



Biblical Influence on the (Trans) Formation of Brazil (ian) Identity

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Resumo: Durante o século XV muitas expedições colonizadoras deixaram a Europa com o propósito de encontrar recursos naturais para ajudar sua expansão mercantil. Colonizadores, tais como Pero Vaz de Caminha, influenciados pelos valores europeus e por sua percepção do mundo escreveram e enviaram de volta muitos discursos descrevendo o Brasil e seu elemento feminino, ambos eram ligados a sensualidade, sexualidade, barbarismo e perigo. Neste contexto, este artigo analisa a conexão da descrição colonial da terra brasileira e as imagens de mulheres com o Brasil contemporâneo e com as metas em criar tais imagens. Concluímos que a classe hegemônica em diferentes períodos históricos manipulou estas imagens para configurar uma identidade social e seus objetivos.

Abstract: During the fifteenth century, many colonizing expeditions left Europe with the purpose of finding natural resources to help their mercantile expansion. Colonizers, such as Pero Vaz de Caminha, influenced by European socio-cultural values and his perception of the world, wrote and sent back to the old continent many discourses describing Brazil and its feminine element both of which were linked to sensuality, sexuality, barbarism, and danger. In this context, this essay will analyze the connection of the colonial description of the land and the image of the women with the contemporary Brazil and with a goal of creating these images. The analysis will conclude that the hegemonic class in different time periods has manipulated these images to configure a social identity and its objectives.

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During the 15th century Christians began to adapt the Greek geocentric concept of the world into the Biblical idea of the creation (O’GORMAN, 1961, p. 52). According to the Christians, God made both man and woman and placed them in paradise known as the Garden of Eden where they could live forever and have anything they desired, except eating the fruit from the Tree of Life. However, Eve tricked Adam into eating the forbidden fruit and consequently, God expelled them from paradise. As written in Genesis (1985, p. 3), Eve was responsible for Adam’s fall: “When the woman saw that the tree *was* good for food, that it *was* pleasant to the eye, and a tree desirable to make *one* wise, she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, he ate.” Because they disobeyed God, He cursed them. To Eve, the Almighty said “Your desire *shall be* for your husband, and he will rule over you”. To Adam, He said “Cursed *is* the ground for your sake; in toil you shall eat *of* it all the days of your life. Both thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you, and you shall eat the herb of the field. In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; for dust you *are*, and to dust you will return” (GENESIS, 1985, p. 3). When the Europeans arrived in the continent known today as South America, they used Christian dogmas in the colonization of the lands. For example, the Portuguese colonizers of Brazil made an analogy with Genesis to describe this new land as a paradise and its native people as innocent beings. They also used the biblical concepts to describe the women. There was an attempt to disguise the sensuality of the naked Brazilian native women for reasons that will be explained later in this analysis. In this context, this essay will analyze the connection of the colonial description of the land and the image of the women with the contemporary Brazil. This analysis will focus on how the hegemonic class in different time periods has manipulated these images to configure a social identity and its objectives. In order to support this argument, the theory of the instincts of Freud, Marcuse’s interpretation of Freud, and the relationship between imaginary and its socio-historical



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representation of Cornelius Castoriadis will be utilized. The object of this study is about the colonial work *Carta ao rei de Portugal Dom Manuel* written by the Portuguese author Pero Vaz de Caminha in 1500 and the contemporary image of both elements on the media, such as TV and magazines.

To determine the formation and transformation of the image of Brazil and its women, it is necessary to mention the concept of imagination, which, according to Cornelius Castoriadis (1982, p. 155), is the main component in the creation of identity. He states that the “imagination is the origin of what can be thought and represented”. Considering that imagination is an individual’s mental capacity to represent real or imagined elements, symbolic representation is an expression of the imaginary. Though Castoriadis thinks that representation does not necessarily determine a society’s identity ... rather its beliefs, practices, and images, he still considers these variables as having an important influence on a social ideology. Therefore, it can be inferred that the symbols which represent a community’s identity are the result of the imagination. Also these symbols can greatly influence a country’s society and history. Therefore, the perception that the first colonizers had about Brazil and the image that they had created and spread throughout Europe had an important impact on Brazilian identity. Additionally, this representation has many characteristics that correspond to the European beliefs since social imaginary is based on expectations, desires and parameters used to explain experiences. Therefore the image, created in the writings of the Portuguese Pero Vaz de Caminha, gave form to his impression of the land and the Brazilian women. Caminha’s sensorial perception was crucial during this process. His observation of the new land’s reality, screened by his socio-cultural background, determined the image of Brazil and its feminine component based on the Portuguese historical-social concept of the world.

