BLACK HONOR: BELONGING AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF IDENTITY AMONG THE WRITERS OF O CLARIM D’ALVORADA

BY

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THESIS

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ABSTRACT

In Brazil of the early twentieth century one of the most important signs of prestige was (and still is) skin color. In the city of São Paulo black skin color was such a negative signifier that it prevented many educated black people from advancing socially. As a result, many blacks in São Paulo formed organizations that sought to articulate and position their right to “eliteness.” Writers of the Black Press were a prominent source of this articulation. This thesis focuses specifically on the writings of the newspaper O Clarim d’Alvorada as a case study of the black press in its defining years (1924-1932). In this thesis, I argue that while these writers were a powerful force in criticizing racism, their own attempts to advocate and show themselves as “cultured” and “civilized” replicated the same exclusionary rationale through which they themselves were excluded.

This thesis is envisioned as an intellectual history and as a result, the first two chapters seek to situate the intellectual currents in which these writers were performing. Chapter one traces the history of racial thought in Brazil from 1880s-1937. Chapter two focuses on gender, specifically, dealing with women and the construction of norms of propriety based upon class. Both of these themes come together in the third chapter where the works of the contributors of O Clarim d’Alvorada are analyzed to demonstrate how their arguments against negative racial stereotypes were articulated by engaging in notions of propriety centered on gendered norms. Furthermore, this thesis seeks to situate the works of these men not only as journalistic political texts, but also as literary works of art in their own right.
To Antonio Luiz Cerdeira

and

Rita Maria Borges de Moraes
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**Introduction**

Throughout the beginning of the twentieth century dark skinned Afro-descendants in the Americas juggled the pressures of demanding nations that offered them citizenship while denying them actual opportunities for social development. Based on this paradoxical state of race relationship in this study I aim to analyze the intersection between concepts of race and the desire for inclusion by the elite black men in São Paulo, Brazil in the early twentieth century. In Brazil slavery was abolished in 1888. This relatively late date signals that for many the experiences of slavery were relatively fresh in their memories. That is, it was not unusual at that time for people to have known blacks who had been born into slavery.

However, groups supporting Afro-Brazilians have been around since before slavery; this thesis focuses on one such group, the black Press. This term refers to a group of writers who wrote in newspapers designed mostly by and for black Brazilians from 1915-1937. Often these papers are referred as a single complex, because writers would often contribute to more than one paper. Thus, the term “black press” refers to this system of intellectual links between these newspapers. The vast majority of these papers were based in the city of São Paulo, and each one of them was officially linked to elite black clubs in their beginning (1915-1924). The publication of *O Getulino* in Campinas in 1924 marked the beginning of the independent black newspapers.\(^1\) Although there were many newspapers with a variety of opinions, their general scope focused on improving the quality of life for Afro-Brazilians in São Paulo. Nonetheless, this situation changed over the years. For example in the early years of the papers they tended to focus on

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\(^1\) The term independent here is not meant to confer a lack of linkages with these clubs. Many of the contributors were active members of these clubs.
“improving” the habits of blacks in São Paulo so that they would be “acceptable” to the broader mainstream society.

This thesis focuses on the concern for inclusion in the writings of the contributors to *O Clarim d’Alvorada*. This newspaper was started by two friends Jayme de Aguiar and José Correia Leite. My analysis focuses on this particular newspaper, for a variety of reasons. First, *O Clarim d’Alvorada* was a newspaper that was available to me by the library system at the University of Illinois in Urbana-Champaign. Second was the actual importance of this newspaper to the broader black press complex. It was the most active black newspaper (1924-1932) of the pre-World War Two era. This is significant because this signals that this newspaper might have reached a bigger audience (than other black press newspapers). For example, Butler considers it to be one of the two most influential journals of the late 1920s.² Also it was an important vehicle for many black intellectuals of the time (José Correia Leite, Jayme de Aguiar, Arlindo Viega dos Santos, Isaltino Viega dos Santos, Gervásio de Moraes, Lino Guedes, Deocleciano Nascimento etc). Thus, it is representative of the points of views of this particular class of black intellectuals. Furthermore, it is from this newspaper that the black press begins to formulate a more critical and combative perspective.³ The story of *O Clarim d’Alvorada* is one of a growing consciousness amongst these intellectuals (e.g. the adoption of the term *Negro* as a positive identifier for themselves).

I argue that these men used *O Clarim d’Alvorada* to not only denounce racism and negate pejorative views of blacks, but also as a deployment of patriarchal practices that advocated their own inclusion into broader mainstream society. Thus, at this time they sought only their

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inclusion into the system, not its outright alteration. Through their writings, we are able to see an exaltation of a certain kinds of male and female figures and habits that these men (the vast majority of the contributors were men) promoted, which (re)produced notions of propriety visible in society at large. In doing so, they advocated their similarity with the elite society and increased the differences between themselves and members of lower social classes.

Any study of the press is, in reality an analysis of its producers and consumers. As with any written cultural production in Brazil in the early twentieth century one needs to bear in mind the horrible state of education. George Reid Andrews points out, using the census of 1890, that 41.7 percent of immigrants to Brazil were literate. While this figure might seem low for today standards, it was far better than the 12.5 percent of native born literate Brazilians. Furthermore, as Andrews points out, there is no analysis of class and race represented in this figure. Thus, the number of blacks who were literate must have been even lower.\(^4\) Sadly, this situation improved very little over the years. In 1934, there were only 483,042 students in school in the entire state of São Paulo.\(^5\) This was grossly inadequate for a State with a population of over 6.7 million people.\(^6\)

For black students the situation was much worse. In her memoirs, Carolina Maria de Jesus, a poor black woman from Minas Gerais recalls that even when Black students were allowed access to schools, there were cultural problems that prohibited students from taking full advantage of the school system: “In 1925, schools started admitting black female students. But,


when the black girls came home from school, they were crying, saying they didn’t want to go back to school because the whites said the blacks smelled bad.” She continues in the next paragraph “the teachers only accepted the black students because they were forced to. But if the black students failed, his mother would go talk to the teacher, ‘you didn’t let my kid go on to second grade because he’s black, but he already knows how to read and write his a-b-c’s.’”

Although Carolina Maria’s experiences are anecdotes, they remind us that even when black students did have access to state institutions, cultural norms and direct and indirect racism limited their ability to take full advantage of these opportunities. Thus, there were many institutional and cultural barriers that inhibited the potential composition and audience for the black press in São Paulo.

This means that the black press of Brazil during the early twentieth century was written and consumed by a very small portion of the population: literate blacks in São Paulo. However, these small numbers do not negate the newspapers’ importance. The men who were engaged with this press (re)presented increasing levels of racial consciousness throughout the years (1915-1937). These were elite men who were not “stuck,” as it were, in a “pre-capitalistic” frame of mind. For example, Florestan Fernandes describes how many parts of what he terms as the “black middle class” managed to integrate more fully into the economic system by learning how to work in a salaried job. Thus, these educated black men experienced barriers to their inclusion based not upon a lack of credentials on their part, but rather from a lack of access to cultural markers of prestige.

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This distinction is crucial because prestige has always been a fundamental part of Brazilian race relations. Florestan Fernandes describes this in a particularly powerful way when he describes what he terms as the mechanism of “the exception that proves the rule,” which he links to the need of Brazil’s past slave society to put its trust on certain men of color (sometimes mulattos other times freedmen) to run particular parts of the regime. This recognition of trustworthy individuals allowed him to distinguish:

‘the Negro with Character,’ the ‘intelligent Negro,’ and the ‘well-mannered’ mulatto’ from the Negro considered as a racial category. As a result the white man… adjusts socially to the competitive social order without being prepared materially or morally, to redefine the image of the Negro and judgments regarding the negro race in light of successes achieved by black men in free competition. Really outstanding successes are either ignored or used as a negative counterweight to accentuate the ridiculously tiny extent of the exceptions and the untouchable validity of the general rule.

Fernandes relates how nearly impossible it was for black men in São Paulo to be a part of that prestige-granting exception. He further highlights how skin color can be an almost cripplingly negative signifier of prestige. For the dark skinned person to be accepted, he must be impeccable. This situation is clearly reflected in the writings of the black press, particularly in their earlier incarnations. We can notice that these writers seek constantly to teach and to reaffirm themselves for Brazilian society in the hopes of being included. It is only when they begin to realize that society in São Paulo was systematically positioned against them in the mid 1920’s that they begin to write more actively against the system.

These men who had progressed professionally also sought recognition and markers of prestige. As a result they wrote with an “elite” frame of mind. This desire to portray oneself as

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9 One clear of example one can think of is the famous Capitão do Mato who would track down runaway slaves.
10 Fernandes 344-345.
11 Fernandes 347-352.
12 This is discussed further in chapter 3.
elite is also seen in the organizational forerunners of the Black newspapers. Despite the plethora of problems facing Afro-Brazilians throughout history, they have a long and rich history of social organization. George Reid Andrews points out that this was also the case in São Paulo, where the oldest black organizations were religious groups. Despite church and official sanctioning of these organizations, some social events (especially dancing) were seen negatively because these displays of Afro-Brazilian cultural productions were perceived as denigrating to the dignity of the church. This caused tension between officials and members of these organizations. Andrews argues that it was out of desire to engage in these dances that the social clubs emerged. The most successful of these clubs were the carnival groups that were the precursors to many samba schools. The founders of these schools did not, however, create organizations based solely upon race; they also divided themselves based on class. As Andrews points out, the names of these organizations (Kosmos, the Elite Club, the Smart Club etc.) points to the social aspirations of their members. He goes on further to say:

But at the same time they were a group systematically excluded from the larger society of which they formed part. Rejecting those they regarded as their social inferiors, and in turn rejected by their white peers, their response was to construct a social world which would simultaneously protect them from the hurts inflicted on them by white society and from social contamination by the black masses below them.

I agree with Andrews when he states that these social clubs were created to protect their members from other members of society that they considered socially inferior. However, his assertion that these clubs protected their members form hurt caused by racism does not go far enough, because these clubs not only protected their members, but by excluding some segments

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13 Andrews 140.
14 Andrews 139-142.
15 Andrews 141.
of society while at the same time engaging in practices of decency (such as chaperoned dances) members of these clubs were also making a claim for their own prestige, their own “eliteness.”

These social clubs are important to this particular study, because it is through these institutions that black newspapers first arose. It was only with the founding of O Getulino in 1924 in the nearby city of Campinas that there emerged the first independent black newspaper in Brazil. Interestingly, these independent newspapers grew out of these same social clubs. Therefore, it seems normal to note that every newspaper had a special section where they announced dances and other events being held at the social club, which indicates a high degree of intermingling between the two worlds where contributors of these newspapers were also members of these clubs and therefore sympathetic to this overall exclusionary practice. It is in this milieu of social clubs that the founders of O Clarim d’Alvorada, Jayme D’Aguiar and José Correia Leite, for example, renewed their childhood friendship which lead to the creation of their newspaper.16 Thus, it should be of little surprise to see this same ideology of “eliteness” going from these social clubs to the newspapers.

It is not possible to understand the political project of the black press without understanding the concepts of citizenship and belonging that were starting to arise in the early twentieth century. In this study the concept of citizenship will be addressed using Roberto da Matta dichotomy between the house and the street (which will be further discussed in greater detail in chapter two). For da Matta the social category of “citizen” is used not to imbue an individual with rights, but rather to mark him as someone without social connections, and thus, subject to the impersonal laws of the street.17 According to da Matta an individual protects

16 Kim Butler 97.
himself when he is able to call upon his intimate relations so as to avoid having to interact with
the State as an unmarked citizen. Thus, it is not enough to be a citizen in Brazil, in order to
succeed, one needs to be someone, one needs to know someone. In short, one needs to belong to
a broader social structure.

Although she does not engage with da Matta’s notion of citizenship, Paulina L. Alberto
argues that the intellectuals who comprised the black press in Brazil engaged with issues of
“belonging” to a local society that marginalized them through governmental practices and
cultural preferences.18 Alberto uses the concept of belonging as defined by Kannabiran, Vieten,
and Yuval-Davis who state “Belonging is a thicker concept than that of citizenship… [it] is not
just about membership, rights and duties, but also about emotion that such membership evoke.”19
Thus, belonging is the emotional bond one gets from being connected with a particular social
group. For Kannabiran, Vieten, and Yuval-Davis this sense of “belonging” would be more akin
to the notions of intimacy of the space of the house that da Matta describes because it entails
having your rights recognized as a “supercitizen;” with rights and not just obligations to the State.

As a result, it is not just a question of being a member of a group but it is also about:

the incessant recognition of identities, boundaries and collectivities results in ever
new frozen positions that simultaneously and by the same process allow privilege
and power for some, while denying access to and creating insecurity for others,
channeled through constructions of gender, sexuality, culture, color and family
relations, and resulting in more widespread processes of social exclusion.20

The ambition to belong, therefore, is a desire not just to obtain legal citizenship (which was not a
concern for blacks in Brazil) but rather a desire for recognition as full and equal members of

18 Paulina L. Alberto, Terms of Inclusion: Black Intellectuals in Twentieth-Century Brazil (Chapel Hill: University
19 Kalapana Kannabiran, Ulrike M. Vieten, and Nira Yuval-Davis, “Introduction” Patterns of Prejudice. 40, no. 3
20 Kannabiran, Vieten, and Yuval-Davis 189.
society in quotidian interactions; a position that was relatively untenable for dark skinned Brazilians in São Paulo of the early twentieth century.

Yet, this longing for recognition highlights how identity is constructed in relation to what others think. That is a person acts to fulfill a role already socially defined. As Judith Butler reminds us, performance is key to the construction of identity,

If identity is asserted through a process of signification, if identity is always already signified, and yet continues to signify as it circulates within various interlocking discourses, then the question of agency is not to be answered through recourse to an ‘I’ that preexisted signification. Thus, identity is all of those moments when people perform these signs of who they envision themselves to be. We become who we are by engaging in practices that eventually label us as practitioners of said act. This labeling process is either done by us (e.g. I teach English therefore I am an English teacher) or it is done to us (e.g. as is the case with negative racial or gendered stereotypes). In the case of this study, we see the writers of the black press advocating for the inclusion of their class as “educated” and “civilized” and above all connected to western models of civilization.

The identity of “educated” is one of the most complex and double-edged concepts exalted by these men. In a country such as Brazil where the education and literacy rates were so low both education markers were incredibly important signs of prestige. However, education is often a very cultured concept as was demonstrated famously by Fanon’s classic study *Black Skin, White Masks*. While there were significant differences between Fanon’s Martinique and Brazil of the 1920s, there is one major similarity: all these men were educated within a system that placed upon a pedestal the experience of Western Europe (particularly France) as the apex of civilization. Fanon realized that the education valued by the Martiniquais was a form of uncritical consumption of knowledge produced by and for the French, which led young

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Antilleans to assume the French perspective. This ultimately led the French to have control over the production of knowledge since they had control over the collective unconscious. Thus, as one engages with cultural production one becomes, in a sense, culturally “whiter.”

This uncritical adoption of European perspectives is problematic, because it is not just an adoption of western ideas, but it is also a negation of the place of origin. This point is made by Fanon’s classic example of the arrival of who he calls “the new comer” who is in fact a high class Martiniquais who was able to go study in France, which highlights how these educational signs of prestige helped perpetuate the system of exclusion. This is so because this educated individual is critical towards the common Antillean and at the same time becomes the model for the high class. Although Fanon’s study relates to the particular conditions of Martinique, he also expands his conclusion by saying that it is a product of colonialism and, thus is likely experienced by other colonized people (and this is clearly the situation in Brazil). Thus, like the Martiniquais, Black Brazilians of that time were particularly keen to show themselves as civilized and modern individuals in what was seen as the most modern center in Brazil, São Paulo.

In this frame, education is of particular importance to Fanon for the process of acculturation. And it must be emphasized that education alone does not remedy the colonization of the minds. In fact, he seems to argue that it can worsen the situation by deepening immersion of the individual in the cultural products of the metropolis. “The black schoolboy in the Antilles, who in his lessons is forever talking about ‘our ancestors, the Gauls,’ identifies himself with the explorer, the bringer of civilization, the white man who carries truth to savages – an all-white

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23 Fanon 23-25.
24 Fanon 25.
Thus through education the individual is exposed to a westernized conception of “civilization.” It is because of this conceptual problem that the first chapter of his book is about language and its appropriation by the colonial subject; as Fanon conceived, “the Negro of the Antilles will be proportionally whiter— that is, he will come closer to being a real human being—in direct ratio to his mastery of the French language.” These attitudes are a result of an educational system and a cultural hegemony that guides and privileges western cultural expressions. Thus, if one were to be “cultured” one had to be necessarily equated to a Western cultural tradition.

This process of acculturation and of elevating one culture over the other reminds us that identity is not just self-defining, it also has an exclusionary side. For Stuart Hall an essential part of identity is that it is constructed by demarcating what it is not; it is marked and defined by difference. Thus, if we combine both Hall and Butler’s notions we see that identity is constantly constructed and performed but it is also always being defined not only as something but also against something. Fanon, however, reminds us that colonialism further complicates these identity relationships for the descendants of Africans in the Americas: “The Martinican (sic) does not compare himself with the white man qua father, leader, God; he compares himself with his fellow against the pattern of the white man.” Thus, through the comparison with his compatriot he is able to place within himself, self-worth based upon his ability to be better than (in his own mind) other members of his own group who are unable or unwilling to engage in the same cultural (re)productions.

