

## Race, Culture, and Religion: The Afro–Brazilian Congresses and Anthropology in 1930s Brazil

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In the 1930s, two major meetings marked the debate on race relations in Brazil: the first Afro-Brazilian Congress took place in the city of Recife, capital of Pernambuco, in 1934, and the second in Salvador, capital of Bahia, in 1937. [1] Both Pernambuco and Bahia are states in Northeast Brazil, and the location of the congresses is of great significance, considering the unique place of the *Nordeste* in the history of Brazil. [2] This region was politically and economically important in the colonial period (1500-1822) and even in the Empire (1822-1889). Sugar production was one of the pillars that sustained the power of part of the Northeastern elite. From the last decades of the 19th century, however, with the decline of sugar in the international market, this region lost prominence compared to states in Southeastern Brazil. This was especially true of Rio de Janeiro, then headquarters of the federal government, and São Paulo, which began to emerge as an industrial hub, while still maintaining an important level of coffee production. [3] At the beginning of the 20th century, political and economic forces converged for these two states, contributing to the creation of new academic institutions which were capable of hosting teaching and research in anthropology. [4]

The emergence of these spaces was linked not only to political and economic interests but also to a cultural movement that influenced the fields of education, literature, arts and publishing. [5] In this context, the idea arose of Brazil as a country constituted by different regional expressions searching for unity. This spirit was incorporated and, at the same time, driven by the government of President Getúlio Vargas (1882-1954), who took office in 1930 in

the wake of a revolutionary movement and, seven years later, led a coup that initiated the authoritarian period of the New State (*Estado Novo*, 1937-1945). The Vargas government was delivering a project to modernize Brazil that aimed to overcome the agrarian past under oligarchic rule. Although this government intended to forge a national unity, regional forces tried to stand out.

In short, it was not by chance that the Afro-Brazilian Congresses of the 1930s took place in Northeastern states, where intellectuals and artists praised the local specificities in their work. It was there, in fact, that studies on the black population in Brazil began, as advocated by the prime movers of these events: Gilberto Freyre (1900-1987) in Recife, and Édison Carneiro (1912-1972) in Salvador. With distinct personal and professional trajectories, they crossed paths in the 1930s, due to the relevance that the study of Afro-descendants in Brazilian society began to have in their careers. The encounter between Freyre and Carneiro, therefore, did not occur without conflicts and divergences, expressed in part in the events they organized.

The Afro-Brazilian Congresses of Recife and Salvador, apart from their differences, brought together researchers who took Afro-descendants as an object of study in different ways. Some of these scholars were linked to state bodies for the development and implementation of public hygiene policies. In addition to the contribution of medicine, including psychiatry, they relied on the anthropology of the time to develop their research on black populations, paying special attention to their religious practices. [6] During these congresses, the debate was not restricted to academics. Afro-Brazilian priests and priestesses were also present in these forums as congress participants, a situation unprecedented until then. In addition, they opened their places of worship, the *terreiros*, to be visited by the congress attendees. In the alliance with the scholarly community, these religious leaders saw a possibility of guaranteeing protection for their practices against the prejudice and the police violence of which they were victims. Modernity as promoted by the policies of the new Vargas government was deemed incompatible with Afro-Brazilian religious practices, still considered the sign of an archaic society. During this period, public bodies responsible for public morality and security followed rules intended to keep Afro-religious practices under police control. [7] Practitioners of Afro-Brazilian religions were imprisoned and prosecuted, and their ritual objects seized. An intense fight against these religions was initiated, which led to their followers organizing themselves to guarantee the practice of their worship, not only in the states of the Northeast region, already recognized as the cradle of Afro-religious practices, but also in other states of the federation. [8]

In addition to being an environment for debate on “black culture” and the defence of Afro-Brazilian religious practices, these congresses also served as more general spaces for making a stance within the field of anthropology, and black studies in particular. Thus, besides presenting the congresses, this article also seeks to record what light they shed on anthropology in Brazil in the 1930s. The emergence of a transnational Afro-Americanist field is highlighted, as the formation of this discipline in Brazil, a fertile ground for foreign

researchers, was linked to a broader context. At the same time, the theoretical and empirical contributions of Brazilian researchers, driven by their experiences in their own country, should be underlined.

## First Afro-Brazilian Congress, Recife, 1934

The first Afro-Brazilian Congress took place between November 11th and 16th, 1934, in Recife (Pernambuco), at the Santa Isabel Theater, the name of which pays homage to the daughter of Emperor Pedro II. Princess Isabel signed the *Lei Áurea* (Golden Act) in 1888, determining the end of slavery. Home of dance, theatre and music shows since 1850, the Santa Isabel Theater – an example of neoclassical architecture with all its pomp – was also the stage for political debates such as the abolitionist campaign, with one of its leaders, Joaquim Nabuco (1849-1910), giving speeches defending the cause there. The choice of location, it seems, was not random. This congress, according to its main organizer, Gilberto Freyre, would be 'the beginning of a considerable movement of cultural and social action', with a view to 'recognizing in black people, thus rehabilitated, a capable race, full of magnificent possibilities and aptitudes, that has already made remarkable contributions to national development' (FREYRE, 1934: 3).

Gilberto Freyre was born in Recife, into a family with means that enabled him to invest in his studies. [9] His first lessons were with a private teacher and he was then enrolled in the American Baptist School, from which, like other fellow students, in 1918 he proceeded to the University of Baylor, in Waco, Texas, an American university of Protestant orientation. Freyre's higher education in the United States was in two stages: after a first season at the University of Baylor, where he graduated in liberal arts, specializing in political and social sciences, he then joined Columbia University in New York, attending postgraduate courses in political, legal and social sciences. During this second experience, he kept in touch with Franz Boas (1858-1942), of whom he declared himself a disciple. Freyre claimed that it was this master who schooled him in anthropology, providing new theoretical input which helped him to understand the differences between social groups, among other things. Following Boasian precepts, these differences were no longer explained in terms of race, as their biological key, but by the concept of culture. According to Freyre himself, this culturalist framework was a major reference in his own analysis of Brazilian society, [10] especially in *Casa-Grande & Senzala* (*The Masters and the Slaves*, FREYRE, 1978). [11] This famous work was published originally in 1933 and made him known worldwide as the great interpreter of Brazil. Upon returning to Brazil in 1923, Gilberto Freyre, still without a university position, decided to remain in his homeland in Recife, where in the following year he actively participated in the foundation of the Northeast Regionalist Centre (Centro Regionalista do Nordeste). Its first goal, according to the programme of the centre, was 'to develop a feeling of unity in the Northeast, already so manifest in its geography and historical development and, at the same time, to work for the interests of the region in its diverse aspects: social, economic and cultural' (FREYRE, 1977: 176). In 1926, the group members organized the Regionalist Congress of the Northeast, which was attended by

intellectuals from the region and was reported by the local press, with whom Freyre often collaborated. In fact, even during his stay in the United States, he published articles in his city's newspaper, thus maintaining a relationship with intellectuals, artists, writers, and politicians from Recife. So, when Gilberto Freyre took up the proposal to organize the first Afro-Brazilian Congress, he already had a network of local relations that, added to his experience studying abroad, increased his personal prestige.

At this first congress, Freyre presented a paper entitled 'Deformações de corpo dos negros fugidos' ('Deformations of the body of runaway blacks'). Based on a survey of 'runaway blacks' in newspapers from the time of the Empire, Freyre (1937a) listed different marks that they presented on their bodies. His conclusion contradicted the tendency to portray Africans and their descendants as a danger to the Brazilian population and responsible for the evils of the ethnic mix that would inflict increasing damage on the country. Freyre concluded that the causes of the 'deformations' were social; they were directly related to the poor living conditions to which blacks were subjected in Brazil and to the 'cruelty of white masters' (FREYRE, 1937a: 245).

He finished his text by saying: '(...) it is high time that we stop attributing to him [the black man] evils and illnesses that have developed in him in the same way as they would probably have developed in any other imported race subject to the same regime of slavery in a country devoted to monoculture' (FREYRE, 1937a: 248). The fact that he considered that such 'deformations' to have social causes pointed to a change in perspective that, while it found an echo in other papers during the Recife Congress, was not unanimous.

