic incorporation of blacks in the nation. Even before the group formally assembled and registered with civil authorities, for example, the press reported that the club held a *marché aux flambeaux*, a night time procession where members carried large torches to illuminate their way from the governor's palace to the tomb of abolitionist, Antonio Bento.¹¹² The group marched through the streets appropriating a tradition from popular Catholicism as they strove for visibility and inclusion at the sites of governance and from the brokers of state power. The event worked to remind the public of Afro-Brazilian rights to citizenship. Years later, the association even displayed a gold pen in a window on the Rua Direita, a principle street of commerce, to commemorate the passage of the Golden Law. The pen and its display, which was noted in the *Provincia de São Paulo*, was to be presented as a gift to Princess Isabella in France, by her husband the Count D'Eu who visited São Paulo in 1921.¹¹³ The Count D'Eu remained popular among Afro-Brazilians as the husband of Brazil's emancipator and a large crowd (*multidão*) came out to greet him in the city center during his visit.¹¹⁴ The Thirteenth of May Club never tired of paying homage to Princess Isabella as a liberator using traditions from popular

¹¹² "Noticias Diversas," *A Provincia de São Paulo*, May 14, 1901.

¹¹³ "Prinzeza Isabel," *O Estado de São Paulo*, January 20, 1921.

¹¹⁴ "O Conde D'Eu e o principe D. Pedro em S. Paulo," *O Estado de São Paulo*, January 23, 1921.

Catholicism combined with secular emblems of freedom in their fight for recognition and inclusion.

The Thirteenth of May Club had five designated organizational objectives beyond publicly marking emancipation day. Education was a prime goal of associational activity. The Club planned and pledged “[t]o create day and night schools when funds permitted...” and “[t]o create a library for associates.”¹¹⁵ The directorate committed to holding “...conferences in the meeting headquarters instructing members about education and manners [comportment]...”¹¹⁶ Cultivating access to education and participating in literacy practices such as reading instruction preoccupied leaders of the society, like their other black civic counterparts.

Mutual aid also represented an important task for the association. Like the other secular Afro-Brazilian organizations reviewed in this chapter, the Thirteenth of May Club of Black Men had a beneficence statute requiring the group to create a fund for associates and their families facing economic hardship.¹¹⁷ Organizing members considered the extension of charity to those less fortunate than themselves important. The association pledged to retain one third of all balances until the 20\$000.00 mil-réis required to construct a charity house was accumulated.¹¹⁸ Like the Gama Masonic Lodge, the Thirteenth of May Club aimed to establish a charitable endeavor that would serve non-members in need.

¹¹⁵ AESP, Sociedades Civis, Estatuas/Compromissos, Club 13 de Maio de Homens Pretos, 07/10/1902, C10393, Capitulo 1, Art.1.2 and Art.1.3, (Criar escolas nocturnas e diurnas, quando seus fundos o permittirem.) and (Criar uma bibliotheca para os socios).

¹¹⁶ Ibid., Capitulo 1, Art.1.5, (Realisar conferencias na sede social, versando as mesmas sobre instrucção e educação...)

¹¹⁷ Ibid., Capitulo 1, Art.1.4, (Criar fundos de beneficencia para os socios e suas familias).

¹¹⁸ Ibid., Capitulo 12, Art.33.2, (Continuará a ser retirada a terca parte de saldo ate attinger a quantia de 20:000.000, para ser construida um predio para estabelecimento da casa de beneficencia que será annexa do club.)

The Thirteenth of May Club celebrated Afro-Brazilian freedom from enslavement, molded a pantheon of abolitionist and emancipation heroes, and became a well-known civic society organized around Afro-Brazilian liberty and full inclusion in the nation through participation in local, civil society. Even when celebrations of emancipation day began to fall out of favor among non-blacks of the highest echelons, the club continued to celebrate and to bring the day to elite and popular notice and remembrance with vigils, parades, and even torch-lit night processions through the city's streets. Like brotherhoods before them, the Thirteenth of May Club used the power of pageantry and processions to commemorate the anniversary of Afro-Brazilian liberation.