25 Fanon 147. 
26 Fanon 18. 
28 Fanon 215.
These complicated series of identity relations are at the heart of the political project of the black press in São Paulo. In this way the black press was an attempt to define and contrast its members with the rest of society. It is true that they spoke often of the need to educate members of “the race” and believed and argued with each other over who truly spoke for the race; they were however, creating a political project where they placed value in the creation and adoption of Western Cultural practices --which they saw as superior-- while at the same time rejecting the “black primitive,” as a sign of their own cultural prestige. Because of this, it can be said that they (re)produced some of the same problematic cultural patterns they were criticizing. Thus, these men who suffered racism, implicitly, responded creating boundaries between themselves and others based upon behavior deemed proper. This allowed them to exercise their own form of power granting patriarchy where they were able to advocate the proper behavior for men and women through their literary productions. These behaviors were at times spelled out specifically in their essays and at other times implicitly in their stories and poems. The effect of their productions was to reinforce their own view of themselves as members (men and women) worthy of status.

We must therefore recognize this behavior as a defense mechanism of a black intelligentsia that was caught in an in-between zone in a local society that overvalued the European and at the same time undervalued the African: “The feeling of inferiority of the colonized is correlative to the European’s feeling of superiority. Let us have the courage to say it outright: it is the racist who creates his inferior.”29 Thus, these men, by being so educated had to break from the colonialist rhetoric that gripped African imagery as backwards. In this way,

29 Fanon 93.
Paulina L. Alberto, points out that the few discussions of Africa presented by the black press were usually imbued with the colonialist prisms from which the news emerged.\(^30\)

Despite these problematic positions these intellectuals still accomplished many great feats. They participated actively in a successful campaign to create a holiday for the “black mother” which allowed them to create a space for the exaltation of the contribution of Afro-Brazilians in the history of Brazil. In addition, they integrated the São Paulo State Guards. Furthermore, they created a political party focused on advancing political gains for Afro-Brazilians. And there were also the beginnings of the deployment of the word “negro” as a positive and affirming identity; one that should not be avoided, but rather embraced.

Following these conceptions or race and identity this thesis is an intellectual case study of one particular newspaper, *O Clarim d’Alvorada*. As such, I seek to investigate the intellectual climate against which the contributors to the papers wrote. Also, I aim to analyze how and in what ways these writers responded to questions of black inferiority. The cultural productions, specifically the literary works of the men who produced the newspaper, were imbued with significance.\(^31\) However, I argue that contributors of the *O Clarim d’Alvorada* specifically, but also the black press generally, engaged in performances of cultural (re)productions that inscribed them as members worthy of inclusion into white society. They tried to achieve this by highlighting their own superior quality, through engagement with Western Cultural traditions, while at the same time excluding those seen as socially inferior. These cultural productions published on the black press were for the most part literary in nature and encompassed many genres (essays, short stories, poems etc).

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\(^{30}\) Alberto 67.

\(^{31}\) While there were black women that were involved in these movements, their participation seems to have been limited to “traditional” roles. Although some women did also write their active participation as contributors were extremely rare.
Because these cultural productions reflected a dichotomous position of both rejecting their own position as lesser individuals in a society that deemed them inferior and also reflect their own use of some of the same biases deployed towards other social groups, this thesis is divided in an effort at discussing two aspects fundamentally influential at this time: race and gender. The first chapter traces the evolution of intellectual thought in Brazil from 1880-1930s. This chapter points at a Brazilian elite that was very worried by what it saw as the many deficiencies within the Brazilian nation-state that failed to live up to its grandiose ideals even after the creation of the Republic. Furthermore, it shows how the intellectuals molded ideas of racial superiority, in vogue in Europe at the time into a whitening ideology that placed the blame for Brazil’s ills upon the black population, while at the same time not condemning Brazilian elites themselves for maintaining the failing system. Thus, the role of this chapter is to highlight the racism inherent in popular intellectuals’ discussion regarding the nation in the early twentieth century.

The second chapter of this thesis describes how intellectuals imagined Gender norms in Brazil. This chapter does not include works of women intellectuals of the time, because the important element discussed here is not how women acted but rather how women were perceived by men. This chapter uses Roberto da Matta’s division of the street and the house and Foucault’s notion of power to not only show how women were controlled through social institutions, but also how men confirmed their own self-worth to other men through “their” women. The concept of “Honor,” for men of high class, was a very important signifier, which rested upon the behavior of “their” women. This chapter highlights what these ideal categories of behaviors were and, as a result, what the ideal roles for Gender were at the time. This is important for understanding not just how women were asked to live by society, but also how men projected
their own self-worth based upon their household. The purpose of this chapter is to expose the
gender norms that were in vogue at the time and how these black writers employed them as
justifications for belonging.

In the third and final chapters I discuss the literary works of *O Clarim d'Alvorada* in
relation to both racial and gendered discussions of propriety. This chapter attempts to
demonstrate how the contributors of the newspaper sought to justify their own image as elite
men by displaying their patriarchal positions, thereby making the case for their inclusion in a
society that had considered them not only to be inferior, but also to be a significant reason for
Brazil’s backwardness. As is discussed in chapter one, for many people, blackness symbolized
primitivism, and as a result was something that needed to be fixed and avoided (it was a mark of
degeneracy). As a result, these black intellectuals wrote works that (re)inscribed them as
bastions of civility through the process of engaging with Literature, but also in the advocacy of a
particular set of norms that were standard at their time (i.e. “proper” behavior). This is especially
the case of the writings regarding the policing of proper gender norms. Thus, black intellectuals
advocated their own inclusion at the same time that they excluded others, specifically women
and other blacks who were unable or unwilling to engage in the practices deemed respectable by
the elites. (However, the chapter does point out that over time *O Clarim d’Alvorada* became
increasingly critical of the space provided to black people. In later years they began to advocate
for the term “negro” and even began to look more fondly and admire other members of the
diaspora).

In the final chapter of this thesis I offer a concluding analysis of the problematic issues
surrounding identity formation amongst black intellectuals in Brazil. In it, apart from
summarizing my previous analysis, I propose possible future paths of research regarding black intellectuals, identity and the nascent Brazilian nation.
Chapter 1: Scientism, Race and the Construction of the Nation

Issues of social-class, gender and race mediated the identity formation process amongst black intellectuals in Brazil. Thus, before discussing the Brazilian black press of the 1920s and 1930s, it is important for me to contextualize the intellectual environment surrounding issues of race (and gender, which I will discuss in the next chapter) in which these intellectuals were producing. To address this issue, in this chapter I reconstruct the intellectual milieu at a broad level across Brazil from 1889-1937. Specifically I focus on the explanations intellectuals created to rationalize disappointment with Brazil’s lack of progress. As such, the chapter focuses on a small, but powerful segment of the population: the intellectual elites.

Intellectuals in every country makeup only a small percentage of any population, in Brazil of the Republic and early Vargas years this number would be even smaller considering the deplorable state of education at the time which restricted schooling to a minutiae of the populace. In 1881, for example, when the electoral law was passed which restricted voting rights only to literates, only one percent of the 14 million people fit that description.\(^\text{32}\) Even with these low numbers, associates of the Members of the State held the Brazilian intelligentsia in high esteem placing many of them in government positions. José Francisco de Oliveira Viana, for example, became a prominent member of the Getúlio Vargas administration. Similarly one of his mentors, Alberto Torres, was a Supreme Court Justice. Thus, although a small group, Brazilian intellectuals are incredibly influential within the economic elites and the Government in Brazil, perhaps even more so than their counterparts in other parts of the world.

In this chapter I seek to reiterate the evolution of social thought concerning racial attitudes from the 1870 to 1937. Intellectuals of the time influenced and were influenced by cultural productions that engaged primarily with science and the concerns of the future of Brazil as a viable nation-state. This chapter will highlight this era’s “scientifism” and then show its progression through time towards a more nationalist critique made by a generation who were disillusioned with Europe and more confident in Brazil. Fundamentally, the question that I tease out of this chapter is how these men intertwined the issues of Race with the concerns over “Progress” throughout time. I aim to show that intellectuals unfortunately did not change their views of minorities that drastically, but rather gradually. The basic underlying structure of racial thought remained the same throughout these years: a hierarchy established with Blacks and Indians at the bottom and Whites at the top. Thus a difficult question arose: If Brazil is a multiracial society and if non-Whites are inferior, then what does this mean for Brazilian history? Or, more importantly, what does this mean for Brazil’s future as a viable nation and its hopes for Progress? What I will argue is that in the midst of a fervent desire to modernize Brazil, the Republicans sought to do just that: make Brazil “modern.” Modern, to these intellectuals, meant European. Thus, to make Brazil a modern country meant that Brazil had to become a tropical Europe. While Europe had always been the model for Brazil, in the late nineteenth and early eighteenth century, race became an increasingly important focus in explaining reasons for European advancement. Therefore, intellectuals in Brazil began focusing on non-European aspects (e.g. race) for Brazil as a negative. Thus, these scholars linked what they perceived as Brazil’s “backwardness” to the racial/ethnic composition of its people.

The first part of this chapter will be a brief description of intellectual trends from 1889-1919. The Second part focuses on the events from 1919-1930. This deals with the post-World
War I phase in the intellectual history of Brazil. During this time period intellectuals began to question the rationale behind the previous generation’s allure to a Europe that, after the barbarism of the Great War, was seen as the antithesis of “Civilized.” These new intellectuals epitomized the rejection of Europe with the rise of “Brazilian-centric” themes and xenophobic rhetoric against European immigrants that had been encouraged to go to Brazil to “whiten” the population. This infatuation and glorification of Brazilian themes culminated after the rise of Getúlio Vargas in the 1930. During Vargas’s time in office, there emerged a concept of “Brazilianess” of which the African –as will be discussed later- and African rituals emerged as a central, albeit subservient, basis of this identity.

In Brazil intellectuals in the 1870s were in the midst of two juxtaposing events: the Second Industrial Revolution and the War against Paraguay. Western European States, the United States and Japan were also industrializing rapidly during this period. Armed with new technologies, European States expanded their empires across the globe. For example, the scramble for Africa gained a feverish pitch in the latter half of the nineteenth century under the guise of bringing “civilization” to a “barbaric” world. In 1871 the German military defeated the French in the Franco-Prussian War, thus transforming the Prussian Empire into the German Empire. The expansions of European empires across the globe coupled with the technological achievements occurring in Europe created an atmosphere of the triumphalism of science and of the European.33

While these momentous changes were occurring around the world, Brazilians felt as though they were being left behind. The Imperial Regime’s inability to mobilize resources

effectively against Paraguay, a much smaller country, distressed many elites, especially in the Military and the younger modern generation.\textsuperscript{34} Intellectuals from this generation were perplexed by the situation, and questioned what kind of country Brazil was, and was becoming (civilized vs. barbaric). They realized that it could not be a question of younger nations versus older nations, because the United States, a young nation, was on the rise. Pessimistic intellectuals sought to explain the “backwardness” of Brazil. As they interpreted it Brazil was still an agrarian economy based on slavery, while the advanced “German People” (the Germans and Anglo Saxons English and United States) reached their peak.

Many social thinkers of the 1870s and beyond became obsessed with “diagnosing” the ailments of the nation.\textsuperscript{35} Reformers targeted the monarchy itself, because Dom Pedro II was a perfect symbol of the “old order” against which to rally. As Thomas Skidmore has suggested, “however enlightened Pedro II might have been, he stood at the apex of a hierarchical society based on human enslavement.”\textsuperscript{36} With such an easily identifiable symbol as the Emperor, opponents of the monarchy placed blame upon him for all forms of failure of the government (failure of the State to mobilize adequately, corruption, political stagnation, lack of jobs, etc).\textsuperscript{37} Thus, to those who sought to place Brazil on a track towards progress, the old regime had to be completely done away with.

Because of this growing anti-monarchical feelings on November 19, 1889 members of the military overthrew Pedro II and proclaimed the Brazilian State a Republic. Jubilant supporters of the Republic hailed it as a new tropical manifestation of the previous revolutions

\textsuperscript{34} Thomas E. Skidmore, \textit{Black into White: Race and Nationality in Brazilian Thought}, 5\textsuperscript{th} ed. (Durham: Duke University Press, 2005), 7-14.
\textsuperscript{36} Skidmore, 5.
\textsuperscript{37} Carvalho \textit{A Formação das Almas}, 25-26.
(e.g. the American, and especially the French Revolutions). For them, Brazil passed from being a nation of subjects to a nation of citizens. However, the Republic that was established was far from egalitarian. Carvalho explains the problems of the Brazilian “revolution” by comparing its reality to the conclusions of Hannah Ardent’s work on the American Revolution where she states that the “true” revolution that occurred in the United States occurred prior to America’s independence; for Brazil, this was not the case. “In Brazil, there was no prior revolution (as had occurred in the United States). Despite the abolition of slavery, society was still characterized by the profound inequality and concentration of power.” Thus, in Brazil, the Republic was unable to become a progressive state and instead reflected the unequal society they had inherited.

Unsurprisingly, the political bosses who controlled the levers of power during the Republic gave it a profoundly authoritarian nature.

More than on any ideas about social equality the advocates of the Republic attacked the Monarch, because of the idea that he inhibited Brazil’s “progress;” as such, it is important to understand what was meant by “progress.” Brazilian society has always been a Eurocentric society, especially among the elite circles. Economically Brazil also depended on Europe since Brazilian producers sold goods primarily to the European markets. Furthermore, Brazilian elites consumed all manner of cultural goods from Europe, particularly France. This connection with the French was especially evident during the Belle Époque. As a result members of the elite created a culture within their class that was heavily imitative of Europe. Therefore, ideologically, many intellectuals felt drawn to ideas surrounding science, such as Positivism. While today it is easy to criticize the uncritical infatuation of these men with science, at that time it was difficult to deny the remarkable pace of the advancements. In his introduction to the third

38 Carvalho A Formação das Almas, 25.
39 Skidmore, 92-93.
volume of *História da Vida Privada no Brasil: República da Belle Époque à Era do Rádio*, Nicolau Sevcenko points to the remarkable advancements that occurred from the 1870s through the 1930s (everything from the telegraph, cars, airplanes to radios were introduced). Because of these advancements it becomes easier to understand how one might feel awe at the changes experienced from 1870 onward. Novais also points out that these advancements led to an unprecedented expansion of European Imperialism across the globe. Underpinning these expansions were doctrines of racial superiority. Writing on the Euclides da Cunha’s classic account of the military expedition that destroyed Canudos, Nicolas Sevcenko describes the military officers as “true representatives of the social, political and economic elites of the costal capitals: always looking towards the old continent, on the other side of the Atlantic, and identifying with it.” Thus, Sevcenko argues that the defeat represented, not necessarily just a problem with the military, but with the elites themselves who sought progress in a European context. In this pursuit, the military sent its officers to train with European officers to prepare themselves to engage in European theatres of war against European enemies, because they assumed that European techniques would be better regardless of the context in which they were employed. When these officers returned to Brazil they failed, because everything their lessons taught them were not pertinent to their engagement at Canudos; after all Canudos was not Waterloo nor was Bahia Belgium.

Although certainly not all of the elites -intellectuals or otherwise- were Positivists, their mere presence and importance is indicative of the power that Science had upon the minds of the elites at that time. Interestingly, there were multiple strands of these “scientific” movements.

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41 Sevcenko, 20.
42 Sevcenko, 16-20.
amongst intellectuals of the time. Some were Positivists, others were Darwinians, and even others were evolutionists, however, what held the era together, intellectually, was a belief that progress came through science. Thus, the intellectuals of the times created “a kind of scientific ethos, an indiscriminate and vague ‘scientism.’”\textsuperscript{43} Although “Scientism” was not a coherent set of rules, Schwarcz describes it as an overarching belief that science could unlock important truths about life and society. The term “Scientifism,” for her, describes the tendency that scholars had at that time of incorporating science into all types of work.\textsuperscript{44} This predisposition is not surprising given the radical technological advancements that were underway during this period amongst the centers that were culturally highly influential for Brazilian elites (i.e. Europe). Scientifism achieved such wide acceptance that it affected various areas that would not be considered compatible with science (e.g. the humanities). For example, Students of Law saw the discipline as a science, with investigators believing that they could, with a certain amount of confidence, predict criminality based upon physical features.\textsuperscript{45} Science, it was thought, would bring unquestionable progress to all social sectors.

However, the intellectual fervor for the Republic began to wane almost immediately. The economic crisis of the Encilhamento brought about increase in external debt and inflation.\textsuperscript{46} As a consequence, dissidents in the State of Rio Grande do Sul rebelled from 1893-1895. There were also the military failures at Canudos, in which the government failed three times to take over the town. Furthermore, the first two Republican administrations Deodoro Fonseca (1889-

\textsuperscript{43} Schwarcz, 30.
\textsuperscript{44} Schwarcz, 29-34.
\textsuperscript{45} Schwarcz, 168-233.
\textsuperscript{46} The Encilhamento was an inflationary economic crisis that arose when in the first two years of the Republic (1890-1891). The then Minister of Finance, Rui Barbosa, deployed economic policies that sought to eased monetary policies and also facilitated the creation of corporations. However, the policies caused the government to lose control over the monetary policy. Boris Fausto, \textit{História do Brasil} 13\textsuperscript{th} ed. (São Paulo: Editora da Universidade de São Paulo, 2010) 252.
1891) and his successor, Floriano Peixoto (1891-1894)—both of whom were military men—restricted civil liberties such as the freedom of speech and of the press in an effort to deal with the institutional crisis they faced. By comparison, Emperor Pedro II never rescinded these freedoms, thus making it harder to compare the Republic favorably against the King’s supposed “tyrannical nature.” These problems, among others, led to phrasings such as “this is not the republic of my dreams” and other comical parodies usually at the expense of Republican symbols.  

Despite the reservations that many held regarding the effectiveness of the Republic, after the administration of Prudente de Morais (1894-1898), another Paulista civilian became president, Campos Sales, thus consolidating the Republican political system. This newfound solidity was the result of an alliance amongst the political bosses throughout the country, which saw the presidency shift amongst a few powerful states (São Paulo, Minas Gerais, Rio de Janeiro). Indeed at this time the most important political unit was the State and not necessarily the Federal Government.  

