

BRAZILIAN ARCHIVES AND RECENT HISTORIOGRAPHY ON COLONIAL BRAZIL*

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Abstract: This article draws attention to archival research by Brazilian historians in Portugal and Brazil and the fruits of these labors in monographs, dissertations, and articles. Following a survey of historical writing in the colonial period, this essay discusses the growing movement in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries to preserve documents in libraries, archives, and museums in Brazil. The existence of such institutions spurred divulgation of manuscript collections through journals and published transcriptions of documents. The essay then traces Brazilian historiography in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries as well as Brazilian responses to new trends in historical writing in the 1960s. A survey of archives consulted by scholars of colonial Brazil provides the background for the main section, which uses case studies to demonstrate how Brazilian historians have used these depositories. Scholarship published between 1983 and 1999 is emphasized. The intensive use of manuscript collections and the high quality of publications testify to the vitality of studies by Brazilian scholars of colonial Brazil.

Historiography reflects attitudes prevailing in the era that produced it. No less than the passage of time, so too is historiography susceptible to change. The historiography of the colonial period in Brazil as written by contemporaries reflected a concept of the role of the chronicler that was to record rather than to analyze, to embellish rather than to be objective. The *História da América Portuguesa* (Lisbon, 1730) by Sebastião da Rocha Pitta, scion of a Bahian landowning family, shares these characteristics but earned the accolade of a contemporary as “seguida e completa.” Despite Robert Southey’s disparaging description as “a meagre and inaccurate work,” this history remains worthy of consultation less as a source of factual information than for the author’s perspective. Unbound by an institutional environment, Rocha Pitta brought a lay perspective that revealed his attitudes, values, and veneration of the classics and occasionally reflected

*I acknowledge my gratitude to Laura de Mello e Souza for valuable bibliographical suggestions, to Consuelo Novais Sampaio and Júnia Ferreira Furtado for keeping me abreast of publications in Bahia and Minas Gerais respectively, and to Ernest Pjining. An earlier version of this study was presented at the Seminário Internacional sobre Fontes Documentais para a História do Brasil Colonial in Rio de Janeiro on 19 October 1998.

contemporary *mentalités*. But neither Rocha Pitta nor his fellow colonial writers engaged in systematic archival research, although he and others had access to ecclesiastical and secular manuscript sources.

With few exceptions, a modern historian wishing to gain insight into the colonial period would consult not such “histories” but printed sources such as the *Diálogos das grandezas do Brasil* (1618), attributed to Ambrósio Fernandes Brandão, the *Triunfo eucharístico* (Lisbon, 1734) of Simão Ferreira Machado, the *Erário mineral dividido em doze tratados* (Lisbon, 1735) of Luís Gomes Ferreira, the *Compêndio narrativo do peregrino da América* of Nuno Marques Pereira (Lisbon, 1760), or Luís dos Santos Vilhena’s *Recopilação de notícias soteropolitanas e brasílicas contidas em XX cartas*. Jorge Benci’s *Economia cristã dos senhores no governo dos escravos* (1700) and Manuel Ribeiro Rocha’s *Ethiophe resgatado, empenhado, sustentado, corregido, instruído e liberto* (1758) remain invaluable as contemporaneous accounts as well as moral tracts opposing the institution of slavery. But these works, to which should be added the satirical poems of Gregório de Matos and the *Cartas chilenas* of Tomás Antonio Gonzaga, were not viewed as having historical value by the authors or their contemporaries. Only with later generations of professional historians have they gained recognition as indispensable sources for understanding colonial Brazil.

While little evidence suggests that such histories or treatises were based on archival research as understood today, this finding does not imply a lack of consciousness of the importance and status attached to having a designated historian for Brazil. In 1658 a royal decree nominated Diogo Gomes Carneiro as “cronista da América,” although a later reference modified this title to “cronista do Estado do Brasil.”¹ The importance of archives was also recognized, even if as an aspiration rather than a reality. One senior crown official in Bahia referred to the lamentable state of the archives in the eighteenth century as “a Babel of confusion,” and on more than one occasion, governors of Minas Gerais took cover from royal displeasure at their failing to carry out an order by claiming that the appropriate manuscript letter either had not been received or had been misplaced. The burning on the night of 20 June 1790 of a substantial part of the municipal archives of the city of Rio de Janeiro was recognized as an irreparable loss and led to requests for copies of documents to be dispatched posthaste from Lisbon.² Such awareness of the importance of the documentary record, however, was based not on its value as a historical source but rather on how its absence might impinge negatively on the administration of government. Colonial Brazilians lacked that appreciation of the importance of

1. *Collecção Chronológica da Legislação Portuguesa, 1657–1674*, compiled and annotated by José Justino de Andrade e Silva (Lisbon: Imprensa de F. A. Da Silva, 1854–1859), pp. 20, 87.

2. On “lost documents and destroyed archives,” see José Honório Rodrigues, *A pesquisa histórica no Brasil*, second edition (São Paulo: Companhia Editora Nacional, 1969), 202–6.

archives and the need for writers to base their histories on manuscript sources, an awareness already present in the Estado da Índia in the sixteenth century. The king not only deferred in 1594 and 1595 to the request of Diogo do Couto that an archive be created in Goa modeled on the Torre do Tombo in Lisbon but appointed him as the first *guarda-mor* of this archive.

PROFESSIONAL HISTORIANS AND ARCHIVAL RESEARCH

For the historiography of colonial Brazil, only in the nineteenth century did archival research in primary unpublished sources become an essential part of the historian's portfolio. British historian Robert Southey visited Portugal and compiled his *History of Brazil* (1810–1819) using rare printed primary sources and manuscripts collected over thirty years of residence in Portugal by his maternal uncle as well as manuscripts sent to him from Brazil. Southey noted, "A collection of manuscripts not less extensive than curious, and which is not to be equalled in England, enables me to supply this chasm in history." Unfortunately, he did not complete the "Critical Account of All the Documents, Printed or in Manuscript, from Which It Has Been Compiled," which he hoped would form part of a "Bibliotheca Histórica Lusitana."³ Francisco Adolfo de Varnhagen (born in Sorocaba, São Paulo) consulted primary sources assiduously, especially for the sixteenth century, in writing his *História geral do Brasil* (1854, 1857). Varnhagen has been referred to as "the father of modern Brazilian historical scholarship." His archival research in Europe and Brazil was complemented by rigorous methodology, critical scholarship, objectivity, and a search for historical truth.⁴

The creation of the Arquivo Nacional in 1838 in Rio de Janeiro recognized formally the importance of establishing repositories for the preservation of historical records. This example on the national level was followed by the creation of state and municipal archives. This development provided an incentive for using primary manuscript sources. Further recognition of the importance of such sources came from the effort by archives and museums to promote knowledge of their holdings by transcribing such documents in their publications: *Anais da Biblioteca Nacional do Rio de Janeiro* (1876–); *Publicações do Arquivo Nacional* (1886–); *Documentos Interessantes para a História e Costumes de São Paulo* (1894–) and the series *Inventários e Testamentos* (both published by the Arquivo Público do Estado

3. Robert Southey, *History of Brazil*, 3 vols. (London: Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, and Brown, 1810–1819); reprinted in 3 vols (New York: Greenwood, 1969). See prefaces to parts 1, 2, and 3; the citation is from the preface to the first part.

4. Stuart B. Schwartz, "Francisco Adolfo de Varnhagen: Diplomat, Patriot, Historian," *Hispanic American Historical Review* 47, no. 2 (May 1967):185–202.

de São Paulo); *Revista do Museu Paulista* (1895–); *Revista do Arquivo Público Mineiro* (1896–); *Anais do Arquivo Público da Bahia* (1917–); and *Anais do Museu Paulista* (1922–). The Instituto Arqueológico, Histórico e Geográfico Pernambucano issued the first number of its review in 1863. Successors were *revistas* of the Instituto de Ceará (1887–), the Instituto Geográfico e Histórico da Bahia (1894–), and the Instituto Histórico e Geográfico de São Paulo (1895–). Founding of the Instituto Histórico e Geográfico Brasileiro thrust historians and history into prominence, and its *Revista* (1839–) has played an invaluable role in publishing manuscript and printed primary sources. Pride of place as manifested in publishing transcribed manuscripts must go to the formidable series *Documentos Históricos da Bibliotheca Nacional do Rio de Janeiro* (1928–).

The twentieth century witnessed a strong nationwide impetus in creating historical societies and municipal and state libraries and archives as well as centralizing in ecclesiastical and secular archives previously dispersed documentation. This trend has been accompanied by a proliferation of historical journals published by historical societies, libraries, universities, and (most recently) departments of history. This greater consciousness of the importance of making public unpublished or out-of-print historical sources was also reflected in a concerted effort dating back to the 1920s and 1930s to publish annotated editions of the canonical works of Brazilian history.

Scholarship on colonial Brazil has been characterized by periods of intense activity followed by relative inactivity. The enthusiasm for history, as reflected in the creation of institutions and archives, in publications, and in the transcription of documents and new editions, was not accompanied by a forceful reassessment of the colonial period. Varnhagen's aspiration to project a global vision of Brazil, limited by his obsession with factual detail to the detriment of interpretation, was not emulated by later generations. What were perceived to be key events were overemphasized, when in reality their importance rarely transcended the region and had little resonance colonywide. This proclivity resulted in imbalance in how the history of a place or region was written and gave historical writing on the national level an episodic quality. The imbalance was also apparent in the great amount of ink expended on historical writings on a few captaincies of the colonial era (Bahia, Pernambuco, Minas Gerais, Rio de Janeiro) to the neglect of others—in short, balkanization in the historiography on the colony.