Through his writing, Caminha described the territory and everything within it by using the parameters of the Grecian concept of the world which states that Greece was the center of the earth and that its classical culture had a powerful influence on the foundation of the modern



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Western world (O’GORMAN, 1961, p. 167). In other words, Europe was the model for civilization to be followed and anything that did not fit in its standards was considered extravagant, barbaric, and exotic. As a result, this idea presents a dichotomy between civilization and barbarism which has been highlighted for several centuries in the Latin American society. This opposition can be explained by Herbert Marcuse’s social-philosophical reading of Freud’s instinct theory as discussed in Marcuse’s book *Eros and Civilization*, 1999. In this work, Marcuse reinterprets Freud’s instinct theory. This theory analyzes the human mind by separating it into three fundamental parts: the unconscious, the conscious, and the subconscious. Each one of these parts corresponds to a characteristic or a different aspect. The unconscious is related to the human instincts; it is governed by the principle of pleasure and does not recognize limits. The conscious corresponds to the control of the instincts by the ego. In other words, the ego is the expression of the reality, which is the principle of the reality. Thus, while instincts prompt the individuals to do what they desire, the principle of the reality allows them to do things that are not prohibited.

Brazilian colonization is linked to the history of its domination. The colonizer’s Christian dogmas restrained the Brazilian native man’s biological and social existence by constraining “his instinctual structure itself” (MARCUSE, 1999, p. 33). This restriction was the precondition of civilization because if man is allowed to follow his natural instincts, which is the search for pleasure, then this pursuit could eventually result in his destruction. This destructive force can be related to the fact that men strive for a gratification which civilization cannot provide. Resources are limited; consequently, civilization begins when the integral satisfaction of needs is successfully controlled. When the Portuguese arrived in Brazil, their main goal was to find resources for their mercantilist expansion. However, there was an exterior motive that restrained the Europeans instincts. Even though their instincts’ original "location" is in their mind, its manifestations and its goals were subject to change due to mechanisms of repression. Over time, there was a modification of pleasure to the reality principle that entailed the subjugation and



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alteration of the destructive force of their instinctual gratification. The Portuguese colonizers' pleasure principle was adjusted to their traditional societal relations and norms resulting in the transformation of pleasure itself (MARCUSE, 199, p. 33-34). Therefore, in order to civilize the Brazilian natives, they had to control their own instincts. In addition to physical subjugation, the Portuguese colonizers also used the Christians' dogmas to dominate and control the natives. In this case, the catholic institution reinforced the reality principle. As Marcuse contends, civilization controls man's instincts. The Brazilian socio-historical process, which was influenced by the catholic norms, molded the native's character. The repressive adjustment of the natives' instincts to the Portuguese expansion of mercantilism was masked by catholic ideology which allows them to control the natives. The Portuguese's ambition and their awareness of the limited resources influenced them to force the natives to work for them. The Portuguese colonizers were aware that man must divert his instincts in order to subsist. Because society does not have sufficient means to support the world's population without productive work by its members, it can be stated that modifications to the instinctual structure are motivated by economic factors. Consequently, man must channel his energies from sexual pursuits to work-related activities (MARCUSE, 1999, p. 51).

Caminha's letter is a classic example of Marcuses' social-philosophical theory that explains the mechanism utilized by the Portuguese to dominate and exploit Brazil in the colonial time. Using one of the most traditional institutions of control, the church, the Portuguese colonizers repressed the natives' sexual instincts through the teachings of the catholic dogmas and catechization, thus shaping the natives according to the Europeans' needs and desires.

Considering the feminine element, Caminha's view of the native Brazilian women is both paradoxical and complementary. His view is paradoxical when describing the women as sensual yet pure. It is complementary when describing this innocence as a condition that would enable the conversion to Catholicism. This conversion would make possible the mercantile expansion since under the catholic dogmas the natives would have their sexual instincts suppressed in order