Despite this political consolidation, members of the elite still worried greatly about the state of Brazil as a viable nation in the first decade of the 20th century. Skidmore proposes that “although political stability appeared to have been achieved between 1898 and 1910, thereby giving satisfaction and relief to worried elite, they had been deeply disturbed by the upheaval of the 1890s.” Furthermore, he argues that the elites concerned themselves with the absence of what they saw as an “authentic” national culture based in part on political stability but also on an

47 Carvalho, A Formação das Almas, 87.
49 Skidmore, 84.
“authentic” national literature. Schwarcz points out a similar trend amongst not only intellectuals, but also intellectual institutions of this time period; in her chapter on historical institutes she places the 1900-1914 period together with the 1890s as an “era of pessimism.”

“Thus, as the twentieth century began, a new way of understanding history began to prevail. To write history was to take part in a debate on contemporary problems and the uncertainties of the future as well as to integrate the era’s scientific advances.” As such, individuals and institutions became concerned about, what they felt, were the deficiencies of the nation, both at present and historically.

In many ways the Republican era in Brazil is tied to the promise of “Progress,” and the disappointment with its unattainability. As mentioned previously, many positivists argued against the Monarchy in the belief that it was holding back Modernization and therefore that the State should be not a monarchy, but rather a Dictatorial Republic, an idea, which appealed to the military (which eventually carried out the overthrow of the Dom Pedro II), because the state would then be controlled by a small cadre of technocrats who would use science to govern. However, despite the political change, progress did not come. Brazilians, as a result, became dissatisfied almost immediately with the failures of the Republic. Adding to this despair is the edenic myth surrounding Brazilian nature, which has been a part of the Brazilian imagination since the colonial era. Behind this expression of patriotism linked to nature is cynicism as expressed by the joke: Brazil is the land of the future and always will be. The joke itself parodies the assumptions held by many Brazilians –including those who tell the joke- that Brazil

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50 Skidmore, 78-123.
51 Schwarcz, 131-136.
52 Schwarcz, 135.
53 Carvalho, A Formação das Almas, 27-29.
55 This joke is a play on a famous book by Stefan Zweig, in which he paints an extremely positive view of Brazil. Stefan Zweig, Brazil: The Land of the Future, trans. Andrew St. James (London: Cassell, 1942).
has almost everything imaginable to be a “great” power, except for the government, the politicians or its Portuguese colonial heritage, etc. This expectation of greatness is nothing new in Brazil. For example, Carvalho notes that even in the naming of the country, once it gained its independence, Brazil reflected this belief: Brazil was an empire rather than a kingdom, because it was believed that Brazil’s wealth in natural resources and sheer size guaranteed it a glorious future. Yet, government after government failed to fulfill this great promise, thus, creating a disconnected space between imaginary progress (what should be) and the disappointment of reality (what is). Carvalho provides an excellent example of these failures by highlighting the Republican elites’ inability to create national symbols and “founding fathers” (the obvious exceptions is Tiradents whose veneration is tied to his Christ-like imagery) that could resonate with all Brazilians. Because of this absence of heroes many continue to see the abundant nature as the appropriate symbol for the country.

As the Brazilian elites felt an air of disappointment rise with every failure of the Republic they sought solace in social explanations for this malfunction. At this time (1870s -1930s), scholars considered arguments based on race to be perfectly acceptable. Many scholars took the works of Herbert Spencer and Charles Darwin to examine their own social realities. Fundamentally, these scholars (re)constructed a racial hierarchy with whites at the top of the pyramid of civilization. For example, the Italian-Argentine scholar, José Ingenieros, described in his book Sociología Argentina published between 1899 and 1913 that “[t]he superiority of the White race is an accepted fact, even amongst those who deny the existence of a struggle between the races.” Whole societies (read races) were seen as singular bodies caught in Darwinian

56 Carvalho, “Dreams Come Untrue,” 67
57 Carvalho, “Dreams Come Untrue,” 57-82. And Carvalho A Formação das Almas, 55-73.
struggles against each other for survival, with the caveat that whites were undeniably the superior race. Ingenieros argues in his book that a race’s quantity and “quality,” together with climate, determined the racial struggle with those white races best disposed to their natural climates “winning” in those lands (e.g. US, Canada, Argentina, Chile, Uruguay and Southern Brazil). Ingenieros’ basic premise of race and climate affecting the struggle for survival between “races” is emblematic of the international discussions (particularly within South America) about evolution; Brazil was no exception.

These discussions of national deficiencies implied serious problems with individual Brazilians. For intellectuals of the time an individual’s flaws passed from generation to generation and were seen as not only problematic for a person’s progeny, but also for the entire nation itself, as the nation extended itself from families. Therefore, the backwardness of societies resulted from the unhealthiness or degeneracy of their individual members. This degeneracy could come in virtually any area: alcoholics, sexual deviants, prostitutes, criminals etc. As such these groups of people became the main area of interests of the intellectual establishments in European countries. As Foucault argues, society changed the ways in which it sought to control these deviants. For example, prior to the 1870s the church and various local customs regulated sexual practices; afterwards the doctors began to assume greater control of these powers with great effect on society. Doctors listened to the sexual acts committed, categorized each act and, more importantly, began creating adjectives to describe those acts as fundamental characteristics of the individuals who engage in them. Thus, “[t]he sodomite had

59 Ingenieros.
61 Borges, 238.
been a temporary aberration; the homosexual was now a species.\textsuperscript{63} This process of labeling and ordering extended to racial structures as well. However, few European scholars interested themselves with race given their generally uncritical acceptance of the assumption of White superiority.\textsuperscript{64}

Contrary to their European counterparts Latin American scholars considered the issue of race immensely important. This interest could be explained by the prevalence of racially mixed population in Brazil, which constituted the largest and most visible segment of “degenerates” in Brazilian society, a space that would have been taken up by sexual deviants or criminals in Europe. The ideals of scientivism of the time meant that the racial hierarchy created in European scholarly circles influenced the intellectual milieu of Brazil, given the power European ideas had within the Brazilian “market of ideas.” This in turn reflected the power dynamics between intellectuals internationally; after all, intellectuals from Europe hardly read any works produced in Brazil.\textsuperscript{65} This one-way exchange resulted from a lack of prestige due to Power differences, and also was the result of Brazilian scholars’ selection of reading material that was considered “inferior” academically within Europe for their Monogeist stances on the issues of race.\textsuperscript{66} Thus, these interactions created, reflected and reinforced an intellectual hegemony, which, formulated in the image of the “degenerate” an idea which “[l]ike any hegemonic idea or scientific ‘paradigm’, degeneration less often dictated conclusions rather than it provided a biased foundation for polemical debates and for contradictory elaborations.”\textsuperscript{67} As such, concerns over the degenerates of the nation were similar to concerns over other problems of the nation, such as typhoid fever, or any other medical problem.

\textsuperscript{63} Foucault, 43.
\textsuperscript{64} Borges, 238.
\textsuperscript{65} Borges, 239.
\textsuperscript{66} Schwarcz, 42-43.
\textsuperscript{67} Borges, 239.
At the base of these intellectual hegemonic ideas of degeneracy was the overall supremacy of scientism, which at this time gained greater strength. Oswaldo Cruz’s success in eliminating yellow fever, small pox and the bubonic plague from Rio de Janeiro serves as a great example of how science and social concerns interacted. In the early years of the twentieth century Oswaldo Cruz was effectively given control over changes needed to eradicate the city of diseases. The changes that were undertaken targeted poor communities living in abandoned colonial houses. Furthermore, the treatment of these communities was myopic in the sense that the health care professionals thought only of the elimination of danger areas. Thus, houses were torn down, and previous tenants of those homes were forced further out of the city; thus riding the city of its degenerates. In 1904 a culmination point emerged when angry residents struck out and demanded an end to the vaccines.

The books of both Skidmore and Schwarcz relay how elites’ concern over the “deficiencies” and diseases of Brazil eventually led them to racial issues of the country. Policy-makers made greater incursions into the Brazilian backlands and other poorer areas due to advances in railroad and other technologies. Medical expeditions went along in an effort to cure the ills of those people, just as they had cured the capital city. Doctors, however, dedicated themselves in eradicating all the causes they believed led to such conditions (including laziness).

In the vision of these (doctors), the pathological physical constitution extended itself to degenerative miscegenation that served to further increase the indolence of the nationals, laziness, lack of enthusiasm that was found in those residents of ranches and small cities, almost always lying about, smoking the pipe and sniffing powdered tobacco.\textsuperscript{68}

Thus, during the *Belle Époque* in Brazil the hegemony of science and belief in progress made the possibility of government intervention in one’s private life including the racial outcomes of families a possibility. Nonetheless, it must be stated that, while these instances were discussed, few projects were ever even mentioned that focused on the sudden elimination of blacks (read genocide) or creating a concrete segregationist system, as was the case in the United States.

Because of this difference in racial formulations Skidmore and Schwarz share a similar argument in their works: that Brazilian intellectuals created a white supremacist ideology that was fundamentally different from the European model, even while borrowing heavily from it. As Skidmore states: “the whitening ideology squared with one of the most obvious facts of Brazilian social history -the existence of a large ‘middle cast,’ generally called ‘mulatto’.”

He further explains the creativity of this model:

> By any objective physical characteristics it was nonsense to refer to such a single category as ‘mulato.’ Yet the Brazilians consistently did so, and their belief in such a category was an essential part of their race thinking. Given the experience of their multi-racial society, the whitening thesis offered Brazilians a rationale for what they believed was already happening. They borrowed racist theory from Europe and then discarded two of the principal assumptions –the innateness of racial differences and the degeneracy of mixed bloods-in order to formulate their own solution to the ‘negro problem.’

Thus, Brazilian intellectuals took what European pseudo-scientists taught them about the human species and turned it around in an effort to create a way to effectively save Brazil from an inevitable decline into barbarism as contemporary theories of social Darwinism proposed. As Schwarz argues, “Intellectuals oscillated between determinist models as they reflected upon them, and they found themselves in an uncomfortable place. Their position between the

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69 Skidmore, 77.
70 Skidmore, 77.
exaltation of ‘national modernity’ and their recognition of the nation’s reality was untenable.”

As such, Brazilian intellectuals argued that while whites were “obviously superior,” continued miscegenation and the presence of mulattos indicated that the nation was becoming progressively whiter, thus progressively superior and more civilized; that is, in the context of Brazil miscegenation was not negative, but rather the nation’s salvation. In this sense, both immigration and black people’s lower reproduction rates meant that whites, like the railroad and medicine were coming to all parts of Brazil to save it from the evils represented by the inferior races.

However, elites put the intellectual and social superiority of Europe after World War I into question. During the War itself Brazilians with the economic ability, benefited from having an increase in share of markets (which Sevcenko argues resulted from increasing sales to the belligerent nations of Europe, but which Werner Baer argues derived not of increasing sales to Europe but an increase in reaching higher capacity of industrialization constructed before the war). Furthermore, Europe’s hegemony over Brazilian intellectuals lessened with war; after all, the nations believed to be at the acme of civilization showed remarkable barbarism. Thus, younger generations began to attack the intellectuals of the Belle Époque for adhering so strictly to European standards and for failing to mobilize to tackle Brazil’s fundamental problems, which for them was a lack of education and healthcare. Oliveira Vianna, for example, chastised

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71 Schwarcz, 298.
73 Skidmore, 152-172.
Republican policies for being too grandiose and not being focused on-the-ground problems of the country.\textsuperscript{74}

The attacks against the \textit{Belle Époque} generation and their veneration of European standards began to emerge as early as the 1910’s; however, the hegemonic belief in the primacy of science was not broken. If anything the attacks against the previous generation relied on assumptions that were based on the successes of science in clearing away many of the problems brought about by “race.” The Jurist Francisco José de Oliveira Vianna, for example, took issue not with the application of scientific notions of evolution upon Brazilian society, but rather on the creation and application of \textit{vast} laws of evolution to all parts of the world. In his \textit{Evolução do Povo Brasileiro} -originally published in 1923- he argues that there are climatic factors that influence evolution within each country.\textsuperscript{75} The argument relies on the idea that evolution applies at the local level, but not at the international level. Therefore, he constructs a paradoxical argument in which he calls for a conservative quasi aristocratic government in which the “Germanic” Brazilian elites control the non-Germanic population, while not adhering to international imperialism.

Nonetheless, Oliveira Vianna’s writing indicates an occurring shift within intellectual circles that reflected greater confidence in the development of the nation. Skidmore relates the criticisms this way:

\begin{quote}
In the earlier period (1889-1910) the critics spoke from a less confident position, expressing a deep sense of uncertainty. The critics of the 1920s felt free to offer a straightforward nationalist critique of the Republican political system. Their view was that Brazil should not continue to copy foreign models of government
\end{quote}


\textsuperscript{75} Francisco José de Oliveira Vianna, \textit{Evolução do Povo Brasileiro}, 4th ed (Rio de Janeiro: José Olympio Editôra, 1956), 21-34.
implied a new faith in their own ability to come up with a workable political system reflecting the uniqueness of Brazil. This confidence came, in turn from a new confidence that the variable of race did not necessarily preclude Brazil’s future as a great nation.\textsuperscript{76}

Oliveira Vianna was at the cusp of this nationalist moment. He sought to address Brazil’s problems with local answers, however, he still argued that the masses of Brazilians were, indeed, inferior as “these two barbaric races only become agents of civilization, that is they only become positive elements of eugenics for the formation of the superior classes when they lose their purity and they mix with the white race.” \textsuperscript{77} Therefore the two “barbaric races” civilized and bettered themselves with each successive generation that engaged in miscegenation with whites. An extreme example of this idea of climbing up the racial ladder is the conception that the Brazilian elites are relatively free from the degeneracy of inferior races because they are extremely light-skinned if not “purely European,” due to their “eugenic cautiousness.”

In the later part of the 1920s and into the 1930s this confidence in mixed races increased. In 1933 Gilberto Freyre culminated this trend with \textit{Casa Grande & Senzala}, which considered racial mixture to be the prominent feature of Brazilian national identity. Edward Telles considers this book to be \textit{the} publication that made race mixture a prominent feature of Brazilian national identity.\textsuperscript{78} Freyre holds that racial mixing is not necessarily negative, because racial differences and superiority/inferiority were always relative. Furthermore, he contends that not only was miscegenation good for Brazil, it was what made Brazil. The Portuguese’s ability to mate and coexist with different people served them well, eugenically:

\begin{quote}
For this (the Portuguese) had been prepared by the intimate terms of social and sexual intercourse on which they had lived with the colored races that had
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{76} Skidmore, 176.
\textsuperscript{77} Oliveira Vianna, 158 (my translation).
invaded their peninsula or were close neighbors to it, one of which, of the Mohamamedan faith, was technically more highly skilled and possessed an intellectual and artistic culture superior to that of the blond Christians.  

Freyre, thus, highlights the relativity of the inferior/superior racist concepts of culture. The Portuguese colonizers made themselves stronger because of their ability and willingness to comingle with the “other,” which gave their progeny various positive characteristics of those cultures, such as “mobility” and “economic realism” from the Jews. “This mobility was one of the secrets of the Portuguese victory.”

Furthermore, Freyre completely rejects the racial degeneracy thesis. For him the inferior status of common Brazilians resulted from a host of factors. The environment, for example, forced the Portuguese to change their diet from one based on the temperate climates of the Mediterranean to one based on the Tropical environments, a relatively new environment for them. By comparison the settlers in North America and the Southern part of South America did not have to change their diet, due to the similarities between those climate zones and Europe.

Power relations was another factor that determined the “status” of common Brazilians, as the example of syphilis points out:

Not only was sexual intercourse between the European conqueror and the Indian woman disturbed by syphilis and other highly contagious venereal diseases of European origin; it also became widespread, under circumstances that were otherwise unfavorable to the woman. A species of sadism on the part of the white man and of masochism on the part of his Indian companion must have been the predominant feature in the sexual as in the social relations of the European with the women of those races that were subject to his rule. The furious passions of the Portuguese must have been vented upon victims who did not always share his sexual tastes, although we know of cases where the sadism of the white conqueror was offset by the masochism of his native or Negro partner.

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80 Freyre, 10.  
81 Freyre, 19-24.  
82 Freyre 74-78.
Nonetheless, *Casa Grande & Senzala* provides hope for the future of Brazil, because the major problems that are related to Brazil’s past are not a result of race, but rather of other factors that no longer exist (e.g. Power discrepancy between Master and Slave) or are being mitigated through time (e.g. tropical diseases).

No one can deny the influence of Freyre’s book on Brazilian intellectual thought, however, we must note how the time of publication was as much a part of Freyre’s success as the work itself. First, Freyre’s mentor in New York, Franz Boas, developed the anthropological arguments surrounding the primacy of environment and its effects on society and culture as opposed to race in the early 1900s. Moreover, Boas’ influence on Brazilian intellectuals did not start with Freyre. Alberto Torres, whose writing was mostly done prior to World War I, was one of the most famous early examples of intellectuals who refuted “aryanists” claims of Brazil’s racial inferiority by using arguments developed by Boas. Like Freyre, Torres’ familiarity with Boas’ studies provided backing to his claim that the blame for Brazil’s lack of progress derived from the environment and “a lack of education, poor nutrition, and faulty hygiene.” However, he was unable to make much headway in his arguments, because the elites of the time were not ready to accept his views.