Much enthusiasm resulted in writing that was antiquarian in approach, selection of subjects, and treatment and failed to satisfy the criteria of professional scholarship. Writers also tended to focus on the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries to the neglect of the seventeenth. That century was viewed either in the context of the sixteenth century (what progress had been accomplished since “discovery” and colonization) or as the century that set the stage for the accomplishments of the eighteenth century.

Except for the few histories of the “*tempo dos flamengos*” and the triumph over the Dutch, the seventeenth century was not studied in its own right. The selection of sources resulted in a historiography with some or all of the following characteristics: an emphasis on institutional and administrative dimensions; a male-dominated perspective that virtually excluded women; a historiography from the perspective of crown agents or dominant colonial elites; and a depiction of society in which some social and racial groups were not represented. In short, this body of work was a history written from the top down. Nor was the quality of extensive writings on historical issues of such sustained quality as to stimulate critical thinking, rigorous scrutiny, and debate.

Two scholars stand out for two reasons: first, because they both recognized the importance of research in primary unpublished manuscript sources; and second, because their visions of how the history of Brazil should be written opened up new avenues for historical research and suggested an agenda for their contemporaries and future generations of historians. Capistrano de Abreu (1853–1927) emphasized the importance of archival research in primary manuscript sources as well as critical editions. In a letter of 1904 to Guilherme Studart, he asked: “Por que não dá a procedência dos documentos que publicas?”⁵ Abreu expressed the view—revolutionary for the 1880s and 1890s—that the real Brazil lay in the interior and that coastal settlements were mere appendages of European civilization. He also advocated the notion that in the *sertão*, an independence of thought and action and a rejection of colonialism developed that provided the seeds for Brazilian nationalism and independence from Portugal. This view represented a major reorientation in how Brazilians saw themselves vis-à-vis Portugal by validating the importance of the *sertão* and affirming their identity. Methodologically, Abreu was an innovator in his interdisciplinary and cross-disciplinary perspectives, recognizing the importance of geography, terrain, linguistics, anthropology, and what has come to be called ethnography as tools to be used by historians.

Sérgio Buarque de Holanda (1902–1982) continued this tradition of opening new avenues for historical research and new interpretations as reflected in *Raízes do Brasil* (1936) and *Visão do Paraíso* (1959), by his emphasis on hydrography in the formation of Brazil in *Monções* (1945), and in *Caminhos e fronteiras* (1957). As regards the state of historical studies on Brazil and Buarque de Holanda’s use of archival sources, an article based on a 1977 interview noted, “A erudição histórica desse homem, ele teve de construí-la sozinho. Como, de resto, os poucos que se aventuraram, como ele, pela

5. Cited by José Honório Rodrigues in “Explicação” of the fourth edition of J. Capistrano de Abreu, *Capítulos de história colonial (1500–1800)*, revised, annotated, and introduced by José Honório Rodrigues (Rio de Janeiro: Livraria Briguiet and the Sociedade Capistrano de Abreu, 1954), 6.

história do Brasil, naqueles tempos heróicos e ingratos do faroeste da pesquisa. Era uma batalha penetrar nos arquivos, quanto estes existiam— lembra.”⁶

THE NEW HISTORY

The 1960s witnessed the dawn of a new approach to history. It was characterized by an eclosion of interest in social history, the “new social history.” From this new interest, new methodologies developed (such as prosopography), often derived from increased cross-fertilization between disciplines and borrowings from the social sciences in particular. This trend coincided fortuitously with the arrival of a new technology, the computer, which then became increasingly versatile, portable, and sophisticated. Initially, this new technology gave great impetus to quantitative history not merely to crunch numbers but to assemble quantitative information that could produce interesting results as well as a database to complement qualitative data. The results demanded the reformulation of old questions and stimulated the asking of new ones. The stage thus was set for increasing cross-fertilization between disciplines. Historians now draw on the social sciences for the development of new methodologies and new approaches, and they are increasingly discovering the benefits of collaborative ventures with sociologists, anthropologists, archaeologists, cartographers, linguists, musicologists, economists, and political scientists. Historians have also become more open to stepping beyond the social sciences and humanities to engage in discussions with geographers, plant and marine biologists, metallurgists, chemists, and physicists as they deal with sources that demand knowledge of the natural sciences. Awareness has increased of the importance of non-European sources and those other than the exclusively documentary, such as oral, musical, architectural, sculptural, and iconographic sources. The nature of what constitutes historical evidence has been called into question, notably as regards oral testimony. Understanding of what constitutes historical evidence has broadened and is now so permeable that no area of human knowledge or physical reality is not a potential source for historians.

The last twenty years have witnessed a sea change in historical writings, moving away from diplomatic and institutional history to social and cultural history. Most exciting has been the birth of subfields of history, many of which have now gained recognition and have their own journals, conferences, and panel discussions. A cursory glance through periodical holdings of a research library reveals the richness and breadth of these new areas: history of the family, history of women, gay history, labor history,

6. Inimá Simões and Walter Zingerevitz, “O que a história deve a Sérgio Buarque,” *Isto É*, 15 June 1977, p. 44.

psychoanalytical history, agricultural history, environmental history, architectural history, economic history, and forestry history, to name but a few. This recent historiography also reflects subtle changes of emphasis that can be characterized as exercises in compensatory history: the gendering of what had hitherto been exclusively male perspectives on history and reexamination of sources from a female perspective as, for example, in the study of mercantile families or commerce; recognition of the perspectives of non-Europeans; and a conscious effort to view history from the bottom up rather than from the prior elitist perspective. A move can be detected toward a more balanced use of quantitative data, including recognition of their shortcomings and offsetting them by enhanced emphasis on qualitative evidence. New themes have come to the fore: identity, elite formation, ethnicity, gender, and intimacy. A greater effort has been made to "go behind the scenes": to unravel the decision-making process rather than baldly stating the result; to try to understand the values and mentalities of a bygone age; to perceive the individual as multidimensional, not merely a statistic on a tax record but a person; and then to view the individual in the context of a family, and the family in the context of the broader society. More emphasis has been placed on children in history and on the largely ignored category of widows. Historians are examining the underclass: slaves and persons marginalized by society or even placed outside society. The new history puts a human face on history, casting its net widely in search of evidence and becoming more inclusive, holistic, and ecumenical.

BRAZILIANIZATION OF THE NEW SOCIAL HISTORY

The impact of these changes on the historiography of colonial Brazil was initially most apparent in dissertations, books, and articles written by foreign scholars in the 1960s and 1970s. As a result of funding targeted by the U.S. government (under Title VI of the Higher Education Act of 1969 for research in Latin America and elsewhere), the number of doctoral dissertations on the history of colonial Brazil surged in U.S. universities (thirty-nine in the 1970s). Although few of these saw the light of day as published monographs, the literature was growing in journals. The number of dissertations declined to eleven during the 1980s. Colonial Brazil had come of age as an area for doctoral research. These young scholars' publications gave the impression that non-nationals (the so-called *brasilianistas*) were preempting historical writing on the colonial period.⁷

Yet precisely at this time, institutional support for historical research

7. A. J. R. Russell-Wood, "United States Scholarly Contributions to the Historiography of Colonial Brazil," *Hispanic American Historical Review* 65, no. 4 (Nov. 1985):684-723; and José Jobson Arruda and José Manuel Tengarrinha, *Historiografia luso-brasileira contemporânea* (Bauru, S.P.: Editora da Universidade do Sagrado Coração, 1999), 63-73.

was increasing in Brazil. Whereas graduate studies in history were associated with the Universidade de São Paulo, during the mid-1970s and since, opportunities for graduate studies in history have expanded to different regions of Brazil. Master's programs have been at the heart of this nationwide resurgence, and more centers are now available for doctoral study. Any visitor to Brazilian archives in the 1970s and subsequently can testify to more opportunities for undergraduates to develop an appreciation of primary manuscript sources and come into contact with their country's past. Brazilian history in general and the colonial period in particular have been the beneficiaries of this resurgence of interest and institutional support as well as greater professionalization and accessibility of archives. The 1980s and 1990s have witnessed Brazilian scholars taking leadership roles in colonial studies and publishing extensively.⁸ More Brazilian students are completing their doctoral degrees within Brazil, rather than going to France or the United States for graduate school. At this point, a critical mass of highly qualified scholars in Brazil can sustain rigorous analysis and debate. The colonial period is riding the crest of a surging wave, and the historiography reflects a high level of conceptualization, methodological sophistication, and research on topics based on unpublished documentary sources available only in archives in Brazil.

Brazilian scholars have developed a historiography that reflects these broader changes in historical studies, while pursuing them within a Brazilian context. Scholars have moved away from political, diplomatic, and institutional history. The last twenty years have witnessed an outpouring of books, articles, and dissertations by Brazilian scholars on the following themes under the broad rubric of social history: the African experience (slavery, slave trade, religions, quilombos, manumissions, women of African descent, mores), sexuality (sodomy, homoeroticism, incest, prostitution), marriage (divorce, annulments, bigamy, adultery, concubinage), family, women and gender, Indians, labor systems, and popular culture (moeurs, mentalités, and beliefs). Most dramatic has been the move away from the ruling classes and elites, from *solares*, plantation houses, and gubernatorial palaces to the *arraia-miúda*, "*povos sem escrita*," "*desclassificados*," or "*esquecidos e sufocados pelo silêncio*" (to use the terms of Iraci del Nero da Costa, Luiz Mott, Laura de Mello e Souza, and Silvia Hunold Lara).⁹ These

8. See the series *Produção histórica no Brasil*, edited by Maria Helena R. Capelato (São Paulo: Conselho Nacional de Pesquisa and História, Universidade de São Paulo–Associação Nacional de Professores de História). The existence of institutional catalogues of dissertations underlines the desirability of having such catalogues for all Brazilian scholarship at the doctoral and master's levels. One institutional catalogue is that organized by Miridan Britto Knox Falci, *Catálogo de dissertações do Programa de Pós-Graduação em História Social da Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro, 1980–1996*.

