



Review: [Untitled]

Reviewed Work(s):

Racial Politics in Contemporary Brazil by Michael Hanchard
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of all irrespective of their race. Hence, the lesson of Anastácia is her moral superiority, seen in her capacity to forgive her torturers. Such superiority undercuts racist notions of black inferiority. While devotion to Anastácia may not encourage incorporation into militant movements, it has given rise to women's groups and social services for children, which tend to emphasize an individual's value irrespective of race.

Burdick concludes his study by commenting on its implications for social movement theory and the interpretation of the politics of cultural practices and of ethnography. He finds that students of social movements tend to overemphasize organizational behavior rather than the evolution of consciousness and resultant actions. He proposes analyzing social movements as cultural fields so that the interplay of factors that prompt individuals and groups to either join, drop out, or opt for certain activities becomes more comprehensible, thereby providing a broader understanding of human agency. In addition, he argues that if such studies emphasize the empirical over the theoretical or ideological, the actual social impact of social movements will be more fully revealed. What Burdick is suggesting is a more acute listening to sources, especially when their views contradict the investigator's hypotheses. His view of social movements is one in which contradictions, unexpected outcomes and contrariness are accepted as a natural outcome of the complexity of human choices. This is the strength of this work, in which his informants' views dominate rather than the author's.

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Hanchard, Michael, ed. *Racial Politics in Contemporary Brazil*. Durham: Duke UP, 1999. Index. 225 pp.

This ambitious project, which grew out of a conference on racial politics in contemporary Brazil, brings together diverse voices and perspectives on race relations in Brazil. The typically energetic yet uneven dynamics of conferences provides the book with its major strengths and weaknesses.

Racial Politics in Contemporary Brazil includes not only the opinions of well-established scholars and activists, but also presents views from US Americans and Brazilians. The essays focus on Brazil in the latter half of the twentieth century, with the exception of Richard Graham's essay on the position of freed Africans prior to abolition. All of the contributors present nuanced and multidimensional ways of examining Brazil's patterns of racial inequality and each one is careful to avoid generalizations and presumptions that portray Afro-Brazilians as monoliths or mere victims. The volume is far from unified, however, and there is no attempt at continuity of analysis as one moves from chapter to chapter. The individual essays focus on distinct issues and time periods; thus, there is no concerted attempt for dialogue among the essays (with the exception of the connections that Hanchard makes in his introduction). Indeed it may be helpful to view this volume as a compilation of perspectives on race in Brazil in the modern era.

Hanchard provides an essential introduction in which he defines the term "racial politics" and provides an important but limited assessment of the scholarship on race relations in Brazil before finally commenting on the individual contributions. There are seven scholarly articles in total and three essays that can best be described as testimonies narrated in the first person.

Richard Graham's "Free African Brazilians and the State in Slavery Times" provides several important insights into the dynamics of race in the eighteenth and

nineteenth centuries while emphasizing the complexity of a system that simultaneously manumitted Africans in large numbers while continuing to deny them privileges. The following three articles offer cross-national and regional analyses of racial dynamics and ideologies (Hanchard's "Black Cinderella? Race and the Public Sphere in Brazil"; Edward E. Telles's "Ethnic Boundaries and Political Mobilizations among African Brazilians: Comparisons with the US Case"; and Howard Winat's "Racial Democracy and Racial Identity: Comparing the United States and Brazil"). Hanchard uses a particular 1993 case of discrimination that occurred in the state of Vitória to discuss issues of citizenship. His concluding discussion of Afro-Brazilian culture and the public sphere, although brief, offers important insights on race in Brazil. Telles and Winat overlap somewhat, as they offer comparisons on identity, race, and class in the United States and Brazil.

Michael Mitchell's pointed focus on Miguel Reale is more difficult to characterize and place among the other essays. Despite Reale's prolific publishing record and his influence on Brazilian thought and academics, his work is not as well known as that of figures such as Freyre and Viana. Although the essay focuses less on the politics of race *per se*, Mitchell, a political scientist, exposes what he calls the "conservative intellectual tradition"—to which Reale pertains—and calls for Afro-Brazilians to devise alternative strategies and discourses to replace the conservative elitist view that continues to dominate thinking on race.

