

RACIAL DISTANCE AND
REGION IN BRAZIL:
Intermarriage in Brazilian Urban Areas*

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Interracial marriage is common in Brazil today despite an overall preference for racial endogamy. Fully one-fifth of all Brazilian unions in 1980 were racially exogenous (Silva 1987), although only a small portion of those marriages involved persons of widely differing colors. Indeed, 93 percent of interracial unions in 1980 were between whites and browns (*pardos*—persons of mixed race or mulattos) or between browns and blacks; only the remaining 7 percent (1.3 percent of all unions) took place between whites and blacks (Silva 1987, 73). Because intermarriage is the ultimate indicator of social distance or assimilation,¹ these rates suggest little or moderate social distance between persons who are proximate in color but greater social distance between persons at the extremes ends of the color spectrum.

Research on race relations in Brazil has sometimes concluded that the main difference between Brazilian race relations and those in the United States is that Brazilian mulattos occupy a distinct racial category while mulattos in the United States are defined as black (Degler 1986). Although similar cross-national comparisons of Brazilian race relations have received a great deal of attention, much less is understood about variations within Brazil. An early account by E. Franklin Frazier (1942), a black U.S. sociologist who traveled through Brazil, suggested regional variations. He perceived that in general, the farther south one travels in Brazil, the more

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1. Assimilation is a problematic concept structurally and culturally for describing the experience of the population of African origin in Brazil for two reasons: Afro-Brazilians comprise about half of the national population, and African cultural elements are an integral part of Brazilian national culture (Vanden Berghe 1976; Fry 1982).

intense the degree of prejudice becomes. In the northeastern state of Bahia, where the majority of the inhabitants are of African origin, Frazier claimed that it was hard to discern a color line at all, while in São Paulo and the states further south, color prejudice approximated the level that he was familiar with in the United States.

The idea that such racial prejudice could exist in Brazil contradicted the image that had been presented in 1933 by Gilberto Freyre and seemingly confirmed by Donald Pierson (1942), who espoused the virtues of Brazil's "racial democracy" in claiming that apparent racial prejudice could be reduced to class prejudice. Freyre and Pierson were analyzing the Brazilian Northeast, where the nature of racism would surely seem subtle when compared with the extreme and often violent racism of that era in the U.S. South, where both researchers had spent several years.

The greatest contribution to the study of Brazilian race relations was made by a series of UNESCO-sponsored studies in the 1950s seeking to understand "the secret to Brazil's racial democracy," as presented by Freyre and Pierson. A primary goal of the UNESCO project was to compare race relations across Brazilian regions. Eminent Brazilian and foreign social scientists were assigned to research race relations in different regions: Thales de Azevedo, René Ribeiro and Harry Hutchinson in the Northeast; L. A. Costa Pinto and Arthur Ramos in Rio de Janeiro; Florestan Fernandes, Oracy Nogueira, Pierre Vanden Berghe, and Roger Bastide in São Paulo; Fernando Henrique Cardoso, Octavio Ianni, and Emilio Willems in the South; and Charles Wagley and Marvin Harris in rural areas of Brazil.

Ironically, the UNESCO researchers found instead much racial prejudice and intolerance in Brazil, and the international agency eventually terminated support for the project in the belief that nothing could be learned from the Brazilian case (Correa 1989). The team's findings for the respective regions contributed greatly to the overall understanding of Brazilian race relations, but the abrupt suspension of funding precluded the planned phase of regional comparison.

About a decade later, Carl Degler managed to summarize many of these studies and to reflect on the regional differences, particularly regarding intermarriage. Benefiting from surveys of racial attitudes and actual rates of intermarriage that were compiled mostly by the UNESCO researchers, he concluded that as one moves south, resistance to intermarriage strengthens but that intermarriage between races is considered undesirable by whites in all areas of Brazil. Degler found less objection to marriage with mulattos, as might be expected (1986, 187).

Degler's observations were largely based on evidence showing that as many as 65 percent of marriages in Bahia involved persons of different color (Azevedo 1966), while only 25 percent of mulatto and 11 percent of black men married white women in one study of the city of São Paulo

(Fernandes 1965) and only 4 percent of marriages were interracial in another study of a town in the state of São Paulo (Nogueira 1955). Yet attitude surveys taken at the time showed a different pattern. The percentage of white college students who would accept blacks and mulattos marrying into their family in the northeastern city of Recife was 14 and 24 percent respectively and 10 and 14 percent in São Paulo (Ribeiro 1956). One study found that in Rio de Janeiro, 37 percent and 43 percent of white secondary students would similarly accept blacks and mulattos marrying into their families (Pinto 1953), while the figures for Florianópolis in the South in a sample of middle-class whites of various ages were 23 and 28 percent (Cardoso and Ianni 1960). Although surveys of racial attitudes have not been taken in Brazil since then, recent census and national household-survey data show that interracial unions are most frequent in the Northeast and decrease roughly on going south (Hasenbalg, Silva, and Barcelos 1989; Berquó 1990).

Accounting for Regional Differences

Although actual intermarriages are apparently more frequent in the Northeast, the attitude surveys did not provide strong evidence of greater resistance to intermarriage as one travels south. This apparent incongruity was not questioned by Degler, who overlooked such details and seemed to rely more on scattered and largely speculative evidence like Frazier's, which pointed to regional differences in levels of racial intolerance. Moreover, the attitude surveys and the actual intermarriage rates were interpreted to mean greater acceptance of mulattos than of blacks. This study will question such conclusions on the basis that none of the studies Degler cites or any since then employ methods that allow direct regional comparisons. Intermarriage in particular cannot be used as an indicator of racial distance or tolerance without controlling for the amount of exposure that the two race groups have to each other.