9. Iraci del Nero da Costa, *Arraia-miúda: Um estudo sobre os não-proprietários de escravos no Brasil* (São Paulo: MGSP, 1992); Luiz Mott, *Escravidão, homossexualidade e demonologia* (São

groups were often denied full participation in colonial society by virtue of race, color, religion, sexual preferences, or legal status.

Social history based on demographic sources such as census materials or on economic quantitative data is also part of this new history. In contrast to the situation in the 1940s and 1950s, new research and new interpretations are stimulating debates on interpretations of the colonial past. The history of mentalités has found many adherents who are opening up new avenues of inquiry: one new dimension is fear as a topic for historical research. Its potential has been exploited by Maria Fernanda Bicalho in her original doctoral dissertation examining how threats to Brazil by the French and other corsairs were the prime causes of policy changes. In taking fear as a lens more locally, she has interpreted symbols and meanings attendant on urban space and colonial society. Equally original is the fascinating study by Iara Lis Carvalho Souza in which she examines the changing concept of royal power. She eschews the traditional biographical approach to the personae of Dom João VI and Pedro I for an approach based on imagery, celebrations, and commemorations that reinforced the notion of the close association between the physical presence of the king and the body politic of the colony and nation. This study was based on manuscript collection of the major Portuguese archives in Lisbon and the Arquivo Nacional, the Biblioteca Nacional, and the Instituto Histórico e Geográfico Brasileiro in Rio de Janeiro.¹⁰

Some of the "hot topics" of the recent historiography are challenges to the notion of Brazil as a mercantilist colony, with an export-driven economy based on slavery and controlled by a plantation elite; evidence of capital accumulation by both planters and merchants in eighteenth-century Brazil, resulting in greater independence from metropolitan domination and greater fluidity between planter and merchant business interests and personal relationships;¹¹ the examination of proto-peasants and the peasant breach in the slave system of the colony;¹² the major debate launched by the provocative thesis posited by Amílcar Martins Filho and

Paulo: Ícone, 1988), 7, 9; Laura de Mello e Souza, *Desclassificados do ouro: A pobreza mineira no século XVIII* (Rio de Janeiro: Graal, 1982); and Sílvia Hunold Lara, *Campos da violência: Escravos e senhores na Capitania do Rio de Janeiro, 1750–1808* (São Paulo: Paz e Terra, 1988), 23.

10. Maria Fernanda Bicalho, "A cidade e o império: O Rio de Janeiro na dinâmica colonial portuguesa, séculos XVII e XVIII," Ph.D. thesis, Universidade de São Paulo, 1997; and Iara Lis Carvalho Souza, *Pátria coroada: O Brasil como corpo político autônomo, 1780–1831* (São Paulo: Fundação Editora da Universidade do Estado de São Paulo, 1999).

11. João Luís Ribeiro Fragoso, *Homens de grossa aventura: Acumulação e hierarquia na praça mercantil do Rio de Janeiro (1790–1830)* (Rio de Janeiro: Arquivo Nacional, 1992); João Luís Ribeiro Fragoso and Manolo Garcia Florentino, *O arcaísmo como projeto: Mercado atlântico, sociedade agrária e elite mercantil no Rio de Janeiro, c. 1790–c.1840*, second edition (Rio de Janeiro: Livraria Sette Letras, 1996).

12. For an assessment, see Ciro Flamarion S. Cardoso, "The Peasant Breach in the Slave System: New Developments in Brazil," *Luso-Brazilian Review* 25, no. 1 (Summer 1988):49–57.

Roberto Martins in 1983 that (based on the experience of Minas Gerais after 1750) slavery was economically viable only in the export-oriented economies;¹³ and challenges to the traditional notion of the prevalence of patriarchal extended families.¹⁴

ARCHIVAL SOURCES

This new historiography demands information from documentary sources other than those of an official nature, sources that fall broadly under the rubric of the administration of empire. The precious archival repositories of the Arquivo Nacional and the Biblioteca Nacional in Rio de Janeiro continue to be the bread and butter of historians of colonial Brazil, but they have cast a far wider net in search of sources. Historians are still using state and municipal archives, but the questions to which they seek answers are leading them to focus more on the social dimension of such archives than on the administrative or institutional aspects. This tendency has resulted in a paradox: while research topics are becoming more universal and a greater variety of archives are being consulted, often the geographical scope has become more limited. Also noticeable is the fact that document-driven studies are extending from the last decades of the colonial period (the 1760s and 1770s) into the 1830s or 1840s to take advantage of rich documentation during the empire.¹⁵

Moreover, historians have “discovered” nongovernmental but institutional archives that were long neglected. Within the institutional framework, these sources can be divided into secular and ecclesiastical ones. The archives of brotherhoods are proving to be rich repositories of information on social, economic, and political history but also on mortality, morbidity, and the history of medicine. Surprisingly, the archives of the Third Orders of lay men and women are still largely virgin territory. Brotherhood and Third Order archives also provide invaluable data on price history. Perhaps the greatest revelations lie in notarial archives that, while often disconcert-

13. Amílcar Martins Filho and Roberto Borges Martins, “Slavery in a Non-Export Economy: Nineteenth-Century Minas Gerais Revisited,” *Hispanic American Historical Review* 63, no. 3 (Aug. 1983):537–68; and critical response in the same issue, 569–90. See also Horácio Gutierrez, “Demografia escrava numa economia não-exportadora: Paraná, 1800–1830,” *Estudos Econômicos* 17, no. 2 (May–Aug. 1987):297–314; and Roberto B. Martins and Amílcar Martins Filho, “Slavery in a Nonexport Economy: A Reply,” *Hispanic American Historical Review* 64, no. 1 (Feb. 1984):135–46. New evidence based on *inventários* in the Arquivo Histórico Casa Setecentista in Mariana has been advanced by Laird W. Bergad in “After the Mining Boom: Demographic and Economic Aspects of Slavery in Mariana, Minas Gerais, 1750–1808,” *LARR* 31, no. 1 (1996):67–97.

14. Donald Ramos, “Marriage and the Family in Colonial Vila Rica,” *Hispanic American Historical Review* 55, no. 2 (May 1975):200–225.

15. I am indebted to Dr. Ernst Pijning for this insight.

ingly organized for researchers, lavishly repay the expenditure of time, effort, and patience.

Interest in religious history has not surged—it remains a neglected area for colonial historians—but great interest has developed in ecclesiastical archives and those of the Holy Office. Archdiocesan and ecclesiastical archives have been “discovered” for their social content and for the history of mentalités. Although often in poor condition and lacking complete runs, parish archives have the potential to yield a wealth of demographic, economic, and social data as well as religious and administrative information. Turning from the secular church to the religious orders and the Society of Jesus, an enormous imbalance in usage of these archives becomes readily apparent. The Jesuit archives have been mined by historians but to the neglect of those of the Benedictine, Franciscan, Carmelite, and Dominican orders in particular. Such archives can provide information on themes as diverse as land usage, labor organization and management, commerce, price history, agricultural history, and the history of art, architecture, and music.

One of the lessons of “the golden age” of Brazil was that the alluvial and placer deposits discovered during the gold rushes could be reworked later to advantage. In Brazilian archives in general and specific collections in particular, researchers are recognizing that these records can be profitably culled by using a different set of criteria. To take but one example, a closer reading of legal and administrative records can make them valuable sources on social history, criminal law, and crime and punishment.

Historians are not only expanding the type of archives they consult but are now using archives outside the metropolises of Brazil: Recôncavo in Bahia and gold towns in Minas Gerais as well as townships in the former captaincy of São Paulo, in Pará, and in Mato Grosso and Goiás. It has long been accepted that any single research project on colonial Brazil often demands consultation of manuscripts in Lisbon in the Arquivo Histórico Ultramarino, the Biblioteca Nacional (especially for the Coleção Pombalina), and the Torre do Tombo, whose extensive collections are a mine of information for judicial history (Casa da Suplicação) and commercial history (Fundo dos Feitos Findos) of colonial Brazil.¹⁶ The records of the Tribunal do Santo Ofício housed in the Torre do Tombo and other Portuguese

16. Recent use of multiple Portuguese archives, notably the different collections of the Arquivo Nacional da Torre do Tombo, has been made by Evaldo Cabral de Mello in *O nome e o sangue: Uma fraude genealógica no Pernambuco colonial* (São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 1989). See also the international research component reflected in his *A fronda dos mazombos: Nobres contra mascates, Pernambuco, 1666–1715* (São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 1995). Cabral de Mello is the heir to the mantle of J. A. Gonçalves de Mello and Charles Boxer as historians of Dutch Brazil. His monographs are characterized by the use of Portuguese and Brazilian national libraries and archives as well as regional and municipal archives. For examples, see his *Rubro Velho: O imaginário da restauração pernambucana*, second edition (Rio de Janeiro: Topbooks, 1997); and *Olinda restaurada: Guerra e açúcar no Nordeste, 1630–1654*, second

archives have proven a treasure trove now being mined by historians of colonial Brazil on sexuality, morality, family history, and witchcraft. For *A heresia dos índios* (1995), Ronaldo Vainfas consulted unpublished inquisitorial records and Jesuit correspondence in the Torre do Tombo to produce an original study (the first by a historian rather than by ethnographers) and interpretation of Tupi religious practices and *santidades*, particularly the one in Jaguaripe that erupted in the south of the Bahian Recôncavo about 1580. These were both heretical acts and forms of indigenous resistance. Maria Beatriz Nizza da Silva's (1998) monograph on the history of the family in colonial Brazil drew on inquisitorial records (*cadernos do promotor, solicitantes, processos, and habilitações do Santo Ofício*) as well as the *habilitações* of the Order of Christ housed in the Torre do Tombo.¹⁷ Brazilian historians are also consulting the extensive parochial registers in the Torre do Tombo for genealogical information. Identification of these rich resources for the history of colonial Brazil has been promoted by the Projeto Resgate, under the aegis of the Ministério da Cultura in Brazil. As for the Arquivo Histórico Ultramarino, Caio Bosci and his indefatigable team have placed all historians of colonial Brazil in their debt with inventories of "*manuscritos avulsos*" relevant to Minas Gerais, Espírito Santo, and northern Brazil (Maranhão, Pará, and Rio Negro).