Freyre, on the other hand, published his oeuvre during a time of heightened confidence in the nation, that is, in 1933, three years after Getúlio Vargas’ Revolution of 1930. The Vargas regime was nationalist and anti-immigrant in tone in its desire to protect the “native-born” worker. As such, the Vargas Regime began to extol the virtues of the Brazilian people through cultural productions such as Carnaval and Soccer, which marked Brazil as a rich multicultural

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83 Skidmore 118-119.
84 Skidmore, 119-121.
Freyre’s argument fit into this time, because the solution to Brazil’s problems was not European in nature. Prior to Freyre’s analysis the main problem in Brazil was considered, essentially, too many Brazilians of questionable origins. Policy makers argued that outsiders were a solution for Brazil’s problems; therefore they proposed to fill Brazil with Europeans. Freyre’s argument represents a counter argument to this solution by proposing that Brazilians were never the cause of Brazil’s problems, but rather victims of circumstances.

As such, the intellectual evolution regarding race within Brazil between the 1870s and the 1930s reflects subtle changes rather than abrupt ones. However, simple classifications of time periods risk oversimplifying the complex processes that occurred. Although scientific racism was a prominent part of intellectual circles in Brazil at this time, its power began to wane with time. For example, Alberto Torres and Gilberto Freyre had similar arguments, however when Torres did his work he was one of the very few who rejected the primacy of Scientific Racism that was present at the time (early 1900s). Similarly until the 1930s Scientific Racism was still quite prevalent and respected within academic circles. Jeffrey Needell points out, in speaking about Oliveira Viana’s views that he “was far from alone in his racial analysis, and as late as the 1930s could refute cultural explanations of racial differences, as well as archeological defenses of African civilizations, with citations from respectable sources dating from the foregoing decade.” After the 1930s, however, harsh scientific racism gave way to the belief in miscegenation as a cornerstone of the Brazilian nation, making more acceptable Freyre’s position.

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85 Telles, 37.
86 Skidmore, 113.
87 Oliveira Viana and Needell, 14.
The decline of Scientific Racism does not mean that there was a decline of racism itself. Freyre, as Oliveira Viana before him, saw races as being comprised of individuals with certain predisposed characteristics. Thus, Jews were economically frugal, blacks were for labor and whites were civilized. Each group’s stereotypical characteristic added to what Brazilians became. This highlights the assumption that there existed typical race characteristics, and a typical Brazilian. Furthermore, the African in these monographs were seen simply as parts of the past that formed part of the “typical” Brazilians ancestry, not as current social contributors. Hence, while discourses regarding the “racial question” effectively changed in nature, becoming more progressive over time, racism remained (and still remains) a big social problem in Brazil.

In this chapter I investigated how intellectuals viewed raced during the early 20th century. I concluded that Black populations, at best, were generally seen as passive agents. In the beginning, the interest in Blacks derived not from a desire to understand them culturally, but rather as an explanation of the nation’s ills. Due to the intellectual environment of scientivism in which these intellectuals lived, it would have been unlikely for them to have gone radically against the existing and respected norms. Thus, at the same time that intellectuals showed immense scholastic ability and malleability in challenging various details of Social Darwinism – particularly regarding the degeneracy of miscegenation- they did not challenge, in any large trend, the overall racist hierarchy present at the time that viewed whites as superior to all others. As we will see in the next chapter women were also subjected to broad generalizations regarding their role in the process of nation building. As we will see many discourses circulated that claimed to provide a space for women to develop but that in reality limited their mobility and behavior, and separated them from the national dialogue by denying them citizenship.
Chapter 2: House/Street Gender Norms Among Early Twentieth Century Intellectuals

In the previous chapter I discussed how Brazilian intellectuals used race to discuss the problems of the young nation. Just like race, gender was another important category that was used to define and analyze social concerns. Just like race gender oppression, by its nature, affects people across economic and social lines. Its prescriptive power for division comes from all social sectors because it formulates general behaviors seen as appropriate and productive. Thus, like the “scientism” approaches generated to regulate racial interaction, elites sought to regulate female behavior by deploying gendered rules that would “ensure” the progressive development of Brazilian society.

Therefore, just as they did with race, Brazilian intellectuals in the early twentieth century concerned themselves greatly with issues of proper female behavior. Specifically, they were interested in what they saw as an erosion of family values, as well as a rise in libertine activities such as dating. Given their concern -explained in the previous chapter- with Lamarckian theories of evolution, their primary attempts at discussing gender was to concentrate on changing the behavior of people they considered to be “degenerate.” Thus, if they attempted to alter behavior they viewed as negative, then the question that ultimately arises: to what should that behavior be changed? What sort of behavior was considered “appropriate” and why?

In this chapter I argue that intellectuals created an idealized image of a “natural woman/mother” against whom all women were compared. Society (re)produced this image of a “natural woman/mother,” but also offered an alternative negative opposite, the “whore.” These images were based upon concepts of “virginity” “honor,” and “honesty” which divided and defined proper female behavior along the line of the house/street dichotomy. Furthermore, these divisions reflected deep patriarchal desires to control women’s body and behavior.
This chapter’s structure will be as follows: first I will introduce a theoretical discussion centered on the works of Roberto da Matta and Michel Foucault. This essay uses da Matta’s house/street dichotomy as well as Foucault’s notions of power and discourse to establish a reading of the Brazilian milieu of the early twentieth century as oppressive to women at an institutional level. I also aim to showcase the “realities” of women’s lives and how they clashed with this nation building discourse. Second, the paper will explain the popular image of the “natural woman” through an exploration of women’s duties in the home as well as concepts of virginity, honor and honesty. Lastly this chapter will conclude by highlighting the impossibility of women to live up to the notion of the “natural woman/mother” and how this disjuncture relates back to da Matta and Foucault’s social insights.

In Brazil’s case, it is pertinent to investigate gender using the Triangular model created by anthropologist, Roberto da Matta. The three sides of the Triangle that da Matta describes are the divisions upon which society governs itself. At the base of the triangle is the social division between the “house” and the “street.” At the apex of the triangle is the “other world.” The basic premise of this system is that Brazilians behave differently in the world of their “house” than they do in their world on “the street.” It is fundamental to understand that for da Matta Power is inherent in each of these divisions and that not all people are allowed to navigate all of the realms of this triangle.

In da Matta’s conception of Brazilian society the house is a space of the individual (the private, the intimate). Nonetheless, his notion of the house appears to be somewhat amorphous. To him a house may indicate a house in the physical sense, but it may also be increased to
include one’s street, neighborhood, or even the entire Nation. The sociological “house” for da Matta appears to be demarcated by intimacy and belonging. Therefore, where one feels a deep sense of belonging may be considered one’s house, regardless of the actual physical space. Thus, the “house” represents the personal, where one is important and may make demands such as attention to one’s needs and welfare. One is, as da Matta describes, a “supercitizen” in one’s “house.” What gives individuals their status of supercitizen in their own house is the personal relationship they have with others. This intimacy gives individuals a plethora of people whom they may call for their benefit.

If the “house” is the space of the intimate, then the “street” is its opposite: the space of the impersonal. Here the individual lacks the critical protection of the relationships that are present in the “house.” The “street” represents a lack of social ties, which in turn represents a lack of social protection. Rather than being a public space of all, this impersonality of the street means that it is the space of and for no one. Thus, citizens are more likely to mistreat and misbehave in public spaces, because they are outside one’s dominion, the individual house. As such, what is out there on the streets is not the preoccupation of the citizens, but of the State. Therefore, the street is the space of laws. As the introduction of the term “law” reminds us not everyone had free access in between the spaces of the street and the house. As will be shown later in this chapter, women were often the victims and the prime examples of individuals who were unable to navigate freely in these spaces. There were women who were of the house, and those who were of the street. This identification of one as a member of one space versus the other had real implications for the life of women, especially since there was no proper life for

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88 Roberto Da Matta, A Casa e a Rua: Espaço, Cidadania, Mulher e Morte no Brasil (São Paulo: Brasiliense, 1985), 12-14.
89 Da Matta, 16.
90 Da Matta, 16-17.
women in the public sphere. José Murilo de Carvalho points out this inconsistency when he calls attention to the problems faced by the positivists who sought to place the image of a white neoclassical woman as the representation of the nation-state, thus placing womanhood under the realm of the public. For women, to be a “public woman” was to be a prostitute.  

However, for a man to be a public figure was not considered a character flaw. Instead these “public men,” that Carvalho points out, were officials who could pass laws that govern the street. In addition, who was allowed to create laws was a sign of status since laws were regulated by those with access to the mythical third space, that of the “other world.” This third space provides justification and morality to Brazilians, either through religion or in the form of a cult of the State. Fundamentally, it is in relation to “the other world” where discourse is created to legitimate laws and notions that allow for the penetration of the street into the affairs of the “house” of Brazilians. This means that lawmakers and religious officials legitimate themselves through their ability to use the discourse of the “other world;” thus, their power arises out of discourse and not action. However, this “other world” does not have to be necessarily linked to a God; for example, during the beginning of the twentieth century, those who create laws governing behaviors considered “degenerate” did so because they legitimated their discourse by adhering to “scientism.”

As we can appreciate, discourse is key to understanding the different zones in which Brazilians operate, as each zone contains its own specific “visions of the world and ethics.” Thus, those with access to the State apparatus used “Scientific” studies to legitimate their

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92 Da Matta, 52.
93 Da Matta, 18.
94 Da Matta, 41 (my translation).
positions. However, the power potential of discourse is not reserved only for authority figures; in the daily milieu people engage in various forms of power discourses depending on where they are physically (e.g. the house or the street) and where they are socially (e.g. a rural worker versus a large plantation owner). In addition, not all discourses hold the same amount of power. For example, on day-to-day interactions the idiom of the house is used more frequently than the discourse of the street. Da Matta explains that this is precisely due to the inequality imbedded in power relations. The poor and dominated segments of society engage with the discourse of the house/family, because it is “an appeal to the moral limits of social exploitation.”\textsuperscript{95} Thus, individuals protect themselves by appealing to social relations where they interact with more powerful agents. This implies that if people seek to be heard they must not only speak to those in power but also speak in a way that allows them to be heard. Thus, they must access traditional patriarchal fields of power in order to possibly obtain real material benefits. If we turn again to the example of women, this meant that women the only way would could seek to amplify their power was through engagements with patriarchy.

Among these hierarchies of power and discourse, the discourse of the street figures as one of domination; as it is the space of laws, it is impersonal and juridical.\textsuperscript{96} Da Matta provides an especially enlightened example of this phenomenon when he observes that the term “citizen” is used negatively in Brazil to mark a person who is in an inferior or disadvantaged position. “[I]t is known that impersonal and Universalist treatment is utilized so as to not resolve and/or to complicate the resolution of a problem.”\textsuperscript{97} Da Matta relates the problematic aspects of this discourse for people caught within it: “If in the universe of the house I am a supercitizen, 

\textsuperscript{95} Da Matta, 18 (my translation). 
\textsuperscript{96} Da Matta, 42. 
\textsuperscript{97} Da Matta, 67. (my translation).
because there I only have rights and no obligations, in the world of the street I am a sub-citizen, because the universal rules of citizenship always define me through negative determinations: by my duties and obligations, through the logic of ‘cannot’ and ‘should not.’”

Thus, the impersonality or lack of social ties in the street defines a person as a generic “citizen,” and by being lumped in a generic classification then people lose the social protection inherent in personal ties at the same time that they are denied access to power.

Nonetheless, it is important to understand that da Matta’s labeling of one form of language as dominant does not imply that he believes it has great hegemonic power. Da Matta argues against Weber’s arguments that relational societies were in transition to a hegemony of commerce. Instead, he proposes that what makes this situation “Brazilian” is precisely this lack of hegemony. As such, neither the house, the street, nor the other world are mutually exclusive forms of understanding Brazil. Instead, each of the three zones allows Brazilians a variety of different ways in which they may codify themselves at different points. Each zone acts as a possible alternative that affects each Brazilian depending on where s/he is socioeconomically and physically located.

Although da Matta’s model recognizes differences in people’s abilities to navigate socio-personal relations, he does not provide a clear reason why this is so. Instead he subtly shows the influence of power in this structure. In his chapter on citizenship he juxtaposes the nominal equality of citizenship to how in practice each person’s citizenship is gradated based upon a variety of socio-cultural factors that mark him/her. In his explanation of the “citizen,” he

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98 Da Matta, 78 (my translation).
99 Da Matta, 41.
100 Da Matta, 55-80.
seems to suggest that people who can go around the system are those to whom we are willing to bend rules for. He states:

At the core, we live in a society in which a type of combat exists between the public world of universal laws and the market; and the private universe of the family, of godparents, family and friends. It’s a society that contains varying forms of defining its members, according to the variety of relations they can call upon to demonstrate in specific situation.\(^{101}\)

Da Matta believes, and rightly so, that the historical situation in which Brazilian institutions emerged (wealth inequality, slavery etc) led to this differentiation in citizenships.\(^{102}\) However, he does not provide an adequate reason of the cause of these differences, and why they are maintained; I believe we can find this explanation by introducing into the discussion the Foucauldian notion of Power.

In his explanation of the term “power,” Foucault cautions us not to see it as emanating from just one place: “At bottom, despite the differences in epochs and objectives, the representation of power has remained under the spell of monarchy. In political thought and analysis we still have not cut off the head of the king.”\(^{103}\) Instead he argues:

Power must be understood in the first instance as the multiplicity of force relations immanent in the sphere in which they operate and which constitute their own organization; as the process, which, through ceaseless struggles and confrontations, transforms, strengthens, or reverses them from one another; and lastly, as the strategies in which they take effect, whose general design or institutional crystallization is embodied in the state apparatus, in the formulation of the law, in the various social hegemonies.\(^{104}\)

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\(^{101}\) Da Matta, 72 (my translation).

\(^{102}\) Da Matta, 64.


\(^{104}\) Foucault, 92-93.
He goes on: “Power is everywhere, not because it embraces everything, but because it comes from everywhere.”

Thus, all people in society have the potential to exercise some form of power. However, this does not mean that all people will be able to exercise power to the same extent. Again if we remember that for da Matta different Brazilians engage with varying degrees of efficacy with members of society and institutions, then we can assume that individuals who are marked by race and gender (i.e. such as the subjects of this chapter and this thesis) would have a lesser ability to deploy this power than the son of a wealthy planter, for example.

Foucault’s notions of power can help fill out the gaps in da Matta’s triangular model of Brazilian society in which relationships mean so much. Fundamentally, we could say that society uses Power to create the sociological divisions between the house and the street.

Furthermore, da Matta and Foucault connect in their conception of the power of discourse. Da Matta links domination with discourse, especially concerning “the other world,” and Foucault seems to agree: “[i]ndeed it is in discourse that power and knowledge are joined together.”

Foucault also views discourse as integral to his theories, because power is deployed with varying success, based on the individuals’ rhetorical abilities. That is, one’s use of power depends on one’s ability to influence others through various means, including, but not limited to discourse. Foucault provides an example of this in one of power’s principles labeled “the insistence of the rule,” in which he states that “power’s hold on sex is maintained through language, or rather through the act of discourse that creates, from the very fact that it is articulated, a rule of law.”

Thus, before any action may be taken against a certain “problem,” a discourse is created to describe, categorize, and analyze it.

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105 Foucault, 93.
106 Foucault, 100.
107 Foucault, 83.
Scholars familiar with Foucault’s principles of Power know that it is not merely the
dominion of a select few, because the oppressed may also deploy power in an effective manner.
Therefore, scholars of the humanities studying Brazil must always understand the famous
\textit{jeitinho}, in which while rules always exist, they are flexible: both Foucault and da Matta
recognize such flexibility.\footnote{Although its history is unclear, the \textit{jeitinho} is a term used to describe an unwritten set of standards and practices
through which an individual may engage with a bureaucrat to obtain a short cut or a bending of overly byzantine
rules and regulations. The jeitinho is granted on a case by case basis by the bureaucrat who needs to be convinced by
the appeals of the individual. Livia Barbosa \textit{O Jeitinho Brasileiro: A Arte de Ser Mais Igual que os Outros} (Rio de
Janeiro: Campus, 1992) 11-29; 139-147 as cited in Brian Owensby, “A History of Brazil’s ‘Cordial Racism’: Race
Although Foucault makes no mention of the \textit{jeitinho} per se, he
argues that at the same time that power creates discourse to justify intervention into specific
areas of investigation, it also creates spaces of resistance.\footnote{Foucault, 101-102.}
This elasticity comes not just from the actions of the individual attempting to achieve a goal for him/herself, but also from the
execution of appeals to other social members.

This understanding of power fit perfectly into the model of Brazilian society as da Matta
constructs it. For him, this Brazilian relationality amongst different people does not exist to the
same extent in countries or areas with more homogenous populations. Instead we can find it in
heterogeneous societies, in which, this system of interrelations developed as a way to maintain
stability in a context with such fundamental social differences.\footnote{da Matta, 17.}
And so the relations that da Matta advocates are avenues through which Brazilians deploy power. As the author elaborates,
“the secret of a correct interpretation of Brazil lies in the possibility of understanding that which
is ‘in-between’ things.”\footnote{da Matta, 21 (My translation).}

When we look at gender relations in early twentieth century Brazil it is helpful for us to
recognize the power that the dichotomy between “natural woman/mother” and “whore” held over
women’s behavior. The term “natural woman/mother” describes a subliminal concept that rules the mind of society, especially of those in the upper classes. I formulate this term based on the concept of the “natural man” as used by Greek philosophers. Classic Greek philosophers viewed societies that were different from their own as unnatural. For example, if they encountered a society that was matriarchal then they would consider that society to be “unnatural.” If they encountered another society with whom they had no previous contact, but in which patriarchy was central, then they would consider that to be a society organized in the “natural” way. We can draw a parallel between this understanding of society as natural and unnatural and the realm of women in Brazil, especially those in higher classes.