Sociological research has long demonstrated that although intermarriage may be the best indicator of social distance, it is strongly affected by racial composition. Characteristics of local marriage markets determine the likelihood of chance encounters between any two groups. Most important, the relative size of the outgroup is fundamental to ascertaining the degree of outmarriage (South and Messner 1986). For example, the fact that racial intermarriage in the Northeast is far greater than in the South may have nothing to do with differences in racial tolerance and everything to do with the fact that the likelihood of encountering non-whites is far greater in the Northeast. Propinquity does not necessarily imply greater rates of interracial marriage, but it is nevertheless a prerequisite. The earlier literature on Brazilian race relations overlooked this

point, focusing instead on two other macrostructural factors—economic development and immigration—as explaining regional differences.

Several of the UNESCO researchers represented the so-called São Paulo school of race relations, which stressed the influence of economic development on race relations. Members of this group claimed that as Brazil changed from an agrarian and slave-based society to a capitalist urban-industrial society, labor market relations would become increasingly competitive but racial distinctions in the labor market would presumably fade under the capitalist calculus of optimizing labor exploitation. Workers are rewarded on the basis of productivity, and valuations based on race are considered to be labor-market imperfections that will be ironed out with increasing development.

Two contrasting views forecast how capitalist development would affect interpersonal race relations. Florestan Fernandes (1965) predicted that the declining salience of race in the labor market would be reproduced at the level of interpersonal relations. Racial intermarriage would thus be expected to increase with economic development. Others of this school argued that because race becomes less important in the labor market and because racial competition increases, whites would seek other ways of maintaining racial separation such as placing a greater emphasis on proscriptions against outmarriage to blacks and mulattos (Cardoso and Ianni 1960; Vanden Berghe 1967; Ianni 1972).

The massive immigration of Europeans between 1885 and 1935 to selected destinations markedly influenced many local cultures in Brazil. Large waves of Portuguese immigrants settled in the coastal areas of the states of Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo (Merrick and Graham 1979), while Italians settled mostly in São Paulo, where the state government subsidized their passage. Italians arrived as laborers to work on the coffee plantations of São Paulo or in incipient urban industries, often as substitutes for former slaves (Andrews 1988). In contrast, most Germans and some Italians settled in the often isolated and relatively self-sufficient agricultural colonies of the three southernmost states of Rio Grande do Sul, Santa Catarina, and Paraná as part of an effort to settle the frontier (Merrick and Graham 1979) and away from the established commercial centers (Azevedo 1979, 27).

The apparently greater level of racism in São Paulo and the South has been attributed by some researchers to the influence of immigrants. Some scholars concluded that immigrants heightened racial prejudice by bringing racist ideologies with them (Frazier 1942; Willems 1949). This interpretation was supported by the racist overtones of the fascist Integralista movement in the 1930s, which consisted mainly of German and Italian immigrants (Skidmore 1990). Another version of the immigration hypothesis suggests greater prejudice because they entered the Brazilian labor force in low-level jobs and had to compete directly with blacks and

mulattos (Bastide and Vanden Berghe 1957; Andrews 1988). Fernandes (1965) contended, however, that foreigners in the state of São Paulo learned racism from the native Brazilians, pointing out cities like Campinas, which had relatively few immigrants but a high level of racial prejudice. Unlike the native Luzo-Brazilians, Italian immigrants had substantial interaction with Afro-Brazilians (Fernandes 1965). During the UNESCO study period, a unique and insightful study of intermarriage based on a small cross-regional sample concluded that opposition to intermarriage by foreign grandparents approximated that by native grandparents and that no regional differences existed in resistance to interracial marriage (Staley 1959).

The present study seeks to examine the extent to which regional differences exist in racial distance when intermarriage is employed as an indicator. My study also seeks to determine whether specific macrostructural factors like racial composition, extent of industrialization, and immigrant influence can explain variations in racial distance. Intermarriage rates used as an indicator of racial distance or tolerance refer not only to marriages between whites and blacks but to those between whites and mulattos or between mulattos and blacks.

Racial Ideology and Racial Intermarriage in Brazil

Underlying Brazilian race relations is a national ideology that has stressed whitening and racial democracy. The eugenics debate about racialism that raged in Europe and the United States in the second half of the nineteenth century, in which blacks were thought to be biologically inferior, was transmitted full-blown to Brazil. But rather than create overt color barriers for the freed black and mulatto population, Brazilian elites promoted continuing miscegenation between whites and nonwhites. Meanwhile, they also encouraged importing and settling European workers while restricting nonwhite immigration in an effort to "improve the quality" of the largely nonwhite labor force and to augment the European element of the national Brazilian population (Skidmore 1990; Vainer 1990). The elites assumed that blacks and mulattos would continue to have fertility rates below replacement levels like those during the slave period, and thus via miscegenation, the goal of whitening Brazil could eventually be achieved (Skidmore 1990).

The whitening ideology, which accepted mixed-race individuals to some extent but not blacks, allowed Brazil to sidestep the biological determinism of the time that would have condemned a country with such a large black population to perpetual third-class status as a nation (Vainer 1990; Skidmore 1990). Miscegenation and intermarriage could then be promoted among the population because the strength of this ideology led many dark-skinned Brazilians to believe that marriage to lighter-skinned

partners provided the greatest chance of upward social mobility, particularly for their children (Degler 1986). Since the 1940 census (the first in this century to contain reliable information on race), the mulatto population has grown with each decennial census from 21 percent of the population in 1940 to 39 percent in 1980, while the white and black populations have declined (Berquó 1988). Intermarriage in Brazil generally produces mulatto children,² while white and black children are born primarily in the endogamous unions of whites and blacks. But because mulatto and black fertility levels have been as high as whites' throughout the twentieth century and higher in recent years, the Brazilian population is becoming browner rather than whiter (Goldani 1989).

