

## A Pioneering Afro-Brazilian Ethnologist: The Life and Work of Manuel Querino

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Best known outside Brazil for his work as a Black vindicationist, food scholar and folklorist, the Afro-Brazilian polymath Manuel Raymundo Querino (1851–1923) was also an abolitionist, journalist, labor leader, politician, musician, painter and art historian. [1] In the field of anthropology, he was the first Black scholar to study the history, culture and origins of the enslaved Africans and their descendants in Brazil, based on his personal experience and respectful interviews with elderly Africans who had survived the transatlantic crossing and enslavement. [2] He described his work as a continuation of the studies of African and Afro-Brazilian culture initiated by Raimundo Nina Rodrigues (Querino 1955 [1916]: 19), who died in Paris in 1906 at the age of 44, and is generally considered a pioneer in that field. However, Querino was the first practitioner-scholar to study African culture in Brazil, and his view of Africans—and particularly of racial mixture—was much more positive and optimistic than the racist, pessimistic stance taken by Nina (as he is known) and most white intellectuals of that time. [3] Pseudoscientific racism was so widespread and generally accepted in scientific circles of his time that Querino's courageous stance in defense of Africans and their descendants—now called Black vindicationism—could be compared with Galileo's rejection of a geocentric universe. [4] A forensic physician and psychiatrist, Nina Rodrigues believed that Blacks were not only legally insane (2011 [1894]) but were holding back progress in Brazil while enfeebling its population through miscegenation. In contrast, Querino called his African informants "*velhos respeitáveis*" ("venerable elders") (1938: 24), and listed the positive

contributions that Africans and their descendants had made to his country in *O colono preto como fator da civilização brasileira* (1918, *The Black colonist as a factor in Brazilian civilization*).

Querino studied at the Colégio Vinte e Cinco de Março and the Liceu de Artes e Ofícios (School of Arts and Crafts), where he learned French and honed his native Portuguese, before going on to become a founding student of the Academy—later School—of Fine Art. Although most sources state that he failed to obtain a degree in architecture, Querino obtained a teaching certificate in geometric drawing. He was also the author of several books in the fields of art history, folk dance, ethnology, Black vindicationism, folklore and food studies.

It is important to stress these aspects of Querino's education and background, as it has often been said and written that he was *autodidata*, meaning autodidact or self-taught. Many have interpreted this to mean that he received no formal education or was even illiterate. Querino may have been a “self-taught” ethnologist because, in his day, there were no courses or studies or professors in cultural anthropology in Brazil, as we know them today. [5] However, by that standard, all ethnologists of his time were autodidacts in the early days of anthropology, which was heavily based on anthropometry (many of Querino's contemporaries—including Nina Rodrigues—believed in the scientific validity of craniometry). [6] This article is part of a decades-long campaign to restore Querino to his rightful place among ground-breaking Brazilian scholars, as well as the international pantheon of people of African descent who challenged racist stereotypes and the ideology of scientific racism. [7]

## From Painter and Decorator to Activist and Author

Querino was born in the Northeast Brazilian town of Santo Amaro, Bahia, on 28 July, 1851, about a year after the definitive abolition of the transatlantic slave trade between Africa and Brazil. Although he was Black [8] and slavery would only be abolished in Brazil in 1888, he was never enslaved. During his early childhood, he was raised by a free Black couple, the carpenter José Joaquim dos Santos Querino and Luzia (or Luíza) da Rocha Pita (Calmon 2021: 40). There is some doubt as to the identity of Querino's biological parents: a handwritten note on his death certificate states that he was the “illegitimate son of Maria Adalgisa.” [9] Then a major sugar, cassava and tobacco-producing hub with a large enslaved population, Santo Amaro was one of the towns which were hardest hit by the cholera epidemic that scourged Brazil in 1855. [10] An inordinate number of victims were Black, and Joaquim and Luzia are believed to have been among them. [11] The orphaned four-year-old Manuel Querino was sent to the provincial capital, Salvador, and placed under the tutelage of a white guardian, the educator and politician Manuel Correia Garcia (1815–1890). Although he was relatively enlightened for his time, Correia Garcia clearly believed that the best future occupation for his ward would be as an artisan, because he had the lad apprenticed as a painter and decorator. Fortunately for Querino, his guardian also taught him to read and write. As a state deputy for the Liberal Party, Correia Garcia also furnished him with a powerful patron, Manuel Pinto de Souza Dantas (1831–1894), the head of the party, who later served briefly as