The Republicans deployed the image of women as nation almost from the very beginning of their term in power. It is easy to see the appeal of women as symbols for these men especially given their orientation towards French culture and the French revolution. That is, the French Revolutionary symbols were dominated by women figures (the nation, liberty, the republic etc). For the French public, the revolutionary symbols stood in sharp contrast to the old regime’s most important symbol, the patriarchal king.\textsuperscript{112} Given the tremendous influence of French ideas in the generation of the Republicans, it is understandable that these Brazilian intellectuals chose women as their main symbols.\textsuperscript{113} Yet, these deployed symbols were not just mere copies of European iconography, they represented a particular political plan for the emerging nation. For if a political group uses a woman as a symbol of a nation, the question inevitably arises: what kind of woman? What should she look like? How should she dress? Eventually the Republicans

\textsuperscript{112} Carvalho, 84.
\textsuperscript{113} Carvalho, 75-84.
settled on a very conservative and westernized formulation, the figure of a white woman dressed in Roman inspired classical attire.\textsuperscript{114}

As Carvalho points out the deployment of these female images was met with an equal number of skeptics that categorized this search for mythic symbols as a failure.\textsuperscript{115} As early as 1895, dissatisfied opponents –and even former supporters of the regime- began publishing mocking caricatures of the women-republics. In fact, Carvalho argues that the caricatures became themselves the dominant image of the iconographic women-republics.\textsuperscript{116} In answering why the Positivist Republicans failed to create images and symbols that spoke to the greater Brazilians public, Carvalho, invoking Baczko argues that “the imaginary, although malleable, needs a community of imagination, a community of meaning for it to take root. Symbols, allegories, myths only create roots when there is social space and culture in which to feed itself. In the absence of such a base, the attempt to create it, to manipulate it, falls short, at times comically.”\textsuperscript{117} Thus, their failure resulted ultimately from the lack of a unique national/local form of representing the Republic itself.

Contrasting the popularity of the image of Our Lady of Aparecida, another female symbol, to the women-republics can help us explain their lack of success. Our Lady of Aparecida functioned as an alternate representation of the nation employed by Opponents of the Republican regime. Carvalho sees the success of the iconography of the opponents of the Republic in the fact that Our Lady of Aparecida tapped into the cultural spaces of the people –part Mary and part Afro-Brazilian- and was thus able to “take root.”\textsuperscript{118} I would also argue that a great importance in

\textsuperscript{114} Carvalho, 84.  
\textsuperscript{115} Carvalho, 75-108.  
\textsuperscript{116} Carvalho, 87.  
\textsuperscript{117} Carvalho, 89 (my translation)  
\textsuperscript{118} Carvalho, 93-94.
the acceptance of this image lies in her characterization as the Virgin Mary. That is, she is both a virgin and a mother. By contrast, many of the caricatures of the women-republics made by opponents were of oversexualized female figures, that is, the “whore.” We can explain this obsession with female sexuality if we consider the sexism inherent in early twentieth century Brazil. Women had no place in politics, “The woman, if public, was a prostitute… Not only did women not participate (in politics), their participation was not considered appropriate. Politics was a man’s thing.”¹¹⁹ Thus, the public space was not for women, whether real or imaginary.

Furthermore, as we can see with this iconographic battle the Virgin/whore dichotomy expressed in the reading of these symbols points to a clear example of the house/street dichotomy. Mary is a mother, and as a mother her place is in the home, not on an oil canvas actively battling for the nation. By contrast the women-republics were women performing in public spaces. Thus, they were women of the streets and as such their moral behavior was suspect. But why was this binary so easily understood? Why were these images of women so easily turned into whores and not virgins?

The answer lies not in what makes a virgin, but rather in what makes a whore. The understanding of this concept is complicated by the difference demarcated between “public” versus “clandestine” prostitutes, and the policing of acceptable behavior. The “public prostitute” is the term used to describe women who sell sex openly.¹²⁰ A “clandestine prostitute, on the other hand, “was a promiscuous woman who might or might not receive payment for sex, but who did not publicly solicit clients.”¹²¹ Thus, the existence of two notions of prostitution “public” and “clandestine” highlights the tension between the ideal and the practical. After all, identifying a

¹¹⁹ Carvalho, 92 (my translation).
“clandestine” prostitute would be considered a constant and dedicated task. Nonetheless, as Caulfield suggests something that unifies both conceptions of prostitution is that they are both constructed based on acts. A “public” prostitute would be easy enough to identify, as she engages in the act of exchanging money for sexual favors. A “clandestine prostitute,” on the other hand, was much harder to identify because she made her identity private. The problem for those who sought to identify such a woman was that unlike the “public” prostitute her identifying feature/act was not an exchange of sexual favors, but rather a personal trait, promiscuity. Thus, in order to identify these “clandestine prostitutes” one had to engage in classifying women based upon the plethora of day-to-day interactions.

As such, the general behaviors of women became a target for government intrusion. As was suggested in the previous chapter, intellectuals of this time attempted to change the behavior of the masses so as to civilize them; thus, they attempted to identify and correct “degenerate” forms of behaving, in the hopes of “bettering” the race. This was especially true for women. “In (the vision of Viveiros de Castro) and also other jurists of the period the path to civilizing the country was in an efficient legislation that guaranteed the ‘respect for the honor of women.’”

Thus, women, because of their importance in procreation, were targets of these attempts to create a “civilized” Brazil, which meant a Brazil with European values.

Moreover, intellectuals’ attempts at altering women’s behavior were a part of a wider project of eugenics in Brazil. Citing Nancy Stepan, Jerry Dávilia points out that, in Latin America most eugenicists followed a “softer” form of eugenics based upon the theories of Lamarck, who “maintained that the behavior and environment of parents could shape the genes

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of offspring: tuberculosis or alcoholism, for example would produce degenerate babies.”¹²³ Thus, if you could eliminate the “contagion,” (i.e. those non-European behaviors) you could improve the lot of the next generation. Dávila’s exploration of the educational system reminds us that eugenics was not only scientific (e.g. genes) but also had pedagogical tones (e.g. teaching proper hygienic practices), especially in the 1920s. Still, in this project, schools were but one of many institutions: “[e]ducators, social scientists and policymakers spared little energy or expense in building a state role in mediating Brazil’s escape from the determinist trap of blackness and degeneracy.”¹²⁴ As we can see it is at the space of sex and reproduction that the policing of both race and gender intersect. Despite the difference in sectors that produced these discourses they share an attempt to alter behavior often based on racist, classist and also gendered assumptions.

The multiplicity of cases of “deflowerment” seen at the turn-of-the-century provide an example of just how gendered these intrusions could be. Jurists who sought to govern women’s actions during the forty-one years of the Old Republic Regime dealt with three different codes regarding their sexuality over that time: the civil code of 1830, the penal code of 1891 and the civil code of 1916. A major difference between the first code and the last two is, as the dates indicate, that Imperial law-makers created the civil code of 1830 with liberal ideals in mind. Republican law-makers, on the other hand created the last two codes: as such they reflected the positivistic ideal in the ability of jurists, through science, to better society (i.e. the race).¹²⁵ Despite the differences between the two schools (i.e. classical vs. Positivist), “[a]t the heart of these theoretical debates, however were the same concerns to maintain, in ‘modernized’ form,

¹²⁴ Dávila, 7.
¹²⁵ Caulfield, In Defense of Honor, 30-34.
the patriarchal institution of the family and the gendered concept of honor that sustained it.”

And so, despite many changes, the codes remained gendered. Highlighting cases of Deflowerment provides two important glimpses: first, it shows the ways in which government officials and social actors viewed women; second, it showcases the ways in which the government officials sought to change the behavior of those in the lower classes - the main targets of their intervention.

As we can see in the legal approaches to deflowerment, the laws established during this time placed women as little more than the property of men. For example, a woman belonged to her father and once she married her sexuality became property of her husband. Thus, a husband could not be convicted of raping his wife. The code of 1916 considered men legal guardians of women, because women were considered incapable of handling their own affairs; a position that Marina Maluf and Maria Lúcia Mott reminds us the Republicans also enforced for the indigenous and children. This emphasis on guarding the private space can also be seen in the attitudes regarding other institutions. For example, from the time of the Imperial Armed forces to World War II, military service in the lower ranks was seen as an extremely un-masculine activity, because of its association with lifestyles that were not considered proper of the house (e.g. defloweres and sodomy); it was only after the victory of World War II that the military began to gain the masculine image we know today. At the turn-of-the-century many men viewed conscription as a threat to their honor by prohibiting them from keeping a vigilant eye

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127 Caulfield, In Defense of Honor, 41.
upon “their women” and so brought conscripts dangerously close to dishonor through the infidelity of their spouses.\textsuperscript{130}

Because of this distrust in female desire and sexuality, men (and women) kept vigilance over women’s body through the highly gendered honor/shame complex. In it, “honor” is inherent in all men, however, it is not just related to the man himself, but rather his family also reflects his honor. As such, he may inherit honor from his father, but he may also lose honor by the actions of “his” women. Specifically, if the woman engages in sexual relations with a man outside the approval of her patriarch (i.e. outside of marriage) the family’s honor is lost. Women, on the other hand, instead of honor, have “shame” and are policed publically through gossip. Through this system the honor of men relate directly to the amount of shame “his” women created publicly towards discussions of their sexuality.\textsuperscript{131}

This sexual vigilance was ever present, from childhood through their married years. Young women were expected to remain virgins until marriage, as virginity was the upmost sign of proper behavior and honor. Jurists considered “Deflowerment” crimes as a terrible offense against a family as it took a way a prized commodity, proof of the girl’s purity and honor. As a result, Judges punished deflowerers in a variety of ways depending on the family’s social standing: for example, some men were pressed into military service -a severe punishment at the time.\textsuperscript{132} During the Republican era, men convicted of deflowering virgins were sentenced to a few years in prison. However, most of the accused were freed if they were able to make restitution for their crimes by marrying the women they deflowered or paying the family of the

\textsuperscript{130} Beattie, 455-457.
\textsuperscript{131} John P. Mitchell, “Honor and Shame” in Encyclopedia of Social Anthropology,
\textsuperscript{132} Beattie, 441.
girl. It is important to point out that the men who settled their cases by marrying the victims, provided restitution not to the woman, but rather to her family (i.e. ideally to her father). Yet, even with such stringent punishment the onus of proving the crime was placed upon the woman. Prosecutors had to prove not just that a sexual act had occurred, but also that the young lady led a “proper life” prior to the sexual act and as such, deserved protection from the State.

Jurists’ concern over, not just the virginity of poor women, but also their “honesty,” and the vigilance present in society via the “honor/shame” complex implies an attempt to control/mold behavior; but towards what ideal? As “deflowerment” cases indicate, virginity was the major ideological benchmark against which both men and women judged young women. Boris Fausto in his book on crime in São Paulo argues that this was true across all racial and socioeconomic categories. Part of the allure of virginity is that it appears to be objective, and thus, indisputable. After all, a woman either has a hymen or she does not. Thus, the honor of families rested in part upon women’s ability to stay virgins, but also on honesty, because the appearance of virginity also reflected the family’s honor. However, after World War I the legal acceptability of the intact hymen as the sign of virginity began to lose sway due to the incapacity of scientifically proving that the hymen would break in every woman who engages in sexual acts.

After World War I, jurists concerned themselves less with the scientific verification of virginity and more with whether or not the young lady engaged in a “proper life.” This concern with a “moral virginity” arose out of an anxiety over the emergence of “modern women.” These

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“modern women” were women who were seen to lead too free a life, primarily in sexual aspects. According to popular conceptions the main problem with these women was that they were too far away from patriarchal vigilance via their families, and were as such, suspected of using their virginity as a tool for social rise instead of holding it in great esteem. Jurists’ concern with “modern women” arose implicitly out of their failure to engage properly in the “honor/shame” structure. In Brazil, during the beginning of the twentieth century, the concept of shame was key for the governance of women’s sexuality, and “new women” put it at risk. Caufield, while writing in English, makes a point of using the Portuguese term pudor, instead of shame, because it connotes not only a general feeling of embarrassment and disgrace, but also a level of modesty and purity at a sexual level. She argues that jurists believed this was the proper sentiment that women should feel regarding their sexuality. Thus, women displayed “honesty” if their hymen was intact until marriage and if they showed the proper level of pudor in their everyday life.

Despite the great pressures placed on women to remain virgins, the proper behavior of women was focused not just on the lives of women during their youth, but also after they were married, at which time her behavior affected through the marital union, her husband’s reputation. After marriage women’s lives centered on an triangle based on three roles, “mother-wife-homemaker.” The ideal woman stayed at home, because the “nature of women” made the home their biologically determined space (i.e. “their natural habitat”). In this “ideal” situation, the husband, the head of the marital union, earned enough money for the woman to stay home, and remain outside of the temptations of the street. The wife should stay home insuring the chores

137 Caufield, In Defense of Honor, 99-104
139 Maluf and Mott, 373-374.
were complete, thereby defending the honor of the family.\textsuperscript{140} The man and wife were thus
thought of as a team where the man completed tasks in the space of the street and the woman
completed tasks in the space of the house.

However, most women did not and \textit{could not} live up to these ideals. Maluf and Mott
point out, that while the technological improvements of the era made the lives of women easier;
they were only available for the small segment of the population who could afford them.
Paradoxically poorer women still had to live up to the ideal of maintaining the house, but on time
constraints brought upon by having to work outside the home –provided they had permission
from their husbands.\textsuperscript{141} Even if women were able to take advantage of some of the new
technologies the ability of women to meet up with their expected duties inside the home was
almost impossible without outside help.\textsuperscript{142} Thus, society’s ideal conception of womanhood was
that of the wealthy white woman and as such only accessible \textit{to} her.

Despite its practical inaccessibility for all women the ideal of the housewife became
incredibly powerful in the first three decades of the twentieth century.

The jurists, just like doctors, were guardians of a project of progress and
civilization that imposed itself upon society and that evidently stressed moral
behavior. They designed an alteration for the masses against their habits of going
out alone, ideally getting them to not go out alone and even then only on certain
hours and to certain places. However, they flagrantly ‘forgot’ that to survive poor
women had to work and the street was where they worked.\textsuperscript{143}

As a result of a model based on the ideal wealthy woman, the men who wrote laws and sought to
modernize Brazil during the early part of the twentieth century attempted to mold the behaviors
of working class women in exclusionary terms. Working-class women could not engage with the

\textsuperscript{140} Maluf and Mott, 380-382.
\textsuperscript{141} Maluf and Mott, 400-403.
\textsuperscript{142} Maluf and Mott, 405-415.
\textsuperscript{143} de Abreu Esteves, 47 (my translation).
space of the street, yet they had to penetrate it in order to make ends meet. Thus, the
contradiction inherent in this construction—the homemaker—subjected working class women to
possible attacks on moral ground.

The classist assumptions upon which the homemaker image was founded is critical to
understanding economic tensions inside the household. At the turn on the century, Brazilian
society underwent massive economic and social changes. Brazilian families evolved unevenly
from paternalistic extended family of the countryside to the idealized bourgeois nuclear family of
the city. “The emergence of the modern nuclear family, by reforming the importance of love and
of caring for one’s husband and children redefined the role of women and at the same time
reduced the woman to the interior of the domestic space where their duties were doubled.”
Thus, women were caught in this in-between space of wanting the bourgeois existence of
Europe, while at the same time remaining within the confines of a relatively feudal system. As
occurred in Europe, the discourse over women’s bodies targeted first wealthy women in the
nineteenth century and gradually began to encompass ever-larger segments of society. Influential
members of society (e.g. lawmakers, intellectuals etc) created a discourse in which women
desperately needed to learn to become proper members of this new family system.

In the scheme of hegemonic power over women’s behavior there were various forms of
social control and it is important to understand that these controls were not applied evenly. De
Abreu Esteves links Foucault and Jurandir Freire Costa’s discussions of power to point out that,
as occurred in Europe, the discourse over women’s bodies was initially directed at wealthy
women since their progeny was the one in need of guarding but gradually it expanded to include

144 Maria Fernanda Baptista Bicalho “O Bello Sexo: Imprensa e indentidade Feminina no Século XIX e início do
Século XX,” in Rebeldes e submissão: Estudos sobre Condição Feminina (São Paulo: Fundação Carlos Chagas,
1989), 79-99. 91. (My translation.)
145 de Abreu Esteves, 27-29.
all segments of society.\footnote{de Abreu Esteves, 28.} However, the scholarship of crimes relating to women in the early twentieth century—particularly deflowerment—finds that State intervention overwhelmingly affected the lives of poorer women.\footnote{See Boris Fausto, Suanne Caulfield, and Martha Abreu Esteves.} Although wealthier women were under similar pressures towards their behaviors, the mechanisms of social controls were somewhat different than those experienced by the lower classes. Power structures guaranteed that government officials could not intervene in the families of the most prominent officials. For example, Suanne Caulfield highlights one incident portrayed in the police journal \textit{Vida Policial}, in which an officer was reprimanded for arresting a wealthy girl because her bathing suit was too short. Caulfield points to this incident to make the point that class hierarchy took precedence over gender hierarchy.\footnote{Suanne Caulfield, “Getting into Trouble: Dishonest Women, Modern Girls, and Women-Men in the Conceptual Language of ‘Vida Policial’,” \textit{Signs} 19 no.1 (Autumn 1993), 146-176. 158-159.} This highlights the different limits of powers that government officials actually had to control female bodies and who was targeted by such government action. Thus, women of different classes had to deal with State control over their lives in different degrees. Furthermore, this incident provides us with an excellent example of the private versus public intrusions into the lives of individuals that da Matta relates. The wealthy girl did not have to submit to the intrusions of the police officer, because she was a member of a home space that guaranteed her protection (e.g. a wealthy family). Thus, because she belonged to the “house” of a wealthy individual she was subject to \textit{his} direct patriarchy and not that of the State.