The remaining articles address various aspects of race and inequality. Peggy Lovell's article on gender and inequality suggest several important conclusions based on data from the 1960s and 1980s, and certainly underscores the need for more systematic studies that integrate gender and racial issues prior to the 1960s. Hasenbalg and Valle Silva offer concrete analysis of racial and political inequality and the perception thereof, utilizing data on education, housing, and other variables. While the authors' contention that we know more about what the elite think about race than the general public is undeniable, their notion of a so-called "black elite" is problematic at best. Given the research of many scholars (including Graham's and Hanchard's articles in this volume), this term needs to be carefully defined and studied, as does the notion that the avoidance of racial confrontation continues to be an ideal shared by Brazilians of all backgrounds. While data on other Latin American societies indicate that non-confrontation as an ideal is not restricted to Brazilian thought (contrary to the author's views [175]), the notion of *brasilidade* (or "Brazilianness") has continually been associated with the ideal of racial non-confrontation or the pursuit of racial harmony. Many activists often utilize the language of non-confrontation according to their perceived strategies within a given political climate. Early Brazilian activists, for example, understood that confrontation would be akin to being branded un-Brazilian. This too is beginning to change, however, particularly in light of growing protests against violence by human rights organizations and Afro-Brazilians.

It is thus fitting that this volume concludes with three essays from Afro-Brazilian activists and political players: Benedita da Silva, Thereza dos Santos, and Ivanir dos Santos, all of whom offer powerful personal testimonies of their experience and work in Brazil (and in the case of dos Santos in Africa as well). On the other hand, all three authors come from the southeast of Brazil and therefore speak more specifically to the dynamics of São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro. Each, nevertheless, represents veritable forces of activism and important political discourses in his or her own right. The placement of their testimonies side-by-side with the essays of scholars represents an important achievement in academic publishing.

Ironically, some of this work's strengths may also be seen as weaknesses. The majority of the scholarly essays come from decidedly social science perspectives, and

many offer recommendations (as many social scientists are trained to do) that must take existing indigenous solutions into account. Moreover, the scholars do not necessarily dialogue with one another in their essays, nor engage with the experiences of the three activists. Two additions would have made this volume more complete. Conspicuously absent is an essay that assesses the role of cultural organizations of the type that Thereza dos Santos mentions in her essay on Afro-Brazilian cultural production in Brazilian racial politics (though Hanchard does make reference to Afro-Brazilian cultural organizations such as Ilê Ayê and Olodum. Secondly, while Hanchard correctly asserts that scholarly works on racial inequality have benefited directly from earlier activists (24), none of the activists in the contemporary history receive critical attention here (for example, Abdias do Nascimento [who is cited once], and José Correia Leite, among others).

Specialists may not find all they want in this work, but this is the nature of such volumes. Editors and publishers make difficult choices of what is to be included in a finite volume. The challenges are even more acute in the case of conferences that include invited guests. As a whole, the scholarly essays are balanced and provide cross-national and regional analysis. The book supplies readers with insights and perspectives that will undoubtedly enhance our awareness of race and politics in Brazil.

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Alexandre, Valentim. *Velho Brasil/Novas Áfricas: Portugal e o Império (1808-1975)*. Oporto: Edições Afrontamento, 2000. 246 pp.

Among the colonial empires established by the states of Europe, that of Portugal may not have been the most considerable but it was certainly the most enduring, running from the 15th to the 20th centuries. In common with the British, the Portuguese lost their first empire and replaced it with a second. Unlike the British experience, Portugal was slow to replace its New World colonies (Brazil) lost between 1808 and 1825 with new ones in Africa (Angola and Mozambique), not occupied until the 1880s and later. So lengthy was this hiatus during which the Portuguese held only a handful of enclaves on the coasts of the Atlantic and Indian Oceans, less colonies than trading posts for the international slave trade, that it makes arguable the enduring existence of an empire. The question of continuity and the evolving attitudes towards empire and Africa in Portugal form an excellent topic for an in-depth study. The wording of the title of Valentim Alexandre's book might lead some readers to believe, as it did this reviewer, that it contains such an analysis.

As the introduction's opening sentence reveals, the work is not a monograph but a collection of twelve disparate essays. Seven began as conference papers (three later published in journals), three were journal articles, one a *tese complementar* for the author's doctoral degree, and one a book review. The justification for bringing together the essays is that "they all study Portuguese colonial history of the XIXth and XXth centuries" (1). Five essays (over half the book in length) relate to Portugal, Brazil, and Africa between 1808 and 1850. Two focus on the late 19th century, two discuss colonial policy during the Estado Novo (1926-1974), and two provide overviews of the entire period. Publishing an author's articles on a topic in a single volume is entirely licit, provided *either* that the articles as originally written constitute distinct but related studies of separate aspects of the topic *or* that the author has reworked them into a coherent range of studies on the topic. *Velho Brasil/Novas Áfricas* meets neither proviso.