Prime Minister of Brazil under the imperial government. Another important mentor, the Spanish artist Miguel Navarro y Cañizares (1834–1913), was part of Correia Garcia’s circle of acquaintances, drawn from amongst Bahia’s intelligentsia. After breaking with the School of Arts and Crafts, where Querino was his student, Cañizares founded the Academia (later Escola) de Belas Artes (Bahia Academy (later School) of Fine Art), and Querino became one of its first students (Freire 2010: 346).

Literacy and good connections benefited Querino greatly when he was drafted into the army in 1868. He would have been sent to the front to fight in the Paraguayan or Triple Alliance War (1864–1870)—where, as he observed in his collection of folklore essays, *A Bahia de outrora (vultos e fatos populares)* (Bahia of yesteryear: folk figures and lore), originally published in 1916, the death toll for volunteers and conscripts was extremely high, and those who survived were often maimed for life (Querino 1922: 165). Fortunately, his literacy—a rare accomplishment for most Brazilians of his time, Black or white—and possibly his slight physique, convinced the leaders of his battalion that he would be more usefully employed as a clerk at their Rio de Janeiro headquarters. After the war ended in 1870, Querino used Dantas’s influence to get himself demobilized and returned to Bahia in 1871. In the preface to one of his best-known works, *A arte culinária na Bahia* (The culinary arts in Bahia,), a groundbreaking study of Bahian cuisine published posthumously in 1928, Querino observes that his travels at that time made him aware of the difference between the ingredients and seasonings of food in Bahia and other parts of Brazil (Querino 2006: 19).

Upon his return from Rio, according to his biographers (see, for example, Pereira 1932) and his autobiographical writings, such as his hand-written CV and the entry on his own work as a painter in *Artistas bahianos* (Artists from Bahia, 1909: 116–117), Querino worked as a painter and decorator by day and studied at night. An abolitionist and republican, Querino became a labor leader and politician while still a student. After obtaining a teaching certificate in geometric drawing in 1882, he matriculated in the architecture course in 1883. He may have been obliged to leave without a degree because the school lacked the lecturers required to teach key subjects.

Another observation that should be made about Querino’s schooling is that he received a distinction in French from the School of Arts and Crafts and showed full comprehension and use of that language in some of his writings. According to his handwritten CV, in addition to several Brazilian artistic and scholarly associations such as the Instituto do Ceará, Histórico, Geográfico e Antropológico (Ceará Geographic, Historical and Anthropological Institute), he was a distinguished life member of the Sociedade Bahiana de Caridade (Bahian Charitable Society), and an associate of the Société académique d’histoire internationale, based in Paris. He was also a member of the Black-run civil associations, the Sociedade Protetora dos Desvalidos (Society for the Protection of the Needy) and Sociedade Montepio dos Artistas (Artists’ Mutual Insurance Society), as well as the Confraternidade de Nossa Senhora do Rosário dos Homens Pretos (Our Lady of the Rosary of Black Men). A founding member of the Instituto Geográfico e Histórico da Bahia (Geographic and Historical Institute of Bahia,

IGHB) Querino proudly identified himself as such in some of his publications. Established on May 13, 1894, the anniversary of the abolition of slavery in Brazil, the IGHB's presidents included the Afro-Brazilian engineer and ethnologist Teodoro Sampaio (1855–1937) who took office in 1922, the year before Querino's death.

Active in the abolitionist movement and politics, Querino was appointed as the city of Salvador's first Black councilman, serving in that role until he decided to step down in 1899 and devote himself to researching and writing books. He was also a journalist, having founded two newspapers, and a civil servant. He worked for the Public Works Department from 1888 until 1895. Then, in 1896, he joined the Department of Agriculture and worked there until his retirement in 1916. When he died on 14 February 1923, several Brazilian newspapers published his obituary, stressing his contributions as an artist, scholar and labor leader (see Gledhill 2021a, Chapter 3). Although he was originally buried in the modest Quinta dos Lázaros cemetery, his remains were later translated to the sacristy of the Nossa Senhora do Rosário dos Homens Pretos Church in the Historic Center of Salvador, where they lie to this day.

