

Molding the Body, Forging the Nation: Race, Physical Culture, and the Shaping of Brazil (1822-1930)

By

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To my father

“Raimundo was twenty-six years old and would be a finished type of Brazilian if it weren't for the big blue eyes he had got from his father. Very black, shiny and curly hair; a dark and mulatto complexion, but thin; pale teeth that gleamed under the blackness of the mustache; a tall and elegant stature; wide neck, straight nose and wide forehead (...) In all his life, always far from his homeland, among different peoples, full of different impressions, taken up with study concerns, he had never managed to come up with a logical and satisfactory deduction regarding his origins.”

Aluisio Azevedo – *O Mulato*, 1881

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INTRODUCTION

In 1937, in a letter addressed to the famous Brazilian eugenicist, Edgar Roquette-Pinto, the Minister of Education and Health during Getúlio Vargas' dictatorship, Gustavo Capanema, attempted to describe the ideal characteristics of the “Brazilian Man” and “Maternity” statues that were to be placed in the gardens of the ministry building.¹ The minister explained to the physician that the task of the sculptor would not simply be to produce a piece of art. For Capanema, “an important scientific side” was the message he wished to transmit: to forge “the ideal figure that we can imagine as representative of the legitimate Brazilian man,” admitting that, “the Brazilian type does not yet exist.” In the letter, Capanema rhetorically asked what would be the physiognomy and physical characteristics—height, color, shape of the head—of “the future Brazilian, not the vulgar or inferior one, but the best model of the race?” Minister Capanema also received in his office, from the hands of Rio de Janeiro's Mayor, Henrique Dodsworth, the “contributions of students” from the schools of the Federal District to the *Monumento à Juventude Brasileira* (Monument to Brazilian Youth) that would be erected in the gardens of the Ministry of Education and Health.² Minister Capanema thanked Mayor Dodsworth and stated that the money collected was a

¹ Letter from Gustavo Capanema to Edgard Roquette-Pinto. Rio de Janeiro, Augusto 30, 1937. Archive of the Academia Brasileira de Letras - Título: Arquivo Roquette-Pinto, RPi Ant/Ra/EP034-035. The former “Ministerio da Educação e Saude Publica” was reorganized and became “Ministerio Educação e Saude” under the Law 378 from 13 January 1937. The ministry was responsible for “a) school and out-of-school education; b) public health and medical and social assistance.” In its article 40, the law also created the Instituto Nacional de Cinema Educativo, which had Roquette-Pinto as its first director, although Capanema initiated the activities of the Instituto after a presidential dispatch from 12 March 1936 (Arquivo Gustavo Capanema, CPDOC-FGV, GCg 35.00.00/2, doc. 609). See the Law 378 available at <https://www2.camara.leg.br/legin/fed/lei/1930-1939/lei-378-13-janeiro-1937-398059-publicacaooriginal-1-pl.html>

² “A Juventude Brasileira ao Presidente Getúlio Vargas,” *Correio da Manhã* (Rio de Janeiro: N.14.464, Year XLI, 27 December 1941), 3. In 1942, The director of the Instituto Nacional de Estudos Pedagogicos (office of the Ministry of Education) gave to the Treasurer of the Executive Commission for the Monument to the Brazilian Youth the money collected by the education departments of São Paulo, Pernambuco, Alagoas, Paraíba and Espírito Santo. “Para o monumento à Juventude Brasileira,” *Correio da Manhã* (Rio de Janeiro: N.14.521, Year XLI, 6 March 1942) 3. The famous artist Bruno Giorgi concluded the statue in 1943.

gesture fully in agreement with President Vargas' beliefs that the gesture represented "the spontaneous idea and realization of Brazilian youth" because it was "a demonstration of its unity."³

These quotes give us the idea of how the Vargas administration urgently needed to create its own aesthetic propaganda about the Brazilian people. It is important to ask why the Vargas' regime believed itself responsible for creating the "Brazilian of the future" and what had happened during previous decades to understand why the leaders of the Estado Novo (1937-45) believed that "the Brazilian type does not yet exist." The debates on representations of the ideal woman ("maternity"), children ("Brazilian youth") and, ultimately, the "Brazilian man" epitomized—not only during the Estado Novo—the deliberations around an aesthetics of shared identity and national culture with the objective of making Brazil into a "civilized and modern" nation.

The main argument of this dissertation is that physical culture served as a powerful means to build the nation by molding Brazilian bodies and played a key role across many decades in multiple nationalist discourses. By exploring the policies on this matter and ideas at the local, national, and transnational levels from the end of the nineteenth century through the first three decades of the twentieth—a critical period in Brazil's history—this work demonstrates the importance of physical culture in processes of nation building. It analyzes how nation-builders thought about the relationship between the body and the nation, and how they put their ideas into practice.

By tracking the concern and care for shaping better bodies, through time and within institutions, and its role in the history of the Brazilian national identity, this work addresses three basic interrelated points. First, it lays out the various forms of intervention upon the body and the diverse official calls for the need to build better Brazilians from independence (1822) to the Old Republic (1889-1930). Second, my analysis focuses on the many elite discourses linked to the physical education of the Brazilian people, from statesmen to medical practitioners and intellectuals. The dissertation investigates how the body served their intention to forge an ideal nation and

³ In its edition of October 31, the newspaper *Correio da Manhã* reported that the director of Rio de Janeiro's Department of Education issued "an ordinance recommending to teachers and students of state schools the contribution to be provided in cash, whatever the amount" to be collected in the first days of November, demonstrating the real "spontaneity" during Vargas's dictatorial regime. "O Monumento da Juventude Brasileira," *Correio da Manhã* (Rio de Janeiro: N.14.416, Year XLI, 31 October 1941) 5.

insert Brazil within what they considered the civilizing process of modern Western countries. Finally, this work aims to see beyond the common trend of the scholarship on nationalism and nation building to demonstrate that physical culture was a powerful and central tool for those wishing to build the Brazilian nation and a strong national identity.

Since Brazil's political independence in 1822, policymakers, intellectuals, and academics had formulated civic-medical-pedagogical endeavors to engender the "new Brazilian". This dissertation examines how the Brazilian state historically attempted to mold men and women through bodily experiences it deemed necessary to create healthy children and adults who would help create a modern and civilized Brazil. In sum, the development of a progressive and strong nation compelled these elites to focus on health, discipline, and morality. I argue that the long path to Capanema's vision of the Brazilian man and woman, in 1937, began nearly a century earlier. This dissertation examines how the trajectory of these ideas and discourses about health, discipline, and morality evolved over that century. I show how the intellectual journey from the European ideal for the "Brazilian body" in the nineteenth century ultimately led a completely different, even contradictory, conception of the body, what was called "the eugenic mulatto." This Brazilian vision of the eugenic mulatto in the twentieth century took shape as Brazilian elites sought (quite literally) to embody the nation in their quest for an authentic Brazilian identity.⁴

This dissertation analyzes how Brazil's longstanding fascination with physical culture shaped and reshaped elite discourses about the formation of the Brazilian nation and presents a new perspective on theoretical questions related to modern state building. It aims to shed a new light on how we think about major narratives of Brazilian identity in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Physical culture, in its broader sense in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, referred to the policies and methodological practices aimed at achieving

⁴ In 1936, Gilberto published *Sobrados e Mucambos* (The Mansions and the Shanties), in which he attempted to understand the transformations of the Brazilian rural patriarchy affected by the decline of slavery and pressed by the external tendencies of modernity. In a chapter called "Ascensão do bacharel e do mulato" (the rise of the graduate and the mulatto), Gilberto Freyre described "the hybrid, when eugenic, seems to possess, like no individual of pure race, a particular charm," referring to the novel *O Mulato*—published in 1881 by Aluísio Azevedo. See Gilberto Freyre, "Ascensão do bacharel e do mulato," *Sobrados e mucambos: a decadência do patriarcado e desenvolvimento do urbano* (São Paulo: Global, 16^a ed., 2006), 712.

healthy, vigorous, hygienic bodies. This work investigates the rising influence of physical culture from the mid-nineteenth century up to the beginning of Getúlio Vargas's authoritarian regime with its cultivation of the body as a symbol of nationalism in the early decades of the twentieth century.

I argue that physical culture was an ideological construct utilized to create the Brazilian nation, a system of ideas guiding individual and collective attitudes. In addition, I show how physical culture played a decisive role as many Brazilians hoped to move Brazil from what they considered national "inferiority" to "civilization". This dissertation stresses the significance that hygiene, healthcare, and bodily betterment had as a means of governance, as a *mentalité* that permeated different historical periods for more than a century. The wide variety of discourses addressing physical culture played an essential role in the historical formation of Brazilian national identity, as elites attempted to shape a modern Brazil in the image of Europe. Ironically, it ultimately led them to forge a national identity that was Brazilian and not in the image of Europe. By using a wide array of sources, such as medical journals, newspapers, records of educational institutions, laws and legislation, this dissertation shows how intellectuals, politicians, bureaucrats, physicians, and policy makers sought to shape Brazilian bodies and the nation through assertive, aggressive propaganda, policies, and bodily interventions aimed at disciplining, standardizing, and improving citizens from the moment of conception to adulthood.

This dissertation analyzes how an emphasis on physical culture in Brazil sheds new light on how we think about the dominant narratives and interpretations of nationalism, nation building, and Brazilian identity. Physical culture, in its broader sense in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, aimed "to unfold the natural and symmetrical beauty of the human body, making it fit and capable in every phase of moral life to obey and carry out the will of its supreme master, the mind."⁵ Physical culture, as used in this project, refers to the policies and methodological practices aimed at achieving healthy, vigorous, hygienic citizens, "developing all the faculties of

⁵ Carl Betz, *A System of Physical Culture, designed as a manual of instruction for the use of schools* (Kansas City: Kansas City Press, 1886) 1.

the body and mind to the highest standard.”⁶ Brazilian intellectuals and policy makers in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries considered physical culture a psychophysical process of cultivating the “harmonious and all-around development of human body activity.”⁷

As with racial discourses, Brazilians were widely read and fully acquainted with European and North American writers. They took these works, however, and adapted foreign theories and ideas to their own realities in various parts of Brazil. The greatest challenge for Brazil’s leadership was how to adapt this foreign mindset for a population of overwhelming African descent. Given the prevailing scientific racism of the nineteenth century, many Brazilian intellectuals, policy makers, politicians, and activists had to challenge scientific racism or find a way to diminish the importance of Afro-Brazilians over time. Moreover, physical education became an instrument to mold bodies and produce healthy, moral citizens within schools and military institutions. This dissertation also describes how transatlantic conversations about eugenics, the body, and physical education unfolded within the Brazilian national context, with regional variations. Ultimately, it demonstrates how the political elites attempted to reshape the bodies of the people, and in the process, remold the nation. This historical analysis describes how the government defined and depicted the Brazilian population but does not fully explore how the great majority of Brazilians received and responded to these definitions and depictions. My work analyzes discourses of governance, attempts by the state to create a specific order. Popular reception is not the principal focus of this research, although it at times appears through petitions, documents, and requests for regulation, as numerous officials seek to find ways to take part in the debates about the creation of an ordered, disciplined, imagined state.

⁶ E.B. Houghton, *Physical Culture* (Toronto: Warwick & Sons, 1886) 3.

⁷ Peter Fanzevich Lesgaft (1898) “Importance of physical culture in the family and at school” in Vladimir Irhin and Irina Irhina’s “Genesis of Health – Oriented Physical Culture at Schools of Russia (the end of the XIX century – the 80s of the XX century)” *SportLogia* 2011, 7(2), 169–176.

In the highly developed historiography, research has principally focused on the role of race in the formation of Brazilian nationalism and national identity, whereas the fundamental role of physical culture in discourses about nation building has been largely overlooked. This dissertation intends to reorient the study of Brazilian nationalism and national identity to demonstrate that the desire to create healthy bodies widely permeated discourses of national identity from independence in the early nineteenth century to the mid-twentieth century. The emphasis on physical culture at the core of nationalism crosses a wide variety of racial theories, scientific approaches, and political regimes. Whether under the Empire (1822-89), the Old Republic (1889-1930), or the authoritarian period (the Estado Novo, especially, 1937-45), nationalists sought to shape and reshape the bodies of Brazilians to form what they so deeply desired—to create a modern, civilized nation.

Nation and Identity

This dissertation builds on previous work on the history of the body, eugenics, nationalism and national identity, and Brazilian regionalism. It builds on the rich literature on nationalism in Brazil, while taking an interdisciplinary framework and a comparative, international perspective. The formation of Brazilian identity across the long nineteenth century paved the way for the nationalism that matured during Vargas' Estado Novo. I hope this dissertation demonstrates the importance of studying national identity formation and physical culture in the construction of modern Latin America's largest and most populous nation.

Nationalism, as a historical-political manifestation, can only be appreciated when seen in both its larger patterns as well as its many faces. Nationalism is, above all, an ever-changing form that varies across countries and cultures. It emerges with the consolidation of a set of key characteristics, the presence of distinctive traces belonging to a defined historical group. Theorists, notably Benedict Anderson, Eric Hobsbawm, Anthony Smith, Michael Billig, Craig Calhoun, and Tim Edensor, have highlighted that nations are not objective, real or indispensable, but rather historical, social, and cultural constructs based fundamentally on collectively shared cultures, myths, symbols, and rituals. The concept of nation founded on the principle of "fatherland" connects its

legitimacy to a territory and unity of political ideals. The bond that holds ethnic communities together, on the other hand, originates from a genealogy, a concept primarily invented by an intelligentsia and reinforced by philological studies, institutions, and the public sphere.⁸

Both the political construct and the genealogy may differ in the attention given to the origin of common values, but both also contain elements in common: the idea of a natural territory from which individuals and histories trace their unique traits, the transmission of cultural values through mass education, devotion to national symbols, and an imagined unity. Authors such as Ernest Gellner argue that the emergence of the nation is a consequence of nationalistic manifestations—of the rise of nationalism in a country.⁹ The nation thus becomes the objective institution of the nationalist ideal; its territorial, political, and historical materialization within a political community that aspires to the same ideals. There is, however, a clear separation between nation and state. Most theorists argue that states existed before nations, and this is the case in Brazil. Nationalists, such as those in Brazil, however, think that nations existed before they became fully recognized by other nations. They believe that the consolidation of their nation was inevitable.

The state is made up of public institutions while the nation is a political community made up of individuals with similar historical identities attached to a “homeland.” Some states rule over contesting nationalities and nationalisms and can be challenged by irruptions within its territory. The challenge for nation builders is to define the homeland as an essential element for the idea of the nation, for it links a national group to a specific historical territory to which primordial narratives are attached, where people and land claim deep historical ties.

The differences between ethnic communities and nations are clearly in the origin of nationalist sentiment. While the bond that binds ethnic communities (ethnic nationalism) originates from an inseparable genealogical

⁸ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1983); Eric J. Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780 – Programme, Myth, Reality* (1990); Anthony D. Smith, *National Identity in Comparative Perspective* (Nevada: University of Nevada Press, 1991); Michael Billig, *Banal Nationalism* (New York: SAGE Publications, 1995); Craig J. Calhoun, *Nationalism* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997); Tim Edensor, *National Identity, Popular Culture and Everyday Life* (Oxford: Berg, 2002).

⁹ Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1983).

root (nourished by an *intelligentsia* and reinforced by philological studies), nations that are founded on the principle of *Patria* ground their legitimacy on territory and the unity of political ideals (civic nationalism). Both may diverge in how they represent values, but both contain elements in common, such as the transmission of cultural values through mass education, devotion to national icons and signs, and a centralizing idea of unity, even if it is symbolic. The idea of unity and autonomy are dominant characteristics of nationalism, and it is built on the need subsume the ‘self’ in a collective environment. The Enlightenment introduced the idea of individual moral autonomy. In the collective sphere, the individual must see herself as sharing common values with the collective for nationalism to emerge as a political force.¹⁰

The history of the formation of Latin American nations is strongly defined by instability. The nexus between the rise of the state and that of the nation is one of the most controversial issues in the historiography of this region.¹¹ In *Becoming Brazilians*, Marshall Eakin argues that in Brazil, the state emerges before the nation.¹² Other works by distinguished scholars such as Carlos Guilherme Mota’s *Viagem Incompleta*, Paulina Alberto’s *Terms of Inclusion*, Barbara Weinstein’s *The Color of Modernity*, Celso Castilho’s *Slave Emancipation*, Leslie Bethel’s *Brazil: Essays on History and Politics*, and the collection *História do Brasil Nação: 1808-2010*, directed by Lilia Moritz Schwarcz, have particularly attended to the multiple forms of constructing Brazil, focusing on the

¹⁰ As Smith states, “[...] with Kant autonomy becomes an ethical imperative for the individual, a principle of his being, not just a political ideal to be invoked at times of danger. Applied by Fichte, Schlegel and the other German Romantics to groups rather than individuals, the ideal of autonomy gave rise to a philosophy of national self-determination and collective struggle to realize the authentic national will – in a state of one’s own.” Smith (1991), 76.

¹¹ The power of the caudillos kept oligarchies in power, making difficult the organization of civil society and making politics a means of oppression and violence; a centralized and authoritarian form of government in flagrant contradiction with the dispositions of the liberal ideals that they claimed to defend. See Tulio Halperin Donghi, *The Aftermath of Revolution in Latin America* (New York: Harper & Row, 1973); Nancy P. Appelbaum, Anne S. Macpherson, and Karin A. Roseblatt, eds., *Race & Nation in Modern Latin America* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2003); Jose C. Moya, ed., *The Oxford Handbook of Latin American History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011).

¹² Marshall C. Eakin, *Becoming Brazilians: Race and National Identity in Twentieth-Century Brazil* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2017).

role of socio-economic, political, and cultural conditions to the formation and development of the nation.¹³ Among the myriad of works examining the process of nation building in Brazil, relatively recent works provide historical perspective into this process, although they largely focus on politics, economics, and race.¹⁴

The rich literature that pieces together an understanding of the emergence of Brazilian national identity, however, has paid very little attention to the broader configurations of physicality, the body, and nation building. Important Brazilian studies, such as *Pesquisa histórica na educação física*, organized by Amarílio Ferreira Neto, *História do esporte no Brasil*, organized by Mary Del Priori and Victor Melo, and *Memória social dos esportes*, organized by Francisco Teixeira Silva and Ricardo Santos, have mostly focused on sports and physical education, important branches of physical culture.¹⁵ Internationally, J.A. Mangan's *Shaping the Superman*, Vertinsky and Hargreaves' *Physical Culture, Power, and the Body*, and Rachel Morgan's *Governing Bodies*, for example, have assembled publications of noteworthy studies from around the world on the matter of physical culture and nationalism. However, Brazilian nationalism is not discussed in any of these publications.¹⁶

¹³ Carlos Guilherme Mota (ed.), *Viagem incompleta: a experiência brasileira*, 3a. ed. (São Paulo: Senac, 2009); Paulina L. Alberto, *Terms of Inclusion: Black Intellectuals in Twentieth-Century Brazil* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011); Lilia Moritz Schwarcz, ed., *História do Brasil Nação: 1808-2010* (Rio de Janeiro: Objetiva, 2012); Barbara Weinstein, *The Color of Modernity: São Paulo and the Making of Race and Nation in Brazil* (Durham/London: Duke University Press, 2015); Celso Thomas Castilho, *Slave Emancipation and Transformations in Brazilian Political Citizenship* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2016); Leslie Bethel, *Brazil: Essays on History and Politics* (London: University of London Press, 2018).

¹⁴ Marcos Napolitano, *História do Brasil República* (São Paulo: Editora Contexto, 2016); José Murilo de Carvalho, *O pecado original da República* (Rio de Janeiro: Bazar do Tempo, 2017); Lilia Moritz Schwarcz & Heloisa Murgel Starling, eds., *Dicionário da República: 51 textos críticos* (São Paulo: Cia. Das Letras, 2019); Renato Lessa & Arno Wehling, eds., *130 anos: em busca da República* (Rio de Janeiro: Intrínseca, 2019); Keila Grinberg & Mariana Muaze, eds., *O 15 de Novembro e a queda da monarquia: relatos da Princesa Isabel, da baronesa e do barão de Muritiba* (São Paulo: Chão Editora, 2019).

¹⁵ Amarílio Ferreira Neto, *Pesquisa histórica na educação física*, 6 v. (Vitória: CEFD/UFES, 1996); Francisco Carlos Teixeira Da Silva & Ricardo Pinto dos Santos, eds., *Memória social dos esportes: futebol e política: a construção de uma identidade nacional* (Rio de Janeiro: Mauad/FAPERJ, 2006); Mary Del Priore & Victor Andrade de Melo, eds., *História do esporte no Brasil: do Imperio aos dias atuais* (São Paulo: Unesp, 2009).

¹⁶ J.A. Mangan, ed., *Shaping the Superman: Fascist Body as Political Icon - Aryan Fascism* (London: Frank Cass, 1999); Jennifer Hargreaves & Patricia Anne Vertinsky, eds., *Physical Culture, Power, and the Body* (London: Routledge, 2006); Rachel Morgan, *Governing Bodies: American Politics and the Shaping of the Modern Physique* (Philadelphia: U. Penn Press, 2018). Mangan also published quintessential works on sports, such as *Athleticism in the Victorian and Edwardian Public School* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981) and *Gender, Sport, Science: Selected Writings of Roberta J. Park* (London: Routledge, 2009) along with Patricia Vertinsky. Other key works are Mark Freeman, ed., *Sport, Health and the Body in the History of Education* (London: Routledge: 2015) and Simon Martin, *Football and Fascism: The National Game Under Mussolini* (Oxford: Berg, 2004). Neither of these works have chapters on Brazil or any other Latin American country.

José Murilo de Carvalho states in *A construção da ordem* that although Brazil managed to retain its political unity after independence while Spanish America fragmented into more than a dozen countries, the ties between provinces/states were weak at the beginning of the nineteenth century.¹⁷ Despite this political “unity”, it is plausible to ask if there was in fact a Brazilian nation in the nineteenth century. Brazilian nation builders had to construct a common past before they could build a common future. Defining and shaping a “Brazilian body” was a crucial imperative for political leaders, intellectuals, and institutions in the process of molding the Brazilian nation. The discourse of physical culture, I argue, was a common thread that would connect Brazilians from different regions.

One goal of this work is to dialogue with global history while examining the process of nation building in Brazil, from the decades after independence to the so-called “Estado Novo.” I seek to understand Brazil not only as a state, as a spatially specific unit, but also through its intangible borders, across its frontiers of thoughts and ideas. To track the body itself and its role in the history of the Brazilian national identity, it is also necessary to take a global approach that involves recovering and understanding a set of practices, intellectual traditions, ways of thinking and acting that existed far beyond Brazil.

This dissertation also seeks to contribute to debates that examine how past experiences condition present policies. This work observes how the present elaborates upon the collective past, and how it projects ways of configuring policies and society for the future. In other words, it explores how social groups, by a means of political action, developed a knowledge and understanding of the past capable of guiding, in that present, its projections for the future of that society. Debates about the formation of the Brazilian nation occurred in distinct historical contexts that took various pieces of evidence and global perspectives into account to project Brazil’s desire as a nation of the future. By “returning to the *longue durée*,” following the call of David Armitage and Jo Guldi, I analyze a set of elements of the Brazilian past related to physical culture, which guided ideas of the future

¹⁷ José Murilo de Carvalho, *A construção da ordem* (Brasília: Editora Universidade de Brasília, 1980), 19.

and a group of concrete historical facts that imposed specific resolutions towards the future of the nation.¹⁸ John Dewey once said that every generation should rediscover democracy because societies seem to suffer from a kind of historical amnesia, debating subjects as if they had not been discussed before.¹⁹ Paraphrasing Dewey, throughout different moments of Brazilian history, policy makers, physicians, intellectuals, and other leaders debated the principles around the maxim *mens sana in corpore sano*, rediscovering and redefining them. This dissertation explores how Brazil governments developed policies over time meant literally to “shape” Brazilian citizens and how managing and molding Brazilian bodies intersected with policies of childcare, education, health, and citizenship.

Building Brazil’s Body Politic in the Longue Durée

Thinking about the human body as a holistic entity is a constant in the Western world. Although their conceptions were different from those developed in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, for the ancient Greeks, the body was philosophically conceptualized, and they introduced a certain nuance that supported modern views about the body. As Nigel Crowther explains, ancient Greeks comprehended the body very broadly.²⁰ Ancient Greek philosophers defined *soma* (body) as physical matter and *psyche* (soul) as the breath (*pneuma*) that gave life to matter.²¹ In general, *soma* and *psique* were not separate, realities, but, on the contrary, were complementary. Aristotle believed that physical substance and form could not be separated. *Soma* and *psyche* were two distinct

¹⁸ David Armitage and Jo Guldi, “The Return of the *Longue Durée*. An Anglo-American Perspective,” *Annales. Histoire, Sciences Sociales* (Paris: Editions de l’E.H.E.S.S., 2015/2) 289-318; See also, Dale Tomich, “The Order of Historical Time: The *Longue Durée* and Micro-History,” *Almanack* (Guarulhos, n.02, 2nd semester 2011) 52-65.

¹⁹ John Dewey (1859-1952) was an American philosopher, psychologist, and educational reformer whose ideas have been influential in education and social reform. See Dewey’s *Democracy And Education: an introduction to the philosophy of education* [1916] (New York: Free Press, 1997).

²⁰ See Nigel B. Crowther, *Sport in Ancient Times* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2007).

²¹ It is worth remembering that the notion of *soma* was quite broad, including the possessions of an individual, as identified by Foucault: “Thus, the word *soma*, which designates the body, also refers to riches and possessions; whence the possible equivalence between the ‘possession’ of a body and the possession of wealth”. Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, v. III: *The Case of the Self* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1986), 27.

aspects of the same reality. For Aristotle, body and soul (*anima*) were, therefore, inseparable.²² In *Politics*, speaking about the issue of the generation of children and their education, Aristotle recommended:

The city should possess the virtues of peace as well as of war, of leisure as well as of business. (...) We have already determined that nature and habit and reason are required, and, of these, the proper nature of the citizens has also been defined by us. But we have still to consider whether the training of early life is to be that of reason or of habit, for these two must accord, and when in accord they will then form the best of harmonies. (...) The care of the body ought to precede that of the soul, and the training of the appetitive part should follow: none the less the care of it must be for the sake of the reason, and our care of the body for the sake of the soul. Since the legislator should begin by considering how the bodies of the children of whom he is rearing may be as good as possible (...) It will be the first care of the legislator that the population are strong and healthy.²³

Based on this principle, Aristotle offered a series of observations about the care of children. For example, he recommended that rather than being idle, pregnant women should instead eat well and exercise their bodies, in order to keep their spirits calm, to better prepare the citizen-soldier. For Aristotle, the body must be active, and individuals should therefore be physically educated from childhood. Aristotle also made the important distinction that body activity should be carefully considered, as reckless body activity could result in consequent issues and physical damage.

The body must be trained before the mind; and therefore boys should be handed over to the trainer, who creates in them the proper habit of body, and to the wrestling-master, who teaches them their exercises. Although the Lacedaemonians have not fallen into this mistake, yet they brutalize their children by laborious exercises that they think will make them courageous. But in truth, as we have often repeated, education should not be exclusively, or principally, directed to this end. We may infer that what is noble, not what is brutal, should have the first place. (...) Even if the Lacedaemonians are right about their end, they do not attain it. When they alone were assiduous in their laborious drill, were superior to others, but now they are beaten both in war and gymnastics. (...) When boyhood is over, three years should be spent in other studies; the period of life which follows may then be devoted to hard exercise and strict diet. Men ought not to labour at the same time with their minds and with their bodies.²⁴

²² Aristotle, *De Anima (On the Soul)* (London: Penguin Classics, 1987).

²³ Aristotle, *Politics: Writings from the Complete Works - Politics, Economics, Constitution of Athens* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016), 206. Edited by Jonathan Barnes.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 215-17.

In modern times, the human body has been one of the most popular objects of regulation and control. It is an object of power. The body is the recipient of impositions and severe regulations, including political control related to morality, emotion, sexuality, leisure, and science. Throughout the nineteenth-century, Brazilian political, scientific, and intellectual leaders constantly evoked the values of “hard exercise,” “strict diets,” and “true courage,” and associated these characteristics with “a gentle and noble character.” Moreover, attributes such as politeness and courtesy also concerned these leaders, a concern which perfectly coincides with what Norbert Elias called a “civilizing process.”²⁵ The process included the control of emotions. While caring for healthy, robust bodies, Brazilian leaders also aimed at shaping a civilized people in the tropics, establishing complete institutional control over physicality, will, and emotions. By shaping Brazilian bodies Brazilian elites aimed to modernize their society to take its place among the “civilized.” In this effort to build the civilized Brazilian, reason and science would prevail over body and emotions.

In the nineteenth century, the discourse of physical education came from physiology, anthropometry, and anatomy seeking to promote the “civilizing process” in Western countries. The hygiene of the body was considered to be both moral and physical. A “clean individual” was a person who held values such as modesty, decency, and virtue. Elegance in motion was the moral and hygienic archetype. Moreover, strength, vigor, courage, and honor were essential qualities for the nation. Throughout the nineteenth century, a pedagogy of gesture and posture was formulated in a more precise and explicit way than previously in the history of Western civilization.²⁶ The education of the body gained crucial recognition in the process of nation building. As historians

²⁵ See Norbert Elias, *The Civilizing Process: Sociogenetic and Psychogenetic Investigations*. Volume I, *Changes in the Behaviour of the Secular Upper Classes in the West* (Boston: Blackwell, 2000). The idea (or concept) of civilization, says Elias (p.5), “express[es] the self-consciousness of the West. One could even say: the national consciousness. It sums up everything in which Western society of the last two or three centuries believes itself superior to earlier societies or ‘more primitive’ contemporary ones. By this term, Western society seeks to describe what constitutes its special character and what it is proud of: the level of *its* technology, the nature of *its* manners, the development of *its* scientific knowledge or view of the world, and much more.”

²⁶ Danièle Tosato-Rigo, “In the Shadow of Emile: Pedagogues, Pediatricians, Physical Education, 1686–1762,” *Studies in Philosophy and Education* (New York: Springer, n.31, 2012), 449-463; Vanessa Heggie, “Bodies, Sport and Science in the Nineteenth Century,” *Past & Present*, 231:1 (May 2016), 169-200.

and social scientists like Gertrud Pfister brilliantly explained, the diffusion of physical culture in several European countries gave birth to a substantial movement called the European Gymnastics Movement, most notably in Germany, Sweden, France, and England.²⁷ Although each country had its own method, they all supported a common objective: to regenerate “the race” by promoting health and bodily care to serve fatherland.²⁸ The European Gymnastics Movement influenced everyday relationships, entertainment, and festivals, such as street shows, circuses, and military exercises.

The European Gymnastics Movement promoted an ideal physical culture with a scientific and utilitarian perspective on an individual’s education.²⁹ With its discipline and methodical character, physical culture claimed to be consistent with scientific thought, which required a logical order for physical activities and an appropriate use of the body’s energy, highlighting the idea that health, vigor, energy, and morality were all linked. During the nineteenth century, these ideas gained prominence in several Brazilian institutions and appeared in a variety of scientific works. Its Brazilian advocates argued that physical culture was the most appropriate means to achieve a proper moral education and build an enhanced nation.³⁰

Concerns about the relationship between the body and the state are not the product of a specific cultural perspective, although they were derived from different historical realities. The debates about the body and the formation of the nation are ongoing. The enduring importance of these debates over the *longue durée* captured

²⁷ Gertrud Pfister, ed., *Gymnastics: A Transatlantic Movement: from Europe to America* (London: Routledge, 2013).

²⁸ Pehr Henrik Ling (1776-1839), for example, a pioneer professor of physical education in Swedish military schools, was not only interested in preparing soldiers for defending his fatherland, but also believed in gymnastics as a useful educative, hygienic, and prophylactic tool. See José Esteves, *O Desporto e as estruturas sociais: um ensaio sobre a interpretação do fenómeno desportivo* (Lisboa: Ed. Universitárias Lusofónas, 1999).

²⁹ Spanish Colonel Francisco Amoros was a pioneer in the formulation of French Gymnastics, defending physical exercises from the perspective of a moral education. The method of gymnastics described by Francisco Amoros, inserted the human body in a set of norms of moral conduct. The goal was to mold bodies, regulating their manifestations and educating their will. The practice of gymnastics was seen as a means to educate the body for functions useful to society. See Esteves (1999).

³⁰ In a chapter titled “Entangled Patriotisms: Italian Liberals and Spanish America in the 1820s,” Maurizio Isabella points out, although timidly, that physical culture was also an important transnational matter in the Spanish America. See Matthew Brown & Gabriel B. Paquette, eds., *Connections after Colonialism Europe and Latin America in the 1820s* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2013).

my attention and has guided my research. Discourses about “progress” have developed a series of ideas and practices based on the premise of educating and preparing the individual for the country as a whole, from the first years of life. Physical culture was one of the crucial tools used by the state, intellectuals, and institutions in thinking and building the Brazilian nation from independence to the mid-twentieth century. Molding and educating the body employed physical culture’s principles of bodily hygiene, nutrition, *puériculture* (the rearing and hygienic care of children), eugenics, and physical exercises.

Finally, in my search to understand physical culture as a representation of a *mentalité*, this dissertation intends to reconstruct “the mental material” available across several phases of Brazilian history. Roland Barthes taught us that literature is also useful to historians.³¹ Classic works of Brazilian literature are also important for the history of mentalities, which I have emphasized at the beginning of each chapter. Highlighting the use of certain terms and words such as “physical education,” “gymnastics,” or “sportsmen” is also to understand the means of expression that characterize these mentalities. It would be impossible to understand the Brazilian mindset without examining the vocabulary in common use. Analyzing works by Machado de Assis, Gonçalves Dias, or Aluísio Azevedo also reveals the extent to which their reasoning was influenced by the debates of their time, because “the individual is always what his time and his social environment allow.”³² In this sense, the intellectuals, writers, physicians, and characters presented in this dissertation, through primary sources, also reveal the ambiguities of their era. As much as they had ideas about a new, modern, and civilized Brazilian nation, it cannot be said that they were completely original. The use of foreign terms, mostly in English and French, demonstrates the strong influence of European thought that characterized the development of “new” ways of thinking about the body and physical culture in Brazil that was not strictly “national.”

³¹ Roland Barthes, *The Rustle of Language* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989) translated by Richard Howard.

³² Lucien Febvre, *Combats pour l’Histoire* (Paris: A. Cotin, 2nd ed., 1965), 221.

In studying the mental material, the *outillage* available to individuals over time, I also seek to reconstruct the physical, intellectual, and moral universe of a time. In my analysis, I am cautious to avoid generating distortions in the representations historical actors forged about their world, life, and politics while seeking the substratum of “modern” and “civilizing” ideas to build a Brazilian nation. This dissertation looks at individuals to understand the collective and, starting from the collective, to explain the behavior of individuals in a kind of Febvrean circuit, a dialectic of complex relationships between the particular and the social that gave rise to ideas and mentalities.³³

The research for this dissertation required several lengthy trips to archives in Brazil, especially in the states of Rio de Janeiro and Pernambuco. These trips allowed me to create a rich inventory of resources, notably catalogs of theses on Brazilian medicine, statutes, minutes, and social clubs programs, as well as the collections of the Brazilian Military Archive and the archive of the Institute of Education (ISERJ/FAETEC). I located documents that spoke to the official state concerns throughout the nineteenth century. Many governmental reports permitted me to analyze the successes, failures, and challenges of the projects conceived for the country through the lenses of their authors. Moreover, the documentation used is also an expression of the state’s efforts to structure itself and to forge an idea of nation. It is also possible to observe a process of specialization taking place in public administration, its different actors, and institutions, as well as hierarchical structures and the establishment of rules and norms for regulating and operating state political activities that addressed bodily care. The identification of objectives that oriented the public agenda to shape the Brazilian “body” represented what Bruno Jobert and Pierre Muller called “the state in action,” in a more or less consolidated way.³⁴

³³ It is important to remember that the collective psychology of a group is not the sum of the participants’ individual psychologies. The group is not a simple gathering of individuals. See Robert Mandrou, “L’histoire des mentalités,” *Encyclopaedia Universalis* (Paris, t. VIII, 1968) 436-438.

³⁴ Bruno Jobert & Pierre Muller, *L’Etat en action: Politique publiques et corporatismes* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1987).

The analysis of this material is certainly not enough to capture or reflect the whole complexity of Brazil's social and political life, with its far broader set of actors, tensions, and interests. I do believe, however, that the dissertation reveals what Brazilian society faced based on the specific contingencies of different times. Official reports not only synthesized certain perceptions, but they also reveal the debates and clashes over the various aspects of the country's division and operation. In this sense, primary documents also give us access to a broader picture of the implementation of physical culture-related initiatives from the viewpoint of those who were institutionally responsible for those actions.

This dissertation examines the relationship between different institutionalized bodily practices and notions linked to the construction of an idea of a nation. Concerns about national identity, military defense, and the development of healthy and sanitary habits aimed to shape a modern Brazilian nation. I have observed a dual focus in the way legislation, reports, and documents in general approached physical culture. One set of beliefs involved the adoption and adaptation of predominantly European ideas by a significant part of Brazil's *intelligentsia*, which investigated the spread of Eurocentric models of civilization and civility among different strata of the population. The ideals and discourses in favor of civilization became the basis for several political projects and administrative measures that guided the constitution of a nation.

Discourses about bodies became a kind of panacea to legitimize actions put forward as a means to overcome the issues in developing a modern nation. In the eyes of the contemporaries who shared ideas of civilization, there was a pressing need for the Brazilian state to foster, educate, and instruct its people's bodies. Second, the conception of civilization, associated with ideas of progress and reason, inspired the vision of intellectuals, medical practitioners, and policymakers toward the utopia of forming a holistic Brazilian people, educating them in a way to integrate their physical, intellectual, and moral aspects.³⁵ Caring for and educating the

³⁵ To know more about the idea of civilization and culture thought history, see Olivier Zunz, ed., *Reliving the Past: The Worlds of Social History* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1985); and Denys Cuche, *La Notion de culture dans les sciences sociales* (Paris: Éditions La Découverte, 1996).

body in its broader sense became part of the “civilizing” project of the Brazilian state, inspired by societies then perceived as models of development and modernity.

This dissertation intends to contribute not only to the substantial arena of studies on nationalism and nation building, but also to a growing historiography of physical culture and its role in the processes of constructing an imagined community by weaving together symbols, rituals and practices that unite a group of people. Intellectuals, policymakers, social reformers, and educators in Brazil identified the individual as the center of the social fabric and defined the individual based on binary and hierarchical stereotypes (fit/unfit, desirable/undesirable, superior/degenerated). They integrated diverse perspectives such as genetics, scientific racism, social Darwinism, and hygiene. Public and private institutions, schools, and the armed forces hoped to manufacture girls and boys, men and women, for a political purpose using, among other means, the ideology of physical culture to achieve their goals. Local and global norms of conduct paved the process of molding bodies in various regions of Brazil, as part of a collective and broader narrative to achieve the social and political effectiveness of the nation.

The imported ideal of civilization helps us understand not just the different meanings attributed to physical culture, but also how this ideology took shape in Brazil after independence. The prevailing economic, political, and social conditions of a peripheral slavocracy, predominantly agrarian, and newly independent, created particularities in structuring and intervening on the development of bodies. For this reason, it is also important to bear in mind crucial aspects of bodily experiences investigated in this historical analysis. The first is the “principle of effectiveness,” linked to the “education of the physical,” historically manifested in questions related to the strength of mothers and the agility of the citizen-soldier. The second reflects upon the “principle of propriety,” involving changes in sensibilities, the education of schoolchildren, and the consolidation of a sportsmanship code. Finally, the “principle of identity” concerns the involvement of larger collectivities in the nation building.

As historians such as Georges Vigarello have demonstrated, the references given to the form, effectiveness, and function of the body change over time.³⁶ However, the fundamental traces of the political relationship between the Brazilian governments and the bodies of their citizens are part of a *longue durée* process. I strive to capture the *mentalité* from the assertions, doubts, concerns, questions, and ambiguities historical actors have had about physical culture, knowing that the perceptions of those historical actors do not end with the inquiry into their writings. I also attempt to understand the external influences that integrated Brazilian historical actors with a global reality. I seek to understand the connection historical actors had to what Marcel Mauss called “a total social fact.”³⁷ My focus on physical culture as a broader phenomenon, as a system of values, follows classic analyses made by Marc Bloch, Georges Duby, Lucien Febvre, Robert Darnton, Michel Vovelle, and Phillipe Ariès.³⁸ Physical culture as a social phenomenon, that this dissertation seeks to understand, embraced, at the same time and at once, a range of institutions, whether political, legal, medical, educational, military, or sporting.

In Brazil’s history, there is an arguable coherence between the nineteenth century and the first decades of the twentieth century leading to the establishment of Getúlio Vargas’ Estado Novo (1937-45). The attempts of Brazilian institutions to build a national identity, using bodies as an important tool for this purpose, was characterized by a series of common features while clashes and transformations reshaped Brazil. Remains amid ruptures, as Fernand Braudel would say.³⁹

³⁶ Georges Vigarello, ed., *Histoire du corps* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 2005).

³⁷ Marcel Mauss, [original 1925] *The Gift: Forms and Functions of Exchange in Archaic Societies*, translated by W.D. Halls (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2000).

³⁸ Marc Bloch, *The Historian’s Craft* (New York: Vintage Books, 1953); Phillipe Ariès, *Centuries of Childhood: A Social History of Family Life* (New York: Vintage Books, 1962); Lucien Febvre, *A New Kind of History and Other Essays* (New York/London: Harper Torchbooks, 1973), edited by Peter Burke; Robert Darnton, *The Great Cat Massacre and Other Episodes in French Cultural History* (New York: Basic Books, 1984); Michel Vovelle, *Ideologies et mentalités* (Paris: Maspéro, 1985); Georges Duby, *Guillermo El Mariscal* (Madrid: Alianza: 1985).

³⁹ Fernand Braudel, “Histoire et Sciences sociales: La longue durée.” *Annales*, 13: 4 (1958), 725-753.

Chapter Outline

As Sydney Chalhoub explains, literary masterpieces had a crucial role in nineteenth-century Brazil, commonly appearing first in the press. In the case of Joaquim Maria Machado de Assis, for example, most of his novels were first published as serials in daily, weekly, or monthly newspapers.⁴⁰ The ways of seeing a historical fact (and the dialogues about it) in a specific present time are ways that circulate intensely within society. This is due, in part, because societies project their vision of themselves onto their imagined past. For example, Gilberto Freyre—who in the 1930s wrote about Aluísio Azevedo’s work of the 1880s—had a series of notions circulating in his society about the meaning of works from previous decades. Since literature arguably acts as a “historical archive” imbued with notions and dialogues from earlier time periods, I open each chapter with a passage from classic Brazilian literature that shows, in different aspects and contexts, the importance of physical culture to the formation of the Brazilian nation.⁴¹

The first chapter of the dissertation analyzes how intellectuals created, discussed, and wrote about physical culture as a key factor of nationalist ideology, setting the stage for the other four chapters. It identifies the historical emergence of new forms and combinations of the idea for molding a novel, modern, and civilized nation. The chapter also reconstructs discourses on physical culture, nationalism, and nation building, demonstrating they were absolutely linked to the nationalist policies in vogue across different eras. I emphasize how advocates of physical culture drew on philosophical approaches that ranged from hygienics, scientific racism, and neo-Lamarckian premises that identified the body as the prime location for the construction of a new “race.” Moreover, this analysis demonstrates that the task of “correcting the deficiencies” of the “Brazilian race” was also dependent on bodily interventions. Molding a physical image of what it meant to

⁴⁰ Sidney Chalhoub & Leonardo Affonso de M. Pereira, eds., *A história contada: capítulos de história social da literatura no Brasil* (Rio de Janeiro: Nova Fronteira, 1998); Sidney Chalhoub, *Machado de Assis, historiador* (São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 2003).

⁴¹ Allan H. Pasco, “Literature as Historical Archive,” *New Literary History*, 35:3 (Summer 2004), 373-94. See also Roger Chartier, “Frenchness in the History of the Book: From the History of Publishing to the History of Reading,” *American Antiquarian Society Proceedings*, 97:2 (October 1987), 299-329.

be “Brazilian” and building a strong body, based on the concepts of “health,” “strength,” and “beauty” would serve to shape a generation of new people, and a new nation.

The second chapter discusses how physical culture practices were directed not only at men, but also at women, “the propagators of the race.” Women and mothers become central to making healthy bodies. The chapter reviews nation builders’ concerns about pregnancy, childbirth, and *puériculture* (child rearing), nutrition, and the roles performed by women in modern Brazil. It shows how these nationalists had an understanding about the protection and improvement of bodies, especially female bodies. Finally, it seeks to understand the key ideas about women’s physical ability to reproduce, breastfeed, and the role of wet nurses. As their institutional power increased, physicians expanded their objects of regulation not only to medical schools and to public health, but also to families as well, giving the physician a decisive role in the growing power of the Brazilian state. Historical records that discuss early Brazilian motherhood allow us to recover (however imperfectly) the lived and imagined experiences of mothers and motherhood, perceptions and representations of the body, and how they figured in the ideological processes of constructing the body of the nation.

Chapter three discusses the senses and meanings attributed to physical culture, its conceptions, functions, and role within the Brazilian educational system. It shows how ideas about physical culture and the nation were propagated through a variety of educational institutions over many decades, as educators and policy makers attempted to shape children and adolescents. By focusing on schools as a space of reference for children and adolescents and the efforts to shape their bodies, chapter three analyzes the importance of youth and how educators tried to represent ideal bodies in school curricula as youth made the transition from infancy to adulthood. The third chapter shows how the body is a complex web of ideas and representations, a territory fought over within state institutional spaces. The various attitudes about the body are aimed at influencing social values and political decisions around creating the ideal young citizen, both female and male. Bodily discipline was a key issue crucial to policy makers’ anxious desire to improve national health and hygiene. By understanding the “new

behaviors” that the state wished to promote, chapter three focuses on how the body had to be educated, how the idea of physical culture continued to shape health and hygiene conditions through physical exercise, and the pivotal role played by schools in the strategy to develop healthy, strong, disciplined citizens ready to contribute to the nation.

The fourth chapter introduces materials from underutilized archives of the Brazilian military to demonstrate how they promoted physical culture through training young men in military schools and programs to shape healthy adults. The ideology of nationhood shaped the Brazilian military’s decisions on how to organize physical education to shape and discipline military bodies. For this, I seek to answer important questions: Could the practice of a European rhetoric, that portrayed the ideal male citizen as a soldier, be applied to Brazilians of all social strata to imagined themselves as part of a homogeneous and novel citizenry? How? Chapter four sets out an innovative understanding of how the State constructed policies addressed to lower-class Brazilians of diverse ethnic and racial backgrounds in physical fitness, discipline, eugenics, and national identity. This chapter delineates the key actions and perspectives of leaders in military institutions as they took part in the conversation about bodies, citizenship, and nation building. Using previously unexplored sources from military archives, this chapter seeks to understand the motivations of military leaders and the measures taken to improve the nation as they sought to mold the bodies of both civilians and military personnel. Finally, the chapter discusses how these leaders envisioned physical culture as an integral part of both nation-building and the reorganization and revitalization of military institutions.

The fifth and final chapter investigates the role of sports in nation building. Chapter five explores new primary sources, investigating the emergence and development of modern sports in Brazil and how this both benefited from and helped promote the rising emphasis on physical culture. This chapter shows how the massification of sports helped spread the importance of physical culture among the Brazilian populace, and how sports (especially soccer) reflected the growing influence of physical culture on Brazilian society and became the

focus of government efforts to produce healthy bodies and a modern nation. Sports, along with schools, reinforced the importance of creating robust and healthy bodies for the nation and quickly evolved into popular forms of physical culture. This chapter delves into the multifaceted character of modern sports, along with the power of the press, and how they helped diffuse the importance of physical culture to reach different strata of society, especially the enormous lower classes. The use of newspapers and magazines is crucial in chapter five's analysis. Although much has been written about sports and the media, very little has been written about the relationship between the industries of physical culture (modern sports in this case), nation building, the state, and the media.

In Brazil, the process of nation building shifted dramatically during the first century after independence (1820s-1920s). This process brought together different political, economic, and social phenomena drawing on symbols, rituals, and practices from across the globe. By examining Brazil's history of nation building, I will demonstrate the overlooked and oftentimes forgotten roles played by theories about physical culture within debates about nation building. This project attempts to forge a way through the existing theoretical and methodological work on the nation-state to understand how the relationship of identity and alterity worked in the construction of a local self, a national "Brazilian body." I seek to understand how individuals reacted to their reality that was politically constructed by institutions that exercised their power over children, men, and women's bodies. This dissertation describes how physical culture was central to Brazil's nation building, in particular, to the policies, and methodological practices aimed at achieving healthy, fit, and vigorous bodies. I analyze how Brazilian policymakers, intellectuals, physicians, and scientists believed that the discipline of minds—in order to develop a modern nation—would be the result of disciplined bodies.

The debates about progress, science, and the body are at the heart of my work, as they fueled and reflected discussions about the nation. Central to these debates was the much studied and highly controversial arguments for "whitening" Brazil's people. Those who defended whitening proposed the elimination of the Afro-descendant and indigenous components of the Brazilian population based on nineteenth-century racial theories. Given the

long history of racial mixing and slavery in Brazil, the nation was overwhelmingly non-white. For those wishing to follow the path of northern Europe, white immigration to Brazil would gradually eliminate the non-whites and whiten the country. A strong counter-narrative, however, sought to recognize (and even glorify) the racially and culturally mixed heritage of Brazilians. This counter-narrative also envisioned molding and civilizing Brazilian bodies, but not to whiten and Europeanize them. My project engages this narrative shift not by producing a history of these contrasting views about the Brazilian nation, as a number of prominent scholars have already done, but by transcending their analysis. My work will show how the racist narrative of the nineteenth century and the counter-narrative, specially in the twentieth century, both accepted and promoted the importance of physical culture and shaping the body as central to nation building. This project documents how Brazilian policymakers, intellectuals, physicians, and scientists adopted the argument that the discipline and development of a modern nation would be the result of creating a hygienic, robust, and disciplined body.

From scientific racism that sought to whiten the population to the more redemptive view of the racially mixed Brazilian, the mulatto archetype, physical culture made crucial contributions to the invention of new narratives for a Brazilian national identity, serving as a powerful ideology to build the nation by molding Brazilian bodies. By exploring policies and ideas at local, national, and transnational levels from the nineteenth century through the first decades of the twentieth century—a critical period in Brazil’s history—my project demonstrates the impact physical culture had on the processes of nation building. It was central to the formulation and diffusion of the dominant narratives of Brazilian national identity for decades.

Understanding how Brazilian policymakers, legal commentators, medical writers, and intellectuals in general constructed arguments about physical culture brings together several shared concerns from social history, the history of science, and the cultural history of the physical body in modern Latin America. This dissertation uses the deliberations about the Vargas’ regime in the 1930s and its efforts to shape children, men, and women’s bodies as a historical starting point to go back in time and address the origins of the principal theories of bodies,

eugenics, physical culture, and nation building. By bringing together areas of historical inquiry such as family, education, the armed forces, and social clubs, this history of knowledge and nation building in modern Brazil delves into these crucial institutional pillars to the cultural construction of the body and to the execution of a physical culture ideology that was markedly nationalist. Idealized healthy bodies became the focus through the intersection of law, medicine, literature, and press physically and culturally to represent the nation. I finally emphasize that physical culture has been central to nationalist discourse since the nineteenth century and that the discourses of nationalism and physical culture have been intimately intertwined in Brazil's modern history. Through initiating this civilizing project with children in the womb, to adolescence, and then adulthood, the proponents of physical culture hoped to shape strong bodies and, thus, a strong nation. I am confident this dissertation will make a major contribution to studies of nationalism, race, gender, and nation building in Brazil—and be an important influence on similar studies in other countries.

In addition to theories of nationalism, key concepts related to the body helped me in exploring and analyzing the mechanisms, propositions, and methodological procedures by which the “rational organization” of physical culture in Brazil produced significant effects in the production of scientific knowledge. Foucault argued that power over bodies was in favor of the ruling classes. Starting in the seventeenth century, this power gained strength when it was implemented as a form of discipline in barracks, schools, and hospitals. Although the forms of regulation theorized by Foucault occurred prior to the period of Brazil's post-independence, biopower actually began to emerge in Brazilian society throughout the nineteenth century through hygienist physical culture. The various attempts to reform physical bodies and the body politic of society were implemented by State projects moving together within a *longue durée* enterprise.

I investigate primary sources in which physical education was intentionally used as an instrument to build the Brazilian national identity. I also examine documents produced by intellectuals, physicians, biotypologists, eugenicists, and policymakers focusing specifically on gender, physical education, and hygiene. A more nuanced

observation on scientific publications at the time, as well as conferences and courses were also taken into consideration. I show how nation-builders thought about the relationship between the body and the nation, and how they put their ideas into practice, bringing new perspectives to bear on the narratives of nation building in Brazil.

I genuinely believe this project will contribute to a growing historiography on nationalism, nation building, and physical culture in Latin America, as well as the processes of constructing an imagined community by weaving together symbols, rituals and practices that unite populations. A large body of research indicates that Brazil's domestic debates about *mestiçagem* (race mixing) and a 'mulatto identity' beginning in the late nineteenth century conflicted with previous efforts to inculcate notions of modernity, development, hygiene and eugenics into a population seen as morally and physically degenerate and backwards. Following international trends, Brazilian reformers incorporated the physical culture of bodies into school curricula in public institutions and military education. The key to my work here is to show how the state, over decades and through various methods, attempted to mold the bodies of men and women through discipline, moral education, and physical activities. At the core of this dissertation is the transition from the European ideal for the 'Brazilian body' to the contrary conception of an idealized mulatto as the national symbol.

This dissertation is not only about the social and political history of Brazil. It is also about finding new paths to forge a way through existing theoretical and methodological works produced about this specific Latin American country (Brazil) connected to understandings on how individuals faced their reality that was politically constructed by statesmen and institutions that exercised their power over men and women's bodies. This research brings significant contributions to a variety of fields, including Latin American political, social, and cultural history, as well as the history of physical culture, and how states employ policies to build nations. This dissertation is relevant to Latin Americanists who investigate the mechanisms, propositions, and methodological procedures by which the "rational organization" of physical culture produced significant effects in the production of scientific

knowledge in different realities. I intentionally organized my chapters to create an understanding of how this knowledge permeated important institutions, such as military academies, schools, social clubs, and the press. When writing the following chapters, there were, of course, residues of ideas and facts that linked them mutually. It is difficult to avoid deviating from a given topic because the historical reality of any of the following topics, stratified in chapters, largely consists of their relationship with each other. Health, education, the military, and physical exercises were crucial pillars for the execution of ideologies, markedly nationalist, idealizing healthy bodies to physically and culturally represent what is called “Brazil.”