Though remembering those who struggled to realize the abolitionist cause represented the association's primary work, the club also participated in civic events outside of emancipation festivities. The association participated in ceremonies for state visits, and members used their corporal presence to make black São Paulo visible in a dignified manner in the civic life of the municipality. The movement of blacks in public areas under slavery was a signal of their servitude, and Thirteenth of May Club members worked to advocate for black social and political inclusion by transforming the meaning and significance of black activity and mobility in urban space. The same streets which were important sites of black labor and that symbolized Afro-Brazilian captivity during bondage functioned as a platform from which Afro-Brazilian men reminded the rest of the citizenry of their freedom.

Federated Center of Men of Color

Founders of the Federated Center of Men of Color, the fourth and final organization documented in early Afro-Paulistano civic organizing began in 1914. The

group focused on racial uplift using symbols of the nation to advocate greater Afro-Brazilian inclusion in the secular civic world and greater society. The Center aimed to symbolically integrate African descendants into the “imagined community of nation” at the municipal and national level.¹¹⁹ Demonstrating Afro-Brazilian patriotism and engagement with citizenship practices emerged as a priority with the same level of importance as the extension of mutual aid.

The Federated Center of Men of Color received approval of the association’s organizational statutes on August 29, 1914. Seven men led the organization. The admissions policy these leaders crafted made their organization more gender inclusive than any black secular organization before 1915. As in black confraternities, women were free to join without any special requirements. “All persons who had reached majority and were of good conduct ...” could become members “...without distinction of religious belief, nationality, and *sex*.”¹²⁰

After being judged as an appropriate candidate, payment of dues and fees represented the next step in the member matriculation process. All members paid 15\$000 mil-réis to join and 3\$000 mil-réis in monthly dues.¹²¹ Membership was not expensive, considering that most wage earners averaged between 3\$000 to 5\$000 mil-réis a day in 1920.¹²² It appears entrance fees were designed to be substantial, while remaining accessible for potential members.

¹¹⁹ Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 6-7.

¹²⁰ AESP, *Sociedades Civis, Estatutos/Compromissos*, Centro da Federação dos Homens de Côr de São Paulo, 28/08/1914, C10414, Capítulo 1, Art.1 and 2, (O Centro admitirá como socio todas as pessoas de maior idade e de boa conducta, sem distinção de creanças, nacionalidade, and *sexo*.) Emphasis added.

¹²¹ AESP, *Sociedades Civis, Centro da Federação dos Homens de Côr de São Paulo*, 28/08/1914, C10414, Capítulo 5, Art.1.1, (Pagar 15\$000 de joia, 5\$000 de diploma, 2\$000 de distintivo, e a quota mensal de 3\$000 a qual será pago adiantadamente.)

¹²² Hahner, *Poverty and Politics*, 197-199.

Association founders organized the group "...to work for the moral, intellectual, and social development of associates and of men of color of Brazil."¹²³ This was a clear commitment to improve the lives of all African descendants, members and non-members alike. In order to improve the quality of life for people of color, the association planned to "...maintain schools for associates and their children, to found a journal for the defense and advertisement of the center, to create libraries, and provide medical help and assistance to associates who needed services."¹²⁴ The emphasis on schools for members and their children underscored their desire to encourage literacy even among adults.

Like all of the other black secular associations analyzed in this chapter, the Federated Center of Men of Color had a strong focus on providing medical assistance and care for the ill. Procurement of health services represented a major preoccupation for all black secular associations. Without religious charities or government social service programs aimed at serving temporarily or chronically ill people, Afro-Brazilians found ways to provide for each other.¹²⁵ The first privilege granted to associates after three months of membership was the ability to visit and consult a doctor at the center's expense.¹²⁶ Medical care represented a critical benefit.