## A Wide and Varied Bibliography

When Querino began writing books, his first publication was a slim textbook on geometric design (1903), which the City Council of Salvador ordered to be used in the schools (Querino 1909: 117). He went on to publish two trailblazing works on the history of Bahian art and artists in 1909 which have led to his being dubbed the "Brazilian Vasari" (Freire 2008). In 1916, he produced a collection of articles on Bahian folklore that had previously appeared in newspapers, entitled *A Bahia de outrora* (The Bahia of yesteryear). This work contains over 300 pages covering a variety of topics, from Christmas festivities to Bahia's involvement in the Paraguayan War. Reflecting the deep African roots of Bahian culture, some of the subjects included are Afro-Brazilian cultural expressions, such as the martial art capoeira, the feast of the "Mãe [sic] d'água" (the water divinity also known as Mami Wata) and the syncretic Lavagem do Bonfim (the procession and cleansing of Bonfim Church).

Querino's first publication which fully and overtly focusses on African and Afro-Brazilian ethnography—*A raça africana e os seus costumes na Bahia* (The African race and its customs in Bahia, 1916), discussed in the following section—was originally presented at the Fifth Brazilian Geography Conference. Held in the city of Salvador in 1916, it was considered the most important congress of its kind held between 1909 and 1926 (Cardoso 2011: 88).

In 1918, Querino published a monograph entitled *O colono preto como fator da civilização brasileira*. Presented at the Sixth Brazilian Geography Conference in Belo Horizonte, it directly confronted the prevailing notion that Africans and their descendants constituted an obstacle to Brazil's progress. Instead, Querino asserted, their hard work, skills acquired in Africa—such as mining and livestock husbandry—courage and patriotism had made Brazil great. In fact, he declared: "Brazil has two chief claims to greatness: the richness of its soil

and the talent of its mixed-race people” (Querino 1918: 36). [12]

Manuel Querino also produced a work on folk dances, *Bailes pastoris na Bahia* (Shepherd’s dances in Bahia, 1957 [1914]) and wrote several articles that appeared in the IGHB’s journal, which have been gathered together in an edited volume by Jaime Nascimento and Hugo Gama (2009). They covered a wide range of subjects, including Bahia’s Independence Day festivities, art history, Bahia’s theatres, Afro-Brazilian religions, historical Black figures and biographies.

For decades, Querino was best known for his posthumously published study of Bahian cuisine, *A arte culinária na Bahia* (2006 [1928]), which is considered a pioneering work in the field of food studies and the “Bible” of Bahia’s unique culinary style. It is his only work that has been consistently in print since it was first published, appearing in Brazil in numerous formats and editions. [13] While describing several African and Afro-Brazilian dishes, some of which were based on his experience in the Candomblé community, Querino pays little attention to the Amerindian contribution to Bahian cuisine. His focus was also on local foodways, rather than African cuisine per se. According to Dória and Bacelar (2021: 164), “...by highlighting the ‘purely African’ dishes, he wanted to stress not the reproduction of what was done in Africa but what was eaten in the streets, in family homes, on a day-to-day basis, and some of the delicacies produced by Bahia’s Candomblé communities.”

## African and Afro-Brazilian Ethnographic Studies

In an appendix to Gonçalo de Athayde Pereira’s biography of Querino, published in 1932, the secretary for life of the IGHB, the geographer and historian Bernardino José de Souza (1884-1949), wrote:

Permit me to point out a flaw in your detailed work: I did not find a reference to the tribute paid to him by our Institute on 13 May 1928, unveiling his portrait together with that of the Brazilian sage Nina Rodrigues, in the Gallery of our illustrious men....

You know very well that it was they, until now in Bahia, [who were] the greatest scholars of the African race. I constantly receive requests for information from Rio, S. Paulo and other Brazilian States, regarding their work (Pereira 1932: 34).



Fig. 1.