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to steer them toward an attitude of work. Consequently, this process would help the European bourgeoisie to become wealthier and more powerful. At first Caminha depicts the Brazilian natives from a sensual perspective. He says “they have a brownish-gray skin complexion, a little bit reddish, a nice face and nose, and a well-built body. They swim completely naked. They are not ashamed of showing off their bodies. In other words, they are innocent”. “A feição dêles é serem pardos, um tanto avermelhados, de bons rostos e bons narizes, bem feitos. Nadam nus, sem cobertura alguma. Nem fazem mais caso de encobrir ou deixar de encontrar suas vergonhas do que de mostrar a cara. Acêrca disso são de grande inocência” (CAMINHA, 1963, p. 32). Referring to the catholic dogmas, Caminha compares the native women to the European women. He emphasizes not only the beauty, exoticism, and sensuality of the Brazilian women, but also their innocence. Once again, Caminha’s writing shows a clear connection with the biblical passage in Genesis which mentions Adam and Eve living naked together in paradise (1985, p.6). Additionally, Caminha says:

One of those young women has her body painted from top to the bottom. She has such a nice body, so rounded and so little shame that if European women saw her they would be ashamed for not being as beautiful as this native woman.

E uma daquelas moças era tôda tingida de baixo a cima, daquela tintura e certo era tão bem feita e tão redonda, e sua vergonha (que ela não tinha!) tão graciosa que a muitas mulheres de nossa terra, vendo-lhe tais feições envergonhara, por não terem as suas como ela. (1963, p. 40)

Clearly, Caminha’s references to the lack of a sense of decency and the display of sensual characteristics of the native women represent a realm of complexity for the XVI century men, who were influenced by the Biblical dogmas as well. For this reason, the natives’ nakedness and sensuality can be related to the concept of paradise – a paradise where their nakedness was considered as something pure (ZIBERMAN, 1989. P. 52). In addition, the natural behavior of the indigenous women in relation to their sexuality reveals their innocence and purity. This innocence depicts the easiness by which the native people could be converted without much resistance. This is explained in the following quotation: “the best we can get from this land is to



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save these people. And this is the thing your majesty should focus on”. “O melhor fruto que dela se pode tirar parece-me que será salvar esta gente. E esta deve ser a principal semente que Vossa Alteza em ela de ve lançar” (CAMINHA, 1963, p. 67). This process of converting the natives is precisely what would enable the European mercantile expansion. Under these repressive Catholic dogmas, the natives would then divert their sexual instincts, feelings, and thoughts toward work. In other words, Caminha’s narrative demonstrates that he was conscious of both the spiritual and physical² potential of the natives which ultimately would help the Europeans to expand into Brazil. However, the way Caminha describes the native inhabitants and the Brazilian land may seem a bit problematic. His narrative of ‘cooperation and good will’ is questionable. Obviously, he was trying to convince the Portuguese royalty and potential investors about the advantages for exploration of the new land.

This view also reinforces the idea of Brazil as a paradisiacal land. It is precisely this image that Caminha evokes when he describes Brazil. Clearly referring to Genesis, the author says that in Brazil there were "palm trees that were not very tall but had very good palm fruit, the soils had big trees, a lot of water; Hence, if a man wants to take advantage of it, he could grow anything on Brazilian land, and finally he speaks about gold and states that, at that point, he did not know if it exists” “*palmeiras, não muito altas; e muito bons palmitos; a terra de cima do chão e muito cheia de grandes arvoredos; (As) agues são muitas; infinitas. Em tal maneira é graciosa que, querendo-a aproveitar, dar-se-á nela tudo, por causa das agues que tem, e finalmente falou sobre o ouro, que até aquele momento não sabia se existia*” (CAMINHA, 1963, p. 59-67). This depiction had an ideological component, in that the representation of Brazil and its women helped the Europeans to justify their domination. Therefore, the colonizers viewed their sense of domination as a means of helping this primitive culture to become civilized. Clearly, the author is now referring to the myth of the Old Testament. According to this myth,

² Caminha mentions that the indigenous people helped them (the Portuguese) to load their boat with water and wood (37-55).



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man, before original sin, and in a state of innocence, lacks rationality and does not know that he has the power of transformation to dominate nature which will satisfy his needs. As O’Gorman (1961, p. 64) states, “a man in his state of innocence, that is to say, in the state of nature, is not responsible for his world; he finds it ready-made, as a place assigned to him by God so that he may live in it without labor but also without conscience, like an animal or a plant”. Through his aesthetical rationality, Caminha states in his letter that Brazil and its women are exotic elements and compares them to the idea of paradise and innocence respectively. Traits of these images, though with some modifications, are present in the contemporary capitalist society and certainly meet the new standards of domination and exploitation of this new socio-economical system.