In addition to mining national and municipal archives in Portugal, scholars of colonial Brazil are as likely to be found in the Arquivo Histórico do Hospital de São José in Lisbon perusing the correspondence of businessman Francisco Pinheiro, or in the Arquivo Histórico do Tribunal de Contas seeking information on Jesuit properties or the Relação of Rio de

edition (Rio de Janeiro: Topbooks, 1998). Portuguese historian Maria Beatriz Nizza da Silva bases her monographs on an extraordinary range of private and public archives (national, state, and municipal) in Brazil and Portugal. See her *Vida privada e quotidiana no Brasil na época de D. Maria I e de D. João VI*, 2d ed. (Lisbon: Estampa, 1996); and *A cultura luso-brasileira: Da reforma da universidade à independência do Brasil* (Lisbon: Estampa, 1999).

17. Luiz R. B. Mott, *Rosa Egípcia, uma santa africana no Brasil* (Rio de Janeiro: Bertrand Brasil, 1993); see also his fascinating study of the dance Acotundá, an example of Afro-Christian syncretism and proto-Candomblé, one of several essays based on Inquisition records and republished in Mott, *Escravidão, homossexualidade e demonologia* (São Paulo: Icone, 1988), 87–117. Also Laura de Mello e Souza, *O diabo e a terra de Santa Cruz* (São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 1986); and her *Inferno atlântico* (São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 1993). See also João Gonçalves Salvador, *Os cristãos-novos em Minas Gerais durante o ciclo do ouro (1695–1755): Relações com a Inglaterra* (São Bernadino do Campo, São Paulo: Pioneira, 1992); the large corpus of works by Anita Novinski on New Christians and Jews in colonial Brazil, of which the most recent is *Inquisição, rol dos culpados: Fontes para a história do Brasil, século XVIII* (Rio de Janeiro: Expressão e Cultura, 1992); Ronaldo Vainfas, *Trópico dos pecados: Moral, sexualidade e Inquisição no Brasil*, third printing (Rio de Janeiro: Nova Fronteira, 1997); and Vainfas, *A heresia dos índios: Catolicismo e rebeldia no Brasil colonial* (Rio de Janeiro: Companhia das Letras, 1995); Maria Beatriz Nizza da Silva, *História da família no Brasil colonial* (Rio de Janeiro: Nova Fronteira, 1998).

Janeiro, or in the still underused Arquivo Histórico Militar researching cartography, military engineering, architecture, and iconography. They may also be found in the public libraries of Evora and Oporto and in municipal, private, and provincial collections.¹⁸ A more recent trend is recognition of the importance of consultation of documents in other European countries: in the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris, the British Library and Public Record Office in London,¹⁹ the Archivo General de Simancas, the Archivo General de Indias in Seville, the Vatican in Rome, and the Algemeen Rijksarchief in the Hague. An international component has become part of the portfolio of historical researchers on colonial Brazil.

USE OF SOURCES: CASE STUDIES

The historiography on colonial Brazil from 1983 to 1999 stresses social and cultural history in general and in particular the history of women, slavery, labor, blacks, the family, sexuality, and popular religion.²⁰ Narrowly economic and demographic histories are less in evidence. Over the last two decades, Iraci del Nero da Costa (sometimes in conjunction with Francisco Vidal Luna) has combed census data on São Paulo and Minas Gerais, parish records (*livros de assentos de batizados, óbitos, and casamentos*) for Vila Rica, and manuscripts in archives in São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro. With Horácio Gutierrez, he has compiled the most comprehensive *mapas de habitantes* for Paraná.²¹ Costa's most recent work used demographic data as the basis for conclusions of a social and economic nature and extended his research to Bahia (with parish records from the sertão) and Piauí. His findings support the contention that in some areas, a majority as large as 65 per cent of the population was not slaveholding, despite significant variations according to place and time.²² Recent political, administrative, and institu-

18. Caio C. Boschi, *Roteiro-sumário de arquivos portugueses de interesse para o pesquisador da história do Brasil* (Lisboa: Edições Universitárias Lusófonas, 1995); *Inventário dos manuscritos avulsos relativos a Minas Gerais existentes no Arquivo Histórico Ultramarino* (Lisboa), edited by Caio C. Boschi, 3 vols. (Belo Horizonte, Minas Gerais: Fundação João Pinheiro, Centro de Estudos Históricos e Culturais, 1998). See also the special number of *Acervo: Revista do Arquivo Nacional* 10, no. 1 (Jan.–Jun. 1997), dedicated to Portuguese archival sources of importance to historians of colonial Brazil.

19. C. R. Boxer, *Descriptive List of the State Papers, Portugal, 1661–1780, in the Public Record Office, London*, 3 vols. (Lisbon: 1979–1983).

20. See two essays by Stuart B. Schwartz: "Recent Trends in the Study of Slavery in Brazil," *Luso-Brazilian Review* 25, no. 1 (Summer 1988):1–25; and "Somebodies and Nobodies in the Body Politic: Mentalities and Social Structures in Colonial Brazil," *LARR* 31, no. 1 (1996):113–34.

21. Iraci del Nero da Costa and Horácio Gutierrez, *Paraná: Mapas de habitantes, 1798–1830* (São Paulo: Instituto de Pesquisas Econômicas, 1985).

22. Nero da Costa, *Arraia-miúda*.

tional histories for the colonial period are few. One is by Arno Wehling on Portuguese administration in Brazil from 1777 to 1808.²³ It makes use of manuscript correspondence in the Arquivo Nacional and Biblioteca Nacional (Seção de Manuscritos), viceregal correspondence in the Seção do Conselho Ultramarino of the Arquivo do Instituto Histórico e Geográfico Brasileiro and the Arquivo Público de Santa Catarina, and registers of port movements in the Arquivo Geral da Cidade do Rio de Janeiro.

The next section will examine how unpublished manuscript sources in Brazilian archives have been used by historians. While the selection of case studies is somewhat arbitrary, an effort has been made to include only books published or theses completed in the last ten to fifteen years by Brazilian scholars.

Biblioteca Nacional and Arquivo Nacional

The Biblioteca Nacional and the Arquivo Nacional continue to be the resources “de primeira instancia” for those researching the history of colonial Brazil. For a pioneering study of the Mesa da Consciência e Ordens (created in Portugal in 1532 and in Rio de Janeiro in 1808) and the social history of the secular clergy,²⁴ Guilherme Pereira das Neves has drawn on a wide variety of archives in Brazil (Arquivo da Cúria do Rio de Janeiro, Arquivo Público do Estado da Bahia) and in Portugal (Arquivo Histórico Ultramarino for documents on Pernambuco, the Torre do Tombo for the *padroados* of the Bispado de Pernambuco da Ordem do Cristo, and the Biblioteca Nacional). But central to his research were collections of the Arquivo Nacional in Rio de Janeiro: the Mesa do Desembargo do Paço, the Tribunal do Desembargo do Paço, and the Mesa da Consciência e Ordens in addition to *inventários* and *testamentos*. This research in the Arquivo Nacional was complemented by research in the Biblioteca Nacional: notably for information on parishes and churches in the bishopric of Maranhão, the captaincy of Rio Negro, and the captaincy of Pernambuco; for data on “*dignidades, cônegos e beneficiados*”; and in the Coleção de Documentos Biográficos, also found in the Divisão de Manuscritos.

Given the 150 years of existence of these institutions, it is especially encouraging when scholars make “discoveries” or when previously known but little researched caches of documents are more fully exploited. This has been the case with João Adolfo Hansen in the Biblioteca Nacional. His use of Gregório de Matos’s poems enabled him to make the most complete

23. Arno Wehling, *Administração portuguesa no Brasil de Pombal a D. João (1777–1808)* (Brasília: Fundação Centro de Formação do Servidor Público, 1986).