Paradoxically, while most intellectuals saw the mixing of races as helpful in solving their "race problem" (Skidmore 1990), Brazilians have often viewed themselves as having a "racial democracy" free of racial discrimination (Ferreira da Silva 1989). This view has been reinforced by studies comparing Brazilian race relations with those in the segregationist and racially hostile U.S. South and in South Africa during the 1930s and 1940s (Freyre 1933; Pierson 1942). Although serious scholars of race relations have documented substantial racial discrimination in Brazil (Hasenbalg 1985) since the 1950s, analyses of race problems have been discouraged from both ends of the political spectrum: by rightists who believe that revealing a race problem in Brazil would be divisive and lead to popular unrest; and also by leftists who believe that race is only an epiphenomenon of social class and thus confuses and distracts attention from the class struggle, the only means capable of correcting Brazil's huge socioeconomic inequalities (Hasenbalg 1985; Skidmore 1972). A few mainstream voices in the Brazilian government recently denounced the end of the myth of racial democracy, but others, including former Presidents José Sarney and Fernando Collor, have not taken issue with it (Andrews 1990).

Under the theory of racial democracy, Brazil's large mixed-race population is often presented as *prima facie* evidence of extensive interracial marriage and little or no racial prejudice. The forefathers of this large mixed-race population, however, emerged during the era of slavery as the progeny of mostly extramarital miscegenation, a poor indicator of racial tolerance (Slenes 1975). The shortage of white women during the colonial (slavery) era prompted a high rate of miscegenation between Portuguese men and (at first) Indian women and (later) black and mulatto women.

2. Because race or color in Brazil is not strictly defined on the basis of heritage but rather on the basis of phenotype, the progeny of mixed marriages are generally, but not always, considered to be brown. In a study using a 1982 national household survey, 84 percent of the children of intermarried couples were classified as brown. Of the remaining 16 percent, 13 percent were children of white and brown unions who were classified as white, reflecting some tendency to whiten one's racial label (Hasenbalg, Silva, and Barcellos 1989).

Extramarital concubinage with nonwhite women also occurred among married white men. Almost all these relationships, however, took place in a highly unequal context in which slave and even freed black and mulatto women were viewed by whites as clearly inferior (Hasenbalg, Silva, and Barcelos 1989). It is notable nevertheless that the mulatto or mixed-race categories have historically been recognized as a distinct group in Brazil. This perception dates back at least to the slavery period, when the high rate of freeing mixed-race offspring of Portuguese men and slave women created an intermediate social class that was dominated by mulattos (Harris 1964).

Consequently, Brazilians often prefer the term *color* to *race* because it captures their conception of race as a continuum running from black (persons appearing to be of pure or almost pure African origin) to white (those appearing to be of pure or almost pure European origin). In one example of this continuum, residents of one Brazilian town cited eight major distinct racial classifications along the continuum from black to white (*preto, cabra, cabo verde, escuro, mulato, pardo, sarará, branco*) with additional qualifiers distinguishing between variations in category (Hutchinson 1957). Other categories such as *caboclo* existed to describe persons with Indian admixture. Whereas in the United States, anyone with even a slight trace of black blood has historically been labeled as black under its dichotomous racial categorization, Brazilian racial categories are based on phenotypes defined by skin color, hair type, and facial features.

A current debate among analysts of Brazilian race relations centers around the extent to which mulattos and blacks suffer from distinct levels of discrimination and intolerance by whites. Degler has argued that interracial marriage for blacks was an escape hatch from poverty and discrimination in that it often meant social mobility and social acceptance for their mulatto children (Degler 1986). But subsequent analysis of income, using human-capital models and national survey data, has shown that mulattos may suffer levels of discrimination similar to those experienced by blacks (Silva 1985). Another income study that controlled for additional human-capital variables concluded that the cost of being black in the Brazilian work force was significantly greater than being mulatto, although the gap between white and mulatto was much greater than that between mulatto and black (Lovell 1989). Thus empirically based studies showed that mulattos as well as blacks suffer substantial discrimination in the Brazilian labor market. A recent study of residential segregation demonstrated that black-white segregation is greater than both brown-white and brown-black segregation, the latter two categories being roughly similar (Telles 1992).

An often forgotten part of Brazilian race relations is the question of relations between mulattos or persons of mixed race and blacks. Degler pointed to at least three instances of mulattos drawing sharp distinctions

between themselves and blacks regarding their social status in a variety of social interaction contexts (Degler 1986). These incidents all occurred in the Northeast, where mulattos comprise the majority of the population while blacks and whites are numerical minorities.

Data and Methods

The data were taken from the 25 percent sample of the 1980 Brazilian Census provided by the Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística (IBGE). The units selected for analysis were the seventy-five metropolitan areas with populations exceeding one hundred thousand. Metropolitan areas are generally used for such analysis because they best approximate local marriage markets and because analyzing intermarriage for entire regions is problematic in that whites, browns, and blacks may be concentrated in entirely different urban areas within the same region. Metropolitan areas also represent the places into which members of various racial groups are most likely to come into contact with each other. The total population of the seventy-five areas made up 42 percent of Brazil's population and 62 percent of the urban population in 1980. The large size of the sample provides a range of 107,992 couples living in São Paulo to 839 couples in Marília, averaging 10,055 couples per metropolitan area.

To limit the sample to recent marriages occurring in the same metropolitan area, only couples currently married (legally or consensually) as of 1980, residing in the same metropolitan area for the preceding five years, and involving a wife who was younger than twenty-five years old were included in the metropolitan area samples. This method of approximating recent marriages in the local area was employed because the 1980 Brazilian Census did not ask how long a couple had been married. It is the same one used by Blau, Blum, and Schwartz (1982) and later by South and Messner (1986) to analyze intermarriage in the United States. The dependent variables are outmarriage rates and are constructed for outmarriage of whites with blacks, outmarriage of whites with browns, and outmarriage of browns with blacks. Similarly, the calculation of independent variables is based on the characteristics of the entire population in a metropolitan area, as was done in the studies carried out in the United States.