Designed primarily to be an event focusing on Afro-Brazilian religions, [12] the Recife Congress had a broader thematic scope while maintaining its focus, as reflected in several papers by academics and also in the contribution of a select group of Afro-Brazilian priests and priestesses. The involvement of these religious leaders did not occur only during the days of the event. They participated in preparatory meetings for the congress, which had activities in three *terreiros*. The Afro-Brazilian temples, led by *Pai* [Father] Anselmo, *Pai* Oscar Almeida and *Pai* Arthur Rosendo, welcomed the congress participants with ritual ceremonies. In addition, there was the presentation of a communication in the congress signed by the *Ialorixá* Santa and the *Babalorixás* Oscar Almeida and Apolinário Gomes. In the paper on 'Receitas e quitutes afro-brasileiros' ('Afro-Brazilian Recipes and Delicacies'), included in the proceedings of the meeting (SANTA, ALMEIDA, GOMES, 1935), the authors list typical dishes of Afro-Brazilian cuisine, also present in Afro-religious rituals, and describe how to prepare them. [13]

The encounter between 'scholars, with great erudition in both theory and practice' and 'intelligent illiterate and semi-illiterate individuals, with a direct knowledge of Afro-Brazilian subjects' (FREYRE, 1937b: 348) – among them, the Afro-Brazilian priests and priestesses – came about as a result of the research already being performed in Recife by Ulysses Pernambucano (1892-1943), the honorary president of the meeting. A paternal cousin of Gilberto Freyre, Pernambucano graduated in medicine in Rio de Janeiro in 1912. After his

time in the federal capital, he returned to his hometown of Recife in 1918, where he took the chair of psychiatry at the Medical School in 1920. At the time of the Recife Congress, he conducted a series of studies on Afro-Brazilian religions and folk spiritism, in which trance and possession practices were common. Some future anthropologists and folklorists, such as Waldemar Valente (1908-1992), Gonçalves Fernandes (1909-1986), and René Ribeiro (1914-1990), joined Pernambucano in this effort.

Trance and possession were considered by Ulysses Pernambucano as a pathological syndrome associated with biological and racial factors. [14] This position was expressed, to a certain extent, in his paper in the proceedings of the congress, 'As doenças mentais entre os negros de Pernambuco' ('Mental illnesses among black people in Pernambuco'). In this text, he presented the results of clinical tests, applied to whites, blacks and mestizos, indicating the 'manifest fragility of blacks, in our environment, in relation to mental diseases' (PERNAMBUCANO, 1935: 94). In the Mental Hygiene Service, Pernambucano submitted followers of Afro-Brazilian religions to observations and clinical examinations, with the intention of establishing a 'scientific control' over them and with a view to replacing the control by police forces, at least in theory. At that time, the *terreiros* needed authorization from the police in order to perform their ceremonies.

The work of Ulysses Pernambucano was not the only one to focus on "the black man" from a biological bias in the Recife Congress. Others also presented this same approach, such as 'Ensaio etnopsiquiátrico sobre negros e mestiços' ('Ethno-psychiatric essay on blacks and mestizos'), by Cunha Lopes [15] and J. Candido de Assis [16] (LOPES; ASSIS, 1935), and 'Grupos sanguíneos da raça negra' ('Blood groups of the black race'), by Abelardo Duarte [17] (DUARTE, 1935). However, this was not the only tone of the debate. The congress also included historically-based communications on the presence of Afro-descendants in Brazil, such as 'Os negros na história de Alagoas' ('The blacks in the history of Alagoas') by Alfredo Brandão [18] (BRANDÃO, 1935). Papers on the religious practices of Afro-descendants should be highlighted. Some of them were merely descriptive, or a kind of compilation of information, such as 'Vocabulário nagô' ('Nagô Dictionary'), by Rodolfo Garcia (GARCIA, 1935); others proposed an analysis of Afro-brazilian practices, like 'Xangô' (CARNEIRO, 1937), a brief text signed by Édison Carneiro about the changes that had occurred in the cult of Xangô – a divinity of Yoruba origin – between Africa and Brazil.

At the event in Recife, Édison Carneiro participated with another paper: 'Situação do negro no Brasil' ('Situation of the black man in Brazil'). In this text, Carneiro exposed the 'deplorable' conditions (CARNEIRO, 1935: 239) in which the Afro-descendants found themselves as a consequence of the continued exploitation to which they had been subjected since slavery by the white elite of the country. In a tone of denunciation, the opening words indicated whom the end of slavery had served: 'The abolition of slavery has solved the problems of the white, not the black. The white man was the master, the capitalist, and the economic development of the country had made the existence of slaves harmful to the development of the productive forces' (CARNEIRO, 1935: 237). In this way, Carneiro

emphasized the social and economic disparities between whites and blacks, following Freyre's criticism of using the idea of race, in the biological sense, to distinguish them. It is curious to note, however, that he refers to a classic work, not of culturalism, but of evolutionism:

The deplorable situation in which blacks find themselves in Brazil absolutely does not testify against the black race. We know today that race is not as important as it is purported to be in social development. There are neither superior nor inferior races. The races were formed in the first stages of Civilization, under the influence of the natural environment, and their ascending march is made, as Morgan states, through uniform paths, due to the similarity of human intelligence and the obstacles they have to overcome to reach the domination of nature. What there is, therefore, is not fixed racial inferiority or superiority, which would be equivalent to the negation of the permanent movement of matter, but inequality in economic development, conditioned in the first place by the geographical environment and in the second place by the technical possibilities of the race at that historical moment, conditioning, in turn, the gradual but progressive liberation of man from nature. (CARNEIRO, 1935: 239)

Relying on the evolutionism of the American anthropologist Lewis Henry Morgan (1818-1881), namely in *Ancient society* (1877), Édison Carneiro thereby developed arguments to explain the latent inequality between whites and blacks in Brazilian society. This work of Morgan had already impacted Karl Marx (1818-1883) and Friedrich Engels (1820-1895). In the understanding of these authors, Morgan provided a historical and ethnological basis for a materialistic conception of history, which is fundamental in the theory they proposed for the understanding of capitalist society. Carneiro also uses these two authors to give density to his argumentation, which was not just present in his writings, but reverberated in his actions. [19] As an affiliate of the Brazilian Communist Party, he sought to understand the racial problem in Brazil through the categories of race and social class. These connections reflect his readings, but also his own life history. The family of Édison Carneiro, who was born in Salvador, had an unstable financial situation. [20] However, they maintained good relations with members of more prestigious sectors of local society. And so he was able to continue his studies, graduating from the Law School of Bahia in 1936, despite carrying a social marker that, even today, is a reason for exclusion: being black. It was not as a lawyer, however, that he invested in the field of racial studies in Brazil. His performance as a journalist was the gateway to this universe.

## Second African-Brazilian Congress, Salvador, 1937

Only a year after receiving his diploma as a lawyer, Édison Carneiro was already at the head of the Second Afro-Brazilian Congress, in Salvador, with the status of specialist in "black studies". This was conferred on him not only by his articles published in the local press on the subject but also by his participation in the Recife event in 1934. However, Carneiro had nothing like the stature which Freyre had when he organized the first congress. Without a



figure of national standing to spearhead the meeting, Carneiro had to postpone it twice until it finally came to fruition between January 11th and 20th, 1937. [21] He had the support of former colleagues to organize the congress; they were members of the *Academia dos Rebeldes*, as the group of young people interested in the debate on modernity and literary modernism in the capital of Bahia in the late 1920s was called. It was a debate that went far beyond literature; it was also animated by political issues. [22]