Nonetheless, a similarity remains between all women in Brazil: regardless of class, or race there remains a great influence of the honor/shame code in their home lives. After all, the ideals of virginity and the housewife appear to be recognizable amongst all people, even those economically unable to maintain it. Women had to act a certain way—show \textit{pudor} and stay in the
home- or else they risk damaging the honor of their men. Any deviation from the code could have very serious repercussions. For example, many officials took alarm at what they perceived to be a disquieting rise in wife killings from the 1910s to the 1930s.\textsuperscript{149} Although jurists sentenced wife killing as illegal under Republican laws, it was tacitly condoned by juries who freed men who were found to be “passionate” and acted in “defense of honor.”\textsuperscript{150}

The example of wife-killings highlights how the honor/shame code fits with da Matta’s notion of social division between the street and the house. Women who engage in public activity are an affront to this system, and thus should be punished. Despite their claims at being revolutionaries, Republican lawmakers did little to change the fundamental concepts of the family. Caulfield describes the debates concerning the penal code of 1890 as having “At the heart… the same concerns to maintain, in ‘modernized’ form, the patriarchal institution of the family and the gendered concept of honor that sustained it.”\textsuperscript{151} Thus, these men sought to confine women back to their “natural” role, despite the tensions brought by a changing social context. Jurists, for example, saw ‘modern women’ as a dangerous phenomenon threatening civilization.\textsuperscript{152} They viewed these women as hazardous to society, precisely because they did not adhere to the honor/shame code. “Modern girls were guilty not only of cunning and other indecorous knowledge afforded by the environment, but of activities that freed them from the discipline of the family.”\textsuperscript{153} Thus, the danger of the modern women lay in their relative freedom, not only from the honor/shame code, but also from the home space (that is, their willingness to engage with the Street). By engaging in the life of the street and, more importantly gaining

\textsuperscript{150} Caulfield, \textit{In Defense of Honor}, 88-89.
\textsuperscript{151} Caulfield, \textit{In Defense of Honor}, 31.
\textsuperscript{152} Caulfield, \textit{In Defense of Honor}, 88-104.
\textsuperscript{153} Caulfield, \textit{In Defense of Honor}, 100.
employment, “modern women” challenged the preeminence of men by questioning what da Matta names the street/house dichotomy.

However, one should not be under the impression that “modern women” were somehow freed from repercussions, once they purged their psyche of the “honor/shame” code. The struggle was endless, because, as Foucault reminds us, surveillance is constant and society finds ways to ensure that all social members engage in proper behavior. Therefore, as a response to changing conceptions of femininity among “new women,” cultural institutions (re)created a variety of mechanisms to maintain women within the physical and psychological space of the house. For example, etiquette booklets defined proper behavior in terms of women’s role inside the house, suggesting that in order to be a moral, proper woman they had to remain inside this space. However, lower class women suffered the burden of this moral code to a greater degree than wealthier women, since the last had the “protection” of the family to seek their interests. It is thus no wonder that the women the police interfered with, as shown in the books of Martha de Abreu Esteves and Suanne Caulfield, were poor.154

The poorer the woman, the more likely she was to be forced to engage directly with the State. If we consider Brazilian society to be highly “relational” as da Matta suggests, and if we argue that Brazil is a society that is highly structured based upon economic and racial lines, then we can see that a woman would be placed lower and lower based upon a series of signifiers that gave away her status, and a such made her a greater target for State vigilance. In his book about the condition of working class Mexicans in Ciudad Juarez, Alejandro Lugo argues that society along the U.S. Mexico Border is stratified by wealth and power and that as a result people have learned to read and (re)produce signifiers that allow others to police who is allowed to cross

154. de Abreu Esteves, 1989. Suanne Caulfield In Defense of Honor
metaphorical (although no less important) borders. Such exchanges are what he calls “border inspections.”

The Mexicans, Lugo describes, must pass through a universe that is full of points of repression, where women in particular are judged, in part, based on how they look. Brazilian women in the early decades of the twentieth century were in a similar situation. A lack of proper signifiers categorize lower class woman as one of da Matta’s “citizen.” This is problematic, because as da Matta relates, in the Brazilian context, the “citizen” is a nobody; someone without personal connections. Thus, lower class women were forced to engage directly with State.

However, repression was not the only thing that society gave to women. As Abreu Esteves and Caulfield argue, women engaged in a variety of survival strategies that they deployed tactically to connect with others in a public context. At times, these women managed to engage even with the repressive institutions of the State, such as the Police, to obtain desired goals.

Nonetheless, the proper roles assigned to women were ideals formulated under classist and gendered assumptions. Thus, women in reality rarely fit them. However, these notions were so engrained in the popular consciousness that they were seen as unavoidable. For example, in his critique of Florestan Fernandes’ interpretation of black Brazilian’s pathological behavior towards sexuality, Boris Fausto argued that virginity was important for all social fields.

Contrary to this claim to an essential value, Martha Abreu de Esteves and Sueann Caulfield countered Fausto by highlighting the flexibility of ideals for these women. Esteves and Caulfield see women as using societal notions of virginity as just one in a various blend of survival

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156 Boris Fausto, 57-58.
strategies. For these scholars virginity was a way for women to drum up resources for their lives. They suggest that at times these resources were even used to free themselves from their own families. At other times, the resources were designed to bring an extra worker to help them with their tasks. The women who could challenge and bend the system were the “modern girls,” and as such they posed a threat to patriarchy.

In sum, society created an ideal for women’s behavior that did not respond to their multiple realities. The term “society” might elicit frustration amongst scholars; however, it is used to highlight the impersonal hegemonic power that maintained this system in place. For instance, the adjudication of “deflowerment” and the ideal of the homemaker are impossible to trace down to a single source because they emerged from and were supported by a variety of actors (e.g. cultural practices). Unfortunately, these ideals were often impractical, if not impossible to follow. In fact, one has the impression that only the wealthy women could adhere to these standards. Nonetheless, it is important to remember that wealthy women were not just “citizens,” they had husbands, brothers, and fathers, that is, connections that could both save them from a problem and also repress them behind the sanctity of the home.

Because Jurists dealt with upper class women in their day-to-day life this interaction affected the way they approached law making. However as women’s role changed over time, so did the Jurists’ view of proper behavior. This can be appreciated by the fact that by the turn-of-the-century jurisprudence denied women had sexual desire, but by the 1920s Sexuality was seen as a part of some women’s lives, even if it was certainly not see as the “healthy” norm. In contrast, by the mid-1930s far more jurists were accepting women’s sexuality as normal.
In the next chapter, I connect issues of gender and race by looking at members of Brazil’s Black Press in the city of São Paulo. Particularly I focus on their use of gender policing as a way to make their claim for inclusion into elite society. Thus, these writers tried to battle racial prejudices by (re)producing patriarchal hierarchies, creating the same expectations of gendered behavior for women of their class as did other members of the white elite. In the end they advocated for a policing of sexual behavior because women who were seen as misbehaving caused dishonor upon the man, and hence disgraced the race.
Chapter 3: O Clarim d’Alvorada and Racial and Gender Relations in São Paulo 1924-1932

Writers of the black press of Brazil in the early twentieth century (1915-1937) engaged with issues of race, gender and power. Oftentimes, their demands for inclusion into white hegemonic circles demonstrated patriarchal notions of power and belonging. Nonetheless, we cannot talk about the black press of Brazil as a constant homogenous entity. As we will see, it went through enormous changes from 1915 to 1937. In the earlier years the intellectuals writing in these journals were mostly focused on elevating their own groups’ social performance so that they may gain access to white mainstream society. However, as time went on, their discourse became increasingly combative. That is, they became less willing to “prove” themselves to the rest of Brazil. Miriam Nicolau Ferrara, Kim Butler and Paulina L Alberto, in their respective analyses demonstrate how this evolution occurs in their political thought as they are expressed through the writings in the black press. As these scholars propose, these men, and they were mostly men, gradually came to the realization that the notion of equality as promised by abolition and by the Republic was a sham. Ferrara, Butler and Alberto focus a great deal of their analysis on the essay portion of the papers, where the ideas about the conditions of blacks are more readily addressed. Through these resources, the three scholars created great historical works about the evolution of the Black press from 1915-1960. However, a vacuum exists in the analysis of these journals as literary texts. After all, many of these papers were envisioned not just as vehicles for the expressions of the desires of Black people in São Paulo, but also as literary journals. Thus, these men were able not only to express themselves, but also do so in a multitude of creative fashions.

This was particularly the case of the journal I will study in this chapter, O Clarim d’Alvorada. As a cultural intellectual production this newspaper was at the forefront of black
intellectual thought. As Ferrara points out the evolution of the motto of the paper can help us identify that the paper became much more political as the years progressed. The motto changed basically from “Literary, News and Scientific Organ” or “Literary, News and Political Organ” to “O Clarim da Alvorada -- for the interests of Black Men: Journalistic, Literary and Combative” in 1928. While her assessment of the evolution of the political ideology of the paper is accurate the motto also points out that Literature was still an important identity marker for the paper. And the literary characteristic that these men gave to the paper were not just solely focused on the essay form; many of the same men who wrote essays on the conditions of Blacks in the city, also wrote poems and short stories about love and other socio-cultural topics. All of these different literary genres were important tools deployed by these writers to achieve their goals of better integrating blacks into Brazilian society.

Because of the social importance of these literary texts, this chapter engages primarily with the fiction writings of O Clarim d’Alvorada. These fiction pieces are important aspects of these papers, because they themselves represent specific moments in time when these men practiced an elevated social position, that of a writer. Furthermore through their fiction they implicitly (subliminally) sent signals of what they considered to be a “proper” social life. This spread of information was central to their aims of inclusion into a Brazilian society that marginalized them, because the principles presented in these stories tended to mirror those of broader white society. Thus, I argue that, in an effort to display their own legitimacy --and that of other black men for whom they felt they spoke for-- and their “Brazilianess,” these writers deployed patriarchal discourses through the recognition and use of symbols of behavior considered “proper.” At the same time they also presented an increasing denouncement of the

past as a strategy for placing themselves within the history of the country, by arguing that they are effectively ‘owed’ inclusion in the national imaginary. Because of this insistence on displaying proper behavior, a set of logical questions arises from a close reading of these historical texts: what was a “proper man?” What ideals were these writers championing? Who were they idealizing? Answering these questions will be the focus of this chapter.

The discussion will be organized in the following way: first, I will define, briefly, the racial terms that will be employing throughout my analysis. Second, I will provide a brief history of the newspaper. Third, I will discuss what the concept of ‘belonging’ means in the context of this discussion. Finally I will make the crux of the argument in the fourth part where I will describe how the practices the writers engaged in form part of a politics of belonging, and how they managed to inscribe themselves as legitimate members of Brazilian society primarily by establishing themselves as patriarchs deploying power over women’s bodies.

Before delving too deep into the subject matter of this chapter, I must make some clarifications over definitions. As with any essay dealing with race in Brazil, one must acknowledge the many notions of race that circulate in Brazil, therefore, I will define the racial codes that I use. In my discussion the term “black” is synonymous with how Brazilians would use the word “negro.” Defining someone as “black” or “negro” is dependent on their own opinion regarding their race and not necessarily on blood line. I would consider most of the consistent contributors to the Black Press of Brazil “Black” because they began to deploy that term more frequently to define themselves than did other members of society. For example, José Correia Leite, a founder of O Clarim d’Alvorada, was an illegitimate son of a white father, because of this he would likely not have been considered “black” by many Brazilians, however, he eventually embraced the term and defined himself as such.
I need to also make a further clarification, although there were many different newspapers dedicated to the experience of blacks in São Paulo, this chapter focuses exclusively on *O Clarim d’Alvorada*. As a result, this is a case study of the black press, through one of its most important papers. I made the decision to investigate this paper primarily because of practical reasons regarding the availability of these sources at the University of Illinois. Beyond this logistic reason, this newspaper was the most active black newspaper (1924-1932) of the pre-World War Two era. This is significant because this signals that this newspaper might have reached a bigger audience (than other black press newspapers). For example, Kim Butler considers it to be one of the two most influential journals of the late 1920s.\(^\text{158}\) Furthermore, many of the most prominent black intellectuals of São Paulo published in this Newspaper (José Correia Leite, Jayme de Aguiar, Arlindo Viega dos Santos, Isaltino Viega dos Santos, Gervásio de Moraes, Lino Guedes, Deocléciano Nascimento, etc). This means that these men participated in the daily life and construction of black intellectual São Paulo through the literary dissemination that this paper provided for them. As for context, these writers also participated in the creation of the Centro Civico Palmares, and in the Frente Negra Brasileira; later this group of intellectuals would split into two major camps, one supporting José Correia Leite, the other Isaltino Viega dos Santos and the Frente Negra Brasileira (FNB). Thus, by focusing on the black press up until the creation of the FNB, I aim to see the contribution of both groups within one newspaper.

*O Clarim d’Alvorada* was founded on January of 1924 by Jaime de Aguiar and José Correia Leite. It had two major phases one from 1924-1927 in which the paper focused more on literature and the second from 1928-1932 when they focused more on politics. However, they were always focused, to a varying extent, on both subjects. After all, the name of the journal

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means Clarion of the Dawn. Clarion is an ancient trumpet that was used to announce news, such as arrivals. Thus, we can see this journal's title to signify the arrival of a new day in Brazil; a new day for race relations. José Correia Leite stated in an interview that the newspaper was meant to have a greater dissemination than other newspapers of the black press at the time. It was envisioned as a mouthpiece for members of the black race. They published around 1,000 - 2,000 copies a month. Although there were many people listed as contributors to the paper many of these names were pseudonyms for Leite and Aguiar who sought to make it appear like there were more people working there than there actually were. However, later, many prominent people began to contribute to the paper (e.g. Evaristo de Morais, a prominent lawyer from Rio de Janeiro; Aureliano Leite, a representative; Cândido Mota Filho, a minister; Cirio Costa, the poet; and the intellectual Mário Vasconcelos). The last issue of the newspaper appeared in 1932 after which time José Correia Leite was forced to stop publishing because militants from the Frente Negra Brasileira broke his equipment in retaliation for his satirization of that group, and its leader Arlindo Viega dos Santos, and his brother Isaltino Viega dos Santos, disseminated through his other newspaper Chibata (the Whip).

Part of what makes O Clarim d'Alvorada interesting to study is precisely the time in which these men wrote. The story of that newspaper is a story of a growing consciousness amongst black intellectuals. This can also be seen, for example, in the adoption of the term negro by these writers. At that time, this was a radical idea, because as Jose Correia Leite, himself, puts it: “the self-awareness, amongst blacks from during the time of the papers, happened only among a small part, because the negro never saw that he was living an incompatible life. The Clarim d’Alvorada fought hard to make the negro accept his condition,

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159 Leite, José Correia as cited in Ferrara 58.
160 Ferrara, 56-59.
because the *negro* did not want to be a *negro*, but rather *preto*, man of color, or something to that effect.”

Thus, these newspapers were part of a small, but intellectually significant process of defining and disseminating black consciousness and identity in the 1920s. Furthermore, *O Clarim d’Alvorada*, is a less problematic newspaper to look at when contrasted to the integralist *Frente Negra Brasileira* because of it openness to (as opposed to authoritarian) social discussions about race.

One of the problems scholars of black newspaper face is that, there were no concrete objections to the integration of blacks in São Paulo, therefore racial issues are harder to discern than in more openly racist societies. For example, many blacks were denied the vote, but so were many whites; many blacks were destitute, but so were many whites. Nonetheless, while the Brazilian Republic extended citizenship to all men, the mere presence of these niche newspapers suggests that there were real obstacles that prevented the inclusion of all social/racial sectors. Paulina L. Alberto argues that the intellectuals who comprised the black press in Brazil engaged with issues of “belonging” to a local society that marginalized them through governmental practices and cultural preferences. Thus, these men, engaged in discourses and actions that argued for a real inclusion into that society. That is, as Kannabiran, Vieten and Yuval-Davis suggest “belonging is a thicker concept than that of citizenship… [it] is not just about

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161 José Correia Leite as quoted in Ferrara, 59. (my translation)
162 I say that the FNB is problematic because their leadership advocated an authoritarianism that is disturbing as well as a xenophobic attitude towards all foreigners, including Africans. Isaltino Viega dos Santos, the leader of the FNB, praised Hitler and other fascist regimes and at the same time denounced democracy as well as communism as being foreign and antithetical to Brazil. Although Butler does argue that this was a reflection of the leadership and that they rest of the members were associated mostly for the social benefit of the group. Butler 118, 123. For more information see Alberto 135-138 and Butler 119-123.
membership, rights and duties, but also about emotion that such membership evoke.\textsuperscript{163} More crucially for this case

the incessant recognition of identities, boundaries and collectivities results in ever new frozen positions that simultaneously and by the same process allow privilege and power for some, while denying access to and creating insecurity for others, channeled through constructions of gender, sexuality, culture, color and family relations, and resulting in more widespread processes of social exclusion.\textsuperscript{164}

Thus, the ambition to belong is a desire not just to obtain legal citizenship (which was not a concern for blacks in Brazil) but rather was a desire to have equal access to institutions of power. Because Brazilian society, like all other societies, set up structures for the denial of access based on “constructions of gender sexuality, culture, color and family relations,” the question becomes, how did these writers attempt to overcome these power-granting definitions?

One rout commonly taken by oppresses groups is the creation of a mythical past to legitimize a great (and civilized) root. Scholars and people involved with Black movements recognize diaspora as an important component of Black Intellectuals argument for self-improvement and exaltation. Abbadias do Nascimento, for example, made the continent of Africa and its idealized history a central part of his manifesto for “quilombismo” in the Americas.\textsuperscript{165} Yet, he wrote his manifesto in 1980, the jingoistic era of the 1920s and 1930s, particularly amongst the blacks in São Paulo, made these post-colonial conceptions nearly impossible to surface. Furthermore, the desire of these 1920s intellectuals was for inclusion, not for an alternative culture. “Awakening an insatiable patriotism, the black group sought, in this

\textsuperscript{164} Kannabiran, Vieten, and Yuval-Davis, 189.
period, to be accepted and assimilated values of the dominant society…” Their desire to

The first way through which black men asserted their privileged position was through the
deployment of the act of writing. Part of the power of writing arises out of the possibility of
controlling discourse itself. As Foucault states, the immense importance and power that
intellectuals have comes from their connections with the discourse of ‘truth.’