It is precisely in this era that Marcuse introduces two new concepts to Freud’s theory of instincts: the surplus repression which refers to the restrictions required by the social domination; and the performance principle which is the reality principle of the modern society. Unlike Freud’s theory, the surplus repression rationalizes that an excessive repression of man would no longer be necessary because of increased productivity and better utilization of resources. However, there would need to be a control over individuals’ consciousness; otherwise, they could perceive themselves as being repressed which ultimately would threaten society as a whole. For this reason, there is a manipulation of consciousness in the modern industrial society through the promotion of activities which contain anti-intellectual ideologies. The control of other areas of the consciousness by anti-intellectual activities reduces the sexual taboos and thus opens space for more sexual freedom (MARCUSE, 1999, p. 95).

Though popular manifestations are found throughout the Brazilian contemporary society, there are still protests against exploitation. Yet these protests have failed to produce any considerable change. Although, there are some changes with the country’s leaders, exploitation of the majority of the population and corruption with no severe punishment still exists.



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Unfortunately, the population soon forgets these facts³. Perhaps the controlling entities contribute to the manipulation of people through the “introduction of sexuality in business, politics, and propaganda” (CAMPOS, 2006, p. 152). As Marcuse (1999, p. 95) states “the freedom of sexual morality helps to maintain an already firm and structured system”. The industry of cultural entertainment (carnivals, soccer games, shows with sensual performances, etc.) induces people to think that they are satisfied. These activities and events have two effects on people: 1) they contribute to people’s euphoric appreciation that there are constantly “good things in life”; and 2) they influence people in forgetting how oppressed they may be. Consequently, the traditional power structure is maintained and society does not return to its initial stage of ‘barbarism’ (MARCUSE, 1999, p. 95-145). An example of a manipulative strategy in the Brazilian modern society was the political strategy used by Getúlio Vargas in the 1930s. With the apparent purpose of interpreting Brazilian history and society, Getúlio Vargas schemed to create a Brazilian identity which included desires, aspirations and symbols to mask his dominating ideology. His government initiated a series of political actions with the purpose of reinterpreting the popular Brazilian culture and of creating a stronger connection between sexuality, musicality and the Brazilian identity (BIGNAMI, 2002, p. 92). The emphasis of Vargas on the exotic is at the same time an aesthetical and political practice. This became an effective instrument of power that masked the inequalities in the relations of power that would support his discourse. In this, Vargas imagined an identity symbol that unified the distinct societal range. As a result, Vargas’ politics emphasized the construction of an industrial and modern Brazil. This representation would be connected to hard work without any trace of work exploitation. In this scenario, the image of Carmen Miranda would fit perfectly to Vargas plans (KERBER, 2006). Internationally, Miranda’s image would help the relationship between Brazil and United States

³ An example of it, it the fact that the former Brazilian president Fernando Collor de Mello who resigned the presidency of Brazil in 1992 to avoid an impeachment for corruption. See *Corruption and Political Reform in Brazil: The Impact of Collor's Impeachment*. Edited by Keith S. Rosenn and Richard Downes. After all, Fernando Collor was elected Senator of the Republic, in 2006.



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and internally her image would help unify a large country like Brazil into a more industrialized country. Carmen Miranda was well known for both her outfit⁴ and her signature hat which is particularly important for this study. On the one hand, her fruit hat symbolizes the natural richness of Brazil; on the other, it refers back to the Biblical myth in which a fruit was responsible for Adam's sin. Like Eve in paradise, the Brazilian women's seductive image is now connected to fruit as well.

The fruit on her head, as if it was a Saussure's sign that points out a signifier and a signified, even though we do not know for sure, what is what, if the woman's body is the signified for the signifier fruit or, on the contrary, the fruit is the signified for this woman's body as a signifier always in transformation

La fruta en la cabeza, como si tratara del signo saussuriano señalando un significante y un significado, aunque no sepamos a ciencia cierta, cuál sería cuál, si el cuerpo femenino es el significado del signifiante fruta o, al revés, si la fruta es el significado de ese cuerpo femenino como signifiante siempre en transformación (SEFAMI, 2011, p. 126).