The Historical and Geographic Institute of Bahia (Instituto Histórico e Geográfico da Bahia) housed the congress attendees. Founded in 1894, this institute was one of several that were established in Brazil under the same title, with the purpose of gathering individuals interested in the study of certain cultural and scientific aspects, particularly those that mattered to the Brazilian intellectual elite in a period when institutionalized academic environments, such as universities, were still rare. [23] But the activities of the congress were not restricted to the surroundings of this institute. As in the Recife event, the congressmen also went to the Afro-Brazilian temples, in the case of Salvador, to the Candomblé *terreiros*. They visited the Casa Branca, the Ilê Axé Opô Afonjá, the Gantois, the Bate Folha, and the Ilê Ogunjá, as well as the Parque São Bartolomeu, a park where the *pai de santo* Joãozinho da Goméia organized a party. The visits to these houses of worship were made possible due to a previous arrangement made by Édison Carneiro with the leading priests and priestesses in order to encourage them to participate in the event. In times of persecution of Afro-Brazilian religious practices, Carneiro argued that the visibility they gained via the congress could contribute to damping down police action against the *terreiros*. Thus, he also made the congress a space for the defence of these practices. Among the religious leaders who collaborated in the debate were Eugênia Anna dos Santos (Mãe Aninha), Manoel Bernardino da Paixão (Bernardino Bate Folha), João Alves de Torres Filho (Joãozinho da Goméia) and Manuel Vitorino dos Santos (Manuel Falefá da Formiga). One of them, as well as being part of the executive committee of the event, [24] was also elected its honorary president: Martiniano Eliseu do Bomfim (1859-1943). Martiniano was a famous *babalaô* – priest of the cult of Ifá, one of the Yoruba oracles. [25] Son of freed Africans of Yoruba origin, he was born in Salvador. His father was a trader and imported African products, also making trips to Africa. He took Martiniano on one of them to carry out his studies in Lagos, Nigeria, where he stayed for 11 years (1875-1886). He mastered English and Yoruba. In the 1930s, when already in his 70s, he became a reference for the *povo de santo* (the Candomblé initiates) and was contacted by researchers who were interested in Afro-religious practices in Bahia. Martiniano attended the Afro-Brazilian Congress in Recife, a city already known to him. He had been in Recife before the congress at the invitation of other Afro-Brazilian religious leaders, such as Pai Adão. Born Felipe Sabino da Costa, in the state of Paraíba, also in the Northeast of Brazil, Pai Adão held an important position in Recife, that of leading priest of the Xangô *terreiro*, Ilê Obá Ogunté, which, after his regency, became known as *Sítio do Pai Adão* (literally Pai Adão Farm). Although he had close relations with Gilberto Freyre, who invited him to the Recife Congress, Pai Adão preferred not to participate himself in the conference. A statement by Martiniano in the newspaper *O Estado da Bahia*, published on

May 14, 1936, may help clarify the reason for the absence of Pai Adão:

When the first Afro-Brazilian Congress took place in Recife, I followed the example of my friend Pai Adão, who had just passed away. Frankly, I didn't take the Congress seriously right away. I preferred to stay in the shadows, waiting for events. The black man has suffered a lot and the people say: '*pobre quando vê muita esmola desconfia*'. [26] I was suspicious. Then some young men spoke and explained what they wanted, and I felt that they were sincere. It is time to look at the black race with sympathy and to do us justice. (quoted by CASTILLO, 2010: 118)

Having overcome the mistrust, the *babalaô* concluded that scholars could be important allies in the fight against the repression of Afro-Brazilian religions. Martiniano committed himself to that mission. As a member of the executive committee of the Congress of Bahia and its honorary president, he did not assume the role of a mere informant of scholars eager for details about the practices of Africans and their descendants. Martiniano knew the importance given to his knowledge:

I am highly valued in the Congress, I am the person who translates the texts in Nagô for them. I am the only Anagô [Yoruba] descendant who can translate Nagô texts in this country, as well as in Yorubaland. There is no one who can translate from and into the Yoruba language like I can. (quoted by Ayoh'Omidire; Amos, 2012: 250-251) [27]

It was Martiniano who translated one of the texts written by the Nigerian Ladipo Solanke (1886-1958), published in the annals of the second congress under the title 'A concepção de Deus entre os negros iorubás' ('The conception of God among Yoruba blacks', SOLANKE, 1940). [28] Solanke was a political activist, involved in the antiracist cause, and defender of pan-Africanism. This translation at once reinforced Brazil's ties – in this case Bahia's ties – with Africa, and demonstrated that the formation of the Afro-American transnational field did not only involve academics and their institutions. This field also had a basis in the *terreiros*, which represented a lively counterweight to the sometimes arid theoretical debates. Solanke's text filled some of the gaps pointed out by Édison Carneiro in one of the papers he presented to the Bahian congress, 'Uma revisão na etnografia religiosa afro-brasileira' ('An assessment of Afro-Brazilian religious ethnography'). In this text, Carneiro (1940) pinpointed the nescience of some Afro-Brazilian religious leaders in Bahia about the existence of a supreme god of African origin. Based upon the Yoruba conception, Solanke's text provided this clarification. Not by chance was this the same tradition of Martiniano, direct descendant of the Yoruba. This can be interpreted as part of a broader movement in which Martiniano was directly involved: the construction of a model of Afro-religious orthodoxy in which the primary basis was the practices coming from the Yoruba, translated into the conception of Nagô Candomblé. [29]

Brazilian scholars such as Raimundo Nina Rodrigues, Arthur Ramos and Édison Carneiro participated in the construction of this model but other priests, such as Mãe (Mother) Aninha, contributed to it as well. Born in Salvador, also daughter of Africans, she had the



help of Martiniano in structuring her *terreiro*, the Ilê Axé Opô Afonjá, at the beginning of the 20th century. Mãe Aninha opened the doors of her *terreiro* to researchers and, with Martiniano's participation, she created the *Corpo dos Obás de Xangô* in 1936, a ritual group formed by personalities of the time. Those who occupied the position of *Obá de Xangô* had the role of giving prestige and material support to the *terreiro*. [30] In the congress he helped organize, Martiniano do Bomfim presented the paper 'Obás de Xangô' (BOMFIM, 1940). In it, he made strategic use of ethnographic discourse, building up his religious discourse in the ways recommended by the academics.

As one of the outcomes of the event, the Union of Afro-Brazilian Sects was created, with Martiniano Eliseu do Bomfim as its president, Édison Carneiro as its general secretary and Arthur Ramos as benefactor. [31] The board took office after the congress, on September 27th, 1937. Seeking to reduce police repression of Afro-religious practices, this entity would be a kind of surveillance body, certifying that these practices did not violate public morality and security. This resembled, to a certain extent, what was proposed by Ulysses Pernambucano in Recife. However, the organization bequeathed protagonism to an Afro-religious representative: Martiniano do Bomfim. And unlike the connected movement in Recife, in the Union of Afro-Brazilian Sects, Afro-descendants were not the target of studies that systematically approached the subject of the race from a biological bias. On this point, it is interesting to note that the papers in the proceedings of the second congress gave greater priority to the study of social and cultural aspects than to the analysis of Afro-descendants from the point of view of medicine, associated with physical anthropology, as had occurred in Recife. In addition, the second congress also had a political agenda, given the importance accorded to the debate concerning religious freedom. Aside from these distinctions, in both events researchers and their 'objects of science' were gathered in the same scene for the first time.