The important thing here, I believe, is that truth isn’t outside power, or lacking in
power: contrary to a myth whose history and functions would repay further study,
truth isn’t the reward of free spirits, the child of protracted solitude, nor the
privilege of those who have succeeded in liberating themselves. Truth is a thing of
this world: it is produced only by virtue of multiple forms of constraint.

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166 Ferrara, 91 (my translation).
Thus, the intellectual’s power derives from his ability to create and guide discourse, a marker of great prestige. Indeed there were cases prior to and after the existence of *O Clarim da Alvorada* where a black writer’s genius is recognized by all of Brazil. For the writers of the newspaper, engaging with the paper became a way to perform this knowledge-power that was denied to them through other institutions.

The performance of writing occurred in two distinct ways: as readers and as writers. As readers, the editors of *O Clarim d’Alvorada* republished many works, particularly poems. These poems often provided an uplifting image of blacks in Brazil, or they highlighted the role of blacks in the construction of the nation. For example, one frequent target of attention for these men of color was the poet João da Cruz e Souza. Besides mentioning him in various publications, they also reprinted many of his works. Their decision to publish his poem *Caveira* (which has no direct connection to race) suggests that the poet’s own positioning as a black Brazilian of substantial literary prowess served as an example of intellectual legitimacy for the newspaper writers. The other way of establishing a connection with the practice of writing was by engaging in the actual process of writing. Many of the more famous contributors to the newspaper engaged in the dissemination of knowledge by practicing different genres of writing: they wrote poems, essays, and stories. Although Jayme de Aguiar was more of a poet and José Correia Leite was more of an essayist they actually utilized multiple genres in their writing, showing that their talents were varied and their intellectual capacity was great.

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169 Michel Foucault, Edward Said, *Orientalism*, Angel Rama *The Lettered City*
170 The most obvious examples of prominent black authors would be João da Cruz e Souza and Affonso Henriques Lima Barreto.
171 “Cruz e Souza” *O Clarim d’Alvorada*, (May 13, 1926), 5-6.
Through writing, these men were able to not only engage in a practice that was highly respected, but also deploy signs within the writing process that (re)presented them as a member who belongs or should belong to the dominant society. An important part of this symbology concentrated on gendered notions of masculinity. As the previous chapter showed, part of the prestige of all men in Brazil was tied with notions of honor. An integral element of honor was the behavior not only of one’s self, but also of “one’s women.” Women were by and large represented in relation to men in these stories, and were constructed as power granting (or forfeiting) objects.

The characters created by the men in the newspapers also reflected efforts to teach what they saw as proper behavior so as to elevate their status as “honorable men.” This is seen clearly in a story published in 1929. In this story, the narrator finds himself at a local establishment where alcohol is sold. The story starts with a storm, thereby justifying the narrator’s presence in the bar where there is “a penetrating perfume of cachaca.” The men at the bar are engaged in an endless cycle of disingenuous storytelling. Then, a very sickly looking pale boy begins to narrate a story about the Greek poet Euripides, whom he claims was a Libyan who was raised as a Greek. A hedonistic Euripides eventually becomes a convert to Christianity, after he saves another African from being beaten. The boy’s story ends with Euripides gloriously dying as a martyr. After the boy finishes his story he leaves, and shortly thereafter the narrator of the story leaves not wanting to hear the other men defile the great story told by the boy. What at first seems like an awkward story actually discusses proper male behavior by establishing dichotomies. There is immediately a distinction between the narrator who finds himself at the

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174 Ibid
bar because he is forced there by the rain, and the other people who are there on a somewhat permanent basis engaged in a “marathon of disingenuous causes.”\textsuperscript{175} So, not only are the men drunkards for being at the bar, but they are also liars. Besides the narrator, the only other honorable man at the establishment is the boy who tells the story of Euripides. This boy is portrayed as good because he has knowledge of a good story. Furthermore, the story is given a high status because it comes from a classical western tradition. While other men narrate cockfights or scary incidents at cemeteries, the boy’s story is treated as culturally superior because the character is a Greek playwright, thus creating a link to high culture. In addition Euripides becomes a convert to Christianity, which further makes him as a bastion of proper behavior.\textsuperscript{176} Therefore, the boy constructs an Euripides that is an ideal for the men of the \textit{O Clarim d’Alvorada}: he is a “good” Christian who is engaged in high cultural practices \textit{and} he is from Libya, and therefore an African. Thus, there is a separation, between the ones who engage in this high cultural form -the narrator, the boy and Euripides- and the rest of the men who go on about their day without really understanding the profoundness of the boy and the story he has just told.

The character of Euripides illustrates the importance of historical literary figures for the editors of the paper. By signaling to already established markers of civilization \textit{O Clarim d’Alvorada} focused on elevating (by westernizing) the values of blacks.\textsuperscript{177} A major part of this strategy was to create links between “Great Men” and blackness, suggesting that black men contributed to the construction of Brazil. Nonetheless I must highlight that these civilizing, authoritative figure were for the most part men. That is, only masculine figures were thought to

\textsuperscript{175} Ibid
\textsuperscript{176} Although this is what is told in the story, biographical sources for the life of Euripides appear to be rare. Considering that he lived 480-406 BC it would not have been possible for him to have been a Christian almost 500 years before the birth of Jesus Christ.
\textsuperscript{177} Ferrara, 105.
posses the ability to grant validation. In an article published in 1927 Horacio da Cunha mentions “father José Joaquim Lucas, inventor of the machine to write music; Dr. Alcides Bahiam Federal Representative for Amazonas; Dr. Evaristo de Moraes Jurist; Dr. Casimiro da Rocha, Doctor, and State Representative; Dr. Cuba dos Santos, [Judge] of Bananal; Dr. Francisco de Assis lecturer of Latin at the Campinas College” all of which are men and figures with a high degree of education and professional involvement in the nation.  

A favorite figure that appears many times in their writing is Luis Gama. Gama was an immensely popular figure among these intellectuals because of his position as an abolitionist and a mulatto. Even the name of the first independent black newspaper, *O Getulino* was a reference to him. These real black men provided precisely that link between the readers and prominent black male figures so that people could be proud of them, and consequently not consider race as an obstacle for success.

In the realm of fiction black figures were also conceived to highlight the connection to the past. Slaves were an important symbol to create a link to the creation of Brazil. One fictional figure commonly employed was the character of “Father John.” Like Uncle Remus in the United States, many people today may consider the Father John character to be a problematic submissive folkloric character of a slave-owning society. Martha de Abreu shows us, however, that he was also deployed as a form of resistance to that very same slave owning society. Indeed it is this subversive Father John that appears in *O Clarim d’Alvorada* several times. He appears especially when the writers highlighting the sacrifices made by the black community so that Brazil could develop. This is exemplified by the poem published on the front page on June of 1924 where the last stanza reads “beneath the brilliant sky, to remember somberly/ that the

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179 Alberto, 45.
fruits of the coffee are red globes/ of the blood that ran from the enslaved black man." This last line is particularly poignant and immensely striking in its symbolism. It links the crop that made São Paulo state—and Brazil—rich to slave labor by pointing out that the red fruit of coffee is not the coffee cherry—which is also red— but rather the blood of the slave. This link between the past sacrifices of the slaves and the current prosperous present is again highlighted in a special May 13 edition of 1928 dedicated to this topic. We see Father John again in 1924 in a poem of the same name:

Father John! Irradiant Shadow/ of a not too distant past/ lives still forgotten/ when he should be remembered/ Father John! Mighty arm/ Big and sincere heart/ black man born in the mud/ who lifted like a giant/ this nation to the apex heights/ Father John—how I love you/ Father John—how I admire you

We can discern two points that are at the heart of the slave symbol for the members of the black press. As with the poem by Cyro Costa, there is a link between the wealth of the present and black sacrifice of the past. Thus, it is the blood of Father John that provides wealth; it is his mighty arm, his work that made Brazil. In addition there is also, in Balthazar’s poem, a more direct criticism of a society that has forgotten these sacrifices. Because of the ungratefulness of subsequent generations the submissive figure Father John becomes a martyr of the black cause.

Alberto further expounds upon this link between sacrifices of Blacks for the greater good of a nation that later forgot them when she discusses the evolution of the campaign for a statue of the Mãe Preta. She very interestingly points out that the image selected by the O Clarim d’Alvorada was not the traditional images of the black wet-nurse holding her white charge, but

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182 This date is important for two reasons first, May 13 was celebrated as the emancipation day, and so drew particular attention from the black press. Also, 1928 is the year when the O Clarim d’Alvorada begins its second and more political phase.
rather it also included her own black son standing at her feet. This image she rightfully recognizes that:

In Clarim’s expanded drawing (quite possibly commissioned by the paper’s editors, like many of their illustrations), the black mother who holds the white child close to her chest is simultaneously turning her back on her own child. This image set the tone for commemoration of the Mãe Preta that, while celebrating the fraternity between the wet-nurse’s black and white sons, also spotlighted the remembered grievances if not the enslaved woman herself, then of the sons that she bore.  

And so we have here, disguised as a cerebration of black women, a homosocial connection between the black and white sons of the Mãe Preta. This link between white and black society again relates to the image of the sacrifices made by blacks who were not recognized. Although the images of Pai João and Mãe Preta do not, on the face value, exert the same high culture aspect of an African Euripides, José do Patrocínio or Luis Gama, they do create forceful symbols not only to the creation of the nation but also to the creation of a misceginated Brazilian family.

The campaign for the Mãe Preta monument opens up an important aspect not yet discussed in this chapter, gender. Many of the stories and the poems that appeared in Clarim d’Alvorada relate to women, and as such contain heavily gendered notions about the possibilities and the proper behavior of women. One could, for example, make the same argument regarding Mãe Preta that José Murilo de Carvalho makes for the failure of the implementation of the woman-republic in comparison to Our lady of Aparecida. Carvalho’s description of the failure of the women-republic is based on the idea that these figures were white and too European to be representative of the nation, and more fundamentally they were public women and therefore subject to accusations of prostitution. Our Lady of Aparecida on the other hand is a morena (like

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184 Alberto, 97.
most of Brazil) and a mother, a proper role for women. As mentioned in the previous chapter
many of the judgments made regarding the honesty of women were based upon a house/street
dichotomy as discussed by Roberto da Matta. Women associated with the house would be
considered proper whereas women that engage in the world of the street would be suspect of
being prostitutes. Thus, Mãe Preta, because she is a mother and is always associated with a baby
and with breast-feeding would be a symbol of proper feminine behavior. However, in this
instance the case of the black mother clearly expresses a homosocial idea; in the end what is
highlighted is the black and white boys’ relationship, not so much the mother herself.

As we can see with the Mãe Preta, in the black press aspects of gender are latent, and
they lie in the descriptions of women and/or their actions. Proper female behavior is not
necessarily discussed as such but instead is promoted through the moral implications of fictional
stories. Take, for example, the following case: a narrative published on December of 1924 tells
the story of two star-crossed lovers who want to marry but cannot because of familial rivalry.
The boy, Gastão must leave for the United States for his studies and the girl is married off.
When Gastão returns after having completed his studies, the families are no longer rivals, but he
is saddened that his love, Maria, has married. The two want to be together but cannot, because
of honor and duty. Maria, however, upon realizing that Gastão still feels strongly for her decides
to kill her husband, which she does by pushing him off a cliff. After she succeeds, she marries
Gastão who had no knowledge of the incident. A year later, Maria kills herself because of the
guilt of the murder and confesses her crime in a suicide note. Gastão is so distraught that he also
takes his own life. At its heart, this story is a tragedy about what occurs when social norms

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185 José Murilo de Carvalho, *A Formação das Almas: O Imaginário da República no Brasil* (São Paulo: Companhia
das Letras, 1990), 81-92.
186 Sebastiano Daniel “Drama de Amor” *O Clarim d’Alvorada*, (December 7, 1924), 2.
are broken. The woman, by first not waiting for her love, and second by killing her husband, has acted selfishly and, thus, is punished by obtaining what she wanted, to marry Gastão, but not being able to enjoy it. Her decision to break the vow of marriage, ultimately leads to the downfall of both Maria and Gastão. By desecrating the home space (committing murder) even if only because of love, she has brought the social fears associated with the street into what was supposed to be a secured honorable realm. It is this transgression that ultimately leads to their downfall. In terms of gendered aspect it is important to note that it is the woman who plots and kills her husband. Therefore she is the one who transgresses against the sacredness of marriage. By violating her vows and killing her husband, Maria steps out of the role of caretaker of the home space. In the story she is a daughter and a wife; by electing to kill her husband she effectively violates her purity, by desiring another and by actually reacting against her patriarch.

While being more direct the essay genre was also used effectively to describe the writers’ ideas of how women should be and should behave. In November of 1925 an essay urges women not to succumb to the latest fashions from Europe and get the cut known as the *la Garçonne*, which is named after the French word for “boy.” Instead of getting this haircut, which the writer says is the same for boys and for girls, he argues that women should wear their hair either naturally or in braids.\(^\text{187}\) There are two strains of thought that disturbs him. First is the fact that this is an androgynous haircut, thus blurring the division between men and women. Second, he refers to it as a haircut of people who work in “bars” and “confectionaries.”\(^\text{188}\) Thus, the writer associates this risky hair cut with an even riskier activity, working on the street. It is the haircut of women who step outside of the home space.

\(^\text{188}\) Ibid.
As this anecdote about hair signals, ensuring that black women were in the space of the house became a real concern for these writers. In the front page of the October 1924 issue there is an article that discusses alarmingly the topic of women who find themselves on the streets due to vices (particularly alcohol).\textsuperscript{189} In this essay Leite creates a dichotomy between proper women and improper women based upon the street/house dichotomy. “How many times do we encounter in the heart of the city, with lost sisters, bringing dirty dresses dominated by the alcohol, which is the cause of so much disgrace and unfortunately dominates many women who could be exemplary mothers.”\textsuperscript{190} He goes on:

how many tears shed by inconsolable mothers that hoped for their daughters who were raised with so much care, to see them today in such complete misery; how many wives abandoned their homes, tricked they throw themselves in the mud of vices, dragging with them often times the good names of their own husbands!\textsuperscript{191}

Thus, in appealing to his readers to help the women he is writing about, he portrays them as lost socially, because they are not following normal social etiquettes. Especially alarming to him are these women who tarnish the “honor” of their husband’s names by becoming women of the street. Hence, a defense of proper female behavior becomes a defense of the legitimacy of black men’s honor and their right to belong to elite social circles.

In addition to this policing of female behavior, proper behavior towards women was extremely important to these men as well. The split between the \textit{Frente Negra Brasileira} and the group led by José Correia Leite occurred because the brother of the FNB president, who was married, allegedly seduced a young \textit{frentenegrina}. The journal \textit{Chibata} (the whip) was therefore created specifically to attack the Santos Brothers, after Arlindo Viega dos Santos refused to dismiss his brother from the leadership and instead dismissed Leite accusing him of being a

\textsuperscript{189} José Correia leite, “Desgraça” \textit{O Clarim d’Alvorada} (October 12, 1924). 1.
\textsuperscript{190} Ibid. (my translation).
\textsuperscript{191} Ibid. (my translation).
Judases of the race. In response Leite accused the Santos brothers of a lack of manliness, due to a lack of morality tied in with Isaltino’s sexual endeavor and his Brother’s willingness to brush it aside. “Word of a lawyer ‘it was nothing. There was no breaking of the hymen; it was only a big moral scratch (finally the race has its own saint Francis of Assisi).’” Leite refused to allow the Santos brothers to get away with such degrading and debasing actions, because it was improprieties like this that allowed elite circles to argue against black inclusion. In another poem entitled “Guess” Leite says:

A married man who dates a young single woman, what is he? / -D. Juan. Conqueror and etc./ Its just youthful immaturity/ We of the mocidade negra/ do not want tapeação/ The well-being of our morality/ demands punishment/ get out of the way secretary/ we demand ceaselessly/ we need serious people/ that we can respect.

The attacks against Isaltino’s indiscretion reflect a general pervasive morality that is present throughout the newspapers. Kim Butler describes Arlindo Viega dos Santos, for example, as a staunch Catholic. She appears to link his Catholicism and Monarchist sentiments as effects of broader dissatisfaction with the Republic, which sought to break the connection between the church and the state at the same time that it failed to provide full citizenship to afro-Brazilians. Alberto states “as with values like education and patriotism, ideas about gender and about male and female honor in particular, had special meaning for people of color seeking to dispel ideas of their ‘moral annihilation.’” As a result members of the intellectual elite of the black movement in Brazil were particularly attuned to issues of morality (especially when dealing with sexuality).

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192 For further information on this topic see Alberto, 131-132.
195 Butler, 112.
196 Alberto, 37-38.
As with any issue of morality, ultimately we must consider its link to religion. One of the strongest tendencies throughout the early history of the newspapers (1915-1937) is the strength of Catholicism, present in arguments and ideals. In an essay published by José Correia Leite, in the first edition of O Clarim’s more political second phase, he lays out the new and more direct mission of the paper. At the end of his short essay he explains his vision for the future the paper is striving for: “we want a moral and social fraternity of our people in the journey that cannot be measured in vicissitudes, to educate our children in the religion of God and of love, to overcome all of the obstacles that prohibit a new life.”197 As we can see there is a clear link between proper and uplifting behavior and a religious moral code. Furthermore, another article argues for the importance of having hope/faith (the word used is esperança) in God, whom the article argues, will never forget the weak. It ends by saying “happy are those who embrace Divine hope/faith (esperança divina): they don’t believe in the hypocritical promises of their peers who judge themselves happy in this valley of tears where only illusion is a fact well represented by our brothers without hearts.”198 As we can appreciate these writers defined the “uplifting” of the race as ultimately reliant on an acceptance of religious values. This religious discourse gives legitimacy in two ways, by establishing that these writers held traditional patriarchal values, and by connecting them with other elite member in the physical space of the Church.