The portrait of Manuel Querino which was unveiled at the IGHB in 1928 but has since disappeared  
Gledhill 2021b (frontispiece)

This observation is all the more interesting because Querino was barely mentioned in the Afro-Brazilian Congresses organized in Recife in 1934 by Gilberto Freyre (1900–1987) and in Salvador in 1937 by Édison Carneiro (1912–1972). [14] By then, Querino’s work had been eclipsed by the posthumous publication of works by Nina Rodrigues, which were considered more “scientific.” Since that time, despite the publication of several editions of Querino’s ethnological studies, [15] the Black polymath is usually excluded from the pantheon of pioneering Brazilian ethnologists—in which Nina Rodrigues is consistently included. [16] In his introduction to *Brazilian anthropology* (1951: 10–11), originally published in 1943, Arthur Ramos (1903–1949) observed that, albeit “worthy of note,” Querino was a “feeble voice” in the period following Rodrigues’s death (which he called the “post-Nina phase”). This view was cited in an essay on Ramos by Adir da Luz Almeida as recently as 2016 (Almeida 2016: 100).

Certainly, Nina Rodrigues provided a much more extensive and detailed study of Africans and their culture in *Os africanos no Brasil* (The Africans in Brazil). However, that work was only in press when he died in 1906 and would not be published until 1933. [17] During his lifetime, he published a collection of essays on Afro-Brazilian religions entitled *O animismo fetichista dos negros baianos* (The fetishist animism of Bahian Blacks, 1900). Therefore, the first scholar to publish his findings on the ethnic origins of Africans in Bahia was Manuel Querino, when he participated in the Fifth Brazilian Geography Congress in 1916. The first editions of *A raça africana e os seus costumes na Bahia* (1916) are illustrated with over twenty photographs of African customs and “types,” as well as objects of material culture. [18]

Querino’s work also stands out for the respectful manner in which he treats the Africans and their descendants. Although Nina Rodrigues was viewed as a great ethnologist, his views of Africans were firmly mired in the ideology of “scientific racism”:

It is curious to note that, being an Africanist, [Nina Rodrigues] was not an Africanophile. On the contrary, he sprinkled his essays with pessimism,

framing them with sober commentaries, not wanting to perpetrate the policy of flattering the ethnic element he studied, nor having the originality to override other social influences. It would fall to Manuel Querino to insist, not only on the defense but on the spiritual vindication of Blacks as a factor of progress; himself, one of those splendid Black artists who, with their personal example, dispel the current prejudices about the inferiority of the race (Calmon 1949: 154).

In *Os africanos no Brasil*, Nina Rodrigues lamented the fait accompli of racial mixture in Brazil and admired the success of the American version of apartheid (2010: 15) known as Jim Crow laws. Convinced of the inferiority of Africans and Afro-descendants, he made it clear that he saw them as an existential threat to progress in Brazil. [19] In contrast with Nina Rodrigues's pessimism, Querino went so far as to observe:

...I hereby register my protest against the disdainful and unjust way in which the African is disparaged, constantly accusing him of being ignorant and crude as [if it were] a congenital quality and not a merely circumstantial condition, common, in fact, to all non-evolved races (Querino 1938: 22).

Querino directly confronted racial prejudice and demanded respect for Africans. More than that, he stressed their ability to “evolve” through education, like the Greeks in ancient Rome or any other enslaved people.

Manuel Querino researched and wrote *A raça africana e seus costumes na Bahia* (1916) at a time when “the Black” was seen more as a problem than a legitimate subject of study in his country. In his introduction, he quotes Camilo de Montserrat (1818-1870), a former director of the National Library (from 1853 to 1870):

More than half a century ago, the Benedictine sage, Fr[iar] Camilo de Montserrat, finding there was little appreciation and no importance given in studies concerning the ways and customs of Africans among us, set the following course for Brazilian writers, only embarked upon by professor Nina Rodrigues, who died too young: “It would be very convenient, before the complete extinction of the African race in Brazil, and, above all, before the most interesting and less commonly known varieties disappear, to obtain from the individuals who represent them information that it will soon be impossible or at least very difficult to obtain. Among the blacks transported from Africa, there are individuals from regions in the interior of the continent, to which no traveler has yet managed to go, and who are not mentioned in any published report. It is also possible to distinguish and study the different types, to verify their origins authentically, to question individuals about their beliefs, their languages, their ways and customs, and thus to collect from the *very mouths of black people* all the more easily as it is certain that they speak the common tongue [Portuguese], information that travelers only obtain at great cost, taking tremendous risks in costly expeditions and still subject to the most serious errors (ibid.: 19-20, emphasis added).