## Primacy in Dispute: 'Escola Nina Rodrigues' *versus* 'Nova Escola do Recife'

The Afro-Brazilian Congresses are a resumption of the studies on black populations in Brazil, dating back to the 19th century. These studies, as advocated by those involved in organizing the second meeting, had been initiated by Raimundo Nina Rodrigues (1862-1906), considered the founder of this subdisciplinary tradition within the field of anthropology. [32] He gained notoriety as an anthropologist, although his academic production came primarily from the field of medicine. Born in Maranhão, another state in the Northeast of Brazil, he made his career in the capital of Bahia. In 1887, Nina Rodrigues received his doctorate from the Rio de Janeiro Medical School. His education also included a visit to the Medical School of Bahia, where he began to work as a professor and researcher in 1889. He combined medicine with legal doctrines to specialize in the field of legal medicine, which had physical anthropology as one of its scientific supports. It was along this path that he embarked on anthropology. [33]

In 1900, Raimundo Nina Rodrigues, who made himself known not only in Brazil but also abroad, had his *O Animismo fetichista dos negros baianos* ('The fetishist animism of black Bahians') published in French (RODRIGUES, 1900), [34] which received praise from Marcel Mauss in a review in *L'Année Sociologique* (MAUSS, 1900-1901). [35] In this monograph, Nina Rodrigues presents an ethnographic account on black religious practices in Bahia, based on his own fieldwork in candomblé *terreiros* in its capital, Salvador. [36] European and North American scientific journals also hosted his writings. In addition to foreign publications, he maintained correspondence with specialists from other countries and was a member of international scientific societies. This shows how his ideas were recognized in a broader intellectual sphere. In this case, his expertise in forensic medicine was gaining importance. [37] In 1906, Nina Rodrigues was chosen to represent the Faculty of Medicine of Bahia at the Fourth International Congress of Public and Private Healthcare in Milan, Italy. He did not, however, go to the congress. Before the trip, while still in Brazil, Nina Rodrigues was already in poor health and died on July 17th of that same year, in Paris, France. In the years following his death, his writings on the "black man" were somewhat forgotten. Criticism of evolutionist theories at the beginning of the 20th century had an impact on how his work was received. However, his legacy came to be claimed in the 1930s by a group of medical professionals who proclaimed themselves members of the 'Nina Rodrigues School', also referred to as the 'Bahian School'. In this group, Arthur Ramos (1903-1949) [38] stands out. Like his master, he went from medicine to anthropology, devoting himself to the "study of black people", and adding the contribution of psychoanalysis to this trajectory.

Attentive to the paradigm changes resulting from the criticism of evolutionism, Arthur Ramos recovered works left by Nina Rodrigues, seeking to update the master's works with a conceptual framework that became widespread in the early twentieth century. He thus put Nina Rodrigues' biological determinism in perspective, pointing out the potentiality of his material for thinking about African "survivals" in Brazil. In the following passage, the reinterpretation that Ramos tries to give to his master's work is explicit:

There is just one reservation to note here, in the work of the Bahian master. It is when he makes the slogan of the time intervene: the degeneracy of miscegenation as the main cause of social maladjustments. These ideas are especially defined in '*Os mestiços brasileiros*' (The Brazilian Mestizos), which I included, although incomplete, in the present volume, [39] so that the readers could understand the thought of Nina Rodrigues in this particular. These ideas are unacceptable in our days. The supposed evil of crossbreeding (*mestiçagem*) is an evil of poor hygienic conditions in general – more social than organic. If, for example, we replace the terms race with culture, and *mestiçagem* with acculturation in Nina Rodrigues' works, his conceptions acquire complete and perfect timeliness. (RAMOS, 2006: 16-17)

In 1934, when the first Afro-Brazilian Congress was held, Arthur Ramos published *O Negro brasileiro: etnografia religiosa e psicanálise* (The Black Brazilian: religious ethnography and psychoanalysis, RAMOS, 2001). Following in the footsteps of Nina Rodrigues, Ramos also

focused on the religious practices of Afro-descendants, taking his own ethnography as his source as well as archival material and the press. He pointed, however, to a new theoretical orientation: a change in the paradigm from 'race' to 'culture'.

This trend in the approach to race relations, though, still drew on previous understandings, especially the continuing classification of Africans and their descendants in Brazil according to their regions of origin in Africa, as well as the religion they practised. Nina Rodrigues' studies were a source not only for Arthur Ramos, but also for Édison Carneiro and Gilberto Freyre, who, each in their own way, sought to point out the superiority of some groups of Africans relocated to Brazil, as evident in works they published in the 1930s.

In *Casa-Grande & Senzala (The Masters and the Slaves)*, Gilberto Freyre highlighted how the groups that landed in Brazil were distinguished by different traits and skills, which, rather than being to the detriment of Brazilian society and its people, contributed to their unique development, which gave miscegenation a positive dimension. Arthur Ramos, in *O Negro brasileiro (The Brazilian Black Man)*, and Édison Carneiro, in *Religiões Negras (Black Religions, CARNEIRO, 1936)*, gave special attention to the differentiation between two groups: Yoruba and Bantu, following what was already put forward by Nina Rodrigues. In this way, they attested to the superiority of the Yoruba, underlining their ability to maintain their religious practices in the new continent and, consequently, preserve a supposed African purity. Ramos and Carneiro not only adopted similar perspectives in their writings but followed together in the attempt to affirm Bahia as the cradle of black studies in Brazil.

In the 1930s, the name Arthur Ramos was already prominent in this field of studies. Although he was not among the organizers of the Afro-Brazilian Congresses, he contributed to the debates. [40] In the annals of the Recife congress, Ramos appears as the author of 'Os mythos de Xangô e sua degradação no Brasil' ('Xangô's myths and their degradation in Brazil', RAMOS, 1937a), as well as signing the preface to the second volume of the annals (RAMOS, 1937b). Even though he was absent from the event in Salvador, he was a constant interlocutor of Édison Carneiro during its preparation. In addition, he sent two papers to the meeting: 'Culturas negras: problemas de aculturação no Brasil' ('Black cultures: problems of acculturation in Brazil', RAMOS, 1940a) and 'Nina Rodrigues e os estudos negro-brasileiros' ('Nina Rodrigues and the studies on Black Brazilians', RAMOS, 1940b).

In this last text, read in a session of the Bahian congress in honour of Nina Rodrigues, [41] Arthur Ramos praises the master, evoking his memory right from the beginning: 'The great shadow of Nina Rodrigues descends over the Afro-Brazilian Congress of Bahia' (RAMOS, 1940b: 337). He called upon the participants to reverence him, seeking not only to highlight his prominence as a pioneer of Afro-Brazilian studies, but especially to affirm the importance of the Nina Rodrigues school in this field: 'May the Afro-Brazilian Congress of Bahia establish a school landmark and proclaim Nina Rodrigues the great, the famous master of us all, who, in his shadow, are now leaning on a great contingent of our history, committed to lifting a tip of the veil' (RAMOS, 1940b: 339). Thirty-one years after his death, Nina Rodrigues was thus present at the meeting in Bahia. Gilberto Freyre, in turn, mitigated

Nina Rodrigues' pioneering spirit. In order to trace new strains of the racial studies in the nascent anthropology in Brazil, Freyre proclaimed the 'New School of Recife'. This was the name of the group led by Freyre in the Pernambuco capital, [42] chosen by Edgard Roquette-Pinto (1884-1954), an anthropologist working at the National Museum of Rio de Janeiro, one of the first centres of anthropological studies in Brazil, but who had also had initial training in forensic medicine. Freyre would thus be the main representative of this lineage. In order to affirm his position in this field, he used every possible measure and artifice at his disposal. On the eve of the Afro-Brazilian Congress in Bahia, for example, he granted an interview to the newspaper *Diário de Pernambuco*, in which he stated:

I'm very afraid that [the Afro-Brazilian Congress of Bahia] will have all the flaws of improvised things. For true scholars to be able to contribute, the deadline should be placed much later. True scholars work slowly. Unless the organizers of the current Congress are only concerned with the more picturesque and artistic side of the subject: the 'rodas' of capoeira and samba, the "toques" [ceremonies] of 'candomblé', etc. (OLIVEIRA; COSTA LIMA, 1987: 128) [43].

However, with the prominence that Nina Rodrigues' studies gained in the 1930s, Freyre had to recognize the importance of this coroner to Brazil's anthropology in terms of race relations and especially Afro-Brazilian religions. In the second volume of the Proceedings of the Recife Congress, not by chance, a portrait of Nina Rodrigues was published on its opening pages. And in the article "O que foi o 1º Congresso Afro-Brasileiro do Recife" ('An Overview the First Afro-Brazilian Congress in Recife'), with which Gilberto Freyre closed the volume, he referred to Nina Rodrigues with the following words: 'Professor of the Faculty of Medicine of Bahia who gave such a great boost to Afro-Brazilian studies, obtaining the respect of Africanologists everywhere' (FREYRE, 1937b: 352). This volume was prefaced by Arthur Ramos, who reaffirmed the protagonism of his master in his text. [44]

In their foreword to the congress proceedings, Édison Carneiro and Aydano do Couto Ferraz highlighted the import of the event. According to them, the international repercussion of the second congress was proof enough of its success. Among its foreign participants, the American anthropologist Melville J. Herskovits (1895-1963) was already a reference in African-American studies. Another American researcher, Donald Pierson (1900-1995), who developed his doctoral research on race relations in Bahia and, to this end, sojourned in Salvador from 1935 to 1937, is also worthy of mention. [45] The interest of these two North Americans in maintaining contact with Brazilian researchers comes from a common source: both abroad and to its internal public, Brazil was presented as the country where racial harmony was in force. This drew the attention of researchers from North America, where the situation was marked by strong racial segregation.