For too long in Brazil, the discussion of nation-building and national identity narratives has been dominated by research on southern Brazil (most notably Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo). Taking this into consideration, this dissertation also brings new perspectives to bear on the narratives of nation building in Brazil. In other words, this work does not solely focus on social and political local dynamics. It attempts to find new paths to forge a way through the existing theoretical and methodological scholarship to understand how the historical relation of identity and alterity worked through the idea of a European “civilized” other, addressing—relatively or directly—the construction of the local, and then, the national self.

This research will contribute to scholarship by bringing a broader perspective of analysis on how Brazilian policymakers, military leaders, eugenicists, and biotypologists brought the positive effects of physical care and exercises of the body to the scientific debate on “the improvement of the race.” I investigate the mechanisms, propositions, and methodological procedures by which the “rational organization” of physical education produced significant effects in the production of scientific knowledge. Again, Foucauldian concepts such as “discipline”, “bio-power”, and the “care of the self” aided my analysis of how the use of physical bodies became a pivotal and scientifically legitimate strategy in shaping ideas of Brazil. Lastly, this dissertation observes how this knowledge permeated important institutions, such as military academies, schools, and press, allowing us to better understand the impact physical culture had on the debates that sought to construct the “Brazilian body politic.” The main

motivation of this work was asking what were the common values and goals of intellectuals, legislators, and scientists from different backgrounds, locations, and decades when they debated about nation building. This dissertation argues that one of the most important factors in how the Brazilian elites defined themselves was their articulation of a shared culture. It was the idea of molding bodies to shape the nation that bound them together.

CHAPTER I

A State in Search of a Nation: Thinking the Brazilian Body



Figure 1

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⁴² *A Redenção de Cam* 1895 (The Redemption of Ham), by Spanish artist Modesto Brocos. (Rio de Janeiro, Museu Nacional de Belas Artes) This painting represents the idealized whitening process of the Brazilian nation.

Parte [disse o chefe Timbira]. Não queremos com carne vil enfraquecer os fortes. (...) Não
descende o cobarde do forte [disse o pai Tupi]; Pois choraste, meu filho não és! (...) Possas tu,
isolado na terra,
Sem arrimo e sem pátria vagando, Rejeitado da morte na guerra,
Rejeitado dos homens na paz, Ser das gentes o espectro execrado (...) Que o teu corpo na terra
embalsame, Pondo em vaso d'argila cuidadoso, Arco e frecha e tacape a teus pés! Sê maldito e
sozinho na terra; Pois que a tanta vileza chegaste, Que em presença da morte choraste, Tu,
cobarde, meu filho não és.

Gonçalves Dias, *I-Juca-Pyrama* (1851)

This fragment from the poem *I-Juca-Pyrama*, written by Antônio Gonçalves Dias in 1851, tells the story of the Timbira Indians, who planned to kill and eat their Tupi prisoner of war, but did not because the captive was a coward, for he wept before his enemies and imminent death.⁴³ The author expressed the importance of human flesh as a symbolic instrument of power, a knowledge of the signs and languages of the body. The Timbira chief feared that his warriors would become cowards themselves by ingesting the physical body of the captured Tupi, therefore absorbing his weak soul. The father of the Tupi Indian was surprised by the revelation made by the Timbira chief. Having a weak mind and a fragile body was enough reason for the Tupi father to curse his son, “secluded,” with no homeland, having his body and soul rejected “from death in war and from men in peace,” destined “to be the deprecating ghost of the people.” To prove he was strong, courageous, and to recover his honor, the Tupi son turned, alone, against the entire Timbira tribe. The Tupi father realized, by the sound of the battle, that his son was fighting bravely. The Timbira chief then intervened and asked for the conflict to be over because the young Tupi had proved himself brave. Tupi father and son reconciled in the end.

I begin with this literary reference to illustrate how deeply embedded in Brazilian society were the ideas of subjection, liberation, and redemption in the nineteenth century. These intertwined dynamics also guided idealized views for the Brazilian nation after the country’s independence and the public policies traced to the bodies of modern Brazilian citizens; that the population and country were both destined for salvation. Despite fundamentally following European models, intellectual movements, such as Brazilian Romanticism, presented very specific national characteristics that added more complexity to the diversity of the local collective identities.⁴⁴ Intellectuals like Antônio Gonçalves Dias sought, as their main proposal, the valorization of a

⁴³ Antônio Gonçalves Dias, “I-Juca-Pyrama,” *Últimos Cantos* (Rio de Janeiro: Typographia de F. de Paula Britto, 1851), 12-35.

⁴⁴ As with the Baroque and Neoclassical movements, Romanticism also arrived late in Brazil, about 1830. The first expression of Brazilian romanticism was Domingos José Gonçalves de Magalhães (1811-1882), who in his travels in Europe was influenced by the work of Chateaubriand, Lamartine and Mazzoni. In Porto Alegre Magalhães launched the magazine *Niterói*, through which, with a small group of intellectuals, he discussed his ideas on Brazilian literature and nationalism. If José de Alencar (1829-1877) is considered the most famous figure amongst romantic novelists—having idealized a vision of Brazil and its indigenous peoples—the greatest expression of Brazilian romantic poetry was Antônio Gonçalves Dias (1823-1864), born in Maranhão. Gonçalves Dias studied in Coimbra where he encountered the works of Almeida Garret and Alexandre Herculano. With the help of the imperial government, Gonçalves Dias

“national culture” with an exaggerated patriotism. The idealization of the Brazilian natural environment as the “homeland” and the indigenous peoples as “the natural Brazilians” were typical hallmarks of the so called “first generation” of these writers.

Debates on national projects started to take shape in the nineteenth century. The state’s efforts focused on constructing the idea of a natural territory from which individuals would extract unique traits, transmit the same cultural values through mass education, devoted to national symbols, and introject an imagined idea of unity. Within the construction of an identity, the concept of “homeland” is an essential element in the idea of nation. It is the remarkable form of connection of a national group to a historical territory. Not any territory, but a specific one to which the primordial narratives are attached, where the ancestors of a nation lived and developed their unique personality. Manifestations of the ideal physiognomy and physiology of the Brazilian people emerged during the Brazilian Empire (1822-89), at the same time as efforts to consolidate Brazil’s territorial unity and the diplomatic arrangements for the international recognition of its sovereignty.⁴⁵

The Brazilian Romantic movement, for example, valued the conception of rescuing Brazil’s historical past tracing back to its native peoples. Many members of the intellectual elites then sought out the themes of their novels and poems in “native hero” imagery, with an idealized vision of Brazil and its native peoples, exalting indigenous bodies as a romantic symbol of Brazilian identity. People and territory hence exerted mutual influence, and the feeling of belonging would be passed on to those heirs of the treasure of the nation.⁴⁶

became a professor of Latin and History of Brazil at the Colégio Pedro II. His poem *I-Juca-Pyrama* is considered a milestone of Indianist poetry in Brazilian romanticism, Antônio Gonçalves Dias’ masterpiece for the excellence of both form and content, and for the affirmation of nationality, placing the native American as a heroic figure.

⁴⁵ See Carlos Delgado de Carvalho, *História diplomática do Brasil* (Brasília: Senado Federal, 1998); Amado Luiz Cervo & Clodoaldo Bueno, *História da Política Exterior do Brasil* (Brasília: Editora UnB, 5ª edição, 2015); Rubens Ricupero, *A Diplomacia na Construção do Brasil, 1750-2016* (Rio de Janeiro: Versal, 2017).

⁴⁶ The perspective Brazilian romantics had on an indigenous ethnic relationship to what they envisioned for the modern Brazilian nation is what Smith describes as “problematic and uncertain” for ethnic communities do not have, necessarily, common culture, codes (legal or symbolic), rights, and/or unity. See Anthony D. Smith, *National Identity: Ethnonationalism in Comparative Perspective* (Reno/Las Vegas: University of Nevada Press, 1991) 41.

Nevertheless, it is plausible to question if there was in fact a Brazilian nation in the nineteenth century. There was no sharing of a common past or ethnic ties among the peoples who inhabited that politically defined territory, but there was a challenge to imagine and build a common future. Since the proclamation of its independence, there had been a constant political instability across the entire imperial period. This situation agitated the ruling elites, fearing that more rebellions would threaten the political and territorial unity of the country, pressing against the existing authoritarianism.⁴⁷ The establishment of the Brazilian State occurred in the midst of the coexistence of multiple political identities, each one expressing collective trajectories that, recognizing themselves as distinct alternatives for their future.⁴⁸

It was not simple for the elites of Brazil to disconnect themselves from something as deeply entrenched as their Portuguese identity, a synthetic expression of their difference and superiority to the many indigenous peoples and Afro-Brazilians for whom that condition was out of reach. Talking to the Constituent Assembly in 1823, deputy João Antônio Rodrigues de Carvalho, from Ceará, stated:

When the Independence of Brazil was declared, it was also declared by a decree that the Portuguese, who here wished to remain, made common cause with the Brazilians, putting the distinctiveness of bond and legend, and that those who did not adhere, should leave during a determined period. It is evident that all of those who did not leave will be part of

⁴⁷ The idea (still present in some books) that the formation of the Brazilian national state took place in a peaceful way does not fit the historical facts. The country had for decades experienced potential fragmentation. Even among the elites who held political power, the divergences were deep, involving mainly those who placed regional interests against the centralizing policy of government. Revolts, rebellions and separatist movements such as the Confederação do Equador (Pernambuco 1824), the Revolta dos Cabanos (Pernambuco and Alagoas 1831-1831), the Cabanagem (Grão-Pará 1833-1836), the Sabinada (Bahia 1837), Balaiada (Maranhão 1838-1841), the Praieira rebellion (Pernambuco 1837-1842), and the Farroupilha (Rio Grande do Sul 1835-1845) are some examples of the political and social turmoil in Brazil. To know more on this period of instability, see Denis Bernardes, *Um império entre repúblicas* (São Paulo: Global, 1983); Sérgio Buarque de Holanda (Org.), *História Geral da Civilização Brasileira* (São Paulo: Difel, 1970); Maria de Lourdes Janotti, *A Balaiada* (São Paulo: Brasiliense, 1987); Tulio Halperín Donghi, *História da América Latina* (Rio de Janeiro: Paz e Terra, 1977); Augustin Wernet, *O período regencial* (São Paulo: Global, 1997); Evaldo Cabral de Mello, *A outra Independência: O federalismo pernambucano de 1817 a 1824* (São Paulo: Editora 34, 2004).

⁴⁸ István Jancsó and João Paulo G. Pimenta have an interesting and complete discussion on the concepts of 'Pátria' (fatherland), 'Nação' (nation) and 'País' (country) during the context of the Independence process. Whereas *Pátria* was considered the place of origin (Rio, Salvador or Pernambuco would be someone's fatherland), *País* was the political State (Brazil is the country) and *Nação* is located in another sphere, a much more complex one, for the imperial elite who followed Pedro I considered itself "Portuguese of Brazil". Many belonged, therefore, to the "Portuguese Nation." See Jancsó & Pimenta's "Peças de um mosaico: ou apontamentos para o estudo da emergência da identidade nacional brasileira" In Carlos Guilherme Mota (Org.), *Viagem incompleta: a experiência brasileira* (São Paulo: Editora Senac, 2009).

the people, who have separated from Portugal, and being this nation the Brazilian nation, each individual of this society is therefore a Brazilian citizen by excellence.⁴⁹

In abdicating a Portuguese identity, the risk of not clearly disentangling the white elite from the largest share of the inhabitants of Brazil was imminent.⁵⁰ This drew the dread of a situation in which “blacks [would] rule whites.”⁵¹ After the independence of Brazil, its intelligentsia faced a task whose complexity was thus enunciated by José Bonifácio de Andrada e Silva:

It is of greatest need to end all this physical and civil heterogeneity. Let us therefore take care to wisely combine so many discordant and opposing elements, *to amalgamate* so many different metals, so that a homogeneous and compact *Whole* shall emerge, which will not fail at the slightest touch of any new political convulsion.⁵²

Molding an idea of unity is a dominant characteristic of nationalism; filling the needs of individual selves within a collective scope is essential. The nexus between the emergence of the “Brazilian State” and the “Brazilian

⁴⁹ BRASIL, *Annaes do Parlamento Brasileiro*, Assembleia Geral Constituinte e Legislativa do Império do Brasil, Session 19 June 1823, p. 84. Available at <https://arquivohistorico.camara.leg.br/index.php/assembleia-geral-constituente-e-legislativa-do-imperio-do-brasil-1823> Accessed on 13 March 2019. From the original in Portuguese: “Quando se declarou a Independência do Brazil, declarou-se por um decreto, que os portuguezes, que aqui quizessem ficar, fazendo causa commun com os brazileiros, porião o distinctivo do laco, e legenda, e que os que não adherissem, se auzentassem dentro de certo prazo; d’aqui eh evidente que todos aquelles, que não se ausentarão ficarão sendo parte do povo, que se separou de Portugal, e sendo este povo a nação brazileira, cada indivíduo desta sociedade, é por consequência cidadão brazileiro. A nação até então compunha-se do Reino do Brazil, e dos da Europa, era uma só; separou-se em duas, e cada uma seguio a sorte daquella parte a que se unio; não se pode ser cidadão das duas nações [...]”

⁵⁰ Marcus Carvalho used the expression “a singular Malthusian crisis” faced by the local elites dealing with the growing multiplication of the African population in Brazil in the nineteenth century that, in his argument, also explained the reduction of the slave trade in places like Pernambuco after the decade of the 1840s. See Marcus J.M. de Carvalho, *Liberdade - Rotinas e Rupturas do Escravismo: Recife, 1822-1850* (Recife: Editora Universitária/UFPE, 2001).

⁵¹ See Carlos Guilherme Mota, *Nordeste 1817: estruturas e argumentos* (São Paulo: Perspectiva, 1972) 148. Illustrating the panic that the racial character of the separatist Revolution of Pernambuco in 1817 created within the white elites, five years before independence, Mota explains that the threat of slave uprisings created the conditions for the advance of white proprietors’ leadership, “at least in the first moment.” Mota shows that on March 20, 1817 a counterrevolutionary observer wrote in Salvador that “pretos comandam brancos, e brancos pretos,” revealing the concern to control the process. See also Jurandir Malerba, *Os Brancos da Lei: Liberalismo, Escravidão e Mentalidade Patriarcal no Império do Brasil* (Maringá: Editora da Universidade Estadual do Paraná, 1994).

⁵² José Bonifácio de Andrada e Silva, *Representação à Assembléa Geral Constituinte e Legislativa do Império do Brasil sobre a escravatura* (Paris: Typographia de Firmin Didot, 1825) 8: “He da maior necessidade ir acabando tanta heterogeneidade physica e civil; cuidemos pois desde já em combinar sabiamente tantos elementos discordes e contrarios, e em *amalgamar* tantos metaes diversos, para que saia hum *Todo* homogeneo e compacto, que se não esfarelle ao pequeno toque de qualquer nova convulsão politica.” Available at <http://www2.senado.leg.br/bdsf/item/id/518681>

Nation” is one of the most controversial issues in Brazilian historiography.⁵³ Less attention, however, has been spent on how the physical image of the people—an idealized “homogeneous and compact Whole” that permeated this time/space within its multiple identities and projects—would produce the desired unity.

This chapter demonstrates how the promotion of physical education was absolutely linked to nationalist policies across many decades and various political regimes. In particular, although the promotion of physical education remained a constant, the dominant intellectual trends over two centuries ranged from hygienist thought to scientific racism, and to neo-Lamarckian premises which identified the body as the prime location for the construction of a new “race.” Moreover, it shows that the task of “correcting the deficiencies” of the “Brazilian race” was also the responsibility of bodily intervenors. Molding a physical image of what it meant to be “Brazilian” and to build a strong body, based on the concepts of “health,” “strength,” and “beauty” meant to foster a generation of new citizens, thus shaping a new nation. By analyzing how intellectuals created, discussed, and wrote about physical culture in relation to nationalist ideology, this chapter opens the way to the other parts of the dissertation identifying the historical emergence of new forms and combinations of the ideal of molding a novel, modern, and civilized nation.

Debates about the physical image and body of Brazilians permeated the nineteenth century—from the first constitution in 1824 to the transition to the republican state in 1889-91—remaining present during important decades in Brazil’s public debates in the twentieth century as well. Defining and shaping a “Brazilian body” was an important instrument for political leaders, intellectuals, and institutions in the process of molding a “modern” and “civilized” country. Brazil was a state in search for its nation.

⁵³ See Carlos Guilherme Mota (ed.), *Viagem incompleta*; Luiz Felipe de Alencastro, *O Trato dos viventes: formação do Brasil no Atlântico Sul* (São Paulo: Cia. das Letras, 2000); José Murilo de Carvalho, *Cidadania no Brasil: o longo caminho* (Rio de Janeiro: Civilização Brasileira, 2001); István Jancsó & João Paulo G. Pimenta; Lilia Moritz Schwarcz, ed., *História do Brasil nação (1808-2010)* (Rio de Janeiro: Objetiva, 2011).

1.1 Creating “the strong, wise, and good son of Brazil”

Theoretically, there is a clear separation between the nation and the modern state. Nevertheless, the emergence of the nation can also be considered a consequence of nationalism.⁵⁴ The nation thus becomes the objective embodiment of the nationalist ideal, its historical and cultural materialization within a political community that aspires to the same ideals, comprised by a territorial State.⁵⁵ That is, the State politically built has its form in the public institutions and the nation becomes, therefore, a political entity formed by individuals with similar historical identities connected to a “homeland.” Nevertheless, the debates during the Brazilian Constituent Assembly of 1823, a year after independence, not only questioned the sovereignty and the autonomy of the provinces, but also the role the old colonizer would play within the new state.⁵⁶

During the nineteenth century, the intellectual generation of independence and its immediate descendants found it important to identify what differentiated them from the colonial past that had shaped the country during at least three centuries.⁵⁷ Despite the perception that the political parties during the Empire were “mere clusters of clans organized for the common exploration of the advantages of power,” the need for self-affirmation expressed two main directions.⁵⁸ There were a retrospective vision, which looked back to Europe, after all Brazil was considered “spiritually like all the Americas, an extension of Europe”⁵⁹; but there were also the one derived from the present to delineate a future perspective.

⁵⁴ See Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1983).

⁵⁵ It is also possible to find differing nationalisms within the same state, appealing to a common ideal of sovereignty and legitimacy, which can be challenged, at times, by irruptions of ethnic and/or distinct political communities within the state borders.

⁵⁶ Alberto da Costa e Silva analyses how politicians considered if “sovereignty” should be part of the people, the emperor or part of both, if the empire would be a federative or a unitarian state, and if the Portuguese could still dominate trade and be involved in domestic politics. See “As marcas do período” In Alberto da Costa e Silva, ed., *História do Brasil Nação 1808-2010* (Rio de Janeiro: Objetiva, 2011) 23-35.

⁵⁷ In Oliveira Lima’s words, “a perfectly natural reaction against the colonial subjection.” Oliveira Lima, *O Imperio Brasileiro: 1822-1889* (São Paulo: Companhia Melhoramentos, 1927) 242.

⁵⁸ “simples agregados de clans organizados para a exploração em comum das vantagens do poder.” Oliveira Vianna, *O Occaso do Imperio* (São Paulo: Companhia Melhoramentos, 1926). Oliveira Lima, 241.

⁵⁹ Oliveira Lima, (Op. cit.) 244.

In the scenario of the Constituent Assembly of 1823—that sought to establish a new nation upon the old social strata—concerns were also voiced about the physical composition of the people and how to mold the bodies of citizens for the nation. During the discussions of the Public Education Commission, policymakers included the subject in their deliberations to structure the Brazilian education system. On 18 June 1823, Belchior Pinheiro de Oliveira, deputy from Minas Gerais and rapporteur on the Commission, proposed the elaboration of “a treaty on physical, moral, and intellectual education for the Brazilian youth.” The project law number 13 established that the author of the compendium should be considered “Benemérito da Pátria” (one who is deserving of praise from the homeland) and—after a suggestion of Clemente Ferreira França, representative of Bahia—honored with a gold medal carved with his name and the inscription “who taught how to create the strong, wise, and good son of Brazil.”⁶⁰ Luiz José de Carvalho e Mello, also from Bahia, suggested that the committee, composed of seven members to judge the projects submitted, should be formed not only by members of the Commission, but also by people chosen from civil society. According to Mello, outside the parliament there were “educated citizens, with love for their homeland and desires that it flourish within the diffusion of enlightenment and knowledge.”⁶¹

Luiz José de Carvalho e Mello explicitly stated that the matter presented for discussion “is the largest and most important subject, especially for Brazil.” For Mello, physical education “prepares the body to acquire robustness, health, and disposition for the intellectual education, both of which are the basis of the literary and

⁶⁰ BRASIL, *Annaes do Parlamento Brasileiro*, Comissão de Instrução Pública, “Projeto de Lei n. 13 para se fazer um Tratado de Educação Physica, Intellectual e Moral para a Mocidade Brasileira” Session on 16 June 1823 (Assembleia Geral Constituinte e Legislativa do Império do Brasil 1823, BR DFCD AC 1823-C-25). By the end of the sessions, the representatives voted not to give the Ordem Imperial do Cruzeiro (the first order of honor created after independence) but for honoring the winner with a gold medal instead, bearing the Brazilian effigy on one side and the name of the person on the other. Available at <https://arquivohistorico.camara.leg.br/index.php/projeto-de-lei-n-13-para-se-fazer-um-tratado-de-educacao> Access on 13 March 2019. It is worth reading Eul-Soo Pang’s *In Pursuit of Honor and Power: Noblemen of the Southern Cross in Nineteenth-Century Brazil* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1988).

⁶¹ BRASIL, *Annaes do Parlamento Brasileiro*, “Comissão de Instrução Pública - Emenda do Deputado Luíz José de Carvalho e Mello ao Art. 1º” Session on 5 August 1823 (Assembleia Geral Constituinte e Legislativa do Império do Brasil 1823, BR DFCD AC 1823-C-25-625) Available at <https://arquivohistorico.camara.leg.br/index.php/emendas-317> Access on 13 March 2019. Access on 13 March 2019.

moral education” and Brazil had failed to care for it.⁶² His position was based on the idea that physical education was fundamentally important for the intellectual development of young Brazilians. A strong body, with good health would improve the inclination to study, righteous customs, promote superior moral stature, and create virtuous citizens:

Nothing is so precious to the growth and prosperity of this country as the increase of its population, and the institution of a system of education. [...] Useless will be calling foreign peoples from civilized states to be settled in our hemisphere. Useless will be the establishment of a good system of colonization and catechesis of our indigenous peoples if we do not form them within good plans of education to be useful citizens [...].⁶³

Physical education and intellectual development were linked. As Antônio Gonçalves Gomide (a representative of Minas Gerais) said: “We need to instruct the people so the parents can give their children a good physical and moral education.”⁶⁴ It would force Brazilians to be integrated within the broader cause, shaping them as the upright defenders of their fatherland.

During the session on 11 August, João Severiano Maciel da Costa stated that the compendium on physical, moral, and intellectual education could be theoretical, practical or both things together, and for that reason he voted for a “theoretical-practical” document, asking his counterparts to make changes in the original proposal. Maciel da Costa also argued that the word “social” should be added, because “our faculties are physical, moral, intellectual, and social.” Finally, the last request Maciel da Costa made to the parliament was the addition of the

⁶² BRASIL, *Annaes do Parlamento Brasileiro: Assembleia Constituinte de 1823, Tomo Terceiro*. (Rio de Janeiro: Typographia do Imperial Instituto Artístico, 1874), 144. Session on 31 July 1823. Available at [Biblioteca Digital da Câmara dos Deputados](http://bd.camara.gov.br/bd/handle/bdcamara/8571#) <http://bd.camara.gov.br/bd/handle/bdcamara/8571#>. Accessed on 13 March 2019. The original in Portuguese is: “faltava tambem tratar da educação physica, que prepara o corpo para adquirir robustez, saude, e disposição para a educação intellectual, as quaes ambas são a base da litteraria e moral.”

⁶³ BRASIL, *Annaes do Parlamento Brasileiro: Assembleia Constituinte de 1823, Tomo Terceiro*. (Rio de Janeiro: Typographia do Imperial Instituto Artístico, 1874), 144-45. Session on 31 July 1823. Available at <http://bd.camara.gov.br/bd/handle/bdcamara/8571#>

⁶⁴ BRASIL, *Annaes do Parlamento Brasileiro: Assembleia Constituinte de 1823, Tomo Terceiro*. (Rio de Janeiro: Typographia do Imperial Instituto Artístico, 1874), 45. Session on 31 July 1823. Available at <http://bd.camara.gov.br/bd/handle/bdcamara/8571#>

expression “of one and the other sex” after the sentence “for the Brazilian youth.” The representative of Minas Gerais explained:

It is true that many of the general rules for the education of men apply to women, but it is also incontestable that the physical difference of women’s organization and the difference of their destinies, both natural and social, imperiously demand changes in the educational plan intended to them.⁶⁵

The amendments proposed by Maciel da Costa were approved (with the exception of the addition of the word “social”) despite a few manifestations against the compendium. Manuel José de Sousa França, for example, voted against the project for believing “there are so many writings among the civilized nations in matters of method [...] I think there is a little more to be done.” José Joaquim Carneiro de Campos, by his turn, stated: “I believe that this project cannot take place for the moment, because a treaty of education for the Brazilian youth can only be perfect after the Constitution has been completed and the principles of public morality and political freedom of the nation been established [...]”⁶⁶

Martim Francisco Ribeiro de Andrada—also a member of the Public Education Commission and José Bonifácio de Andrada’s brother—affirmed that the commission understood Brazil could not be happy while Brazilian youth was not properly edified: “The commission asked itself what a plan of higher instruction would

⁶⁵ BRASIL, *Annaes do Parlamento Brasileiro*, Assembleia Geral Constituinte e Legislativa do Império do Brasil, Session of 11 August 1823, pp. 55-6. Available at <https://arquivohistorico.camara.leg.br/index.php/assembleia-geral-consituinte-e-legislativa-do-imperio-do-brasil-1823> Access on 13 March 2019. The original in Portuguese is: “Eu estou convencido de que nem o autor do projecto nem esta assembléa quizerão excluir as mulheres do benefício da educação publica e nem julgo necessario demonstrar quantos e quão graves inconvenientes se seguirão ao privar uma tão grande e tão interessante porção do genero humano, destinada pela natureza e pela sociedade a tão importantes funções, sem a educação conveniente; mas é preciso declaral-o, porque um autor poderia muito bem parar na educação dos homens sómente, para formal-os bons cidadãos. Verdade é que muitas das regras geraes para a educação dos homens têm applicação às mulheres, mas é incontestavel que a differença physica de sua organização e a differença dos destinos dellas assim naturais como sociais, exigem imperiosamente mudanças essenciaes no plano de educação que a ellas se destinar.”

⁶⁶ BRASIL, *Annaes do Parlamento Brasileiro*, Assembleia Geral Constituinte e Legislativa do Império do Brasil, Session 31 July 1823, pp.142-44. Available at <https://arquivohistorico.camara.leg.br/index.php/assembleia-geral-consituinte-e-legislativa-do-imperio-do-brasil-1823> Access on 19 March 2019. The original in Portuguese is: “Eu creio que este projecto não póde ter lugar por ora, porque um tratado de educação para a mocidade brasileira só póde ser perfeito depois de acabada a constituição e estabelecidos os principios da moral publica e liberdade politica da nação [...]”.

serve if the bodies remain languid and weak, the intellect unformed, and the hearts perverted?”⁶⁷ The way the Assembly addressed the subject was clearly inspired by the Enlightenment and by liberal thought, drawing on the ideas of John Locke who proposed that the physical education was a means to strengthen man, improving his stamina and self-control. Locke argued that a man is the result of what he receives from his education and that a healthy spirit in a healthy body is a brief description, although incomplete, of a happy intellectual state in this world: “[...] and the useful exercises of the body and mind, taking their turns, make their lives and improvement pleasant in a continu’d train of recreations, wherein the weary’d part is constantly reliev’d and refresh’d.”⁶⁸

Moreover, Brazilian policymakers remembered works on education from mutual instruction, such as “Plan d’éducation pour les enfants pauvres” written by Alexandre de Laborde in 1815.⁶⁹ Theoretical references to the Lancaster method in the schools of London were also cited by Brazilian representatives as a good example for the country.⁷⁰ The method, in which physical and intellectual action were combined, forged its philosophy on the “monitorial system” and formal discipline—“order, industry and obedience”. It also defended mental and physical culture “in a Republican form of government” for being “suitable for the children of the people the training of the physical powers, conferring a healthful vigor of the body, while through the admirable feature of

⁶⁷ BRASIL, *Annaes do Parlamento Brasileiro*, Assembleia Geral Constituinte e Legislativa do Império do Brasil, Session 31 July 1823, p.142. Available at <https://arquivohistorico.camara.leg.br/index.php/assembleia-geral-constituente-e-legislativa-do-imperio-do-brasil-1823> Access on 19 March 2019. The original in Portuguese is: “A comissão perguntou a si mesma - de que servirá um plano de alta instrução, se os corpos estiverem languidos e fracos, os entedimentos não formados e os corações pervertidos?”.

⁶⁸ John Locke, *Some Thoughts Concerning Education*, Vol. XXXVII, part 1, 1693. Available at The Harvard Classics (New York: P.F. Collier & Son, 1909-14), www.bartleby.com/37/1, Part VII, Section 108. Locke also believed “A gentleman in any age ought to be so bred, as to be fitted to bear arms, and be a soldier.” (Part I, Section 15). Chapter 3 addresses with more details the vestiges of John Locke’s thought within the Brazilian reality.

⁶⁹ BRASIL, *Annaes do Parlamento Brasileiro: Assembleia Constituinte de 1823, Tomo Sexto*, Session on 21 October 1823, p.125. Available at <https://arquivohistorico.camara.leg.br/atom/AC1823/sobre/annaes/ANNAES-TOMO6.pdf>

⁷⁰ BRASIL (Op. cit.) 125. Englishman Joseph Lancaster (1778-1838) formulated a teaching method that was also called the Lancasterian or monitorial method. In 1827, by means of a law passed on October 15 that “had schools of basic literacy created in all the towns, villages and most populous places of the empire,” the use of the method in the empire was institutionalized. For more on this subject, see Fátima Maria Neves, *O método lancasteriano e o projeto de formação disciplinar do povo (São Paulo, 1808-1889)*, Doctoral dissertation (Assis: Universidade Estadual Paulista Júlio de Mesquita Filho, 2003).

mutual instruction, from constant requisition on their mental resources, there is an energetic development of mind”.⁷¹

Before concluding the debates and its deliberations on the draft for a constitutional-type document, Pedro I dissolved the Constituent Assembly.⁷² The Constitution promulgated by the Emperor, in 1824, theoretically abolished “the whip, torture, the branding iron, and all the other cruel penalties.”⁷³ The 1824 Constitution was also very concise on the matter of national education. Nevertheless, it did establish free primary education as one of the “civil and political rights of Brazilian citizens, based on liberty, individual security, and propriety.”⁷⁴ On many occasions during the Empire, the issue of physical culture was related to the actions taken by the inspectors of education, medical practitioners, and other governmental authorities in a constant quandary of echoing European assertions while searching for a national perspective, their “own framework of doctrines.”⁷⁵ People like

⁷¹ John Franklin Reigart, *The Lancasterian System of Instruction in the Schools of New York City* (New York: Columbia University, 1916) 74. To learn more about the “monitorial system” in places like the United States, see Rayman, Ronald’s “Joseph Lancaster’s Monitorial System of Instruction and American Indian Education, 1815-1838,” *History of Education Quarterly*, 21 (4), 1981, 395-409.

⁷² “Decreto – Havendo eu convocado, como tinha direito de convocar, a assembléa geral constituinte e legislativa, por decreto de tres de Junho do anno proximo passado; afim de salvar o Brazil dos perigos que lhe estavão imminentes: e havendo esta assembléa perjurado ao tão solemne juramento que prestou á nação de defender a integridade do imperio, sua independencia, e a minha dynastia: Hei por bem, como imperador e defensor perpetuo do Brazil, dissolver a mesma assembléa, e convocar já uma outra na forma das instrucções feitas para convocação desta, que agora acaba, a qual deverá trabalhar sobre o projecto de constituição que eu lhe hei de em breve apresentar, que será duplicadamente mais liberal do que o que a extincta assembléa acabou de fazer. [...]” In BRASIL, *Annaes do Parlamento Brasileiro*, “Decreto do Imperador para dissolução da Assembléa”, Assembleia Geral Constituinte e Legislativa do Império do Brasil, Session 11 November 1823, p. 247, BR DFCD AC 1823-E-225. Available at <https://arquivohistorico.camara.leg.br/atom/AC1823/sobre/annaes/ANNAES-TOMO6.pdf#page=247> Access on 20 March 2019. To learn more, see Oliveira Lima, op. cit.; Sérgio Buarque de Holanda, *O Brasil Monárquico: o processo de emancipação* (São Paulo: Difusão Europeia do Livro, 4th edition, 1976); José Murilo de Carvalho, *A Monarquia brasileira* (Rio de Janeiro: Ao Livro Técnico, 1993); Sérgio Corrêa da Costa, *As quatro coroas de D. Pedro I* (Rio de Janeiro: Paz e Terra, 1995); Ronaldo Vainfas, *Dicionário do Brasil Imperial* (Rio de Janeiro: Objetiva, 2002); Isabel Lustosa, *D. Pedro I* (São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 2007).

⁷³ BRASIL, *Constituição Política do Império do Brazil*, 1824, Titulo 8º. Art. 179 XIX. Available at http://www.planalto.gov.br/ccivil_03/Constituicao/Constituicao24.htm Access on 15 March 2019.

⁷⁴ BRASIL, *Constituição Política do Império do Brazil*, 1824, Titulo 8º. Art. 179 XXXII. Available at http://www.planalto.gov.br/ccivil_03/Constituicao/Constituicao24.htm Access on 15 March 2019. To learn more, see Ilmar Rohloff de Mattos. *O tempo saquarema: a formação do Estado imperial* (São Paulo: Hucitec. 1990); José G. Gondra, *Educação, poder e sociedade no Império brasileiro* (São Paulo: Cortez. 2008).

⁷⁵ Dr. Joaquim Antonio Alves Ribeiro, “Correspondencia – Carta do Collega J.R.M., Provincia de S. Catharina, Desterro 4 de fevereiro de 1863.” *A Lancêta, Jornal de Medicina, Physiologia, Cirurgia, Chimica, Pharmacia, Literatura e Noticioso* (Ceará: Imp. João Evangelista, Anno 2, vol.2, n.4, 25 de Abril de 1863) 59. The original in Portuguese is: “(...) é também uma verdade, que não podemos actualmente applicar ao nosso paiz, cujas escolas medicas não representam senão, como echos da francesa, da italiana, e finalmente da ingleza. Ellas não tem ainda um corpo de doutrinas seo proprio. Cada um lente modifica, conforme sua intelligencia, as doutrinas de

Antônio Herculano de Sousa Bandeira Filho (an outstanding legal expert) also addressed the subject, after being called by Pedro II to the task of discovering how Germany ran its kindergartens.⁷⁶ Another inspector who wrote about the topic was Eusébio de Queirós, a leading imperial figure (better known for the creation of the laws that curbed the slave trade and created a code for trade, both in 1850) involved in the central political agenda during Pedro II's reign.⁷⁷

The government held a series of debates indicating that the question of molding, educating, and disciplining bodies was crucial for forging identities and for the formation of the Brazilian people, a process whose foundations lay on the notions of social stratification and the maintenance of order.⁷⁸ Mostly significant, however, is the fact that the general discussion on the topic—beginning during the context of the Constituent Assembly of 1823—represented the first debates of the Brazilian leaders on the subject as they led the country in its first moments as an independent state.⁷⁹

One indication of how the ideal of forming the bodies of the nation was widely discussed during the early imperial period is the space given to this issue not only within the realm of official reports, but also in press

uma d'aquellas escolas que segue, sem com tudo enunciar o seo credo medico". In the case of Education, innumerable European works were adopted by the Escola Normal da Corte, inaugurated in 1880 by the imperial decree n.7684 from 6 March, signed by Pedro II. The books still can be found at the library of the Instituto Superior de Educação (ISERJ) in Rio de Janeiro: Alf Junod's "Manuel de Gymnastique Pratique A L'usage des Ecoles" 1869 (ref. 371.73 Jun.M); Louis Leonel's "Traite Theorique et Pratique de Gymnastique..." 1867 (ref. 371.73 Len.T); Eugene Paz, "La Gymnastique Obligatoire" 1868 (ref. 371.73 Paz.G). Chapter 3 explores this issue with more details.

⁷⁶ Bandeira Filho's voyage had great repercussions within Brazilian education. His administration at the inspectorate was marked by the attempt to organize, standardize and update the education system in Rio. See José G. Gondra, "Exercício de comparação: um normalista da Corte na Europa," in Ana Chrystina V. Mignot & José G. Gondra (Org.), *Viagens imperiais* (São Paulo: Cortez, 2007, 65-89).

⁷⁷ See André Paulo Castanha, "Regimento interno das escolas públicas da Corte de 1883: uma síntese da educação imperial," in *Revista HISTEDBR On-line* (Campinas: Unicamp, special issue, 2012), 282-96.

⁷⁸ At the time, some quintessential writings on the subject were circulating in Brazil. The most significant of those might be *Tratado de educação física dos meninos, para uso da nação portuguesa* [Treaty on physical education for boys, for use by the Portuguese nation] written by the Brazilian physician Francisco de Mello Franco and published in Portugal in 1790. Chapter Two of this dissertation explores this work, its influence and range. Another book under the same title was written by Francisco José de Almeida and published in 1791. For more information on those publications, see Jean Luis Neves Abreu, *O corpo, a saúde e a doença: o saber médico luso-brasileiro no século XVIII* (Belo Horizonte: Doctoral dissertation, Federal University of Minas Gerais, 2006).

⁷⁹ To learn more about the debates on education during 1823, see Antônio Chizzotti's "A Constituinte de 1823 e a Educação," In Osmar Fávero (ed.), *A Educação nas constituintes brasileiras: 1823-1988* (Campinas: Autores Associados, 2014).

publications, and private institutions. Writing to British diplomat Henry Chamberlain, José Bonifácio de Andrada e Silva described, for example, his concerns based on “the absolute necessity of measures to ensure an increase of the white population before abolition [...] we hope to take measures to immediately attract European immigrants here. As soon as they begin to produce this effect, the need for the supply of African arms will gradually diminish, and I hope that in a few years an end to the traffic forever will be reached [...]”⁸⁰

Brazil’s intellectual leaders believed that the racial balance of the population was dangerously unstable. For them, Brazil would not develop without the “Europeanization” of the population, without whitening the country. José da Silva Lisboa argued, in 1818, that the progress of São Paulo was due to “the extraordinary preponderance of the white race” and that Rio Grande do Sul was colonized “by the Portuguese race, not by the population of Ethiopia.” For José da Silva Lisboa, “experience has shown that once the supply of Africans stagnates, the race does not diminish and decline, but it becomes better and whiter.” According to this belief, it was necessary to prevent Brazil from becoming a “Negrolândia.”⁸¹ José Bonifácio de Andrada e Silva wished the English vessels “to patrol all the slave ships that they found in the sea” because “they are the gangrene of our prosperity. The people we want are white [...] they are the settlers we want.”⁸² These examples reveal the omnipresence of slavery as a variable that determined the mental horizon of Brazilian leaders towards their project for the nation.

The physical composition of Brazilian society had a long and cumulative process of similar debates and ideas from Independence to Republic. The arrival of European racial theories in Brazil stimulated debates on all

⁸⁰ See Kenneth Maxwell’s “Por que o Brasil foi diferente? O contexto da independência” In Carlos Guilherme Mota, *Viagem incompleta*, 190. The text in Portuguese is: “[...] absoluta necessidade de tomarmos medidas para garantir um aumento da população branca antes da abolição [...] esperamos adotar medidas para atrair imigrantes europeus para cá sem perda de tempo. Assim que estes começarem a produzir esse efeito, a necessidade do fornecimento de braços africanos diminuirá gradativamente, e eu espero que em alguns poucos anos se coloque um ponto final no tráfico para sempre [...]”.

⁸¹ José da Silva Lisboa, *Memória dos benefícios políticos do governo de el-rey nosso senhor d. Joao VI* (Rio de Janeiro, na impressão régia, 1818) apud Maxwell (2010) 191.

⁸² Maxwell, 193.

the implications racial mixing would bring in terms of the possibility or impossibility of progress and civilization for the nation. According to these theories, the mixture of races meant physical degeneration and a threat to the future, an affirmation that brought no comfort to Brazilian intellectuals. Regarding their different fields of knowledge, the notion of intellectual, with which I name these literate men, has fluid outlines. Except for a few rare exceptions, they wrote not only for peers' publications, but also had their work about various subjects published in the broader press. I understand these men as cultural theorists and producers of knowledge that presented forms of expression articulating and reflecting on the social functions and developments that such forms would hold. These intellectuals shared some common traits, such as lecturing on issues related to national identity, a tutelary stance towards society, and an intense work in the press.

For some who followed the scientific racist paradigm, *mestiçagem* served as an instrument of racial assimilation, of those they considered inferior groups. It provided a way to escape the deterministic trap that would condemn Brazil to backwardness and barbarism. Other outstanding figures did not want to ban nonwhite persons from the national future, nor did they disregard the contributions of those groups, considered as original elements of a Brazilian ideal type capable of sealing a harmonious unity for the nation. They also debated racial relations and conflicts, denouncing the prejudice of color, publicly stating the position that Afro-*mestiço* elements should not be erased from the history and future of the country—albeit the many demonstrations of evident hierarchical notions on the theme of *mestiçagem*. The emphasis on *mestiço* bodies meant that the founding myths of a national identity were based on the fusion and integration of races around an idealized Brazilian physical type.

With this in mind, physical culture was not just about building an identity through its physical composition inextricably linked to the social construction of dominant ideologies and policies of identity, but also developing an identity built on intellectual and moral habits.⁸³ Physical culture became one of the key factors responsible for

⁸³ Bodily care and physical culture became popular among Brazilians, as Theodore Roosevelt noted in a visit to the country: “An interesting feature of this out-of-door life was the amount of football that was played. In the various parks and playgrounds there were

the idea of improving the “Brazilian race,” and articulated with racial projects of unity and nationality, forged to elevate the country to the status of a modern and civilized nation. This perception existed not only internally, but also among eminent foreigners, such as Theodore Roosevelt. He also believed that “the Brazilian of the future will be in blood more European than in the past, and they will differ in culture only as the American of the North differ,” contradicting the prophecies that stated Brazil would become genetically degenerated within a few decades.

1.2 “The Brazilian problem par excellence”

In Brazil, the idea looked forward to is the disappearance of the Negro himself—that is, through his gradual absorption into the white race. This does not mean that Brazilians are or will be the ‘mongrel’ people that they have been asserted to be by certain writers, not only French and English, but American. The Brazilians are a white people, belonging to the Mediterranean race, and differing from the northern stocks only as such great and civilized old races as the Spaniards and Italians, with their splendid historic past, differ from these northern stocks.⁸⁴

This statement by Theodore Roosevelt on the physical aspects of Brazil’s population first appeared in the publication *The Outlook*, after a scientific expedition to South America along with Brazilian General Cândido Rondon.⁸⁵ Roosevelt believed that steady European immigration would “make the Negro blood a smaller element

football fields, and if the space was too limited for regular match play, then small plots goal posts were provided for practice. Every day we saw hundreds of men and boys playing football. It was not the Rugby, and still less the American college game, but Association or soccer football, as played in England.” Theodore Roosevelt, “Rio de Janeiro,” *The Outlook* (New York: Outlook Company, v.105, 20 December 1913) 841. Available at the Theodore Roosevelt Digital Library, Dickinson State University: <https://www.theodorerooseveltcenter.org/Research/Digital-Library/Record?libID=o279287>

⁸⁴ Theodore Roosevelt, “Brazil and the Negro,” *The Outlook* (New York: Outlook Company, vol. 106, n.8, February 21, 1914) 409-11. In this article, Theodore Roosevelt described race relations in Brazil, comparing Brazil's attitude toward race relations to that of the United States. Available at the Theodore Roosevelt Digital Library, Dickinson State University: <https://www.theodorerooseveltcenter.org/Research/Digital-Library/Record?libID=o279297> The article was also translated as “O Brasil e o negro” and published by the Brazilian newspaper *Correio da Manhã* (Rio de Janeiro: Anno XIII, n.5.521, 7 de Abril de 1914) 1-2.

⁸⁵ To learn more about the Roosevelt-Rondon expedition, see Marc André Meyers, *River of Doubt: Reliving the Epic Amazon Journey of Roosevelt and Rondon on its Centennial* (Scotts Valley-CA: CreateSpace, 2017); Sérgio Luiz A. A. de Almeida, *Expedição científica Roosevelt-Rondon: Um ex-presidente americano e um coronel do exército brasileiro em uma odisseia pelos Sertões de Mato Grosso e floresta amazônica* (Jundiaí-SP: Pacto Editorial, 2018).

of the blood of the whole community,” attesting to an “extraordinary progress” made in Brazil. Roosevelt mentioned “certain writers” to contradict people like Joseph Arthur de Gobineau, the French theorist on scientific racism who had expressed his repulsion towards the Brazilian people after living in the country as a diplomat. Gobineau not only disparaged dark-skinned people as “inferior” but prophesied a gloomy future for Brazil due to the “most depressing degeneration in both the lower and upper classes” of its “mestizo” population.⁸⁶

While Roosevelt considered that “the evident Indian admixture has added a good, and not a bad, element” to Brazilians’ physical composition, Gobineau, on the contrary, believed Brazilians, were “all mulattoes,” representing “the rabble of humankind.” These examples permeated the thoughts of scientific racism theorists during the transition from the nineteenth to the twentieth century, adopted by Brazil’s intelligentsia as its references within the conceptual clashes to define “the Brazilian” corporeal composition.

It is impossible to deny the fascination Brazilian intellectuals had for the European models on scientific racism.⁸⁷ The concern about designing a national project existed in the main centers of the country, but the understandings about a project aiming to develop the “Brazilian race” were not uniform. Within São Paulo’s Law School, a model based on a more liberal analysis was adopted, although accepting the models of Cesare Lombroso, Raffaele Garofalo, and Enrico Ferri on “physical types” and cautiously rejecting “exaggerations.”⁸⁸ In the Law School of Pernambuco, academics gave “great importance” to social darwinism and to figures like Ernst Haeckel and Herbert Spencer.⁸⁹ When giving voice to the arguments of Brazilian elites, however, one cannot

⁸⁶ Joseph Arthur de Gobineau “L’Emigration au Brésil” [1873] in Georges Raeders, *Le Comte de Gobineau Au Brésil (Avec nombreux documents inédits)* (Paris: Nouvelles Éditions Latines, 1934), 130-134. As Raeders showed, Gobineau only spared Emperor Pedro II, probably for having developed a close friendship with the Brazilian monarch.

⁸⁷ During this period, Brazilian intellectual elites were influenced by August Comte’s positivism, Charles Darwin and Herbert Spencer’s evolutionism, as well as Joseph Arthur Gobineau and Georges V. de Lapouge’s scientific racism. See Lilia Moritz Schwarcz, *The Spectacle of the Races: Scientists, Institutions, and the Race Question in Brazil, 1870-1930* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1999); Heloisa Maria Bertol Domingues et.al. (eds.), *A Recepção do Darwinismo no Brasil* (Rio de Janeiro: Editora FIOCRUZ, 2003); Andreas Hofbauer, *Uma história de branqueamento ou o negro em questão* (São Paulo: UNESP, 2006).

⁸⁸ João Arruda, “A Lucta contra o Delicto”, *Revista Academica da Faculdade de Direito de São Paulo* (São Paulo, v.14, 1906) 67-88.

⁸⁹ Phaelante da Camara, “Tobias - O orador,” *Revista Academica da Faculdade de Direito do Recife* (Recife: Imprensa Industrial, 1907 Anno XV, 1908) 98. Herbert Spencer was also constantly cited within São Paulo’s Law School regarding judicial themes. See, for

understand them only based on the explanations of their adherence to European racial theories. Brazilian intellectuals had to think about domestic questions, such as the disputes around centralization or decentralization of power, the country's slave past, and the future of the nation.

Physician Raimundo Nina Rodrigues, for example, followed eugenics and was strongly in favor of the “whitening” of the Brazilian population.⁹⁰ Similar to the pictographic representation “The Redemption of Ham,” painted in 1895 by Spanish artist Modesto Broco, Nina Rodrigues believed in the physical whitening of Brazilians as essential and irreversible due to “the inferiority of the negroes.”⁹¹ By citing works by authors such as anthropologist Augustus Henry Keane, Nina Rodrigues supported the argument of an “organic or morphological” incapacity of black individuals to adapt to “the civilization of the superior races.”⁹²

Here rises the difficulty for the absolute lack of positive knowledge in which we find ourselves on the products from the crossbreeding of the various races that will contribute and are contributing to the settlement of the Empire, and from which natural selection will have to choose the one that will definitely represent the national type in the future. With which part the three races, white or European, red or American, and black or African, are contributing to this product; between which of those the crossing has acquired the eugenic capacity that must guarantee its future stability; and in what sense the paragenesis of the mestizos tends to attenuate the influence of any of them are the many problems of interests and applications? The statistics of our naturalists lack a single positive and correct data on which judgments can be issued with a value other than mere assumptions.⁹³

example, Pedro Lessa's “Ha Um Direito Natural?” *Revista Academica da Faculdade de Direito de São Paulo* (São Paulo, v.2, 1894) 119-135. Lessa interestingly compared the “natural right” to hygiene.

⁹⁰ Raimundo Nina Rodrigues was born in Vargem Grande, state of Maranhão, in 1862. Nina Rodrigues graduated in medicine in Rio de Janeiro and became a prominent professional on legal medicine in Bahia exercising epidemiology, hygienics, and tropical medicine. The states of Rio de Janeiro and Bahia were the poles of medical studies, while São Paulo and Pernambuco were famous in the legal field.

⁹¹ Raimundo Nina Rodrigues, *As raças humanas e a responsabilidade penal no Brasil* [Bahia, 1894] (Rio de Janeiro: Centro Edelstein de Pesquisas Sociais, 2011) 47-49. The painting, shown in the opening of the chapter, illustrates a Brazilian family consisting of a Black grandmother, a mixed-race mother with a White child, and a Portuguese father, with each generation becoming “whiter.” The painting represents the Brazilian ideology of “embranquecimento” or whitening of the Afro genetic line, and depicts the Black grandmother thanking God for making her grandchild white.

⁹² Raimundo Nina Rodrigues, *Os africanos no Brasil* [posthumous publication, 1932] (Rio de Janeiro: Centro Edelstein de Pesquisas Sociais, 2010) 289. See, especially, the chapter “Valor social das raças e povos negros que colonizaram o Brasil,” 287-98. Augustus Henry Kane (1833–1912) wrote, among many other studies, *Man, Past and Present* (Cambridge: At the University Press, 1899), described by Kane in the Preface as “a more systematically [study] with the primary divisions of mankind.”

⁹³ Raimundo Nina Rodrigues, “Contribuição Para o Estudo da Lepra na Provincia do Maranhão,” *Gazeta Medica da Bahia 1888 a 1889* (Salvador: Litho-Typographia de João Gonçalves Tourinho, Anno XX, Serie III, vol.VI, 1889) 358-59. The original in Portuguese is: “Nasce aqui a difficuldade da carencia absoluta em que nos achamos de conhecimentos positivos acerca dos productos de cruzamento das diversas raças que contribuirão e estão contribuindo para o povoamento do Imperio e d’entre os quaes a selecção natural terá de

Years later, in a paradoxical article, Nina Rodrigues praised, however, the “innumerable representatives of the most advanced in culture and civilization African peoples” brought to Brazil by the slave traffic, observing as “an injustice and an error” all the prejudice imposed to them by “the dominant classes.”⁹⁴ Reminding his readers that an analysis of the techniques and religiosity of Afro-Brazilian sculptures was part of a “broader medico-psychological study,” Nina Rodrigues questioned if the “*mestiçamento*” (giving mixed races features), observed by him in many pieces, represented “the product” reproduced or the artist’s conception on the physical reality of Brazilian bodies. “The association of characteristics from the two races, so widely merged among us, received a fantastic realization in the imagination of the black artist; or was he merely copying the reality of specimens offered by nature?”⁹⁵ In his opinion, both possibilities were plausible because once black Brazilian artists were educated in a white environment, “nothing more natural than the characteristics of the white race influencing their ideals and conceptions of physical beauty,” especially the feminine body. It would be just one more “simple and trivial case of social influence, of unconscious suggestion or imitation, which, as a rule, the upper or ruling classes exert over the lower or subordinated ones.”⁹⁶

Even fervent abolitionists like Luis Anselmo da Fonseca—in Nina Rodrigues’ cohort at the medical school of Bahia—affirmed, “the African race is still late in its civilizational development.”⁹⁷ Dedicating his book “to the

escolher aquella que de futuro deverá revestir definitivamente o typo nacional. Porque parte estão contribuindo as três raças, branca ou européa, vermelha ou americana e negra ou africana para esse produto; entre quaes o cruzamento adquirio a capacidade eugenetica que lhe deve garantir a estabilidade futura: e em que sentido a paragenesia dos mestiços tende a attenuar a influencia de qualquer dellas, são outros tantos problemas momentosos de interesses e applicações, que da confissao entretanto dos nossos proprios naturalistas, embora funcção de estatística, estão a carecer de um só dado positivo e certo sobre o qual se possa emitir juizos com outro valor que não seja o de meras suposições.”

⁹⁴ Raimundo Nina Rodrigues, “As Bellas-Artes nos Colonos Pretos do Brazil – A Escultura,” *Kósmos - Revista Artistica, Scientifica e Litteraria* (Rio de Janeiro: Officina Typographica de J. Schmidt, Anno 1, n.8, Agosto 1904) 6-11. The magazine *Kósmos* was distributed all over the country, from Curitiba and Porto Alegre to Manaus and Belém, from Belo Horizonte and Campinas to Natal and Fortaleza as stated in their issues. To know more about the *Kósmos* magazine and other publications, see Nelson Werneck Sodré, *História da Imprensa no Brasil* (Rio de Janeiro: Mauad, 4th edition, 1999).

⁹⁵ Raimundo Nina Rodrigues, “As Bellas-Artes nos Colonos Pretos do Brazil” (1904), 9.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

⁹⁷ Luis Anselmo da Fonseca, *A Escravidão, o Clero e o Abolicionismo* (Bahia: Imprensa Economica, 1887), 143.