Founding members had more than mutual aid on their minds as they organized. The group's decision to place emphasis on entering public spaces accompanied by the

¹²³ AESP, Sociedades Civis, Estatuas/Compromissos, Centro da Federação dos Homens de Côr de São Paulo, 28/08/1914, C10414, Capitulo 1, Art.1, (...Tendo por fim trabalhar pelo desenvolvimento moral, intellectual, e social dos socios associados e dos homens de cor de Brasil.)

¹²⁴ AESP, Sociedades Civis, Estatuas/Compromissos, Centro da Federação dos Homens de Côr de São Paulo, 28/08/1914, C10414, Capitulo 1, Art.3, (...manterá escolas para os associados e filhos, fundará um jornal para a defesa e propoganda do Centro, creará bibliotechas e prestará soccorros medicos e assistencia aos associados necessitados.)

¹²⁵ Butler, *Freedoms Given, Freedoms Won*, 147.

¹²⁶ AESP, Sociedades Civis, Estatuas/Compromissos, Centro da Federação dos Homens de Côr de São Paulo, 28/08/1914, C10414, Capitulo 6, Art.1, (1. Passado tres meses da data da sua admissão ira medico para visitas e consultas.)

national flag and wearing organizational regalia, which mirrored the standard's colors, underscored the patriotism of Afro-Paulistanos. Linking Afro-Brazilians and patriotism in the context of the first Republic (1889-1930) was quite important. Republicans, those advocating the end of monarchical rule in Brazil, did not collectively advocate a position expressing support for the abolitionist cause until the late 1880s. The Republican Party in São Paulo was largely composed of plantation owners from the western part of the province, though the party sought to attract those in urban, liberal professions such as “doctors, engineers, lawyers, journalists, and merchants.”¹²⁷ The party, due to its significant slave holding contingent, “had not committed itself on the slavery question...” though founded in 1870,¹²⁸ when the abolitionist movement had gained enough ground to make the issue of slavery and abolition an increasingly important political matter.¹²⁹ In fact, famous abolitionist Luiz Gama who joined the Republican effort, seeing republicanism as a way to end racial hierarchy and facilitate equal rights for all citizens subsequently “...resigned from the party in disgust over its failure to take a stand against slavery.”¹³⁰

Many Afro-Brazilians who were granted freedom by imperial decrees had increasingly strong allegiances to the monarchy. The monarchy had adopted laws conditionally freeing the children of enslaved mothers in 1871 and sexagenarians in

¹²⁷ Da Costa, *Brazilian Empire*, 169 and 226-227.

¹²⁸ Da Costa, *Brazilian Empire*, 169.

¹²⁹ For more on the growing political importance of the abolitionist movement in the 1870s see Machado, *O plano e o pânico*, 133-162; Morse, *From Community to Metropolis*, 146-147 and 159-161; Castilho and Cowling, “Funding Freedom, Popularizing Politics,” 89-120; Cowling, “Debating Womanhood, Defining Freedom,” 284-301; Kittleson, *The Practice of Politics*, 128-135; and Barman, *Citizen Emperor*, 324.

¹³⁰ Andrews, *Blacks and Whites*, 44.

1886.¹³¹ Slaves also saw the monarch as a potential protector who was often solicited in order to protect them from abusive masters. Of course, the final abolition decree issued and signed by Princess Isabella in 1888 only further served to endear and create loyalty to the monarchy among Afro-Brazilians.¹³²

After emancipation in May 1888 and the declaration of the new republic in November 1889, there was no political party, group, or benefactors to champion causes directly aimed to expand opportunities and improve the quality of life for Afro-Brazilians. Blacks were further marginalized by government policies designed to Europeanize and whiten the nation. For example, the 1891 Constitution banned African and Asian immigration, in order to prevent non-whites from entering the country.¹³³ In this climate of deliberate exclusion and indifference, Afro-Brazilians understood that their capacity to influence the political process and policy depended on their pro-active engagement with their compatriots in public spaces. As such, the leaders of the Federated Center of Men of Color worked to display their allegiance to the nation in the First Republic in order to advocate for greater political inclusion.