Furthermore, the religious rhetoric links black sacrifices (like slavery) to power granting religious analogies. Ana Maria, which was a pseudonym used by Jayme de Aguiar, tells an instructive story about this issue.199 That piece relates the story of a man who is depressed, but who upon seeing an image of suffering Jesus loses his melancholy, because he sees the suffering

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199 Ferrara, 57.
that Jesus went through for him. As a result, he decides to dedicate his life to saving his soul.\footnote{Anna Maria, “Jesus,” O Clarim d’Alvorada, (November 15, 1925): 3.}

As we can appreciate, this piece reflects a practice of inscribing oneself as, not only religious, but as a devout member of a dominant and accepted religion, Catholicism.

This staunch Catholicism is part of a broader set of practices amongst the activists who saw the need to create a separate identity of the negro. After all this negro identity was relatively new as a non-pejorative identity. We can say that “negroness” came to be only after the brilliant illiterate carioca orator Vicente Ferreira replaced the term “colored man” for the term “negro” and thus signaled a new era in race relations.\footnote{Florestan Fernandes, The Negro in Brazilian Society trans. by Jacqueline D. Skiles, A. Brunel and Arthur Rothwell. Ed by Phyllis B Eveleth (New York: Columbia University Press, 1969) 453 note 3.} In this way the racial identity of these writers (which is incredibly complex in Latin America) was undergoing specific local processes of formation in response to new socioeconomic conditions. This new (re)definition and appropriation of a previous negative term is incredibly important because as Stuart Hall proposes, “Identity is always, in that sense, a structured representation that achieves its positive only through the narrow eye of the negative. It has to go through the eye of the needle of the other before it can construct itself.”\footnote{Stuart Hall. “The Local and the Global: Globalization and Ethnicity” in Dangerous: Gender, Nation & Postcolonial Perspectives eds Anne McClintock, Aamir Mufti and Ella Shohat, (Minneapolis: University of Minneapolis Press, 1997)173-187. 174.} Therefore the black intellectuals could only form and justify this “new” identity in relation to an “other.”

The “other” against whom the negro identified was the foreigner, thus advocacy of racial harmony and nativism were a reaction to increased feelings of displacement.\footnote{Alberto, 24.} However, this is where O Clarim d’Alvorada differed with many of the newspapers of the time. It was far less nativist, promoting a more open definition of racial belonging. In fact, where A Voz da Raça was
nationalist in tone, the more politically militant *O Clarim d’Alvorada* became -the more they started to pay attention to pan-African movements- very inclusive. (Marcus Garvey, for example garnered special attention in various editions). Alberto shows that this was not the case however in many of the other papers. Even in *O Getulino* there was a belittling for example of Garvey’s “Back to Africa” movement, because Africa was seen only as the place of one’s ancestors, as opposed to Brazil the place for civilized *afro-brazilians*. She points out that these differences in rhetoric are present because in the 1930s there is a distinction between the right and the left wings of the black movement. The right-winged Frente Negra Brasileira denied space for Africa in *A Voz da Raça*, therefore the leftist journalist who split from the FNB along with Correia Leite began to provide increasing coverage of Pan-African issues.

If we continue to hold that identity is indeed defined by what it is not, then we may understand why Blacks sought to distance themselves from African cultural productions. Kim Butler points out that when Blacks were writing these newspapers, there was already a white elite that had, through a positivist rationale, decided that to be modern and black was antithetical. Furthermore, she points out that this conclusion was confirmed by a worldview that held Africa as the “primitive” and Europe as the “Civilized.” Moreover, government officials began to regulate black cultural productions (like candomblé) and make them illegal, because they were seen as a permanent threat to order, security and morality. The result, as Freyre argues, was to create out of a legitimate cultural expression (capoeira, candomblé, samba etc) spaces where resistance occurred, but also where negativity became drawn. The consequence was a

204 Alberto, 65.
205 Alberto, 140.
206 Butler, 33-35.
207 Sevcenko, 21
Brazilian reality where Africa was seen as a savage land and hence cultural productions from that place were seen as dangerous. Thus, black cultural productions began to be seen as bad by the general public especially in areas where there was little contact with African culture to begin with, such as São Paulo. Hence any defense of socio-cultural equality between whites and blacks in Brazil stressed their similarity and not their differences.

Although the governing officials separated Church and State during the Old Republic in Brazil in 1889, the Church was still immensely important culturally. Many high-ranking officials were catholic or had connections to the Church. At the more extreme, people may have belonged to one of the smaller protestant churches –or at the extreme of acceptable extremes- belonged to a new European religion (e.g. positivism, spritisim etc). However one thing is certain, practitioners of Afro-Brazilian religions were targeted by State policies as “backward” people.

Because of the urgency they felt to belong, most of the Black intellectuals in São Paulo also saw afro-Brazilian practices as backward. For these men Catholicism was an important marker for inclusion because it signaled Western civilization. After all as Alberto claims “The Paulistanos of color who frequented São Paulo’s black social and political associations were mostly staunch Catholics who saw their religion as central to what qualified them as true, unmarked Brazilians.”209 Thus, the practice of marking oneself as Catholic through actions (in this case through the act of writing) was a key part of claiming to belong to São Paulo’s elite society, which also shared those same religious views. As a result, religious imagery and elusions were common in black press stories, as described before.

209 Alberto, 141-142.
In contrast, Candomblé would have been antithetical to a black “religious consumer” who sought inclusion into a mainstream society that held negative views of that religion. Thus, the black press created through their allusions to Christianity an identity of Catholicism through a negative othering of candomblé. This was the case for most of the other Black intellectuals of the time as well. These black intellectuals established an obvious contrast between their religious practices and the Afro-derived religions exercised in other Brazilian geographical areas. Kim Butler and Paulina Alberto both compare São Paulo and Salvador for this reason. Alberto points out that in the Frente Negra Brasileira’s newspaper *A Voz da Raça* the pejorative term “macumbeiro” and “batuqueiro” were used against political adversaries.\(^{210}\) If we consider how important it was for these men to not only be Catholic but show and perform their Catholicism, being called a “macumbeiro” would be akin to being labeled a heretic, an outsider. Even Leite, who had shown more inclusive notions of identity, saw the afro-Brazilian religions as “sort of backward move in the process of obtaining social progress for blacks.”\(^{211}\) As Alberto puts it:

> Therefore, both the Frente Negra’s subtle but palpable rejection of Afro-Brazilian culture and opponents like Leite’s embrace of a contemporary, political pan-Africanism portrayed São Paulo’s black politics as essentially modern, while excluding certain kinds of African manifestations deemed “primitive” and rejecting the reevaluation of African culture rooted in the Northeast and in the nation capital.\(^{212}\)

Thus, these writers privileged certain ideals of “blackness” that were culturally attuned to the “modern” concepts of the city space of São Paulo of the 1920s, including high esteem for westernization and patriarchy. As Miriam Nicolau Ferrara described “if the press valued the *Negro*, it was the westernized *Negro* that assimilated the values of white society and not the

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\(^{210}\) Alberto, 141.


\(^{212}\) Alberto, 142.
Negro through the prism of African culture.” Thus, it is important to remind ourselves that while members of the Black Press in São Paulo exalted the image of the black man and woman, they exalted a particular black man and woman one who were firmly placed within a patriarchal western tradition.

In this chapter I have argued that through the creation of fiction writings in the Black Press of Brazil, black Brazilians were reacting to a social reality that saw them increasingly excluded from white society. As a result, they did something that was unusual in the rest of Brazil, they banded together based on the category of Race. Their cultural productions through their newspapers reflected practices that sought to define them and their readership as inherently Brazilian. Furthermore, in an attempt to further legitimize black intellectual productions O Clarim d’Alvorada directed itself to a white audience. However, “the white Brazilian did not take notice. O Clarim da Alvorada was a journal for blacks and by blacks. Only extremely curious or studious whites would send their employees to get the journal.” And perhaps this special distance was one of the roots of the racial problems. Although some whites sought out the papers, even in those instances, there were few actual contacts between the members of the Black Press and the hegemonic white world. In other words, even with presumably sympathetic whites the intellectual exchange would have been uneven. Thus, the black press may have responded, but with the exceptions of some notable instances (mãe preta holiday, the integration of the State Civil Guard, the Creation of the FNB as a political party etc) there is always the nagging question for scholars engaging with this topic: How many people actually listened?

\[213\] Ferrara, 203 (my translation).
\[214\] José Correia Leite cited in Ferrara, 58 (my translation).
The answer is that even with a limited number of followers this newspaper still represented a remarkably early and important effort to engage with, and change, the symbology of “blackness,” and “Brazilianess” within not only Brazil but also within a city that had marginalized blacks and “blackness” more than any other, São Paulo. However, in many instances the defense of race came at the cost of gender. In that way, women were subordinated and objectified as a way to signify and enforce power. Thus, a careful policing of sexuality and the female body coexisted with more progressive positions regarding identity politics.

In the introduction to this chapter I raised several questions regarding the rhetoric of these individuals that comprised the *O Clarim d’Alvorada* and how we can extrapolate these findings to a broader Black Press: what was a “proper man?” What ideals were they championing? Who were they idealizing? The answer to all three questions is that they simply were defending a westernized, Catholic and patriarchal version of themselves. That is, through their fiction we can see that there were three sets of men that were idealized: the historical real black man, the historical fictional black man, and the present black man. The historical real men were the great men that through their professional positions were “uplifting” the race; Men, like José do Patrocínio, João da Cruz e Souza, Luis Gama, etc. who, like the writers, were well read individuals of color. The fictional man was the slave image through which they made a moral argument for belonging and forming an integral part of the nation for which their fictional grandfathers suffered. The present man was an idealized patriarchal version of themselves; the one that would secure a position in the hierarchy of power through his actions. This was the man who held ideals such as honor, love and Christianity. Therefore, paradoxically, black intellectuals did not criticize the system that oppressed them but instead sought inclusion by defending the same mechanisms that assured their exclusion.
Conclusion

In this thesis I discussed various literary works produced by intellectuals within the black movement in São Paulo, Brazil. Specifically, I looked at the production of *O Clarim d’Alvorada*. Primarily I argued that the works these black men created, expressed an ideology that sought to exclude those they viewed as inferior, while at the same time, seeking inclusion into the broader *paulista* society that directly -through policies- or indirectly -through culture- sought to eliminate and/or marginalize these individuals. These writers argued for their inclusion into the normal body politic not by strategically othering themselves, as Abbadias do Nascimento argued for in 1980 in his *Quilombismo* manifesto, but rather by seeking to remove differences between themselves and the broader elites of society.

Explicitly, these writers began to attack and denounced the various forms of racism and inequality that kept them from enjoying their full rights as citizens of Brazil, even while they defined themselves in exclusionary terms.\(^{215}\) Many of these black intellectuals even recognized (some admired) the immigrant communities who succeeded in Brazil and so sought to replicate their organizational structure (although xenophobia was also utilized as a political tool). Despite these narratives of success, there was a sense that Brazilian society was leaving them behind and forgetting about their collective past sacrifices to Brazil. As a result, they engaged in many campaigns to remind their fellow *Paulistas* of the sacrifices their slave ancestors made for Brazil. One of the ways in which they deployed this strategy was by the use of the Mãe Preta image. This image illustrated the connection to past black sacrifices, because it highlighted what they had lost (i.e. collectively foregoing their mothers) so that white children could be cared for.

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\(^{215}\) If interested, I would highly recommend Paulina L. Alberto’s book. It is the most update book on these intellectuals in São Paulo that I was able to find.
similar case was the image of Pai João whose physical sacrifice of blood and sweat, as a slave, allowed Brazil to economically prosper.

However when we look at the implications of the arguments these intellectuals were making we find that their discourses are also problematic. Specifically they argued for their own inclusion within the Brazilian society not just by attempting to disregard the differences between themselves and the mainstream elites, but also by (re)producing differences between themselves (as elite blacks) and those they considered inferior (e.g. the poor and non-western blacks). As such, these men displayed their westernized intellectual prowess by engaging with/and in literary activities that demarcated them as powerful. They distinguished themselves by advocating, and thereby displaying their own conservative ideals and morality about decency. In short, they displayed themselves as patriarchal honorable men.

I have read this behavior as an attempt to present themselves as the antithesis of the “degenerate” that had so preoccupied Brazil of the pre-World War I years. Although there was a forceful defense of Brazil by the white intellectual elites, Chapter One shows that, although this new positive image of Brazil provided an apology for racial miscegenation, it did little to change the ways in which the elites viewed individual black citizens. In fact, race continued to be a tacit way for the white elite to justify their own superiority. In the end Freyre’s Casa Grande & Senzala (1933) established a metanarrative through which the white elites could dispel fears of their own “questionable” racial background and turn that issue into an affirmation of their own superiority. For intellectuals, this new positive view of the contribution of Africans and indigenous groups to the formation of Brazil did little to change lingering perceptions of what they saw as “black primitivism.” That is, little seems to have changed in the day-to-day lives of
the people who contributed to the black press. However, through their writings we can get a better sense of what it was that these men were up against.

In an effort to show that they themselves were not “degenerate,” these men upheld and advocated “proper” gender norms. In chapter two I provided background information to show exactly how gender norms were conceived during the early twentieth century. Therefore, in that section I discussed mostly the ideals of proper female behavior because it was through women’s practices that men obtained and maintained their honor. Specifically, the behavior of women reflected not only on themselves but also on the men of their family. This point is not just theoretical; for example, at the time wife-killings based upon a violation of honor were an accepted practice regardless of its legality. Despite the focus on women, it should be noted that the chapter is also about men, in that it is about how men conceived women and proper female behavior. This discussion centered on the evolution of an ideal, the woman who would remain in the space of the house. Those who were unable or unwilling to protect their own family’s honor and entered the space of the street would be subjected to the intervention of the State; that is if they were able to prove that they were “honest women” that only transverse the world of the street but did not belong to it they would be safe from police intervention.

These reconstructions of the intellectual milieu regarding notions of race and gender by the broader elites in Brazil served as the starting point from which to start analyzing the works of the black press. Neither of these discussions was much influenced by black thinkers, however, chapter three shows how both frames of thought came together for black intellectuals. By investigating the construction of blacks and women within intellectual circles, we can see how these black writers fought against, and selectively chose how to represent themselves. These were men seeking to define themselves and claim their space as “honorable” men. Blacks were
seen not only as lazy, but also as unintelligent and caught in practices seen as uncouth and lowly. Intellectuals, such as José Correia Leite and Jayme de Aguiar sought to dispel these myths. They wrote against it directly, but they also showcased their own examples to show how they were upright citizens worthy of inclusion. The problem, however, is that they used the same ideological conceptions that sought to devalue them, and hence they perpetuated myths about the impropriety and degeneracy in Brazilian society and in the black community as a whole. Thus, these men viewed not only “vices” such as drinking negatively, but also cultural practices linked to many afro-Brazilians in other parts of Brazil, such as afro-Brazilian religious practices.

Despite the black press’ flaws I have argued that the political project of the black press needs to be recognized for its innovation. Particularly because when these newspapers came out it was still extremely early in the political fight for racial equality around the world. After all, it was four decades before the voting rights act would be passed in the United States, five decades before the independence of Lusophone Africa, and seven decades before the fall of legal apartheid in South Africa. However, their innovative approach to race must be taken with caution. Some of their positions against their own discrimination were based upon the elimination of differences between themselves and the white elites of Brazil not on an overturn of the system. Hence, the problem arises from the fact that in doing this they also (re)created old differences between themselves, as elites, and other lower members of society. Thus, the discourse these men employed to justify their own inclusion was done through their own use of patriarchy, which took on not only gendered, but also classist tones.

My aim was for this work to reflect the social ideals that the contributors to *O Clarim d’Alvorada* displayed in and through their own literary works. However, there is still much needed to complete our understanding of this subject: one of the most visible possible avenues
for future paths of research is to investigate the other journals as literary works and not just as historical evidences. Another element that must be considered is the differences between São Paulo and another city where black intellectuals were engaged in a similar local struggle. Both Paulina Alberto and Kim D. Butler compare São Paulo and Salvador, because São Paulo’s struggle is seen as intellectual whereas the struggle in Salvador is seen as quotidian practices imbued with “African” meanings (e.g. the black press vs candomblé and capoeira), but what about a city with even less cultural links to Afro-Brazilian culture such as Porto Alegre? Porto Alegre had branches of the Frente Negra Brasileira, how did they react against a local situation that sought to marginalize them to an even greater extent than in São Paulo? What I am suggesting is that we cannot make the assumption that the practices exercised in São Paulo can be transferred to other black intellectual contexts. Instead we need to consider how the many cultural differences of the large country that is Brazil affected how racial identities were formed, and not assume homogeneity of thought based solely on race.

The overall goal of this thesis was to explore the ways that black intellectuals wrote and reacted to the racism of the 1920s era as writers. While there have been works done on the importance of black intellectuals’ ideas as disseminated through the black press, little has been said about their literary contributions and their implications. I believe it is important for us to recognize that these men imagined themselves as authors and they placed a great value on this creative profession. Hence, I hope that I have been able to present how art was involved with politics, and how the black press sought to manage and disseminate both fields. I also hope that I successfully presented how race and gender norms can collide in the process of identity formation, and how political discourses can be both conservative and progressive at the same time.
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