However, Querino goes on to note that it would not be possible to follow that course every

step of the way:

...because, among other reasons, we lack the indispensable requirements for a psychological study of the tribes that lived together for many years, and, above all, because of the passing of the Africans who, albeit enslaved here, *occupied a high social position in their homeland, as a guide to the destinies of the tribe, or as depositaries of the secrets of the religious sect* (Querino 1955 [1916]: 20, emphasis added). [20]

He modestly describes his own work as “just a sketch, something of an attempt” (ibid.).

## Ethnic Identity

Querino’s first specific reference to the ethnic identity of African groups in Bahia—referred to as “tribes”—appears in the second chapter of *A raça Africana e os seus costumes na Bahia* (1916), titled “In Portuguese America,” where he provides the following list:

*Cambinda, Benin, Gêge, Savarú, Maqui, Mendobi, Cotopori, Daxá, Angola, Massambique, Tápa, Filanin, Egbá, Iorubá, Efon or Cara Queimada* [“burnt face” in Portuguese], *Quêto, Ige-bú, Ótá, Oió, Iabaci, Congo, Galinha, Aussá, Ige-chá, Barbá, Mina, Oondô Nagô, Bona, Calabar, Bornô, Gimum*, the favorite or preferred people of the lookouts etc., tribes of which we still have some representatives here... (Querino 1955 [1916]: 38-39).

He also makes the following observation in a footnote: “The term *Nagô* covers the following tribes: *Mina Iorubá, Ige-chá, Ige-bú, Efon, Otá, Egbá*, due to the vast expanse of the territory included in the lands of the Slave Coast. The Egba and Yoruba tribes, the most distinctive, were considered the oldest” (Querino 1955 [1916]: 38).

As Querino himself comments (1938: 40) and Arthur Ramos observes in a footnote, the names Querino provides sometimes designate African nations, localities or cities. Ramos, however, makes the patronizing observation that “In this enumeration of African ‘tribes,’ Manuel Querino confused the names of nations with mere place names...” (Querino 1938: 38). Nevertheless, far from being mistaken, these names reflect the reality of the Africans themselves—they often identified more strongly with their place of birth than with a “linguistic group” or “ethnic group” imagined or imposed by foreigners. [21]

According to Bernardino J. de Souza, referring to Manuel Querino and Nina Rodrigues in 1928: “[they] are, to this day in Bahia, the two greatest scholars of the African race” (Pereira 1932: 34). However, based on the paternalistic tone of Arthur Ramos’s notes in *Costumes africanos no Brasil* (African customs in Brazil 1938), and his description of Querino as merely a “feeble voice” in the early days of anthropology (1951: 10), his readers could be led to believe that Querino’s work was not a reliable source, as was once the case with many academics in the field of art history (Freire 2008). Although the vast majority of Brazilian authors fail to list Querino among the first researchers who unearthed the ethnic, linguistic and cultural roots of Africans enslaved in Brazil, we now know that, even if Nina Rodrigues’s research had not been published posthumously in 1933, we would still have valid clues for future



studies thanks to Querino’s work. For example, in *A raça africana e os seus costumes na Bahia* (1916), the Bahian scholar mentions the names of Yoruba-speaking groups that correspond to ancient civilizations and cities, many of which still exist in Nigeria and Benin.

As we have seen, and as Freire observes about the works of this Bahian scholar in the field of art history (2006), Querino furnished valuable information on the ethnic identity of Africans and slavery in Brazil—the way in which Africans self-identified their “ethnicity” or “nations.” It is indisputable that, compared with the overwhelming majority of his contemporaries, Querino provided a positive and respectful perspective on enslaved Africans. As a former militant abolitionist and “friend of the race,” he made a point of stressing the contribution of Blacks to Brazilian society and, above all, the dignity and value of the Africans whom Querino called venerable elders (1955: 23) and their descendants.