Brazilian slaves,” Anselmo da Fonseca highlighted that this “cannot be explained by the defect of the race but, in ones, by the influence of a bad and improper education to elevate the character; in others, by the absence of any education at all, which is the case of the majority.”⁹⁸ Jurist Sylvio Romero, member of the so-called *Escola do Recife*,⁹⁹ believed, “All that is a national prejudice and a hindrance to the free competition of the foreigner and the national should be amputated.”¹⁰⁰ Conveniently, Romero affirmed, “it will not be necessary to preach hatred between races and to impose on us the superiority of the African on the white races” because, for him, the inferiority of the “black races” was not up for debate in a “ethnographic scale” and “Brazil is not, and will not be, Haiti.”¹⁰¹ Advocating that “there is no example of a *negro* civilization” in all history, Romero envisioned “our *negro* brothers cannot, thus, achieve the highest positions of the established civilizational hierarchy” and that they should “complain only to nature if discontented with their destiny.”¹⁰² Romero, however, recognized Brazil as a country composed of *mestiços* as an irrevocable fact and to think on the *mestiço* necessarily implied assuming and studying “the disparate formations of the *mestiço* peoples.”¹⁰³

Combining *mestiçagem*—as a phenomenon that differentiated Brazil from other nations—to the whitening process of its population was Romero’s paradox. While attributing to the whitening process, through

⁹⁸ Luis Anselmo da Fonseca, *A Escravidão, o Clero e o Abolicionismo* (Bahia: Imprensa Economica, 1887), 153.

⁹⁹ The *Faculdade de Direito do Recife* (Law School of Recife) was the environment where intellectual, literate, critical, philosophical, sociological, folklore and legal movement flourished. This movement, known as *Escola do Recife* in the 1860’s and 1880’s, was headed by Tobias Barreto de Menezes, born in Sergipe, and counted with prominent people like Sylvio Romero, Artur Orlando, Clovis Bevilacqua, Capistrano de Abreu e Graça Aranha and others who took part of the movement.

¹⁰⁰ Sylvio Romero “A Questão do Dia: A emancipação dos escravos,” *Revista Brasileira* (Rio de Janeiro: Escripório da Revista Brasileira, 2º Anno, Tomo VII, 1º de Fevereiro de 1881), 196.

¹⁰¹ Sylvio Romero (1881), 197.

¹⁰² Sylvio Romero (1881), 198.

¹⁰³ In 1882, Romero stated that even the elements of Brazilian literature “are all from the three races, which constitute our population, traditions modified by the environment and by *mestizaje*.” *Gazeta de Notícias* (Rio de Janeiro: Anno VIII, n.40, 9 de Fevereiro de 1882) 2. In March 1904, Romero wrote that “As doutrinas do evolucionismo spenceriano tinham-me posto na pista do desdobramento natural dos vários ramos da atividade humana; tinham-me despertado a atenção para as formações díspares dos povos mestiçados, nomeadamente os da América do Sul, e, por esse caminho, havia sido conduzido as conclusões a que cheguei em todos os escritos acerca da minha pátria.” Sylvio Romero, “O Sr. Artur Guimarães e seu novo livro,” *O Brasil social e outros estudos sociológicos* (Brasília: Senado Federal, 2001), 34.

mestiçagem, the solution for the creation of an original, non-imitative nation, Romero also claimed, “the Brazilian problem par excellence” to be the question of “millions of sertanejos, matutos, tabaréus, caipiras, jagunços, and caboclos.” For him, it was necessary to do “whatever it costs for those peoples, educating them, connecting them to the soil, making them interested on the nation’s destiny.”¹⁰⁴ Crossbreeding would be the only factor that would give Brazil a difference in overcoming its lack of originality. Although it not necessarily meant, in his vision, the national superiority, for “Another Latin American singularity, aggravated in Brazil, is that we could not yet form a properly organized people from top to bottom.”¹⁰⁵ For Romero, “we Brazilians formed a collection of true clans of various species” from north to south.¹⁰⁶ For that reason, “Brazil has no people!” he proclaimed.¹⁰⁷

If Arthur de Gobineau considered Brazil’s population degenerated by miscegenation and, therefore, doomed to fail, for Sylvio Romero the mixture between races represented exactly a form of elevating the “white” portion in the Brazilian blood. Theories according to which “black races” were unable to reach civilization were part of the predominant political thought settled along with the establishment of the emergence of the Republic. Advocating for the natural inferiority of the black individuals also explained, justified the state of affairs in Brazil. Projects aiming for national “salvation” through “race improvement” emerged. Racial determinism was a strong tendency among intellectuals in Brazil. Nevertheless, such thought was not completely hegemonic and there were defenders who stood for a more “nationalist” attitude.

Brazilian intellectuals ensured that eugenic ideas were widely taught and practiced through a “selective transport,” creating several programs in areas such as the military, public health, and criminology, among others,

¹⁰⁴ Sylvio Romero, “Estudo social do povo brasileiro (Extraído do discurso recitado na *Academia Brasileira* no dia 18 de dezembro de 1906)” *O Brasil social e outros estudos sociológicos* (Brasília: Senado Federal, 2001) 90.

¹⁰⁵ Sylvio Romero, “Estudo social do povo brasileiro” [1906] 90.

¹⁰⁶ Sylvio Romero, “As Zonas Sociais e a situação do povo (Trecho duma carta a M. Edmond Demolins) 1906,” *O Brasil social e outros estudos sociológicos* (Brasília: Senado Federal, 2001) 56.

¹⁰⁷ Sylvio Romero, 1906 (2001) 94. The original in Portuguese is: “Tomemos a questão do alto, estudemos o conjunto da população. O estado funcional das gentes brasileiras pode-se resumir numa palavra: o Brasil não tem povo!”

adapted to local conditions.¹⁰⁸ Followers of neo-Lamarckian theories of heredity and eugenics believed changes from the surrounding environment could cause transmutation, therefore improving future generations.¹⁰⁹ The following chapters show that the dedicated advocates of physical education believed that neo-Lamarckism, along with the actions of the hygienics, would produce a discourse—even though heterogeneous—that would influence not only the adherence of men and women to bodily care, but also their behavior in a more general context.¹¹⁰

Nevertheless, historical actors—scientists, political leaders, and educators—did not simply import foreign ideas about eugenics and apply them to Brazil.¹¹¹ On the contrary, they created, developed, and incorporated concepts and theories in a particular context and under distinct influences. They were not simply propagandists of knowledge, apostles of science. They were also the result of their own local circumstances and cultural environment, putting into circulation alternative formats that underscored other paths and perceptions about the human body. Physical education would be also responsible for developing disciplinarian and moral values that would reshape the bodies of young citizens, and by doing so, would lead to a strong and civilized nation.

There were also fundamental additions to the European theories that dealt with the role African descendants played in Brazil's national formation. Parallel to the racial theories that accepted the inferiority of

¹⁰⁸ I borrowed the expression “selective transport” from John H. Warner. I thank Dr. Arleen Tuckman for sending me this reference. See John Harley Warner, “The Selective Transport of Medical Knowledge: Antebellum American Physicians and Parisian Medical Therapeutics”, *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 59, 1985, 213-231.

¹⁰⁹ To learn more on the impact Neo-Lamarckian eugenics had in Brazil and other Latin countries, see Nancy Stepan, *The Hour of Eugenics* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991); Mark Adams, *The Wellborn Science: Eugenics in Germany, France, Brazil, and Russia* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990); Marius Turda & Aaron Gillette, *Latin Eugenics in Comparative Perspective* (New York: Bloomsbury, 2014).

¹¹⁰ Important to remember Mendelian eugenicists (fundamentally non-Lamarckian in outlook) never left the discussion, as the following chapters demonstrate with documents.

¹¹¹ In explaining the interest of various intellectuals at the time for manifestations associated with blacks and mestizos, some historians affirmed the existence of a fashion of exoticism and regionalism, which invaded the main capitals of Brazil from the early twentieth century as another European influence. Their argument, although crucial to understand an important facet of Brazil's intellectual history, is not enough to explain such complex issue. By forgetting or ignoring Brazilian broader intellectual sociability, this scholarship continues to propagate the message Brazilian elites only tried to imitate and copy Europe. See Hermano Vianna, *O mistério do samba* (Rio de Janeiro: Jorge Zahar, 1995); Santuza Cambraia Naves, *O Violão Azul, Modernismo e Música Popular* (Rio de Janeiro: Fundação Getúlio Vargas, 1998); Nicolau Sevckenko, *Literatura como missão: tensões sociais e criação cultural na Primeira República* (São Paulo: Brasiliense, 1983).

the African descendants and predicted the degeneration of the mestiços—to which intellectuals, politicians, scientists, physicians, and jurists adhered at that time—it is possible to identify the innovations of some intellectuals in terms of racist proposals because they did not associate miscegenation with racial degeneration. The racial argument acquired other meanings, not limited to the biological definition. The term “Brazilian race,” historically constructed, was a social-political interpretation, not taken as a fixed, unchangeable natural idea, but more as a fluid and complex concept.



Figure 2

FIG. V — PEÇA DO CULTO DE OCHUM

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¹¹² Peça do Culto de Ochum, In Raimundo Nina Rodrigues, “As Bellas-Artes nos Colonos Pretos do Brazil – A Esculptura,” published at the magazine *Kósmos* (1904), 9.

1.3 “The hybrid coffee-with-milk”

Intellectuals like the eminent diplomat Manoel de Oliveira Lima also feared the degeneration of the Brazilian population due to low birthrates, high mortality, but above all, the moral and physical decline of individuals. In 1895, for example, Lima wrote about the importance Pernambuco had in guarding what was considered the racial composition of the Brazilian nation: “Thus, Pernambuco has been sheltered from the waves of European immigrants, who seem to want to submerge the South in a flood of foreignness, fading the idiosyncrasy of the Brazilian product. In the North (...) the soul of Brazil is taking refuge (...) Brazil will indeed subsist there, when one day, having not opposed a dike to the rising tide of asylum seekers from other continents, our nationality has sunk into a heterogeneous mixed race and a sterilizing divergence of feelings.”¹¹³ For Lima, the colonial heritage preserved “the soul of Brazil” and the policies in favor of European immigrants—mostly representing the idealized vision of whitening the population—would physically mischaracterize “the Brazilian product” into a negative, novel form of miscegenation. Too much European immigration, ironically, would be a negative and not a positive force in reshaping the Brazilian nation.

In 1910, *The Almanaque Garnier* reproduced an article written by Augusta Peick Moreira, a German nurse and wife of physician Juliano Moreira, in which she addressed her husband’s thoughts on mestiçagem.¹¹⁴ Augusta

¹¹³ Manoel de Oliveira Lima, *Pernambuco, seu desenvolvimento histórico* (Recife: Governo de Pernambuco, 2ª edição, Coleção Pernambucana, 1975 [1895]), 315-316. Preface written by Gilberto Freyre. The original in Portuguese is: “Assim, Pernambuco tem-se conservado ao abrigo das levas de imigrantes europeus, que parecem querer submergir o Sul n’uma inundaçãõ de estrangeirismo, desbotando a idiosyncrasy do producto brasileiro. No Norte (...) vai-se refugiando a alma do Brazil (...) Alli subsistirá com effeito o Brazil, quando um dia, não se havendo opposto um dique à maré enchente dos asylados de outros continentes, a nossa nacionalidade se tiver afundado n’uma mestiçagem heteroclita de raças e n’uma divergencia esterilizadora de sentimentos.”

¹¹⁴ Augusta Peick Moreira, “Homens de côr no Brasil,” *Almanaque Brasileiro Garnier para o anno de 1910* (Rio de Janeiro: Typ. H. Garnier, 1910) 352-59. According to the *Almanaque Garnier*, the article was originally published by Augusta Peick in 1908 at the number 5 (volume XCIII) of *Globus*, described as “the important journal of Geography and Ethnography edited in Germany under the direction of the notable geographer, professor Dr. Richard Andree” (page 352). At the age of twenty-three, Juliano Moreira, the son of a maid with a city hall official, became a professor at the Bahia Medical School. Moreira met Augusta Peick during his work in a sanitarium in the city of Cairo, in Egypt. To learn more about Juliano Moreira’s professional life, in Brazil and abroad, and see all the titles of his publications and works in Portuguese and in foreign languages, see Carlos Penafiel, “O prof. Juliano Moreira,” *Arquivos Brasileiros de Psychiatria, Neurologia e Medicina Legal fundados pelos Drs. Juliano Moreira e Afranio Peixoto* (Rio de Janeiro: Oficinas de Typ. e Encad. do Hospicio Nacional de Alienados, Anno IX, n°s. 1 e 2, 1913), 122-136. Juliano Moreira had already addressed the issues related to racial determinism and skin-color prejudice during his inaugural speech as a professor at Bahia Medical School, in 1896. See Alexandre Passos, *Juliano Moreira: vida e obra* (Rio de Janeiro: Livraria São José, 1975); also Anamaria Galdini Oda & Paulo

Peick marked Moreira's position by stating that neither skin color nor race should matter, but only individual merits, and insisted there was no scientific basis for "theories about the greater or less vitality of these products [mestiços], nor about degeneration by mestiçagem."¹¹⁵ In dialogue with Juliano Moreira's peers, Augusta Peick also defended the role of prophylaxis, that is, hygiene, sanitation, and the mental and physical education for the "moralization of the masses" because, in his vision, "the mulatto intellectually loses nothing in general compared to the white person."¹¹⁶ Juliano Moreira and Augusta Peick refuted Arthur de Gobineau's "erroneous generalizations" on the "inconvenience of [racial] crossing" by presenting the names of Gonçalves Dias, André Rebouças, Tobias Barreto, and José do Patrocínio—"distinguished mulattos" from different professional fields—as some examples that mestiçagem would not be an obstacle for Brazil to become a developed nation. They rejected any hypothesis that physical or moral "degenerative factors" were related to mestiçagem.¹¹⁷

Scientific racism and interpretations on what represented (or would represent) a "Brazilian race" permeate the political and cultural debates during the beginning of the First Republic, and they were redefined and adapted to local conditions. In a way, interpreting the *mestiço* category also corresponded to a search for national identity, which is also evident when looking at the periodicals published in the early years of the twentieth century.¹¹⁸ The

Dalgalarondo, "Juliano Moreira: um psiquiatra negro frente ao racismo científico" *Rev. Bras. Psiquiatria* (v. 22, n. 4, Dez.2000) 178-179.

¹¹⁵ Augusta Peick Moreira, "Homens de côr no Brasil" (1910) 358.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 356.

¹¹⁷ Juliano Moreira, "Querelantes e pseudo-querelantes," *Arquivos Brasileiros de Psychiatria, Neurologia e Medicina Legal fundados pelos Drs. Juliano Moreira e Afranio Peixoto* (Rio de Janeiro: Oficinas de Typ. e Encad. do Hospicio Nacional de Alienados, Anno IV, v. 3-4, 1908) 426-434. Juliano Moreira described to Nina Rodrigues the story of a patient (called A.P.D.), mestiço, son of Italian father and a black mother, from his childhood, his studies up to the second year at the Law school, his illness, until his death at the age of fifty-five. Moreira said that "Tendo mostrado este doente ao Prof. Nina Rodrigues, achou ele no caso mais uma prova de que a mestiçagem é um fator degenerativo. Ora, tendo eu sempre me oposto a esta maneira superficial de ver o problema, aproveitei uma longa estada na Europa para examinar os parentes de A.P.D. que tinham ficado na Europa livres da mestiçagem. (...) Apurei o seguinte: (...) o ramo europeu da família, livre da mestiçagem, em nada foi superior ao ramo mestiço brasileiro. (...) Intelectualmente mesmo A.P.D. apesar de paranóico era evidentemente superior aos seus primos italianos. Não afirmarei que o relativo lucro proveio do cruzamento, mas sim da circunstância de ser a mãe dele uma mulher sã, não tendo ele herdado sua eiva senão de seu pai, bêbado habitual, nada escrupuloso em negócios e com evidente tendência demandista."

¹¹⁸ Interesting to see Gonzaga Duque's approach on the issue of mestiçagem when talking about Afro-Brazilian poet Cruz e Souza. See Gonzaga Duque, "O Poeta Negro," *Kósmos - Revista Artistica, Scientifica e Litteraria* (Rio de Janeiro: Officina Typographica de J.

concern for national unity motivated Brazilian public figures to explore the theme of *mestiçagem*, its role in the destiny of the nation, and how *mestiço* bodies could function as Brazil's standard of authenticity.¹¹⁹

Observing the debates, we can reflect on a type of intellectual production that constructed a version of Brazil's identity considering that "the national, in its vast majority, is characteristically *mestiço*".¹²⁰ Both abolition (1888) and the proclamation of the Republic (1889) provoked many intellectuals to think about the incorporation of Afro-Brazilians—if not into the life of the state, giving them actual citizenship—at least into the physical identity of the national character:

by the formation of this *mestiçagem* spread in our people, becoming softer, daily, by the assimilation of foreign elements, it leaves, in return, as an inescapable trace, the slight golden of the face, the barely curbed insurrection of the hair, the insinuating and elastic gaze; a mixed race that will form one day, by the constant and balanced welding, the definitive type of our nationality (...) Also in the future, May 13 will be the commemorative date of the black race's collaboration with Brazil, the recognition it gave us in work and dedication, mentalities and heroes.¹²¹

Although the mixture of races was seen positively by important intellectuals to be the essence of Brazil's uniqueness, it was not a phenomenon the all interpreted in the same way. The variety of interpretations was as wide as the choice for what to value and what should be condemned. Religious festivities like Festa da Penha "which excited the *mestiço* and defeated the prejudice of some reluctant classes [*blasé* white elites]" in Rio, or

Schmidt, Anno VI, n. 2, Fevereiro 1909) 44-6. Gonzaga Duque clearly speculated on the whitening process of Brazilian society. According to him, *mestiçagem* in Brazil would end racial prejudice while eliminating "the black element" of "the ancestral race."

¹¹⁹ The reflection I propose in this chapter necessarily demands a dialogue with important scholarship, produced by several historians in the 1980s and 1990s, on Brazil's First Republic. See Nicolau Sevcenko, *Literatura como missão: tensões sociais e criação cultural na Primeira República* (São Paulo: Brasiliense, 1983); Monica Pimenta Velloso, *Tradições populares na primeira década do século 20* (Rio de Janeiro: FUNARTE, 1988); Martha Abreu Esteves, *Meninas perdidas, os populares e o cotidiano do amor no Rio de Janeiro da Belle Époque* (Rio de Janeiro: Paz e Terra, 1989); Jeffrey Needell, *Belle Époque tropical* (São Paulo: Cia das Letras, 1993). This scholarship supports the thesis Brazil's that intellectual thought during the so-called *Belle Époque* turned, almost homogeneously, to external values and to the Europeanisation of national customs, ignoring or excluding all the African heritage in order accomplish Brazil's civilizing project. My work shows that elite discourse was more heterogeneous.

¹²⁰ Gil, "Crônica" *Kósmos - Revista Artística, Científica e Litteraria* (Rio de Janeiro: Officina Typographica de J. Schmidt, Anno I, n.5, Maio 1904) 5.

¹²¹ Idem. The original is: "pela formação dessa *mestiçagem* que se diffunde pelo nosso povo, abrandando-se, dia a dia, pela assimilação de elementos estranhos, mas deixando, em troca, como um traço inilludível, o leve dourado da face, a insurreição mal refreitada dos cabellos, o olhar insinuante e elastico; *mestiçagem* que formará um dia, pelo caldeamento constante e nivelador, o typo definitivo da nossa nacionalidade (...) Seria, de futuro, também o 13 de Maio a data comemoradora da collaboração da raça negra no Brasil, o reconhecimento que nos deu em trabalho e dedicação, mentalidades e heróes."

the cult of the Senhor do Bomfim as a representation of how “the *mestiço* Bahian Catholicism expands,” illustrate that the search for a national unity recognized the *mestiço* as the Brazilian “product,” bringing to readers nationwide the discussion on the issue.¹²² Mestiçagem manifested spiritually, mentally, and physically—in examples like “that *mestiço* genius” Tobias Barreto.¹²³ While for Lima Campos, “our *capoeira*” represented “the inventive spirit of the *mestiço*,” considering it “*mulata, cafusa, mameluca*, that is, racially crossed, *mestiça*,” for Olavo Bilac, the African, Portuguese, and indigenous elements merged in another corporeal manifestation.¹²⁴ For Bilac, samba absorbed the hatreds of color, making all the conflicts of the races disappear. In his words, “samba is - if I may express it - a kind of teapot, where dark coffee and light milk come in separately and whence the homogeneous and harmonious hybrid coffee-with-milk wells up...”¹²⁵

Olavo Bilac argued Brazil could assume its inheritance without any implications to its modernizing project because “civilized countries” in Europe already had black people in public positions of power.¹²⁶ It was the racial

¹²² Gil, “Chrónica” *Kósmos* (Rio de Janeiro: Officina Typographica de J. Schmidt, Anno 1, n.10, Outubro 1904) 4-6; Xavier Marques “Uma Tradição Religiosa da Bahia,” *Kósmos* (Rio de Janeiro: Officina Typographica de J. Schmidt, Anno 2, n.3, Março 1905) 19-22. To learn more about the relationship between the dissemination of national discourses and the recognition of identity codes during Brazil’s First Republic, see Lucia Lippi de Oliveira, “Questão nacional na primeira república,” In Helena Carvalho De Lorenzo & Wilma Peres da Costa (eds.), *A década de 1920 e as origens do Brasil moderno* (São Paulo: Editora da Unesp/FAPESP, 1997).

¹²³ A. G. de Araujo Jorge, “Psychologia D’uma Epocha: Tobias Barreto (Pagina de um estudo consagrado à memoria do genial sergipano),” *Kósmos* (Rio de Janeiro, Anno 2, n.7, Julho 1905) 48-50. Artur Guimarães de Araujo Jorge (1884-1977) was born in the state of Alagoas, graduated in 1904 from the Recife Law School, entered Brazil’s Ministry for Foreign Affairs in 1906, being the personal secretary of José Maria da Silva Paranhos Júnior (Barão do Rio Branco), and became one of the most important Brazilian diplomats in the first half of the twentieth century. Araujo Jorge founded the *Revista Americana* in 1919.

¹²⁴ Lima Campos, “A Capoeira,” *Kósmos* (Rio de Janeiro, Anno 3, n.3, Março 1906) 56-59. To learn more about journalist and writer César Câmara de Lima Campos (1872-1929) see Marcelo José Fonseca Fernandes, *O Conto Simbolista no Brasil: seguido de antologia comentada* (Rio de Janeiro: UFRJ, Doctoral Dissertation, 2014).

¹²⁵ Olavo Bilac (signing Fantasio one of his pseudonyms), “A Dansa no Rio de Janeiro,” *Kósmos* (Rio de Janeiro, Anno 3, n.5, Maio 1906) 49-51. The original in Portuguese is: “O samba é, – se me permittis a expressão – uma espécie de bule, onde entram, separados, o café escuro e o leite claro, e de onde jorra, homogeneo e harmonico, o hybrido café-com-leite...”. Olavo Brás Martins dos Guimarães Bilac (1865-1918) was a member of the Brazilian Academy of Letters and considered the most important representative of the so-called “Brazilian Parnasianismo”.

¹²⁶ Olavo Bilac, “O Que Se Diz De Nós,” *Correio Paulistano – Orgam do Partido Republicano* (São Paulo: Imp. Koenig & Bauer, n.15.834, 13 Setembro-1907), 1. Bilac specifically mentioned France as a country with black individuals serving the country as congressmen: “Mas a França já teve uma porção de deputados negros, – e nem por isso o gallo francez, o glorioso *Chanteclair* da Gália, perde o entono da voz possante e a côr afogueada da crista!”

and cultural certificate of Brazil's compatibility with the great models of progress. For Bilac, figures such as José do Patrocínio, a black man, should be a source for the national pride, not of contempt or shame. Moreover, Bilac repudiated what seemed to be a growing emulation of the United States, especially represented by São Paulo, due to the introduction of color hatred, characterized by the prohibition of "blacks and mulattos" (considered "incapable and bad figures") in the corps of the civil guard of the "city that wants to be a Yankee."¹²⁷ Although arguing that no Brazilian was "completely, legitimately, absolutely white, with the blood positively cleaned of any African mix," Bilac fantasized about a society where "the simple and admirable harmony established between races" was the aspect that honored "Brazilian civilization" the most. In his imagined reality (detached from reality itself), Bilac believed that "color has never prevented a man from reaching the highest positions in Brazil." Bilac reproduced the discourse of a "great confraternization of the races" in Brazil compared to the United States, which he singled out as racially segregationist. *Mestiçagem*, "realized by our grandparents," was for him the positive and original characteristic of Brazilian nationality. Olavo Bilac also demonstrated his deference to "the race we owe the most, the martyr race which broke through the land for us, watered it with its blood, defended it, formed it, enriched it."¹²⁸ Bilac resolutely criticized those Brazilians ashamed of their African ancestry:

Here whites despise mulattos, and mulattos despise blacks; light mulattos say they are white, and dark mulattos say they are not descended from blacks but descended from the Tamoyos and Tupyniquins. It is still a damned race, and yet Brazil was made by it... Oh our cruel foolishness, our stupid presumption, as if a homeland could nullify its past, alter its tradition, destroy its history as easily as if any of us throw the broken boots and the worn-out white clothing into the trash!¹²⁹

¹²⁷ Olavo Bilac, "Chronica," *Gazeta de Noticias* (Rio de Janeiro: Typ. da Gazeta de Noticias, Anno XXXII, n.21, 21 January 1906), 3.

¹²⁸ Olavo Bilac, "Chronica," *Gazeta de Noticias* (Rio de Janeiro: Typ. da Gazeta de Noticias, Anno XXXIII, n.83, 24 March 1907), 1. Speaking of Argentine General Roca's trip to Sao Paulo, Olavo Bilac mentioned an incident that happened at a stop in the city of Resende (RJ) in which a black octogenarian, veteran of the Paraguayan war, shouted "Long live the Emperor!" offering the general a bunch of bananas. According to Bilac, General Roca did not laugh nor feel outraged: "He received the black man kindly, greeted him when learned he was a veteran of the Paraguayan war, accepted the bananas, and gratified the poor old man," a very different reaction compared to the negative manifestation of many Brazilians present at the event.

¹²⁹ Olavo Bilac, "Chronica," (1907) Op.cit. The original in Portuguese is: "Aqui, os brancos desprezam os mulatos, e os mulatos desprezam os pretos; os mulatos claros dizem que são brancos, e os mulatos escuros dizem que não são descendentes de pretos, mas descendentes de tamoyos e tupyniquins. É ainda uma raça maldita, e entretanto o Brasil foi feito por ella... Oh a nossa cruel tollice, a nossa estúpida presumpção, como se uma patria pudesse annullar o seu passado, alterar a sua tradição, destruir a sua historia tão facilmente como qualquer de nós deita ao lixo as botinas estragadas e a roupa branca puída pelo uso!"

With a similar argument, Domingos Olympio denounced, in a novel, the prejudices suffered by a black physician named Pedro da Conceição, son of a slave mother, “compressed by the tone of his dark skin,” who succeeded in his “victorious fight towards the ultimate title of doctor” despite all the obstacles faced by his “damned ancestry.”¹³⁰ Four years later, General Dionisio Cerqueira told the story of a freedman soldier, son of manumitted slave parents, another “ignored hero” who had a valorous role during the Paraguayan War.¹³¹ Cerqueira also praised the representatives of the “anonymous mass” of “poor heroic sons” ignored by their motherland.¹³²

Notable figures like Dionisio Cerqueira, Domingos Olympio, e Olavo Bilac dialogued with their readers recognizing that, despite the integration of dark-skinned individuals within Brazilian society, a strong prejudice of color persisted in Brazil, including the relations of blacks and mestiços among themselves. Distinguished personalities like them denounced the hypocrisy of a country that claimed to be proud of having assimilated the “black race” arguing that nonwhite bodies should be recognized as part of the nation in its the past, present and, most importantly, civilized future.

Dealing with the scientific racism of their time, outstanding Brazilian thinkers also refuted the application of biological theories to human society and challenged the prevailing racial determinism. In order to understand the “backwardness” of Latin America and Brazil, those significant figures invested in the analysis of the problems inherited from the colonial period, concluding that the backwardness had historical motivations derived from the

¹³⁰ Domingos Olympio, “O Doutor Conceição (Excerpto de Romance),” *Kósmos* (Rio de Janeiro: Anno 1, n.5, Maio 1904) 36. Olympio Domingos Olympio Braga Cavalcanti (1851-1906) was born in Sobral (Ceará) and graduated from Recife’s Law School in 1873. Olympio served as provincial parliamentarian in Belém (Pará) in 1879 as an abolitionist and republican. Olympio worked as a diplomatic secretary with General Dionisio Cerqueira in Washington, also developing an intense literary activity with important works for Brazil’s literature.

¹³¹ Dionisio Cerqueira, “O Rosario do Cabo de Ordens,” *Kósmos* (Rio de Janeiro, Anno 5, n.5, Maio 1908) 34-36.

¹³² Dionisio Cerqueira, “Dous bons camaradas,” *Kósmos* (Rio de Janeiro, Anno 1, n.3, Março 1906) 6-7. Dionisio Evangelista de Castro Cerqueira (1847-1910) was born in Bahia and wrote “Memória histórica sobre a Faculdade de Medicina da Bahia relativa ao ano de 1864.” General Cerqueira was also a representative for Bahia at the 1891 National Constituent Assembly and was Minister of Foreign Affairs (from September 1896 to November 1898) during President Prudente de Moraes’ administration, taking part in the works that delimited the Brazilian borders with Guyana, Venezuela, Bolivia and Argentina. Source: CPDOC/FGV <https://cpdoc.fgv.br/sites/default/files/verbetes/primeira-republica/CERQUEIRA,%20Dion%C3%ADsio.pdf>

predatory exploitation by European colonizers in Latin America. They rejected the view that Latin America was a region inhabited by inferior peoples, degenerate mestiços, unable to organize authentic nations.

The biological theories based on scientific racism were considered “an abject sophism of human egoism, hypocritically masked as cheap science, and cowardly applied to the exploitation of the weak by the strong,” in the words of Manoel Bomfim.¹³³ Bomfim refuted the negative characteristics imputed by Swiss-American scholar Jean Louis Agassiz who stated Brazilian mestiçagem “nullifies the best qualities of whites, blacks, and Indians, producing an indescribable mestizo type whose physical and mental energy is weak.”¹³⁴ Bomfim argued that negative characteristics, when present, resulted not from biology but from slavery, exploitation, and abandonment, the socio-historical conditions imposed to a large group of the population. In opposition to these racial theories, Bomfim made use of other references, believing mestiçagem could mix moral and intellectual qualities and open doors to the rise of new skills. For Bomfim, “the crossed race” developed in Brazil appreciable qualities and the opportunity for mestiços to fully develop their capabilities, “superior at least to the vast majority” of individuals from the “progenitor races.”¹³⁵

Hemetério dos Santos, a noteworthy black teacher, believed that counteracting skin-color bias—critically reflecting on “the problem of the ‘negro’”—was a patriotic mission to insert blacks into Brazil’s “national life.”¹³⁶ Despite having suffered himself from the prejudice of Brazilian society, Hemetério dos Santos also saw Brazil as

¹³³ Manoel Bomfim, *A America Latina: males de origem* (Rio de Janeiro/Paris: H. Garnier, 1905), 278.

¹³⁴ Jean Louis Rodolphe Agassiz (1807-1873) *Voyage au Brésil*, in Bomfim (1905), 305-06. By pointing to the inconsistencies of racist theses about the alleged inferiority of mestiços in Brazil, Bomfim demonstrated how anachronistic authors such as Agassiz were.

¹³⁵ Bomfim (1905), 309-10. Manoel Bomfim cited Théodule-Armand Ribot (1839-1916), Martin De Moussy (1810-1869), Jean Louis Armand de Quatrefages de Bréau (1810-1892), and Frederick William Beechey (1796-1856), among others, to argue there were important figures who made statements in favor of mestizos.

¹³⁶ Hemetério José dos Santos (1858-1939) was born in Codó (state of Maranhão) and became a philologist, poet, and teacher. Although a constant target of racist mockery by some members of the press, Hemetério dos Santos was the first black teacher at the Rio de Janeiro’s Normal School, also teaching at the Collegio Pedro II and at the Military School in Brazil’s former capital. In 1920, he became Honorary Lieutenant-Colonel of the Brazilian Army. A number of articles in newspapers between the last three decades of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the 1920s show that Hemetério dos Santos was present in various social and political events and his relentless quest to build a respected and valued social place among Brazilian elites.

a nation built on love and tolerance.¹³⁷ For him, “Brazilian society is unique in history because of the examples of constant, multiple and varied high virtues of these three types that came together through feeling, becoming a single spirit for the culture of goodness.”¹³⁸

The insistence of some public figures on racial integration is unquestionable, especially when arguing that Brazil should proudly assume its African heritage, even if this was still a matter of embarrassment for the elites. Furthermore, we can observe what was at stake around the debates on the criteria necessary for national belonging. While countering the contemporary racist paradigms (such as the whitening ideology) that identified the presence of nonwhite individuals as obstacles to progress and civilization, important public figures pointed to a mestiço nation, legitimizing the Brazilian mestiço body as a distinctive national trait. For those intellectuals, the definition of a homogeneous physical type for the nation implied assimilation by mestiçagem. Figures such as Hemetério dos Santos, Olavo Bilac, Manoel Bomfim, Domingos Olympio, Lima Campos, Araujo Jorge, and Dionisio Cerqueira championed a national type in which the phenotypical traces capable of conferring originality to Brazil should be “*mestiço* of the three races.”¹³⁹

The transition from monarchy to the proclamation of the Republic, in 1889, brought few changes when we reflect on the progress of citizenship in Brazil. The abolition of slavery, in 1888, is considered the only real

¹³⁷ Hemetério dos Santos, “Machado de Assis – Carta ao Sr. Fabio Luz” *Gazeta de Notícias* (Rio de Janeiro, Anno XXXIV, n.334, 29 Novembro 1908) 2. In 1907, Hemetério published an interesting etymological study—September 12, 1905—in which he contested another grammarian about negative terms associated with skin color. Hemetério argued that there were, historically, no pejorative notions associated with the terms “black” and “negro.” See Hemetério dos Santos, “Etymologias - Preto,” *Almanaque Brasileiro Garnier* (Rio de Janeiro, Anno V, 1907) 237-239.

¹³⁸ In a public letter to Fábio Luz, written on November 16, 1908 and published on the 29th in the *Gazeta de Notícias*, Hemetério dos Santos accused Machado de Assis of having neglected the “black problem” and that the prejudice against his own origin would have erased any significant traces of black persons in his work. For Hemetério dos Santos it was an offense to Machado’s “brothers of color” and, for “being a mulatto, Machado had no plausible reason to disfigure our simple and traditional morality.” Therefore, Hemetério dos Santos considered that Machado de Assis, despite his contribution to Brazilian culture, fell short of men such as Joaquim Manoel de Macedo, Gonçalves Dias, Castro Alves, José do Patrocínio, Joaquim Nabuco, Aluizio Azevedo, Ruy Barbosa “and so many others who kept wetting their quill pens in this inkwell of pain and shame of ours.” This letter in which Hemetério criticized Machado de Assis, regardless the merits of the accusations, represents how the issue was often viewed and how people dealt with prejudice of color and with the participation of blacks in the construction of a national identity. The letter was also published in the *Almanaque Brasileiro Garnier* (1910) 369-74.

¹³⁹ Dionisio Cerqueira, “Dous bons camaradas,” *Kósmos* (1906) Op. cit.

structural transformation from independence to the end of the First Republic, in 1930.¹⁴⁰ In terms of a “national feeling,” the proclamation of the Republic somehow “meant the strengthening of the local loyalties [within the provinces] in detriment of a national loyalty.”¹⁴¹ There was neither a people politically organized nor a national sentiment.



Figure 3

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¹⁴⁰ See José Murilo de Carvalho, *Cidadania no Brasil: o longo caminho* (Rio de Janeiro: Civilização Brasileira, 2017). It is important to remember, nevertheless, that the hierarchical order on which Brazilian slave society was founded was not entirely broken with Abolition or with the Republic. According to Antônio Sérgio Guimarães, this order in fact was never broken, not even with the postwar democratic restoration or even with the New Republic. For him, this structure has been maintained, in everyday life, by norms and laws based on a supposed equality between individuals, an equality that in fact has never been allowed to exist. See Antônio Sérgio A. Guimarães, *Classes, raças e democracia* (São Paulo: Editora 34, 2002).

¹⁴¹ *Idem.* 86.

¹⁴² Professor Juliano Moreira - *Arquivos Brasileiros de Psychiatria, Neurologia e Medicina Legal* (Rio de Janeiro: Oficinas de Typ. e Encad. do Hospicio Nacional de Alienados, Anno IX, n°s.1e 2, 1913) 123.

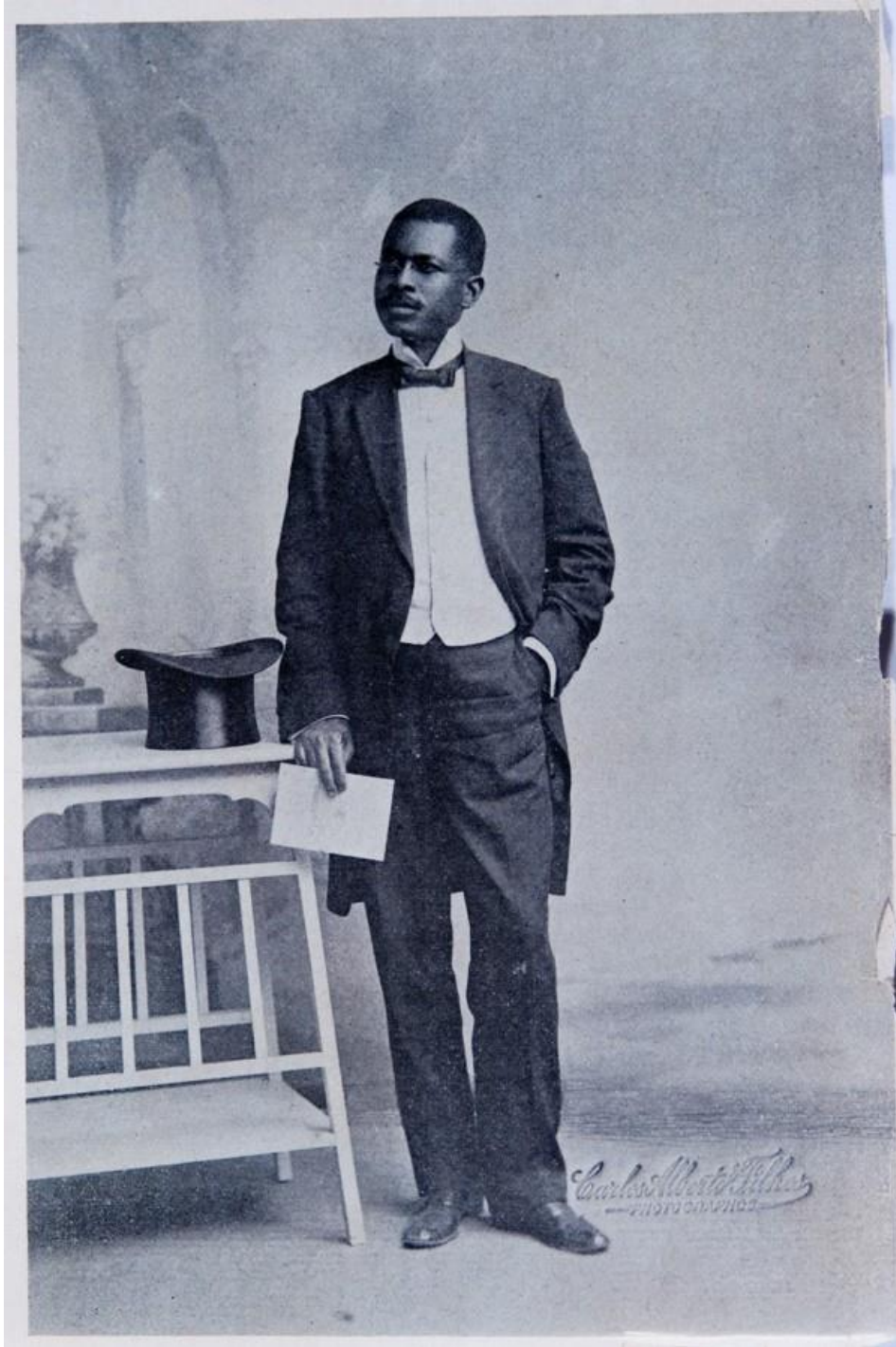


Figure 4

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¹⁴³ Professor Hemetério José dos Santos - Centro de Memória Institucional (CEMI) do Instituto Superior de Educação do Rio de Janeiro (ISERJ).

1.4 Wombs, Schools, and Barracks

Brazilian scientific figures created a social determinism that translated social hierarchy into racial hierarchy. In order to put eugenic ideals into effect, many believed it would be necessary to stimulate European immigration and the procreation among the “superior eugenic types.” For them, the whitening process would be the hegemonic solution for the so-called “Brazilian racial problem.” As we have seen, over centuries, a counter current of discourse challenged racial determinism and valued nonwhite persons and *mestiçagem*. The diversity of positions show that *mestiçagem* and skin-color prejudice were pivotal issue of conflict and symbolic negotiation. Some Brazilian intellectuals offered possibilities for reconciling the contradictions of a multiracial and hierarchical society, and adapting eugenic theories to national realities. The European ideals were behind the social practices to incorporate public policies aimed at “improving the race” and, at the same time, preventing its “degeneration”:

Give them superior interests, and from there estimable societies will be born. Strong and vigorous as they are, they will lately be able to take advantage of their energies and resistances, which effectively make them superior to the colonists recruited from the rubbish of corrupted civilizations.¹⁴⁴

Based on this vision, the challenges for Brazilians were no different from those faced by European populations that lacked adequate access to hygiene and education. Imbued with a nationalist and anti-imperialist tone, the posture adopted by some outstanding intellectuals—and academics—refuted the scientific racism framework of a “degenerated Brazil” as a nation. From Nina Rodrigues’ certainty of African “inferiority,” or Sylvio Romero and Gonzaga Duque’s vision of *mestiçagem* to “whitening the nation,” to Lima Campos’ selective consecration of the *mestiço* to Olavo Bilac’s ambivalent statements or Juliano Moreira’s refusal of race as a determining factor, positions on *mestiçagem* varied. What these intellectuals had in common was the search for

¹⁴⁴ Manoel Bomfim (1905) 314. See, especially, the chapter “As Novas Sociedades – Elementos essenciais do caracter; raças colonisadoras; efeitos do cruzamento.”

the national “product” Brazil needed to be a true nation, a “physically harmonious” people endowed with a sense of belonging and brotherhood; an ideology aimed at shaping the Brazilian ideal type. As demonstrated in the next chapters, the solution passed through the expansion of puericulture, education, military bodily training, and moral codes of behavior. In other words, to achieving the hygiene and nutrition of bodies—people’s physical and mental regeneration—wombs, schools, and barracks would be the preferred path for building an exceptional Brazilian civilization.

Alongside the widespread sharing of scientific racist European theories at the turn of the twentieth century, there was also a growing disagreement over the assessment of the effects of miscegenation, frankly observed but not so unanimously condemned. The belief in the scientific basis of these theories remained latent, hence the spread of whitening ideology. The active presence of non-white “products” in the construction of the national ideal type, however, became a key topic of discussion. Intellectuals from the most diverse areas participated in a debate marked by ambiguities and a plurality of conceptions. There were notable shifts in the racial and cultural debate about which corporal “Brazilian” figure would represent the national ideal. The scientific racism paradigm and the relativization of *mestiçagem* as an aspect of Brazil’s distinctive myth of origin dialogued within the construction of a national identity. Some intellectuals were committed to interventionist projects as they aspired to transform Brazilian society by shaping bodies.

The crucial means to implement the ideology of physical education, aiming to mold the image of Brazil, rested on key institutions. As explained in the introduction, physical education in modern Brazil should not be understood as the mere manifestations of physical exercises. Advocates envisioned physical education as the means to mold the modern person of the tropics to be humanized, and civilized. Brazilian public authorities sought to adapt and apply scientific knowledge to the local conditions of institutions, and they considered the physical education of the population “the most important part of all scientific and rational systems in medical treatment.”¹⁴⁵

¹⁴⁵ Dr. Joaquim Antonio Alves Ribeiro, “Correspondencia,” *A Lancêta, Jornal de Medicina, Physiologia, Cirurgia, Chimica, Pharmacia, Literatura e Noticioso* (Ceará: Imp. João Evangelista, Anno 2, vol.2, n.3, 25 de Março de 1863) 35.

Over the years, when the brand-new Republic initiated its efforts to imagine and build a nation, discourses on physical education—developed from and practiced with patriotic sentiments—aimed to create the moral sensation that Brazilians needed to develop solidarity. Brazilian intellectuals like José Veríssimo, it was “very important, therefore, to have our own works, from an original Brazilian observation, both on our own physiology and psychology and on its application to a national pedagogy.”¹⁴⁶

A new constitution in 1891, the first magna carta of republican Brazil, introduced changes for Brazilian physical culture. The constitution created a relative decentralization and changed the political and administrative organization of the Empire, giving greater autonomy to the provinces.¹⁴⁷ From then on, a greater number of initiatives were crucial not only for structuring the educational system but also for the regulation of childcare and women’s patriotic role, the military corps, and “gentlemen’s” bodies. In this context, concerns about the physical education of the people again came to the fore in the public sphere. At the beginning of the twentieth century, with the reforms proposed both nationally and locally, institutions began to share a key political role along with policymakers, intellectuals, and physicians.

The following chapters explore how the project of “making better Brazilians” gained widespread acceptance from the first years after independence as well as the belief that proper bodily care should start during childhood, with what was called puericulture (childrearing). Moreover, they were also urgently concerned with introducing bodily care, physical exercises, and sportsmanship into the educational system. Finally, I will show how the struggle between those believing in “civilized” western countries as “incomparably stronger people” molded political and scientific acts which envisioned a militarized body prepared with robustness, strength, and

¹⁴⁶ Veríssimo (1890) 77-8. José Veríssimo made this statement after he analyzed works such as F. Lagrange’s *Physiologie des exercices du corps* (Paris, 1888). The original statement in Portuguese: “Importa, pois, e muitíssimo, possuímos trabalhos nossos, de observação original, *brazileira*, quer sobre a nossa própria fisiologia e psicologia, quer sobre sua aplicação à pedagogia nacional.”

¹⁴⁷ BRASIL, *Lei n. 16 de 12 de Agosto de 1834, Registrada nesta Secretaria de Estado dos Negocios do Imperio no Livro 6º do Registro de Leis, Alvarás, e Cartas a fl. 75*, Presidência da República, Casa Civil, Subchefia para Assuntos Jurídicos, available at http://www.planalto.gov.br/ccivil_03/leis/lim/LIM16.htm. Chapter 3 explains the Ato Adicional of 1834 in details, especially on the education reforms taking place throughout Brazilian provinces.

health not only for war, but for the symbolic battlefield of capitalism, in order to guarantee “this land, which our forefathers created and civilized, and which the future greatness they prepared, is mainly ours.”¹⁴⁸ The physical education of bodies in Brazil was, “in all its rigor, a national problem.”¹⁴⁹

Physical culture as an ideology gained strength in national life through political projects developed within the family, at schools, in the military, and in sporting clubs as institutions of discipline. In addition, the backers of this ideology not only focused on how and what to teach, but also (especially) on elevating the discipline and instruction of bodies to “effectively assist the maintenance of public order and the principle of authority.”¹⁵⁰ Physical education combined childcare, institutional control of women’s bodies, the discipline of young individuals at schools, the gentleman cult, and military virtues of the good warrior with the self-restraint and control to produce the desired modern citizen. Advocates believed in the importance of bodily care, physical exercise, and the ability to transform the nation through the disciplining of Brazilian bodies. They believe they could sanitize their society and forge a people with strong bodies and the character to serve their country.

The proponents of physical education wrote pamphlets and textbooks, proposals on childcare, military gymnastics and a whole spectrum of bodily practices as the path to be followed toward accomplishing their vision of national unity and order. The relationship between family, education, the military, and hygienists’ ideas—gradually adding eugenic principles—converged in a wide variety of professionals all with a common interest in improving the human body. They endeavored to “cultivate our valor by civilizing ourselves by our own efforts” and mold individuals within the narrative of progress, nationalism, and the making of a new, “noble race” destined

¹⁴⁸ Veríssimo (1890) 91. See also Dr. Murillo de Campos, “Notas sobre a hygiene mental no Exercito,” in *Archivos Brasileiros de Hygiene Mental: Orgão oficial da Liga Brasileira de Hygiene Mental* (Rio de Janeiro: Typ. do Jornal do Commercio, anno 1, n.1, Março de 1925) 91-100.

¹⁴⁹ Veríssimo (Op. cit.) 91.

¹⁵⁰ Joaquim d’Almeida Faria Sobrinho, “Ordem do dia n.53,” *Gazeta Paranaense – Orgam do Partido Conservador* (Curitiba: Typ. Gazeta, Anno X, n.219, 1º de Outubro de 1886) 1. Joaquim d’Almeida Sobrinho (1847-1893) was a lawyer and politician. He was vice-president of the province of Paraná, taking over the presidency temporarily in 1885 and 1887.

to lead.¹⁵¹ In the late nineteenth and the early twentieth century, the expression “physical education” frequently appeared along with widespread terms such as hygiene, puericulture, and gymnastics. These terms were often used in Brazil to promote an ideology that aimed to institute harmony among the corporal, moral, and intellectual formation of “civilized” citizens committed to their nation. Brazilian families, schools, military institutions, national and local laws, and discussions within newspapers are filled with this language and these ideological proposals.

¹⁵¹ Luiz da Silva Bastos, “A Orthologia e os Ideaes da Razão,” in *O Physiologista* (Curitiba: Anno I, vol. 1, 14 de Julho de 1910) 4.

CHAPTER II

From Conception to Birth: Puericulture, Gender, and the Growth of the Nation



Figure 5

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¹⁵² *A Pátria* (1919) by Pedro Bruno. Museu da República, Rio de Janeiro.

The doctor replied that Dona Evarista enjoyed perfect physiological and anatomical accomplishments, easy digestion, excellent eyesight, and normal blood pressure; she had had no serious illness and her urinalysis was negative. It was likely she would give him healthy, robust, and intelligent children.

Machado de Assis - *O Alienista*, 1881

In Machado de Assis' novella, psychiatrist Simão Bacamarte, despite devoting his entire life to the study of the mind, believed that physical health was as determinant as mental health for the future of a nation.¹⁵³ Machado de Assis described the doctor as “the greatest physician in Brazil, Portugal, and Spain.” The story tells us that Dr. Bacamarte returned to Brazil, after he graduated from Coimbra at the age of thirty-four, marrying the widow Evarista da Costa e Mascarenhas six years later. Initially, the people close to Dr. Bacamarte did not understand why he chose Evarista, because she was “neither beautiful nor charming.” Dr. Bacamarte, “rigorous in his science,” justified the decision from a pragmatic point of view when he diagnosed in Evarista the basic physiological and anatomical conditions “to give him healthy, robust, and intelligent children.” Machado de Assis believed “the scientific temperament is by nature patient” and for that reason his protagonist waited five years for the desired heir. At the end of that frustrating time, Simão Bacamarte did a thorough study on the matter, reread all the writers he knew and sent inquiries to Italian and German universities, finally prescribing a special diet to Evarista as a final endeavor. Despite all the scientific efforts made by Dr. Bacamarte, the story tells us that Evarista gave to her husband “neither robust nor disgraceful children,” attributing to her “lack of wifely submissiveness, understandable but unqualified,” the total extinction of the Bacamarte dynasty.

Although fiction, Machado de Assis' novella serves us as a primary source that portrayed part of a movement within Western societies to boost the active workforce of populations.¹⁵⁴ This chapter shows that the scientific ideal for the nation and its practices were not restricted to men, but also directed at women because, after all, they were considered the propagators of the race. Moreover, it analyzes the concerns about miscarriages

¹⁵³ *The Alienist* is a masterpiece created by the Brazilian writer Machado de Assis. Originally published in 1881 in the journal *A Estação* (Rio de Janeiro) and divided into thirteen chapters, the classic story takes place in the village of Itaguaí (in the state of Rio de Janeiro) and debates the tenuous frontier between rationality and madness. See Machado de Assis, *The Alienist* (Brooklyn/London: Melville House, translated by William L. Grossman, 2012). In his works, Machado de Assis had a particular interest in female characterization. To learn more about how Machado de Assis used female characterizations to convey social consciousness, see Earl E. Fitz, *Machado de Assis and Female Characterization: The Novels* (Lewisburg-PA: Bucknell University Press, 2016).

¹⁵⁴ According to Foucault, as early as the sixteenth century England, France, and Austria began to calculate the active force of their populations. In societies where the number of inhabitants was their greatest wealth, the observation of high mortality rates led to the need for tactics to improve the population's health status. See Michel Foucault, “The Birth of Social Medicine,” In *Power*. volume 3 of *Essential Works of Foucault: 1954-1984*. Ed. James D. Faubion. Trans. Robert Hurley et al. (New York: The New Press, 2000).

and the institution of hygienic childcare, called *puériculture*—that partly arose as a consequence of the change in the social status of children—and nutrition. The chapter also examines the scientific ideals infused with a nationalist ethos that characterized the roles women were expected to play in Brazil to protect and care for bodies so as to cast aside “degenerative behaviors,” and strive to shape and improve a Brazilian race.

Concerns about the health of populations, among other things, informed national policies in a more significant way in the mid-eighteenth century. In the German States, for example, these concerns took official shape in 1764, with the establishment of what was called the “medical police.”¹⁵⁵ States engaged in the rigorous observation of mortality, birth rates, and the regulation of the medical profession, with the subordination of these professionals to new administrative organizations. This commitment reached its apex with the works of Johann Peter Frank (1779-1817). Throughout J.P. Frank’s work, there was a meticulous system of hygiene, which included rules aimed at increasing birth rates, such as the tax on unmarried people, labor laws giving a rest period to women after childbirth, the control of school institutions creating conditions for improving education, and the standardization of food, clothing, and housing. New health codes, such the one developed by Franz Anton Mai (1742-1814) for governments (although not fully implemented) consolidated the idea of State Medicine and the innumerable possibilities of an alliance between physicians and statemen.

This chapter seeks to better understand ideas about women’s physical ability to reproduce, breastfeed, and the role of the wet nurse in Brazil. As its institutional power increased, modern medicine expanded its objects of regulation not only to medical schools and cities, but to families as well, giving to the physician a formidable power to rule on key health issues. In the early years of the United States, for example, the medical notion emerged that women were responsible for the shaping of children’s minds, morals, and for the nurturance of children’s souls, something previously regarded as primarily the responsibility of the father and other older men.¹⁵⁶

¹⁵⁵ See George Rosen, *A History of Public Health* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, revised expanded edition, 2015). See, in particular, the chapter “Enlightenment and Revolution.”

¹⁵⁶ See Nora Doyle, *Maternal Bodies: Redefining Motherhood in Early America* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2018).

Historical records that discuss early Brazilian motherhood show us the perceptions and representations of corporality within the lived and imagined experiences of mothers as well as their connections to the ideological process of physical culture in constructing the body of the nation.