24. Guilherme Pereira das Neves, *E receberá mercê: A mesa da consciência e ordens e o clero secular no Brasil, 1808–1828* (Rio de Janeiro: Arquivo Nacional, 1997).

study to date of these poems, their significance as political and social commentary, and the poet's position in the political and social environments of seventeenth-century Bahia.²⁵ Keila Grunberg went to the Arquivo Nacional expecting to find *processos criminais*. Instead, she came across a cache of documents of *ações de liberdade*. The *gaveta* (drawer) marked "Escravos" of the Seção da Côrte de Apelação do Rio de Janeiro contained 380 *ações de liberdade*, which provided insights into the judicial system, from the initial *requerimento*, the hearing of witnesses, *certidões* and *provas das afirmações* of both sides, and a *relatório* of the *processo* through to the final ruling (*o veredicto*). This verdict could be appealed to the Côrte de Apelação. Such *processos* may date back to the end of the eighteenth century. Grunberg's research reveals those arguments that were most successful in achieving the freedom of slaves as the final outcome, the incidence of rural and urban defendants, and how slaves brought their cases to the attention of lawyers. Clearly, these slaves were familiar with instruments for gaining access to the judicial system and knew how to manipulate the system to their own advantage.²⁶ This judicial documentation (including *inventários post mortem*), together with manuscript sources of the Côrte de Apelação (*processos de força*, *de manutenção de posse*, and *de despejo de terras*, and *processos criminais* from Rio de Janeiro, Minas Gerais, and São Paulo), has also been used by Hebe Maria Mattos de Castro.²⁷ She provided a fascinating insight into legal processes, relations between slaves and owners, and how slaves had knowledge of—and access to—legal procedures. More recently, Manolo Florentino and José Roberto Goes have used the Arquivo Nacional's collections of judicial manuscripts (*apelação*, *crime*, *inventários post mortem*) for their study of slave families in Rio de Janeiro.²⁸

The Arquivo Nacional has excellent manuscript holdings on three institutions created with the arrival of the royal court in Rio de Janeiro in 1808: the Real Junta do Comércio, the Mesa do Desembargo do Paço, and the Intendência da Polícia. All await their historians. In 1986 Maria Beatriz Nizza da Silva called attention to the Intendência da Polícia.²⁹ Some police records have been used by historians, such as the Registro de Correspondência da Polícia, 1809–1836, and arrest records (*Relação de Prisões Feitas*

25. The poems were found in the Biblioteca Nacional, Rio de Janeiro, Cofres 50, 55–60. See João Adolfo Hansen, *A sátira e o engenho: Gregório de Matos e a Bahia do século XVII* (Rio de Janeiro: Companhia das Letras, 1989).

26. Keila Grunberg, *Liberata, a lei da ambigüidade* (Rio de Janeiro: Relume-Dumará, 1994).

27. Hebe Maria Mattos de Castro, *Das cores do silêncio: Os significados da liberdade no sudeste escravista, Brasil, século XIX* (Rio de Janeiro: Arquivo Nacional, 1995).

28. Manolo Florentino and José Roberto Góes, *A paz das senzalas: Famílias escravas e tráfico atlântico, Rio de Janeiro, c. 1790–c. 1850* (Rio de Janeiro: Civilização Brasileira, 1997).

29. Maria Beatriz Nizza da Silva, "A Intendência-Geral da Polícia: 1808–1821," *Acervo, Revista do Arquivo Nacional* 1, no. 2 (July–Dec. 1986):187–204.

pela Polícia) for the city of Rio de Janeiro. Arrest records have been analyzed by Leila Mezan Algranti for the decade 1810–21.³⁰ Another source for the history of criminality are the *autos crimes* used by Suely Robles Reis de Queirós.³¹ This unique source provides information about offenders and victims but also permits construction of a profile of criminality in the Brazilian capital.

One indicator of how the documentation of the Arquivo Nacional is being used by historians are books of importance to the colonial period that won the Prêmio Nacional de Pesquisa. These include João Luís Ribeiro Fragoso's *Homens de grossa aventura: Acumulação e hierarquia na praça mercantil do Rio de Janeiro (1790–1830)*, which drew heavily on *inventários post mortem* (1790–), *livros de escrituras públicas* (1799–) (*compra-venda e hipotecas*), *registros de tropeiros*, and documentation of the Real Junta do Comércio (*companhias de seguros, administração de bens de falecidos, and processos de falência*).³² The database for Manolo Florentino's *Em costas negras: Uma história do tráfico atlântico de escravos entre a África e o Rio de Janeiro (séculos XVIII e XIX)* was provided by documentation of the Junta do Comércio (*correspondências e consultas, administração de bens de falecidos, falências comerciais, navegação, navios, comerciantes, receita e despesa, importação e exportação, and processos contra companhias de seguros*); that of the Provedoria da Fazenda (*termos de contagem de escravos vindos da costa da África*); *ordens régias* of the Desembargo do Paço; and *inventários post mortem*.³³ Florentino's study examined the slave trade, Rio commerce's dependence on the trade, supply and demand factors, and African provenances of slaves. This work also provided a balance sheet of the trade in terms of profit and loss and investment potential. Sheila de Castro Faria's *A colônia em movimento: Fortuna e família no cotidiano colonial*, a study of southeastern Brazil, drew heavily on 256 *processos* in *livros de sesmarias* of the Captaincy of Paraíba do Sul (1729–1811), also housed in the Arquivo Nacional.³⁴

30. Leila Mezan Algranti, "Slave Crimes: The Use of Police Power to Control the Slave Population of Rio de Janeiro," *Luso-Brazilian Review*, 25, no. 1 (Summer 1988):27–48.

31. Suely Robles R. de Queirós, *Escravidão negra em São Paulo: Um estudo das tensões provocadas pelo escravismo no século XIX* (Rio de Janeiro: José Olympio; Brasília: Instituto Nacional do Livro, 1977).

32. João Luís Ribeiro Fragoso, *Homens de grossa aventura: Acumulação e hierarquia na praça mercantil do Rio de Janeiro (1790–1830)* (Rio de Janeiro: Arquivo Nacional, 1992).

33. Manolo Florentino, *Em costas negras: Uma história do tráfico atlântico de escravos entre a África e o Rio de Janeiro (séculos XVIII e XIX)* (Rio de Janeiro: Arquivo Nacional, 1995; São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 1997).

34. Sheila de Castro Faria, *A colônia em movimento: Fortuna e família no cotidiano colonial* (São Paulo: Nova Fronteira, 1998).

State Archives

State archives contain a wealth of information on the governance of captaincies: fiscal records, metropolitan correspondence to governors-general, royal orders and *alvarás*, letters patent, and correspondence between crown officials in the colony. A recent illustration of how these can provide a documentary base for scholarship is *O Livro da Capa Verde* by Júnia Ferreira Furtado. She has used such official sources in conjunction with notarial inventories to write a social and administrative history of the Diamond District for the period from 1772 to 1808. She drew on the same pool for her study of commerce in colonial Minas Gerais and complemented this source with wills and inventories found in the Museu do Ouro de Sabará/Casa Borba Gato and the Arquivo da Casa Setecentista in Mariana to sketch a profile of persons drawn to Minas by commercial and business opportunities.³⁵ Some state archives, such as the Arquivo Público Mineiro, contain extensive manuscript collections of municipalities. All these records continue to be heavily used, but scholars increasingly have turned from the institutional or administrative dimensions to the social content of these records or have used them to provide the administrative context for studies of society. In a study of poverty and the “*ideologia da vadiagem*” in Minas Gerais, such administrative documentation and correspondence were used extensively by Laura de Mello e Souza.³⁶

State archives also house sources indispensable to a debate that intensified in the United States in the 1970s on relationships between slaves and owners and for studies of various forms of slave resistance. Carlos Magno Guimarães, using sources of the Arquivo Público Mineiro, contributed to one aspect of this debate.³⁷ But he did not use another type of source housed in the same archive, namely wills. These documents are crucial for their biographical details, inventories of possessions, patterns of giving, and relations among family members and also for variations reflecting differences in socioeconomic standing, sex, race, and legal status. They are also windows on mentalités as individual expressions of contemporaneous collective attitudes toward life, death, and faith in an afterlife. The last twenty years have seen studies focusing on wills of persons of African descent. Eduardo França Paiva used six hundred wills, many housed in the Arquivo Público Mineiro (Câmara Municipal de Sabará) and

35. Júnia Ferreira Furtado, *O Livro da Capa Verde: O regimento diamantino de 1771 e a vida no distrito diamantino no período da real extração* (São Paulo: Annablume, 1996); see also her *Homens de negócio: A interiorização da metrópole e do comércio nas Minas setecentistas* (São Paulo: Hucitec, 1999).

36. Laura de Mello e Souza, *Desclassificados do ouro*.

37. Carlos Magno Guimarães, *Uma negação da ordem escravista: Quilombos em Minas Gerais no século XVIII* (São Paulo: Icone, 1988).

the Museu do Ouro in Sabará (Cartório do Primeiro Ofício). These will reveal strategies of resistance used by slaves.³⁸ State archives often house manuscript census materials for the later colonial period important to historians engaged in the ongoing debate about slave families. The sources (*mapas dos habitantes* for 1801, 1817, and 1829) have been mined by José Flávio Motta for his study of the structure and profile of slaveholding and the relationship between slave families and the coffee-growing industry in the community of Bananal in the Paraíba valley in São Paulo.³⁹

Municipal Archives

In a parallel development, historians are looking beyond the *atas e livros de acordãos e vereações* of the *Senados da Câmara* to documents with greater social content. Examples include *livros de enjeitados*, *livros de condenações por bem da saúde pública*, *cartas de examinações de oficiais*, *termos de distribuição de querelas e devassas*, *matrículas de escravos e vendas*, *termos de prisão*, *registros de presos*, and *autos de denúncias* of merchants. The full potential of these sources has yet to be exploited by historians studying public health, urban slavery, prices and wages, market economies and the informal sector, contraband, prostitution, artisans, elite formation, instruments of social control, *camadas populares*, recreational activities, diet, and dress, to name only some subjects. Municipal archives are of great importance because it was precisely at the local level that inhabitants of the colony, slave and free, were most likely to come into contact with civil government. Remarkably, many municipalities have yet to find their historians. An exception is Salvador, where the archives of the Prefeitura have recently been mined by Avanete Pereira Sousa for her study of networks of power, the social and economic history of the city, and everyday life in the eighteenth century and early part of the nineteenth. One intriguing conclusion challenges a historiography that has long asserted that control of the Senado da Câmara

38. Kátia M. de Queirós Mattoso, *Testamentos de escravos libertos na Bahia no século XIX: Uma fonte para o estudo de mentalidades* (Salvador: Centro de Estudos Baianos, Universidade Federal da Bahia, 1979); and Eduardo França Paiva, *Escravos e libertos nas Minas Gerais do século XVIII* (São Paulo: Annablume, 1995).