## Afro-Brazilian Religions

As Querino observes in his introduction to *A raça africana e os seus costumes na Bahia*, Africans were extremely secretive about their “fetishist practices” [22] in Brazil (1955: 20). His access to African and Afro-Brazilian religious practitioners and their rites went beyond the fact that they were “brothers in color.” He was also an *ogã*, a high-ranking member (always male) of the Gantois *terreiro* (Lima 2010: 94). In fact, the only identified Candomblé practitioners included in the photographs published in *A raça africana e os seus costumes na Bahia* (1916) are two of that religious community’s *iyalorixás* (high priestesses).



Fig. 2.

Portrait of Maria Júlia da Conceição Nazaré, the founder of the Gantois *terreiro*  
Querino 1955, Estampa XII-a



Fig. 3.

Portrait of Pulcheria Maria da Conceição, the successor of Maria Júlia da Conceição Nazaré and *iyalorixá* of the Gantois *terreiro* in Querino's time  
Querino 1955, Estampa XXIII

It is important to note that these religious practices were illegal in Brazil in Querino's day, and were only officially legalized in the 1930s. As an *ogã*, Querino performed his expected role and defended the religious communities, which were regularly subjected to raids by the police, their members beaten, humiliated and arrested—sometimes killed—and many sacred objects smashed or confiscated, held in evidence storage rooms and later handed over to museums. [23] Querino wrote a report on one incident involving then-Assistant Chief Constable Pedro de Azevedo Gordilho's persecution of the religious community led by Pai Procópio (Procópio Xavier de Souza), among others (transcribed in full by Castillo 2000: note 17; Cardoso 2021: 83–84).

In *A raça africana* (1916), Querino describes the role of the *ogã* (also spelt *ogan*) as follows:

He is an honorary authority in candomblé .... Each saint is represented in various individuals who, while not taking part in the precepts of the sect, nevertheless have the right to certain privileges .... When [an *ogan*] enters the candomblé temple, the drums signal the beginning of the procession according to the saint to which he is consecrated.; the women pay obeisance, and he has the right to wear a hat indoors or go anywhere in the temple without special authorization. The women who have the same *saint* are called *his daughters*, and when they see the *ogan* they kneel and ask his *blessing* wherever they might be.

He is obliged to reward such great veneration with money (...).

Some people, whose number here includes individuals of social status, have joined the ranks of the *ogans* in the candomblés. While the Africans ran things, they did not allow Brazilians to become *ogans*. Later, an influx of [Brazilian *ogans*] began and they were accepted in order to facilitate police permits (Querino 1955: 82–84).

When it came to his observations on Afro-Brazilian religious practices in Bahia, Querino hewed more closely to the line held by psychiatrists and ethnologists well into the 1930s and

beyond—shared by the Brazilian psychiatrist Ulysses Pernambucano (1892–1943), who believed that “trance and spirit possession were...a pathological syndrome” (Morais, 2020: 5). Indeed, Querino refers to the Afro-Brazilian religion generally known as Candomblé as “fetishism” (although he makes a point of using a Brazilian Portuguese spelling, *feiticismo*, that is related to magic [*feitiço*], rather than fetishism) and calls it a “national psychosis” (1955: 21). Nevertheless, he does not go so far as to describe spirit possession as “pathological”—calling it a “special psychological state” instead (1955: 73).

As for *quizilas* (literally antipathies, but in this context, *ewo* or religious taboos), Querino describes them as “the superstitious antipathy the Africans nurture against certain foods and given actions,” and goes on to list the ritual proscriptions followed by women, which “vary according to the guardian angel of each person, and so some women observe them fully and others only in part” (1955: 71–72).

There is one aspect of Querino’s description of the Afro-Brazilian divinities—the *orixás*—that is strongly disputed by today’s practitioners in Nigeria and Brazil. [24] He identifies the orixá Exú (Esu or Eshu) with the Devil:

The fetishist believes that Satan, having been expelled from Paradise, did not lose all the power granted him by God. He closely follows everything we do, and to keep him away, we must feed him, because, thus beguiled, he will not exercise a pernicious interference on the fate of humanity (1955: 50).