2.1 “*Infantes tuendo pro patria laboramus*”: conceptions of childcare and the issue of *puériculture*

On April 4, 1841, during his speech at the inauguration of the *Sociedade de Medicina*, in the state of Pernambuco, doctor Antonio Peregrino Maciel Monteiro (president-elect of the Society) clearly affirmed that the objectives of the new institution were “brilliant and fruitful thinking in happy results for Science!; beneficial and advantageous goals for the Country and for the whole of Humanity!” Monteiro argued that the Society of Medicine had the responsibility to follow similar scientific associations around the world in serving—with governmental endorsement—a decisive role in the destiny of the Brazilian people. The president of the Society of Medicine understood two “capital effects” should manifest from the organization of those institutions: “1st the physical condition of the population; 2nd its moral and intellectual condition.” Dr. Monteiro believed that, “Medicine is the most social of all Sciences” and called up his counterparts not only to investigate the diseases that affect, “indiscriminately, individuals who inhabit the same soil and breath the same air” but particularly not to forget “the physical education of the population, which only when submitted to the rules of Hygiene and Gymnastics can become valid, active, robust, and brave; characteristics that distinguish a People that loves work, production, and freedom.”¹⁵⁷

¹⁵⁷ *Annaes da Medicina Pernambucana*, “Discurso Recitado pelo Senhor Doutor Antonio Peregrino Maciel Monteiro, Presidente da Sociedade de Medicina, no acto da installacao da mesma Sociedade, no dia 4 de Abril de 1841.” (Recife: Typ. de Santos & Companhia, Anno I, Numero I, 1842) 9-17. In 1808, the Escola de Cirurgia da Bahia (School of Surgery) was created in the province of Bahia. In 1816, it became the Academia Médico-Cirúrgica da Bahia. Years later, a group of doctors, influenced by French social medicine, created in 1829 the Sociedade de Medicina e Cirurgia (Society of Medicine and Surgery) of Rio de Janeiro, with the purpose of lobbying the government regarding hygiene measures and regulating the teaching and practice of medicine. In 1832, two medical colleges were created, one in Bahia and another in Rio de Janeiro. In addition, following the example of France, urban spaces began to be remodeled according to the sanitary ideals of urban medicine. See Lycurgo dos Santos Filho, *História da medicina no Brasil: do século XVI ao século XIX* (São Paulo: Brasiliense, v.1, 1947); Lourival Ribeiro, *Medicina no Brasil colonial* (Rio de Janeiro: Sul-Americana, 1971).

The aim of these initiatives was to create a population based on an ideal of physical perfection which would require strong, agile, intelligent young people, resulting from the regulation of bodily hygiene and physical education. Brazilian physicians of the nineteenth century argued in favor of gymnastics—in addition to the enlargement of intelligence—as fundamental for “perfecting the organs of the movement and development of the child,” emphatically condemning “sedentary life.”¹⁵⁸ Beginning with the care of women’s bodies, techniques were established to control and modify the elements of the environment capable of favoring or harming bodily health.¹⁵⁹

Institutional strategies used in Brazil echoed those from nations that physicians considered vanguardist and civilized, although they also reflected the intense debates on the factors responsible for the backwardness of the country and how to elaborate specific strategies necessary to combat this backwardness. The medical community in Brazil was also concerned with factors that were “consuming” the bodies of lower-class citizens, especially inadequate nutrition and housing, conditions that would stunt the growth of families and, thus, the nation. As a result, “their quality of work will be low, and few will be their offspring; from them will be born the

See also FIOCRUZ, *Dicionário Histórico-Biográfico das Ciências da Saúde no Brasil (1832-1930)*, available at <http://www.dichistoriasaude.coc.fiocruz.br/iah/pt/index.php>.

¹⁵⁸ Pedro Antonio de Oliveira, “A Infancia”, In *O Medico Popular: Jornal Medico-Homeopathico* (Santos: Typographia Imparcial, n.10, 15 July 1851) 4. Another interesting work of the period, written by the physician from the state of Alagoas, Alexandre José Mello Moraes, is *Physiologia das Paixões e Affecções, Precedida de Uma Noção Philosophica Geral e Por Um Estudo Aprofundado e Descrições Anatomicas do Homem e da Mulher, Suas Diferenças Physiologicas, Physionomicas, Philosophicas e Moraes, Baseadas nas Theorias de Lavater, Moreau, Porta, Le Brun, Roussel, Virey e Outros, Seguida de Uma Classificação Methodica de Todos os Sentimentos Affectivos e Moraes, Conforme a Força Com Que Obram no Espirito, na Imaginação e no Coração* (Rio de Janeiro: Emp. Typ. Dous de Dezembro - De Paula Brito, 1855). In the second volume (see pages 15 to 19), Moraes described the physiological effects of activities such as athletic marches, jumping exercises, running, swimming, and dancing.

¹⁵⁹ Foucault called this type of State Medicine initiated in France in the eighteenth century as Urban Medicine, since it was a response to disorganized urbanization, with many industries under construction, conflicts between workers and employers, a large population and houses that collapsed easily, epidemics, etc. This policy sought to analyze and reorganize urban space, removing all that could be associated with diseases, such as cemeteries and slaughterhouses, controlling the distribution of water, and separating sanitary sewers. Foucault also analyzes a third form called Medicine of the Poor. It first took place in England, when the poor were recognized as a real danger to society. Influenced by German and French ideas, it innovated by having a medical service for the poor. Nevertheless, while helping the poorest to meet their health needs, the State subjugated them to various controls, ultimately resulting in protection for the wealthy classes, so preoccupied with the threats of revolts and epidemics. See Michel Foucault, “The Birth of Social Medicine” (2000).

weak and cowardly soldier; low-quality maids and wet nurses will take care of the homes and children of the wealthy ones,” jeopardizing the long-term development of the nation.¹⁶⁰

Intellectuals, physicians, and public health officials produced an abundant literature, also directed at mothers in nineteenth-century Brazil, on how to educate their bodies as a direct consequence of the strategies to care about the bodies of their children. This literature made an unprecedented connection between medicine and women in Brazil. While the doctors focused on children—the future of the nation—they also highlighted the importance of the role mothers should endeavor to follow in the noble task of preserving the health of infants’ bodies for the country. Brazil “demanded the aids of a domestic medicine, wise and prudent.”¹⁶¹ Medicine thus became fundamental for the rise of this new “Brazilian family,” for

the modern physician is no longer the friend who, in the home, tries to mitigate human pains; he (...) should deserve a place of honor in the greatest issues of public education, morality, criminal law and sanitary regulations. (...) Thus, to the divine ideal of suppressing physical evil comes another one, to which the physician can no longer be indifferent - the conquest of moral good, the perfectibility of the human genus.¹⁶²

¹⁶⁰ Dr. Cosme de Sá Pereira, “Da necessidade e utilidade da historia de qualquer repartição; Da Policia sanitaria em Pernambuco até 1845. Creação de um conselho Geral de Salubridade Publica n’esta época; suas attribuições; sua comparação com a Policia civil; sua importancia transcendente para o Legislador, Commerciante, Agricultor; & Antiguidades das Leis d’esta ordem. Reflexão a seu favor.”, writing from Recife on 2 December 1849, *Collecção dos Trabalhos do Conselho Geral de Salubridade Publica da Provincia de Pernambuco* (Pernambuco: Typographia de M.F. de Faria, 5º. Anno, 1849) 135-53. Arquivo Público de Pernambuco, Relatórios da Saúde Pública Sec. XIX e XX, Caixa 9. The document is very critical to the “hygienic situation” of the province, explaining the necessity for the creation of the “Conselho Geral de Salubridade Publica, essential for the Nation” (installed by the Provincial Law n.143 from 21 May 1845) and the ideas to regularize the urban space. It suggested, for example, the relocation of slaughterhouses, factories and cemeteries to more distant places. Understandings of hygiene, however, went beyond the misrepresentation of the environment, and acquired a moral role that located the cause of health problems in personal behavior. The fight against prostitution and slums was also illustrated in the document, as an example of the moral obsession with hygiene.

¹⁶¹ Jean-Baptiste Alban Imbert, *Guia Medica das Mães de Familia, ou A Infancia considerada na sua hygiene, suas molestias e tratamentos* (Rio de Janeiro: Typographia Francesa, 1843) 10. Available online at Biblioteca Nacional <http://acervo.bndigital.bn.br/sophia/index.html>

¹⁶² “Discurso Proferido pelo Dr. Ambrosio Braga, na Sessão Funebre realizada em homenagem à memoria do Dr. Romualdo C.M. de Miranda Ribeiro, Vice-Presidente da Sociedade, no dia 1º de Junho de 1890.” *Boletins da Sociedade de Medicina e Cirurgia de Juiz de Fora* (Juiz de Fora: Anno I, N.2, Abril, Maio e Junho de 1890, Typ. Pereira, 1891) 3. The original text in Portuguese: “(...) O medico moderno já não é só o amigo que, no recondito do lar, procura mitigar humanas dôres; elle (...) deve merecer um lugar de honra nas grandes questões de educação publica, de moral, de legislação penal e das regulamentações sanitárias. (...) Assim, ao ideal divino de supprimir o mal physico vem se ajuntar um outro, a que o medico não pode mais ser indifferente - a conquista do bem moral, a perfectibilidade do genero humano. (...)”.

The family then was not just an institution to transmit surnames and material goods. It assumed a political function for the nation, subjecting the body of children and women to the need for a healthy population.¹⁶³ Medical specialists, policymakers, and various distinguished intellectuals worried about the survival of children up to adulthood, the physical and economic conditions of their survival, and the investments necessary to their development precisely because they saw them as useful for building the state and the nation. A set of obligations and new rules were codified for both parents and children, from which puericulture (child rearing), breastfeeding, and physical activities stood out.¹⁶⁴

In a letter dated April 8, 1944, physician and professor of medicine Afrânio Peixoto¹⁶⁵ responded to his “dear fellow and friend,” pediatrician José Martinho da Rocha,¹⁶⁶ giving his first impressions on what can be

¹⁶³ The “child” became an object of study in the 1960s, notably with the work of the French historian Philippe Ariés, who sought to construct a history of the child and how the feeling of childhood was born out of the organization of the bourgeois family and the school. Colin Heywood, English historian, is an interesting counterpoint to Ariés especially for his analysis on the understanding of the concept of childhood during the Middle Ages. See Philippe Ariés, *Centuries of Childhood: A Social History of Family Life* (New York: Vantage Books, 1962) translated from the French by Robert Baldick; see also Colin Heywood, *A History of Childhood: Children and Childhood in the West from Medieval to Modern Times* (Polity: Cambridge & Malden, 2001).

¹⁶⁴ Concerns on the relationship between the protection of children, breastfeeding, the role of women, and the future of the nation are evident since the eighteenth century as this excerpt from Rousseau’s *Emile* (1762) shows: “But let mothers only vouchsafe to nourish their children, and our manners will reform themselves; the feelings of nature will re-awaken in all hearts. The State will be re-peopled; this chief thing, this one thing will bring all the rest into order again.” Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Emile, or Education*, translated by Eleanor Worthington (Boston: D.C. Heath & Company, 1889) 18.

¹⁶⁵ Júlio Afrânio Peixoto was born in Lençóis (Bahia) on December 17, 1876, son of Francisco Peixoto and Virgínia de Morais Peixoto. He completed the Faculty of Medicine of Bahia in 1897. In 1902, he became professor of public medicine at the Faculdade Livre de Direito in Salvador. In Rio de Janeiro (Federal District) Afrânio Peixoto became sanitary inspector of Public Health and director of the National Hospital of the Mentally Ill and substitute professor of Hygiene and Legal Medicine in the Faculty of Medicine. He directed the Legal Medical Police Service from 1907 to 1911. In 1910, he was elected to the Brazilian Academy of Letters in the vacancy of Euclides da Cunha, becoming president of the institution in 1923. Peixoto assumed the direction of the Escola Normal in 1915, the year in which he also became professor of Rio de Janeiro’s Faculty of Law. Peixoto was also director of Public Instruction in Rio (1916), Congressman for Bahia (1924-1930) and Chancellor of the University of the Federal District (1935) created by Anísio Teixeira (director of the Department of Education). Afrânio Peixoto wrote numerous works on medicine, law, history, folklore, education and literature, as well as novels, chronicles and was a member of the Lisbon Academy of Sciences and the Institute of Legal Medicine in Madrid. He died in Rio de Janeiro on January 12, 1947. Source: Fundação Getúlio Vargas/CPDOC, available at <http://www.fgv.br/cpdoc/acervo/dicionarios/verbete-biografico/julio-afranio-peixoto>

¹⁶⁶ José Martinho da Rocha was born on February 11, 1899, in the city of Juiz de Fora (Minas Gerais). Rocha completed secondary school in Berlin and in 1917 went to the National School of Pharmacy in Rio de Janeiro, transferred his course to Medicine and graduated in 1923. Rocha lectured on Natural History, Biology, and Hygiene in Juiz de Fora and assumed there the direction of the Pediatric Service of the Institute for Protection and Assistance to Childhood. In 1931, he moved to Rio de Janeiro to work in the newly created National Department of Public Health, dedicating his career to pediatrics and sanitation. Rocha was appointed head of the pediatric section of the São Sebastião Hospital, linked to the National Department of Public Health, an agency of the Federal Government. He was also an effective partner of the Brazilian Society of Pediatrics, becoming its First Secretary in 1932 and president in 1937. As a

considered the reedition of *Tratado da Educação Física dos Meninos para uso da Nação Portuguesa* (Treatise on the Physical Education of Children for the Use of the Portuguese Nation), written in 1790 by Brazilian medical practitioner Francisco de Mello Franco.¹⁶⁷ Released under the title “Nosso Primeiro Puericultor” (Our First Puericulturist), the book is a threefold publication, offering the biography of Mello Franco, a comparative analysis of pediatrics and puericulture of the 1940s, and the reedition of the *Tratado da Educação Física dos Meninos*. Interestingly, the Brazilian edition strategically removed the part “*para uso da Nação Portuguesa*” for considering “our [Brazilian itself] first book on physical education and transcendent novelty,” in Afrânio Peixoto’s words.¹⁶⁸ Rocha and Peixoto not only shared mutual admiration for Mello Franco, but believed a reedition of the work from the late eighteenth century was “still clear and useful” in their time, for “Francisco de Melo Franco's centuries-old compass of children's hygiene deserves the greatest admiration from contemporaries.”¹⁶⁹

Philosophically influenced by Locke and Rousseau, the work of Mello Franco directly addressed the social and individual bodily care of the nation itself.¹⁷⁰ The narrative provides elements for understanding what became a more common concern about childhood and the medicalization of families, establishing links between the

public employee of the Ministry of Education and Health, Rocha taught pediatrics at the Division of Support to Maternity and Childhood, was head of the São Sebastião Hospital, and member of the Brazilian Society of Pediatrics. In the early 1940s, he became Professor of the Pediatric Medical Clinic in the National Faculty of Medicine and assumed the direction of the Pediatrics and Child Care service of the General Polyclinic of Rio de Janeiro. In this public service (created by Carlos Arthur Moncorvo de Figueiredo in the late nineteenth century) Rocha worked until 1954, being transferred to the Institute of Child Care and Pediatrics at the University of Brazil. At the end of the 1940s, he participated in several pediatric associations in Argentina, Uruguay, United States of America, Portugal, and Peru. He was also the director of the “Bulletin of the Institute of Child Care” of the University of Brazil. Rocha died in Rio de Janeiro in 1977. Source: Sociedade Brasileira de Pediatria (Brazilian Society of Pediatrics) <https://www.sbp.com.br/institucional/academia-brasileira-de-pediatria/patronos-e-titulares/jose-martinho-da-rocha/>

¹⁶⁷ There is another book with the same title, written by Francisco José de Almeida and published in 1791 by the Portuguese Academia Real das Sciencias. Almeida was also member of the Société Royale de Médecine of Paris. The National Library of Portugal has the book available online at <http://purl.pt/6378>, code sa-12310-v.

¹⁶⁸ José Martinho da Rocha, *Nosso Primeiro Puericultor: Biografia de Fr.^{co} de Mello Franco, Tratado da Educação Física dos Meninos, Comentários* (Rio de Janeiro: Agir, 1946). Afrânio Peixoto’s letter is printed after the preface of the book. Chapter 5 of this dissertation offers a more detailed examination of the book and the role puericulture played during the Vargas Era in Brazil.

¹⁶⁹ Rocha (1946), Preface.

¹⁷⁰ To know more about the thoughts of Locke and Rousseau on physical education, see also Roy J. Shephard’s *An Illustrated History of Health and Fitness, from Pre-History to our Post-Modern World* (New York: Springer, 2015).

change of attitudes towards children and mothers, the Enlightenment, and the new relations between medicine and the State, during a period prior to “scientific *Puériculture*.”¹⁷¹ Nevertheless, pediatrician Martinho da Rocha positively believed the work was “the first true Puericulture in the sense of Pinard’s science in its triple prenatal, natal, and postnatal aspect.”¹⁷² Rocha was talking about Adolphe Pinard, a French obstetrician considered a pioneer of modern perinatal care who, in the late nineteenth century, understood *puériculture* as a way of research and application of knowledge useful to the reproduction, preservation, and improvement of the species.¹⁷³ For many years, *puériculture* was the equivalent of eugenics in France, reflecting not only the preoccupation towards childcare but also the official beliefs in neo-Lamarckian heredity.¹⁷⁴

More than admiration for Francisco de Mello Franco’s first medical publication, what Brazilian physicians of the first decades of the twentieth century appreciated was the “dominant empiricism and exceptional connection of common sense and intelligence” on the matter of hygiene and children health care.¹⁷⁵ They manifested an interest not only in how medical sciences related to State strategies in Luso-Brazilian political culture since the eighteenth century, but also about the elements found in contemporary health policies towards “the privileging of the child and the medicalization of the family.”¹⁷⁶ Mello Franco’s book demonstrated a twofold concern: the birth/mortality relationship and the proper care of mothers’ bodies, for “a robust son was never born from a mother

¹⁷¹ To know more about the history and usages of the term, see Arlette Dubocage Meyer, “La Puériculture Scientifique,” in *Faces de Eva. Estudos sobre a Mulher* (Lisbon: n.38, 2017), 115-32.

¹⁷² Rocha (1946), 264.

¹⁷³ See Adolphe Pinard & Victor Wallich, *Traitement de l'infection puerpérale* (Paris: G. Steinheil, 1896), available at <https://archive.org/details/traitementdelin00wallgoog/page/n10> See also A. Pinard, *La puériculture du premier âge* (Paris: Librairie Armand Colin, 18th ed., 1938), available at <https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k56987974/f11.image.texteImage>

¹⁷⁴ Adolphe Pinard (1844-1934) was also founder member (and later president) of the French Eugenics Society in 1913, incorporating eugenic ideas into his method of puericulture. See William H. Schneider “Puericulture, and the Style of French Eugenics” In *History and Philosophy of the Life Sciences* (vol. 8, no. 2, 1986), 265-277; A more robust work by William H. Schneider is *Quality and Quantity: The Quest for Biological Regeneration in Twentieth-Century France* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990).

¹⁷⁵ Rocha (1946), 40.

¹⁷⁶ See Michel Foucault, *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings 1972-1977* (Edited by Colin Gordon, New York: Pantheon Books, 1980), 172.

full of infirmities.” For that reason, parents who desired “the pleasure to procreate vigorous and happy children should be regulated according to what reason dictates,” that is, “having healthy nutrition, breathing fresh air, and exercise.”¹⁷⁷

These types of assertions demonstrate some commonalities in the practices molded by nineteenth-century Brazilian childcare enthusiasts and the ideal standards of the European bourgeois nuclear family. Yet, as historians, we are aware that medical professionals—including the European physicians settled in the country—had to adapt those standards to the specificities of Brazil’s socio-political constitution. Nonetheless, the training of Brazilian physicians, hygienists, and later puericulturists themselves had (many of them completing their studies in Europe) is the point of entry into the country’s childcare practices, a crucial conduit to explain the ways through which one of the main aspects of nineteenth-century physical culture was introduced in Brazil.

In 1828, Joaquim Jeronymo Serpa, a physician from Pernambuco, published *Tratado de Educação Physico-moral dos meninos*, dedicating it to mothers.¹⁷⁸ The book—by and large the Portuguese version of Claude Martin Gardien’s work—supported the idea that the object of education is to create a healthy body, while also regulating behaviors and “adorning” the soul.¹⁷⁹ The script indicated the physical and moral care of mothers and

¹⁷⁷ Francisco de Mello Franco, *Tratado da Educação Física dos Meninos*, specifically the chapter I, named “Por que modo se deve reger uma mulher pejada” (Which precepts must a pregnant woman follow) In Rocha (1946), 264.

¹⁷⁸ Joaquim Jeronymo Serpa, *Tratado de Educação Physico-moral dos meninos: extrahido das obras de Mr. Gardien, e ampliado com ilustrações, extrahidas dos melhores autores* (Pernambuco: Typ. do Diario, 1828). Serpa was born in Recife on 13 September 1773 and studied medicine at the S. José Hospital in Lisbon. Back to Brazil in 1808, Serpa joined the Revolução Pernambucana, in 1817, and was sent to jail in Bahia for four years. After Brazil’s Independence, Serpa was appointed professor of botany and agriculture and at the same time he was the head of Olinda’s Botanical Garden, in 1834. Serpa died on 17 July 1842. See Augusto Victorino Alves Sacramento Blake, *Diccionario Bibliographico Brasileiro* (Rio de Janeiro: Imprensa Nacional, Quarto Volume, 1898) 156. Serpa’s book was catalogued, for example, within the session “Sciencias e Artes: I Sciencias Philosophicas, B. Applicação da Moral” of the *Catalogo dos Livros da Bibliotheca Fluminense* (Rio de Janeiro: Typographia Thevenet, 1866), 42.

¹⁷⁹ Claude Martin Gardien, *Traité d'accouchemens, de maladies des femmes, de l'éducation médicinale des enfans, et des maladies propres à cet âge* (Paris: Crochard Libraire, 1807). On the physical education of children, Gardien adopt the division proposed by Jean Noël Hallé (professor of physical medicine at the École de Santé and pioneer of hygienic reform in France) presenting each of the six topics established in the order he assumed to be “in conformity with the care require” as followed: “De la lactation,” “De la sécrétion laiteuse,” “Mode de sécrétion,” “Avantages de l’allaitement maternel,” “Du choix de la nourrice,” “Conditions que l'on exige pour qu'une nourrice soit bonne.” Gardien also addressed the matter of hygiene pointing out what would be “advantageous and pernicious” in childcare. See pages 489 to 538 of the Tome Troisième.

their children (starting it before their birth) in order to deliver apt, hygienic individuals demanded by the State. The nation itself would consequently harvest the fruits from this policy.¹⁸⁰

Furthermore, in his *Guia medica das mães de familia, ou a infancia considerada na sua hygiene, suas molestias e tratamentos*, Jean-Baptiste Alban Imbert—a French physician who moved to Rio de Janeiro in 1831—focused on “the care and precautions that pregnancy claims; the especial hygiene of the child since the moment of birth through her first years; and the treatment of childhood diseases.”¹⁸¹ With more than four-hundred pages, Imbert’s guide expatiated on a code of bodily hygiene the Brazilian women should follow in order to “perfect the human species”. He claimed that black Brazilian children did not generally benefit from the lessons of science, and that this “almost always led to complete abandonment because of inhuman prejudices,” in contrast to the white ones.¹⁸² From the “care without risks during the diverse phases of pregnancy” to the “various hygienic doctrines” to be obeyed, *Guia medica das mães de familia* oriented women to “preserve these beloved beings from everything that is harmful to their health and may delay the progress of their physical education.”¹⁸³

¹⁸⁰ The *Annaes da Medicina Pernambucana* emphasized, however, the contributions of Joaquim Jeronymo Serpa’s book because “by the notes Serpa made on the French text he demonstrates he did not want to assume himself as the original author.” See *Annaes da Medicina Pernambucana (1842-1844)* (Recife: Coleção Pernambucana vol.X, Governo de Pernambuco, 1977) 189-96. Serpa disagreed with Gardien, for example, in the application of cold water in the navel of Brazilian children, which for Serpa could cause tetanus.

¹⁸¹ Imbert, 11. Jean-Baptiste Alban Imbert, who believed “nationality disappears absolutely for the doctor (...) for the physician is no citizen of this or that State, but an active soldier of the humanity”, adopted the Brazilian name of João Batista Albano Imbert in 1835, when elected a permanent member of Brazil’s Imperial Academy of Medicine under the presidency of Joaquim Cândido Soares de Meirelles. After graduating in Montpellier, Jean-Baptiste Alban Imbert was the first foreign physician to revalidate his diploma in the Faculty of Medicine of Rio de Janeiro (1834) taking advantage of a law from October 3, 1832 that gave “a new organization to the Medical-Surgical Academies of Rio de Janeiro and Bahia.” Imbert also participated in boards and examining committees for higher education, national and international societies and associations. He was an honorary member of the Royal Society of Medicine of Marseille and a member of the Sociedades Auxiliadoras da Indústria Nacional (inspired by the French *Société D’Encouragement à L’Industrie Nationale*) founded in 1825 within the process of strengthening the Brazilian state to stimulate the improvement of its industry (agriculture and factories). Imbert was also Major Assistant Surgeon of the French Imperial Navy. See more at the Academia Nacional de Medicina: [http://www.anm.org.br/conteudo_view.asp?id=1756&descricao=Jean-Baptiste+Alban+Imbert+\(Jo%C3%A3o+Baptista+Albano+Imbert\)](http://www.anm.org.br/conteudo_view.asp?id=1756&descricao=Jean-Baptiste+Alban+Imbert+(Jo%C3%A3o+Baptista+Albano+Imbert))

¹⁸² Imbert, 14-6.

¹⁸³ Imbert, 40. See, in especial, chapter II “A hygiene da infancia.” In a curious statement, Jean-Baptiste Imbert explained that “the temperature of Brazilian weather naturally induces, as if by instinct, to give preference to hard and fresh substances for the composition of the cradle, and for that reason we can infer that the small number of hunchbacks in Brazil, compared to other countries, is because this imminently hygienic usage.” (page 47).

The emancipation of women and their agency as medical practitioners were “materially unacceptable” for the majority of physicians who believed “society, morally, would barely benefit from those acquisitions.”¹⁸⁴ Others even mentioned the mental disturbances foreign female doctors allegedly suffered to justify their position against the acceptance of women in the medical profession.¹⁸⁵ Simply put by a newspaper dedicated to Brazilian elite women, in the late 1870s, “a proof of the stupid prejudice that had been keeping women away from practicing medicine.”¹⁸⁶ The fact is, a decree from 19 April 1879 authorized women’s access to public health careers and they entered Brazilian medical schools for careers in medicine, pharmacy, and dental surgery.¹⁸⁷ Women such as Rita Lobato Lopes, Amelia P. Benebien, Ephigenia Veiga, Glafira Corina de Araujo, Francisca B. Prager, Laura A. de Souza Bahiense, Maria Augusta G. Estrella, and Ernestina Pereira da Fonseca graduated from medical schools in Bahia, Rio, and Ouro Preto, for example.¹⁸⁸ Many did not accept being blamed for the high mortality of children, attributing the causes not only to climate, famine, or feeding mistakes, but also “to the ignorance and impatience” of male doctors.¹⁸⁹

Claims for agency permeated the nineteenth century, claiming that “women were created doctors of bodies and souls.” In a straightforward criticism, several elite women believed that once well trained in medicine, they

¹⁸⁴ Escholiaste Medico [pseudonym], “A Mulher Medica,” in *Gazeta Medica da Bahia* (Salvador: Typographia de J.G. Tourinho, vol. III, n.54, 31 de Outubro de 1869), 70.

¹⁸⁵ “Estado Mental das Mulheres Medicas,” in *Gazeta Medica da Bahia* (Salvador: Typographia de J.G. Tourinho, Anno XVII, N.1, Julho 1885), 287.

¹⁸⁶ “A mulher na medicina,” *Echo das Damas: Órgão Dedicado aos Interesses da Mulher – Litterario e Scientifico* (Rio de Janeiro: Imprensa Industrial, Anno 1, n.2, 02 de Maio de 1879), 1.

¹⁸⁷ BRASIL, *Decreto n° 7.247, de 19 de Abril de 1879*, available at Câmara dos Deputados: Legislação Informatizada: <https://www2.camara.leg.br/legin/fed/decret/1824-1899/decreto-7247-19-abril-1879-547933-publicacaooriginal-62862-pe.html>

¹⁸⁸ “Noticiario,” *Echo das Damas: Órgão Dedicado aos Interesses da Mulher – Litterario e Scientifico* (Rio de Janeiro: Typ. Echo das Damas, Anno 1, n.4, 20 de Julho de 1879) 2; “As mulheres medicas,” in *Gazeta Medica da Bahia* (Salvador: Litho-Typo. V. Oliveira & C., vol. XXXII, n.3, 31 de Outubro de 1900) 472. Francisca Barreto Prager, for example, had her dissertation “Breves Noções sobre a raspagem uterine” approved with distinction and honors in 1893: *Gazeta Medica da Bahia* (Salvador: Litho-Typographia de João Gonçalves Tourinho, Anno XXV, 19 de Julho de 1893), 284.

¹⁸⁹ “A mulher na medicina,” *Echo das Damas: Órgão Dedicado aos Interesses da Mulher – Litterario e Scientifico* (Rio de Janeiro: Imprensa Industrial, Anno 1, n.3, 26 de Maio de 1879), 2.

would be “better doctors, better nurses knowing better how to cure and prevent diseases, neither ruining the health of little children nor atrophying the bodies of the daughters by compressing them between steel-boned corsets to satisfy the whims of stupid fashions.”¹⁹⁰ The claims that women were unable to perform certain social tasks were criticized by figures like Maria Amalia Vaz de Carvalho, who denounced how a country “that wants to be so civilized” could have people that “in the name of the future race, have never opposed to the excesses of some works that cruelly crush women.”¹⁹¹ For Maria Amalia, it was necessary for women “to prepare themselves for the tasks that emancipate them from misery, giving them the such precious and moralizing material independence.”¹⁹² After all, as Amelia da Silva Couto had stated years before, “the woman of today also studies, also thinks, knowing what is useful and what is harmful for the family. She also wants the progress and the aggrandizement of humanity for the realization of modern ideas” to be addressed in favor of childcare to the benefit of the nation.¹⁹³

At the turn of the century, Brazilian cities were home to a number private institutions, made up of elite men and women, aimed to the protection and assistance of children, notably the poor.¹⁹⁴ The combined action of

¹⁹⁰ Ibid., p.3.

¹⁹¹ Maria Amalia Vaz de Carvalho, “Seleção,” in *Mensagem: Revista Literaria dedicada à mulher brasileira* (São Paulo: Typ. Brazil de Carlos Gerke & Comp., Anno I, n.18, 30 de Junho de 1898), 285. Maria Amalia especially pointed her finger to the passivity of philanthropists, giving examples of women from lower classes who had to work in factories, pregnant seamstresses who worked until late at night, and washerwomen carrying heavy bundles of clothes around Brazilian cities.

¹⁹² Maria Amalia Vaz de Carvalho (1898), 286.

¹⁹³ Amelia Carolina da Silva Couto, “Questão Religiosa,” *Echo das Damas: Órgão Dedicado aos Interesses da Mulher – Litterario e Scientifico* (Rio de Janeiro: Typ. Echo das Damas, Anno 1, n.6, 3 de Agosto de 1880), 1. In her long text, Amelia Couto made a hard comment against some religious behaviors and “false prophets” that historically looked at the woman as their “passive instrument, possessing her” wills. Couto also praised the Enlightenment, cited Voltaire, and exalted “the free spirit.”

¹⁹⁴ The *Estatutos do Instituto de Protecção e Assistencia à Infancia do Rio de Janeiro: fundado pelo Dr. Moncorvo Filho em 24 de março de 1899 e installado em 14 de julho de 1901* (Rio de Janeiro: Imp. na Casa Hoepfner & C.o Ldt., 1923) can be found at the University of Illinois’ Library. A list of the names of the responsible of the homonymous institutes, installed in states such as Pernambuco, Maranhão, Pará, São Paulo, and Amazonas, and the respective dates and short history of their foundations can be found in Moncorvo Filho, “Progressos da Puericultura no Brazil: Conferencia (resumida) realisada na Sociedade Scientifica Protectora da Infancia em 30 de Junho de 1911” *Archivos de Assistencia à Infancia* (Rio de Janeiro: Typ. Baptista de Souza, Anno VI, N.4, Setembro a Dezembro 1913), 3-7. To know more on the institute of Bahia, see Alane Carvalho Santos, *O Instituto de Protecção e Assistência à Infância da Bahia: uma instituição educativa de assistência e saúde (1900-1920)* (Salvador: Federal University of Bahia, Doctoral

charity and assistance was set up as a strategy to “combat the evils that afflict the little children,” considered a “noble” mission to be assumed in the name of the nation.¹⁹⁵ Moreover, promoting an image of the morality and elevation of character of the women who accepted the mission was linked to the duty of the mother-woman in life.¹⁹⁶ Such understanding built up strength among the wealthiest sectors of society aimed at alleviating the precariousness of the impoverished population, in especial of the “helpless children.”¹⁹⁷ Diffusing “amongst the poor and proletarian families” the precepts of elementary hygiene for infants, nutrition, gynecology, and the regulation of women’s industrial work, “to indirectly favor childhood,” were some of the plethora of issues that needed to be addressed.¹⁹⁸ After all, children were seen as “the soft wax, on which everything can be modified and corrected,” morally, intellectually, and physically.¹⁹⁹ The project of remedying the evils that overwhelmed children represented the mission to be undertaken in the name of the good of the nation, after all “*Infantes tuendo pro patria laboramus*” (those who protect childhood work for the motherland).²⁰⁰

dissertation in Education, 2016). On the institute of Ceará, see Abdenago da Rocha Lima, *Instituto de proteção e assistência à infância de Fortaleza, 1903-1938* (Fortaleza: Ed. da Universidade Estadual do Ceará, 2018).

¹⁹⁵ Dr. Alfredo Magalhães, “Assistencia e Proteção à Infancia,” in *Gazeta Médica da Bahia, fundada em 1866* (Salvador: Litho-Typo. e Encad. V. Oliveira & C., vol. XXXV, n. 1, Julho 1903) 478-9. According to Alfredo Magalhães, the *Instituto de Protecção e Assistencia á Infancia* was founded by the physician Joaquim Tanajura on 24 March 1903. The members of institution approved its statues at the hall of the Instituto Geographico Historico da Bahia on August 15.

¹⁹⁶ A good example is the organization Damas da Assistência à Infância (Ladies of Child Care) founded in 1906 and linked to the Instituto de Proteção à Infância. To know more about this institution, see Sônia Câmara, “As Damas da Assistência à Infância e as Ações Educativas, Assistenciais e Filantrópicas (Rio de Janeiro, 1906-1930)” *História da Educação* (Santa Maria: v. 21, n. 53, Sep/Dec 2017) 199-218.

¹⁹⁷ “Instituto de Protecção e Assistencia à Infancia,” *Almanach de Pernambuco* (Recife: Typ. de Tondella, Cockles & C., successores de F. P. Boulitreau, 11º Anno, 1908) 98-9.

¹⁹⁸ “Programma geral do Instituto de Protecção e Assistencia à Infancia do Rio de Janeiro,” *Archivos de Assistencia à Infancia* (Rio de Janeiro: Besnard Frères Editores, Tomo1, vol.1, 1 de Novembro de 1902) 2.

¹⁹⁹ “Protecção à Infancia,” *Diario de Pernambuco* (Recife: Anno 79, N.172, 2 de Agosto de 1903) 1. The writer cited the examples of Buenos Aires and Rio de Janeiro also quoting Jean Rambosson to support his argument in favor of the creation of a “Instituto de Protecção e Assistencia á Infancia” in Pernambuco. Rambosson wrote *L'Éducation Maternelle d'Après Les Indications de la Nature* (Paris: Librairie Firmin Didot, 1872).

²⁰⁰ “*Infantes tuendo pro patria laboramus*” was the motto scripted on the cover of all publications of the institute for assistance and child protection of the capital and its analagous institutions in other states. The sentence indicated the patriotic character that those institutions intended to transmit to the population, notably to the political and intellectual elites, stating to government representatives that the guiding principle of the activities developed there was, above all, working for the nation.

Based on hygienic principles, these institutions emerged in a context marked by the process of promoting medical knowledge within Brazilian society amid the underdeveloped sanitary and urban services that marked the country's largest metropolitan areas. This context perhaps explains the presence of industrialists and businessmen on the boards and as members of the institutions. Many of them were financial contributors, possibly foreseeing, through “the protection and assistance” of children, the modification of Brazilian society that would also benefit their interests, guaranteeing a “vigorous” and sufficient workforce to “the mightiness and progress” of the nation.²⁰¹ They also saw the body as a productive unit and as a commodity. The institutional control exercised over individuals influenced society in coercive and repressive ways. The biopolitical reality thus begins with the practices and knowledge on the biological body.²⁰² In other words, this biopower regulated a series of biological processes, such as births, mortality, and the life expectancy of women and children, strongly influencing and providing control over the Brazilian population. Childcare represented in nineteenth-century Brazil a procedure of power aiming not only at the so-called “anatomy-politics of the human body” (starting with mothers) in order to optimize its capabilities, but also at disciplining children’s bodies while rendering them hygienically more docile and fit for the nation.

Puericulture, materialized through concrete and daily actions developed in those institutions, thus imposed on the country “the question of the physical development of the child, in its multiple aspects, by the study of weight and height in relation to races, ages, morbidity, heredity, etc.”²⁰³ It appeared as a significant tool for the

²⁰¹ “Assistencia à Infancia,” *Archivos de Assistencia à Infancia* (Rio de Janeiro: Besnard Frères Editores, Tomo1, N.2, 1 de Dezembro de 1902) 28. Moncorvo Filho exalted Pinard, “the great French physician and philanthropist,” who, according to him, shared similar understandings about the necessity of more manifestations of solidarity aiming to make life better for mothers and children at the end of the nineteenth century. See Brazil - Departamento da creanca, *Historico da proteccaõ a infancia no Brasil, 1500-1922 / pelo dr. Moncorvo Filho, director-fundador do departamento* (Rio de Janeiro: Paulo, Pongetti & C., 1926). Available at the University of Illinois’ Library, code 362.7 B73H2.

²⁰² See Michel Foucault, “Right of Death and Power of Life,” *The History of Sexuality – Volume 1: An Introduction* (New York: Vingage Books, translated from French by Robert Hurley, 1990) 134-59.

²⁰³ Moncorvo Filho, “Trabalhos Originaes - Puerimetro,” *Brazil-Medico: Revista Semanal de Medicina e Cirurgia* (Rio de Janeiro: Typ. Besnard Frères, Anno XVIII, N.13, 1 de Abril de 1904) 123. Moncorvo created what he called “puerímetro,” a device “to immediately weigh and measure any child from birth to 15 years.”

intervention of medicine in all Brazilian social strata, highlighting the elevation of medical practitioners to the status of physical educators, the benefactors of children “the future and hope to the progress of the race.”²⁰⁴

Brazilian puericulturists’ discourse also addressed the issue of breastfeeding, the responsibility of women in their mission for their country, and the medical examinations of the wet nurses, considering that “the woman’s mission is not only to procreate the intelligent animal; but rather the complete man, as society demands from her”. Simply put, mothers’ “divine mission” symbolized “the origins of family, nations, and humankind,” a mission not only “to procreate the intelligent animal, but the complete man; what society demands from them”.²⁰⁵ The status of the female citizen as a womb owner, in this case, did not exist. It belonged to the nation. On the other hand, wombs (and by logical extension women themselves) became the predominant biopolitical space. The woman’s bodily borders were displaced onto the nation’s borders. This an interesting paradox in Brazil’s modern biopolitical state.

A child’s conception and breastfeeding constituted inseparable tasks for the female body. Breastfeeding notably became a very delicate moral theme of national debate once people like Friar Francisco de Nossa Senhora dos Prazeres considered “half mothers” those women who did not raise their children, “giving them to the care of slaves who, suffering from occult infirmities,” were blamed for production of “feeble and sick” white infants.²⁰⁶

²⁰⁴ Dr. L. Blottière, “Carta de Paris - A Exposição da infância,” *Brazil-Medico: Revista Semanal de Medicina e Cirurgia* (Rio de Janeiro: Typ. Besnard Frères, Anno XV, N.29, 1 de Agosto de 1901), 308-9. The original in Portuguese is: “No sumptuoso edificio do *Petit Palais* inaugurou-se recentemente uma exposição infantil. Em busca de tudo quanto possa interessar à arte médica, fômos visitar essa exposição, esperando ahi encontrar objectos e dispositivos referentes à infância, sob o ponto de vista de sua educação, isto é, no posto de vista da puericultura. Realizou-se inteiramente o que havíamos previsto; todas as instituições: *crèches*, *pouponnières*, sanatoria, etc. figuravam na exposição; os ophelinatos, os institutos de surdo-mudos e de cegos representavam condignamente tudo quanto é possível fazer em favor da juventude infeliz e enferma. (...) Os organizadores da exposição tiveram a idéa de aproveitá-la para servir como objectivo de conferencias, feitas sobre todas as questões que se relacionam com a criação e educação dos infantes. Estas conferencias attrahiram muitos ouvintes. Esperamos que as palavras dos oradores não tenham sido proferidas em pura perda; almejamos, ao contrario, que ellas germinem, beneficiando o mais possível a infancia, futuro e esperança do progresso da raça.”

²⁰⁵ Antonio Gonsalves de Lima Torres, *Breves considerações sobre o physico e o moral da mulher nas diferentes phases da sua vida* (Rio de Janeiro: Typ. Brasiliense de M.F. Ferreira, 1847), 25. Dissertation defended at Rio de Janeiro’s Medical School on 4 December 1848.

²⁰⁶ Frei Francisco de Nossa Senhora dos Prazeres [Maranhão], “Poranduba Maranhense, ou Relação Historica da Provincia do Maranhão [...] desde o seu descobrimento até o anno de 1820 [...] com [...] um dicionario abreviado da lingua geral do Brazil.” in *Revista Trimensal do Instituto Historico e Geographico Brasileiro* (Rio de Janeiro: Typ. Lithographia de Laemmert e C., Tomo LIV, parte 1, 1891) 134. Available at http://biblio.etnolinguistica.org/prazerres_1891_poranduba. The document has a note written on 28 April 1890 by César

Moreover, important intellectuals, such as José Veríssimo who affirmed “maids, slaves, and ex-slaves”—although “extremely loving and devoted”—conducted “*nossos filhos*” [white children’s] first physical education,” blaming those black women for “nerve-racking customs” that should be “corrected and modified according to the instructions of hygiene and children’s pedagogy.”²⁰⁷ Writing from the northern city of Belém, Veríssimo considered that because “our children were delivered to the care of slaves whose milk, almost always riddled with vices, [it] would later compromise their [children’s] health.” An interpretation also spread among various physicians who valued motherhood, who criticized the use of slave mothers to breastfeed children, for “the real mother is the one who suckles the child.”²⁰⁸

Constructing or destroying families, spreading religious prejudices, and enabling social mobility or maintaining servile bounds, wet-nursing was not simply a biological phenomenon. Rather, its complex, biocultural roles were intertwined with its deep history and significance in Brazil. More than just a viable alternative to maternal lactation, wet-nursing stimulated discussions around the defense of the cultivation of a more intimate parent-child bond, considered essential to the strengthening of the bourgeois Brazilian family.²⁰⁹

Augusto Marques, “Nota sobre o Poranduba Maranhense” (279-81), in which the author, member of the Instituto, explains the manuscript was given by Frei Francisco to Francisco Adolpho de Varnhagen in 1843 who donated it to the Instituto Histórico. Marques also explained “Poranduba Maranhense” vanished from the Instituto when, in 1890, he acquired a copy of the manuscript from the hands of Colonel Francisco Manoel da Cunha Junior. I am thankful to Alexandre Pelegrino for sending me this source.

²⁰⁷ José Veríssimo Dias de Matos, *A Educação Nacional*, (Pará: Editores Tavares Cardoso e C^a. Livraria Universal, 1890), 74-5. The original text in Portuguese is: “Os nossos filhos eram entregues aos cuidados das escravas, cujo leite quasi sempre eivado de vícios que mais tarde lhes comprometteriam a saúde, principalmente as alimentavam. Eram as mucamas, escravas ou ex-escravas, - e isto basta para indicar o seu valor - que de fato dirigiam a sua primeira educação physica (...) Não era raro ver meninos de oito e mais annos dormindo na mesma rede que a mucama de seu serviço que, em geral extremamente amorosa e afeiçoada a elles, não sabia recusar-lhes nada, nem ainda aquillo que evidentemente lhes podia comprometter a saúde. O que tinham de enervantes semelhantes e costumes, que, sem mentir, si não podem dizer findos, não escapará a ninguém. Estes habitos exigem corrigidos, e modificados de accordo com os ensinamentos da hygiene e pedagogia infantil.”

²⁰⁸ Antonio Gonsalves de Lima Torres (1847). The original text in Portuguese is: “Não nos demoraremos em fazer conhecer as vantagens do aleitamento pela própria mãe, e não por amas mercenárias, outros o têm feito melhor do que nós o poderíamos fazer. Dizemos somente que a verdadeira mãe é aquela que aleita o menino.”

²⁰⁹ To learn more about wet-nursing within various cultures throughout history, see Valerie A. Fildes’ *Wet Nursing: A History from Antiquity to the Present* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1988).

Hence, what was expected of parents in return was not only to attend to their children for the sake of the nation, but also to give them up for education and training in benefit of the state.

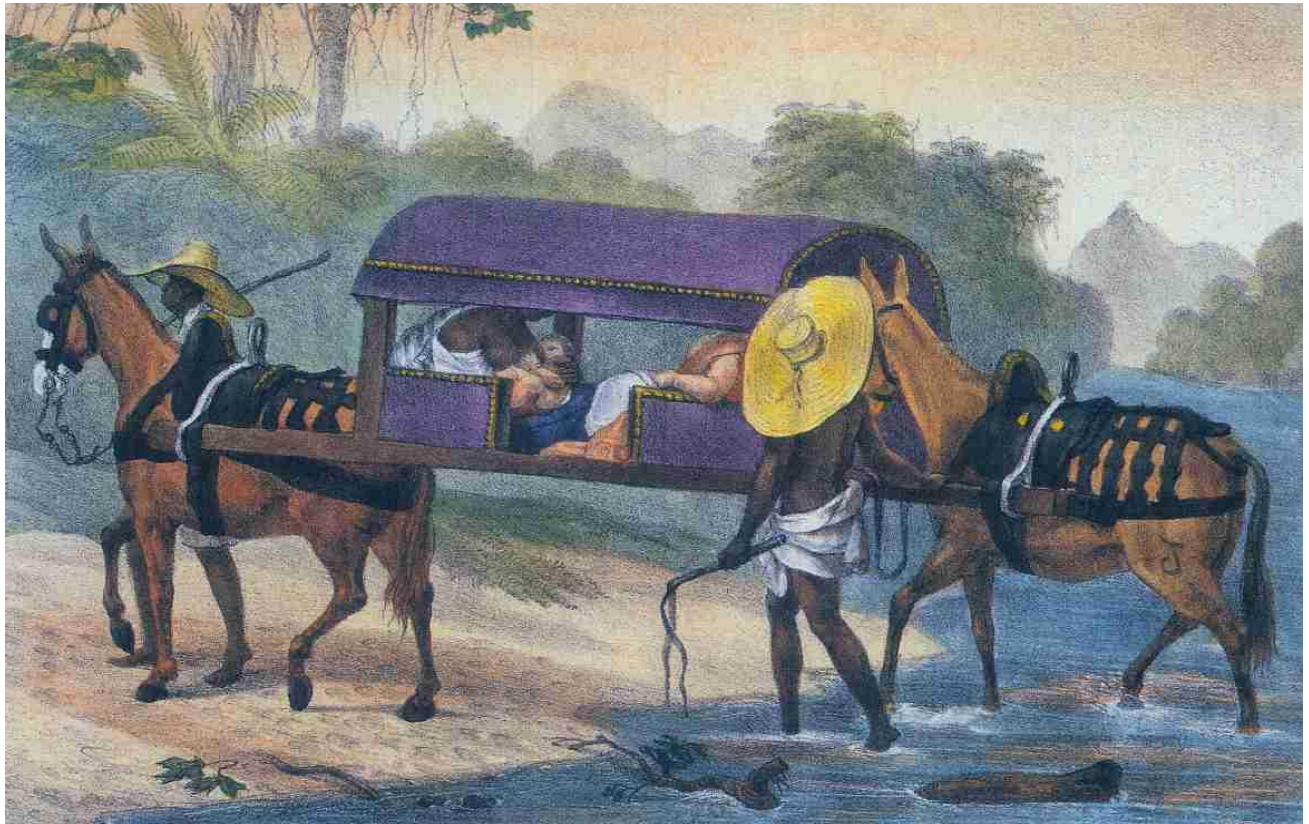


Figure 6

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²¹⁰ Jean-Baptiste Debret, "Liteira para viajar no interior" c.1834-1839. Coleção Martha e Erico Stickel / Acervo Instituto Moreira Salles.



Figure 7



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²¹¹ "A black woman with white child on her back," (left), Bahia, 1860; "An enslaved woman with a sleeping child on her back," (right), Bahia, undated photo. Instituto Moreira Sales.



Figure 8

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²¹² “Augusto Gomes and his wet nurse Mônica,” picture by João Ferreira Villela, Recife circa 1880. Coleção Francisco Rodrigues, CFR 1795, Fundação Joaquim Nabuco de Pesquisas Sociais.



Figure 9

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Figure 10

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²¹³ Front cover of the *A Mai de Familia: Jornal Scientifico Litterario e Illustrado - Educaçao da Infancia Hygiene da Familia* (Rio de Janeiro: 1º Anno, n.1, Jan 1879).

²¹⁴ “A slave with her child,” Salvador-Bahia, 1884. Instituto Moreira Sales.

2.2 “Ave, lex, nascituri et morituri te salutant”: wet nurses, infant mortality, and maternal hygiene

Nineteenth-century Brazilian newspapers published numerous announcements of rentals and sales of wet nurses.²¹⁵ Advertisements of “healthy,” “lovely to children” wet nurses, with “good manners, “hygienic conditions,” and “very good breast milk,” could be found along with the offerings of other slaves, goods from Europe, food, clothing and accessories for ladies and gentlemen, fabric for slave clothing, sales of properties, and the most varied products.²¹⁶ The advertisements had a standard format, with small, straightforward text, often with the expression *ama de leite* (wet nurse) highlighted in larger letters or in bold font.²¹⁷

Until the abolition of slavery in Brazil in 1888, many of the wet nurses were enslaved women who belonged to or were hired by upper-class families, facing motherhood as a double-edged sword. Many of them were separated from their own babies, so that they could nourish the children of the wealthy and endure this complex relationship with mothering. Few were fortunate enough to be allowed to share their breastmilk between their own child and the white baby.²¹⁸ Physicians of the nineteenth century already considered breastmilk an

²¹⁵ When an upper-class family needed the services of a wet nurse and it could not be arranged from its own slaves, the family turned to its neighbors and acquaintances, who could indicate an already known wet nurse with the expected references. The last resort to find a wet nurse was perhaps the local newspaper advertisements.

²¹⁶ *Jornal do Commercio* (Rio de Janeiro: 18 January 1832), 3: “Amas de Leite – 41. Quem quizer alugar huma preta para ama de leite muito carinhosa para crianças, muito limpa e sadia, com muita abundancia de leite, pode procurar na rua Direita casa n. 18”; *Diario de Pernambuco* (Recife: 5 January 1850), 4: “Vende-se uma escrava crioula, de 20 anos e tantos annos, parida de 15 dias, com muito bom leite, e com algumas habilidades; na rua Augusta, n.52”; *Diario de Pernambuco* (Recife: 8 January 1870), 3: “AMA DE LEITE – Quem precisar de uma boa ama de leite, escrava, de boa saúde, e com filho, dirija-se a rua das Cruzes n.36, armazém de molhados, que encontrará com quem tratar.”; *Diario de Belem* (Belém: 25 July 1874), 2: “Ama de Leite – Quem precisar de uma boa ama de leite em condições hygienicas, dirija-se a Phenix que se indicará quem aluga.”; *Diario de Noticias* (Salvador: 7 July 1880), 3: “Ama de Leite – Precisa-se de uma sadia e de bons costumes, a tratar na rua do Baluarte, em uma casa que tem 1880 no passeio.”

²¹⁷ In order to help in choosing the “merchandise,” some publications oriented advertisers on how the “piece” should be examined and on which details the person interested in buying or renting should notice. According to Lilia Schwarcz, handbooks such as the *Manual do fazendeiro: ou Tratado domestico sobre as enfermidades dos negros, generalizado ás necessidades medicas de todas as classes*, written in 1839 by Jean-Baptiste Alban Imbert and Ferdinand Jean Denis, is a good example. See Lilia Schwarcz, “Ser peça, ser coisa” In Lilia M. Schwarcz & Letícia Vidor de Sousa Reis (Orgs.) *Negras imagens: ensaios sobre cultura e escravidão no Brasil* (São Paulo: Edusp, 1996), 14.

²¹⁸ Kimberly Cleveland shows that from its independence from Portugal in 1822 to the early years of the Republic in the late nineteenth century, Brazil’s societal and medical beliefs about wet nursing varied. See her *Black Women Slaves Who Nourished A Nation: Artistic Renderings of Wet Nurses in Brazil* (Amherst: Cambria Press, 2019). See also Renato Pinto Venâncio, “Maternidade negada,” In Mary Del Priore, org., *História das mulheres no Brasil* (São Paulo: Contexto, 2002), 189-222; Ana Maria Mauad, “A vida das crianças de elite durante o império,” In Mary Del Priore (org.), *História das crianças no Brasil* (São Paulo: Editora Contexto, 1999) 137-176.

essential source for the formation of healthy and robust bodies, and also fundamental in combating various ills.²¹⁹ In this context, the aim of good childcare was not only to respond to problems such as the precarious health conditions of the population, poverty, and high infant mortality—even among those from the upper-class families—but also to directly interfere in lives, redefining moral values aiming to preserve the future of the nation. In Brazil, medical professionals diverged, for example, on whether the outcomes of black wet nursing could bring the desired future for the country but, for physicians in general, all women had an inherent maternal nature and all women needed medical guidance.²²⁰

A very common inquiry was whether children should be breastfed by the mother or by a wet nurse. Writing from the city of Santos, surgeon Pedro Antonio de Oliveira defended that “the infant will find in a mother the tender solicitation and the continuous care necessary to fortify his fragile existence.”²²¹ Nevertheless, Oliveira considered the moment of selecting a wet nurse (when necessary) “a subject of the highest transcendence,”

²¹⁹ If the mother of a seignorial child (a white child usually from a wealthy family) did not have enough breastmilk, or did not want to, or could not breastfeed, but was able to use the services of a wet nurse, it was considered positive for that child. This measure would postpone the early introduction of animal milk and various mixtures, for which the child’s body was considered not yet prepared.