The racial categories taken from the 1980 census are white (*branco*), brown (*pardo*), and black (*preto*). When referring to census categories, I use the term *brown* rather than *mulatto* for the intermediate category because *brown* refers to the 1980 census color variable and thus includes not only mulattos but also *caboclos* (assimilated Indians and persons of predominantly Indian admixture) and the small number of ethnic Brazilian Indians. Mulattos most likely make up most of the brown category in Brazil, except perhaps in the frontier region (Telles 1992).

Respondents to the census were asked to identify themselves ac-

ording to one of five racial categories.³ Although racial categories in Brazil are often diverse, a study using a national survey showed that the census racial categories were consistent with the numerous racial labels given in response to an open-ended question about color (Silva 1987). Also, it would be impossible for census categories to capture all the nuances of Brazilian racial identity, although they do reflect three distinct shades of the color continuum. Because no clear-cut legal or cultural definitions exist for race in Brazil, racial identification is somewhat flexible and may reflect a tendency toward whitening. Persons near the boundaries between color categories are likely to identify with the lighter category. Thus whites often are not purely white as in the U.S. definition but relatively white. In sum, given the vagueness in Brazilian racial categorization, a census can never accurately capture race, but it does provide a good indication of relative differences in color for large populations.

The method used to analyze the independent effects of region and other variables on outmarriage rates is weighted least-squares regression analysis. Specifically, outmarriage rates are each regressed on a vector of characteristics to determine their unique effect on interracial marriage while controlling for the other variables. The independent variables are region, racial composition, industrialization, and immigrant influence. Finally, because the number of couples in the sample varies widely, the weighted least-squares method was employed to correct for potential heteroskedastic error terms (Hanushek and Jackson 1977). Each metropolitan area is weighted by the square root of the number of in-group persons among the sample population of couples.

To model the effects of region, dummy variables representing the five regions were created. Four regions were entered into the model: North-east, Central-East, São Paulo, and the frontier. Each metropolitan area was assigned a score of 1 or 0 for each of the four regional variables to indicate whether it lies within the respective region (a score of 1) or not (a score of 0). The South region is excluded so that the coefficient representing each region in the model is the regional effect compared with the South. It was chosen as the reference region because its intermarriage rates are by far the lowest.

Although many regional schemes have been suggested for Brazil, my approach was based on past discussions about regional systems of race relations in Brazil and an attempt to keep the number of regions to a minimum. The states were assigned to the five regions in this manner: the Northeast (Alagoas, Bahia, Ceará, Maranhão, Paraíba, Pernambuco, Rio Grande do Norte, Sergipe); the Central-East (Espírito Santo, Minas Gerais, and Rio de Janeiro); São Paulo (São Paulo); the South (Paraná, Rio Grande

3. The two other possible responses were Asian (*amarelo*) and other.

do Sul, and Santa Catarina); and the frontier (Amazônia, Acre, the Federal District, Goiás, Mato Grosso, Mato Grosso do Sul, Pará, and Rondônia).

The other independent variables are all continuous rather than categorical. Industrialization is operationalized as the proportion of the labor force employed in manufacturing. Immigrant influence is captured by three variables representing the local influence of Portuguese, Italians, and Germans. Specifically, immigrant influence was measured as the proportion of the white population over sixty born in Portugal, Italy, or Germany. An elderly cohort was chosen in 1980 because they were part of the large-scale immigration that ended in the 1930s. This method yields the best approximation available of immigrant or ethnic influence with the 1980 census, which contained no questions about ethnic ancestry for the native Brazilian population.

Descriptive Statistics, Nationally and by Region

Table 1 shows the outmarriage rates for each of the metropolitan areas by region and in descending order of population size within regions. Rates of outmarriage vary widely. For example, white outmarriage to blacks varies from almost none (.001 or .1 percent) in Joinville and Santarém to .033 in São Luis. An index of .033 in São Luis means that 33 out of every 1000 whites in the sample are married to blacks. White outmarriage to browns is generally much greater and varies much more, from .012 in Joinville to .498 in Santarém. Thus about half of all sampled whites in Santarém are married to browns. Interestingly, while white outmarriage to blacks is among the lowest in Santarém, white outmarriage to browns is the highest. This contrast is more understandable on considering that according to the 1980 census, Santarém's population is 17 percent white, 82 percent brown, and only 1 percent black (data for racial composition are not shown). Thus the much greater chance of a white person encountering persons who are brown rather than black should presumably lead to a greater likelihood of marrying a brown person. To conclude the analysis of Santarém, one finds also about a 50–50 chance, .501 or $1 - (.001 + .498)$, that whites will marry other whites despite the much greater chance of encountering a brown person rather than another white. This finding shows the persistent preference for marrying a person in the same racial category.

Brown outmarriage to blacks is intermediate to the other two rates and varies from .002 in Santa Maria to .134 in Nova Friburgo. Again, Santarém's rate of brown outmarriage to blacks is relatively low at .005, reflecting the town's small black population relative to its large brown population. By contrast, Nova Friburgo, the highest in brown-black marriage has much closer to equal proportions of browns (10 percent) and