39. José Flávio Motta, *Corpos escravos, vontades livres: Posse de cativos e família escrava em Bananal (1801–1829)* (São Paulo: Annablume and the Fundação de Amparo à Pesquisa do Estado de São Paulo, 1999). For contributions to this debate since 1995 that are based on primary sources, see Clotilde A. Paiva and Douglas C. Libby, "Caminhos alternativos: Escravidão e reprodução em Minas Gerais no século XIX," *Estudos Econômicos* 25, no. 2 (May–Aug. 1995):203–33; Manolo Florentino and José Roberto Góes, *A paz das senzalas: Famílias escravas e tráfico atlântico, Rio de Janeiro, c. 1790–c. 1850* (Rio de Janeiro: Civilização Brasileira, 1997); Francisco Vidal Luna, "São Paulo: População, atividades e posse de escravos em vinte e cinco localidades (1777–1829)," *Estudos Econômicos* 28, no. 1 (Jan.–Mar. 1998):99–169; and Robert W. Slenes, "A formação da família escrava nas regiões de grande lavoura do Sudeste: Campinas, um caso paradigmático no século XIX," *População e Família* 1, no. 1 (Jan.–June 1998):9–82.

was virtually the exclusive domain of planters and merchants. Sousa's evidence suggests that the unwillingness or refusal of members of these classes to accept municipal office led to opportunities being created for members of other classes to hold public office.⁴⁰ For Rio de Janeiro, two studies in progress complement each other remarkably well. João Fragoso is working on a history of Rio in the seventeenth century using *inventários*, while Maria Fernanda Bicalho is using documents housed in Portuguese archives to construct a discourse of local governance, investigate the dynamic of crown-municipality relationships, and place the Brazilian example in a comparative perspective.

Ecclesiastical Archives

It is ironic that despite the undoubted richness of the manuscript collections of archdiocesan and diocesan archives for the history of the Catholic Church in colonial Brazil, historians have mined these sources for secular rather than ecclesiastical ends. The history of the church during the colonial period has not received the attention it demands. The importance of one type of document for the social historian was recognized only in the early 1960s.⁴¹ These are records of *visitas pastorais* (or *visitações ordinárias*) made by bishops or their representatives once a year as "*visitadores*" to towns and villages far removed from their episcopal sees. Despite a similar purpose and format, these documents should not be confused with inquisitorial visitations made by the Tribunal do Santo Ofício. The purpose of *visitas pastorais* was first to take testimony on blasphemy, heresy, crimes against the faith, acts regarded as sexually deviant, and (most severe) apostasy and then to punish the transgressors.⁴² Such a "*reverendo visitador*" established a base in a town and set up a *mesa da visitação*. *Moradores* whose lives were considered free of blemish were interrogated on forty points under the general rubric of acts against the faith (*crimes contra a fé*). At each point, the witness identified persons whom he or she had seen, heard, or suspected of having committed a crime. A meticulous record was kept of individuals, couples, and groups named in the *termo de testemunhas*. Further testimony was gathered, data were cross-referenced, contradictions highlighted or resolved, and gaps filled in. These files were kept secret. Subsequently, the *termo de culpa* was drawn up, a legal document formally

40. Avanete Pereira Sousa, "Poder local cotidiano: A Câmara de Salvador no século XVIII," M.A. thesis, Universidade Federal da Bahia, 1996.

41. José Ferreira Carrato, "A crise dos costumes nas Minas Gerais do século XVIII," *Revista de Letras* 3 (1962), separata; and "As gentes mineiras," in Carrato, *Igreja, iluminismo e escolas mineiras coloniais* (São Paulo: Companhia Editora Nacional and Editora da Universidade de São Paulo, 1968), cited by Luciano Figueiredo in *O avesso da memória: Cotidiano e trabalho da mulher em Minas Gerais no século XVIII* (Rio de Janeiro: José Olympio, 1993), p. 148, n. 18.

42. Figueiredo, *O avesso da memória*, 143–52.

accusing the individual of crimes against the faith. The final stage of the *devassa* came when the individual was called before the mesa da visitação, admitted his or her crime, and paid the appropriate fine. Although such documentation throws little light on the spiritual life of colonial Brazil and the effectiveness of such *visitas* is called into question by the frequency of recidivism, *devassas gerais* are indispensable tools for the historians of society and customs. They are particularly valuable in opening a window on sectors of society who were poor and often of mixed blood. José Ferreira Carrato was the first to use systematically and to highlight the importance of *devassas* as social documents, but others have followed his precedent. The Arquivo Eclesiástico da Arquidiocese de Mariana has been well mined by Laura de Mello e Souza in her reconstructions of poverty and destitution and also the customs and life styles of "*camadas que constituíram as camadas da miséria*," "*os padres infratores*," "*negras quitadeiras*," and "*prostitutas*."⁴³ More recently, Luciano Figueiredo has drawn in *O avesso da memória* on such *devassas* in the Arquivo Eclesiástico da Arquidiocese de Mariana, but he has cast his net wider to include *devassas* in the Arquivos Eclesiásticos das Arquidioceses de Diamantina and of Belo Horizonte.⁴⁴ This approach enabled him to gain insight into the everyday lives of women of African descent, slave and free, engaged in petty trade and prostitution, and also on domestic life and conjugal relations in eighteenth-century Minas Gerais. Luiz Mott drew on the manuscript "Devassa nas freguesias da Comarca do Sul da Bahia no ano de 1813" housed in the Cúria Arquidiocesana de Salvador. Covering twelve towns, testimony taken from 391 "*homens bons*" resulted in 596 *acusações* and more than 1500 *denúncias*. This documentation is the database for his study of concubinage, immoral acts (*tratos ilícitos*), reasons for separation (adultery, desertion), bigamy, and incest. These data led Mott to question the prevalence of the model of the "*sagrada família*" in the colony.⁴⁵ *Devassas* of the "*visitações ordinárias*," used in conjunction with other sources, have also served as sources for demographic studies at the parish and municipal levels.⁴⁶

Archdiocesan archives have manuscript collections important for historians of the family. Luciano Figueiredo drew extensively on *devassas* in the Arquivo Eclesiástico da Arquidiocese de Mariana for his history of the family, marital arrangements and tensions, and domestic environments in

43. Laura de Mello e Souza, *Desclassificados do ouro*, esp. 153–61, 175–91. See also her use of *devassas* (legal inquiries) for information on *feiticeira* in *O Diabo e a terra de Santa Cruz* (São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 1986).

44. Figueiredo, *O avesso da memória*.

45. Luiz Mott, "Os pecados da família na Bahia de Todos os Santos (1813)," *Cadernos CER* no. 18 (May 1983), republished in Mott, *Escravidão, homossexualidade e demonologia* (São Paulo: Icone, 1988), 49–81.

46. Francisco Vidal Luna and Iraci del Nero da Costa, *Minas Colonial: Economia e sociedade* (São Paulo: Fundação Instituto de Pesquisas Econômicas and Pioneira, 1982), 79–85.

Minas Gerais.⁴⁷ Another source in archdiocesan archives for family history and legal history consists of *processos* on marriage and divorce. One of the first scholars who systematically used *dispensas matrimoniais* and *processos* for divorce and annulment proceedings was Maria Beatriz Nizza da Silva. Her pioneering (1984) study of marriage in colonial Brazil was largely based on manuscript collections of the Arquivo da Cúria Metropolitana de São Paulo. The *dispensas matrimoniais e casamentos* were *autos* of the *justiça eclesiástica* that preceded matrimony. Depositions and testimony under oath provide insights into the circumstances of both parties before matrimony and factors leading to the selection of the future spouse. These *autos* contain biographical information on those about to enter holy matrimony. The Arquivo da Cúria of São Paulo contains an index of sixty thousand *autos de dispensas matrimoniais e casamentos* in the Secção Segunda of the archive as well as uncatalogued packets of such documents from São Paulo, Curitiba, Paranaguá, Iguape, and Cananéia inter alia.

In a master's thesis on colonial São Paulo, Eliana Maria Réa Goldschmidt consulted more than a thousand *autos* on mixed marriages (in which one party was a slave and the other was indigenous) in conjunction with the *pastorais antigas*, which were recommendations to vicars on their procedures vis-à-vis concubinage and similar matters. The *autos* constitute an invaluable source for names, regional origin, place of birth and baptism, civil status, residence, affiliation, physical and racial characteristics, and the names of owners. Analysis of these data permitted a comparison between marriages in which both parties were slaves and those in which one party was Native American. Such marriages resulted in the effective enslavement of the Indian partner (usually female), with owners and priests who promoted such marriages being knowing partners in such enslavement. But these marriages also served as an escape valve for tensions resulting from the shortage of African women. Subsequently, Goldschmidt consulted a largely untapped source housed in the Arquivo da Cúria Metropolitana of São Paulo: the *processos* of the diocesan tribunal referring to sexual mores that would not have been approved by the Council of Trent. Only in 1985 did this rich documentation become known to historians. The database for Goldschmidt's fascinating study of sexual deviance, extramarital behavior, and ecclesiastical attempts at social control consisted of 262 criminal cases of "*delitos da carne*" (incest, sodomy, bestiality, rape, assault, concubinage, and adultery) in the city of São Paulo and within the captaincy of São Paulo. By establishing the jurisdiction of this tribunal vis-à-vis civil tribunals and the Inquisition and by positing comparisons with Spanish America, Goldschmidt has made a major contribution to scholarly understanding of the family and sexuality in São Paulo from 1719 to the end of the colonial period.