²²⁰ In the *Catalogo Systematico da Bibliotheca da Faculdade de Medicina do Rio de Janeiro* (Rio de Janeiro: Imprensa Nacional, 1892), organized by Dr. Carlos Costa, one can find innumerable works on the matter, such as: Louis Girault, *Conseils aux jeunes mères, aux nourrices et aux sages-femmes, pour éviter la mortalité fréquente chez les enfants en bas âge* (Paris: Adrien Delahaye et E. Lecrosnier Éditeurs, 1882); Armand Corre, *La mère et l'enfant dans les races humaines* (Paris: Octave Doin Éditeur, 1882); Stéphane Tarnier & Gustave Chantreuil, *Physiologie Et Hygiène De La Première Enfance: Considérées Surtout Au Point De Vue De L'alimentation* (Paris: Lauwereyns lib. edit., 1882); Henri Perrussel, *Guide médical et hygiénique de la mère de famille* (Paris: Librairie J. B. Baillière et fils, 1882); Raimondo Guaita, *Igiene pediatrica e malattia dei bambini* (Milano: Typ. Bernardoni di C. Reberchini & C., 1882); Adrien Coriveaud, *Hygiène de la jeune fille* (Paris: J. & Baillière & fils., 1882); Luigi Mastello, *Esercizi di ginnastica medico-educativa* (Firenze: Typ. di Giuseppe Civelli, 1882); Eduardo Lozano y Ponce de León, *Higiene de los niños y su educacion consagrada, especialmente a las madres* (Madrid: Imp. de Enrique Rubiños, 1883); Alexandre Bourgeois, *Manuel d'hygiène et d'éducation de la première enfance* (Paris: Octave Doin Éditeur, 1883); J. Wallace Anderson, *Lectures on Medical Nursing: Delivered in the Royal Infirmary, Glasgow* (Glasgow: James Maclehose & Sons, 1883); Giulio Uffelmann, *Manuale d'igiene infantile privata e pubblica* (Napoli: Leonardo Vallardi edit., 1883); Dr. Rode, *Die pflege des gesunden und des kranken Kindes* (Merseburg: Friedrich Stollberg, 1883); Moutier, *Histoire de la protection de l'enfance a Rome depuis la fondation de la ville jusqu'a la chute de la République* (Paris: Delahaye et Lecrosnier, 1884); Antonio Maria Secondo Laura, *Madre, Igiene della giovine famiglia* (Torino: Ermanno Loescher, 2a edizione, 1884); Mme. Cora Millet-Robinet & Dr. Émile Allix, *Le livre des jeunes mères: la nourrice et le nourrisson* (Paris: Librairie Agricole de la Maison Rustique, 1884); Collineau, *La gymnastique: notions physiologiques et pédagogiques, applications hygiéniques et médicales* (Paris: Librairie J.-B. Baillière et Fils, 1884).

²²¹ Pedro Antonio de Oliveira, “A Amamentação”, In *O Medico Popular: Jornal Medico-Homeopathico* (Santos: Typographia Imparcial, n.7, 24 June 1851) 2.

arguing that the chosen woman had to be “healthy, vigorous, between fifteen and thirty, had given birth recently, intelligent, happy, and inclined to cherish children.”²²²

In Rio, Jean-Baptiste Imbert believed the designation of a wet nurse was “the main question on the physical education of the infant” and deduced, “based on experience, for a dozen years exercising our profession in the capital of the Empire,” there were not many women in Brazil capable of “providing, by their own physical strength,” the necessary daily nutrition to the “rapid grow of the infant they breastfeed.”²²³ In Imbert’s words, Brazilian mothers (read white women) could not fulfill the prerequisites for breastfeeding their own children because they were very young, “married right after a premature puberty,” and experienced more than one childbirth “before having complete their bodies development.” In addition, Imbert argued they were “mostly delicate and anxious, incessantly fighting against a sub-tropical climate and the excessive heat” which, at the end, “exhaust their vital forces and irritate their nervous system.”²²⁴

Furthermore, the Franco-Brazilian doctor believed that choosing the wet nurse was “undoubtedly one of the most prickly and difficult” tasks for mothers to make, so they should pay close attention to the prerequisites and qualities “a perfect wet nurse” was required to possess. In this regard, a list of conditions stood out as essential: being young, “between twenty and twenty-four years old,” strong and robust, “well-formed”; their milk should be as old as the infant to be nursed, “so it would be conveniently related as if the own mother was breastfeeding the child”; the breasts of the nurse had to be “conveniently developed”; no signs of illness should be noticed in her body in order to avoid the transmission of “all the infections and the vicious of blood” to the child; the skin of the wet nurse should be “smooth, soft to the touch, slightly oily, and above all free from bad smell”; finally, the chosen woman should have “clean and clear teeth, no altered gums, pure breath, cheerful physiognomy and

²²² Oliveira (1851) 3. Oliveira argued that not many women could fulfill those characteristics.

²²³ Imbert, “Deverá a criança ser amamentada pela mãe, ou por huma ama de leite?” *Guia Medica das Mães de Familia...* (1843) 48. See his chapter “Hygiene da infancia.”

²²⁴ Imbert (1843) 49.

good temper.”²²⁵ Imbert recognized his opinion was not definitive so to support him and discredited “those who think differently,” he cited “the work of Dr. Maia”—referring to Emilio Joaquim da Silva Maia—as a counterpoint.²²⁶

Maia wrote *Essai sur les dangers de l'allaitement par les nourrices*, as his doctoral dissertation in medicine at the University of Paris, presenting his thoughts to the Society of Medicine of Rio de Janeiro on June 18, 1834.²²⁷ Advocating against the dangers for children not breastfeeding from their own mothers, Maia also defended the usefulness and necessity of gymnastics, “truly one part of Medicine indeed,” displaying similar theoretical sources as Antoine Martin Bureaud-Riofrey’s *Treatise on Physical Education; Specially Adapted to Young Ladies*.²²⁸ Mentioning “the annals of medicine,” Maia stated that the physical exercise of the body—through the course of life, but especially during childhood—would bring “immense advantages” and “astonishing” results. “[T]hus lymphatic, scrofulous children, with a constitution so weak that they seemed to end their existence at every moment, have seen their strength develop through it, their bodies straighten up, and

²²⁵ Imbert (1843) 51-3.

²²⁶ Emílio Joaquim da Silva Maia was born on September 8, 1808 in Salvador, Bahia. He graduated from the Medical School of Paris in 1833, defending the thesis “Essai sur les dangers de l'allaitement par les novices.” Upon returning to Brazil, he established an office in Rio de Janeiro in 1834 and was elected member of the National Academy of Medicine. He was also a municipal representative in Rio de Janeiro, taught classes on the natural sciences at the Dom Pedro II school beginning in 1838 and directed one of the sections of the National Museum. Maia was one of the founders of the Brazilian Geographical Historical Institute and was a partner of the Literary Institute of Bahia. He regularly wrote for the journals of the Society of the Sociedade Auxiliadora da Indústria Nacional, for the journal of the Imperial Academy of Medicine and member of Lisbon Society of Medical Sciences and the Society of Natural Sciences of France. He died on November 21, 1859.

²²⁷ Emilio Joaquim da Silva Maia, *Essai sur les dangers de l'allaitement par les nourrices*, doctoral dissertation in medicine, University of Paris, 1833. The work was published in Portuguese under the title “Ensaio Sobre Os Perigos à Que Estão Sujeitos Os Meninos, Quando Não São Amamentados por Suas Proprias Mães: Appresentado na Sociedade de Medicina do Rio de Janeiro na Sessão de 18 de Junho de 1834” (Rio de Janeiro: Typ. Ogier, 1834).

²²⁸ See Emilio Joaquim da Silva Maia, “Sobre a utilidade e necessidade da gymnastica,” *Revista Medica Fluminense* (Rio de Janeiro: Academia Imperial de Medicina, Typ. Imparcial de F.P. Brito, Jan. 1840) n.10 (Anno 5°): 473-481. Available at Biblioteca Nacional, Hemeroteca Digital Brasileira: <http://bndigital.bn.br/acervo-digital/revista-medica-fluminense/341622> See also Antoine Martin Bureaud-Riofrey, *Treatise on Physical Education; Specially Adapted to Young Ladies* (London: Longman, second ed., 1838). A.M. Bureaud-Riofrey taught at the faculty of Medicine at the University of Paris and was member of medical institutions in England, Scotland, Italy, and Belgium. He was also editor of the *Continental and British Medical Review*. Both Maia and Bureaud-Riofrey cite, for example, Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778) and Louis Jurine (1751-1819), the renowned Swiss physician, surgeon, and naturalist, professor of anatomy and surgery at the Société des Arts in Geneva, founded in the city l'Hospice de la Maternité in 1807. Jurine was recognized for his work on the artificial feeding of infants. See René Sigrist, Vincent Barras, Marc Ratcliff, *Louis Jurine, chirurgien et naturaliste (1751–1819)* (Genève: Georg, Bibliothèque d'histoire des sciences, 1999).

finally all their discomforts disappear.”²²⁹ Maia called for Brazilians to learn more about “this important matter” by praising Luiz Vicente De Simoni’s “beautiful report,” printed in the *Semanario da Saúde Publica*, published in 1833. The report exalted “the real benefits” of bodily care and gymnastics, “guaranteed by science and history” and “in childhood, the most secure remedy to develop muscular energy, rectify organic defects, and prevent the terrible effects of masturbation.”²³⁰ For these reasons, Dr. Emilio Joaquim da Silva Maia urged the Brazilian government to take into account “the important services” bodily care would make to the future “of Brazil and Science.”²³¹

On 18 June 1846, during the general session of the Academia Imperial de Medicina, its president Dr. Joaquim Cândido Soares de Meirelles brought up for debate the causes of the high mortality of children in their first six years of life in Brazil.²³² The doctors participating in the debate scrutinized various possible causes, such as: the incorrect way “poorly trained and ignorant” Brazilian midwives used in cutting off the umbilical cord, the “negligent habit of leaving the children naked inside and outside their houses,” malnutrition, “the abusive use of heavy food in the diet of very young children”, and “the poor quality of air because of filthy streets, public squares

²²⁹ Maia (1840) 476-77. Maia referred to the report by doctors Bally and Denis Baillot to the Société de Médecine de Paris on Peter Heinrich Clias’ *Gymnastique élémentaire, ou Cours analytique et gradué d’exercices propres à développer et à fortifier l’organisation humaine*, from 1819, available online at <https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k1247935/f8.image.texteImage>. In addition, Maia cited Thomas Sydenham (1624-1689), Pierre Foissac (1801-1886) and their defense of the medical importance ascribed to gymnastics. Maia also cited Christian Gotthilf Salzmann (1744–1811), the German educational reformer, founder of the Schnepfenthal institution, who believed in the high value of bodily hygiene for the mental health of his pupils; the French-Spanish Francisco Amorós y Ondeano (1770-1848) and the Swiss educator Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi (1746-1827). Finally, Maia cited François-Victor Mérat De Vaumartoise’s *Dictionnaire universel de matière médicale et de thérapeutique générale: contenant l’indication, la description et l’emploi de tous les médicaments connus dans les diverses parties du globe* (Paris: J.B. Baillièrre: Méquignon-Marvis: Gabon, 1829). According to Maia, Mérat De Vaumartoise presented some cases of “weak and ill children” and their physical and medical improvement after “methodic exercises of gymnastics.”

²³⁰ According to the “Catalogo da Exposição Medica Brasileira,” Dr. De Simoni had his report “on the physical e moral effects of gymnastic exercises” read and approved at the session of 4 August 1832, publishing it on page 413 of *Semanario da Saúde Publica*. See *Catalogo da Exposição Medica Brasileira: realizada pela bibliotheca da Faculdade de Medicina do Rio de Janeiro a 2 de Dezembro de 1884* (Rio de Janeiro: Typ. Nacional, 1884) 412.

²³¹ Maia (1840) 481.

²³² “Academia Imperial de Medicina” In *Annaes de Medicina Brasiliense* (Rio de Janeiro: 2º Anno, Vol 2º, N.9, Fevereiro 1847) 193.

and beaches” in cities like Rio de Janeiro.²³³ The question, if “the practice of breastfeeding in slaves, chosen with little care, could be considered as one of the main causes?” provoked a long deliberation by the physicians.²³⁴

Dr. Jacintho Reis argued against “the delegation of mother’s duties to the slaves; which,” he continued, “causes all the disadvantages resulting from the bad quality of the breastmilk from those wet nurses, as well as the untoward contagious diseases those wet nurses carry.”²³⁵ Moreover, Dr. Reis attacked “the influence of bad habits from many slave wet nurses on children for precociously developing in them the habits of the pubertal age, exposing these tender individuals not only to the evils of excesses, but even to contracting contagious evils proper to relationships unfit for their age.” For Dr. Reis, however, the most important concern was that illusory signs (such as clean, light skin) of no visible disease had made parents neglect the need for medical research into the previous lives of the wet nurses to know that “they did not suffer from syphilitic or scrofula contaminations” and avoid the premature death of their infants. On the other hand, Dr. José Pereira Rego recognized Reis’ argument that “degenerate breastmilk” could have some influence (little influence, in his words), but did not give it the

²³³ *Annaes de Medicina Brasiliense* (1847) 194-197. Francisco de Paula Cândido was born on April 2, 1805, in Minas Gerais. He entered the military in 1821 and later attended the Military Academy of the Court, in Rio de Janeiro. In 1825, Paula Cândido went to Europe and on August 31, 1832 he graduated from the Faculté de Médecine de Paris with the thesis “Sur l’électricité animale,” also presented at the Faculdade de Medicina of Rio de Janeiro, where he took charge of the medical physics course in March 1833, teaching it for 30 years. He was a full member of the Sociedade de Medicina do Rio de Janeiro, of the Academia Imperial de Medicina and was a representative of Minas Gerais from 1838 to 1856. Cândido was also the editor of the *Annaes de Medicina Brasiliense*, directed the *Diário da Saúde* and the literary newspaper *Brasil Illustrado*, and was the first president of the Junta Central de Hygiene Pública (Central Board of Public Hygiene) created by the decree n. 598, of September 14, 1850. He was a member of the Brazilian Historical and Geographical Institute, honorary member of the Academia de Belas Artes, member of the l’Académie Diplomatique (Paris), and of the Sociedade das Ciências Médicas de Lisboa. Francisco de Paula Cândido died in Paris on April 5, 1864.

²³⁴ Important research on historical demography has brought to light the large population of abandoned newborns in the past. Find it, for example, in Peter Burke’s *The French Historical Revolution: The Annales School 1929-2014* (Cambridge: Polity, 2nd edition, 2015). In Portuguese, see Sheila de Castro Faria, “História da Família e Demografia Histórica” In Ciro Flamarion Cardoso & Ronaldo Vainfas, *Domínios da História* (Rio de Janeiro: Ed. Campus, 1997), 241-58.

²³⁵ *Annaes de Medicina Brasiliense* (1847) 194-197. Dr. Jacintho Rodrigues Pereira Reis (1768-1882) graduated in medicine from the Escola Médico-Cirúrgica of Rio de Janeiro, in 1831. He was the Honorary Surgeon of the Imperial Chamber during the reign of D. Pedro I (appointed in 1830), the Director of the Vaccine Institute, and was a Titular Member and President of the Medical Society of Rio de Janeiro (1831). Reis founded the Hahnemannian Institute of Brazil in 1859, of which he was President, and wrote several articles for the *Annaes*.

same importance, rejecting the thesis that most children were dying from transmissible diseases.²³⁶ For Rego, disproportionate feeding and malnutrition were the main cause of mortality, especially among slaves, “because some masters entrust several children to a single wet nurse without giving her the necessary nourishment.”²³⁷

The last word came from Dr. Luiz Vicente De Simoni.²³⁸ The Italian physician, although moderately agreeing with his colleagues in some of their diagnoses, pondered the question and said there were no secure statistics on that matter to solve the problem. De Simoni also challenged the other physicians when he affirmed that “if on the one hand, there are many and important causes of diseases and death, there are also many advantages in this country not found in Europe where different causes equally harmful and fatal, if not stronger and more deadly, afflict and lead many children to the grave.”²³⁹ Most significant for De Simoni was the role he assumed nature plays in “decimating by death” plants, animals, and humans to maintain an arithmetical balance.

²³⁶ Dr. José Pereira Rego was born and died in Rio de Janeiro (1816-1892). He graduated from the Faculty of Medicine of Rio de Janeiro in 1838, defending his doctoral thesis “Fenômenos obtidos pelos diversos métodos de exploração do coração, e aplicação dos mesmos fenômenos ao diagnóstico de algumas afecções do mesmo órgão mais frequentes.” In the area of public health, he was a member and later president of the Central Board of Public Hygiene in 1855 and began to accumulate this position with the one of Health Inspector of the Port of Rio de Janeiro (1865) and the Inspector General of the Vaccine Institute (1873). After personal differences with Emperor Pedro II, Rego resigned from the three public offices in 1881. Rego went on to dedicate himself to Pediatrics, performing his activities at the General Hospital of the Santa Casa da Misericórdia in Rio de Janeiro, writing a “Formulário de Moléstias de Crianças”. He was a councilor of the Municipality of Rio de Janeiro from 1865 to 1868 and received honors from Portugal and Austria. Pereira Rego was elected permanent member of the Academia Imperial de Medicina (1839), acclaimed perpetual president of the Academia Imperial de Medicina (1883), member of the Instituto Histórico e Geográfico Brasileiro, member of the Conselho Fiscal do Imperial Instituto Fluminense de Agricultura, of the Sociedade Auxiliadora da Indústria Nacional, Meritorious Partner and Consultant of the Sociedade Amante da Instrução, and one of the Founding Partners of the Instituto Homeopático do Brasil. Rego was also a Corresponding Member of Lisbon’s Real Academia Médica de Ciências, of the Société Française de Hygiène and the Reale Accademia di Medicina di Torino. In his career, Pereira Rego published most of his works in the *Anais da Academia Imperial de Medicina*.

²³⁷ *Annaes de Medicina Brasiliense* (1847) 194-197. Dr. Rego ended his statement by defending the benefits of baths for “being useful in cleaning impurities and mucus off the skin,” disagreeing once again with Dr. Reis.

²³⁸ Luiz Vicente De Simoni was born in Novi (Italy) in 1792 and became a Brazilian citizen in 1855. Simoni graduated from the Università di Genova, and improved his studies at the Università de Pavia, in 1817. De Simoni went to Brazil that same year, disembarking in Rio de Janeiro. He worked at the hospital of Rio de Janeiro’s Santa Casa da Misericórdia and was the main physician of the Real Hospital Militar of Mozambique where he wrote the “Tratado Medico sobre Clima e Enfermidades de Moçambique.” De Simoni was one of the founders of the Sociedade de Medicina do Rio de Janeiro (1829) being the editor of the minutes of the opening session (1830). As teacher and educator, he was for a few years the tutor of the Princesses Isabel and Leopoldina Theresa. He joined the main staff for the foundation of the Imperial Colégio D. Pedro II in 1837, and in 1855 the Emperor appointed De Simoni professor of Italian language and literature of the same school. De Simoni wrote for the *Annaes Brasilienses de Medicina* (publication of the Academia Imperial de Medicina) and for the *Revista Médica Fluminense*. De Simoni died in 1881 in Rio de Janeiro and his death certificate was signed by José Pereira Rego, then President of the Imperial Academy of Medicine.

²³⁹ *Annaes de Medicina Brasiliense* (1847) 194-197.

De Simoni's calculation came up with the final result that at least two-thirds of the children born alive were "destined to early death, that is, for three children to survive, nature produces nine," eliminating "the inferior" and, consequently, regulating the human species.²⁴⁰ For De Simoni, this would explain "the little or no result obtained so far in the establishments of the *expostos* (foundlings) and in the hospitals for children to prevent the great mortality, which has not stopped despite all the diligence and efforts of the most illustrious men."²⁴¹ On many occasions, though, reports about the deplorable conditions of those institutions proved "all the efforts" of "illustrious men" insufficient, revealing instead the remarkable efforts of women of humble origins.

In 1845, the General Council of Public Health inspected the Casa dos Expostos of the city of Recife, together with the Administration of the Establishments of Charity.²⁴² Inspectors saw "with pleasure" that children entrusted to the charity of largely indigent women—"poorly rewarded for their work, detected the meager amount they receive"—were well nourished and clean. In this rare testimony on women's positive agency, the physicians examining the institution praised the work of the maids and wet-nurses, asking those responsible for the house to pay the women better wages. Their justification was the "current neatness, protection and assistance these women give to the children under their care, and for looking after those who are scattered in various nursing homes where they are educated from a young age up to 7 years."²⁴³

²⁴⁰ In Europe, many physicians believed that the tropics caused infertility in European women and high infant mortality. David M. Pomfret shows that the leading doctors of the *puériculture* movement in France "worried much more than their Anglophone counterparts about the dangers" of the tropics. David M. Pomfret, *Youth and Empire: Trans-Colonial Childhoods in British and French Asia* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2016), 48. See also A.J.R. Russell-Wood, "Women and Society in Colonial Brazil," *Journal of Latin American Studies* 9, 1 (1977): 1-34; Helen Callaway, *Gender, Culture, and Empire* (London: Macmillan, 1987); Ann L. Stoler, "Making Empire Respectable: The Politics of Race and Sexual Morality in 20th-Century Colonial Cultures," *American Ethnologist* 16, 2 (1989), 634-659.

²⁴¹ *Annaes de Medicina Brasiliense* (1847) 194-197. To know more about the *expostos*, see Judite Maria Barboza Trindade, "O abandono de crianças ou a negação do óbvio" *Revista Brasileira de História* (São Paulo, vol.19, n.37, Sept 1999), 35-78.

²⁴² Dr. Joaquim d'Aquino Fonseca (Presidente do Conselho) & Dr. João José Pinto (Secretário), *Collecção dos Trabalhos do Conselho Geral de Salubridade Publica da Província de Pernambuco* (Recife: Typ. Imp. por S. Caminha, 1^o. Anno, 1845/1846) 30-9. The inspection was made by the Administration of Charitable Institutions on the fourth day of each month, the same day the women received their payment. Arquivo Público de Pernambuco, *Relatórios da Saúde Publica secs. XIX e XX*, Coleção dos Trabalhos do Conselho Geral de Salubridade, caixa 9.

²⁴³ *Ibid.*, 37-9.

The physicians testified, however, that the facility offered no comfort and, observing specifically that the children who were breastfeeding, noted the poor ventilation and excessive heat as some of the reasons for the high mortality rate. They also informed that the older orphans shared the same rooms with the women, “who ordinarily come from a very low class of society.” For the inspectors, the low cost of the rooms made “people of little or no exemplary life” occupy the rooms “where it turns out that the orphans can see and hear things that offend decency and morals.” For this reason, the physicians advocated for the expansion of the house and a better division of space, believing in the possible construction of a “school of first letters so necessary to those girls,” a vaccine division and an infirmary, “absolutely indispensable, where the ill *expostos* could be treated, bringing about a decrease in the appalling mortality that is noted.”²⁴⁴ In this regard, the physicians at Recife’s Casa dos Expostos, and others representing Pernambuco’s Society of Medicine, considered the high mortality of infants more related to antihygienic facilities and “the hygienic circumstances in which they live” than to racial heritage or a presumed negligence on the part of the women caring for the children’s bodies.²⁴⁵

Beyond that, in the second half of the century, legislation continued the process of making the institution of slavery weaker.²⁴⁶ Notably, the 1871 “Law of the Free Womb” effectively legislated a gradual abolition of

²⁴⁴ Fonseca & Pinto, *Collecção...* (1845-1846) 37-9.

²⁴⁵ *Annaes da Medicina Pernambucana*, “Relatorio Dos trabalhos da Sociedade de Medicina de Pernambuco no anno de 1841 a 1842, feito e lido em virtude das disposições dos § § 1º e 2º do Artigo 34 dos Estatutos respectivos, perante a mesma Sociedade, na sua sessão solemne do anniversario de sua installação no dia 4 de Abril de 1842, pelo Secretario perpetuo o senhor Doutor Josee Joaquim de Moraes Sarmiento.” (Recife: Typ. de Santos & Companhia, Anno II, Numero III, 1943) 114-15. The original text in Portuguese was: “(...) Uma mulher amamenta sua filha, são ambas acomettidas pelas bobas, mas parecendo curadas, passa a mulher a dar o peito a uma criança de pais sadios, e chegada com poucos dias de nascida a um paiz, onde não ha bobas endemicamente. Apenas decorre um mez, principia a criança a ter bobas, e onde se hão de ellas declarar? nos cantos da boca. A mãe da criança, que vê sua filha infectada, conservando ainda leite, despede a ama, e dá o peito a sua filha, e eis que principia a infeliz senhora a ter bobas; e onde se hão de ellas declarar? nos bicos dos peitos. Oh! Senhores! Pois havemos de negar a infecção directa do peito da ama para a boca da criança, e desta para os peitos de sua mãe? Havemos de attribuir esta transmissão successiva pelos pontos de contacto, ao acaso, ou a essas causas pathogenicas que suppondes no ar, ou nos mãos hábitos hygienicos? (...) Concordao os auctores das quatro memorias [Paiva, Serpa, Teixeira e Doutor Dornelas] em que a predisposição para as bobas é a mesma na raça Caucasea e na Etiopica, sendo a maior frequencia das bobas nos pretos unicamente devida ás más circumstancias hygienicas, em que estes vivem (...)”.

²⁴⁶ This process began in 1831 when Great Britain first signed a treaty with the Brazilian government to end the slave trade. However, the illegal importation of African bodies continued for twenty more years, until British pressure forced its end point in 1850. In the second half of the century, the main legislative acts are the 1871 Law of the Free Womb, which freed all children born to enslaved women, and the 1885 Sexagenarian Law, which freed all slaves over 60 years of age. Abolitionists and enslaved people themselves employed this legislation to fight for their freedom—and that of their families. See Keila Grinberg, *Liberata, a lei da ambiguidade: as*

slavery centered on enslaved women's reproductive bodies, although with little impact on the demographics of slavery itself. Scholars have repeatedly shown that in Brazil the slave population was replaced through imports, not through natural growth.²⁴⁷ Moreover, not found in those debates and treatises surrounding the process of abolition are the feelings and desires of enslaved women or of their children.²⁴⁸ At the end of the day, the 1871 law did not create effective means to prevent children's continued enslavement, but did result in the increasing the abandonment of black infants in Brazilian cities.²⁴⁹ Enslaved women's babies held pecuniary value to slaveholders who also profited from bondswomen by calculating their value based on their reproductive capacity.²⁵⁰ The practice of renting out enslaved wet nurses and discarding their children is just one example of this phenomenon. Enslaved women's breastmilk was more important than having their children live to

ações de liberdade da Corte de Apelação do Rio de Janeiro no século XIX (Rio de Janeiro: Centro Edelstein de Pesquisa Social, 2010); Herbert S. Klein & Francisco Vidal Luna, *Slavery in Brazil* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010); Sidney Chalhoub, *A força da escravidão: ilegalidade e costume no Brasil oitocentista* (São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 2012); Celso T. Castilho, *Slave Emancipation and Transformations in Brazilian Political Citizenship* (Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2016).

²⁴⁷ Lei nº 2.040, de 28 de Setembro de 1871: "It declares of free condition the children of slave women who have been born since the date of this law, freed the slaves of the Nation and others, and provides on the creation and treatment of these minor children and on the annul liberation of slaves..." Available in *Presidência da República, Casa Civil, Subchefia para Assuntos Jurídicos* online at http://www.planalto.gov.br/ccivil_03/leis/lim/LIM2040.htm. The law was sanctioned after extensive reflection on its legal terms which, according to Lana L. Lima and Renato P. Venâncio, did not differ too much from a proposal presented, in the eighteenth century, by Manoel Ribeiro da Rocha in "The Ethiopian rescued" published in 1758. See Lana Lage Lima & Renato Pinto Venâncio, "Abandono de Crianças Negras no Rio de Janeiro" in Del Priori (1991). For more on how enslaved women's wombs had never demographically sustained the institution of slavery in Brazil, see Manolo Florentino & Jose Roberto Góes, *A paz das senzalas: famílias escravas e tráfico atlântico, Rio de Janeiro, c.1790-1850* (Rio de Janeiro: Civilização Brasileira, 1997); Laird W. Bergad, *Slavery and the Demographic and Economic History of Minas Gerais, Brazil, 1720-1888* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999); Robert Wayne Slenes, *Na senzala, uma flor: esperanças e recordações na formação da família escrava, Brasil sudeste, século XIX* (Rio de Janeiro: Editora Nova Fronteira, 1999).

²⁴⁸ See Maria Helena Pereira Toledo Machado, "Between Two Beneditos: Enslaved Wet-nurses amid Slavery's Decline in Southeast Brazil" *Slavery & Abolition*, 38:2 (2017), 320–36. Machado discusses the absent black children role in Brazil's historical practice of renting out enslaved women to breastfeed children that were not their own.

²⁴⁹ See Camillia Cowling, *Conceiving Freedom: Women of Color, Gender, and the Abolition of Slavery in Havana and Rio de Janeiro* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2013); Martha S. Santos, "Slave Mothers, Partus Sequitur Ventrem, and the Naturalization of Slave Reproduction in Nineteenth-century Brazil," *Tempo*, 22:41 (Sep/Dec 2016), 467–87.

²⁵⁰ It is important to remember that many slave-owners opted to keep importing new slaves rather than to rely on reproduction to maintain their labor force. With some regional particularities, this pattern can be observed in many slave-owning societies across the Americas. See Jennifer L. Morgan, *Laboring Women: Reproduction and Gender in New World Slavery* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004); Sasha Turner, *Contested Bodies: Pregnancy, Childrearing, and Slavery in Jamaica* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2017); Katherine Paugh, *The Politics of Reproduction: Race, Medicine, and Fertility in the Age of Abolition* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2017).

adulthood.²⁵¹ A request signed by the representatives of the Banco Auxiliar de Colonização e Imigração, addressed to the “the highest powers of the State” in 1878, shows that the country was constantly suffering by losing young children for the “ambition, egoism, and squalor” of slaveowners, a situation considered “overly shameful for our civilization.”²⁵² The signers of the text asked the authorities to duly increase their efforts in favor of “one of the most urgent needs of the country”. In their words, the Law of the Free Womb had turned out to be “a devourer of innocent creatures” and for that reason those children would only be able to voice “*Ave, lex, nascituri et morituri te salutant.*”

Especially after the Law of the Free Womb, many in the medical profession stated that enslaved women’s sorrow had made them “unfit” to nurse other children.²⁵³ Ordinarily, the bar for establishing proof that enslaved wet nurses’ breastmilk was dangerous to white children was not so high. Throughout different decades of the century, this concern was based on a belief among many medical professionals that enslaved women’s bodies carried diseases slave-owners tried to hide in order to rent them out.²⁵⁴ The emotional state of the woman was perhaps just as important as her physical health in order to discard those enslaved wet nurses considered of “poor quality.” The belief that the physical, moral, and emotional dangers of enslaved women could be passed on to white toddlers through breastmilk persisted throughout the nineteenth century.

²⁵¹ In the case of the United States, this complex scenario also existed alongside ambivalent attitudes towards motherhood among enslaved women who feared that their children were wrenched away or otherwise failed to survive under the slave regime. See Emily West & Erin Shearer, “Fertility Control, Shared Nurturing, and Dual Exploitation: The Lives of Enslaved Mothers in the Antebellum United States,” *Women’s History Review* 27, 6 (2018), 1006-1020; Emily West & Rosie Knight “‘Mothers’ Milk’: Slavery, Wet-Nursing, and Black and White Women in the Antebellum South,” *Journal of Southern History* 83, 1 (Feb. 2017), 37-68.

²⁵² “A Lei n. 2040 de 28 de Setembro de 1871,” in *Congresso Agrícola – Colleição de Documentos* (Rio de Janeiro: Typographia Nacional, 1878), 107-8.

²⁵³ Francisco Moreira Sampaio, *Do aleitamento natural, artificial e mixto em geral e particularmente do mercenário em relação às condições em que elle se acha no Rio de Janeiro* (Rio de Janeiro: these, 1873).

²⁵⁴ For example, Francisco Julio Xavier’s *Considerações sobre os cuidados e os socorros que se devem prestar aos meninos na occasião de seu nascimento; e sobre as vantagens do aleitamento maternal* (Rio de Janeiro: Typographia Imperial e Constitucional de Seignot-Plancher e G., 1833); Agostinho José Ferreira Bretas, *A utilidade do alleitamento maternal e os inconvenientes que resultão do desprezo deste dever* (Rio de Janeiro: Typographia de J. Crechiere, 29pp., 1838); José Henrique de Medeiros, *A amamentação materna é quasi sempre possível* (Rio de Janeiro: Typ. Imparcial de Francisco de Paula Brito, 4ºgr., 22pp., 1848); José Ribas Cadaval, *Da alimentação nas primeiras idades* (Rio de Janeiro, 1885). These Works, among many others, were compiled by Dr. Carlos Costa in his *Catalogo Systematico da Bibliotheca da Faculdade de Medicina do Rio de Janeiro* (1892), available at the University of Illinois Library.

In 1874, physician Francisco Moura wrote that a slave wet nurse, when rented, “does not take her son with her in order to give a greater rent” for her master.²⁵⁵ According to Moura, the enslaved wet nurse was forced to abandon her own child, going to play her role while “hating the family that rented her, especially the innocent child to whom she is going to act as mother!”²⁵⁶ Regarding moral and psychological emotions suffered by the wet nurse, hygienist Celso Eugenio dos Reis observed how it would affect the quality of breastmilk. For Reis, “fear, anger, anguish, and all the violent disturbances of enervation” would have a very negative influence on breastmilk secretion and its qualities. Reis believed all those negative factors could suspend breastmilk secretion for many hours, bringing disturbance to the child's digestion for many days and causing “vomiting, colic, diarrhea, convulsion and even death.”²⁵⁷ Even students of medicine highlighted how the practice of separating child and mother mitigated the quality of enslaved women's maternal milk.²⁵⁸

²⁵⁵ Jurandir Freire pointed out how masters and physicians, in general, did not care much about the destiny of children from slave mothers. Many of those babies were abandoned in the “wheels” of religious institutions. See Jurandir Freire Costa, *Ordem médica e norma familiar* (Rio de Janeiro: Edições Graal, 2nd edition, 1983). See also Sandra Lauderdale Graham, *House and Street: The Domestic World of Servants and Masters in Nineteenth-century Rio de Janeiro* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1992); Maria Elizabeth Ribeiro Carneiro, *Procura-se “preta, com muito bom leite, prendada e carinhosa”*: uma cartografia das amas-de-leite na sociedade carioca (1850-1888) (Brasília: PhD dissertation, Universidade de Brasília, 2006); Sandra Sofia Machado Koutsoukos, “‘Amas mercenárias’: O discurso dos doutores em medicina e os retratos de amas - Brasil, segunda metade do século XIX” *História, Ciências, Saúde – Manguinhos*, 16:2 (Jun 2009), 305-24. Karoline Carula, “Perigosas amas de leite: aleitamento materno, ciência e escravidão em A Mãe de Família” *História, Ciências, Saúde – Manguinhos*, 19, supl. (Dez. 2012), 197-214.

²⁵⁶ The original in Portuguese: “A ama escrava quando é alugada, não leva em sua companhia o seu filho; ella é obrigada pelo seu senhor, a fim de dar um aluguel maior, a abandonal-o, portanto ella vai contrariada, e odeia a familia que a aluga e principalmente a innocente criança a quem ella vai fazer as vezes de mãe!” Francisco José Coelho de Moura, *Do aleitamento natural, artificial e mixto em geral e em particular do mercenário attentas às condições da cidade do Rio de Janeiro* (Rio de Janeiro: Typ. Carioca, 1874), 26. The thesis was presented to the medical school of Rio de Janeiro.

²⁵⁷ “As emoções moraes influem sobre a secreção do leite. (...). O medo, a colera, o pezar, e todas as perturbações violentas da innervação têm influencia muito notavel sobre a secreção leitosa e sobre as qualidades do leite. Ellas podem suspender durante 12 ou 24 horas esta secreção, e o leite, que fôr secretado depois, póde perturbar, durante muitos dias, as digestões da criança e determinar vomitos, colicas, diarrhéa, convulsões e até a morte.” Celso Eugenio dos Reis, *Do aleitamento natural, artificial e mixto em geral, e em particular do mercenário em relação às condições da cidade do Rio de Janeiro*. (Rio de Janeiro: Oliveira e Silva, 1882), 12.

²⁵⁸ Ildfonso Archer de Castilho, *Hygiene da primeira infancia* (Rio de Janeiro: Typographia Universal de Laemmert & C^a., 44pp., 1882). In 1833, for example, Francisco Julio Xavier, still a medical student at the time, wrote that forced to breastfeed, enslaved women were coping with it “more because of fear than because of love,” therefore their milk was considered dangerous to white infants (Xavier, 1833, 17–8). On the overall emotional impact of slavery resulting in “bad milk,” see also Francisco Moreira Sampaio, *Do aleitamento natural, artificial e mixto em geral, e particularmente do mercenário em relação às condições da cidade do Rio de Janeiro, do aborto criminoso, do aborto provocado e da icterícia*. (Rio de Janeiro: Typ. Americana, in-4^o gr., 39pp., 1873). A few years before, P.C.A. Lima also wrote a dissertation on the same theme: *Do aborto criminoso e do aleitamento natural, artificial e mixto em geral, e particularmente do mercenário em relação às condições da cidade do Rio de Janeiro* (Rio de Janeiro: Typographia Americana, 1869).

Medical testimonials also pointed out many cases of forced abandonment of black children as they were considered “non-viable.”²⁵⁹ The black mother, “recovering her strength after the painful labor of childbirth, had her innocent little child taken from her and sent to the *roda* (orphanage).”²⁶⁰ For the doctors, the destiny of those newborn infants, “barbarically separated from their mothers” and sent to orphanages, caused “deep sadness” in those “disgraced women,” influencing not only the morale of the slave but her physical state, disqualifying bondwomen as wet nurses for white children.²⁶¹ These assertions again highlight the growing emphasis, within the medical field, on the emotional and physical conditions necessary for a “hygienic motherhood” and the need for professional medical guidance, even on the issue of forced separations of black mothers and their children.²⁶²

²⁵⁹ See José Maria de Noronha Feital, *Meios que se podem empregar actualmente para diminuir as molestias e a mortalidade dos expostos, offerecidos ao snrs. administradores pelo respectivo professor, em 9 de março de 1853* (Annaes Brasilienses de Medicina, 9º Anno, Vol.9, n.5, Fevereiro 1854) 136-37. The text in Portuguese was written as follows: “(...) A segunda, e não menos considerável [cause of the *expostos* high mortality], depende da recepção diaria que faz a roda de monstros e outros recém-nascidos não viáveis, ou de creanças moribundas ou gravemente doentes, que são expostas sofrendo – tetanos, convulsões, fracturas, gangrenas, diarrhéas, hydrocephalos e phthisicas, que alli são mandadas pela pobreza dos pais ou avareza dos Snrs., pois que a maxima parte é de crianças de côr preta, só para pouparem-se a despeza do enterro.” In economic terms, between 1850 and 1871, it would seem that perhaps slaveowners should have taken more interest in ensuring enslaved children lived to adulthood to maintain the labor force. However, physicians believed that owners preferred to abandon sickly slave children to profit from their mother’s milk than to invest in their health—and future productive potential.

²⁶⁰ Neves (1873) 38.

²⁶¹ Francisco de Paula Lazaro Gonçalves, *Que regimen será mais conveniente para a criação dos expostos da Santa Casa de Misericórdia, attentas as nossas circumstancias especiaes: a criação em commum dentro do Hospicio, ou a privada em casas particulares?* (Rio de Janeiro: Typographia Universal de Laemmert, 1855, in-4º de 55pp.); Luiz Delfino dos Santos, *Que regimen será mais conveniente á criação dos expostos da Santa Casa de Misericórdia, attentas as nossas circumstancias especiaes: a criação em commum dentro do Hospicio, ou a privada em casas particulares?* (Rio de Janeiro: Typ. Univ. de Laemmert, 1857, in-4º gr., 1f. 139pp., 2f. 6pp.); José Alexandre Teixeira de Mello, *Que regimen será mais conveniente para a criação dos expostos da Santa Casa de Misericórdia, attentas as nossas circumstancias especiaes: a criação em commum dentro do Hospicio, ou a privada em casas particulares?* (Rio de Janeiro: Typ. Univ. de Laemmert, 1859, in-4º, 85pp.). The three theses were presented at the Medical School of Rio de Janeiro. See *Catalogo da Exposição Medica Brasileira: realizada pela bibliotheca da Faculdade de Medicina do Rio de Janeiro a 2 de Dezembro de 1884* (Rio de Janeiro: Typ. Nacional, 1884) 460-1. The doctor Francisco de Paula Lázaro Gonçalves became later one of the directors of the “Associação Promotora de Imigração em Minas” in the state of Minas Gerais as found in the newspaper *A União: Órgão do Partido Conservador* Anno II, n.129 (Ouro Preto: 17 December 1887) 2. See also José Cypriano Nunes Vieira, *Hygiene da primeira infancia* (Rio de Janeiro: Typographia de Moreira, Maximino & C^a., 78pp., 1882). Nunes Vieira was a medical student and presented his thesis on 16 December 1882 protesting against the abandonment of *ingênuos* by many slave-owners that separated the children from their mothers to rent out the slave women as *amas de leite*. The theme of hygiene in early childhood also entitled two more theses defended at Rio de Janeiro’s Medical School in 1882: José Vieira Martins’ *Hygiene da primeira infancia* (Rio de Janeiro: Typographia de Moreira, Maximino & C^a., 58pp., 1882); and Ildefonso Archer de Castilho’s Op.cit. See *Catalogo da Exposição Medica Brasileira* Op. cit. (1884) 430.

²⁶² See Jurandir Freire Costa, *Ordem médica e norma familiar* (Rio de Janeiro: Edições Graal, 4ª edição, 1999); Fabíola Rohden, *Uma ciência da diferença: Sexo e gênero na medicina da mulher* (Rio de Janeiro: Editora Fiocruz, 2001); Ana Paula Vosne Martins, *Visões do feminino: A medicina da mulher nos séculos XIX e XX* (Rio de Janeiro: Editora Fiocruz, 2004); Maria Martha de Luna Freire,

While a group of doctors denounced slave-owners abandonment of their bondswomen's free toddlers to take full advantage of breastmilk as "a lucrative source of profit"²⁶³ and the emotional outcomes of being forced to nurse other people's children, many other physicians, however, preferred to denigrate those women. From Agostinho Bretas in the decade of the 1830s and the debates at the Imperial Academy of Medicine in the 1840s, to Juvenal Neves and Luiz Azevedo in the 1870s and Manoel Ferro Silva in the 1880s, ideas of black women's "vicious" behavior permeated physicians' minds. Accusations that bondswomen surreptitiously practiced "the most extravagant evils," such as eating pepper to pass on a "morbid milk," tightly wrapping white toddlers to asphyxiate them, and maliciously teaching African superstitions to white children are only few examples.²⁶⁴ The belief that enslaved women took revenge on their "ambitious and despotic owners," by mistreating the infants under their care, led various physicians to declare that they had no confidence in wet nurses and that, "Black African *amas* [were] stupid, full of vices, with no affection etc., which make children easily acquire those vices, becoming impertinent."²⁶⁵

Mulheres, mães e médicos: Discurso maternalista no Brasil (Rio de Janeiro: Editora Fundação Getúlio Vargas, 2009); Luiz Lima Vailati, *A morte menina: Infância e morte infantil no Brasil dos oitocentos* (Rio de Janeiro e São Paulo) (São Paulo: Alameda, 2010).

²⁶³ Ildefonso Archer de Castilho, (1882) 40.

²⁶⁴ Agostinho José Ferreira Bretas (1838) Op.cit. The Catalogo da Exposição Medica Brasileira (Op. cit., 1884, p.413) explains Bretas presented his thesis to Rio's Medical School on 15 December. Debates on the matter can be found at Academia Imperial de Medicina, "Sessão geral em 25 de junho de 1846," *Annaes de Medicina Brasiliense*, 2(10), 217–220, 1847. See also Luiz Augusto Corrêa de Azevedo, *Do aleitamento natural, artificial e mixto e particularmente do mercenário em relação às condições em que elle se acha no Rio de Janeiro* (Rio de Janeiro: Typographia Academica, 1873); Juvenal Martiniano das Neves, *Do aleitamento natural, artificial e mixto e particularmente do mercenário em relação as condições em que elle se acha no Rio de Janeiro* (Rio de Janeiro: Typographia da Reforma, 1873); Manoel Ferro e Silva, *Da alimentação nas primeiras idades* (Rio de Janeiro: Typographia Lombaert e Cia., 1vol., in-4° gr., 72pgs., 1883), dissertation presented at Rio's Medical School in 1884 for the discipline of medical clinic and surgery of children; José Ribas Cadaval, Op. cit. (1885) 29; J.B.C. Camarano, *Da alimentação nas primeiras idades: estudo crítico sobre os diferentes métodos de aleitamento*. (Rio de Janeiro: Typographia de Miranda & Almeida, 1884). When commenting on the "different morbid milks," Camarano (pp. 9-12) mentioned French physicians Antoine-Henri Becquerel and Ange Gabriel Maxine Vernois. See more about José Ribas Cadaval and medicine in the military at chapter four of this dissertation.

²⁶⁵ Dr. Carlos Costa, "Palestra do Medico," *A Mai de Familia: Jornal Cientifico, Litterario e Illustrado – Educação da Infancia, Hygiene da Familia* (Rio de Janeiro: 1º Anno, n.9, Maio 1879) 67. Carlos Costa was founder and diretor of the *Annuario Medico*, member of Rio de Janeiro's Society of Medicine, Lisbon's Society of Medical Sciences, Argentina's Medical Society, member of the Société Française d'Hygiene, and librarian of Rio de Janeiro's Medical School.

Moreover, numerous medical professionals assumed enslaved wet nurses were “seduced” by the hope of achieving a positive distinction when they were rented out. Before becoming a Republican congressman from Minas Gerais, Dr. Targino Ottoni de Carvalho e Silva acknowledged that *amas* believed they could conquer friendship and some rewards from the child’s parents, being granted freedom by their owners, or even buy their freedom from some additional money earned.²⁶⁶ In 1882, medical practitioner José Cypriano Nunes Vieira, however, deduced there was “a type of unconscious revenge” that the enslaved wet nurse exercised over the free woman for the fact “those that judge themselves superior in this conjuncture” depended not only on *mãe de leite* (milk mother) breastfeeding but also on her devotion and care towards a white child.²⁶⁷

Abolitionists also pointed their fingers at the issue. On 11 August 1883, José do Patrocínio and André Rebouças wrote a manifesto in the name of Rio de Janeiro’s Confederação Abolicionista and signed by representatives of groups from all over the country such as the *Libertadora da Escola Militar*, the *Libertadora da Escola de Medicina*, the *Abolicionista Cearense*, the *Libertadora Pernambucana*, the *Abolicionista Espirito Santense*, and the Sociedade Libertadora Sul Rio-Grandense.²⁶⁸ Abolitionists denounced the practice of enslaved wet nursing by censuring slave-owners who, in their opinion, crudely separated the new born children from their mothers. They condemned the practice of commercializing bondwomen’s breastmilk while little black children were either sent away to the *roda* or died from hunger in places that, according to the abolitionists, undertook

²⁶⁶ Targino Ottoni de Carvalho e Silva, *Da alimentação nas primeiras idades* (Rio de Janeiro: Typographia Hamburgueza do Lobão, 1884). Carvalho e Silva was elected during the elections of 25 January 1891, officially proclaimed by the Comissão 1a of the Congresso do Estado de Minas Gerais in its “Parecer N.4.” See “Acta da 3a Sessão Preparatória a 1º de Abril de 1891” in *Annaes do Congresso constituinte do estado de Minas Geraes 1891* (Ouro Preto: Imprensa Official, 1896) 16-7. See also J.P. Xavier da Veiga (direct.), *Revista do Archivo Publico Mineiro* (Ouro Preto: Imprensa Official, 1896) 91. He is also mentioned as a representative at the *Almanak Laemmert: Administrativo, Mercantil e Industrial* (Rio de Janeiro- S. Paulo – Recife: Laemmert & Comp. Livreiros-Editores, edição A-058, 1901) 1322.

²⁶⁷ See José Cypriano Nunes Vieira, Op. cit. (1882) 53.

²⁶⁸ José do Patrocínio & André Rebouças, *Manifesto da Confederação Abolicionista do Rio de Janeiro* (Rio de Janeiro: Typ. da Gazeta da Tarde, 1883). Available at Senado Federal, Biblioteca Digital <http://www2.senado.leg.br/bdsf/handle/id/174454> visited on 8 August 2018.

concealed infanticides.²⁶⁹ As reported by the manifesto, the surviving children demonstrated “a weak, completely depleted constitution” and the enslaved women were forcibly “prostituted, exploited on a larger scale, as demonstrated by the annals of the police.”²⁷⁰ The manifesto pronounced that “slave-owners circumscribed the nation to their interests; humanity, civilization, and justice to their greed.” For that reason, the Law of the Free Womb, far from being a dawn of hope, was considered “a decree of extermination of children, of prostitution of women, the hecatomb of a race.”²⁷¹

Due to wet-nursing’s constant presence in nineteenth-century Brazil, physicians routinely debated on the nutritional value of enslaved women’s breastmilk, how policymakers should regulate the practice, and how it was related to upper-class women’s “disdain for the advice of men of science” and “the wise precepts of hygiene.”²⁷² In Salvador, for example, a group of Brazilian physicians known as the Bahian Tropicalista School of Medicine were also not always successful in persuading women to abandon a midwifery tradition (often conducted by lower-class black women, judged as “backward”) in favor of scientifically trained male doctors, considered modern by the physicians themselves. Although gaining some international recognition for making recommendations for improving the health of all classes of Brazilians, the “Tropicalistas” failed in trying to institutionalize their home-grown model that emphasized the link between wretched social conditions and illness

²⁶⁹ Dr. Carlos Costa also condemned the “danger of the *Roda*.” See “Palestra do Medico,” *A Mai de Familia: Jornal Cientifico, Litterario e Illustrado – Educação da Infancia, Hygiene da Familia* (Rio de Janeiro: 1º Anno, n.1, Janeiro de 1879) 7. On the practice of infanticide, see Antonio Amancio Pereira de Carvalho “Estudo Medico-Legal do Infanticidio,” in *Revista da Faculdade de Direito de São Paulo* (São Paulo, v.2, 1894) 151-59, available online at <https://doi.org/10.11606/issn.2318-8227.v2i0p151-159>

²⁷⁰ *Manifesto da Confederação Abolicionista do Rio de Janeiro* (1883) 15-6. The original in Portuguese is: “Nas cidades, arrancam-se as creancinhas recém-nascidas aos seios maternos, e fazem do leite das mulheres redusidas á escravidão o mais hediondo commercio, enquanto as creancinhas vao vagir a sua orphandade sem carinhos nas rodas dos hospicios, ou morrer de fome em casas que a baixo preço se encarregam de infanticidios sem vestigio. (...) As crianças, que sobrevivem, demonstram pelo seu organismo uma constituição fraca, completamente depauperada (...) O commercio da prostituição da mulher escrava tem sido explorado na maior escala, como se pode demonstrar pelos annaes da policia desta corte.”

²⁷¹ *Manifesto da Confederação Abolicionista do Rio de Janeiro* (1883) 15-6. The original in Portuguese is: “Os possuidores de escravos circunscreveram a nação aos seus interesses; a humanidade, a civilização, a justiça à sua avareza. Desse modo que a lei de 28 de Setembro, longe de ser sido uma aurora de esperança para os míseros espoliados da liberdade, foi pelo contrario um decreto de extermínio de crianças, de prostituição de mulheres, de hecatombe de uma raça.”

²⁷² Dr. Carlos Costa, “Palestra do Medico,” *A Mai de Familia: Jornal Cientifico, Litterario e Illustrado – Educação da Infancia, Hygiene da Familia* (Rio de Janeiro: 1º Anno, n.9, Maio 1879) 65.

in Brazil.²⁷³ Moreover, despite the fact the Tropicalistas reflected a preoccupation with national identity and modernization that obsessed the Brazilian elite in general, they also failed in defending their conviction that a torrid climate and racially mixed population need not hamper Brazil's progress, contrary to the racial and cultural stereotypes presented by Europeans and supported by many national physicians against the “unhealthy” inhabitants of the Tropics.

In general, support for wet nursing gradually diminished by the end of the nineteenth century and the continuous reduction in the use of “mercenary” breastmilk in Brazil also corresponded to the advance of new milk formulas, the pasteurization system, and other kinds of “artificial” food, such as glycerin, that became cheaper than having a wet nurse. Advocates for these alternates hoped they would produce “robust children, free from most of the hassles that persecute childhood.”²⁷⁴ Discussions moved from questions of health and morality to the issue of nationalism, as white elites grew increasingly concerned about what they viewed as “the pernicious influence” black women could have on white infants and, consequently, on the country’s future. Notably during the process of abolition—also driven by the policies on enslaved women’s wombs—patriarchal control over women’s bodies moved from the private to the public sphere.

In 1901, for example, the Instituto de Proteção e Assistência à Infancia created its Dispensario Central, an organism to provide services and medical assistance to pregnant women and to children, and “complete and truly

²⁷³ See Julyan G. Peard, *Race, Place, and Medicine: The Idea of the Tropics in Nineteenth-Century Brazilian Medicine* (Durham/London: Duke University Press, 1999). The Tropicalistas were practitioners in the emerging field of tropical medicine in Bahia, between the 1860s and 1880s. Peard argues the Tropicalistas’ heyday short life was because they failed to institutionalize their informal network and recruit disciples to pursue their research and social agendas. Moreover, the author states the Tropicalistas “provided conceptual tools with which the national intelligentsia could resist derogatory labels of difference and inferiority produced by European scientific and medical discourse.” (page 9).