Sociologist James Holston has argued that even though successive constitutions made meeting the criteria required to be formally recognized as a resident citizen in Brazil fairly easy, exercising citizenship privileges was much more difficult.¹³⁴ As suffrage eligibility expanded, contracted, and shifted during the later years of the empire

¹³¹ See Conrad, *Destruction of Brazilian Slavery*, ix; and Abreu, "Slave Mothers and Freed Children," 567-580 for discussion of the Rio Branco Law (Law of the Free Womb). For discussion of the Sexagenarian Law, see Conrad, *Destruction of Brazilian Slavery*, 168-169; and Cowling, "Debating Womanhood," 286.

¹³² Ibid; and Barman, *Citizen Emperor*, 346.

¹³³ Andrews, *Whites and Blacks*, 52; Lesser, *Negotiating National Identity*, 33; and Skidmore, *Black into White*, 64-77.

¹³⁴ James Holston, *Insurgent Citizenship: Disjunctions of Democracy and Modernity in Brazil* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008), 63. The 1824 Constitution granted formal citizenship to men in Brazil who were either born free or who became free following manumission.

and the First Republic (1890-1930),¹³⁵ Holston notes “the distribution of citizenship rights and privileges...” remained markedly unequal among those recognized as citizens.¹³⁶ Historian Brodwyn Fischer came to a similar conclusion based on analysis of housing patterns, labor legislation, and criminal court outcomes. She documents the poor receiving little protection before the law, and argues that in the twentieth century Afro-Brazilians and the poor suffered from diminished citizenship privileges based on their class and race, even though they were unquestionably, formally included in the nation. Fischer describes the lack of equal protection under the law confronted by the poor and African descendants as “a poverty of rights.”¹³⁷ In the first thirty years after emancipation, black identified leaders understood their systemic vulnerability and associational leaders worked to remedy this inequality by establishing citizenship readiness activities such as literacy instruction and civic informational sessions.¹³⁸ Afro-Paulistano civic leaders took steps, however meager, to eradicate the issues, which

¹³⁵ The extension of suffrage was uneven. Qualifications establishing voter eligibility was quite wide based on the 1824 constitution. In 1870, about one-million voters were eligible to participate in elections. After electoral law changed in 1881 based on legislation sponsored by senator José Saraiva, those eligible to vote declined to approximately 150,000 men. This abysmally low rate of political participation did not continue. After the proclamation of the new Republic in 1889, voter rolls rebounded in small measure with the 1891 Constitution. Voter roll expansion remained modest by design based on the adoption of new literacy requirements. The vast majority of male residents were effectively barred from voting based on insufficient income and illiteracy. Joseph Love suggests that only 14.8 percent of the national population could read and write in 1890, but June Hahner suggests that overall literacy rates were higher and that there was significant variation and concentrations of eligible literate residents in urban areas between 1872 and 1920. For more on changing suffrage eligibility and political participation patterns see Joseph Love, “Political Participation in Brazil, 1881-1969,” *Luso-Brazilian Review* 7, no.2 (December 1970): 6-8; Graham, *Patronage and Politics*, 196-205, especially 201-202; and Hahner, *Poverty and Politics*, 87-90.

¹³⁶ Holston, *Insurgent Citizenship*, 64.

¹³⁷ Brodwyn Fischer, *A Poverty of Rights: Citizenship and Inequality in Twentieth-Century Rio de Janeiro* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2008).

¹³⁸ AESP, Sociedades Civis, Estatuas/Compromissos, Centro da Federação dos Homens de Côr de São Paulo, 28/08/1914, C10414, Capitulo 1, Art.3.2, (O Centro comemorará as festas nacionaes, realizando conferencias e sessões civicos.)

prevented associates and the larger Afro-Brazilian populace from realizing their full citizenship potential.¹³⁹

The centuries old mutual aid tradition that gained prominence in black confraternities lived on in black secular organizations in São Paulo in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. However, those mutual aid traditions morphed and became intertwined with ongoing concerns about the situation and representation of Afro-Brazilians in civic and political contexts. Afro-Paulistanos active in early post-emancipation secular associations worked to enact their citizenship using intra-community improvement tactics such as civic information sessions, literacy initiatives, and conferences, in addition to, externally oriented programs such as processions and vigils to further the symbolic integration of people of color in the nation and the immediate community where they lived. The Federated Center of Men of Color aimed to function as an advocate for Afro-Paulistanos by fostering mutual aid and publicly proclaiming black patriotism using symbols of the nation.