## The Rise of An Afro-American Field

In addition to the importance that the Afro-Brazilian Congresses of Recife and Salvador had for black studies in Brazil in the 1930s, they integrated a broader field of research in

development at that time: Afro-American studies, of which Melville Herskovits was one of the main protagonists. As well as contributing to the debate in Salvador, he had already participated, albeit indirectly, in the Recife event. A disciple of Franz Boas, Herskovits focused his studies on the transformations in African cultures when transposed to the American continent. Based on Boas' ideas and together with Ralph Linton (1893-1953) and Robert Redfield (1897-1958), he developed the concept of acculturation, with which he sought to understand the contact between previously unrelated cultures and the influence of one on the other. Herskovits was not actually present in Recife or Salvador, but he sent some of his works to the organizers, which already indicates an approximation to them. At the Bahia event, Arthur Ramos had already corresponded with his North American colleague, apparently through Gilberto Freyre, demonstrating how some alliances were also necessary, even in the dispute over hegemony in the black studies' field. [46]

Donald Pierson, on the contrary, attended the Bahia Congress. He was in Salvador doing his PhD research under the guidance of Robert E. Park (1864-1944), representative of the Chicago School, another important research centre in the United States. Park was also connected with the University of Fisk, in Nashville, Tennessee, historically an institution that welcomed Afro-descendant students. [47] In the 1930s, he turned the focus of his research to race, with his colleagues at the University of Chicago, Robert Redfield and Louis Wirth (1894-1952), and with a group of scholars gathered in Fisk. Herskovits even had a hand in this endeavour. The project consisted of observing different forms of inter-ethnic arrangements in the context of European colonization throughout the world so that, through comparative sociology, they could shed light on the American case. [48]

Donald Pierson's activities, however, were not restricted to anthropological research. During his stay in Brazil, his intention was to explore the potentialities of the social sciences in Brazil, as well as making contact with local scholars with a view to a study on racial relations on a transnational scale. On his arrival in the country, he contacted specialists on the subject, such as Gilberto Freyre and Arthur Ramos. It was the latter who introduced Pierson to the Bahian field, mediating his access to the local political elite and to Candomblé houses, in which one of his interlocutors was Martiniano Eliseu do Bomfim. At the time, Ramos lived in Rio de Janeiro, then the federal capital; the city was a gateway for part of the foreign scholars who came to Brazil with an interest in researching racial relations. There, they also had contact with anthropologists from the Museu Nacional (National Museum).

The Afro-Brazilian Congresses of Recife and Salvador were attentively followed by the press of the time. The involvement of its main organizers in the media – both Gilberto Freyre and Édison Carneiro frequently published in their city newspapers – may have influenced the coverage. This was also related to the importance of the subject beyond academic circles. The presence of the artists and writers who participated in the congresses, for example, is also an indication of how the discussion on this subject did not come only from those linked to academic institutions. This was the case despite the efforts since Nina Rodrigues to deal with questions about the Afro-descendants from a scientific point of view. To a certain extent,



this is due to the fact that the boundaries between different areas of intellectual activity were not yet well delimited. The first Brazilian scholars to develop anthropological studies on black people did not have a specific background in the social sciences, much less in anthropology, a discipline that was institutionalized at that time.

The participation of artists and writers in the congresses also shows how ideas circulated and how they were spread via different circuits. Among the writers who participated in the congresses was, for example, Jorge Amado (1912-2001). He had written of an African Bahia in his novels (which were translated into several languages) since the early 1930s when the publication of his books began. [49] His international recognition helped Amado become a kind of cicerone of foreign scholars in Salvador's *candomblés*. In Recife, in turn, he presented a paper entitled "Biblioteca do Povo" e "Coleção Moderna" ("People's Library" and "Modern Collection"), in which he reproduced stories (in the form of *cordel* literature, i.e. dime novels) published in these two series, which he considered to be 'the popular literature of Bahian blacks', an 'admirable material of beauty and poetry' (AMADO, 1937: 264). The Salvador Congress also had the contribution of Amado, who was a personal friend of Édison Carneiro since the days of the *Academia dos Rebeldes* and who frequented the *terreiros* of Salvador with him. Jorge Amado presented the paper 'Elogio a um chefe de seita' ('Praise for a cult leader'), in which he lauded Martiniano Eliseu do Bomfim for his contribution 'to Afro-Brazilian studies, whether for his own studies or for the moral support given to scholars', which were listed in the text, demonstrating that he was a connoisseur of the academic production on this subject (AMADO, 1940: 326).

Another writer who participated in the debates was Luís da Câmara Cascudo (1898-1986), who was also an ethnographer with recognized contributions to the field of folklore in Brazil. In Recife, he presented the paper 'Notas sobre o catimbó' ('Notes on Catimbó') (CASCUDO, 1937), in which he addressed Afro-Brazilian religious practices in Rio Grande do Norte, his state of origin, and also in Pará. The participation of the poet Mário de Andrade (1893-1941), from São Paulo, is also worthy of mention. In the Recife congress, he contributed the paper 'A Calunga dos maracatus' ('The Calunga of maracatus', ANDRADE, 1935), which discusses the Calunga, a ritual object of great importance in the *maracatus*, one of the set of Afro-Brazilian practices in Pernambuco. [50] Besides acting as a writer, Mário de Andrade studied different phenomena related to Afro-descendants in trips he undertook throughout Brazil in the 1920s and 1930s. He was not only concerned with describing their practices ethnographically, but also with how these accounts should be made.

As head of the Culture Department of the state of São Paulo, Mário de Andrade created the Ethnography and Folklore Society, which operated from 1936 to 1939. During this brief period, the Society was a channel for bringing together the university and the wider cultural system. [51] Teachers from abroad participated in its activities, and trained the first generations of social scientists at the recently created University of São Paulo (USP). Among them were the famous couple, French anthropologists Claude Lévi-Strauss (1909-2009) and Dina Dreyfus (1911-1999), as well as Roger Bastide (1898-1974), who had come from France to



Brazil in 1938 to replace his fellow countryman Lévi-Strauss in the chair of sociology at USP.

Unlike Claude Lévi-Strauss and Dina Dreyfus, who during their stay in Brazil developed research on indigenous populations, Roger Bastide embarked on Afro-Brazilian studies. To this end, he used much of what had been produced by those involved in the two congresses. Their pathbreaking work was a fundamental source for Bastide's interpretations of Brazil, especially of Afro-Brazilian religions. [52] Bahia was to be a crucial destination for this French anthropologist, as well as other researchers trained in social sciences, and with similar interests. Following the Afro-Brazilian Congress of Bahia, they came from the United States: Robert E. Park, in 1937; Ruth Landes (1908-1991), from 1938 to 1939; Lorenzo Turner (1890-1972) and E. Franklin Frazier (1894-1962), from 1940 to 1941; Melville Herskovits, from 1941 to 1942. [53] In 1946, the French photographer and anthropologist Pierre Verger (1902-1996) arrived.