As the association of Afro-Brazilian religions with “devil worship” is still used to justify their persecution today, this observation is unfortunate. Given the fact that Querino staunchly defended Africans and their descendants from racist attempts to place them on the lowest rungs of the Social Darwinist ladder, it is also very much out of character. [25]

## Conclusion

Querino was much more than a “self-taught” ethnologist. He was a keen observer who respected the people and cultures he studied, free from most (but not all) of the prejudices and ideologies of his time. As with his books on Art History (Nunes 2021), attempts have been made to disparage his work in the field of ethnology—even by Arthur Ramos, who was responsible for editing the best-known collection of his anthropological works (Querino 1938). As we have seen, an in-depth analysis of Querino’s identification of the cultural groups to which numerous Africans enslaved in Bahia belonged, shows that in most cases he was reporting the Africans’ self-identification. Although Querino occasionally followed the conventional way of describing Afro-Brazilian religions (particularly the “trance” state of priestesses—all female, according to his study—embodying their divinities) as a “psychosis” and associated the orisha Exú with the devil, most of his observations are accurate and, significantly, respectful.

While Raimundo Nina Rodrigues is rightly considered to be Brazil’s first ethnologist to focus

on Afro-Brazilian religions, Manuel Raymundo Querino's name is rarely mentioned among the early pioneers of Brazilian anthropology—despite the fact that Querino was the first Black scholar, and the first participant-observer as a high-ranking member of the *Gantois terreiro*—to publish his work in that field. As Bernardino de Souza made a point of noting, Querino's and Nina Rodrigues's portraits were unveiled simultaneously at the IGHB in 1928, and, in his capacity as secretary for life of that institute, de Souza had received numerous inquiries about the work of both scholars. [26] Furthermore, based on his own declarations and publications, Nina Rodrigues was convinced of the inferiority of his subjects—both physical and mental—whereas Querino staunchly defended the opposite view. The “autodidact” Querino therefore richly deserves to be reincluded in the pantheon of Brazil's groundbreaking cultural ethnologists.

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[1] I would like to thank Paulo Farias, Stefania Capone, Fernanda Areas Peixoto, Lisa Earl Castillo, and last, but foremost, my partner, David Pett, for their valuable comments on the final draft of this article.

[2] The transatlantic slave trade was definitively abolished in Brazil in 1850. Therefore, if they arrived in Brazil as adults or even adolescents, Africans who had formerly been enslaved would have reached a relatively advanced age by the time Querino was interviewing them for his ethnographic research at the turn of the twentieth century.

[3] The two major exceptions that we know of are Manoel Bonfim and Alberto Torres (see Gledhill 2021a).

[4] Querino’s staunch defence of Africans and Afro-descendants in the face of racist pessimism is the focus of an article by E. Bradford Burns (1974), reprinted in Chapter 1 of Gledhill 2021b. The contrast

between Querino's and Nina's views on racial mixture inspired Jorge Amado to write *Tenda dos Milagres* (2008 [1969], translated literally as *Tent of Miracles*). Although there is no indication that Querino and Nina were adversaries in real life, the plot of Amado's novel is centred around the conflict between a white university lecturer, Nilo Argolo (based on Nina Rodrigues), and a Black workingman and writer, Pedro Archanjo (partly based on Manuel Querino).

[5] In 1877, João Batista de Lacerda (1846–1915) created the first Brazilian course in Physical Anthropology at the Museu Nacional, with an approach based on Broca's anthropometry (Seyferth 1996: 48).

[6] It is interesting to note that the Black Haitian intellectual Anténor Firmin (2002: 148–156) included the artificial ranking of human races through cranial measurements in his magisterial refutation of the pseudoscientific ideas spread by Gobineau and other racialists.

[7] Querino can be added to a long and illustrious list that includes Antenor Firmin (Haiti), W. E. B. Du Bois, Booker T. Washington, Carter G. Woodson and Arthur Schomburg (USA), Lino Dou y Allyon (Cuba) and Stuart Hall (UK), among many others.

[8] Querino self-identified as *mestiço*, or mixed race, but is consistently described as Black by scholars such as Artur Ramos (2010), Edison Carneiro (2019: 312) and E. Bradford Burns (1974: 78).

[9] This raises numerous questions that may never be answered, such as whether Maria Adalgisa was Black or white, enslaved or free, and if she was Black and enslaved – given the life stories of figures such as Luiz Gama – whether Querino's biological father was one of the white men who would later play an important role in his life, or a member of their social circle.