Conclusion

Each of the early secular, civic groups Afro-Paulistanos established and joined shared prerogatives articulated by the Luiz Gama Masonic Lodge. Similar concerns persisted and challenged black identifying participants to find strategies to support their inclusion in wider society. The institutional objectives of the associations reviewed in this chapter demonstrate that multiple leaders in multiple groups considered themselves to be

¹³⁹ Civic education for Afro-Brazilians took place in several contexts, which accompanied further loss of their already weak citizenship rights. For example, Amy Chazkel argues that civic education for Afro-Brazilians occurred during periods of incarceration in local jails, while Peter Beattie suggest military barracks also served as a site of underclass formal and civic education. See Amy Chazkel, "Social Life and Civic Education in the Rio de Janeiro City Jail," *Journal of Social History* 42, no.3 (Spring 2009): 697-731; and Beattie, "The House, the Street, and the Barracks," 439; and *Tribute of Blood*, 74 and 167-169.

part of a racial community that would be best served by organizing to address and to subvert the inequalities that limited their access to work, health, and education.

Self-identified men of color in Brazil began to work toward their own advancement at a moment parallel to blacks in Cuba and the United States,¹⁴⁰ well before the black newspaper movement and international exchanges with other African diasporic peoples began in the 1920s. Afro-Brazilian engagement in racial uplift projects was not a response to outside influence originating elsewhere in the Americas.¹⁴¹ Black civic organizing designed to advance the race through mutual assistance emerged before the dawn of the twentieth century. After bondage ended for all blacks, Afro-Brazilians began to generate new associations to combat the effects of structural inequalities and discrimination through participation in secular groups influenced by the Catholic, mutual aid tradition.

Afro-Paulistanos organized themselves in religious and secular assemblies to improve the lives of participating members and their families. They also used those groups to become more visible social and civic actors. These civic group members showed up in the streets and sites across the city on emancipation day and other civic and celebratory occasions to commemorate their collective transition into the nation's citizenry. They did what they could to show they belonged. However, even as associational leaders imagined and organized to improve their quality of life and the status of Afro-Brazilians over all, they did little to genuinely open spaces of sociability

¹⁴⁰ See Aline Helg, *Our Rightful Share: The Afro-Cuban Struggle for Equality, 1886-1912* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1995); Howard, *Changing History*; for US history texts see Moore, *Leading the Race*; and Mary G. Rolinson, *Grassroots Garveyism: The Universal Negro Improvement Association in the Rural South, 1920-1927* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007) for synopsis and analysis of black associational life and equality struggles in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

¹⁴¹ Seigel, *Uneven Encounters*, 3.

for women with the single exception of the Federated Center of Men of Color. Despite this shortcoming, the mutual aid tradition and civic aspirations meshed in São Paulo and generated a pioneering variety of associational options concerned with the improvement of Afro-Brazilian life and reframing African descendants as a more integral part of the nation's citizenry.

Conclusion

The process of turning human beings into market commodities for the trans-Atlantic slave trade and bondage in the Americas involved terror, violence, and coercion.¹ For those born in Africa, the onslaught of traumas began at the moment of capture, continued in the Middle Passage, and undoubtedly intensified as captives were thrust into new lives filled with drudgery, arduous labor, and innumerable daily indignities designed to dehumanize and strip away their autonomy. Work dominated the pace and rhythms of life. Bondspeople, however, still managed to cultivate social lives and to eke out spaces to express religiosity, sociability, and mutuality not oriented around labor. From the 1700s when African captives began to arrive in the city São Paulo until slave emancipation in 1888,² engagement with religious traditions from their homelands and with Catholicism functioned as important ways for Afro-Paulistano bondspeople and their descendants to build connections among those deemed their equals.