During the same period, two figures who already stood out in the field of Afro-Brazilian studies in Brazil were received by academic institutions abroad: Arthur Ramos and Gilberto Freyre. Considered for a scholarship granted by the Guggenheim Foundation, Arthur Ramos travelled to the United States in 1940, returning to Brazil in 1941. There, he participated in round tables and gave lectures at universities such as Harvard, Louisiana, Columbia, California, Minnesota and Yale. On that occasion, his book *The Black in Brazil* had already been printed in an English version (RAMOS, 1939). Gilberto Freyre also travelled to the United States in the 1930s and 1940s to present lectures. In 1931 he was at Stanford University; in 1938 at Columbia University; in 1939 at the University of Michigan; and in 1944 at Indiana University. In this last institution, he gave six talks, gathered the following year in *Brazil: an interpretation* (FREYRE, 1945). [54] He also lectured in European universities, with emphasis on his trip to Portugal in 1937 as representative of the Brazilian government, where he was at the universities of Coimbra, Lisbon and Porto, as well as in England, with a presentation at King's College, London. [55]

## Final Notes

A showcase for part of the anthropology done in Brazil in the 1930s, the Afro-Brazilian Congresses that took place in Recife and Salvador revealed the way the question of race was thought on at the time: despite the influences of American culturalism, the legacy of evolutionist theories, often with a biological bias, was still manifest. The two congresses, therefore, did not mark a sudden rupture with theories that had been the basis of racial studies in Brazil until then. This was encapsulated by the exaltation of Nina Rodrigues in the second congress, in Salvador. These meetings did, however, demonstrate how conceptual and theoretical changes operate gradually, as other conceptions begin to gain currency among those who reflect on a certain social reality – the complex transition from the concept of race to that of culture was one such case. These changes are also driven by the arrival on the scene of other agents. The prominence that Afro-Brazilian priests and priestesses had in these two meetings, especially in Bahia, also shows how the research agenda was influenced

by groups that were previously pushed to the margins by hegemonic circles claiming to be the holders of scientific knowledge.

In Brazil in the 1930s, access to education was reserved for the few. The main characters in this text – Raimundo Nina Rodrigues, Martiniano Eliseu do Bomfim, Gilberto Freyre, Arthur Ramos, Édison Carneiro – have exceptional trajectories when compared to the social and economic conditions of the majority of the Brazilian population at the time. However, the few who stood out in the academic environment circulated beyond the limits of their own time along with their innovative anthropological ideas. Their writings are still revisited today by those interested in Afro-Brazilian studies and the issue of race, but also the issue of space, as the participants of the Recife and Salvador conferences were part of transnational – American, European and African – networks. [56]

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[1] Mariana Ramos Morais is associated researcher of CéSor, EHESS, Paris.

[2] The Afro-Brazilian Congresses of the 1930s have been studied by different authors, such as Dantas (1988, 2009); Capone ([1999] 2004, 2010); Bacelar (2001); Silva (2002); Romo (2007); Rossi (2015). In both events, proceedings were published. In the Recife Congress, there were two volumes (AFRO-BRAZILIAN STUDIES, 1935; FREYRE AND OTHERS, 1937). The Bahia Congress had one publication (*O Negro no Brasil*, 1940). In the excerpts from the annals of the two Afro-Brazilian Congresses, cited throughout this text, we chose to adopt the spelling of the words according to the current Portuguese norms. I thank Christine Laurière, Fernanda Arêas Peixoto, Frederico Delgado Rosa and Stefania Capone for their careful reading of this text.

[3] After the proclamation of the Republic in 1889, hegemonic groups from states in north of Brazil, and others in the south which were not restricted to Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo, particularly in Minas Gerais

and Rio Grande do Sul, sought to ensure their influence in national politics. The economic development observed in the state of São Paulo, especially since the 1870s, enabled the political rise of the local elite at the national level. However, other groups were also in dispute. The period called the First Republic (1889-1930) was a troubled time when the agrarian oligarchies tried to remain in power, while social movements contested this hierarchical structure. Some of these movements added a religious dimension to their struggle, such as Canudos and Contestado, or a military one, such as Tenentismo. The latter movement reflected more directly on the Revolution of 1930, through which Getúlio Vargas became President of the Republic. For a history of this period, see Fausto (2018).

[4] Until the 1930s, studies of an anthropological nature in Brazil were developed by researchers linked to museums, historical and geographic societies, as well as to medical and law faculties. In this decade, anthropology began to stand out as an academic discipline within the field of social sciences, with the creation of universities in Rio de Janeiro, the University of the Federal District in 1935, later transformed into the University of Brazil (1937), and with the foundation of the School of Sociology and Politics of São Paulo in 1933, and the University of São Paulo in 1934. Another centre for debate and research in anthropology at the time was the Department of Culture of the city of São Paulo, which emerged in 1935. An extensive bibliography has been produced on the history of social sciences in Brazil. For an overview of this history, see Miceli (1989, 1995). Specifically, on the history of Brazilian anthropology, the work of Mariza Corrêa (2013a) is a reference.

[5] As Antonio Candido (1984: 27) states, in the 1930s, an 'atmosphere of fervor' characterized the cultural milieu, marked by the political, religious and social engagement of intellectuals and artists. In the author's view, this decade would have catalyzed the aspirations of groups from the previous decade that longed for reforms in teaching in Brazil, including the creation of universities with a substantial contribution from philosophy, science, literature and education.

[6] Afro-Brazilian religious practices have been persecuted since the colonial period in Brazil. Considered as sorcery, magic and *curandeirismo* (the illegal practice of medicine by traditional healers), these practices have gone through a process of legitimization as a religion since the beginning of the 20th century. There are several afro-religious denominations in Brazil. Among them, two are found throughout the country: Umbanda, which appeared at the beginning of the 20th century in the Southeast region, and Candomblé, formed in the middle of the 19th century in the state of Bahia. Other denominations are more restricted to some regions, such as Xangô, in Pernambuco; Tambor de mina, in Maranhão; Batuque, in Rio Grande do Sul. The Afro-Brazilian religions, in general, are going through a process of expansion outside the country, being present in countries like Argentina, Uruguay, Portugal, France, Italy, Germany and the United Kingdom. On the process of legitimization of these practices see: Montero (2006); Giumbelli (2008); Morais (2018).

[7] The Penal Code of 1890 is a milestone in the institutionalized repression of Afro-Brazilian religious practices. Articles 156, 157 and 158 prohibited, respectively, the illegal exercise of medicine, the 'practice of magic, spiritism and sorcery', and healings, which were associated with Afro-Brazilian religious practices. In this way, there was a legal instrument that guided the repression of these practices, since it legally classified them as a crime (NEGRÃO, 1996: 44).

[8] The repression of Afro-Brazilian religions and the strategies found by their followers to ensure the

practice of their rituals in the 20th century are discussed by Birman (1985), Maggie (1992) and Negrão (1996).

[9] The life and work of Gilberto Freyre has been analysed by different authors. I especially follow the reading proposed by Pallares-Burke (2005) who, going through the author's biography, points out constitutive references of Freyrian thought.

[10] In the preface to the first edition of his work *Casa-Grande & Senzala* (*The Masters and the Slaves*), Freyre states: 'It was the study of anthropology under the guidance of Professor Boas that first revealed to me the black and the mulatto in their just value – separated from the traits of race the effects of the environment or cultural experience. I learned to consider as fundamental the difference between race and culture; to discriminate between the effects of purely genetic relationships and those of social influences, cultural heritage and the environment' (FREYRE, [1933] 1978: XXIV; my translation). Despite this statement and the attempt to adopt the Boasian precepts in his analysis, Pallares-Burke (2005) puts the influence of Franz Boas on Freyre's interpretations into perspective. Reviewing Freyre's career at Columbia University, she demonstrates that the Pernambucan author did not maintain extensive or close contact with the 'father' of American cultural anthropology. In addition, she highlights other influences on how Freyre read and analyzed the formation of Brazilian society. By focusing on the analysis of *Casa-Grande & Senzala*, Araújo (1994) proposes that despite Freyre's insistence on associating his analysis with the Boasian concept of culture, '(...) he works with a fundamentally neo-Lamarckian definition of race, that is, a definition that, based on the unlimited aptitude of human beings to adapt to the most different environmental conditions, emphasizes above all their capacity to incorporate, transmit and inherit the characteristics acquired in their - varied, discrete and localized - interaction with the physical environment (...)' (ARAÚJO, 1994: 39). Regardless of these interpretations of Freyre's work, it is worth mentioning that culturalism had influences on the racial studies in Brazil in the 1930s; see Skidmore (1976); Cunha (1999); Oliveira (2004); Corrêa (2013a).