[10] Santo Amaro was also the birthplace of other major figures in Brazil's cultural and intellectual history, such as the engineer and ethnographer Teodoro Sampaio, artist and museum director Emanuel Araújo, singer, songwriter and author Caetano Veloso, and his equally famous sister, singer Maria Bethania.

[11] According to Donald B. Cooper (1986: 474–475), "The two districts [*sic*] (*municípios*) of the province of Bahia that suffered the worst, indeed legendary, devastations from cholera were Cachoeira and Santo Amaro." More than 8,500 people died of cholera in Santo Amaro and its outlying areas. Cooper concludes, "No class or race escaped the ravages of cholera completely, but black people paid by far the highest tribute to the disease. It seems that no less than two-thirds of the victims of cholera in Brazil were black. It was a nineteenth-century, South American holocaust, a new 'black death' that ranks as Brazil's greatest and most dramatic demographic disaster" (Ibid.: 486).

[12] This quotation is one of the epigraphs of Jorge Amado's novel *Tenda dos milagres* (Tent of Miracles)..

[13] Querino's work as a food scholar is the subject of a recently published book by Jeferson Bacelar and Carlos Alberto Dória (Dória and Bacelar 2020).

[14] For more information on these congresses, see Morais (2020).

[15] Later editions include *A raça africana* (Salvador: Progresso, 1955), which is illustrated, and more



recently *Costumes africanos no Brasil* (Salvador: Eduneb, 2010) and *A raça africana e os seus costumes* (Bahia: P55, 2021), among others.

[16] For example, an essay published in the journal *Amazônica* in 2009 lists nine pioneers of Brazilian anthropology, including just five Brazilians. The only Africanist among them is Nina Rodrigues (Salzano 2009: 17).

[17] Some sources state that the date of publication was 1932. The year given in this article is based on the date of the foreword to the first edition by Homero Pires (Rodrigues 2010: 6).

[18] Querino's use of images in ethnography is the subject of an analysis by Christianne Vasconcellos (2008 and 2021).

[19] For example, Nina Rodrigues opined: "The Black Race in Brazil, no matter how great its incontestable services to our civilization, no matter how justified the sympathy that surrounded the revolting abuse of slavery, no matter how great the generous exaggerations of its thurifers, will always constitute one of the factors in our inferiority as a people" (2010: 14–15).

[20] According to Costa e Silva (2000), this observation about the "high social position" of some of the enslaved Africans in Brazil has been proven to be true.

[21] According to the Benin-based historian Elisée Soumonni, an individual's place of birth could be much more important as a factor of self-identification and unification than the linguistic factor – that is, the fact that two people came from two different villages could be much more significant than speaking the same language (lecture given on 14 May 2009 for the Graduate Course in Ethnic and African studies at CEAO/UFBA, in Salvador, Bahia).

[22] In a footnote, Querino observes that he is using the form "feiticista" and "feiticismo" whose root is *feitico* (spell or witchcraft), rather than "fetichista" and "fetichismo," as the French term from which the latter are derived originated from the Portuguese *feitico*, *feiticeiro*, *feiticaria* (spell, sorcerer, sorcery) (1955: 50, note 1). The root of "fetichismo" has the same meanings and connotations in Portuguese as the term "fetishist" does in English.

[23] The Museu Afro-Brasileiro da UFBA in 2010 received a donation of Afro-Brazilian religious objects previously held by the Museu Estácio de Lima (<http://www.mafro.ceao.ufba.br/pt-br/colecao-afro-brasileira/colecao-estacio-de-lima>).

[24] See, for example, "I am Exú," by the late Valdete Ribeiro da Silva, Detinha de Xangô, Obá Gesin of Ilê Axé Opo Afonjá (Polk *et al.* 2018: 129). In April 2022, the theme of Acadêmicos da Grande Rio's parade in Rio's Carnival was "Exú is not a Devil," to combat religious racism against Afro-Brazilian faiths. (see <https://g1.globo.com/rj/rio-de-janeiro/carnaval/2022/noticia/2022/04/24/exu-nao-e-diabo-saiba-quem-e-orixa-mensageiro-do-enredo-da-grande-rio.ghtml>)

[25] See the essay by E. Bradford Burns (1974, reprinted in Gledhill 2021b, chapter 1).



[26] Querino's portrait has since disappeared. See Gledhill 2021b, chapter 9.