47. Luciano Raposo de Almeida Figueiredo, *Barrocas famílias: Vida familiar em Minas Gerais no século XVIII* (São Paulo: Hucitec, 1997).

In her introduction to *Sistema de casamento no Brasil colonial*, Maria Beatriz Nizza da Silva made the perceptive observation that “*o parecer*” carried practically as much weight as “*o ser*” in colonial society. She underlined the importance of this study for colonial attitudes and how nuanced these were.⁴⁸ The works of Laura de Mello e Souza, Luciano de Figueiredo, and Eliana Goldschmidt add to social history, especially of non-European communities. They also constitute exercises in legal history and judicial processes in the colony.

Archdiocesan archives also contain information on the claustration of women in retirement houses (*recolhimentos*) and convents. The archive of the Cúria Metropolitana do Rio de Janeiro contains *habilitações para noviciados*, episcopal *portarias* pertaining to women religious, and *livros de despesas e receitas* of conventual institutions and churches. The book of statutes of the Recolhimento da Divina Providência is found in the Arquivo da Cúria Metropolitana de São Paulo, as are registers of entries, statutes, and an inventory of the possessions of the Recolhimento de Santa Teresa. These documents have been used by Leila Mezan Algranti to study retirement houses and convents in the southeast of Brazil in the second half of the eighteenth century.⁴⁹ Mary del Priore found in the manuscripts of the Arquivo da Cúria Metropolitana de São Paulo (along with evidence from other sources) material on contemporary attitudes toward female sexuality that are misogynistic and variations between popular cultures and learned cultures.⁵⁰ The result is a thought-provoking and fascinating contribution to the history of women and of mentalités. The fact that manuscript collections on *recolhimentos* should be found both in archives of *cúrias* and in conventual archives points up one difficulty confronting historians when their sources are scattered throughout several archives. This problem is also found with archives of brotherhoods.

Parish records, no less than those of brotherhoods and convents, are often dispersed among the archives of *cúrias* and private archives of individual parishes. These parish records include *registros de batizados*, *casamentos*, and *óbitos* and usually are consulted for their demographic data. A more imaginative use of them was made by Sheila de Castro Faria, who employed them to examine legitimacy, virginity and marriage, marriage and social condition, foundling children, working conditions of slaves, and the

48. Maria Beatriz Nizza da Silva, *Sistema de casamento no Brasil colonial* (São Paulo: Editora da Universidade de São Paulo, 1984); Eliana Maria Rea Goldschmidt, “Casamentos mistos de escravos em São Paulo colonial,” M.A. thesis, Universidade de São Paulo, 1986; and Goldschmidt, *Convivendo com o pecado na sociedade colonial paulista (1719–1822)* (São Paulo: Annablume, 1998).

49. Leila Mezan Algranti, *Honradas e devotas, mulheres da colônia: Condição feminina nos conventos e recolhimentos do Sudeste do Brasil, 1750–1822* (Rio de Janeiro: José Olympio, 1993).

50. Mary del Priore, *Ao sul do corpo: Condição feminina, maternidades e mentalidades no Brasil colônia* (Rio de Janeiro: José Olympio, 1993).

everyday existence of *libertos* and slaves in the southeast of Brazil.⁵¹ Of particular interest are her chapters on wealth formation in an agrarian and slave (*escravista*) environment and those on social and interpersonal relations in *casas de morada*. She used parish records for much of the data on slaves and *livres*. The earliest such records date back to 1648, but most come from the eighteenth century and are housed in the Arquivo da Cúria Metropolitana de Campos (in the state of Rio de Janeiro), the Mitra Cúria Arqui-diocesana de Niterói (also in the state of Rio de Janeiro), and the Cúria Metropolitana de Nova Iguaçu. These records were complemented by extensive research on *cartas de sesmarias* and *inventários post mortem* in non-parochial archives.

Monasteries and Convents

Almost half a century has elapsed since Carlos Ott began his systematic research in the archives of monasteries, convents, and churches of Bahia for information on the city's social history and the history of colonial Brazilian art.⁵² The last thirty years have seen scholars gaining greater access to conventual archives in Salvador and elsewhere. Anna Amélia Viera Nascimento mined the rich archive of the Convento de Santa Clara do Desterro in Salvador in her comprehensive study of the Poor Clares in Salvador. She also used sources in Rio de Janeiro and Lisbon as well as ecclesiastical, private, municipal, and public archives in Salvador.⁵³ Leila Mezan Algranti's pioneering work has drawn on conventual archives in Rio de Janeiro (Convento da Ajuda, Convento de Santa Teresa), Minas Gerais (Convento de Nossa Senhora da Conceição das Macaúbas), and São Paulo (Convento da Luz).⁵⁴ The *livros de entradas e profissões* and *registros de óbitos*, together with administrative records, provide important information on families, social structures, and hierarchization within convents as well as on the numbers of young women (*educandas*) and older women paying fees as boarders (*porcionistas*) and the incidence of women taking their initial vows (*de véu branco*) and final vows (*de véu preto*).

51. Sheila de Castro Faria, *A colônia em movimento: Fortuna e família no cotidiano colonial* (Rio de Janeiro: Nova Fronteira, 1998).

52. Carlos Ott, "O claustro do Convento de S. Francisco da Bahia," *Revista do Instituto Geográfico e Histórico da Bahia*, no. 68 (1942):91–98; and Ott, "O Livro dos Guardiães do Convento de S. Francisco da Bahia," *Revista do Instituto Geográfico e Histórico da Bahia*, no. 69 (1943):1–58.

53. The Arquivo do Convento de Santa Clara do Desterro was consulted in the middle 1960s and early 1970s by A. J. R. Russell-Wood, *Fidalgos and Philanthropists: The Santa Casa da Misericórdia of Bahia, 1550–1755* (London: Macmillan, 1968); by Susan Soeiro, "The Social and Economic Role of the Convent: Women and Nuns in Colonial Bahia, 1677–1800," *Hispanic American Historical Review* 54, no. 2 (May 1974):209–32; and by Anna Amélia Viera Nascimento, *Patriarcado e religião: As enclausuradas clarissas do Convento do Desterro da Bahia, 1677–1890* (Bahia: Conselho Estadual da Cultura, 1994).

54. Leila Mezan Algranti, *Honradas e devotas*.

Conventual and monasterial archives are especially rich in financial records, which provide valuable information on the *patrimônio* of the convent or monastery, business investments, commercial transactions, and property owned by the institution. They also throw light on financial arrangements, debts and debt collection, and the making of secured loans (including what was offered as collateral and the identities and social standing of guarantors). Convents and monasteries played a major role given the absence of banks in the colony. *Livros de receitas e despesas* provide detailed information on costs of daily living for such communities: the purchase of food, wood, clothing, and medicines; wages and salaries; the upkeep of the building; and even the operation of a *botica*. These sources also offer insight into diet and even recipes for *doces* and *licores*.

With convents, much remains to be learned about cultural and recreational activities and how women in such convents had opportunities denied to women *extra muros*. Much of a nonconventual nature can be derived from such records: gender relations and spousal relations, including wife abuse and domestic discord that might lead to women being placed in convents or *recolhimentos* on the order of civil or ecclesiastical authorities or a husband. Algranti refers to one such petition, entitled “Requerimento do capitão Silva Andrade pedindo que sua mulher seja enviada para o Recolhimento de São Raimundo.”⁵⁵

Brotherhoods

When the second edition (“revista e aumentada”) of *A pesquisa histórica no Brasil* appeared in 1969, José Honório Rodrigues observed: “Não existem informações sobre estes arquivos, a não ser excepcionalmente.”⁵⁶ He was able to list only ten references in his bibliography. The last thirty years have witnessed an explosion in studies of brotherhoods. Portuguese scholar Isabel dos Guimarães Sá in 1997 conducted a survey limited to Santas Casas da Misericórdia throughout the world. She drew on eleven different archives and assembled some twenty-five pages of bibliography.⁵⁷

As is true of conventual records, brotherhood registers may be housed in more than one location. Ecclesiastical archives, such as the Arquivo Eclesiástico da Arquidiocese de Diamantina, often house discrete volumes,⁵⁸ all that survives of brotherhood archives that disappeared or

55. Biblioteca Nacional, Rio de Janeiro, Seção de Manuscritos, doc. II, 33, 19, 28.

56. José Honório Rodrigues, *A pesquisa histórica no Brasil* (São Paulo: Companhia Editora Nacional, 1969), p. 201.

57. Isabel dos Guimarães Sá, *Quando o rico se faz pobre: Misericórdias, caridade e poder no império português, 1550–1800* (Lisboa: Comissão Nacional para as Comemorações dos Descobrimientos Portugueses, 1997).