[11] *Casa grande & Senzala* is Gilberto Freyre's most famous work. It was translated into different languages, such as English (FREYRE, 1946) and French (FREYRE, 1952).

[12] Gilberto Freyre, in a conference on Ulysses Pernambucano given in 1944 in Maceió, stated that the initial proposal was to hold an event on religions of African origin. But this was not possible due to the resistance of the religious leaders (see Capone ([1999] 2010 : 186).

[13] *Ialorixá* (*mãe de santo*) and *babalorixá* (*pai de santo*) are the chief priestess and the priest of some Afro-Brazilian religions, such as Candomblé.

[14] About Ulysses Pernambucano's activities in relation to Afro-Brazilian religious practices, see Dantas (1988).

[15] Cunha Lopes (1915-1990) was born in the state of Rio Grande do Norte and graduated in medicine in 1934 from Recife Medical School. He worked as a resident at Hospital das Tamarineiras, under the guidance of Ulysses Pernambucano (PAZ, 2007).

[16] J. Cândido de Assis (1909-1988) was born in the state of Paraíba and graduated in medicine in 1934 at

the Recife Medical School, in the same class of students as Cunha Lopes. He worked as a resident at Hospital das Tamarineiras, under the guidance of Ulysses Pernambucano. He was also a journalist and a writer (PAZ, 2007).

[17] Abelardo Duarte (1914-1991) was born in the state of Ceará. He graduated from Recife Law School in the 1940s and worked as a journalist (PAZ, 2007).

[18] Alfredo Brandão (1881-1956) was born in Alagoas. He graduated from Recife Medical School in the 1920s. As well as a doctor, he was also a poet, historian, and writer (PAZ, 2007).

[19] Following Rossi's interpretation (2015).

[20] For an analysis of Edison Carneiro's work, see Rossi (2015).

[21] As pointed out in the correspondence exchanged between Carneiro and Arthur Ramos, the event should have occurred in 1936. But it had to be postponed twice (OLIVEIRA; COSTA LIMA, 1987).

[22] Rossi (2015) analyzes the activities of the *Academia dos Rebeldes* in detail, with special focus on the performance of Édison Carneiro.

[23] The Historical and Geographic Institutes still maintain their activities. In 2018, that of Bahia, for example, celebrated the 81 years of the Afro-Brazilian Congress of Salvador with a symposium that gathered researchers who revisited part of the works presented in 1937 in their communications. The programme of the event is available at: <https://www.ighb.org.br/single-post/2018/08/10/II-Congresso-Afrobrasileiro---uma-releitura-81-anos-depois>.

[24] Aydano do Couto Ferraz and Reginaldo Guimarães, in addition to Édison Carneiro, also composed the executive committee. Aydano do Couto Ferraz graduated in 1937 from the Law School of Bahia. He had a great friendship with Édison Carneiro. Between the years 1939 and 1941 he published several articles on Afro-descendants culture in the magazine of the Municipal Archives of São Paulo. In the Afro-Brazilian Congress of Bahia, he presented a paper entitled 'Castro Alves e a poesia negra da América' ('Castro Alves and the Black Poetry of America', FERRAZ, 1940). Reginaldo Guimarães also was on the executive committee of the Second Afro-Brazilian Congress. In 1937, he graduated from the Medical School of Bahia. In that congress, he presented the communication 'Contribuições bantus para o sincretismo fetichista' ('Bantus Contributions to Fetishist Syncretism', GUIMARÃES, 1940). Biographical notes by Ferraz and Guimarães are in Oliveira and Costa Lima (1987).

[25] A brief biography of Martiniano Eliseu do Bomfim is in Capone (2016). On his relationship with the Afro-religious milieu, see Costa Lima (1987), Capone ([1999] 2004, 2010), Castillo (2010). One point is worth noting here: the spelling of his surname is found in the references consulted for this work in two ways: Bonfim and Bomfim. As in the annals of the Second Afro-Brazilian Congress Bomfim was adopted, it was chosen to follow this spelling in the references to the *babalaô*.

[26] Literally, 'the poor are wary of large handouts'.



[27] This excerpt was taken from an interview given by Martiniano Eliseu do Bomfim to Lorenzo Dow Turner in Salvador in 1940. The version consulted here is in Ayoh'Omidire and Amos (2012).

[28] In the annals of the second congress, there is no information about the original language of the text.

[29] This Yoruba based model of Afro-religious orthodoxy is continually reworked. For a debate on how these congresses contributed to the construction of a religious orthodoxy, fundamentally Yoruba, in Candomblé *terreiros*, see Dantas (1988) and Capone ([1999] 2004, 2010).

[30] The *Corpo dos Obás de Xangô* is still part of the hierarchical structure of the Axé Opô Afonjá. For a narrative about Martiniano do Bomfim and Mãe Aninha, see Costa Lima (2004).

[31] Ramos was not present on the board of directors, but became aware of the progress of the work through his correspondence with Édison Carneiro (OLIVEIRA; COSTA LIMA, 1987: 161).

[32] At the end of the 19th century, Nina Rodrigues focused part of his studies on black people. Surrounded by racist premises, typical of his time, he distinguished whites, blacks, and indigenous people, the former being representatives of a superior race and the following two of inferior races, while a higher position was reserved for the Blacks. Among them, there was also a distinction. The Yoruba, who were concentrated in Bahia, were among the most advanced in the evolutionary framework outlined by Nina Rodrigues. And the religion they practised attested to their superiority over others Africans, especially the Bantu, who had a marked presence in southeastern Brazil. The Yoruba, according to Nina Rodrigues, would have been able to preserve their religion, maintaining their organization and mythology; thus, they protected their supposed cultural purity.

[33] Nina Rodrigues was also a reference in criminology studies of his time, having developed medico-legal and psychosocial analyses on black people. In 1894, he published *The Human Races and Criminal Responsibility in Brazil* (RODRIGUES, 1938 [1894]), which was dedicated to renowned physicians and jurists in the field, such as Lombroso, Ferri, Garófalo and Lacassagne. For an analysis of the work of Nina Rodrigues, as well as the resumption of his studies by members of the 'Nina Rodrigues School', see Corrêa (2013b).

[34] Between 1896 and 1897, *Brazileira Magazine* published four chapters entitled *O animismo fetichista dos negros baianos*. Only in 1935 were the chapters of *Brazileira Magazine* organized by Arthur Ramos and gained a Brazilian edition (MAGGIE, FRY, 2006).

[35] According to Lisa Earl Castillo, the translation of this work into French was done by the author himself. For her, the fact that Nina Rodrigues sought to publish the book in a foreign language, added to the fact that he dedicated the work to a medical association in Paris, of which he was a member, was a clear indication that the author intended to insert this pioneering work in an international body of academic discourse on "the Black" (CASTILLO, 2010: 104).

[36] On that occasion, Nina Rodrigues had Martiniano Eliseu do Bomfim as his main interlocutor, demonstrating how the priest's relationship with scholars had its roots in the end of the 19th century.

[37] The description of the tributes paid to Nina Rodrigues on the occasion of his death demonstrates his

importance both in Brazil and abroad (RIBEIRO, 1995).

[38] Arthur Ramos was also born in the Northeast. His hometown was Pilar (now Manguaba), located in the state of Alagoas. But it was in Salvador that he carried out his academic studies in medicine, specializing in psychiatry and gaining a doctorate in Surgical Medical Sciences, in 1926, at the Faculty of Medicine of Bahia. Also in the capital of Bahia, he worked at the Instituto Médico Legal Nina Rodrigues and, in 1934, moved to the then federal capital, Rio de Janeiro, where he initially joined the Department of Orthophrenia and Mental Hygiene of the Department of Education and Culture of the Federal District and became a professor at the University of the Federal District, occupying the chair of social psychology in 1935. In concomitance with his career in medicine, Ramos developed studies on folklore, paying attention to Afro-descendant-related practices. In 1946, he took the chair of anthropology at the Faculty of Philosophy of the newly founded University of Brazil in Rio. For an analysis of Arthur Ramos' work, see Cunha (1999) and Campos (2004).