Her image "reinforces the woman's stereotype, also imposed by Hollywood, which uses and abuses the feminine sexuality as an object of usufruct" (SEFAMI, 2001, p. 127). In this sense Carmen Miranda incorporates the idea of sensuality - an idea that was vastly emphasized during Vargas's Government. Through his populist ideology, Vargas used several political actions with the objective to reinterpret the Brazilian culture and to create a more direct and evident bond between sensuality and musicality to the Brazilian identity (BIGNAMI, 2002, p. 92). Contrary to what is seen in Caminha's letter of repressing sensuality, Vargas emphasizes it as a symbol of "Brasilidade". Additionally, Vargas's discourse was based on ambiguous rhetoric which reveals

⁴ Carmen Miranda made an adaptation of the clothes that the black women used to wear to sell food in the streets of Salvador, capital of the Bahia (Brazilian state in the northeast of Brazil). The influence of Bahia on Miranda's outfit as a national identity was important for two main reasons: first, the racial and cultural miscegenation; secondly, Salvador was the capital of Brazil during long period in the colonial period. Also, the connection to these hard workers Black women of Bahia complements Vargas politics of national modernization and industrialization. Kerber, Alessander: as <<http://www.espacoacademico.com.br/057/57kerber.htm>>



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several ideologies⁵ intended to raise people's national awareness of patriotic trust (LACLAU, 2005, p. 95). By connecting the Brazilian women's identity to both the "mulata" dancing samba and Carmen Miranda, Vargas reinforces an existing exotic and sensual image of the Brazilian woman⁶. Focusing on the exoticism, he emphasizes both an aesthetical and political practice. This is one of the reasons why exoticism has been proven throughout centuries its power as an effective instrument of control that masks inequality in the relation of power. As Edward Said expressed in *Orientalism*, domination is justified through theories and practices which express sensuality and exoticism. In his words "The Orient that appears in *Orientalism*, then is a system of representations framed by a whole set of forces that brought the Orient into Western learning, Western consciousness, and subsequently the Western Empire" (SAID, 1979, p. 202-203). Vargas, imagining an identity pattern, chooses arbitrary characteristics that camouflage his power discourse in order to modernize Brazil at any cost.

During this period, the Brazilian economy and society also went through a transformation. During the 16th through 19th centuries, the Brazilian economy was based primarily on agriculture. Though economic cycles of these periods, such as sugar cane, mining, and coffee, helped with the development of many new cities, the life in the country remained predominantly rural (ZORRAQUINO, 2005, p. 10). However, the 19th century was a turning point in the Brazilian process of urbanization. The mechanization of production not only increased the productivity but also made the financial capital more attractive than owning land (28)⁷. In fact, in the second half of the nineteenth century, the coffee culture helped intensify the process of industrialization and urbanization in Brazil. During the Vargas government, this process was consolidated. Vargas sought to transform Brazil from a plantation-based economy into an

⁵ Las ideologías son sistemas de valores y prácticas que demarcan posiciones, construyen proyectos políticos y promueven adhesiones o rechazos a los mismos (Gutiérrez Castañeda, 1994; 359).

⁶ Alessander Kerber mentions the fact that the Vargas government, to a certain extent, supported Carmen Miranda image. This government sponsored the band group *Bando da Lua* to accompany Miranda to the United States. <<http://www.espacoacademico.com.br/057/57kerber.htm>>.

⁷ In 1815 the state of Bahia acquired the first vapor machine. (look at Zorraquino page 28)



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industrialized powerhouse, under the guidance and intervention of the government. He embraced this *national-developmentalism* by providing protection to domestic industries and allowing diversification. Vargas invested large sums of money in strategic sectors of the economy for the needed infrastructure in such areas as oil, mining, steelmaking, hydroelectricity, and automobiles (BASTOS, 2006. p. 241-42).

Meanwhile, the mechanization of the rural sector, the construction of roads and railroads and the opening of the Brazilian harbors to others nations all had an important influence in the populous areas of the country. At the same time, the early stages of industrialization of the urban centers thrived because of increased work opportunities. These opportunities attracted many people from Brazilian rural areas, European immigrants and recently freed slaves to urban centers. However, these centers lacked the necessary living infrastructure to sustain the arrival of so many immigrants (ZORRAQUINO, 2005, p. 29). As a result, cities had to deal with serious problems such as a lack of decent housing for all people, and an increase in violence, prostitution, and other criminal activities. Consequently, the image of Brazil as a paradise created by Caminha was also transformed. The Brazilian image is now seen as an “infernally paradise”. This dichotomist representation can be observed through the contrasts between the big cities and the natural landscape, the modern buildings and the slums within the big urban centers, the happiness of the people and the difficulties they face to survive in the contemporary Brazilian society (BIGNAMI, 2002, p. 92). Paradoxically, these contrasts reveal a happy and unequal society sustained by a traditional power structure in which a very small percentage of the population controls the entire society.