The province and city of São Paulo saw few organized efforts designed to proselytize African bondspeople. Afro-Brazilian sodalities were established in an uncoordinated, haphazard fashion by the initiative of individual local priests and eventually by black parishioners. As historian A.J.R. Russell-Wood notes, “Despite the importance attached by the crown to the propagation of the Catholic faith among so-called pagans...local ecclesiastical authorities were extremely lax in the enforcement of

¹ The literature on the trauma of enslavement is too vast to cite here. For examples utilizing qualitative analysis see Smallwood, *Saltwater Slavery*, especially 123-125 and 152; Sandra Lauderdale Graham, “Slavery’s Impasse: Slave Prostitutes, Small-Time Mistresses, and the Brazilian Law of 1871,” *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 33, no. 4 (October 1991): 669-694; Nell Irvin Painter, “Soul Murder and Slavery: Toward a Fully Loaded Cost Accounting,” in *U.S. History as Women’s History*, ed. Linda Kerber, Alice Kessler-Harris, and Kathryn Kish Sklar (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1995), 125-146; and Trevor Burnard, *Mastery, Tyranny, and Desire: Thomas Thistlewood and His Slaves in the Anglo-Jamaican World* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004), 209-240.

² Luna and Klein, *Slavery and the Economy*, 11 and 13; Marcílio, *A cidade de São Paulo*, 99 and 107; Oliveria, *Entre a casa e o armazém*, 99-100 and 111-116; and Butler, *Freedoms Given, Freedoms Won*, 69.

royal decrees. Once collective conversion ceremonies had been held, the clergy were satisfied that they had complied with orders from Lisbon.”³ This lack of missionary effort in regard to Africans and their descendants continued in post-independence Brazil. The scant level of Catholic religious instruction provided to bondspeople and their children throughout the nineteenth century likely gave Afro-Brazilians the opportunity to engage Catholicism on their own terms and at their own pace after baptism, which usually occurred in circumstances where forced migrants learned little beyond the new name the ceremony bestowed to them.

Despite this dearth of formal religious education, rosary beads, crucifixes, and images of saints created a rich and ubiquitous visual tapestry of Catholic symbols. Neither African arrivals nor their children had to enter the doors of churches in the nineteenth century to encounter Catholic emblems of faith. Sodalities and other lay people paraded effigies and/or carved images of saints as well as crucifixes up and down city streets during festivals, holy days, and at times of crisis instigated by drought or outbreaks of disease.⁴ Priests, nuns, neighbors, and owners, as well as the market women who brought sustenance to city streets and household doors, adorned themselves in rosaries and crosses out of devotion and as a means to ward off malevolent forces.⁵ Baroque Catholicism likely had attractions beyond the social pressure from the master class to convert. Baroque Catholicism’s emphasis on collective expressions of devotion, as well as the presence of African saints allowed forced migrants and their descendants to acquaint and attach themselves to patrons who mirrored themselves in terms of color and

³ Russell-Wood, *Black Man in Slavery and Freedom*, 130.

⁴ For examples see Kidder, *Sketches*, 148-151; Martins, *São Paulo antigo*, 64 and 324; and Karasch, *Slave Life in Rio*, 86.

⁵ Reis, *Death is a Festival*, 52; Kiddy, *Blacks of the Rosary*, 169; Sweet, *Recreating Africa*, 207; and Machado, *O plano e o pânico*, 118.

who reportedly responded to gifts and offerings in a manner similar to ancestral spirits in their various cultures of origin.