²⁷⁴ João Camara, *Almanach Administrativo, estatístico, mercantil, industrial e litterario do Estado do Ceará Para o Anno de 1897* (Fortaleza: Typ. da Republica, Anno 3º, 1896) 352. The original in Portuguese is: “As Senhoras Gravidas devem usar a Glycerina phosphatada do pharmaceutico Oliveira Junior, para assim terem filhos robustos e livres da maior parte das molestias que perseguem a infância. (...) Substitui vantajosamente a agua de cal, empregada na amamentação das creanças, pois alem de facilitar a digestão do leite e de comunicar-lhe sabor agradável, tem as propriedades incontestáveis sobre a digestão e nutrição geral.” Com quina [a kind of plant] e carne. Aprovada pelo Instituto Sanitario Federal.” For more on the relation between artificial food and wet nursing, see Sandra Lauderdale Graham, *Proteção e obediência. criadas e patrões no Rio de Janeiro (1860-1910)* (São Paulo: Cia. das Letras, 1992) and Janet Golden, *A Social History of Wet Nursing in America: From Breast to bbottle* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 2001).

scientific” exams on wet nurses.²⁷⁵ The Dispensario issued to poor women and children medicated and electric baths, gymnastics training, and orthopedic appliances. In addition, the authorities declared that, “poor pregnant women receiving medical and hygienic assistance during pregnancy are to be assisted at home by professional staff.”²⁷⁶ Mortality and fertility control, connected to a broader educational project, then became pivotal issues on which the state hinged gendered and racialized power in the name of the nation.²⁷⁷ It explains why physicians became the “true guides who are useful and faithful to the nutrition, education and finally the salvation of your [the nation] children’s health.”²⁷⁸

Several factors influenced the efforts of the State to shape “modern” and “civilized” child-care practices by encouraging the social construction of the “new mother”. They aimed at the health and hygiene of the child, “the nation’s future,” which required the direct treatment and strengthening of the natural mother’s body. Simply put by Antônio Pacífico Pereira in 1878, physical education “actually a magna question, urgent and vital in this country where the race goes significantly languishing,” was as important for women as for boys because physical exercises “prepare the young girl for her future role of motherhood, conserving her health, vigor, and beauty, and protecting her from all the physical evils that come from a sedentary life.”²⁷⁹ It is important to remember that

²⁷⁵ Dr. Luiz do Nascimento Gurgel, “Algumas palavras sobre o Movimento Científico do Instituto,” in *Archivos de Assistencia a Infancia: Orgão Oficial do Instituto de Protecção e Assistencia á Infancia* (Rio de Janeiro: Besnard Frerés Editores, Tomo 1, n.2, 1 de Dezembro de 1902) 25-6. Nascimento Gurgel pointed out that many wet nurses had been rejected, therefore justifying the importance of those exams and how population started to understand it.

²⁷⁶ “1ª Secção Dispensario Moncorvo (Antigo Dispensario Central) Para tratamento gratuito das moléstias das creanças pobres – Creação” in *Archivos de Assistencia a Infancia...* (Rio de Janeiro: Besnard Frerés Editores, Tomo 1, n.1, 1 de Novembro de 1902) 10.

²⁷⁷ Cassia Roth analyzed judicial documents, criminal and civil legislation, and travel writings to argue that, before abolition, the state did not prosecute enslaved women for their reproductive capabilities because of the contradictory legal status of their bodies as both property and person. This changed after abolition with the state prosecuting all women, particularly poor women of color, for these crimes. See Cassia Roth, “From Free Womb to Criminalized Woman: Fertility control in Brazilian slavery and freedom” *Slavery & Abolition*, vol. 38, issue 2, 269–86, 2017.

²⁷⁸ “1ª Conferencia sobre hygiene infantil (resumida) Realizada em 14 de Setembro de 1901, pelo Dr. Moncorvo Filho,” in *Archivos de Assistencia a Infancia...* (Rio de Janeiro: Besnard Frerés Editores, Tomo 1, n.2, 1 de Dezembro de 1902) 40-42. The Instituto de Protecção e Assistencia á Infancia periodically published letters of support from public and political figures (senators, representatives, and mayors) to its works.

²⁷⁹ Antônio Pacífico Pereira, “Hygiene das Escolas I,” *Gazeta Médica* (Salvador: Anno 10, n.5, Maio 1878) 193; “Hygiene das Escolas V” *Gazeta Médica* (Salvador: Anno 10, n.10, Outubro 1878) 436.

when the care for the strength and beauty of women's bodies was mentioned that idealized figure had mostly (almost exclusively) "white skin, teeth, and hands; thin lips; and small nose," some of the "thirty perfections" a woman's body should have to be considered a "complete beauty."²⁸⁰



Figure 11

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²⁸⁰ "Belleza da Mulher," *Jornal das Damas: Periodico de Instrucção e Recreio* (Recife: Typ. do Diario do Recife, Anno 1, n.9, 6 de Dezembro de 1862) 35-6.

²⁸¹ "The 30 nursing children submitted to the pasteurized milk distributed by the Dispensario." *Archivos de Assistencia à Infancia* (Rio de Janeiro: Besnard Freres Editores, Anno V, N.9, Setembro 1907) 9.

2.3 Preparing “strong and sound generations”: a transition

Mammas who have been taught little but languages, music, and accomplishments, aided by nurses full of antiquated prejudices, are considered competent regulators of the food, clothing, and exercise of children. Meanwhile the fathers read books and periodicals, attend agricultural meetings, try experiments, and engage in discussions, all with the view of discovering how to fatten prize pigs! We see infinite pains taken to produce a racer that shall win the Derby: none to produce a modern athlete.²⁸²

During the second half of the nineteenth century, the old concerns about the moral formation of exemplary individuals joined new scientific precepts on the education of bodies under the broader precept of physical culture.²⁸³ Maternal instinct, virtue, and affection were no longer enough to guarantee the proper formation of citizens for the nation. Rigid standards to be achieved regarding hygiene, nutrition, and even physical exercises came into vogue with the emergence of a broader network of care and new knowledges on bodies. In this sense, Brazilian physicians, puericulturists, policymakers, and educators started to attribute to the scientific care of the physical self an increasing power over the country’s future. This brought a direct repercussion into Brazil’s society, since it represented only part of a large scope of projects and ideas inspired by foreigner thinkers, mingling nationally to finally be shared abroad in its genuinely Brazilian form.

Observing the development of Brazilian physical education, we can see that gender privileged perceptions and processes through which the anatomy of the body was taken as the cause and explanation of differentiation dictated the social position of individuals in the broader plan visualized for the nation. By emphasizing mind-body dualism to deal with the bodily aspects of childbearing and childrearing, Brazilian intellectuals of the eighteenth hundreds, such as José Veríssimo, believed the education (physical and spiritual) of Brazil’s infants still

²⁸² Herbert Spencer, *Education: Intellectual, Moral, and Physical* (London: John Childs and Son Printers, 1861), 146.

²⁸³ See Sheila Fletcher, *Women First: The Female Tradition in English physical Education, 1880-1980* (Dover: Athlone Press, 1984); Jan Todd, *Physical Culture and the Body Beautiful: Purposive Exercise in the Lives of American Women 1800-1875* (Macon: Mercer University Press, 1998).

remained “entirely primitive and empirical,” despite all the “gentleness and affection” Brazilian mothers could demonstrate.

The perception of a “civilized” society passed through the interest on future generations and the broader physical education of early-year children, that is, their nutrition, meal and sleep schedules, proper dressing, hygiene and, particularly, their corporeal exercises. The influences of the environment and external factors surrounding the child demanded the special attention from what was considered “a cleverly directed physical education” in order to prepare “strong and sound generations.”²⁸⁴ Along with the perception that medical and pedagogical knowledge on physical education were not fully disseminated within the masses of the Brazilian public, scientists and intellectuals still considered it neglected among political decision-makers, a “national problem”. They believed that this caused serious and incalculable damages for the improvement of the population as on the nation’s future itself.

The establishment of a rigorous “education of the body” in Brazil became a key tool during the nineteenth century to achieve the nation’s modernization and progress, reshaping the old colonial structures. With childcare as its touchstone, physical education became a key target to be developed and a key instrument for the construction of a new society. Although never reaching its idealized goals properly, there were enough conditions for a considerable diffusion of those ideals, albeit limited, and a recognition that old customs threatened the country’s future. Medical practitioners incorporated the physical education of bodies among their principles, identifying childcare, in a broader approach, as a social-political problem to be addressed. Physicians assumed this “patriotic commitment” to use their craft for the construction of the desired new, modern, and civilized nation.

This history of the Brazilian body is somewhat the history of the politicization and “civilization” of the physical qualities expected to be acquired by the modes of physical education; a heterogeneous and plural history, which contemplates different modes of sociability and differentiation. In this process, the care and management

²⁸⁴ José Veríssimo, *A Educação Nacional* (1890) 75.

of women's bodies became progressively active and interventionist. It expanded, with more power, the idea that the health of the nation is administered and managed from the embryo to the deathbed. This vital cycle in favor of the nation initiated with the exaltation of intra-uterine life, passing through the idea that a healthy nation would be born from the wombs of healthy women.

The next chapter of this dissertation underscores the educational system as a site of power where regulation and institutionalization of childcare occurred as a consequence of the changes within the Brazilian state, as well as the scientific references and influences on the national *intelligentsia*. Brazil's institutions of education adapted techniques for the discipline and control of children's bodies—boys and girls—according to their scientific and medical ideas about the formation of healthy citizens. The institutionalization of childcare characterized the Brazilian transition from monarchy to republic and, as the founders of the new regime strove to create a “new, modern, civilized” nation. Gestation in women's wombs, childcare, and the multiple functions of the state in relation to childhood were defined by law in this new republic. In addition to the defense of the physical integrity and vigilance of bodies in general, educational institutions had the mission to provide medical assistance and promote physical education, based on scientific principles, to address Brazil's major health problems.

Committed to what they believed to be the ideals of modernity, the discourses of the dominant intellectuals of the period supported the need to shape people's bodies (as well as their minds) to civilize Brazil. In first decades of the twentieth century, when educational and hygienic issues overlapped, events such as the Brazilian Congresses on Hygiene appeared as public arenas where nationalists sought to elevate physical education as the basis of the project to mold and strengthen the nation. These assumptions were the main instruments used to mark a “new,” modern representation of young women and men and their physical development. Moreover, physicians, puericulturists, and political leaders also closely followed the development of children to ensure those boys and

girls, when adults, would guarantee the reproductive continuity of a new cycle of healthy children, still considered “in large proportions, poorly generated, coming from weakened, anemic and degraded parents.”²⁸⁵

Building a strong body, based on the concepts of ‘health,’ ‘strength,’ and ‘beauty’ meant to foster a generation of new creatures forging, thus, a new country. These ideals and practices were not restricted only to men but also directed at women. Given the great moral and physical demands of motherhood, the intention to strengthen the female body through physical culture, in order to prepare it for a healthy maternity, guided the inclusion of women in the world of bodily activities, after all, they were considered the propagators of the race. The physical capacities of muscular strength, physical vigor, stamina, and power, through bodily exercises, began to be seen as important and necessary for both male and female occupations.

As the next chapter shows, schools became another crucial promoter of these attributes in this dialectic conception of body and nation. Education was no longer exclusively controlled by public policymakers, reformers or religious institutions. It became also a domain of medical knowledge, that reorganized schools’ physical spaces, their nutritional routines and schedules, and regulated the time and the programs of bodily activities, for children, “the source of regeneration,” were considered the “future’s hope, the security of nationality and the guarantee of the race.”²⁸⁶ The construction of patriotism and the shaping of healthy bodies that would serve the nation revealed, through the educational system, another face of this articulation between power and knowledge.

²⁸⁵ Dr. Belisario Penna, “Dever Social de Assistência À Infância (continuação)” in *Gazeta de Notícias* - Secção Paulista (Rio de Janeiro: Anno XLIX, n.97, 23 Abril 1924) 8. The text published by the newspaper was the same presented at a conference realized at the Theatro Municipal (Rio) on 10 April 1924 for the benefit of the childcare institute of Ribeirão Preto (state of São Paulo).

²⁸⁶ Dr. Belisario Penna, “Dever Social de Assistência À Infância” in *Gazeta de Notícias* - Secção Paulista (Rio de Janeiro: Anno XLIX, n.94, 22 Abril 1924) 7.

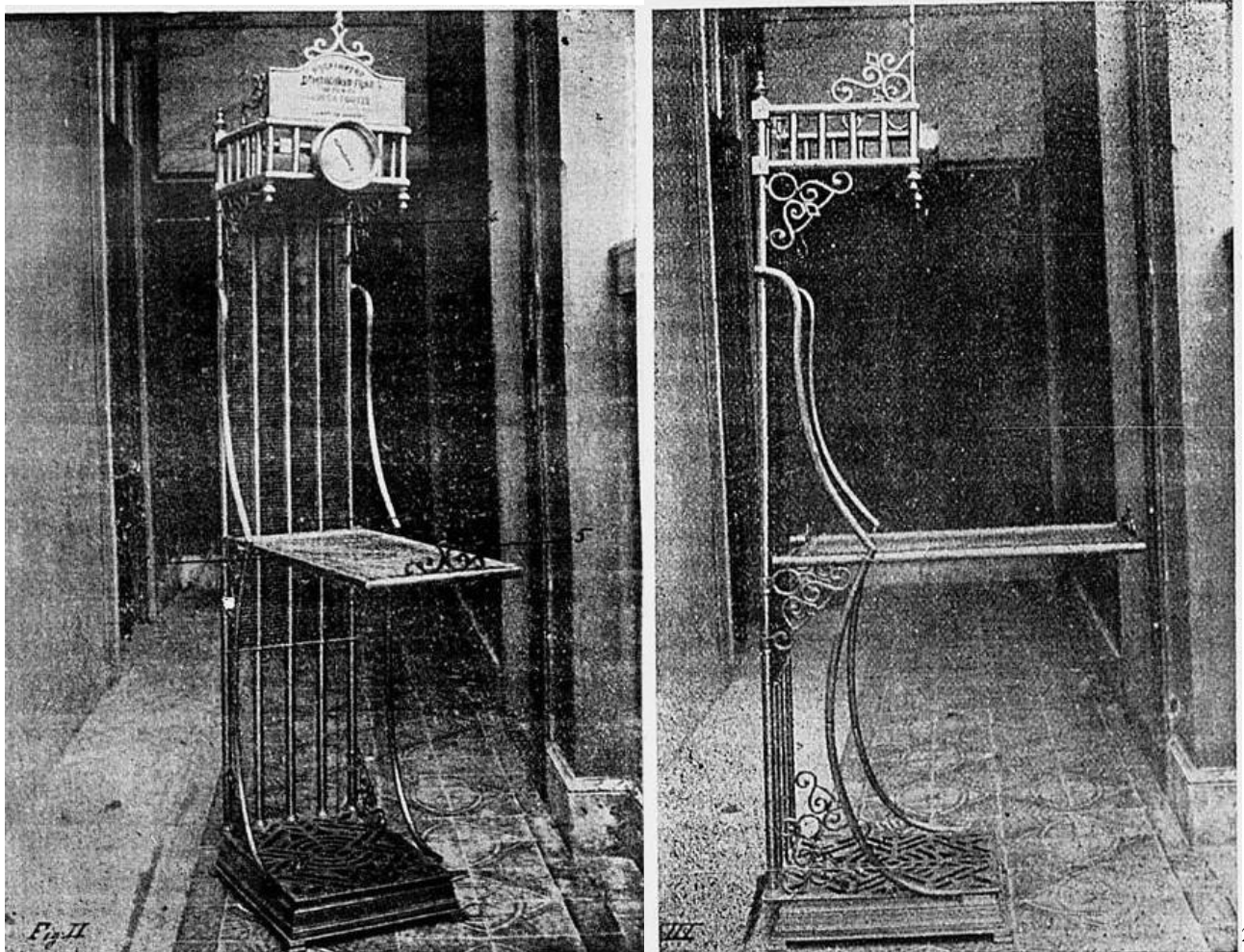


Figure 12

²⁸⁷ “Puerimetro” in *Brazil-Medico Revista Semanal de Medicina e Cirurgia* (Rio de Janeiro: Typ Besnard Freres, Anno XVIII, n.13, 1 April 1904) 123.

CHAPTER III

Educating Bodies for the Nation: Physical Education and Brazil's School System

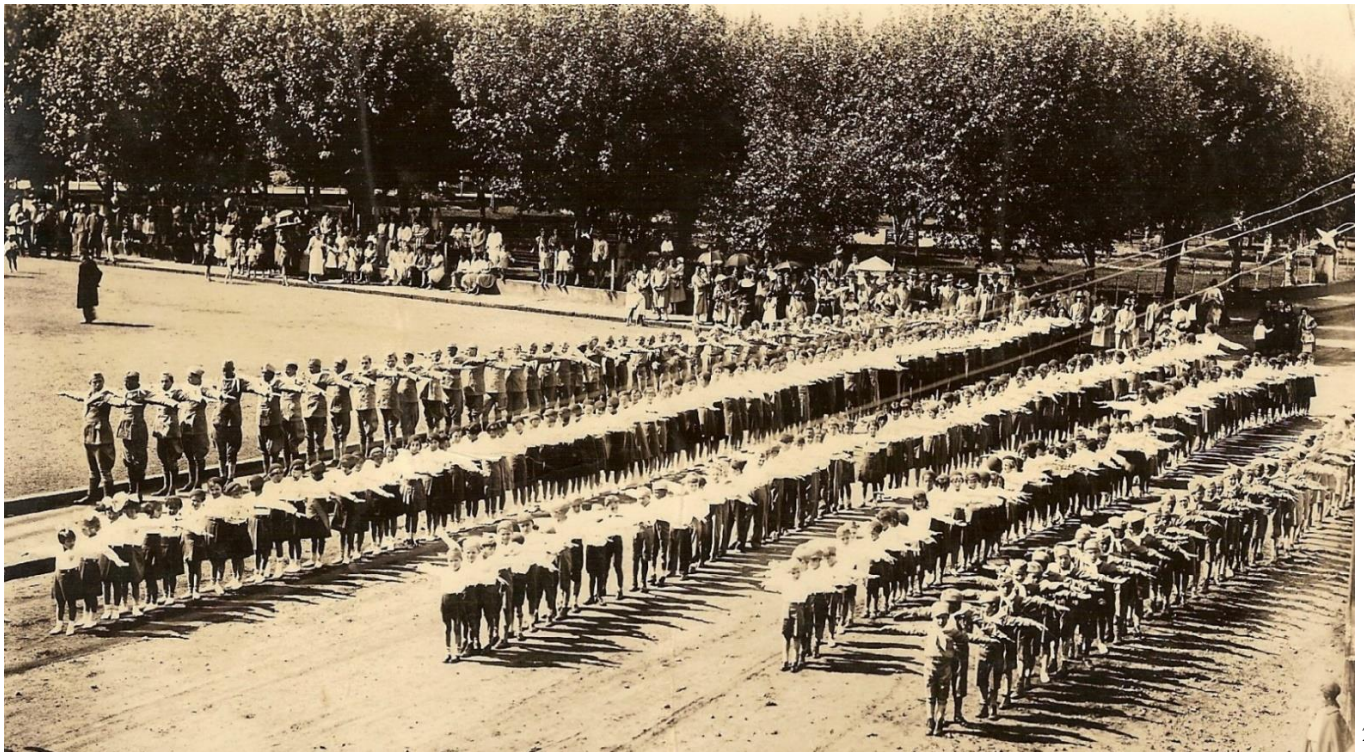


Figure 13

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²⁸⁸ School groups of students demonstrating gymnastic exercises in the city of Vacaria, Rio Grande do Sul, 1930s. Collection “Centro de Memória do Esporte (5065),” Repositório Digital LUME, Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul.

As subordinate officers, the class leaders helped him, properly posted with the platoons
(...) After the turns were over, they demonstrated the exercises. Muscles of the arm,
muscles of the torso, tendons of the knees, the whole theory of the corpore sano was
valiantly practiced there, precisely (...) Movement, enthusiasm everywhere, and the
sunniness, white uniforms, burning the last fires of daylight glory on that spectacular
triumph of health, strength, youth.

O Atheneu - Raul Pompéia, 1888

In 1888, Brazilian author Raul Pompéia wrote the novel *O Atheneu*, which is considered his masterpiece and one of the most prominent examples of Brazilian Realism and Naturalism.²⁸⁹ Pompéia's novel tells the story of an eleven-year-old boy sent by his father to the Atheneu *internátus*, hence the book's title, a well-respected all-male boarding school. The Atheneu had very strict rules imposed by its headmaster and the story of the protagonist's life is full of references to the physical education of young bodies, sexual experiences, and the discipline a boy as he grows from childhood as it progresses towards maturity. One character of Pompéia's novel stated that, "Education does not make souls; it exercises them." The character's argument in favor of the usefulness of boarding schools like the Atheneu supported that those institutions "agitated life like a mineworker's sieve, separating what is more worthy from what is worthless," because "the weak are sacrificed; do not prevail." Based on this idea and practicing "the whole theory of the corpore sano," nineteenth-century educational institutions had the mission to foster "the blacksmith's learning by the forge, enabling the fighter through fighting."²⁹⁰

This chapter discusses the senses and meanings attributed to physical culture, its conceptions, functions, and role within Brazil's educational system. By focusing on diverse kinds of schools as spaces of reference for children and adolescents and the efforts to shape their bodies, the current chapter analyzes the importance of youth and how educators tried to represent their ideal bodies in school curricula as they made the transition from infancy to adulthood. It also shows how the body is a complex web of ideas and representations, a territory fought over within state institutional spaces. The various attitudes about and images of the body are aimed at influencing social values and political decisions around creating the ideal young citizen, both female and male. One key issue

²⁸⁹ Raul Pompéia, *O Atheneu (Chronica de Saudades)* (Rio de Janeiro: São Paulo: Belo Horizonte: Francisco Alves e Cia., 1888). All translations are mine preserving the original style of the documents. Raul d'Avila Pompéia (1863-1895) was born in Rio de Janeiro, starting his academic studies at the Law School of São Paulo and finishing it at the Law School of Recife. Writing for numerous newspapers and having contact with the Positivist philosophy of Auguste Comte, Pompéia's work was praised by people like José Veríssimo and Sylvio Romero. According to José Veríssimo, *O Atheneu* was the best representative and the most original novel within the naturalistic literary school. Sylvio Romero claimed that Pompéia was the most intelligent among his peers in Brazil, without simply copying the style of French literature. See Veríssimo's *História da literatura brasileira* (Rio de Janeiro: José Olympio, 1954); and Romero's *História da literatura brasileira: diversas manifestações na prosa, reações anti-românticas na poesia*. Tomo quinto (Rio de Janeiro: José Olympio, 1960).

²⁹⁰ Raul Pompéia, *O Atheneu*, 16-17.

was bodily discipline, considered crucial at the time to policy makers anxious to improve national health and hygiene. By understanding the “new behaviors” that the state wished to promote, the present chapter focuses on how the body had to be educated, how the idea of physical culture continued to shape health and hygiene conditions through physical exercises, and the pivotal role played by schools within the strategy to develop healthy, strong, disciplined citizens ready to contribute to the nation.

3.1 Projecting “corporeal improvement and physical perfection”

In a letter from the imperial government dated 30 April 1828, the bylaws of an orphanage in the province of Bahia, the Casa Pia e Colégio de São Joaquim dos Meninos Órfãos, emphasized the importance of physical education in shaping the behavior of daily life.²⁹¹ The document stated that the type of physical education Brazilian orphan students had to receive was to be a veritable mixture of rules for life and behavior, “so that they acquire the greatest degree of strength and robustness that their bodily constitutions are capable of, and become fit to serve society with their arms,” building in them the manners of “civility” desired by the state.²⁹² The document not only mentioned how the pupils’ rooms should be “airy and visited by the sun,” but also how cold baths were recommended and were an integral part of student health care. The rules of the orphanage for the students’ physical education thus prioritized bodily hygiene, food, clothing, lodging, and also recommended “all sorts of proper movements to strengthen the body, such as running, jumping, climbing trees, fighting, lifting and carrying weights, ball games, swimming, and elementary military tactics with wooden sticks” to be executed every day.²⁹³ By accustoming young students to life’s “intemperance,” the intention was explicit:

our physical perfection, from which we can still derive very great advantages today, and which is closely linked with the intellectual and moral perfection of the spirit. This project of improvement and physical

²⁹¹ BRASIL Actos do Poder Executivo de 1828, “Carta Imperial, de 30 de abril de 1828, Approva os estatutos da Casa Pia e Collegio de S. Joaquim dos Meninos Orphãos da Cidade da Bahia.” *Collecção das Leis do Imperio do Brazil de 1828, Segunda Parte* (Rio de Janeiro: Typographia Nacional, 1878) 27-74.

²⁹² Ibid., “Titulo III. Da educação dos collegiaes. Capitulo I. Da Educação em Geral.” 52.

²⁹³ Ibid., “Titulo III. Da educação dos collegiaes. Capitulo II. Da Educação Physica.” 54-56.

perfection is not chimerical, because continued exercises will form a new corporal constitution. Therefore, by that simple process it is to be expected that we will approach those beneficial results in favor of the present generation.²⁹⁴

Conflicts and disagreements marked Pedro I's reign (1822-31) and the political projects designed to guide the nation building project. Pedro I abdicated the throne in 1831 when his son was just five years old, initiating a decade of political and economic instability until Pedro II was crowned at the age of fifteen, in 1841. The young emperor proved to be an important figure in settling armed conflicts, keeping the country unified, and imposing a degree of political stability.²⁹⁵ Under Pedro II (1840-89) Brazilians elites sought stability. They saw physical culture as an instrument for the physical and social "regeneration" of the Brazilian empire and its people, not only for shaping healthy, strong elites, but also to forge "robust" individuals from the lower classes.²⁹⁶

The Seminário de São Joaquim, another school dedicated to "orphaned and unprotected children," also emphasized the physical education of its students.²⁹⁷ In 1837, legislation transformed the Seminário into a public secondary school called "Collegio de Pedro Segundo," becoming the first of its kind in the country and one of the most prestigious educational institutions during Brazil's imperial period.²⁹⁸ Such concern about physical

²⁹⁴ Ibid., "Título III. Cap. I." 53.

²⁹⁵ To learn more about the political and economic turmoil during this period, see Marcos Morel's *O período das Regências (1831-1840)* (Rio de Janeiro: Jorge Zahar, 2003); and José Murilo de Carvalho's "A vida política." In José Murilo de Carvalho, coord. *História do Brasil Nação (1808-2010)* (Rio de Janeiro: Objetiva, v.2, 2012) 83-130.

²⁹⁶ In their very interesting chapter, "Corinne in the Andes: European Advice for Women in 1820s Argentina and Chile," Matthew Brown and Gabriel B. Paquette touch upon the issue of physical culture by mentioning "Gimnástica del bello sexo: Ensayos sobre la educación física de las jóvenes," from 1824, and the "Cartas sobre a educação das meninas por uma senhora Americana," translated to Portuguese in 1838. See Brown & Paquette, eds., *Connections after Colonialism: Europe and Latin America in the 1820s* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2013) 183-5.

²⁹⁷ The institution was originally founded in the eighteenth century and closed in 1818 by King João VI. Emperor Pedro I reopened the school in 1821, although its complete reform only took place in 1831.

²⁹⁸ For more about the Colégio Pedro II, see Carlos Fernando Ferreira da Cunha Junior, *Imperial Colégio de Pedro II: o ensino secundário da boa sociedade brasileira* (Rio de Janeiro: Apicuri, 2008).

education and daily exercises for students in orphanages, although not new, represented a clear process of shaping and disciplining bodies for the newly independent Brazil.²⁹⁹

In 1841, the Collegio de Pedro II hired Swedish Captain Wilhelm Ludvig Taube (Guilherme Luiz de Taube) as its teacher of gymnastics.³⁰⁰ Before moving to Brazil and becoming a Brazilian citizen in 1837, Taube had been a teacher of gymnastics in New York.³⁰¹ In 1832, Taube sent a letter asking the Medical Society of Rio de Janeiro to appraise them of a study called, “A Short Treatise on the Physic and Moral Effects of the Gymnastic and Kalistenic Exercises,” which he claimed would be beneficial for Brazil.³⁰² The Medical Society designated one of its members, Italian physician Dr. Luís Vicente De-Simoni, to evaluate this documented example of how networks of relationships intersected with physical culture.³⁰³ De-Simoni understood the importance of Taube’s

²⁹⁹ We will also see along with this chapter how publications by people like Franco-Swiss physicians Clemens Josef Tissot (in 1766) and Simon Andrew (in 1786) had influenced Brazilians’ concerns about the value of physical exercises from a medical point of view. Tissot’s purpose, for example, was to teach how to conserve and restore health through physical exercise, defining gymnastics as one crucial part of medicine. Tissot also influence medical approaches to physical education in the United States. See *A Guide to the History of Physical Education* (Philadelphia & New York: Lea & Febiger, 1923) written by M.D. and Fred Eugene Leonard, professor of Hygiene and Physical Education in Oberlin College, Ohio. This book was part of The Physical Education Series, edited by physician R. Tait McKenzie, Major of the Royal Army Medical Corps and professor of Physical Education and Physical Therapy of the University of Pennsylvania.

³⁰⁰ “Parte Official - Ministerio do Imperio, Expediente do dia 16 de setembro de 1841” *Jornal do Commercio* (Rio de Janeiro: Typ. Imperial de J. Villeneuve e Comp., Anno XVI, n.258, 8 de outubro de 1841) 1. See also Cândido José de Araújo Vianna, “Instrução Publica.” In: Brasil - Ministério do Império, *Relatório do ano de 1841 apresentado à assembleia geral legislativa na 1ª sessão da 5ª legislatura* (Rio de Janeiro: Typographia Nacional, 1843) 11-20. Available at: <http://brazil.crl.edu/bsd/bsd/u1712/>. Access on 28 November 2019.

³⁰¹ In Brazil, Taube served as captain in the Imperial Army after marrying a Brazilian. He lost his military job as a result of a law passed on 24 November 1830, before receiving his Brazilian citizenship. By the terms of this law, foreigners were discharged from the army or forbidden to serve, with the exception of men who had taken part in the campaign of independence or were seriously injured in conflicts or considered disabled. See “Decreto N. 144 – de 20 de Outubro de 1837. Autorisando o Governo a mandar passar carta de naturalisação a Guilherme Luiz Taube.” *Collecção das Leis do Imperio do Brasil de 1837 parte I* (Rio de Janeiro: Typographia Nacional, 1861) 103-4. See also “Decreto de 20 de Dezembro de 1830 – Dissolve os batalhões compostos por estrangeiros” *Collecção das Leis do Imperio do Brasil de 1830, Parte Segunda* (Rio de Janeiro: Typographia Nacional, 1876) 55.

³⁰² “Boletim da Sociedade. (Extracto de Actas) - Sessão de 14 de Julho de 1832.” *Semanario de Saude Publica Pela Sociedade de Medicina do Rio de Janeiro, Sabbado 11 de Agosto de 1932* (Rio de Janeiro: Typographia Imperial de E. Seignot-Plancher, n.113, 1932) 385. Created in 1829, the Sociedade de Medicina do Rio de Janeiro brought together physicians keen to debate and advise the government on issues related to health and hygiene.

³⁰³ Luís Vicente De-Simoni was an Italian physician trained at the Università di Genova and Università de Pavia. Moving to Brazil in 1817, he held leading positions, especially at Rio de Janeiro’s Santa Casa da Misericórdia, becoming co-founder of Rio’s Medical Society. De-Simoni also worked at Mozambique’s Real Hospital Militar and from that country he wrote his “Tratado Medico sobre Clima e Enfermidades de Moçambique.” De-Simoni became a Brazilian citizen in 1855. For further information, see Luís Vicente Simoni, *Dicionário histórico-biográfico das ciências da saúde no Brasil (1832-1930)*, s.d. Available

work and reported favorably on it to the Medical Society.”³⁰⁴ De-Simoni’s report highlights the value of physical education for medical practitioners, arguing that if many people’s “strength, health, glory, and prosperity” derived from it, most importantly would be its “great influence on the character, glory, and prosperity of a nation.”³⁰⁵ For that reason, Brazilian physicians should support “the physical, moral and intellectual education of idiots [mentally impaired],” believing that hygiene, gymnastics and “the love for physical work” would benefit those children with “all the faculties existing in a congenital inferiority,” aiming at “more robust and instructed disciples.”³⁰⁶

Brazil deserves greater attention for its adoption of progressive ideas of physical culture in the nineteenth century and the key role of the medical society in promoting them.³⁰⁷ Physicians supported efforts to promote physical education among young Brazilians even beyond the educational environment of schools. Medical reports constantly observed the need to “establish the most vigilant inspection on the physical education of the youth.”³⁰⁸

at: <http://www.dichistoriasaude.coc.fiocruz.br>. Access on 03 December 2018. See also Edivaldo Góis Junior’s “Ginástica, higiene e eugenia no projeto de nação brasileira: Rio de Janeiro, século XIX e início do século XX.” *Revista Movimento*, v.19, n.1, p.139-159. 2013.

³⁰⁴ Luís Vicente de Simoni, *Relatório sobre huma memoria do Sr. Guilherme Luiz Taube acerca dos efeitos physicos e moraes dos exercicios gymnasticos, lido na Sociedade de Medicina do Rio de Janeiro em 4 de Agosto de 1832* (Rio de Janeiro: Seignot-Plancher. 1832) 3.

³⁰⁵ Luís Vicente de Simoni, *Relatório sobre huma memoria do Sr. Guilherme Luiz Taube acerca dos efeitos physicos e moraes dos exercicios gymnasticos, lido na Sociedade de Medicina do Rio de Janeiro em 4 de Agosto de 1832* (Rio de Janeiro: Seignot-Plancher. 1832), 11.

³⁰⁶ “Relatorio Acerca do Tratamento dos Alienados e seus Principaes Hospitaes em França, Inglaterra, Italia, Alemanha, Belgica e Portugal; Pelo Dr. A.J.P. das Neves, Encarregado Desta Comissão em Maio de 1844 Pela Administração do Hospicio de Pedro 2º. Desta Capital. Artigo 3º.” *Annaes de Medicina Brasiliense: Jornal da Academia Imperial de Medicina* (Rio de Janeiro, Anno 4, Vol.4, n.2, Agosto 1848) 42-7. The Brazilian physician based his conclusions on the studies of French psychiatrist Félix Voisin (1794-1872) and physician, educationist Édouard Séguin (1812-1880).

³⁰⁷ See Lilia Moritz Schwarcz, *As barbas do Imperador* (São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 1998); Lucia Bastos Pereira das Neves. “A vida política.” In: Alberto da Costa e Silva, coord., *História do Brasil nação (1808-2010) v.1* (Rio de Janeiro: Objetiva, 2011) 75-114; Lilia Moritz Schwarcz, “Cultura.” In: *História do Brasil nação, v. 1*, 205-48; Sidney Chalhoub “População e sociedade.” In: José Murilo de Carvalho, coord., *História do Brasil nação, v.2*, 37-82.

³⁰⁸ Francisco de Paula Candido, “Exposição do estado sanitário da Capital do Imperio, apresentado ao Ministerio do Imperio pelo presidente da Junta Central de Hygiene Publica.” In BRASIL, *Relatorio Apresentado Apresentado à Assembléa Geral Legislativa na Quarta Sessão da Oitava Legislatura Pelo Ministro e Secretario d’Estado dos Negocios do Imperio Visconde de Mont’alegre* (Rio de Janeiro: Typographia Nacional, 1852) S1-11 to S3-1. The report was delivered on 15 April 1852. Available at: <http://brazil.crl.edu/bsd/bsd/u1723/>.

Brazilian physicians called school principals' attention to the broader aspects of physical education, that is, the eating habits of students, their clothing, and the adequacy of school spaces and facilities. Parents were criticized for delivering to society children with "their physical education led astray." These kinds of reports, in addition to illustrating medical concerns about the physical education of Brazilian students, are of evidence of physicians concerns about Brazil's fragile infrastructure, system of public health, sanitation, and the persistence of slavery. Cities like Belém, Recife, Rio de Janeiro, and Salvador, although eager to present a European elegance, could not hide the stench of their streets, that they were repeatedly struck by epidemics, and the clearly visible influence of Africa on these major cities.³⁰⁹

There was a close relationship among medicine, public health, and physical education within the educational system. Although recognizing that Brazilian medical schools followed very diverse approaches, "echoing French, Italian, and English" influences, physicians reinforced the common belief of articulating physical, moral and intellectual elements in the education of generations intended to become exemplary, and therefore suitable for the desired and expected path to becoming a modern, civilized nation.³¹⁰ The growing preoccupation with the health of young people set new standards for primary and secondary education, explicitly requiring public schools to teach gymnastics as a complement of students' physical education.³¹¹

In a report dated 2 May 1858, addressed to Minister and Secretary of State for Imperial Affairs Sergio Teixeira de Macedo, the general inspector of primary and secondary instruction Eusebio de Queiroz celebrated

³⁰⁹ See Schwarcz (1998); Emilia Viotti da Costa, *The Brazilian Empire: Myths and Histories* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1985); Sidney Chalhoub, *Cidade febril: cortiços e epidemias na Corte imperial* (São Paulo: Companhia da Letras, 1996); Peard, *Race, Place, and Medicine*; and, Jaime L. Benchimol, *Febre amarela: a doença e a vacina, uma história inacabada* (Rio de Janeiro: Editora Fiocruz, 2001).

³¹⁰ Joaquim Antonio Alves Ribeiro, "Correspondencia – Carta do Collega J.R.M., Provincia de S. Catharina, Desterro 4 de fevereiro de 1863." *A Lanceta, Jornal de Medicina, Physiologia, Cirurgia, Chimica, Pharmacia, Literatura e Noticioso* (Ceará: Imp. João Evangelista, Anno 2, vol.2, n.4, 25 de Abril de 1863) 59.

³¹¹ "Decreto N°.1.331 A. - de 17 de fevereiro de 1854. Approva o Regulamento para a reforma do ensino primario e secundario do Município da Côrte." BRASIL, *Colecção das Leis do Imperio do Brasil* (Rio de Janeiro: Typographia Nacional, Tomo 17, Parte 2ª, Secção 12ª, 1854) 45-68.

the access students had to physical education and the progress achieved.³¹² Queiroz stated, however, that bodily exercises should be mandatory for all students “despite, unfortunately, all the baseless prejudice and concerns of some families.”³¹³ Eusebio de Queiroz strongly considered physical education “a part of education that undoubtedly deserves the collaboration and assistance of all who aspire to see Brazil’s youth achieving the degree of development for which, indeed, it is so well disposed.”³¹⁴ In subsequent reports, the urgency of physical education, “its development, and wish to see it as soon as possible in all primary schools and private schools” became increasingly common, illustrating that the majority of “the young people of Brazil were almost completely deprived” of it.³¹⁵ This connection between physical activity, youth, and the idea of the nation became central to nationalist discourses in the nineteenth century. The importance of physical education made it more than merely a school subject. In the long nineteenth century, physical culture became central to national discourses that promoted efforts to civilize the nation through the promotion of good health and hygiene.³¹⁶ New behaviors had to be adopted and bodies, the “physical,” had to be educated.

³¹² Eusebio de Queiroz Coutinho Mattoso da Câmara, “Relatorio da Inspectoria Geral da Instrucção Primaria e Secundaria do Município da Corte. Apresentado ao Ilmo. e Exmo. Sr. Conselheiro Sergio Teixeira de Macedo, Ministro e Secretario d’Estado dos Negocios do Imperio, em 25 de Abril de 1859,” p.18 in BRASIL, Ministério do Império. *Relatorio do Anno de 1858 Apresentado à Assembléa Geral Legislativa na Terceira Sessão da Decima Legislatura Pelo Ministro e Secretario de Estado dos Negocios do Imperio Sergio Teixeira de Macedo* (Rio de Janeiro: Typographia Universal de Laemmert, 1859) A-E-1 to A-E-15. Available at: <http://brazil.crl.edu/bsd/bsd/u1731/>.

³¹³ Ibid. Eusebio de Queiroz Coutinho Mattoso da Câmara (1812-1868) was a Brazilian magistrate and politician born in Luanda, Angola. During Eusebio de Queiroz’s term as the Brazilian Minister of Justice, from 1848–1852, the parliament passed the law on September 4, 1850 to abolish the international slave trade to the country. This law is known as “Lei Eusebio de Queiroz” (The Eusebio de Queiroz Law). After some orthographic reforms, his name is now written as Eusebio de Queirós. I preserved the original name from the primary sources.

³¹⁴ Ibid.

³¹⁵ Eusebio de Queiroz Coutinho Mattoso da Câmara, “Relatorio da Inspectoria Geral da Instrucção Primaria e Secundaria do Município da Corte. Apresentado ao Ilmo. e Exmo. Sr. João de Almeida Pereira Filho, Ministro e Secretario de Estado dos Negocios do Imperio,” p.15 in BRASIL, Ministerio do Imperio. *Relatorio do Anno de 1859 Apresentado à Assembléa Geral Legislativa na Quarta Sessão da Decima Legislatura Pelo Ministro e Secretario de Estado dos Negocios do Imperio João de Almeida Pereira Filho* (Rio de Janeiro: Typographia Universal de Laemmert, 1860) A-H-1 to A-H-19. Available at: <http://brazil.crl.edu/bsd/bsd/u1732/>.

³¹⁶ See José Gondra, *Educação, poder e sociedade no Império brasileiro* (São Paulo: Cortez, 2008).

In the 1860s, efforts to promote physical education in schools ramped up in legislation and government reports. While gymnastics became part of the curriculum in the primary schools of Pernambuco in 1865, the number of students enrolled in those classes and activities like dance and swimming increased in Rio de Janeiro.³¹⁷ Schools adopted methods based on works such as Louis Leonel's *Traite Theorique et Pratique de Gymnastique* (1867), Eugene Paz's *La Gymnastique Obligatoire* (1868), Alf Junod's *Manuel de Gymnastique Pratique a L'usage des Escoles* (1869), and Archibald Maclaren's *A System of Physical Education* (1869). For these authors the exercises were "the chief agent of bodily culture, agent of growth and development to be regarded in an educational light, capable of being permanently systematized and administered as a means of progressively physical culture."³¹⁸ It does not mean the spread of those ideas was similarly promising in all of Brazil. As Minister Paulino José Soares de Souza warned in 1869, "the gymnastics normally taught, even at Europe's most modest facilities, and which would contribute to the physical development of our young people who resent its absence, is only known in one or another province, as if its utility were problematic."³¹⁹

³¹⁷ See Ruy Bello, *Subsídios para a história da educação em Pernambuco* (Recife: Governo do Estado de Pernambuco, Coleção Pernambucana, volume XVIII, 1978). In 1865, Rio de Janeiro's Colégio de Pedro Segundo registered 143 students enrolled to gymnastics classes, more than the number of students registered for most of the other subjects. This is explained by the fact that the class was open to students of all ages. In 1866, there were 566 secondary-school pupils enrolled in gymnastics and 368 enrolled in dance classes (boys and girls). In that same year, private schools enrolled 311 students for swimming lessons. Numbers continued to increase as the decade proceeded. BRASIL, "Município da Corte – Anno de 1865. N.4-Mappa das matriculas do Imperial Collegio de Pedro II, unico estabelecimento publico de instrucção secundaria, por matérias." *Relatório Apresentado À Assembléa Geral Legislativa na Quarta Sessão da Decima Segunda Legislatura pelo Ministro e Secretario de Estado dos Negocios do Imperio Marques de Olinda* (Rio de Janeiro: Typographia Nacional, 1866) Anexo D, A-D-N4. Available online at <http://brazil.crl.edu/bsd/bsd/u1740/000085.html>. See also, BRASIL, "Município da Corte – Anno de 1866. N.7-Mappa das matriculas de instrucção secundaria, etc., nos estabelecimentos publicos e particulares; por matérias." *Relatório Apresentado À Assembléa Geral Legislativa na Primeira Sessão da Decima Terceira Legislatura pelo Ministro e Secretario de Estado dos Negocios do Imperio José Joaquim Fernandes Torres* (Rio de Janeiro: Typographia Nacional, 1867) Anexo C, A-C-N7. Available online at <http://brazil.crl.edu/bsd/bsd/u1741/000129.html>.

³¹⁸ Archibald Maclaren, *A System of Physical Education: Theoretical and Practical* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1869) 4-5. Emphasis in the original. The book is available online at <https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=hvd.32044028811776&view=1up&seq=30>

³¹⁹ Paulino José Soares de Souza, "Instrucção Publica nas Provincias." *Relatório Apresentado À Assembléa Geral na Segunda Sessão da Decima Quarta Legislatura pelo Ministro e Secretario de Estado dos Negocios do Imperio Paulino José Soares de Souza* p.51 (Rio de Janeiro: Typographia Nacional, 1870) 39-94. Available online at: <http://brazil.crl.edu/bsd/bsd/u1696/>. It is worth stressing that from 1871 onwards there are also records of students enrolled in fencing classes. See BRASIL, "N.23-Mappa das matriculas de instrucção secundaria, etc., nos estabelecimentos publicos e particulares; por matérias." *Relatório Apresentado À Assembléa Geral Legislativa na Quarta Sessão da Decima Quarta Legislatura pelo Ministro e Secretario D'Estado dos Negocios do Imperio Dr. João Alfredo Corrêa de Oliveira* (Rio de Janeiro: Typographia Nacional, 1872) A-B3-N23. Available at: <http://brazil.crl.edu/bsd/bsd/u1698/000263.html>.

Those in favor of physical education repeatedly referred to its development in Europe and the United States, pointing to the insalubrity and “lack of appropriate and precise conditions of hygiene” in Brazilian schools. According to one proponent, the absence of physical education in schools was “one of the greatest difficulties we have to fight against” to achieve not only the desired physical development of students but also to promote rational discipline and social control.³²⁰ The growing concern about the physical education of students had an impact on how bodily care was perceived in Brazil, permeating the discourses of modernity, the new organization of society, and the pursuit of health and civility.³²¹ Although some initiatives, such as collective sessions of exercises towards the end of the school year, emerged in order to provide public recognition for the best performing students, nevertheless, many political leaders did not have so optimistic a view about the progress of physical education in Brazil’s schools.³²²

The overview sketched out in an 1873 report illustrates how physical education was ignored in many Brazilian schools, and the absence of exercises was not helpful to the physical development of students. A commission designated to inspect the province of Rio de Janeiro’s public and private schools of primary and secondary education, highlighted the “defective sanitation system of latrines, too close to the classrooms, noxious to health” of many schoolhouses, some of which also exposing the children to lack of mobility and too much fetid

³²⁰ Paulino José Soares de Souza (1870) 42. Richard Holt argues that an increased interest in physical education and sport, which was already common practice in Europe, especially in Britain, became an instrument of social discipline in schools and a source of military recruits. See Richard Holt, *Sport and the British: A Modern History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989). See also Holt & Vigarello, “O corpo trabalhado - Ginastas e esportistas no século XIX.” In Alain Corbin, Jean-Jacques Courtine & Georges Vigarello, org., *História do corpo*. v.2 (Rio de Janeiro: Vozes, 2008) 393-478; and Mark Freeman, ed., *Sport, Health and the Body in the History of Education* (London: Routledge, 2015). In the case of France, Weber identifies a degree of conflict among the supporters of different types of physical education. See Eugen Weber, *Fin de siècle: la France à la fin du XIX siècle* (Paris: Fayard, 1986).

³²¹ See Carmen Lucia Soares, *Educação física: raízes europeias e Brasil* (Campinas: Autores Associados, 1994). In 1870, the same year the Paraguay War officially ended, gymnastics became mandatory at the Collegio de Pedro Segundo and the syllabus required clear methods for its teaching. The 1870 regulations even determined that students should be split into three different groups according to their physical development. Only those students who had a proven health problem would be excused from those classes. See BRASIL, *Decreto n.4.468, de 1 de fevereiro de 1870 - Altera os regulamentos relativos ao Imperial Collegio de Pedro II*. Available online at <http://www2.camara.gov.br/legin/fed/decret/1824-1899/decreto-4468-1-fevereiro-1870-552830-publicacaooriginal-70377-pe.html>.

³²² BRASIL, *Decreto n.6.130, de 1º de Março de 1876 - Altera os Regulamentos do Imperial Collegio de Pedro II*. Available online at <http://www2.camara.gov.br/legin/fed/decret/1824-1899/decreto-6130-1-marco-1876-549094-publicacaooriginal-64441-pe.html>.

air.³²³ The commission also criticized the “sad spectacle” of physical punishment witnessed in many schools.³²⁴ Those in favor of physical education continued to meld health and hygiene conditions with discipline and physical exercises, something they considered as a crucial strategy for the development of healthy habits. In fact, even though physical education had officially become mandatory in 1854, another law, from 1877, curiously restated that obligation, proving that the previous law had not been widely enforced.³²⁵ The general understanding, however, was that “families and schools” had a quintessential role in respect to “the true education”—notably in the suburbs and “the rural populations”—seeking the “harmonious development of the child’s aptness and organism.”³²⁶

The increasing appreciation for physical culture and for the specific contributions it could potentially bring to the education of the body *per se* was associated with the rise and increased legitimization of medical-scientific knowledge in Brazil. Those who promoted the importance of hygiene became the self-proclaimed authorities that simultaneously rejected other practices and forms of knowledge they considered unscientific.³²⁷ In 1878, for example, the *Gazeta Medica da Bahia* referred to the education of young Brazilians as “the matter deserving the closest attention of public powers because there is no other that intimately affect the moral and social welfare of

³²³ Filipe da Motta D’Azevedo Corrêa, José Manuel Garcia, João Rodrigues da Fonseca Jordão. “As escolas públicas da Corte do Império no ano de 1873.” p.8 and p.11. *Relatório Apresentado À Assembléa Geral Legislativa na Terceira Sessão da Decima Quinta Legislatura pelo Ministro e Secretario D’Estado dos Negocios do Imperio Dr. João Alfredo Corrêa de Oliveira, Anexo 3* (Rio de Janeiro: Typographia Nacional, 1874) A-B7-3 to A-B7-69. Available at: <http://brazil.crl.edu/bsd/bsd/u1701/>.

³²⁴ Ibid., “VI - Meios Disciplinares,” 55-57.

³²⁵ BRASIL, *Decreto n.6.479, de 18 de Janeiro de 1877 - Manda executar e Regulamento para as Escolas publicas de Instrução primaria do município da Côte*. Available online at <http://www2.camara.gov.br/legin/fed/decret/1824-1899/decreto-6479-18-janeiro-1877-548686-publicacaooriginal-63853-pe.html>

³²⁶ Ibid. “II - Da Educação: Educação Physica,” 37-38.

³²⁷ Chalhoub. As shown in this chapter, the educational system received close attention from the state, manifested in the ongoing reforms explicitly influenced by the scientific knowledge of their respective times. See also, Maria Elizabete Xavier et al., *História da educação: a escola no Brasil* (São Paulo: FTD, 1994); and José Gonçalves Gondra, “Medicina, Higiene e Educação Escolar” In Eliane Marta Teixeira Lopes, Luciano Mendes de Faria Filho & Cynthia Greive Veiga, orgs., *500 anos de educação no Brasil* (Belo Horizonte: Autêntica, 2000) 519-550. For information about how this matter influenced physical education in different places in Brazil, see Amarílio Ferreira Neto, ed., *Pesquisa histórica na educação física* (Vitória: UFES/Aracruz, 5 volumes, 1996); and Carmen Lúcia Soares, *Imagens da educação no corpo: estudo a partir da ginástica francesa no século XIX* (Campinas: Autores Associados, 1998).

the country.”³²⁸ Although recognizing the issue of education as “serious, difficult and complex,” physicians understood “the simultaneous development of the physical, moral, and intellectual skills” as the main goal of pedagogy, so that citizens could be able to use “all their active strengths, of body and spirit, for the betterment of society. Brazilian physicians saw themselves responsible for improving the educational system,

facing especially one of its faces, which has been completely neglected, - physical education, which must be a magna question, urgent and vital in this country where the race visibly languishes.³²⁹

Medical knowledge underscored “the serious problem of physical education” in Brazil by comparing it with “the most cultured countries”—such as the United States, England, France Germany, Sweden, Norway, Denmark—and their support for hygiene.³³⁰ By citing Froebel, Hippeau, Laprade, Virchow, Lallemand, and Schreber, Brazilian physicians condemned “the terrible educational system” of the country and what they called the “tyranny of pedagogues” for mostly ignoring and neglecting the importance of “fresh air, hygiene, and exercise for the physical and physiological development” of students “in intertropical climates.”³³¹ Medical practitioners praised hygiene and physical exercise (even military gymnastics) to be “favorable for shaping intelligent, disciplined, and robust students,” not only for boys but also for girls to “preserve their health, vigor, and beauty,

³²⁸ Pacífico Pereira, “Hygiene das Escólas.” *Gazeta Medica da Bahia* (Salvador: Officina Litho-typographica de J.G. Tourinho, Anno X, n.5, Maio 1878) 193-201. Antonio Pacífico Pereira (1846-1922) was born in Salvador, Bahia. Along with Raymundo Nina Rodrigues and other important physicians, Pacífico Pereira participated in the Escola Tropicalista Baiana which consisted of a group of doctors, all established in Bahia, who from the 1860s dedicated themselves to the study and research of the etiology of tropical diseases that affected the poor populations of Brazil.

³²⁹ Ibid.

³³⁰ Pacífico Pereira, “Hygiene das Escólas.” *Gazeta Medica da Bahia* (Salvador: Officina Litho-typographica de J.G. Tourinho, Anno X, n.5, Maio 1878) 194-195.

³³¹ Ibid., 198-201. Also “Hygiene das Escólas.” *Gazeta Medica da Bahia* (Salvador: Officina Litho-typographica de J.G. Tourinho, Anno X, n.10, Outubro 1878) 433-449. Pacífico Pereira mentioned and cited works by French Claude François Lallemand (1790-1854), Germans Friedrich Fröbel (1782-1852) and Rudolf Virchow (1821-1902) as well as Célestin Hippeau’s 1873 “L’Instruction Publique En Allemagne,” Victor de Laprade’s 1873 “L’éducation libérale: L’hygiène, la morale, les études,” and Daniel Gottlob Moritz Schreber’s 1855 “Ärztliche Zimmerymnastik.”

and create at the same time the salutary habit of exercise, preparing the young lady for the future duties of maternity, and spare us from all the evils of a sedentary life.”³³²

It is important to remember that medical knowledge developed in response to society’s questions, not within a scientific universe totally disconnected from reality.³³³ Ultimately, the value given to “hygiene as preparatory and a complement of physical education” had to do with the close link between the physical, moral and intellectual domains. It addressed not only childhood’s education but also “to all the people, all classes, and all ages” within the process of “transmitting those notions from parents to children, incarnated in the habits of live, becoming the wholesome economy of family, the progress, the wealth and happiness of the forthcoming society.”³³⁴ Physical culture formed part of a sort of utopia for a holistic instruction. Intellectuals like Ruy Barbosa considered schools a place for shaping a new Brazilian society, one that would end disorder and a lack of strong bodies, civility and rationality.

3.2 Ensuring strong generations for the homeland

In the late nineteenth century, Brazil followed European and North American bourgeois rationalists and scientists who produced an assertive, aggressive propaganda extolling the importance of a robust and healthy youth.³³⁵ In general, Brazilian policymakers and scientists accepted that the discipline of the mind would be the result of a disciplined body, absorbing scientific theories from different sources and developing their own visions,

³³² Pacifico Pereira, “Hygiene das Escólas.” *Gazeta Medica da Bahia* (Salvador: Officina Litho-typographica de J.G. Tourinho, Anno X, n.10, Outubro 1878) 436. Pereira also cited Dr. A. Riant’s 1874 “Hygiène Scolaire: Influence de L’École sur la Santé des Enfants,” and J-B. Fonsagrives’ 1869 “L’éducation physique des jeunes filles.”

³³³ See Olivier Faure, “Le regard des médecins” In Alain Corbin, Jean-Jacques Courtine, Georges Vigarello, dir., *Histoire du corps - 2, de la Révolution à la Grande Guerre* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 2005) 15-50.