INTERMARRIAGE IN BRAZILIAN URBAN AREAS

TABLE 1 *Intermarriage between Whites, Browns, and Blacks in Brazilian Metropolitan Areas with Populations over 100,000 in 1980*

| | <i>Proportion of Whites Married to Blacks</i> | <i>Proportion of Whites Married to Browns</i> | <i>Proportion of Browns Married to Blacks</i> |
|---------------------------|---|---|---|
| Northeast | | | |
| Recife | .025 | .348 | .034 |
| Salvador | .032 | .289 | .084 |
| Fortaleza | .014 | .398 | .015 |
| João Pessoa | .015 | .363 | .024 |
| Natal | .020 | .291 | .018 |
| Teresina | .015 | .483 | .027 |
| Maceió | .021 | .364 | .028 |
| Aracaju | .025 | .373 | .035 |
| São Luis | .033 | .357 | .044 |
| Feira de Santana | .019 | .307 | .059 |
| Campina Grande | .010 | .373 | .016 |
| Itabuna | .028 | .464 | .055 |
| Crato-Juazeiro | .009 | .380 | .012 |
| Petrolina | .018 | .409 | .040 |
| Imperatriz | .016 | .407 | .028 |
| Mossoro | .014 | .403 | .022 |
| Caruaru | .004 | .347 | .011 |
| Vitória da Conquista | .016 | .440 | .029 |
| Central-East | | | |
| Rio de Janeiro | .024 | .188 | .076 |
| Belo Horizonte | .020 | .219 | .056 |
| Vitória | .019 | .291 | .046 |
| Barra Mansa-Volta Redonda | .022 | .127 | .072 |
| Juiz de Fora | .019 | .095 | .112 |
| Ipatininga | .022 | .249 | .047 |
| Uberlandia | .013 | .098 | .067 |
| Campos | .020 | .098 | .108 |
| Uberaba | .015 | .078 | .075 |
| Governador Valladares | .031 | .282 | .066 |
| Montes Claros | .014 | .369 | .034 |
| Divinópolis | .015 | .094 | .043 |
| Nova Friburgo | .015 | .062 | .134 |
| São Paulo | | | |
| São Paulo | .012 | .140 | .039 |
| Santos | .014 | .184 | .032 |
| Campinas | .011 | .093 | .053 |
| São Jose dos Campos | .008 | .087 | .033 |
| Sorocaba | .008 | .059 | .048 |
| Ribeirão Preto | .016 | .083 | .081 |
| Jundiai | .008 | .078 | .028 |

TABLE 1 (continued)

| | <i>Proportion of Whites Married to Blacks</i> | <i>Proportion of Whites Married to Browns</i> | <i>Proportion of Browns Married to Blacks</i> |
|-----------------------|---|---|---|
| Guaratingueta | .023 | .119 | .041 |
| Taubate | .010 | .082 | .033 |
| Americana | .006 | .049 | .047 |
| Piracicaba | .009 | .056 | .054 |
| São José de Rio Preto | .013 | .072 | .038 |
| Bauru | .018 | .098 | .038 |
| Limeira | .008 | .055 | .051 |
| Franca | .011 | .076 | .060 |
| Presidente Prudente | .014 | .130 | .039 |
| Araçatuba | .013 | .164 | .033 |
| Marília | .010 | .105 | .043 |
| São Carlos | .010 | .078 | .065 |
| Rio Claro | .008 | .074 | .020 |
| Araraquara | .016 | .052 | .106 |
| South | | | |
| Porto Alegre | .007 | .034 | .087 |
| Curitiba | .006 | .085 | .018 |
| Pelotas–Rio Grande | .007 | .020 | .061 |
| Florianópolis | .005 | .009 | .086 |
| Londrina | .011 | .102 | .049 |
| Joinville | .001 | .012 | .037 |
| Caxias do Sul | .004 | .050 | .015 |
| Foz de Iguaçu | .006 | .086 | .027 |
| Ponta Grossa | .003 | .084 | .015 |
| Maringá | .009 | .095 | .039 |
| Cascavel | .008 | .104 | .019 |
| Blumenau | .002 | .005 | .009 |
| Lages | .010 | .064 | .028 |
| Passo Fundo | .007 | .061 | .009 |
| Santa Maria | .004 | .028 | .002 |
| Frontier | | | |
| Brasília | .013 | .299 | .021 |
| Belém | .015 | .487 | .018 |
| Manaus | .008 | .460 | .007 |
| Campo Grande | .011 | .224 | .021 |
| Cuiabá | .020 | .390 | .020 |
| Porto Velho | .020 | .390 | .020 |
| Santarém | .001 | .498 | .005 |
| Imperatriz | .016 | .407 | .028 |
| Brazil | .015 | .161 | .037 |

NOTE: The sample was based on couples who had resided in the same metropolitan area during the previous five years and in which the wife was under twenty-five in 1980.

blacks (7 percent), making the likelihood of a brown encountering a black almost as great as that of encountering another brown. Besides the effect of racial composition, the minority status of nonwhites (browns and blacks) in Juiz de Fora tends to create greater solidarity among the two nonwhite groups, whereas in Santarém, browns are the clear majority and blacks are a tiny (and therefore conspicuous) minority.

Overall, the analysis shows wide variation of outmarriage for all three comparison groups. The metropolitan areas of the South, however, appear to have lower rates of outmarriage than those of other regions in terms of white outmarriage to browns and blacks. This finding is likely due to the much larger proportion of whites to nonwhite groups in the South. By contrast, the rate of brown outmarriage to blacks is not particularly low and is lowest overall in the frontier region, which has few blacks relative to browns.

Table 2 shows mean and standard deviations for the dependent and independent variables for all metropolitan areas and by region. White outmarriage to blacks averaged .014 in the seventy-five metropolitan areas. The average rate for metropolitan areas varies from .006 in the South to .019 in the Northeast and Central-East. The average rate of white outmarriage to browns is many times higher at .197, showing a wide range from .056 in the South to .377 in the Northeast. Thus whites in the Northeast are more than six times as likely to marry browns as those in the South. Finally, the average rate of brown outmarriage to blacks is .042, ranging from .019 in the frontier area to .072 in the Central-East.