Confraternal membership had many benefits for the Afro-Brazilians who joined. Lay Catholic brotherhoods provided slaves and free people with spaces of socialization during life and communal, ritual commemoration at death. The ability to secure death rites that included public mourning through song, movement, eulogy, and feasting provided a strong impetus for blacks to join confraternities. In 1850 in the central parish of Sé, 53 enslaved adults and 23 slave children died. Of the captive adults, 22 or approximately 41 percent received burial under the auspices of a black confraternity, while 24 or 45 percent of enslaved adults were buried in the public cemetery, known as the Cemetery of the Afflicted.⁶ Of the bonded children, 19 or approximately 83 percent had internments in black sodality burial sites. Only two enslaved Afro-Brazilian youth who died in the parish of Sé were interred in the public cemetery.⁷ Afro-Brazilian adults, but especially parents looked toward members of the Afro-Catholic community to have the lives of their children commemorated at death.

Confraternities were more than just funeral societies, however. Sodalities functioned as sites where people from different parts of the African continent and different locales in Brazil engaged each other beyond the gaze of white authorities, given that blacks began to fill administrative posts in brotherhoods as early as the eighteenth century. In São Paulo, confraternities became institutions in which blacks publically presented themselves as part of the social fabric of the capital. Churches built by black lay brotherhoods were open to all and they served wide swathes of residents in their

⁶ ACMSP, Livro de óbitos, Sé, Livres e Escravos, 1844-1853, 03-02-07.

⁷ ACMSP, Livro de óbitos, Sé, Livres e Escravos, 1844-1853, 03-02-07.

parishes. However, these institutions gained reputations as gathering places for people of color. Such views were not unjustified, since church buildings represented established communities in action. These groups had already managed to establish leadership, scrape together funds, and commit to the physical work of building a sanctuary.⁸ Historian Christina Wissenbach asserted that “The patio of the Rosary was the black territory par excellence of São Paulo...” due to the presence of the church and as a result of the food and other goods Africans and African descendants sold in the stands they set up outside of their residences on streets near and adjacent to Rosary confraternity property.⁹ Black churches, and the adjacent graveyards, houses, markets, and praças that joined them functioned as de facto and symbolic spaces of Afro-Brazilian cultural convergence with a physicality and visibility acknowledged by association members and the wider populace.¹⁰

Black confraternities reflected great diversity in terms of member’s financial security, literacy, and age, but they were not egalitarian spaces. In terms of gender, confraternities privileged male authority and limited female leadership roles and responsibilities, though associations benefited substantially from female member donations. Male leaders did not completely discourage female involvement and women shouldered the burden of executing festivals for patron saints.

The biographies of leaders reconstructed in this study suggest that Africans and Afro-Brazilians who led sodalities were overwhelming free, but not far removed from the location of their captivity. Preliminary evidence also suggests that organizational leaders

⁸ Amaral, *Os pretos do Rosário*, 35-43.

⁹ Wissenbach, *Sonhos africanos*, 206. (O pátio do Rosário era o território negro por excelência de São Paulo...)

¹⁰ *Ibid.*; Arroyo, *Igrejas de São Paulo*, 163; Martins, *São Paulo antigo*, 291 and 325; and Karasch, *Slave Life in Rio*, 57-58.

enjoyed high rates of marriage, as did the rest of the Afro-Paulistano population compared to other enslaved and free black populations in the Americas.¹¹ African arrivals and Afro-Brazilians valued family formation and strove to preserve kin relations. Confraternity participation likely represented an important place for Afro-Brazilians to form relationships beyond their households. Sodalities functioned as important sites where new arrivals and permanent residents interacted across the lines of immense diversity these assemblies represented.

Observance of Catholic rituals did not inherently require forced migrants to dissociate themselves from fundamental elements of their cultures or religions of origin. As Afro-Paulistano women extolled the life of the Our Lady of the Rosary with little ones in tow, they adorned themselves with *pacová* or wild banana leaves that celebrated their fertility and ability to have children.¹² They also dressed their young in necklaces, amulets, and brooches to ward off malevolent forces.¹³ The sights and sounds noted by city chroniclers and travelers in São Paulo and other cities in the second half of the nineteenth century document non-western, non-Christian cultural influence in Afro-Brazilian confraternal life, especially during festive occasions. Celebration and mourning at confraternity festivals and funerals encompassed adornment styles as well as musical expression and movement that diverged from patterns common in Portugal and among white confraternities in Brazil.¹⁴

¹¹ Luna and Klein, *Slavery and the Economy*, 143; and Slenes, *Na senzala*, 89.