Likewise, the image of the Brazilian woman has been transformed. The modern image of these women seems to be adequate to the “infernally paradise”. Referring to the biblical myth, the recent image of the Brazilian woman is related, as it was with Carmen Miranda’s professional image, to fruit. The relationship between the image of these women and fruits appears to corroborate the statement of Orlando González Esteva who says: “the fruit was responsible for



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man's fall, not the serpent as most people think" (1998, P.19 apud SEFAMI, 2011, p. 126). And Lezama Lima states, "Latin American fruits have an impassioned characteristic of the pleasure of the senses" (1959, p. 134 apud SEFAMI, 2011, p. 125). From this statement, it can be inferred that, metaphorically speaking, a fruit can be compared to sexuality. A fruit's taste, smell, and appearance can have sexual connotations. Appealing to these sensual and sexual characteristics, many Brazilian women today pursue artistic-type careers which enable them to showcase their sensual body parts. Such appearances began in the early 2000's at funk parties in the clubs in Rio de Janeiro (OLIVEIRA, 2012, p. 2). Instead of carrying a tray of fruits on their heads as Carmen Miranda did during the 1940's and 1950's, women today display their "fruits" or body parts openly. As a result, they are given fruit names which are metaphors for their breasts and buttocks. Examples of these are melon woman, strawberry woman, pear woman, apple woman, etc. These female images function as commodities in the modern capitalism. And, as it happened with Adam in the bible, the modern man has become mesmerized with these appearances. The shows where these women perform are crowded. They frequently receive invitations to pose in men's magazines for extremely large sums of money. Some of them have become singers. Unfortunately their song lyrics are very salacious which further degrades Brazilian women. These women perform a very sensual dance while wearing very little clothing. Such performances bring these women much money and as a result, they begin to escalate economically. An example of this is the Melon woman. She is 27 years old. Her most popular song is called "Você você você você quer?" "Do you do you do you do you do you want?" A part of her song's lyrics says: "I am the melon woman/ my rhythm is this way/pay for me/pay for me/ pay for me.... I want a breast implant/ I want an imported car/ I want a gold chain/ I want brand name clothes /.....pay for me.....pay for me/...But I am not a mercenary/ Men are easy/ They do what women want/ just to have our body"⁸ (my translation). As this lyric suggests, a man can have a woman if he is willing to pay for her. In other words, there is a double commodification of the women. While

⁸ <<http://letras.terra.com.br/mulher-melao/1865324/>>.



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their physical appearance and sensual dance helps to promote the funk music among the masculine population, the song lyrics directly reinforce the idea of women as merchandise. Moreover, it can be stated that these Brazilian women fruit images and salacious song lyrics contribute to the '*objectification*' of the Brazilian woman. The use and abuse of feminine sexuality as an object of usufruct also reinforces the '*objectification*' of the Brazilian woman. The emphasis on the sexual body parts shows an evident difference from Caminhas's description in the XVI century of disguising a woman's sexuality.

In conclusion, there is strong evidence of a transformation of the representation of Brazil and its women throughout the XVI, XX, and XXI centuries. These images have been adapted to the changing ideologies of the different periods. As a result, this process has helped to disguise the social inequalities while maintaining the traditional power structure throughout the centuries. Following the Greek tradition, Pero Vaz de Caminha portrays Brazil as a paradise and the Brazilian women as innocent beings. In this way, the domination of both elements could be justified. In the twentieth century, Vargas, trying to maintain a firm and structured system, promoted the freedom of sexual morality. In doing so, he transforms the Brazilian woman's image into something more sensual and links this image to the Brazilian identity. Additionally, he accelerates the industrialization and urbanization of the country without a well-defined plan of development. As a result, the large urban centers created by Vargas turned Brazil into an "infernal paradise", which created a country plagued with severe social problems and magnified contrasts in lifestyles. Unfortunately, this image of Brazil still persists today. The Brazilian women's image, on the other hand, went through another transformation – a transformation that, more than ever, identifies women's image with sexuality, sensuality, and eroticism. This identity has led to a culture of using the body as the primary form of expression in today's society. This lascivious approach contributes to the social historical process of '*objectification*' of the Brazilian feminine element. Such a salacious attitude creates extreme challenges and difficulties for most men who worry about balancing their personal needs and desires with the demands of society. As



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a result, this atmosphere of sensuality is precisely why these women are so appealing to men, tantalizing them with a taste of nature's wildness which is represented by the forbidden fruit. Additionally, this type of culture allows the dominating social class to maintain its status quo and control by manipulating a woman's sexuality for not only entertainment but also by creating a feeling of unification among the population.

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