[39] Arthur Ramos refers here to the book *The Anormal Collectivities* (RODRIGUES, 2006b), a collection of works by Nina Rodrigues organized by the 'disciple', who signs the preface from which the highlighted passage was extracted. The first edition of the publication is from 1939.

[40] According to the sources consulted, Arthur Ramos is presumed not to have attended the Afro-Brazilian Congresses in Recife and Salvador. In the case of the first congress, the newspaper *Diário de Pernambuco* – which was reporting on the programme of the event – stated in its November 11, 1934 edition that Ramos' communication was in the "Proceedings of the congress" and in its November 14, 1934 edition, it reported that the paper had been read, without informing who had read it. Another indication of his absence is in the preface to the second volume of the annals of the event, signed by Ramos himself. Referring to the activities of the event, he states: 'Not having been part of the organizing committee of the First Afro-Brazilian Congress (...) nor having discussed directly the theses and motions presented, I followed, however, from afar, with the greatest interest, the march of the works (...)' (RAMOS, 1940: 11). As for the second congress, the absence of Ramos is made explicit in the letter that Édison Carneiro sent to him on January 10, 1937, as well as in the news in the newspaper *Estado da Bahia* on January 20: 'Mr. Reginaldo Guimarães read a paper by Arthur Ramos on the great Africanist [Nina Rodrigues]' (OLIVEIRA; COSTA LIMA, 1987: 135-136).

[41] This session took place at the Nina Rodrigues Institute, which was part of the Faculty of Medicine.

[42] According to information from Silva (2002).

[43] Freyre's interview was published on November 13, 1936. In it, he informed that he had become aware of the second congress in a letter sent by Édison Carneiro and received by him 'only two or three days away' (OLIVEIRA; COSTA LIMA, 1987: 128).

[44] During this period, Arthur Ramos directed the serie Biblioteca de Divulgação Científica, of the Companhia Editora Nacional (later, Civilização Brasileira), which published the second volume of the annals of the Congress in Recife. Nina Rodrigues' essays were also published in this collection, as well as other titles on race relations, such as *Religiões negras* (*Black Religions*), by Édison Carneiro.

[45] In 1939, Donald Pierson returned to Brazil to serve as full professor of sociology and social anthropology at the Escola Livre de Sociologia e Política de São Paulo, founded in 1933 (CORREA, 2013a: 206).

[46] Arthur Ramos and Melville Herskovits corresponded between 1935 and 1949. It was Ramos who started the correspondence, sending three volumes of the Brazilian Scientific Divulgence series, directed by him, to Herskovits, on the recommendation of Gilberto Freyre, as Guimarães presumes (2004: 169), based on correspondence exchanged by Ramos and Herskovits and also by Freyre and Herskovits.

[47] Stefania Capone (2021, forthcoming) analyses the formation of the Afro-American transnational field, highlighting the relationship established between American and Brazilian researchers with Roger Bastide. In her analysis, Capone points out how the University of Fisk was a meeting point for North American researchers who left for Brazil in the 1930s and 1940s in order to do research on race relations. Besides Park and Pierson, Ruth Landes and Lorenzo Turner were also at Fisk.

[48] About Park's passage through Brazil, see Valadares (2010). On Donald Pierson's stay in Bahia in the 1930s, see Silva (2012) and Maio e Lopes (2017). Pierson's research on race relations in Bahia was first published in English (PIERSON, 1942) and then in Portuguese (PIERSON, 1945).

[49] Jorge Amado's first published novel was *O país do carnaval* (*The Country of Carnival*), 1931. Also in the 1930s, *Cacau* (1933), *Jubiabá* (1934), *Suor* (1934), *Mar Morto* (1936), *Capitães de Areia* (1937) were launched, all of them with translations into several languages.

[50] Mário de Andrade was invited to the second Afro-Brazilian Congress. However, he was ill at the time and did not attend, as Édison Carneiro explains in a letter to Arthur Ramos (OLIVEIRA; COSTA LIMA, 1987: 151).

[51] About Mário de Andrade's performance, see Peixoto (2002). On the Society of Ethnography and Folklore, see Valentini (2013).

[52] It was Roger Bastide, in fact, who translated into French the work *Casa-Grande & Senzala*, by Gilberto Freyre (FREYRE, 1952).

[53] Part of the results of the research developed by these North American anthropologists in Brazil can be found in the following references: Landes (1940, [1947] 1994; 2002); Turner (1942); Frazier (1942), Herskovits (1943). Carneiro's work, 'The structure of African cults in Bahia', published in the same issue of *The Journal of American Folklore* in which Landes (1940) also published an article based on her experience in Brazil, is worth mentioning here. About Turner, Frazier and Herskovits' stay in Brazil and their contribution to the construction of an Afro-American transnational field, see Sansone (2002, 2012).

[54] The publication of Gilberto Freyre's works in a foreign language precedes that of *Brazil: an interpretation* (1945), which later gained a version in Portuguese (FREYRE, 1947). Part of the results of his master degree research had already been published in 1922 (FREYRE, 1922). After his reputation developed with *Casa Grande & Senzala*, texts in foreign languages also multiplied, like the articles 'The negro in Brazilian culture' (FREYRE, 1939) and 'Some aspects of the social development of Portuguese America'

(FREYRE, 1940a), to be restricted to the 1930s and 1940s, in addition to the translation of his masterwork, *The Masters and the Slaves*, into English in 1946 (FREYRE, 1946).

[55] Gilberto Freyre's trip to Portugal in 1937 took place in the year that Getúlio Vargas, already in the presidency since 1930, led a coup and began an authoritarian period that was renamed the *Estado Novo* (1937-1945). This was the term that also defined the Portuguese regime led by António de Oliveira Salazar, from 1933. Freyre's trip to Portugal, as well as to England, was financed by the Brazilian government. In Portugal, in addition to conferences at universities, he represented Brazil at the Congress of Portuguese Expansion in the World. His presence in Portugal was thus part of the Brazilian policy of rapprochement with the Salazar government. Aside from this intention of the Brazilian government, the way in which the Portuguese regime of the *Estado Novo* ideologically used Freyre's Luso-tropicalist theses and his characterization of the 'Portuguese colonizer' as prone to miscegenation, in order to promote the image of a non-racist colonial empire, should be highlighted. The conferences Freyre gave in Europe in 1937 were published the following year under the title *Conferência na Europa* (Lecture in Europe), in an edition of the Ministry of Education and Public Health (FREYRE, 1938). In 1940, the texts, with modifications, were re-presented in *O mundo que o português criou: aspectos das relações sociais e de cultura do Brasil com Portugal e as colônias portuguesas* (The World the Portuguese Created: Aspects of Brazil's Social and Cultural Relations with Portugal and the Portuguese Colonies) (FREYRE, 1940b).

[56] The Afro-Brazilian Congresses of the 1930s were also the subject of further criticism. Édison Carneiro himself states in a 1953 text, 'Os estudos brasileiros do negro' ("Brazilian studies on black people"), that the events 'gave rise to a season of spectacle around the black man' (CARNEIRO, 1964: 115). Criticism also comes from Afro-descendant activists such as Alberto Guerreiro Ramos and Abdias do Nascimento who, together with Carneiro, were at the head of the Brazilian Black Congress in 1950. For them, in the 1930s congresses, Afro-descendants were just thought as an object of study, without considering the practical problems related to their psychic and socioeconomic condition (MAIO, 2015: 623). A third congress was planned in São Paulo, in 1939, by Mário de Andrade and Mário Pedrosa, as Édison Carneiro wrote in a letter sent to Arthur Ramos after the Salvador congress (OLIVEIRA; COSTA LIMA, 1987: 128). This meeting, however, did not take place. An event in Recife, in 1982, with the presence of Gilberto Freyre (honorary president of the event), was named the Third Afro-Brazilian Congress and stated in its proceedings, that it was in the same series as the events of 1934 and 1937 (MOTTA, 2017). In 1994, in Recife, the Fourth Afro-Brazilian Congress took place. Like the third, it was held by the Joaquim Nabuco Foundation, conceived by Gilberto Freyre and established in 1949.