The average black component of metropolitan area populations is .052 and ranges from .027 in the South to .087 in the Central-East. The average brown component is .318, ranging from .618 in the Northeast to .102 in the South. Thus intermarriage rates may vary greatly because of wide variations in racial composition. For example, because browns constitute a majority in the Northeast (a mean of .618 percent) but only a small minority in the South (.102 percent), the chances that whites will encounter browns at any given time are much greater in the Northeast. Table 2 also suggests why brown outmarriage to blacks is so low in the frontier area. There are more than twenty times as many browns (.582) as blacks (.027) in the average metropolitan area of the frontier, a much higher ratio of browns to blacks than in any other region.

Industrialization also varies greatly by region. Nationally, about 21 percent of the labor force is employed in manufacturing in the average metropolitan area. The frontier (.112) and Northeast regions (.134) have the lowest proportions in manufacturing while the highest is found in São Paulo (.304). The level of urban industrialization in the South (.227) and the Central-East (.204) are intermediate. Yet the South is diverse in this regard, as indicated by a standard deviation of .153, suggesting a mix of highly industrialized areas and others based more on agriculture and ser-

TABLE 2 *Mean and Standard Deviations of Dependent and Independent Variables on Inter-marriage Rates for the Largest Metropolitan Areas in Brazil in 1980, Total and by Region*

| <i>In-group-Out-group</i> | <i>Total</i> | <i>North-east</i> | <i>Central-East</i> | <i>São Paulo</i> | <i>South</i> | <i>Frontier</i> |
|---|----------------|-------------------|---------------------|------------------|----------------|-----------------|
| Outmarriage | | | | | | |
| White-black | .014 (.007) | .019 (.008) | .019 (.005) | .012 (.004) | .006 (.003) | .013 (.007) |
| White-brown | .197 (.149) | .377 (.053) | .173 (.100) | .092 (.037) | .056 (.036) | .366 (.106) |
| Brown-black | .042 (.027) | .032 (.019) | .072 (.030) | .047 (.019) | .033 (.027) | .019 (.010) |
| Percent in outgroup | | | | | | |
| Percent black | .052 (.032) | .061 (.042) | .087 (.026) | .047 (.009) | .032 (.019) | .027 (.015) |
| Percent brown | .318 (.239) | .618 (.083) | .277 (.142) | .140 (.051) | .102 (.054) | .582 (.170) |
| Industrialization (% in manufacturing) | .210 (.125) | .134 (.036) | .204 (.073) | .304 (.130) | .227 (.153) | .112 (.069) |
| Immigrant influence | | | | | | |
| Portuguese | .016 (.028) | .004 (.006) | .018 (.034) | .028 (.040) | .008 (.009) | .024 (.026) |
| Italian | .009 (.010) | .001 (.002) | .005 (.004) | .020 (.010) | .007 (.007) | .006 (.002) |
| German | .004 (.007) | .001 (.001) | .003 (.005) | .003 (.003) | .011 (.013) | .002 (.002) |
| Number of areas | 75 | 18 | 13 | 21 | 15 | 8 |

vices. Metropolitan areas of the state of São Paulo are also industrially diverse (with a standard deviation of .130).

Immigrant influence varies mostly according to national group. The Portuguese are the largest group of immigrants among persons sixty and older, followed by Italians and then Germans. The larger proportion of Portuguese than Italians may be due to the fact that in 1980 this elderly population represented the survivors of a wave of Portuguese immigration that surged in the 1920s, whereas Italian immigration peaked around the turn of the century (Merrick and Graham 1979). The Portuguese population is the most regionally diverse of the three groups, being found in large proportions in São Paulo and the Central-East as well as in frontier metropolitan areas. Large standard deviations relative to the means indicate that the Portuguese are highly concentrated in a few metropolitan areas of these regions. Italian immigrants are most likely to be living in the state of São Paulo, although significant Italian populations can be found in all the other regions except the Northeast. Germans are highly concentrated in the

South. These findings regarding immigrants and their place of settlement are consistent with data from the 1920 census, suggesting that relatively little internal migration occurred subsequently (Merrick and Graham 1979).

Multivariate Statistics: Explaining Regional Patterns

Columns 1, 5, and 9 in table 3 show the simple model of regional effects on intermarriage without other controls. In the models of white outmarriage to blacks and to browns, all regions have significantly higher outmarriage rates than those found in the South. The strength of the relationship can be perceived in the large coefficients relative to their standard errors. Three levels of white outmarriage with blacks emerge: the Northeast and Central-East have the highest rates, followed by São Paulo and the frontier, while the South has the lowest. White outmarriage to browns is four-tiered: the highest rates by far are in the Northeast and the frontier, followed by the Central-East, then São Paulo, and finally the South. In the case of brown outmarriage to blacks, the highest rates occur in the Central-East, followed by the Northeast, São Paulo and the South with similar rates, and finally the frontier.

As the likelihood of encountering an outgroup member increases, so do the chances of marrying one. Thus regions like the Northeast that have large numbers of browns and blacks are likely to have higher rates of white outmarriage. Once the size of the outgroup is statistically controlled, other macrostructural variables can be more properly evaluated. Columns 2, 6, and 10 reveal a test of regional differences in racial distance, as opposed to simply describing regional differences in outmarriage (see columns 1, 5, and 9).

The relationship of region to white-black marriage remains strong (see column 2), but in the case of white outmarriage to browns, the relationship to region weakens (see column 6). Three regional tiers emerge in white marriage to blacks: the Northeast, Central-East, and the frontier are about equally high, followed by São Paulo, and in the third tier, the South. Thus white intolerance of blacks is particularly high in the South, followed by São Paulo and the rest of Brazil. Such high intolerance in the South is noteworthy because blacks there make up an unusually large part of the nonwhite population (see table 2). In the case of white outmarriage to browns, although there are not strong regional effects, metropolitan areas in São Paulo and the frontier tend to have higher rates than the other regions. Thus whites in the state of São Paulo appear more racially tolerant of mulattos than in other regions.