³³⁴ *Ibid.*, 448.

³³⁵ Classic studies on race relations in Brazil are Carl N. Degler, *Neither Black Nor White: Slavery and Race Relations in Brazil and the United States* (New York: Macmillan, 1971) and Thomas E. Skidmore, *Black into White: Race and Nationality in Brazilian Thought* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1992). See also Lilia Moritz Schwarcz, *The Spectacle of the Races: Scientists, Institutions, and the Race Question in Brazil, 1870-1930* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1999).

understanding the body as an element in the production and conduct of a rational and vigorous nation.³³⁶ Furthermore, it was necessary to offer not only to boys but also to girls the knowledge and bodily experiences necessary for them to transmit to their offspring the appropriate incentives for their development, focusing on discipline and morality. This morality, they believed, should be transmitted from the very beginning. Schools became key allies in achieving these goals.

Writing on the reform of Brazilian educational system in the 1880s, polymath Ruy Barbosa reinforced what seemed to be common sense about the future of the Brazilian people. Barbosa believed it was impossible to “build a hardworking and productive nation” without the hygienic education of the body during the entire schooling process.³³⁷ According to Barbosa,

It will be more particularly concerned with calisthenics, in that combination of ‘exercises of movement’, designed by Adolfo Spiess, and destined to produce a symmetrical muscular development, without prejudice to the sweetness of manners, the grace and elegance, the beautiful harmony of female forms. One point in which we see the most considerable importance is the combination of rhythm and singing with gymnastics. The works of the most eminent European authorities leave no doubt about the perfect rationality and the extraordinary utility of the association of these two elements in school pedagogy.³³⁸

³³⁶ Marius Turda and Aaron Gillette, *Latin Eugenics in Comparative Perspective* (New York: Bloomsbury, 2014); Dirk A. Moses and Dan Stone, “Eugenics and Genocide,” in Alison Bashford and Philippa Levine, eds., *The Oxford Handbook of The History of Eugenics* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010); Mark Adams, *The Wellborn Science: Eugenics in Germany, France, Brazil, and Russia* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990). Mark Adams affirms it is “a myth to think that Eugenics was a single, coherent, principally Anglo-American movement with a specifiable set of common goals and beliefs,” 217. In Moses and Stone’s view, “Nowhere were the distinctions between eugenic projects more evident than in Latin America between the world wars. (...) In general, then, neo-Lamarckianism was suited to contending with Latin America’s Catholic, racially diverse, poor, and rural population,” 195. Turda and Gillette analyzed the eugenics movement in countries such as Brazil, Mexico, Argentina, Cuba, Portugal, Spain, France, Italy, and others, arguing that in the case of Latin countries, they were all part of a heterogeneous, but still unitary Latin eugenicist community following the Neo-Lamarckian side in opposition to Nordic and Anglo-Saxon Mendelian eugenics. Turda and Gillette, 237.

³³⁷ Ministerio da Educação e Saude, *Obras Completas de Ruy Barbosa: reforma do ensino secundário e superior* (Rio de Janeiro, Vol. IX 1882, Tomo I, 1942), 173-74. Available at www.casaruibarbosa.gov.br/rbonline/obrasCompletas.htm.

³³⁸ *Ibid.*, 90-1. A fair appraisal of Ruy Barbosa’s positions on the subject is found in Inezil Penna Marinho’s *Ruy Barbosa, paladino da educação física* (Brasília: Horizonte, 1980). See also Maria Cristina Gomes Machado, *Ruy Barbosa: pensamento e ação* (Campinas: Autores Associados: Casa de Ruy Barbosa, 2002).

Calisthenics arose in the early nineteenth century from the work of Friedrich Ludwig Jahn and Adolf Spiess in popularizing gymnastics. Originally, calisthenics consisted of a system of exercise especially stressed by Per Henrik Ling of Sweden as important in the development of education for women. Calisthenics quickly became an activity for both sexes, and its physical exercises were divided in specific groups: arm and leg exercises; posterior-lateral, posterior-inferior and lateral thoracic exercises; stability and balance exercises; abdominal exercises; shoulder exercises; and plyometric jumps.³³⁹ Brazilian leaders considered gymnastics and calisthenics as important tools in the development of the discourse on the health and the physical vigor of society, and physicians saw “the Spiess method currently serves more for our schools, taking into account our habits, education, and special conditions of our teachers.”³⁴⁰

Intellectuals, physicians, and politicians supported combining the principles of hygiene and morality with physical education and urbanity. Hence, the culture of the body would become a modern reality when physical culture began to articulate its practices around a cohesive discourse. In this way, education played a crucial role. Schools would become the spaces where Brazilian youth ideally would receive not only an intellectual education, but also the physical education necessary to forge healthier and stronger generations. Through building both minds and bodies, science, physical culture, and schools converged.

For boys, specifically, the preoccupation with the body mirrored the militarization of gymnastics. Policymakers and intellectuals like Ruy Barbosa agreed with physicians that Brazilians had neglected bodily care more than other “civilized nations,” putting the nation itself to risk. The intention was that physical hygiene and exercises would give the civic body the aspect of neatness, discipline, order, and obedience:

The precision, the decision and the energy of the military movements constitute, together with an excellent way of cultivating the corporeal strengths, one of the most effective factors in the

³³⁹ According to its first manuals, calisthenics also had as one of its main characteristics the music associated with the rhythm of the movements. It could be done with dumbbells, sticks, or free hand clapping. Robertson shows that in Japan eugenicists also promoted calisthenics in the army, schools, and local communities in the name of empire and territorial expansion. See Jennifer Robertson, “Blood Talks: Eugenic Modernity and the Creation of New Japanese,” *History and Anthropology* 13, no. 3 (2002), 191-216.

³⁴⁰ Filipe da Motta D’Azevedo Corrêa, José Manuel Garcia, João Rodrigues da Fonseca Jordão (1874) Op.cit., 38.

education of the virile character. All nations that are at the forefront of modern civilization recognize it, stating that the school is the citizen's first initiator to the hardships of art that must prepare him for the defense of his country.³⁴¹

The education of the body in the schooling environment was closely tied to civic education. The promotion of a morally educated body would appear in public festivities organized by schools or in civic parades, for example. Hence, disciplined bodies had to demonstrate righteousness, respect, and obedience to the norms and rules of the time. Physical education marched side by side with the pursuit of order. The 1881 regulations reinforced the need for this order.³⁴² By law, Brazilian representatives highlighted the importance of physical education in primary and secondary schools in reports during various executive and legislative terms.³⁴³ The challenge of building a national physical culture, though, was how to deal with the rough-hewn reality of the Brazilian education system. Many hurdles had to be overcome. The resistance of many families, which considered the care of children's bodies inappropriate—even undignified—for a schooling environment, often came up in the reports. Moreover, schools needed resources to supply the appropriate meals, better sanitary conditions, suitable physical spaces, and to remedy the lack of preparation of teachers on how to train students.

In 1884, according to an evaluation of the general inspector for education, the scenario was no better than it had been a decade earlier. For Antonio Herculano Bandeira Filho, even though a guide based on the Prussian principles of pedagogy had been translated and distributed, following the ministerial order of Joaquim Teixeira de Macedo, “the teaching of gymnastics, drawing and music, despite having been made obligatory for teachers

³⁴¹ *Obras Completas de Rui Barbosa*, Op. cit., 91.

³⁴² Gymnastic teachers, for example, had to “send the school Principal a list of students who have distinguished themselves in performance and good conduct every year.” Barão Homem de Mello, “Decreto n.8.051, de 24 de março de 1881. Altera os regulamentos do Imperial Collegio de Pedro II.” *Colecção das Leis do Imperio do Brazil* (Rio de Janeiro: Typographia Nacional, Vol. 1, pt. II, Tomo XLIV, 1882), 225-38.

³⁴³ Carlos Leoncio de Carvalho, “Decreto n.7.247, de 19 de abril de 1879. Reforma o ensino primario e secundario no municipio da Côrte e o superior em todo o Imperio.” *Colecção das Leis do Imperio do Brazil* (Rio de Janeiro: Typographia Nacional, Vol. 1, pt. II, 1879), 196-215.

by art. 23 of Decree no.6.479 of January 18, 1877, is to this day not practiced except sporadically.”³⁴⁴ Bandeira Filho’s report pointed out that the legal deadline for the widespread introduction of physical exercises as a mandatory subject had already expired.

In that same year, the Central Board for Public Hygiene (Junta Central de Higiene Pública), under the chairmanship of Domingos José Freire, again mentioned the medical importance of physical education at schools. While issuing his report on epidemics in the Brazilian provinces, he suggested that the “means for preventing those scourges are multiple” if “both private and public hygiene are applied to physiology”. Domingos José Freire also criticized the fact that “physical education is despised in most of our schools; our habits condemned exercises and families’ reclusion is an established principle.”³⁴⁵ For physician Domingos José Freire, “the well-known aphorism of *Mens sana in corpore sano* has never been more needed,” because “Health is the strength, and nations are nourished by the vigor of their children, as our tissues are nourished by the arterial blood that runs through them.”³⁴⁶

The nature of physical education and its importance became more marked, as it was also associated with infant mortality. As we have seen in chapter two, Freire also wrote about the shortfalls in the physical education of mothers and children, bringing the subject closer to the areas of hygiene and puericulture. Domingos José Freire rhetorically asked if “the flaws in physical education,” syphilitic infections, and slavery were responsible for “such a dismal outcome,” contributing “to a great extent to the extinction of life at birth?”³⁴⁷ For the physician,

³⁴⁴ Dr. Antonio Herculano de Souza Bandeira Filho, “Relatorio do Inspector Geral da Instrução Primaria e Secundaria do Município da Corte.” *Relatório Apresentado à Assembléa Geral Legislativa na Quarta Sessão da Decima Oitava Legislatura Pelo Ministro e Secretario de Estado dos Negocios do Imperio Francisco Antunes Maciel* (Rio de Janeiro: Typographia Nacional, 1884), A-C7-1 to A-C7-65. Available online at <http://brazil.crl.edu/bsd/bsd/u1750/000310.html>.

³⁴⁵ Domingos José Freire, “Relatorio Apresentado ao Governo Imperial pelo Dr. Domingos José Freire, Presidente da Junta Central de Higiene Publica. p.24” *Relatório Apresentado à Assembléa Geral legislativa na Quarta Sessão da Decima Oitava Legislatura Pelo Ministro e Secretario de Estado dos Negocios do Imperio Francisco Antunes Maciel* (Rio de Janeiro: Typographia Nacional, 1884), A-F2-1 to A-F2-39. Available online at: <http://brazil.crl.edu/bsd/bsd/u1750/>.

³⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 31.

³⁴⁷ Dr. Domingos José Freire, “Relatório do Presidente da Junta Central de Higiene Publica.” *Relatório Apresentado à Assembléa Geral Legislativa na Primeira Sessão da Decima Nona Legislatura Pelo Ministro e Secretario de Estado dos Negocios do Imperio João*

“all these causes may coexist, but it is to be believed that one of them has a more powerful influence than the others.”³⁴⁸ Freire argued that, “the physical education of mothers and children is undoubtedly not the most appropriate for our climate; and this proposition extends from the newborn to the child who walks into adolescence.”³⁴⁹ Freire saw “schooling hygiene” as decisive. Citing authorities like Herbert Spencer, he understood that not attending to the needs of the physical would be providing an incomplete education. Schools had the mission to bring more balance, a “harmonious consensus” between the corporeal development of “Herculean athletes” and intellectual evolution:

There is therefore a need to find a compromise: to stimulate the intellectual faculties without failing to provide reasonable exercise for the bodily organs. The principle that should rule the education of children is this harmonious consensus between physical and intellectual development.³⁵⁰

Freire also recalled that other countries such as Germany and France had “successfully adopted” the strategy of “military gymnastics and education at primary schools.” For Dr. Freire, Brazil should follow this “schooling hygiene” example and distribute “proper handbooks” to teachers, equip schools with “collections of apparatus for gymnasia” as well as provide “a certain number of weapons for the practice of shooting and fencing.”³⁵¹ In fact, sports such as swimming, equitation, fencing, and shooting legally became part of the curriculum for military education in Brazil a few years later.³⁵² For physicians like Freire, the hygienic function of institutionalized physical activities would extend beyond the schooling environment and overlap in multiple ways with other social

Florentino Meira de Vasconcelos (Rio de Janeiro: Imprensa Nacional, 1885) A-F-1 to A-F-20. Available online at <http://brazil.crl.edu/bsd/bsd/u1370/>.

³⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 10.

³⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁵⁰ Domingos José Freire (1885) 11.

³⁵¹ *Ibid.*

³⁵² “Decreto n.10.202, de 9 Março de 1889. Approva o Regulamento do Imperial Collegio Militar.” *Colecção das Leis do Imperio do Brazil* (Rio de Janeiro: Typographia Nacional, Vol.1, pt. II, 1889) 247-58. See, especially, chapters V and VIII.

dimensions, such as national defense. As the other chapters of this dissertation explain, civil and military teachers spread physical culture outside of the schooling environment, to private clubs and establishments such as circuses and theaters. Although not always done well, these efforts demonstrated that school and extra-curricular activities could interact to the advantage of both.

Physical education became a standard subject at educational conferences and congresses, events that gathered not only principals and instructors of public education, but also intellectual leaders and faculty from the medical and law schools of Bahia, Minas Gerais, Pernambuco, Rio de Janeiro, and São Paulo. Their aim was to “consult the enlightened minds and experiences of qualified people, submitting the main subjects concerning public education to their collective study.”³⁵³ The ninth primary education conference, for example, held in 1886, highlighted discussions on subjects relating to physical education, including teacher training and development. The second part of the event addressed the teaching of gymnastics, discussing its stage of development in Brazil at the time, how it should be taught, how those methods could be evaluated, and what kind of curricula should be adopted.³⁵⁴

On the eve of the proclamation of the republic in 1889, physical education was on the authorities’ agenda as one of the many concerns relating to bodily care. Its introduction to school life had not progressed as much as expected, but it was certainly a reality by the time the monarchy entered its final years. The initiatives put forward during the empire show that leading figures deemed corporal education as crucial for the country and the nation. The authorities could see that the great gap between their modern ideas and the country’s reality, especially the glaring lack of hygiene and sanitary infrastructure.

³⁵³ Pedro Leão Velloso “Congresso de Instrução,” *Relatório Apresentado à Assembléa Geral Legislativa na Terceira Sessão da Décima Oitava Legislatura* (Rio de Janeiro: Typographia Nacional, 1883) 83-85. Available online at <http://brazil.crl.edu/bsd/bsd/u1749/>. To learn more about those pedagogical events, see Angélica Borges & José G. Gondra, “Política e arte de superar-se: um estudo acerca das conferências pedagógicas na Corte Imperial.” *Revista de Educação Pública* (Cuiabá: EdUFMT, v.14, n.25, 2005) 203-220.

³⁵⁴ According to Herold Júnior, the issue had been in the spotlight already during the Education Congress of Rio de Janeiro, in 1884. See Carlos Herold Júnior, “A educação física nas atas do Congresso de Instrução do Rio de Janeiro (1884).” *Revista HISTEDBR Online* (Campinas: Unicamp, n.26, 2007) 114-129.

In the last decades of the nineteenth century, physicians and polymaths emphasized bodily hygiene and physical exercises and promoted them through the many educational reforms, from the capital in Rio de Janeiro to the extreme north in places like Maranhão. In the name of the fatherland, legislators considered physical culture an important part of what they called “scientific education.”³⁵⁵ Political and medical authorities of the period considered Brazilian boys and girls fragile, poorly disciplined, and dedicated to idleness. Elites intended to change this scenario by promoting new conduct for Brazilian youth and found in physical education the ideal way to carry out their national project. Physical education drew on physiology and gymnastics and pedagogical methods from theoreticians like Adolph Spiess, becoming the “partner of health and strength” to both young boys and girls.³⁵⁶ While citing Paul Rousselot’s *Pédagogie à usage de l’enseignement primaire*, Ruy Barbosa stated:

Thus, the whole civilized world, we may say, today imposes gymnastics as a vital necessity in the organization of the school, applied to both sexes. ‘We will create only ugly, vicious, exhausted generations, until the same cares are devoted to the woman’s body, which, after all, today everyone agrees to recognize as useful and even indispensable to man’.³⁵⁷

3.3. “Necessary as the air and space to the birds of the sky”: the physical education of schoolgirls

As chapter two has shown, medical discourse contributed to the construction of a long-range view about women and motherhood. Moreover, by trying to insert young schoolgirls into the narrative of their role as future healthy mothers, the press was also helped affirm the social division of female and male functions as a natural, biologically determined phenomenon. In 1879, Dr. Carlos Costa, a specialist in children’s medicine, launched the

³⁵⁵ Decree n. 330, 12 April 1890, regulating and organizing education at military schools in Brazil. Available at: Portal Câmara dos Deputados – Legislação Informatizada, <http://www2.camara.leg.br/legin/fed/decret/1824-1899/decreto-330-12-abril-1890-524468-publicacaooriginal-1-pe.html>

³⁵⁶ “Ciencias, Letras e Artes – Exercisios Physicos.” *Publicador Maranhense: Jornal do Commercio, Administração, Lavoura e Industria* (São Luis: Anno LXI, n.222, 1 de Outubro de 1882) 1.

³⁵⁷ Ministerio da Educação e Saude, *Obras Completas de Rui Barbosa: reforma do ensino secundário e superior* – Vol. IX 1882, Tomo I (Rio de Janeiro: 1942), 90. Barbosa quoted Paul Rousselot’s *Pédagogie à usage de l’enseignement primaire* (Paris, 1882), 99. The original in Portuguese: “Assim, pois, todo mundo civilizado, podemos-lo dizer, impõe hoje como necessidade vital, na organização da escola, a ginástica, aplicada aos dois sexos. ‘Não criaremos senão gerações feias, viciosas, extenuadas, enquanto se não consagrarem ao corpo da mulher, os mesmos cuidados, que, afinal, hoje todos concordam em reconhecer como uteis e, até, indispensáveis ao homem’.”

journal *A Mãe de Família* dedicated to “childhood education and family hygiene,” addressed to “the dignified ladies who are or will be mothers of families and must understand the sublime duty entrusted to them.”³⁵⁸ According to Dr. Costa these upper-class women, “more favored by luck,” also had the mission to transmit scientific knowledge to “those women who, being mothers like you, do not have the happiness, at least, of knowing how to read.”³⁵⁹

Dr. Costa constantly wrote about the hygiene and nutrition of schoolchildren, also incentivizing physical exercises, considered “very necessary for their education” even during school breaks.³⁶⁰ Physician Antonio Henriques Leal, also writing to *A Mãe de Família*, boosted the argument of those in favor of physical education for schoolgirls. Dr. Leal insisted on the question of the care of children’s bodies, calling for “mandatory gymnastics” during study breaks. From Dr. Leal’s medical perspective, “the utility and hygienic necessity” of those exercises were unquestionable.³⁶¹ Leal emphasized a specific “elementary national gymnastics,” based on the Spiess method of “exercises physiologically oriented for all muscular groups of the body.” The Spiess method became a model in different parts of Brazil, repeatedly addressed to schoolgirls, considered the “future mothers and delicate entities” of the nation in need of a “developed and strong body.”³⁶² Medical discourse lauded the so-called “physiological gymnastics” and defended its mandatory adoption by the Brazilian educational system along

³⁵⁸ “Apresentação.” *A Mãe de Família: Jornal Científico-Litterario* (Rio de Janeiro: Typ. H. Lombaerts, 1º Anno, nº.1, jan. 1879), 1.

³⁵⁹ Carlos Costa, “Palestra do Medico.” *A Mãe de Família: Jornal Científico-Litterario* (Rio de Janeiro: Typ. H. Lombaerts, 1º Anno, nº.2, 31 Jan. 1879). According to the 1872 census, only 19.8% of men and 11.5% of women could read and write across Brazil. In the most important cities, the percentage of literate people was higher. In the capital Rio de Janeiro, for example, 51.2% of men and 29.3% of women were literate. These people belonged, in general, to the higher strata of the population. See June Edith Hahner, *Emancipação do sexo feminino: a luta pelos direitos da mulher no Brasil 1850 – 1940* (Florianópolis/ Santa Cruz do Sul, EDUNISC, 2003) 73-83.

³⁶⁰ Carlos Costa, “Palestra do Medico XXIII - As Ferias.” *A Mãe de Família: Jornal Científico-Litterario* (Rio de Janeiro: Typ. H. Lombaerts, 10º Anno, nº.24, 31 Dez. 1888), 185-6.

³⁶¹ Antonio Henriques Leal, “Hygiene Escolar.” *A Mãe de Família: Jornal Científico-Litterario* (Rio de Janeiro: Typ. H. Lombaerts, 10º Anno, nº.24, 31 Dez. 1888), 186-7.

³⁶² Antonio Henriques Leal, “Hygiene Escolar.” *A Mãe de Família: Jornal Científico-Litterario* (Rio de Janeiro: Typ. H. Lombaerts, 10º Anno, nº.24, 31 Dez. 1888), 187.

with periodical hygienic inspections for its “convenience and advantages” as a means of preventing “the infirmities peculiar to schools.”³⁶³

In order to guarantee the type of efficient women—strong and aware of their duties and responsibilities as the guardians of a healthy offspring for the nation—forming female bodies under the principles of physical culture was key. Places like Pernambuco faced, nevertheless, structural problems in maintaining gymnastics classes, in its private provincial schools.³⁶⁴ The innovation of having young girls and boys studying together, however, became not only scandalous and revolutionary for that time, but also opened interesting debates. João Barbalho, one of the educational reformers, affirmed that both sexes would be sitting side by side, and facing the teacher. This information was given in answer to complaints made by parents and the general public.³⁶⁵ The decision in Pernambuco to give girls the right to practice bodily exercises faced resistance. After the Reform of 1879, when gymnastics became part of the curriculum for girls and boys together, the magazine *América Ilustrada*, published a critical text addressing the governor of Pernambuco:³⁶⁶

If His Excellency, however, had been born in the past centuries, imagine readers, how in that time of darkness the administrative capacity of His Excellency would shine, when he, *verbi gratia*, speaking about gymnastics for a course of different sexes establish a law imposing on boys and girls the obligation to practice gymnastics with each other.³⁶⁷

³⁶³ Ibid.

³⁶⁴ “Deixou de funcionar a (classe) do sexo feminino e a da gymnastica por não haver no edificio os commodos precisos para este trabalho”, Ibid. “Mandei proceder a alguns concertos neste estabelecimento e orçar a despeza dos aparelhos para os exercicios gymnasticos que convém estabelecer alli”. Relatório com que o Exm. sr. doutor Manoel Clementino Carneiro da Cunha passou a Administração desta Provincia ao Exm. Sr. Desembargador Francisco de Assis Oliveira Maciel a 15 de Novembro de 1877. (Pernambuco, Typ. de Manoel Figueirôa de Faria & Filhos, 1878), 16.

³⁶⁵ See Tarcisio Mauro Vago, “A Escolarização da *Gymnastica* nas Escolas Normais de Minas Gerais (1883-1918),” in Amarilio Ferreira Neto, et.al. Orgs., *Pesquisa histórica na educação física* (Vitoria: CEFD/UFES, vol.2, 1997). See Ana Carrilho Romero Grunennvaldt, “Escola Normal de Sergipe: a Educação Física e as Normalistas,” in Amarilio Ferreira Neto, vol.4.

³⁶⁶ The newspaper *América Ilustrada* was founded in 1871 by Joaquim Maria Carneiro Villela along with José Caetano da Silva. Carneiro Villela was also part of the *Escola do Recife* movement. Circulating every Sunday, it claimed to have the moral duty to alert the readers to the excesses that took place in Pernambuco.

³⁶⁷ The author signed with the pseudonym Phileas Fogg, the famous character created by Jules Verne in his famous novel *Around the World in Eighty Days*. *América Ilustrada*, IX, n. 27 (13 July 1879), n.12, 7. The original in Portuguese: “Se S.Exc., porém, tivesse nascido nos séculos passados, imaginem leitores, como n’aquella época de trevas, não brilharia a capacidade administrativa de S. Exc., quando elle, *verbi-gratia*, falasse em *gymnastica* para um curso de sexos differentes e estabelecesse uma lei impondo aos rapazes e às moças a obrigação de fazerem *gymnastica*, uns com os outros.”

The author stressed that he was a supporter of gymnastics. For him, the idea of introducing those exercises into the curriculum of the normal school was magnificent—and for that reason it could not be a governor’s idea—having nothing offensive or against “damsels” reputations. He addressed to the governor his strong criticism on the idea of co-ed gymnastics. He mentioned, sarcastically, that young boys were “licking their chops” by thinking of a naïve young lady practicing pole and balance beam exercises called “percha”: “It is not yet known whether His Excellency will attend the first exercises and where he will be standing, whether on the top or under a *wonderful percha?!...*”³⁶⁸

In 1884, a statement made by Dr. Eduardo Magalhães, pointed out the need for strengthening the female body among women of the white elite. The result was strictly connected to the nationalistic goal that attributed to these white women, the role of strengthening the nation through the physical and racial regeneration of the Brazilian population. Magalhães stated that from the weakness of mothers comes the weakness of man because society could not expect a burly child from a “weak, depleted, nervous, malnourished woman.”

The newborn represents a cell from the progenitors’ organism, the mother’s maximum. She, the predestined to reproduce the species, guarantee its validity, enable man to be a man able to fight for a life useful for himself, for the family and for the country, is not properly educated among us for the performance of her sublime mission.³⁶⁹

³⁶⁸ The *Revista Contemporânea* was a vehicle that circulated Positivist ideas in Spanish between 1875 and 1917. It was also published in Argentina, Mexico, Cuba, Venezuela, and Brazil, specifically, in Pernambuco, by Bellarmino Carneiro.

³⁶⁹ Eduardo Magalhães, *A gymnastica hygienica* (Rio de Janeiro: Laemert, 1884), 123. The original in Portuguese is: “O recém-nascido representa uma célula do organismo de seus progenitores, máxime da mãe. A predestinada a reproduzir a espécie, garantir a validez, habilitar o homem a ser homem, apto a lutar pela vida utilmente para si, para a família e para a pátria, não é devidamente educada entre nós para o desempenho de sua missão sublime.”

For schoolgirls, the harmonious development of the idealized “healthy mother’s body” was the goal.³⁷⁰ During this period, more systematic research also took place resulting in proposals for specific exercises for girls’ bodies. With the development of scientific gymnastics, physical exercise addressed to young girls began to pass through a process of systematization. Female’s gymnastics was strongly promoted through the influence of hygienist and eugenicist discourses emerging in the late nineteenth century. Those discourses steadily legitimized physical exercise as one of the most important instruments of bodily control and of the propagation of morality related to gesture and discipline. Physical education was part of Brazil’s national project of modernization. Its purpose was to foster Brazilian young citizens—boys and girls—within moral, intellectual, and physical characteristics, attributing to them aspects of “civility”.

In addition to the deleterious quality of nutrition, the unhealthy conditions of the homes, the stressful and ill-healthy professions, the poorly directed education of women during the critical period of their formation, the routine of the old school methods and the disdain for the corporeal education stand out, the main responsible for this impoverishment of people, for this decrease in their longevity.³⁷¹

This idea was linked to the search for a socioeconomic and cultural development of the nation that could not take place through an outdated educational system. The ideal education for girls would emphasize the balance and harmony of the individual, overcoming the antagonism between body and intellect. By releasing and defending publications for schoolgirls to practice gymnastics, policymakers assured that physical exercise should be smooth, without compromising the “sweetness of manners, grace and elegance of gesture” that characterized the “beautiful harmony” of the female form.

³⁷⁰ As Okezi Otovo brilliantly argued in her study on Bahia, the decades following emancipation saw the rise of reformers who sought to reshape the citizenry and an idealized Brazilian by educating women in methods for raising “better babies” in order to contribute to the needs of a modern nation. See Okezi T. Otovo, *Progressive Mothers, Better Babies: Race, Public Health, and the State in Brazil, 1850-1945* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2016).

³⁷¹ *Obras Completas de Rui Barbosa* (Op. cit.), 177.

One of the most important contemporary authorities on this subject says that, for the woman, ‘gymnastics is as necessary as the air and space to the birds of the sky;’ these exercises will have a character particularly ‘soft, accommodated to the female sex.’³⁷²

Young women also studied in the “escolas normais” (normal schools), institutions responsible for the instruction and preparation of future teachers, following the mission to physically educate schoolgirls.³⁷³ Figures like Julia Candida Dezouart, Ernestina Gomensoro Ferreira, Elvira Lussac de Carvalho, Maria Thomazia Monteiro, Francisca de Paula Meyer Ribeiro, Valentina de Almeida Martins, and many others became part of Brazil’s educational system as teachers, having passed mandatory oral and physical exams about gymnastics.³⁷⁴ Summarizing the thought of a generation, José Veríssimo affirmed: “Let us never forget that she [woman] is the first and immediate educator of man, and to educate the first condition is to know.”³⁷⁵

The political debates of nineteenth-century Brazil demanded the utmost attention and great interest in the physical education of Brazilian girls as a way of preventing them from “unconsciously transmit[ing] their weakness, their diseases, their organic addictions” to future offspring. The purpose of teaching girls how to conserve and restore bodily health through physical exercise, linked gymnastics to medicine. Pedro Manoel Borges’ *Manual Teórico-prático de Ginástica Escolar*, edited in Rio de Janeiro in 1888, is another example

³⁷² *Obras Completas de Rui Barbosa*, 90. In this passage, Barbosa cited Eugene Paz, *La Gymnastique raisonnée* (Paris, 1880), 152. The original in Portuguese is: “Para a mulher, a quem, diz uma das mais eminentes notabilidades contemporâneas neste assunto, ‘a ginástica é tão necessária, quanto o ar e o espaço às aves do céu’, esses exercícios terão um caráter particularmente ‘suave, acomodado ao sexo.’”

³⁷³ “Escola Normal - Matricularam-se no curso normal em 1876, 56 alunos e 48 alunas, e na aula primaria a elle annexa 98 meninos”. *Falla com que o exm. sr. doutor Manoel Clementino Carneiro da Cunha abriu a sessão da Assembléa Legislativa Provincial de Pernambuco em 2 de março de 1877* (Pernambuco, Typ. de M. Figueirôa de Faria & Filhos, 1877), 42. Center for Research Libraries, Brazilian Government Documents. Provincial Presidential Reports (1830-1930): Pernambuco. In Pernambuco, for example, the first law establishing gymnastics as part of the curriculum in Normal Schools is from 1875. In Minas Gerais, it is from 1890. See Tarcisio Mauro Vago, “A Escolarização da *Gymnastica* nas Escolas Normais de Minas Gerais (1883-1918)” in Neto (1997). In the state of Sergipe, evidences of gymnastics as subject in Normal Schools appeared only in 1917. See Ana Carrilho Romero Grunennvaldt, “Escola Normal de Sergipe: a Educação Física e as Normalistas,” in Amarilio Ferreira Neto et.al., *Pesquisa histórica na educação física* vol.4 (Vitoria: CEFD/UFES, 1997).

³⁷⁴ “Escola Normal da Côrte.” *Jornal do Commercio* (Rio de Janeiro: Typ. de Villeneuve & Cia., Anno 64, n.5, 5 Jan. 1886), 1; BRASIL-DOU, “Editaes e Avisos - Escola Normal.” *Diário Oficial da União* (Rio de Janeiro: Seção 1, 15 de fevereiro de 1893) 7-8.

³⁷⁵ See José Veríssimo, *A Educação Nacional* (4th edition, Rio de Janeiro: Topbooks, 2013), 169. The first edition was published in Belém do Pará by Editores Tavares Cardoso & Cia., in 1890.

showing the importance of physical exercises for the educational environment.³⁷⁶ In the case of girls' education, Borges argued, the general teaching of human physiology and hygiene should be included as an important element, "as it is already being practiced in some Normal Schools, but apparently with serious deficiencies and little benefit."³⁷⁷ It was widely argued that physical exercises had to be part of the doctrine that should prevent girls against "the physical sins, from a social point of view as serious or more than the sins of their catechism." The fact that many schools only offered the practice of gymnastic exercises "an hour or two a week" in many schools, with "classes of 50 and 60 schoolgirls," became a matter of criticism. The Brazilian intellectual and scientific community spoke out in favor of "the good and hygienic and healthy games and plays, outdoors, in parks, and gardens". Ball games, "national games," and "even cricket, Lawn-tennis and any foreign game useful and adaptable to our environment" were encouraged so young schoolgirls could practice them "without any embarrassment."³⁷⁸

Just as "a spiritual education" (intellectual and moral) was intended to "prepare the cultured and good spirit", the role of physical education was to form a "robust and healthy" body, both culminating in an education aimed to build the educated and strong Brazilian. Physical education thus could act on the child from the cradle (as chapter two showed) and then form the person through childhood and adolescence, leading young students to become "tough and brave" Brazilians.

³⁷⁶ Borges based his ideas especially on the works published by Franco-Swiss physicians Clemens Josef Tissot in 1766 and Simon Andrew in 1786. For more about the dozens of handbooks of gymnastics adapted by Brazilian schools, in different states, see Diogo Rodrigues Puchta's doctoral dissertation in Education: *A escolarização dos exercícios físicos e os manuais de ginástica no processo de constituição da educação física como disciplina escolar (1882-1926)* (Belo Horizonte: UFMG, 2015).

³⁷⁷ See José Veríssimo, "VII – A Educação da Mulher Brasileira," *A Educação Nacional* (Op. cit.), 168.

³⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 169.

3.4 National Physical Education: “a problem”

In 1890, a year after the Proclamation of the Republic, educator José Veríssimo published *A Educação Nacional* (National Education) and opened his book with an epigraph by Sylvio Romero (“a cry of enthusiasm for a better future”), dedicating an entire chapter exclusively to physical education and its effects “in favor of the Brazilian race.”³⁷⁹ According to Veríssimo, physical education needed to be implemented in all Brazilian schools to become a common practice in republican society. To support his argument, Veríssimo began the first three pages of the chapter “A Educação Física” citing the chapter “Physical Education” from Herbert Spencer’s book *Education: Intellectual, Moral, and Physical*.³⁸⁰ Veríssimo translated into Portuguese the passage in which the English author said:

The matter is a serious one, however. Ludicrous as is the antithesis, the fact it expresses is not less disastrous. As remarks a suggestive writer, the first requisite to success in life is ‘to be a good animal;’ and to be a nation of good animals is the first condition to national prosperity. Not only is it that the event of a war often turns on the strength and hardiness of soldiers; but it is that the contests of commerce are in part determined by the bodily endurance of producers. Thus far we have found no reason to fear trials of strength with other races in either of these fields.³⁸¹

Dr. Belisário Augusto de Oliveira Penna (1868-1939), a famous physician in the history of Brazil’s public health, also cited the same passage from Spencer’s book in his works on hygienic education and the health of the Army.³⁸² For Spencer, “it is becoming of special importance that the training of children should be so carried on, as not only to fit them mentally for the struggle before them, but also to make them physically fit to bear its excessive wear and tear.” Although Auguste Comte’s positivism gained currency among Brazilian intellectuals in the

³⁷⁹ José Veríssimo, *A Educação Nacional*. Among many other educators of his time (from Rio, Recife, São Paulo, etc.) Veríssimo was perhaps the one with the most national influence. For more about Veríssimo, see Maria Auxiliadora Cavazotti, *O projeto republicano de educação nacional na versão de José Veríssimo* (São Paulo: Annablume, 2003).

³⁸⁰ Ibid. “IV. A Educação Physica,” 109-122.

³⁸¹ Ibid., 111. Herbert Spencer, *Education: Intellectual, Moral, and Physical* (London: John Childs and Son Printers, 1861), 166-69.

³⁸² See Peter M. Beattie’s *The Tribute of Blood: Army, Honor, Race, and Nation in Brazil, 1864–1945*, p.256. See also Ricardo Augusto Dos Santos, “The Hygiene Education Project of Belisário Penna. 1900-1930,” *Dynamis*, 32(1), 2012, 45-68. <https://dx.doi.org/10.4321/S0211-95362012000100003> To learn more about Belisário Augusto de Oliveira Penna, see his profile at the Nacional Academy of Medicine: http://www.anm.org.br/conteudo_view.asp?id=2247

second half of the nineteenth century, many educators and law students derived their politics from theories promulgated in the North Atlantic cultures by evolutionists such as Rudolf von Ihering and Herbert Spencer.³⁸³ Writing from the northern city of Belém, Veríssimo praised Spencer's claim and affirmed that England was the nation most concerned about physical education, in which secondary and higher schools reserved periods for bodily exercises almost equivalent to the time destined to intellectual work.

The belief in the necessity of physical exercise and gymnastics as a fundamental part of the future of Brazil as a nation was widely shared among the elites. A textbook published in the city of Recife in 1891, *Educação Physica*, stated that the level of civilization or backwardness of a “race” could be measured by the physical development or degeneration of its inhabitants. Tito Franco, the author of the text and owner of the newspaper *O Defensor do Povo* (Defender of the People), affirmed that in a city whose inhabitants had little or no physical education, diseases and the consequent degeneration of the race would be the tragic outcome. Franco emphasized that physical education was just as necessary for individuals as nutrition. For Franco, physical exercise—such as swimming, horseback riding, and gymnastics—was essential to the success of the study of any area of human knowledge. Physical education would also serve to develop and strengthen the human body, preparing fit citizens for the “exuberance of the race,” transforming Brazilian students into “robust men, whose muscular development is an attestation of the sap of their organic structure.”³⁸⁴ Franco concluded his manifesto by proclaiming to educators and policymakers the necessity of taking physical education more seriously and making it a fundamental part of the Brazilian educational system:

When our educators understand the pressing need that our schools have for a section on gymnastics, and the evidence of this need attracts the attention of our legislators to decree and adopt gymnastic exercises, then a new regeneration and prosperity will be inaugurated among us, promising a strong generation and not the degeneration of the race, as currently observed, saving us the trouble of seeing one day our population completely Darwinized.³⁸⁵

³⁸³ See Sérgio Adorno, *Os Aprendizes do poder: o bacharelismo liberal na política brasileira* (Rio de Janeiro: Paz e Terra, 1988).

³⁸⁴ *O Defensor do Povo* (Recife, Year I, n.18, 12 October 1891), 3-4.

³⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

Likewise, José Veríssimo argued that in each city the municipalities should prepare small or large places where students, “so weak,” from public and private establishments could be led by their teachers into bodily exercises and “the wholesome pleasures” of athletic games, “what a French writer calls *a matter of enthusiasm*.”³⁸⁶ For him, it was urgent to strengthen the “Brazilian race” through the physical education of students, “inciting their ardor for physical struggle, to see if we generate the enthusiasm that lacks in their intellectual and moral fights.”³⁸⁷ Veríssimo referenced pedagogues and physiologists who studied these issues, defending the “powerful influence” of physical education on intelligence, on character, and morality, “making every citizen a good soldier.” As chapter four shows, the idea of citizen-soldier, albeit controversial, was also linked to this same scientific pedagogy.

Moreover, Veríssimo stated that if English thinkers like Herbert Spencer were concerned that part of British society neglected the importance of physical education, what then would become of Brazil, where physical education was “only superficially known.” Veríssimo criticized the young elite Brazilian students, for whom it would be difficult for their dignity and character to indulge on bodily exercises, doing gymnastics, running, or playing sports, “the great school of English physical education.”³⁸⁸ Veríssimo believed that their “infatuation with pretending to be men,” characterized these elite students, “the most capable of moral indiscipline that is so damaging for the country.” He argued that if those responsible for Brazilian higher education wanted to bring young boys to engage in physical exercise, almost all of them would be resistant to it.³⁸⁹ For Veríssimo, those “poseurs and doctors since second grade” considered the care of the body beneath them and for that reason one

³⁸⁶ Verissimo refers to Pierre de Coubertain, *L'Éducation Physique*, in *Revue Scientifique*, v. XLIII, p. 141.

³⁸⁷ Verissimo, 117.

³⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

³⁸⁹ As shown in chapter five, the scenario was not exactly as Veríssimo painted. Nevertheless, in a note written for the second edition in 1906, José Veríssimo assumed that the criticism would not be entirely fair once the taste for sports developed so rapidly in the years between 1890 and 1906 (at least in Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo). Once again, Veríssimo seemed to ignore the reality in cities like Salvador, Recife, Porto Alegre, or even his hometown of Belém.

could not expect them to be as devoted to physical culture as they were to cards and roulette. Veríssimo then chastised these elite young men stating bluntly:

They would rudely adopt all the bad novelties from Paris, ridiculously mock the English workers, but their childish vanity and fear of exercise—proper to our softness and indolence—will not permit them to intelligently imitate the institutions and customs that we must adopt, if we do not mind bastardizing our race.³⁹⁰

José Veríssimo also extolled British educators' view that physical education should be grounded in biology and psychology, arguing that Brazil was an even more backward country because not even the bodies of the animals were properly cared for, and British sports were treated in Brazil in an “unintelligent” and “ridiculous” way. While citing the work of the French physician Jean-Baptiste Fonssagrives, *Entretiens Familiars Sur L'Hygiene* (1869), Veríssimo also criticized the fact that among Brazilians the concept of “physical education” was simply understood as a synonym of gymnastic and acrobatic exercises.³⁹¹

This is not the true and most useful understanding of this form of education which, although advocated by Montaigne, Locke, J.J. Rousseau, Hufeland, and Frobel, is only now beginning to move from the realm of speculation to practice. As Spencer's passage makes clear, physical education is not limited only to physical exercise, as it is commonly supposed, but covers hygiene, which is considered, according to the excellent definition of Littré and Robin, as the set of 'rules to be followed in the choice of suitable means to entertain the normal action of the organs at various ages, constitutions, life conditions, and professions.'³⁹²

³⁹⁰ Verissimo, 116. The original in Portuguese: “Eles arremedarão grotescamente todas as ruins novidades parisienses, macaquearão ridiculamente os caixeiros viajantes ingleses, mas a sua vaidade infantil e o medo do exercício, próprio à nossa moleza e indolência, não lhes consentirá imitar inteligentemente as instituições e os costumes que nos cumpre adotar, se nos importa não abastardar a nossa raça.”

³⁹¹ According to Anaïs Bohuon and Antoine Luciani, “As early as 1867, the emeritus professor of hygiene, Jean-Baptiste Fonssagrives held a conference called ‘Physical regeneration of the human species through health education of the family and in particular, the mother’s role in children’s physical education’. In 1869, he offered to teach women ‘maternal science’, which would help them in the physical education of their daughters.” See Anaïs Bohuon & Antoine Luciani (2009) “Biomedical Discourse on Women's Physical Education and Sport in France (1880–1922),” *The International Journal of the History of Sport*, 26:5, 573-593.

³⁹² Veríssimo, 112. He cited the *Dictionnaire De Médecine* (1873) written by Émile Maximilien Paul Littré and Charles Robin in which they also cited P.H. Clias definition of *Callisthénie* (Calisthenics) as: “Exposé des procédés desomascétique qui conviennent dans l'éducation physique des jeunes filles, et des moyens efficaces pour corriger les déviations de la colonne vertébrale occasionnées par une action irrégulière des muscles (Clias).” *Libraires de L'Académie Impériale de Médecine* (Paris, 1865), 205. For many, P.H. Clias was the man responsible for exciting an interest in exercise amongst England’s upper classes. Arriving in England in 1822, the Swiss physical culture instructor quickly emerged as a prominent figure in England’s blossoming fitness industry. See Sheila Fletcher, *Women first: The Female Tradition in English Physical Education, 1880-1980* (London: Athlone, 1984); Kathleen E. McCrone, *Playing the Game: Sport and the Physical Emancipation of English Women, 1870-1914* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1988); and Jan

At the same time, Veríssimo also considered embarrassing that Brazil had to study and debate all these “serious and interesting questions” based on foreign authors, whose doctrines were “not always compatible with our environment.” For him, physical culture was a responsibility of both national educators and medical professionals. The way to develop a person (physically, intellectually, and morally) needed to be based on scientific psychology and biology. Veríssimo shared a broader understanding that the psychology of Brazilian children (and consequently that of all adult Brazilians) was not the same as the psychology of French or North American children, “and yet it is from the wise men and teachers of those nations that we have drunk all the knowledge on child psychology we may have.” For that reason, Veríssimo argued that Brazil needed Brazilian physicians’ dedication to biological studies, necessary to provide for the country and remove “all vicious and problems” from national education.

Veríssimo understood that the conditions of climate, race, the physical constitution, and temperament of Brazilians were not the same as for Europeans. The ideas and teachings of foreign specialists had to be adapted to the local realities of Brazil, such as diet and bodily exercises. To support his assertions, Veríssimo mentioned the work *Physiologie des exercices du corps*, written in 1888 by French doctor and psychologist Fernand Lagrange.³⁹³ Lagrange studied the supposed racial differences between Latins and Northern Europeans in the execution of physical exercises. In one of his passages, Lagrange postulated:

These differences [in exercises of speed] are often racial, and at first glance are seen in deportment. The vivacious step of the Southerner contrasts with the calm posture of the man of the North. The motor fibers of the former are more irritable than those of the latter. It is curious to see these differences manifesting themselves in physical exercises and to ascertain the differences of aptitudes resulting from them for this or that form of work. The English and the Germans have never been able to rival the French and Italians in fencing. English boxing needs above all massive

Todd, *Physical Culture and the Body Beautiful: Purposive Exercise in the Lives of American Women, 1800-1870* (Macon: Mercer University Press, 1998).

³⁹³ According to Pablo Ariel Scharagrodsky, Fernand Lagrange also influenced the Argentine system of physical education, developed by Dr. Enrique Romero Brest. See “El Sistema Argentino de Educación Física. Entre el cientificismo, la higienización, el eclecticismo y la argentinidad,” *Revista Brasileira de Ciências do Esporte*, 37:2, (2015):158-164.

strength and power of resistance; French boxing needs on the contrary, agility and readiness in the blows, that is, great suddenness of attack and quickness in reply.³⁹⁴

Regretting that physical exercises and a “whole collection of games” were lacking in Brazil, Veríssimo became a champion for physical culture to be introduced in the Brazilian schools, colleges, and even in the academies and other higher courses adapting method and system used by the “civilized nations”:

Not only in colleges, but in English, Swiss, German, American, and very recently French universities and academies, physical education (in the form of gymnastics, athletic games, fencing, walking, canoeing, horse riding) is, if not an official institution, a custom so inveterate and so respected, that it is almost law. In England, whose people are undoubtedly the strongest, the most energetic, the most virile of this end of century, physical exercises are, so to speak, a national institution.³⁹⁵

Veríssimo cited Ruggiero Bonghi’s *Istruzione secondaria in Inghilterra* and *Renaissance physique* by Philippe Daryl, both written in 1888, to explain how gymnastics and military exercises were important in European schools, making “every citizen a good soldier,” recalling the “great Hellenic prowess from Ancient Greece.”³⁹⁶ Veríssimo shared with Ruy Barbosa the admiration for the way countries like the United States and educators such as Norman Allison Calkins maintained some English games and calisthenic exercises within their general system of public education.³⁹⁷ Translated by Barbosa, Calkins’ manual was adopted by the Brazilian government and “unanimously approved” by the Superior Board of Education in Bahia and Rio de Janeiro. Veríssimo and Barbosa also showed appreciation for how the German educational system employed scientific knowledge from

³⁹⁴ I used the English version. Fernand Lagrange, *Physiology of Bodily Exercise* (New York: D. Appleton & Company, 1890) 253.

³⁹⁵ Veríssimo, 116. The original in Portuguese: “Não só nos colégios, mas nas universidades e academias inglesas, suíças, alemãs, americanas e, muito recentemente, francesas, a educação física sob a forma de ginastica, dos jogos atléticos, de esgrima, de pedestrianismo, de canoagem, de equitação, é, quando não uma instituição oficial, um costume tão inveterado e tão respeitado, que quase faz lei. Na Inglaterra, cujo povo é, incontestavelmente, o mais forte, o mais enérgico, o mais viril dos deste fim de século, os exercícios físicos são, digamos assim, uma instituição nacional.”

³⁹⁶ Philippe Daryl was one the pseudonyms used by Jean-François Paschal Grousset (1844-1909). Grousset was a French politician, journalist, translator, and science fiction writer. Switzerland was also often cited in Brazil as a model for having the Alpine clubs and numerous shooting societies, as well as fencing and multiple games.

³⁹⁷ Norman Allison Calkins, *Primeiras Lições de Coisas: Manual de Ensino Elementar Para Uso dos Paes e Professores* (Rio de Janeiro: Imprensa Nacional, 1886). Ruy Barbosa’s translation is from the original *Primary Object Lessons for training the senses and developing the faculties of children. A manual of elementary instruction for parents and teachers*, originally published in the United States in 1861.

military physicians and physiologists like Emil du Bois-Reymond, professor of the University of Berlin, “consecrating the cult of physical education, almost comparable with patriotism.”³⁹⁸

Veríssimo and Barbosa supported the way Germans considered physical education “a national art” by citing French educator Michel Jules Bréal, also an admirer of British athletic exercises, German and Swiss gymnastics.³⁹⁹ Veríssimo also explained how intellectuals like Jean François Paschal Grousset championed physical culture within the French government. Getting support not only from the population but also from the general administration of schools and universities, France had created what Verissimo called “a movement” of progress through hygiene and physical exercises. For Brazilian academic leaders, if “all other nations, where the public spirit does not sleep but that continuously watches over the interests of the country,” had physical education in particular interest, Brazil had to do the same.⁴⁰⁰ If physical education became systematically organized and military exercises officially entered the primary and secondary education of Sweden, Belgium, the Netherlands, Austria, and Italy, polymaths and outstanding intellectuals of Brazil truly postulated the same auspicious and “most favorable solution, perhaps the definitive solution” for Brazilian students.⁴⁰¹ In those “civilized countries,” physicians, physiologists, hygienists, and pedagogues allegedly multiplied in books, magazines and in daily newspapers, the advices, prescriptions, prompts, and directions Brazil had to follow to solve “the problem of physical education.”⁴⁰²

³⁹⁸ Verissimo referred to Bois-Reymond’s “L’Exercice,” published in the *Revue Scientifique* (Paris: 3, 1882) 97-109. According to Gabriel Finkelstein, Emil du Bois-Reymond is one of the most important forgotten intellectuals of the nineteenth century. Du Bois-Reymond’s public lectures made him a celebrity. In talks that touched on science, philosophy, history, and literature, he introduced Darwin to German students. See Gabriel Finkelstein, *Emil du Bois-Reymond: Neuroscience, Self, and Society in Nineteenth-Century Germany*. Cambridge (Massachusetts: MIT Press, 2013).

³⁹⁹ Michel Jules Alfred Bréal (1832-1915) was a French philologist, son of Franco-Jewish parents.

⁴⁰⁰ Veríssimo, 118-9.

⁴⁰¹ Veríssimo, 116-8. About this “movement,” Verissimo cited *L’Éducation Physique, Bulletin de la Ligue Nationale de l’Éducation Physique* (Paris: 51 Rue Vivienne, 7fr., 1889).

⁴⁰² Veríssimo, 118.

More critical intellectuals, notably José Veríssimo and Ruy Barbosa, denounced the desire simply “to react” in terms of physical education, simply to copy Europe, although they recognized the need for “some official programs, exclusively in the form of gymnastics” within national schools. With a perspective from the northern state of Pará, Veríssimo was even more rigid in his assertions of including “physical education in our education and in our customs.” It was necessary, however, to understand it more widely, scientifically. Veríssimo constantly reminded his readers that physical education was not limited to gymnastics. He understood that Brazil had geographic and climatic advantages that would allow for schools and society to introduce the taste for physical exercises, despite the “national indolence,” even from some of the elites.⁴⁰³ While citing Alfred Russel Wallace, called “an emulator of Darwin,” Veríssimo argued in favor of the adaptation of hygienic exercises to local conditions, “invigorating physical energies and therefore health,” especially in the Amazon area.⁴⁰⁴ In both theory and praxis, according to this vision, the advantages of the environmental adaptations of physical education were clear Brazilian “physiologists had to minutely study” this matter to hygienically determine “the exercises that befit” Brazil’s schools and environment.⁴⁰⁵ As for Britons, “the people who are conquering the world because of their strength, energy and audacity,” Brazilians would also forge a “civilized nation” through physical education.

3.5 “For the Greatness of the Race”

At the end of the nineteenth century, there was a quest in Brazil’s new Republic for more accurate knowledge about the deplorable living conditions of most of its population. The awareness of that reality became progressively evident as the twentieth century approached, heightened by growing emphasis on hygiene and education. In practice, this awareness generated medical-educational interventions aimed at ensuring the proper

⁴⁰³ Veríssimo, 121.

⁴⁰⁴ Veríssimo referred to Alfred Russel Wallace’s *Narrative of Travels on the Amazon and Rio Negro* (London, 1853).

⁴⁰⁵ Veríssimo, 120. Veríssimo referred to Franco-Italian mathematician and physiologist Joseph-Louis Lagrange (1736-1813), born under the name Giuseppe Lodovico Lagrangia. To learn more about Lagrange, see Maria Teresa Borgato & Luigi *Pepe’s Lagrange, appunti per una biografia scientifica* (Turin: La Rosa, 1990).

conditions for the “regeneration” of bodies as well as the regulation and standardization of students’ customs and behavior. In Brazilian schools, the need to improve the conditions of this corporeal “regeneration” required vigilance over the health, hygiene, food and physical education of students.

In 1895, Pernambuco’s Governor Barbosa Lima urgently asked the legislators of his state to organize primary public education, financed and directed by the state. As a means of pressure, Governor Barbosa Lima, while waiting for action from state representatives, submitted a decree in advance for the legislators’ approval on July 26, 1894:

With this act I tried to provide the main cities and towns of our State with buildings suitable for primary classes, having satisfied the requirements that school hygiene advises, regarding the capacity of the rooms, the distribution of light and air, the choice of furniture accommodating the requirements of children’s health and physical education.⁴⁰⁶

Physical education has been a perennial issue for Brazilian politicians and educators ever since.⁴⁰⁷ Advocates believe that physical education should serve to shape and train bodies based on scientific discourses within the intent of establishing a strong, national, collective order. The improvement of citizens’ morality, discipline, and the hygiene of their bodies are at the core of the vision of civilization and modernity of Brazilian lawmakers and scientists in their efforts to build the national body politic. When looking at the specific civic space of schools, proponents argued that local norms of conduct paved the process of educating bodies in different regions of Brazil, but as parts of a collective and broader narrative to achieve the social and political integration of the nation.⁴⁰⁸

⁴⁰⁶ *Mensagem Apresentada pelo Exm. Sr. Governador do Estado, Dr. Alexandre Jose’ Barbosa Lima, ao Congresso Legislativo em 13 de 1895* (Recife: Typ. de Manoel Figueiroa de Faria & Filhos, 1895), 127.