¹² Martins, *São Paulo antigo*, 325; MacGaffey, *Religion and Society*, 130; and for detailed analysis see chapter 2, 114-115.

¹³ Martins, *São Paulo antigo*, 325; and for further analysis see chapter 2, 120.

¹⁴ For evidence and analysis of African influence on festivals and funerals in the nineteenth-century see Moraes, "Arranjos e timbres," 592 and 599; Martins, *São Paulo antigo*, 324 and 328; Kiddy, *Blacks of the Rosary*, 129-137; Karasch, *Slave Life in Rio*, 232, 250-252; and Reis, *Death is a Festival*, 144-148.

Though confraternities were part of the institutional Catholic Church, examination of association meeting minutes from the Brotherhood of Saint Ephigênia and Saint Elesbão of Black Men in the mid to late nineteenth century emphasizes the autonomy leaders experienced.¹⁵ This association ruled itself with little interference from outside church authorities. Only when diocese officials began to institute ultramontane reforms beginning in the 1850s and intensifying from the 1870s through the 1890s did this pattern of self-rule change. It became clear with the dissolution of the Brotherhood of Saint Ephigênia and Saint Elesbão of Black Men, sodalities would no longer serve as relatively unmediated havens of black assembly and autonomy.

Black confraternities did decline, but they did not completely disappear at the dawn of the twentieth century. Association leaders divided their efforts and energy as they shifted emphasis from the sacred to the secular realm and helped establish newly minted voluntary organizations in the aftermath of emancipation. Black confraternity leaders and members helped populate and finance an Afro-Brazilian Masonic lodge and an emancipation commemoration club. Other blacks of the same generation also established two secular beneficence societies, which represented emergent forms of post-abolition sociability.

Black confraternity leaders made the Catholic, mutual aid tradition their own early in the slave regime and when enslavement ended they compelled many who were already associational brethren to see sodalities as models for race based solidarity. While black confraternities and secular associations did not develop overtly radicalized, politicized platforms, association emphasis on inclusion in processions, parades, and

¹⁵ACMSP, Irmandade de Santa Efigênia e Santo Elesbão, Livro de Atas, 1862-1885, 04-02-28; and Irmandade de Santa Efigênia e Santo Elesbão, Livro de Atas, 1885-1890, 07-03-44.

other civic functions emphasized their desire to be represented in and part of the life of the municipality where they lived. Furthermore, the determination to care for the sick, to grieve the deaths of the departed, and to provide for the bereaved acknowledged the value leaders and members saw in each other. Association leaders intended to have a positive impact on the lives of their members and those beyond their organizational fold. The earliest wave of secular organizing after emancipation underscored the desire of participants to establish personal and economic security for themselves, their families, and their brethren.

Brotherhoods functioned as unique institutional spaces in a slave holding society where self-identified blacks forged meaningful bonds and mutual support systems, which they used to navigate and negotiate a world predicated on their marginalization. Emancipation granted the promise of freedom, but Afro-Brazilian denigration, ostracism, and social exclusion continued well after abolition. Afro-Paulistano associational participants recognized the tumultuous terrain emancipation (1888) and secularization (c.a. 1870-1910) initiated, and they shifted their definitions of what mutual aid organizations aimed to achieve and what membership entailed. Detailed analysis of the religious and secular organizational charters and association documents produced by Afro-Brazilians in São Paulo before 1920 highlights a segment of the population doing what they could to chip away at their marginalization and struggling to lift themselves from the subordinate, socio-economic legacy of slavery and ongoing racial discrimination. Afro-Paulistano associative leaders and participants worked to improve their lot and quality of life repeatedly, resourcefully, and resolutely relying on various incarnations of brotherhoods of their own.

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