58. These were consulted by Luciano Figueiredo on the role of women in brotherhoods. See his *O avesso da memória*, 152–67.

fell victim to human neglect, the ravages of ants, and leaking roofs. Often such holdings are limited to the statutes (*compromissos*), also to be found in the Arquivo Histórico Ultramarino in Lisbon, where drafts of such documents were sent for royal approval. In Ouro Prêto, internal papers on brotherhoods are housed in the Arquivo da Matriz de António Dias or the Arquivo da Matriz do Pilar. Yet a diligent researcher may chance across volumes still housed in churches or even in private hands. The effort in Ouro Prêto to centralize this documentation is commendable but has not been emulated elsewhere. The variation in the quality of conservation and manuscript volumes today recalls the variety of such brotherhoods in the colony, ranging from the elitist, wealthy, and long-lasting *Santas Casas da Misericórdia*, *Ordens Terceiras*, and the *Irmandade do Santíssimo Sacramento* to the transitory and poor brotherhoods of sometimes no more than a dozen members of persons of African descent, slave and free. Archives of the *Santas Casas* and *Ordens Terceiras* are invaluable sources that are often in good condition and reasonably complete. By way of contrast, those of branches of the *Irmandade de Nossa Senhora do Rosário* or of *Santo António de Catagerona* may have only one or two volumes of *livros de entradas de irmãos*.

The focus on the administrative dimensions of such brotherhoods, based on registers of admissions, elections, and deliberations of the governing board (*mesa*), has shifted to using these manuscript collections for their social and economic content. Historians are turning to fiscal records for price histories, to contracts for architectural and artistic works, and to membership rolls for social and racial stratification, elite formation, intergroup relations, immigration, and ethnic origins in the case of persons of African descent. In Salvador, Ana Palmira Bittencourt Casimiro has used the archives of the Third Order of St. Francis in an intriguing study on aesthetics and mentalités.⁵⁹ The existence of a hierarchy among such brotherhoods ranging from the *Misericórdia*, Third Orders, *Santíssimo Sacramento*, and *Rosário* to the smaller brotherhoods of blacks and mulattos permits studying colonial society and group interaction between whites and persons of African descent. In a fascinating study of funeral rites in early-nineteenth-century Bahia, João José Reis drew heavily on such archives in Bahia: the *Santa Casa da Misericórdia*, *Nossa Senhora do Rosário dos Prêtos das Portas do Carmo*, the *Igreja de Nossa Senhora da Conceição da Praia*, and the Third Orders of St. Francis, St. Dominic, and the Carmelites.⁶⁰ These rich sources have permitted the detailed study of

59. Ana Palmira Bittencourt Casimiro, *Mentalidade e estética na Bahia colonial: A Venerável Ordem Terceira de São Francisco de Assis e o frontispício da sua igreja* (Salvador: Fundação Cultural do Estado da Bahia and Empresa Gráfica da Bahia, 1996).

60. João José Reis, *A morte é uma festa: Ritos fúnebres e revolta popular no Brasil no século XIX* (São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 1991).

relations between blacks and mulattos in eighteenth-century Vila Rica by Marcos Magalhães de Aguiar.⁶¹

The potential of these archives has yet to be fully realized by researchers, however. Topics that could be pursued in the manuscript collections of brotherhoods and Third Orders include epidemiology, pharmacopoeia, public health, child and foundling care, orphans, widows, medical practices and hospital services, land use and property prices, price history, professional medical personnel (doctors and surgeons), slavery and manumission, rituals and ceremonies, inheritance practices, music and musicians, and philanthropy. Broader societal issues could also be researched. Leila Mezan Algranti even found an example of hagiography in the Arquivo do Convento da Luz in São Paulo, the “Carta sobre fatos singulares ocorridos no nascimento de madre Helena.” There is virtually no field of colonial history that cannot be studied using these rich archives.

Notarial Records

Cartórios (notarial archives) represent the “new” archival resource that has exploded on the scene in the last twenty years. The richness of this juridical documentation is unparalleled for any other European overseas empire. These documents have proven to be indispensable sources for social historians of colonial Brazil, notably in reconstructing the daily life of slaves. As a result, historians probably know more about the *vida cotidiana* of slaves and free persons of color in the colonial period than about any other sector of colonial society. Silvia Hunold Lara has aptly described this source, “que nos permite uma aproximação da fala escrava, ainda que filtrada pela pena do escrivão.”⁶² The *processos criminais* are especially significant because they permit historians to engage in an exercise in parallax: to study the perspectives of multiple persons (owners, business owners, and slaves) on the same occurrence and to examine interpersonal dynamics. The *autos de inquirição de escravos fugidos* provide details on slave flights. Rare are collections as complete as those housed in the Arquivos dos Cartórios do Primeiro, Segundo, e Terceiro Ofícios of the city of Campos (the old Vila de São Salvador). The variety of *autos* is enormous: *de devassa, de apreensão e perguntas, autos sumários de testemunhas, de apelação e agravo; de livramento; de agravo crime de injusta pronúncia e prisão entre partes, autos cíveis de justificação entre partes, autos cíveis de execução entre partes, autos cíveis de ação de dez dias entre partes, de libelo cível e crime entre partes, de querela, de cominação, de apelação e agravo, and autos crimes de livramento.*

61. Marcos Magalhães de Aguiar, “Vila Rica dos confrades: A sociabilidade confrarial entre negros e mulatos no século XVIII,” M.A. thesis, Universidade de São Paulo, 1993.

62. Silvia Hunold Lara, *Campos da violência: Escravos e senhores na Capitania do Rio de Janeiro, 1750–1808* (Rio de Janeiro: Paz e Terra, 1988), 24.

These documents have permitted Silvia Hunold Lara to take up the old historiographical debate on the softness or harshness of Brazilian slavery by rephrasing it in the conceptual context of violence and slavery, and in a region rarely touched by attention from historians of slavery (namely Campos dos Goitacases in the late colonial era). Sheila de Castro Faria was able to use a seventeenth-century *livro de notas* of the Cartório do 1º Ofício de Notas da Capitania da Paraíba do Sul (1652–1693) in a private archive to obtain information on purchases and sales of lands, leasing of lands (*arrendamentos* and *aforamentos*), gifts, adoptions, and manumissions. For her book on customs, marriage patterns, and persons of African descent, Faria also consulted *inventários post mortem* for the Capitania da Paraíba do Sul of the Cartórios do 1º, 2º e 3º Ofícios de Notas of Campos.⁶³

CONCLUSION

This categorization of archives should not give the erroneous impression that researchers deal exclusively with a single archival source. While it is the dream of every researcher to have a documentary corpus that will provide the primary source for a study,⁶⁴ the reality is that historians usually consult multiple archives—thanks in part to computer-generated catalogs and the Internet. These archives may be a mix of private and public, of national, state, and municipal, of secular and ecclesiastical. The way in which modern researchers draw on multiple archives is well illustrated by John Manuel Monteiro's acclaimed revisionist study *Negros da Terra*, which focuses on the role of Indians as sources of labor in the Paulista economy from the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries. Monteiro drew on primary sources in the Archivum Romanum Societatis Jesu and the Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale "Vittorio Emmanuele" (both in Rome); and on the Arquivo Histórico Ultramarino, the Biblioteca Nacional, and the Biblioteca do Palácio da Ajuda (all in Lisbon), and the public library in Evora. He also consulted a variety of Brazilian archives: ecclesiastical archives (Cúrias Diocesanas of Guarulhos, of Mogi das Cruzes, of Jundiá, and of Sorocaba; and the Cúrias Metropolitanas of Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo); state archives (São Paulo); municipal archives (São Paulo, Mogi das Cruzes); notarial archives (Jundiá); museums (Taubaté, Jundiá, and the Museu do Ipiranga); and historical institutes (the Instituto de Estudos Brasileiros in São Paulo and the Instituto Histórico e Geográfico Brasileiro in Rio de Janeiro).⁶⁵

63. Sheila de Castro Faria, *A colônia em movimento*.

64. An example is the corpus of *inventários post mortem* in the Arquivo Público do Estado da Bahia (Seção Judiciária) and in the Arquivo Regional da Cachoeira. B. J. Barickman examined a thousand of them for *A Bahian Counterpoint: Sugar, Tobacco, Cassava, and Slavery in the Recôncavo, 1780–1860* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1998).

65. John Manuel Monteiro, *Negros da terra: Índios e bandeirantes nas origens de São Paulo* (São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 1995).

This essay is self-evidently a highly selective survey *à vol d'oiseau*. It makes no claim to completeness. As for primary sources, gross omissions include private collections, archives created with the arrival of the royal court (such as the Arquivo do Exército, founded in 1808), archives of historical museums and historical institutes (especially the Instituto Histórico e Geográfico Brasileiro, founded in 1838), and the rich collections of the Arquivo Histórico de Itamarati (underutilized by historians of colonial Brazil). The regional nature of publishing in Brazil results in books that are published in Salvador, Recife, or Belém rarely being distributed for sale in São Paulo, Belo Horizonte, or Rio de Janeiro and vice versa. Moreover, the publication run for a book on colonial Brazil is likely to be pegged at a thousand copies or less, a situation that inevitably poses a major challenge to anyone attempting to survey national historical production on the colonial period. At the master's and doctoral levels, the absence of an annual national guide to dissertations is regrettable. My intention has been to survey those archives that are being most used by the current generation of Brazilian historians with an emphasis on manuscript collections, the creative and imaginative ways in which they are being consulted and interpreted, and the sharing of this information through articles and books. The energy apparent in such research, the intellectual curiosity, the sophistication of the methodologies and conceptualization of questions, and the overwhelming dependency on manuscript collections in Brazilian archives as primary sources all testify to the vitality of studies of colonial Brazil by Brazilian scholars.

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