For brown marriage to blacks, the former three regional tiers are reduced to two, but the regions are reordered. The Central-East, São Paulo, and the South have the highest rates, while the frontier and the Northeast have clearly lower rates. The negative coefficients for all of the regions

TABLE 3 Weighted Least-Squares Regression Coefficients for Outmarriage Rates in the Seventy-Five Largest Metropolitan Areas in Brazil

| | White Outmarriage to Blacks | | | |
|---------------------|-----------------------------|----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) |
| Region ^a | | | | |
| Northeast | .014 (.001) | .010 (.002) | .009 (.001) | .010 (.002) |
| Central-East | .014 (.002) | .008 (.002) | .008 (.002) | .008 (.002) |
| São Paulo | .005 (.001) | .004 (.001) | .005 (.001) | .005 (.002) |
| Frontier | .007 (.002) | .008 (.002) | .006 (.002) | .006 (.002) |
| Outgroup size | | .115 (.019) | .108 (.018) | .106 (.019) |
| Industrialization | | | -.012 (.004) | -.012 (.005) |
| Immigrant influence | | | | |
| Portuguese | | | | .019 (.013) |
| Italian | | | | .006 (.062) |
| German | | | | .043 (.077) |
| Constant | .006 | .002 | .006 | .004 |
| r ² | .595 | .736 | .762 | .776 |

Note: Standard errors in parentheses. For explanations of methods used in the numbered columns, see the text.

^aThe reference category is the South.

in column 10 suggest that racial distance between browns and blacks is lowest in the South. There may be a greater solidarity between browns and blacks in the South because they must contend with greater distance from whites there. Finally, the greatest distance between browns and blacks is found in the frontier and the Northeast, regions where browns constitute the majority.

The fact that the outgroup size coefficient is by far the smallest for white outmarriage to blacks reveals some interesting findings about the nature of interracial prejudice in Brazil. Although white outmarriage to browns and brown outmarriage to blacks increase strongly in proportion to the size of the group, increasing proportions of blacks translate into a much lower yet steady increase in white outmarriage to blacks. There seems to be relatively little resistance to marrying a person of a similar albeit different color but much greater resistance to marriage between persons of widely

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| <i>White Outmarriage to Browns</i> | | | | <i>Brown Outmarriage to Blacks</i> | | | |
|------------------------------------|--------|--------|--------|------------------------------------|--------|--------|--------|
| (5) | (6) | (7) | (8) | (9) | (10) | (11) | (12) |
| .312 | -.005 | -.006 | -.000 | -.007 | -.025 | -.024 | -.024 |
| (.022) | (.018) | (.018) | (.020) | (.008) | (.007) | (.007) | (.008) |
| .129 | .007 | .007 | .007 | .030 | -.005 | -.010 | -.003 |
| (.021) | (.010) | (.010) | (.011) | (.008) | (.008) | (.008) | (.008) |
| .050 | .013 | .015 | .017 | .004 | -.003 | -.004 | -.007 |
| (.019) | (.007) | (.008) | (.030) | (.007) | (.005) | (.006) | (.008) |
| .286 | .018 | .017 | .026 | -.021 | -.017 | -.019 | -.016 |
| (.026) | (.016) | (.017) | (.018) | (.010) | (.007) | (.009) | (.008) |
| | .625 | .622 | .615 | | .626 | .628 | .624 |
| | (.031) | (.031) | (.033) | | (.084) | (.085) | (.088) |
| | | -.018 | -.017 | | | .003 | -.002 |
| | | (.026) | (.030) | | | (.020) | (.023) |
| | | | .088 | | | | -.070 |
| | | | (.087) | | | | (.064) |
| | | | -.204 | | | | .337 |
| | | | (.393) | | | | (.296) |
| | | | .237 | | | | -.068 |
| | | | (.484) | | | | (.367) |
| .053 | -.008 | -.003 | -.005 | .041 | .019 | .018 | .019 |
| .811 | .973 | .973 | .974 | .280 | .596 | .623 | .634 |

different color, namely between black and white. Such a conclusion must be conditioned, however, by the understanding that intermarriage may also act to “whiten” the darker partner in the marriage so that actual black-white intermarriage may have been underestimated while intermarriage of proximate-color members may have been overestimated. But whether such a pattern occurs or the extent to which it might occur is unknown.

The hypothesis that industrialization and immigration explain away the regional effects are tested in the remaining models. Columns 3, 7, and 11 model the combined effects of region, size of outgroup, and extent of industrialization on intermarriage. The addition of industrialization has little effect on removing the large and significant regional effects in any of the models. For white marriage to blacks (column 3), differences in the Northeast and the frontier when compared with the South are slightly reduced.

The coefficient for industrialization shows that rates of white mar-

riage to blacks clearly decline as industrialization increases. On the other hand, industrialization has a very slight negative effect on white marriage to browns and bears virtually no relation to brown outmarriage to blacks. Brown-black marriage continues to be lower in all regions than in the South. Thus industrialization is clearly related to greater social distance, as measured by intermarriage, between whites and blacks, but this relationship is weak or negligible between proximate color groups.

Finally, columns 4, 8, and 12 show the full-effects models that include region, outgroup size, industrialization, and immigrant influence. The addition of immigrant influence does little to alter the regional effects. For the case of white marriage to blacks (column 4), the South continues to show substantially lower intermarriage rates than the other regions, net of all controls. While São Paulo was the only region that had a strong statistical relation to rates of white-brown marriage, the relationship (not the magnitude) weakened when the effects of immigrant influence were included (column 8). Thus the full model for white-brown marriage (unlike white-black marriage) indicates that there are no significant regional differences that cannot be explained by outgroup size, industrialization, and immigrant influence.

Brown outmarriage to blacks (column 12) was reduced in the frontier region by immigrant influence. Brown outmarriage to blacks continued to be clearly lowest in the Northeast, followed by the frontier region. The remaining regions exhibit similar levels. The fact that the Northeast and the frontier have significantly lower rates of brown outmarriage to blacks than the other regions despite controls suggests that this distinction is particularly significant there. Because browns constitute the numerical majority of the population in both regions, social distinctions between browns and blacks may be stressed more while in other regions where whites dominate socioeconomically and numerically, there may be a greater tendency for blacks and browns to consolidate. In the case of the frontier region, this outcome may also reflect a distinct system of race relations because the "brown" population there is more likely to be indigenous rather than African in origin.

Regarding the immigrant coefficients themselves, whites are more likely to marry blacks in urban areas with large Portuguese populations (column 4). While Italian and German influences were expected to have negative effects on white-black marriage, they actually have little or no effect. In fact, white marriage to blacks tends to increase slightly as the extent of German immigration increases. Areas with higher Portuguese influence were also more likely to have more white-brown marriages (column 8). Italian and German influences were far from significant, as indicated by standard errors that are much higher than the coefficients, although Italian areas tended to have lower rates of white-brown marriage and German areas higher such rates. Although immigrant influences refer to

white ethnic groups, they nevertheless correlated with brown-black marriage. Areas with greater Portuguese influence tended to have lower rates of brown-black marriage, while areas of Italian influence had higher rates.

Discussion and Conclusion

This study offers several findings. First, the widely varying racial compositions of Brazilian metropolitan areas explain most (but not all) of the regional differences in intermarriage. Second, despite controls for racial composition, white outmarriage to blacks in the South is significantly lower than in other regions and thus white-black social distance is greatest there. Third and similarly, brown-black social relations in marriage are more distant in the Northeast and frontier regions. Fourth, industrialization can explain some of the regional differences in white outmarriage to blacks but white-black distance in marriage still remains significantly greater in the South despite controls for industrialization. Fifth, Portuguese, Italian, and German immigrant influences bear no significant relationship to local rates of intermarriage. Finally, although endogamy is preferred, there is less resistance to marriage between persons of proximate color in comparison with the much higher resistance to marriage between whites and blacks. These findings are noteworthy because they represent the seventy-five largest metropolitan areas of Brazil and can account for local marriage-market composition and also for local levels of industrialization and immigration.

This study has shown that differences previously found in intermarriage by region can be explained mostly by differences in racial composition because the likelihood of outmarriage depends partly on the extent of exposure to the outside group. For example, the fact that whites are much more likely to marry mulattos in the Northeast than in São Paulo is due mostly to the fact that exposure of whites to mulattos is several times greater in the Northeast. Thus propinquity—not tolerance—explains most of the regional variation in Brazilian rates of intermarriage.

The evidence on white marriage to blacks suggests that it is inappropriate to speak of a homogeneous Brazilian system of race relations, which should be differentiated by region. Previous accounts of regional differences based on scattered and often speculative evidence have been unable to account for the complexity of regional differences in Brazilian race relations. Evidence for intermarriage shows that Frazier's (1942) and Degler's (1986) claims that white racial prejudice increases as one travels south in Brazil is particularly true of social relations with blacks. Results for intermarriage suggest that regional differences in the level of white intolerance of mulattos are slight, especially when compared with regional differences in white intolerance of blacks. Also, although brown-black relations have generally been ignored by Brazilian race relations

analysts, intermarriage results suggest that browns maintain the greatest social distance from blacks in the Northeast and the frontier.

Although racial composition is the most important factor accounting for differential rates of intermarriage, other factors may also be salient. The hypothesis of the "São Paulo school" (see Vanden Berghe 1967; Bastide and Vanden Berghe 1957) that industrialization increases racial competitiveness and thus enhances social proscriptions against intermarriage is supported for white-black and to a lesser extent for white-brown relations. Also, there is only weak evidence that local areas with notable immigrant influences are more endogamous, as expected by some theorists.

Results for intermarriage suggest a racial continuum in which mulattos fall about halfway between whites and blacks, thus providing support for Degler's (1986) theory of a mulatto escape hatch. My findings show that as the population proportion in the outgroup increases, white outmarriage to mulattos increases at about the same rate as mulatto outmarriage to blacks. In contrast, white marriage to blacks increases at a much slower rate, demonstrating much greater resistance to intermarriage between groups at the extremes of the color continuum. This study of intermarriage demonstrates further that, along with segregation (Telles 1992), there is a roughly even continuum for the case of interpersonal relations, although something closer to a color line exists in the case of labor-market position (Silva 1985; Lovell 1989).

Remaining regional differences may reflect differences in subcultures of racism. Also, the identification of a person as belonging to one race or another in Brazil may be constructed quite differently across regions. Similarly, the salience of the distinction between blacks and mulattos as well as differing perceptions of mulattos in comparison with blacks may also vary from region to region. Further controls for sex ratio, age at marriage, and social class may reveal that demographic and socio-structural effects other than racial composition also help to account for regional differences.

Undoubtedly, the Brazilian population continues to exhibit high rates of intermarriage when compared with the other large societies with substantial populations of European and African origin, namely the United States and South Africa. Indeed, the relatively high levels of racial interaction are often used to illustrate the lack of racial problems in Brazil. Although such manifestations may make Brazil unique, they nevertheless hide the fact that racism and racial inequality are great. In a society where inequalities are great, Afro-Brazilians make up the majority of the poor and only a small minority of the middle class at best. Despite the fact that blacks and persons of mixed race make up nearly half the Brazilian population, they are virtually absent from the national political scene. Similarly, Afro-Brazilians are all but invisible in the universities of large metropolitan areas, a situation that helps explain why academic concerns about Brazilian race relations have been slow to emerge from longstanding obscurity.

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