⁴⁰⁷ In my research at the archive of the Instituto de Educação, in Rio de Janeiro, I found dozens of books and manuals related to gymnastics and physical education, such as M. Caldas & E. de Carvalho’s *Manual de Gymnastica Escolar* (Rio de Janeiro/Sao Paulo: Alves & Cia. Editores, 1896) code 371.73 Cal. in Portuguese and in other languages. Many of these books appear in the doctoral dissertation of Diogo Rodrigues Puchta.

⁴⁰⁸ See Jane Almeida, *O legado educacional do século XIX* (Araraquara: UNESP, 1998).

At the dawn of the new century, Brazilian cities passed through a profound process of urban and social reforms.⁴⁰⁹ Reorganizing major Brazilian cities was not enough. Redesigning the habits of hygiene and the social behavior of the population was also necessary.⁴¹⁰ Cleaning up the cities, making them cultured and hygienic, meant reordering the population by imposing new standards of health and hygiene.⁴¹¹ A new aesthetic and hygienic program characterized the process of Brazil's modernization. Reformers targeted not only the country's main cities, but also the Brazilian population itself, as central to the "civilizing mission". This new urban atmosphere largely reinforced, again, the need for physical activities not only in public areas, but also within the formal educational system throughout the country.

In 1901, President Campos Salles signed into law new regulations for secondary education imbued with the civilizing project for the nation. Along with studies such as the history of Brazil—"the main way to insert the national sentiment"—, gymnastics and sports were included for "hygienic purposes". Teenagers would practice not only gymnastics but also "school games" such as soccer, cricket, tennis, and running, as part of the goal to

⁴⁰⁹ In its first major reform, which officially began in 1912 although authorized in 1910, city officials rebuilt downtown Recife, demolished its houses, skewed streets, alleys, arches, churches, and other landmarks to make way for a new, modern neighborhood with a "European feel." For more: Antonio Paulo Rezende, *(Des)encantos modernos: histórias da cidade do Recife na década de 20* (Recife: Fundarpe, 1997); Napoleão Barroso Braga, *Cartas recifenses* (Recife: Fundação de Cultura Cidade do Recife, 1985); F.A. Pereira da Costa, *Arredores do Recife* (Recife: Fundação de Cultura Cidade do Recife, 1981); Mário Sette, *Arruar – história pitoresca do Recife antigo* (Recife: Secretaria de Educação e Cultura, 3a. edição, 1978); Orlando Parahym, *Traços do Recife – ontem e hoje* (Recife: Secretaria de Educação e Cultura, 1978).

⁴¹⁰ Brazilian newspapers constantly published texts about hygiene and physical culture. In 1907, for example, the *Diario de Pernambuco* published the "hygienic advises" of North American physician and president of the American Physical Education Association (1903-1906), Luther Halsey Gulick (1865–1918). *Diario de Pernambuco* (Recife: Anno 83, n.32, 8 Fevereiro 1907), 1.

⁴¹¹ In the first fifteen days of April 1907, physician Octavio de Freitas reported 375 deaths in the city of Recife, mostly caused by infectious diseases; 315 happened in the urban area, 124 in hospitals and 191 in residences. "Seção Demographica – Mortalidade da cidade do Recife de 1 a 15 de abril de 1907" *Diario de Pernambuco* (Recife: Anno 83, n.108, 15 Maio 1907), 1. According to Joel Outtes, like other main Brazilian cities, Recife faced innumerable epidemics. In 1855-56, five percent of its population (3,338 people) died from cholera; in 1890, there were 2,204 deaths caused by smallpox; in 1896, 2,119 deaths also caused by smallpox; in 1904, 2,886 from dysentery; 1905, 3,965 from smallpox; 1915, 1,696 from tuberculosis; and in 1918, 1,783 people died from influenza (1,251 only in October). See Joel Outtes, *O Recife: Gênese do Urbanismo 1927–1943*. Série Estudos e Pesquisas, number 93. (Recife: Editora Massangana, 1997). See also Leduar de Assis Rocha, *História da Medicina em Pernambuco: séculos XVI, XVII e XVIII* (Recife: Arquivo Público Estadual, 1960).

“develop students’ strength and skills,” guided by an instructor.⁴¹² This presidential order had the support of medical professionals such as Alvaro Borges Reis, who presented his “*Synthese historica e importancia da Educação Physica*” to the 1904 inaugural class at the Medical School in Bahia.⁴¹³ From the country’s president, in the capital, to physicians and other upwardly skilled workers in major cities, the indisputable importance and relevance of physical culture was ever present public discourse.

In Minas Gerais, teacher Fernando de Azevedo advocated for the “social and physical regeneration” of Brazil’s people by “educative gymnastics.”⁴¹⁴ Azevedo stated that if pedagogues inserted physical culture into the educational system, and “sustained [it] over a long series of generations” that “it would purify our race.”⁴¹⁵ In eugenic terms, Azevedo reproduced the discourse in favor of schools as a key vector for the biological transformation of Brazilian bodies, “the prerogative of strong nations and healthy organizations, and the germ or guarantee of the ethnological supremacy of a people.”⁴¹⁶ Simply put, “a country with no physical education,” he declared, “is dead.”⁴¹⁷ A thousand miles away, Pernambuco’s Governor Manoel Borba, in his annual message to the legislature, noted that in 1916 gymnastics classes would become mandatory in schools in the cities of Recife, Jaboatão, Cabo, Olinda, Pau d’Alho, Nazareth e Jatobá de Tacaratú. He emphasized the role of the state in this matter and the “beneficial results” physical education had brought to Pernambuco.⁴¹⁸ Two years later, Governor

⁴¹² “Decreto nº 3.914, de 23 de Janeiro de 1901 - Approva o regulamento para o Gymnasio Nacional,” *Diário Oficial da União* (Rio de Janeiro: Seção 1, 06 de fevereiro de 1901) 687.

⁴¹³ Alvaro Borges Reis, *Synthese historica e importancia da Educação Physica* (Salvador: Faculdade de Medicina da Bahia, 1904). Available online at <https://repositorio.ufba.br/ri/handle/ri/25869>

⁴¹⁴ Fernando de Azevedo, “8. - Regeneração Social Pela Gymnastica” *A poesia do corpo, ou, A gymnastica escolar: sua historia e seu valor* (Belo Horizonte: Imprensa Oficial do Estado de Minas, 1915) 203-10.

⁴¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 208.

⁴¹⁶ *Ibid.* 203.

⁴¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 109.

⁴¹⁸ *Mensagem do Exm. Sr. Dr. Manoel Antonio Pereira Borba, Governador do Estado, Lida por ocasião da instalação da 2ª. Sessão da 9ª. Legislatura do Congresso Legislativo do Estado, aos 6 de Março de 1917* (Pernambuco: Typ. Da Imprensa Official, 1917) 41-42.

Borba informed the legislature about the necessity of improving schools' health inspection. For Borba, health inspections at schools should be the responsibility of just one doctor in the capital, and of sanitary inspectors in other districts. Manoel Borba reorganized the health service, delegating the responsibility to the *Inspeccoria Geral da Instrucao*.⁴¹⁹ For the state, the physical culture of gymnastics, games, and sports became an integral part of a public discourse in favor of the hygienic education of the citizen.⁴²⁰

For advocates like Borba, the organization of Brazilian schools and the moral and physical formation of students were fundamental in achieving that goal.⁴²¹ Moral formation and controlling students' physical hygiene also expanded to rural schools and institutions responsible for the education of young offenders. Pernambuco's *Colônia Correccional de Menores*, for example—located in a facility attached to the public penitentiary and under the direction of the same establishment—housed around one hundred and eighty teenagers. Five teachers provided their primary instruction. Military instruction and physical education were the responsibility of a member of the public security forces.⁴²² In São Paulo, defenders of physical education declared that, “the most advanced pedagogy will have nothing more useful to teach our children than the defense of health, the sanitary education

⁴¹⁹ “Aos funcionarios incumbidos da inspecção foi confiada a vigilancia higienica das escolas e de seu material, a prophylaxia das molestias transmissiveis e evitaveis, a inspecção medica dos alumnos e do pessoal escolar, a systematizaçao e fiscalizaçao da educaçao physica e assistencia dentaria aos alumnos pobres, enquanto não existirem clinicos escolares.” *Mensagem do Exm. Sr. Dr. Manoel Antonio Pereira Borba, Governador do Estado, Lida por occasiao da installaço da 1ª. Sessao da 10ª. Legislatura do Congresso Legislativo do Estado, aos 6 de Março de 1919* (Pernambuco: Oficinas graphicas da Imprensa Official, 1919), 61.

⁴²⁰ A national decree from 1921, for example, described callisthenic exercises in thirty detailed pages. See *Decreto nº 14.784, de 27 de Abril de 1921*, available online at <https://www2.camara.leg.br/legin/fed/decret/1920-1929/decreto-14784-27-abril-1921-511224-publicacaooriginal-1-pe.html>

⁴²¹ See Ana Cristina Santos Matos Rocha, “Noemy Silveira, Isaías Alves, and educational psychology: dialogs between Brazil, France, and the USA,” *História, Ciências, Saúde-Manguinhos* (Rio de Janeiro, vol. 26, n.2, 2019) 407-425; Heloisa Helena Pimenta Rocha, *A higienizaçao dos costumes: educaçao escolar e saúde no projeto do Instituto de Higiene de São Paulo (1918-1925)* (São Paulo: FAPESP, 2003); and Lausane Corrêa Pycosz, *A higiene nos grupos escolares curitibanos: fragmentos da história de uma disciplina escolar (1917-1932)* (Curitiba: Universidade Federal do Paraná, Masters thesis, 2007).

⁴²² *Mensagem apresentada ao Congresso Legislativo em 7 de Setembro de 1925, 2ª. Sessao da 12ª. Legislatura, pelo Dr. Sergio Loreto, Governador do Estado de Pernambuco* (Recife: 1925), 37. In 1927, the institution had 150 students. *Mensagem apresentada ao Congresso Legislativo na abertura da 4ª. Sessao da 12ª. Legislatura, pelo Governador do Estado, Dr. Estacio de Albuquerque Coimbra* (Recife: 1927), 20. A very interesting work about correctional institutions in Rio de Janeiro is Martine Jean's ““A storehouse of prisoners”: Rio de Janeiro's Correction House (Casa de Correçao) and the Birth of the Penitentiary in Brazil, 1830–1906,” *Atlantic Studies* (London: Taylor & Francis, Volume 14, Issue 2, 2017) 216-42.

of children,” in rural schools, under the risk of “losing the capacity for a strong life, degenerating the race and weakening the nation.”⁴²³ Moreover, when speaking in Minas Gerais to the Second Congress of Hygiene, physicians from all over the country, in particular Dr. Almir Madeira, defended school hygiene as a quintessential part of the public health system. Confronting the problem of “feeble students” as a cause of “degeneration” was an imperative for guaranteeing “the health, the vigor, and the future of the race.”⁴²⁴

In 1928, the newspaper *O Esporte* (Recife) published an article highlighting the need for educating not only children, but citizens in general, on sporting practices. The article, “Educação Physica” (Physical Education), brought the following call-to-action:

Give the fields, the outdoors and freedom to children, women and men. Taking care of health through sports is the most practical way to guarantee a strong generation for the Motherland.⁴²⁵

Positive statements about physical education also recommended sports for kindergarten children.⁴²⁶ They emphasized that the United States was making a major investment in sports in schools and that it would bring victorious consequences for the country in social and economic life: “The American understands the *'mens sana in corpore sano'*.”⁴²⁷ The text also cited physical activities and sports practiced by the girls of Wellesley College in Massachusetts, presenting a photograph to illustrate it. The girls in the picture are practicing different activities,

⁴²³ Dias Martins, “Hygiene Rural (Necessidade do Ensino da Hygiene Rural)” *Correio Paulistano - Orgam do Partido Republicano* (São Paulo: Koenig & Bauer, n.15834, 13 Setembro 1907) 6.

⁴²⁴ “Congresso de Hygiene – Preservação escolar das moléstias infecciosas. Um voto de louvor a uma obra meritosa.” *Gazeta de Noticias* (Rio de Janeiro: Officina Impressora, Anno XLIX, n.300, 13 de dezembro de 1924), 2.

⁴²⁵ Baroni, “Educação Physica,” *O Esporte* (Recife: Abril 1928), 2. The original in Portuguese is: “Deem às crianças, às mulheres e aos homens, o campo, o ar livre e a liberdade. Cuidar da saúde por intermédio dos esportes é a via mais prática para garantir à Pátria uma geração forte.”

⁴²⁶ In my research, I found in the archive of the Instituto de Educação, in Rio de Janeiro, innumerable books on physical education adopted by Brazilian schools. Some examples are: Mary Wood Hinnan, *Gymnastic and Folk Dancing* 1918 (ref. 793.31 Hin G.); Fernando de Azevedo, *Da Educação Física...* 1920 (371.73 Aze.D.); and Arthur Higgins, *Compêndio de Gymnastica Escolar* 1923 (371.73 Hig C.).

⁴²⁷ Baroni, “Educação Physica,” *O Esporte* (Recife: Abril 1928), 2.

such as volleyball, tennis, and equitation. Baroni, the author, stated at the end of the piece: “Notice, readers, the health that reigns in the faces of these lively and vigorous girls.”⁴²⁸

Still in April 1928, *O Esporte* published an article specifically dedicated to sports practiced by women. Titled “Os Esportes Femininos” (Women’s Sports), the piece has a critical tone addressed to women who do not play sports, indicating that women’s sports were common in the late 1920s in Recife.⁴²⁹ The author presumed that it would take a long time for women to understand and become dedicated to sports. For the writer, one reason for that pessimistic view was the kind of education women received. Traditional education was based on a mistaken assumption that women were “spoiled dolls” for whom every physical effort would be dangerous. The author’s criticism is based on the testimony one *senhorinha* gave to the newspaper. She reported that she lived in France for a long time and, upon her return to Brazil, she was impressed by the lack of female participation in sports. The woman said she practiced various sports in Europe, including track and field, but when back in Brazil, she realized that there was no organization to support women’s sports.⁴³⁰ The article emphasized that even dancing should be held outdoors so that people could breathe fresh air, away from filthy rooms full of diseases. The text ended by pointing out that the lack of interest in sports was the result of girls’ education being based on erroneous and outmoded traditions.⁴³¹ At least in the state of Pernambuco, German Benedictine nuns of the Academia Santa

⁴²⁸ The official webpage of Wellesley College has interesting historical pictures of women in physical educational and sporting activities. As it is stated on their website, “Wellesley founder Henry Durant believed in the importance of physical exercise for women, a radical notion in the late 19th century.” Available online at <http://www.wellesley.edu/about/collegehistory#H1i1XzSKzAIXzvY.97>

⁴²⁹ *O Esporte*, “Os Esportes Femininos,” (Recife) April 1928, 3.

⁴³⁰ Ibid. The newspaper’s explanation attributed to Brazilian women a much bigger concern for fashion and dance than sports. The author even said that for Brazilian women, fashionable dress and good dance steps would be worth more than all the other things of the world. The text pointed out that this kind of attitude was also taken by “*almofadinhas*” (dandies) who valued fashion and enclosed spaces for dancing more than sports.

⁴³¹ Ibid. The text’s tone of disapproval became clear when pointing that women felt ashamed by joining some sports practices “but not ashamed to lift their skirt above their knees on the street.” *O Esporte* was in favor of women’s sports and reinforced that those sports were not happening often among the women of Recife.

Gertrudes proved an important counterpoint by often stimulating festivities with exhibitions of schoolgirls practicing physical education outdoors.⁴³²

The point is—as chapter two demonstrated—that women were expected to participate in the strengthening and worship of the nation. The care of women’s bodies—through physical education and hygiene—supported nationalism and the work of nationalists. Brazilian physicians and educators treated physical education as one of many ways to develop a more productive population. Thus, eugenic projects emerged in campaigns on education and public health in the first decades of the twentieth century, providing a justification for expanding educational resources.

Antônio Carneiro Leão, for example, born in Recife and director of the school system of Rio de Janeiro from 1922 to 1926, returned to Pernambuco in 1928 to reform public schools in his home state. His return and reforms are examples of the constant flow not only of people, but also of ideas between the school systems of different states and municipalities.⁴³³ Carneiro Leão was a faithful eugenicist, believing that the practice of physical education in elementary schools “would be decisive in the elevation of the race in addition to helping combat vices and diseases.”⁴³⁴ In 1924, the Department of Education of Rio de Janeiro, under Carneiro Leão’s supervision, produced the documentary *Pela grandeza da raça* (For the greatness of the race). The *Jornal do Brasil* announced the movie calling all students from municipal schools:

The Children's Party - Cine-Theatro Rialto Company, associated with the Hon. Mr. Carneiro Leão, Director of Municipal Public Education, will make a 50% discount on admission prices to all students of municipal schools who want to watch the program of which the film ‘For the greatness of the race’ is part.⁴³⁵

⁴³² For more about the Academia Santa Gertrudes in the early twentieth century, see Zaida Maria C. Cavalcanti, “Educadoras Alemãs nos Trópicos: as Beneditinas da Academia Santa Gertrudes”, *Revista Ciência & Trópico*, v. 17, n.1 (1989), 25-40. Available at www.fundaj.gov.br According to Cavalcanti, the Benedictine nuns also adopted the Froebel’s method of physical education.

⁴³³ Jerry Dávila shows that education remained local, but national elites managed it. *Diploma of Whiteness: Race and Social Policy in Brazil, 1917–1945* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003).

⁴³⁴ See Maria de Lourdes de Albuquerque Fávero and Jader de Medeiros Britto, orgs., *Dicionário de educadores no Brasil; da colônia aos dias atuais* (Rio de Janeiro: Editora UFRJ/INEP, 1999), 67.

⁴³⁵ *Jornal do Brasil* (Rio de Janeiro), XXXIV, n.258, 26 October 1924, 14.

Always offering a discount to all children and students from the municipal schools for a “matinee” or “soirée” from Monday to Saturday, the screening aimed to promote and propagate the state’s objectives and ideas.⁴³⁶ The movie showed students practicing calisthenic gymnastics in order to promote physical education in other parts of the country. As we have seen, public officials and legislatures had been promoting these techniques since the nineteenth century.⁴³⁷ Carneiro Leão’s vision for civic and physical education emphasized a love for the nation, which he felt should come from knowledgeable identification with it. Therefore, Carneiro Leão also advocated the study of Brazilian geography, history, language, and the constitution. For him, education should also stimulate the celebration of national holidays and compulsory military service. He believed that educating citizen-soldiers in their national rituals and history would inspire in them greater national solidarity.⁴³⁸

To fulfill the desire to shape healthier and more prepared students, it was necessary to carry out a comprehensive reform to regulate the implementation of new pedagogical practices, especially those related to hygiene in schools. Thus, reforms called for a school doctor in addition to the traditional officials who controlled and inspected schools’ operations.⁴³⁹ This medical professional should be one of the “commissioners of hygiene” whose task was to carry out medical school inspections. The commissioner was appointed by the inspector of education and was charged with working in both public and private establishments. The medical inspection service would be carried out by the commissioners of the respective districts. In addition to the vaccination and

⁴³⁶ “‘PELA GRANDEZA DA RAÇA’, reportagem da Botelho Film, documentario da festa das crianças das Escolas Municipaes! 2.000 crianças em interessantes exercicios de gymnastica sueca e de cultura physica generalisada! Os defensores do Brasil de amanhã”. *Jornal do Brasil*, Anno XXXIV, n.268, 07 November 1924, 26.

⁴³⁷ “Encerrar-se-á mais especialmente na calistenia, nessa combinação de ‘exercícios de movimento’, engenhados por Adolfo Spiess, e destinados a produzirem um simétrico desenvolvimento muscular, sem prejuízo da doçura das maneiras, da graça e elegância do talhe, da bela harmonia das formas femininas. Um ponto a que ligamos a mais considerável importância, é a combinação do ritmo e do canto com a ginástica. Os trabalhos das mais eminentes autoridades europeias não deixam a menor dúvida sobre a racionalidade perfeita e a extraordinária utilidade da associação desses dois elementos na pedagogia escolar.” *Obras Completas de Rui Barbosa* (1882), 90-91.

⁴³⁸ See Cristina Araújo, “A Reforma Antônio Carneiro Leão no final dos anos de 1920.” *Revista Brasileira de História da Educação*, n° 19, (2009), 119-136.

⁴³⁹ Estado de Pernambuco, *Regulamento do Ensino Publico Estadual de Pernambuco* (Recife: Typographia do Jornal do Recife, 1912), 18-9. In the case of Pernambuco, the reform of 1926 reiterated the activities and obligations of the school doctor.

revaccination service, these doctors were responsible for everything else related to school hygiene. Working together, teachers and physicians supervised hygienic inspections and sanitation in schools. The partnership between the doctor and the teacher, foreseen in the regulations, mirrored the speeches of reformers like Carneiro Leão and doctors like Ulysses Pernambucano, affirming that pedagogy and medicine should walk together for the success of hygienic education.⁴⁴⁰

Psychiatrist Ulysses Pernambucano also created the position of “visitadoras” (female visitors) in the educational reforms. Those “visitors” were nurses who would assist school medical inspections, ensuring the health of schoolchildren. Subordinated to the Department of Health and Assistance, numerous medical professionals were responsible for working inside or outside of schools and for visiting the families of schoolchildren to ascertain more precisely students’ family history and their living conditions. In addition, it was also important to advise and guide the parents about the practice of good hygiene.⁴⁴¹ Ulysses Pernambucano’s proposal to “sanitize” schools included the exclusion of children with contagious diseases and what he called “abnormal” ones, aimed at not risking “the development of normal children.”⁴⁴² In this process of identifying “abnormalities,” the school doctor played the central role.⁴⁴³

It was necessary to individualize the curriculum of the students, making each one compatible with the collective teaching plan. The best teacher was the one “who knows his students.” Brazilian authorities called for

⁴⁴⁰ Ulysses Pernambucano de Melo Sobrinho (1892-1943) was a Brazilian physician and psychiatrist born in Recife. He graduated from the Medical School of Rio de Janeiro in 1912, working there at the Hospital Nacional de Alienados. He also worked in the state of Paraná before moving back to his hometown. In Recife, Pernambucano created the Instituto de Psicologia (1925) and became the principal of the prestigious educational institution Ginásio Pernambucano (1928). In 1936, he founded the Sanatório Recife, a private institution for the treatment of patients with psychiatric pathologies. Pernambucano wrote, among other studies, *As medidas de estatura dos escolares de Pernambuco* (1927) and *As doenças mentais entre os negros de Pernambuco* (1935).

⁴⁴¹ Estado de Pernambuco, *Organização da Educação no estado de Pernambuco (justificação, lei organica e commentarios, opiniões de associações e da imprensa)* (Recife: Imprensa Oficial, 1928).

⁴⁴² *Ibid.*, 11.

⁴⁴³ A very interesting work about pioneering works on the development of special education and psychology in Brazil (notably São Paulo) is Carlos Monarcha’s “Escola “Pacheco e Silva” anexada ao Hospital de Juqueri (1929-1940),” *Boletim - Academia Paulista de Psicologia* (São Paulo, v. 30, n. 1, jun. 2010) 7-20.

separate classes for “normal students, sub-normal (mentally weak, delayed, holdbacks) and super-normal (very intelligent).” The objective was to keep students’ skills at the same level in each section and to “know the inner physiognomy of each student, their characteristic way of being, and study their mental types: visual, auditory, motor, imaginative, repeater, reflective, logical, aesthetic, selfish, altruistic, euphoric, good-natured, depressive, self-willed, abulic.”⁴⁴⁴ There was almost unanimous consensus among physicians who discussed educational hygiene at the time, that the physicality of student bodies, their mental diagnosis, and the hygienic conditions of schools and classrooms worked hand in hand to shape and enhance a prosperous “race.”⁴⁴⁵

The separation of students into normal, subnormal, and supernormal categories, regulated by the state, indicates the consonance of hygienist ideals and precepts so widely studied and disseminated by Brazilian educators, hygienists, and intellectuals. Clearly, hygiene, psychology, and pedagogy were connected. Professionals involved in education, such as school doctors, visiting nurses, and teachers themselves evaluated the physical, mental, and moral state of schoolchildren. From the hygienic and pedagogical point of view, reformists thought that, among other issues, “the problem of abandoned children” had to be addressed as well.⁴⁴⁶ It was also necessary strictly to observe the eugenic measures aimed particularly at avoiding the larger issue of “the impoverishment of blood,” brought about by the material and social poverty of school-age children:

As civilization grows in intensity and the struggle for life reaches its most ferocious aspects, the pauperism and anguish of a large part of men increases. All these people, whose life is dragging

⁴⁴⁴ “Abulic” (neurotic) is a person diagnosed as suffering from abulia, a symptom of mental disorder involving impairment or loss of volition, the abnormal lack of ability to act or to make decisions. Estado de Pernambuco, *Instrução Pública de Pernambuco. Diretoria técnica de educação. Planos de aula de aritmética. (Números) pelo prof. José Ribeiro Escobar* (Recife: Imprensa Oficial, 1929), 5.

⁴⁴⁵ Aloysio da Silva Lima Jorge, *Higiene Escolar* (Salvador: Livraria e Typ do Comercio, doctoral dissertation, Faculdade de Medicina da Bahia, 1924). Lima Jorge became the Mayor of Valença from 1931-1937, in the state of Bahia. See also, Dinorah Bittencourt Moscoso, *A Higiene na escola* (Salvador: doctoral dissertation, Faculdade de Medicina da Bahia, 1930). Documentation shows there was a substantial debate about the ideal number of students for each classroom. The French admitted 50 students per classroom, the Americans 40 for the lower classes and 50 for the other classes. Germans, Belgians, Swiss and Italians defended 40 students per class. Some hygienists in Brazil, however, proposed a reduced number of just 30 students for each classroom. See Ulysses Pernambucano, *Classificação das crianças anormais: a parada do desenvolvimento intelectual e suas formas de instabilidade e astenia mental* (Recife: Imprensa Oficial, 1918). This text was Pernambucano’s dissertation for admission as full Professor of Psychology and Pedology at the Escola Normal Oficial de Pernambuco.

⁴⁴⁶ Antônio Carneiro Leão, *Problemas de educação* (Rio de Janeiro, RJ: A. C. Carvalho, 1919), 238-9.

on painfully, producing much less than they need, must endure the consequences of the imbalance, compromising, by the impoverishment of their blood and the weakening of their resistance, the generations to come. Sometimes these generations are born ruined; other times, however, they resurface promisingly and only the abandonment, suffering, physical and moral deprivation will dissolve them in the first years of existence. They are the children of misery and pain. The criminals, the insane, the beggars and the entire legion of monsters will emerge from them on a large scale, degrading the species and affect and poison life itself.⁴⁴⁷

In the context of the educational system, hygiene also joined eugenics to combat the causes of social degeneration. From the eugenic perspective, heredity would be one of the causes of the degeneration/generation of Brazilian future generations, creating a sick and useless people or a healthy and strong nation.⁴⁴⁸ Emphatic eugenic positions also guided educational reforms in the previous years of era of Getúlio Vargas. When Carneiro Leão returned to Recife to direct the Department of Public Education of Pernambuco, he brought with him eugenicists from Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo.⁴⁴⁹ The reforms conceived and implemented by people like Carneiro Leão and Ulysses Pernambucano, from Rio de Janeiro (in the south) to Pernambuco (in the north), are interesting examples of how the main principles of eugenics, hygiene, physical education, and the formation of citizen-soldiers were interconnected through the work of educational leaders.

⁴⁴⁷ Antônio Carneiro Leão, *Problemas de educação* (Rio de Janeiro, RJ: A. C. Carvalho, 1919), 238-9.

⁴⁴⁸ Graça Couto & Afrânio Peixoto, *Noções de Higiene: Livro de leitura para as escolas* (Rio de Janeiro: Francisco Alves & Cia; Paris: Aillaud, Alves & Cia, 1914); José Paranhos Fontenelle, *Compendio de Higiene* (Rio de Janeiro: Leite Ribeiro & Maurillo, 1918); Afrânio Peixoto, *Ensinar a Ensinar: ensaios de pedagogia aplicados à educação nacional* (Rio de Janeiro: Francisco Alves, 1921); Filogonio Lisboa, “Organização do Serviço de enfermeiras no Maranhão,” *Annaes do Primeiro Congresso Brasileiro de Higiene* (Rio de Janeiro: Oficinas Graphicas da Inspectoria de Demographia Sanitaria, 1924). Manoel Ferreira, “Sessão de Encerramento: discurso do dr. Manoel Ferreira.” *Annaes do Segundo Congresso Brasileiro de Higiene. Vol. I* (Rio de Janeiro: Livraria, Papelaria e Litho-Typographia Pimenta de Mello & Cia, 1928); Samuel Libanio, “Serviço permanente de higiene municipal,” *Annaes do Segundo Congresso Brasileiro de Higiene. Vol. I* (Rio de Janeiro: Livraria, Papelaria e Litho-Typographia Pimenta de Mello & Cia, 1928); Humberto Pascale, “A acção do posto de higiene em educação sanitária,” *Annaes do Terceiro Congresso Brasileiro de Higiene* (Rio de Janeiro: Oficinas Graphicas da Inspectoria de Demographia Sanitaria, 1929); Abreu Fialho, “Organização higienica do Ensino. Higiene do trabalho mental. Higiene das férias.” *Annaes do Quinto Congresso Brasileiro de Higiene* (Rio de Janeiro: Oficinas Graphicas da Inspectoria de Demographia Sanitaria, 1930).

⁴⁴⁹ Carneiro Leão also transformed the Normal School of Pernambuco into the first Brazilian institution to offer regular courses in sociology, and he invited his friend and fellow *pernambucano*, Gilberto Freyre, to be the first professor of sociology. Gilberto Freyre, et.al, *Estácio Coimbra: homem representativo do seu meio e do seu tempo* (Recife: Instituto Joaquim Nabuco de Pesquisas Sociais, 1973).

Transition to Authoritarianism

Prior to the 1930 Revolution, political leaders, medical practitioners, and educators responsible for composing and implementing educational reforms, promoted the physical, intellectual, and moral formation of Brazilian schoolchildren. The “mission of the school”, they believed, should be to shape young Brazilians through physical culture. For them, this was a “modern orientation” to education. It would be through this type of education “that Brazil will have the only effective means for its entire reconstruction, (...) to which the values of race are added.”⁴⁵⁰ The eugenic discourse that circulated in Brazil emphasized the role of a systematic physical education of the people, aimed at “the physical regeneration of the race.”⁴⁵¹

The educational system also had the patriotic role of building a new generation of physical and mentally healthy young Brazilians. Strongly promoting “its constructive, biological and social action,” Brazil’s educational system aimed at creating a “common social ideal, for the conscious and harmonious cooperation of all for the general good.” Through these methods, “the revolution for this educative work will come to conspicuously consume its commitment” and fulfill its nationalist mission:

If there is a work that should bring together the aspirations of all healthy voices, that in Brazil rise by the grandeur of the country, that should provoke the clamorous unison, an irresistible movement of all the living forms of the country, this one is the education of the people. A central problem that encompass all other problems, in which all the grandiose wishes and aspirations of the race merge, the open and luminous air of freedom, the majesty of justice, the abundance of wealth, the broad perspectives of health, national prestige and dignity, the education of the people must be itself a project of government. Extensive and comprehensive education, within which the physical regeneration of the race, the formation of the character, the cultural rise of the people, and the technical preparation of the national worker are elaborated.⁴⁵²

⁴⁵⁰ Aníbal Bruno, “Conferencia pronunciada em 20 de Junho de 1930 em reunião presidida pelo Dr. Arthur Marinho, Secretario de Estado da Justiça, Educação e Interior.” In: José Ribeiro Escobar, *Educação Nova*. Diretoria Technica de Educação de Pernambuco (Recife, PE: Imprensa Official, 1930).

⁴⁵¹ Aníbal Bruno (Op. cit.), 8.

⁴⁵² *Ibid.*, 14.

Medical practitioners and educators had similar concerns about the education of the people. They believed in education as the tool for the physical regeneration of the Brazilian race, which should begin in primary schools. Their preoccupation was in creating a type of physical education that would fit the “strictly scientific models” of the time because “More than in any other people, perhaps, it is urgent to seriously consider among us the physical basis of the race.”⁴⁵³ Education and health experts in regions such as Bahia, Pará, Pernambuco, São Paulo, or Rio de Janeiro considered the health and physical capacity of the nation as “the basis of all social progress,” but a focus on individual regions was not enough, more attention should be given to the physical education of Brazil as a national priority. After all, “the accumulated anti-hygienic causes created a sick race, which must be rescued at all costs.”⁴⁵⁴ Although places like Pernambuco claimed national leadership on the measures adopted by its department of education, they also saw that all regions of Brazil had to adopt the same project.⁴⁵⁵

By the 1930s, a corps of physical education inspectors, female monitors, and school doctors specialized in physical education and supervised teachers and school groups. The preparation of these specialized teachers took place in regular courses in education schools that emphasized both theoretical and practical classes about physical exercises. They also took principles of anatomy and physiology applied to physical education, physiology, hygiene, and pedagogical biometry, taught by medical inspectors. Schoolchildren gathered for physical exercises forming homogeneous groups according to their anatomical-physiological age. There were also special groups of corrective gymnastics and respiratory gymnastics for the “weak and abnormal.” Schools created individual files on the physical education of each student, and were tasked with giving students periodic medical exams “to verify the results obtained with the practice of physical exercises.”⁴⁵⁶

⁴⁵³ Diretoria Técnica da Educação do Estado de Pernambuco, “Introdução.” *Boletim da Directoria Tecnica* (Recife, Ano I, n. 1, dez., 1931) 5-6.

⁴⁵⁴ Diretoria Técnica da Educação do Estado de Pernambuco, “Introdução.” *Boletim da Directoria Tecnica* (Recife, Ano I, n. 1, dez., 1931) 5-6.

⁴⁵⁵ Diretoria Técnica da Educação do Estado de Pernambuco, “Introdução.” *Boletim da Directoria Tecnica* (Recife, Ano I, n. 1, dez., 1931), 9.

⁴⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 10.

It is noteworthy that the biometric tests consisted of psychological exams and anthropometric data. The results were assigned racial classifications by Edgard Roquette-Pinto, from Rio de Janeiro, Arthur Ramos, from Alagoas, and other key eugenicists during the Vargas' regime.⁴⁵⁷ It was expected that schoolchildren would eventually have the proper facilities for biometric exams, hygienic study, games and the militaristic conception of physical education. Physical exercise was to be practiced outdoors in areas "immediately adapted for this purpose and, during bad weather, in pavilions or other sheltered places, with sufficient airing and general conditions of the perfect hygiene."⁴⁵⁸ For boys and girls, physical education and "hygienic gymnastics" represented a healthy and scientific base for the redemption for the "re-education of the abnormal," and for developing the vigor of the new generations.⁴⁵⁹

As this chapter has shown, throughout the decades leading up the Second World War, physical education had become a dominant discourse in the educational approaches of the Brazilian elites and the government—at the state and national levels. The state was determined to standardize hygienic norms and inspections, the moments in which children were examined by doctors, nurses and even dentists in order to ensure their health, and in the organization of gymnastics classes. Moreover, the state pursued scientific standards as the government set out a series of guidelines formulated by intellectuals, hygienists, physicians, and educators. From the

⁴⁵⁷ Edgard Roquette-Pinto (1884-1954) was an ethnologist, anthropologist, physician, and professor. Roquette-Pinto established the racial classifications such as Faiodermo, Leucodermo and Melanodermo from Greek formative parts of words: phaios: pardo (brown); leukos (white); melas/melanos (black); derma (skin). To learn more about Roquette-Pinto and the racialization of education during Vargas' regime, see Jerry Dávila's *Diploma of Whiteness*. Arthur de Araújo Pereira Ramos (1903-1949) was a psychiatrist, ethnologist, and social psychologist born in Alagoas. See also Ramos' *A higiene mental nas escolas: esquema de organização* (Rio de Janeiro: Oficina Gráfica do Departamento de Educacao do Distrito Federal, 1934); *O negro brasileiro: etnografia religiosa e psicanálise* (Rio de Janeiro: Civilização Brasileira, 1934); *Loucura e crime: questões de psiquiatria, medicina forense e psicologia social* (Porto Alegre: Liv. do Globo, 1937); *As culturas negras no Novo Mundo* (Rio de Janeiro: Civilização Brasileira, 1937); *A criança problema: a higiene mental na escola primária* (Rio de Janeiro: Companhia Editora Nacional, 1939); *Saúde do espírito: higiene mental* (Rio de Janeiro: Serviço de propaganda e educação sanitária, 1939); *O negro brasileiro* (São Paulo: Cia. Editora Nacional, 1940); *A aculturação negra no Brasil* (Rio de Janeiro: Cia. Editora Nacional, 1942); *Guerra e relações de raça* (Rio de Janeiro: Departamento Editorial da União Nacional dos Estudantes, 1943); and *A mestiçagem no Brasil* (a post-mortem publication. Maceió: EDUFAL, 2004), among others.

⁴⁵⁸ Diretoria Técnica da Educação do Estado de Pernambuco, *Boletim da Directoria Tecnica* (Recife, Ano I, n. 1, dez., 1931), 109.

⁴⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

construction of school buildings to the bodies of students, the state objective was to guarantee the physical, intellectual, and moral development of the nation.

This was proper role of the educational system, and physical education had a key role, to help constitute physically, intellectually, and racially homogeneous Brazilians. Clearly, this education discourse had become dominant by the Vargas era (1930-45) as medicine and education worked together “to save and regenerate” the nation, the Brazilian homeland.⁴⁶⁰ The discourses of eugenics, health, and physical education had been part of the conversation among intellectuals and government officials since the nineteenth century. They became dominant by the early twentieth century. Physical education, as a key part of physical culture, was clearly historically significant instrument, if not the most important instrument, constituting school culture. By the 1930s, physical culture, especially the physical education of the body itself, was widely viewed as key contributor to the formation of the student as citizen. The school had become a central and crucial place to rehabilitate and form bodies for the nation.



Figure 14

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⁴⁶⁰ For more about the role teachers had in disseminating physical culture in primary schools during Vargas’ administration, see Rosa Lydia Teixeira Corrêa, “Cultura, material escolar e formação de professores: como disciplinar o corpo – imagens e textos,” *Educar em Revista* (Curitiba: Editora UFPR, n. 49, jul./set. 2013) 183-205.

⁴⁶¹ Schoolgirls practicing physical exercises in the 1930s. Academia Santa Gertrudes school, Olinda, Pernambuco.



Figure 15

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⁴⁶² “Em recreio. Um grupo de aprendizes na primeira lição de ginástica militar,” 1910. Students in their first lesson of military gymnastics at the Escola de Aprendizes e Artífices in Maceió, Alagoas. Collection Nilo Peçanha - Museu da República/IBRAM, NP 146.

CHAPTER IV

Soldierly Bodies: Masculine and Militaristic Mechanisms of National Identity



Figure 16

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⁴⁶³ “Educação Phisica - Exercícios Diversos” 1917. *Escola de Aprendizes-Marinheiros do Ceará* (founded in 1864). Arquivo da Marinha DPHDM: RJDPHDM EAMCE-DE-IC-013-39318.

Quaresma was a small, thin man (...) It was not well known where he was born, but it was certainly not in São Paulo, nor in Rio Grande do Sul, nor in Pará. Quaresma was primarily Brazilian. (...) At the age of eighteen he wanted to become a military man; but the health board found him unfit. He disliked it, suffered, but did not curse the Motherland.

Lima Barreto – *Triste Fim de Policarpo Quaresma* (1911)

Triste Fim de Policarpo Quaresma is considered a masterpiece of Brazilian pre-modernist literature, originally published in 1911 as a *feuilleton* in the newspaper *Jornal do Commercio*.⁴⁶⁴ While describing and criticizing the first years of the Brazilian Republic, Lima Barreto tells the story of the naïve, idealistic patriot protagonist Major Quaresma and his exacerbated nationalistic attitude during the government of Marshal Floriano Peixoto, also mentioning significant historic events such as the Paraguayan War and the Federalist Revolution.⁴⁶⁵ Lima Barreto's audacious satire pointed to the face of a Brazil that maintained political and economic privileges, although its leaders expressed discourses of unity, progress, and belonging. In the story, the character Policarpo Quaresma, in fact, was not a real major of the Army and had never occupied a military post because, at the age of eighteen, he was considered physically unfit. In 1901, before Lima Barreto's book, the author Júlia Lopes de Almeida wrote *A Falência*, a story that took place in 1891—the year when the price of coffee reached extraordinary proportions—soon after the establishment of the Republic.⁴⁶⁶ One of the characters developed by Júlia Lopes de Almeida is the “tall and broad-shouldered” Captain Rino, described as a person who stood out among the others for the “robustness” of his physique.⁴⁶⁷

⁴⁶⁴ The full work was published as a book in 1915. See Lima Barreto, *Triste Fim de Policarpo Quaresma* (Rio de Janeiro: Typ. Revista dos Tribunaes, 1915). Also in English: *The Sad End of Policarpo Quaresma*, translation by Mark Carlyon (London/New York: Penguin Classics, 2015). Afro-Brazilian Afonso Henriques de Lima Barreto (1881-1922) was born in Rio de Janeiro and is one of the greatest Brazilian writers, considered one of the main literary figures who preceded Brazilian Modernism. According to Lilia Schwarcz, Lima Barreto suffered so much from racial discrimination that he tried three times to enter the Brazilian Academy of Letters without success. To know more, see Lilia Moritz Schwarcz's *Lima Barreto: triste visionário* (São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 2017).

⁴⁶⁵ See Nelson Werneck Sodré, *História militar do Brasil* (Rio de Janeiro: Civilização Brasileira, 3ª edição, 1979); Celso Castro, *Os militares e a República: um estudo sobre cultura e ação política* (Rio de Janeiro: Jorge Zahar, 1995); See also João Quartim de Moraes's *A esquerda militar no Brasil: da conspiração republicana à guerrilha dos tenentes* (São Paulo: Siciliano, vol.1, 1991).

⁴⁶⁶ At a time also known as Encilhamento, a period of great financial speculation on the stock market, Júlia Lopes de Almeida uncovered a scenario of romantic affairs, developing the plot of Camila, an adulterous woman in search of fulfillment. For more about the Encilhamento economic crisis, during the military government of Marshall Deodoro da Fonseca, see Edmar Bacha et.al., *130 anos: em busca da República* (Rio de Janeiro: Editora Intrínseca, 2019).

⁴⁶⁷ Júlia Lopes de Almeida (1862-1934) was one of the main writers of her generation and one of the creators of the Academia Brasileira de Letras (Brazilian Academy of Letters). Coming from a modern home, which stimulated reading, and married to the Portuguese poet Filinto de Almeida, Júlia Lopes de Almeida faced the craft of writing with diligence, achieving a prolific and outstanding corpus of work. She began her career at the age of nineteen at the *Gazeta de Campinas*, in a difficult time for women's participation in intellectual circles. For over thirty years, Júlia Lopes de Almeida collaborated with the Rio de Janeiro newspaper *O Paiz*. She championed abolitionism and republicanism. Throughout her career, Júlia Lopes de Almeida wrote short stories, plays, novels, chronicles, and children's books. She ended up somehow forgotten in the decades of 1930s and 1940s, during the Modernist Movement, and her name

Although what was considered a soldierly physique changed over different historical periods, the primary intent of physical standards and bodily composition within the military corps has been to select the individuals best suited for the physical demands of military service and warfare. In this context, both of these fictional characters somehow depict, although paradoxically, the Brazilian military's concerns about physical standards that gained greater attention with the advent of the Republic. From the perspective of the military, the Brazilian nation and its people would need to be strong, trained, fit, and ready to join the greatest, civilized nations.

As the previous chapter demonstrated, the ideology of physical culture notably focused on the (re)structuring of bodily education at schools, including military exercises for young Brazilians. But what about the military institutions themselves? As a means of achieving this goal of fitness and physicality, the ideal project for the new country also involved aspects of bodily preparation and enhancement of military citizens, those reckoned to be responsible for defending the motherland and guaranteeing Brazil's "order and progress."⁴⁶⁸ This chapter seeks to understand the action and perspectives adopted by military institutions in a fundamental moment of the identification of the interests that motivated major concerns with the preparation of the body. The analysis is also devoted to understanding what motivated the concerns about a militarized body and the measures taken to improve it. This chapter also discusses the context that led to a greater emphasis on physical activities as an integral part of the projects of reorganization and revitalization of military institutions, especially during the early years of the new Brazilian republic.

was excluded from the list of the Brazilian Academy of Letters' first meeting. The reason was the prohibition of women to participate in the Academy, which would only be revoked in 1977, when Rachel de Queiroz was granted a seat. Júlia Lopes de Almeida's husband occupied seat number 3 of Academy, among the founders, always stating that his wife was the one deserving the post.

⁴⁶⁸ The motto "order and progress" was inspired by the ideals of Positivism at the time of the creation of the Brazilian national flag in 1889.

4.1 Defying “idle habits”

After independence, Brazilian military officers assumed various roles within national organizations and the government bureaucracy. The military’s main focus, however, remained internal repression, the defense of the coast against foreign invasions and border operations.⁴⁶⁹ Invoking article 145 of the 1824 Constitution—which called upon Brazilians “to uphold the independence, the integrity of the empire, and to defend it from its external or internal enemies”⁴⁷⁰—the general legislative assembly of 1833 determined “the gymnastics proper for war” as part of the Army’s organization.⁴⁷¹ Accordingly, the physical education of soldiers had to be “cultivated in Brazil as a necessary art,” integrated to what Brazilian statesmen considered “the public education” of “infants and young men.”⁴⁷² By “spreading gymnastics teachers” throughout the territory, the Brazilian government sought in the Brazilian soldier characteristics such as “frugality, sobriety, continence, neatness, and vigilance” within the “reverent” mission of always “obey and never complain.”⁴⁷³

Under the Empire, the armed forces did not have fully professionalized troops.⁴⁷⁴ The Brazilian Army had to organize based on, “those improvements existing in other nations for a long time,” with the utilization and

⁴⁶⁹ For more about the internal organization of the armed forces and the role of the military personnel within the organization of Brazil’s public services after Independence, see Aurélio de Lyra Tavares, *Exército e nação* (Recife: Imprensa Universitária, 1965); Nelson Werneck Sodré, *História militar do Brasil* (Rio de Janeiro: Civilização Brasileira, 3a edição, 1979).

⁴⁷⁰ BRASIL, *Constituição Política do Império do Brasil* (25 March 1824), Chapter VIII – “Da Força Militar,” Art. 145. Available online at Presidência da República - Casa Civil - Subchefia para Assuntos Jurídicos: http://www.planalto.gov.br/ccivil_03/constituicao/constituicao24.htm

⁴⁷¹ “Sessão em 8 de Junho de 1833,” *Annaes do Parlamento Brasileiro – Camara dos Srs. Deputados, Quarto Anno da Segunda Legislatura, Sessão de 1833, Colligidos por Jorge João Dodsworth, Tomo Primeiro* (Rio de Janeiro: Typographia de Viuva Pinto & Filho, 1887) 234.

⁴⁷² Ibid.

⁴⁷³ Ibid.

⁴⁷⁴ Brazilian armed forces accepted battalions of mercenaries and foreigners who opted for a national system of volunteering in order to participate in interventions and armed conflicts. Moreover, the discontent and complaints of the troops were because of late payments, lack of food, absence of uniforms, and so on that many times led to indiscipline. According to Sodré, being a soldier was often considered “a punishment, a reason for humiliation, the fate of incorrigible elements, of evildoers.” See Sodré (1979) 127-8.

valorization of the human contingent available to the nation.⁴⁷⁵ Physical culture played a determinant role in Brazilian military reforms and the responsible authorities believed that the investment in the army's physical education was "well compensated for by the physical development achieved and the aptness obtained by all the bodily exercises."⁴⁷⁶

Hoping to form and prepare stronger and better bodies for the military forces, officials also addressed the apprenticeship stages of officers' formation, as demonstrated by an order by the Minister of War dated April 20, 1849, sent to the director of the arsenal of war, instructing Bernardo Urbano de Bigegorry to be admitted as a gymnastics instructor for young apprentices.⁴⁷⁷ This idea was even extended to orphaned minors working in the military, aiming "to improve the fate of these innocent sons of the Nation, the only ones who, being well educated, can give utilitarian workers, less expensive to the War Armor Companies."⁴⁷⁸ Neglecting and "hindering the physical development" of those young individuals meant the obstruction of "their moral education" as well.

The employment of bodily exercises as part of Brazil's soldierly formation gradually gained more supporters within military institutions, convinced that the "development of physical strength" would produce "the modern peoples," not only preparing individuals for the actions of military life but also for "inspiring great

⁴⁷⁵ "Arsenaes de Guerra e Depositos de Artigos Bellicos," *Relatorio da Repartição dos Negocios da Guerra Apresentado à Assembléa Geral Legislativa na 3ª. Sessão da 8ª Legislativa, pelo respectivo Ministro e Secretario de Estado Manoel Felisardo de Sousa e Mello* (Rio de Janeiro: Typographia Americana de I.P. de Costa, 1851) 16.

⁴⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

⁴⁷⁷ "Sessão em 6 de março de 1850 - Expediente," *Annaes do Parlamento Brasileiro – Camara dos Srs. Deputados, Primeiro Anno da Oitava Legislatura, Sessão de 1850, Colligidos por Antonio Pereira Pinto, Tomo Segundo* (Rio de Janeiro: Typographia de H.J. Pinto, 1879) 61. The text in Portuguese is: "Officio do Sr. ministro da guerra, que informando o requerimento de Bernardo Urbano de Bigegorry, declarando que por aviso de 20 de Abril de 1849, dirigido ao director do arsenal de guerra da côrte, se ordenou que este individuo fosse admittido como professor de gymnastica dos aprendizes menores (...)."

⁴⁷⁸ José Clemente Pereira, "Menores do Arsenal de Guerra," in *Relatorio Apresentado à Assembléa Geral Legislativa na Sessão Ordinaria de 1841, Pelo Ministro e Secretario de Estado dos Negocios da Guerra José Clemente Pereira* (Rio de Janeiro: Typographia Nacional, 1841) 9-10. Also according to the report, by 1841 there were 200 minors working in the Arsenal of War. However, "infinite" was "the number of destitute orphans" reported to asking for admission at the institution and so "an act of generosity and national protection" raised the number to 300.

confidence in those” instructed and educated with gymnastics.⁴⁷⁹ This belief encountered support also within medical discourse, according to which “the true, enlightened gymnastics” was “a necessity” for the Brazilian military to bring benefits to the soldiers’ bodies and “produce good effects by correcting the inconvenient outcomes brought about by their habitual practices.”⁴⁸⁰ The Imperial Academy of Medicine, concerned with the health of underage military apprentices, indicated “rational” exercises as part of the “hygienic means” necessary to “prevent and diminish” the high level of infirmities among them.⁴⁸¹ The Commission’s report, divided into three parts, comprised questions concerning the places in which the young apprentices lived and worked, the individuals themselves, and the major diseases that affected them. Medical reports on military corps and hospitals became a constant feature of the bureaucracy.⁴⁸²

Concomitantly, the legislation for the recruitment of regular troops changed over time seeking to improve and modernize Brazil’s armed forces, as fencing, swimming, rowing and equestrian classes became essential parts of the curricula in the military academies.⁴⁸³ The Navy and the Army created hubs of physical improvement,

⁴⁷⁹ G.S. “Do emprego da gymnastica como parte da instrucção ou escola do soldado.” in *O Militar Brioso* (Rio de Janeiro: Typ. de M.A. da Silva Lima, Anno 1, n.16, 3 de Julho de 1855) 4. The document offers no information about its writers. According to Fernanda Nascimento, it is possible that the publication “O Militar Brioso” came about as the result of some rupture between the writers of an older publication named “O Militar.” For more on nineteenth-century military publications, see Fernanda de Santos Nascimento, *A Imprensa periódica militar no século XIX: política e modernização no Exército Brasileiro (1850-1881)* (Porto Alegre: PUC-RS, doctoral dissertation in History, 2016).

⁴⁸⁰ “Relatorio da Comissão Encarregada Pela Academia Imperial de Medicina do Exame das Causas e Origem das Enfermidades dos Aprendizes Menores do Arsenal de Guerra desta Côrte Apresentado em 3 de Junho de 1841,” *Annaes Brasilienses de Medicina* (Rio de Janeiro: 8º Anno, 8º Vol., n.11, Agosto 1853) 260.

⁴⁸¹ “Relatorio da Comissão Encarregada Pela Academia Imperial de Medicina do Exame das Causas e Origem das Enfermidades dos Aprendizes Menores do Arsenal de Guerra desta Côrte Apresentado em 3 de Junho de 1841,” *Annaes Brasilienses de Medicina* (Rio de Janeiro: 8º Anno, 8º Vol., n.11, Agosto 1853), 152.

⁴⁸² Dr. Luiz Alvares, “Correspondencia Scientifica – Relatorio do hospital militar de Corrientes” *Gazeta Medica da Bahia* (Salvador: Typographia de Tourinho e Comp., n.18, 25 de Março de 1867) 212; Dr. Julio Rodrigues de Moura, “Ainda a Intoxicação Paludosa no Exercito Brasileiro em Operações Contra o Paraguay” *Gazeta Medica da Bahia* (Salvador: Typographia de Tourinho & C.^a, vol. II, 1868) 243; “Hygiene Publica - Estado Sanitario da Provincia do Pará” *Gazeta Medica da Bahia* (Salvador: Typographia de J.G. Tourinho, n.59, vol. III, 15 de Janeiro de 1869) 121.

⁴⁸³ See Euzebio José Antunes & Francisco Manoel Alvares de Araujo, “Estudos Sobre a Nossa Marinha de Guerra,” in *O Brasil Maritimo* (Salvador: Typ. Jornal da Bahia, Anno 1, vol.1, 2 de Janeiro de 1854). More: BRASIL, Decree 2.116 of March 1, 1858. Available online at <http://legis.senado.leg.br/norma/395509/publicacao/15777891> The regulation changed again in 1860 by Decree n. 2582, not altering though the article which determined fencing, swimming, and gymnastics as part of the regular military preparation. See Sebastião do Rego Barros, “Regulamento organico a que se refere o Decreto n.2582 desta data, modificando o Regulamento n.2116 do 1º de Março

“frankly opened to Brazilian youth” as part of the habits of military discipline and “services to the motherland.”⁴⁸⁴ Under the watch of Brazilian military leaders, concerns about the officers’ bodily preparation would become imperative as a result of key experiences on the battlefield. The Paraguay War (1864-1870) had a crucial impact on the thoughts of those who believed that the care of bodies was intrinsically connected to the nation building and national security.⁴⁸⁵

Army surgeon Eduardo Augusto Pereira de Abreu, for example, was sent to Uruguay in 1865 amid the events of the Paraguay War.⁴⁸⁶ Dr. Pereira de Abreu remained for two months in the region and made extensive observations about the soldiers on the front who rendered the work called “Hygienic studies on the physical, intellectual and moral education of the soldier: choosing the personnel for the good organization of our army” written in 1867.⁴⁸⁷ Dr. Abreu detailed and discussed aspects on the physical features of Brazilian soldiers that

de 1858 - Rio de Janeiro, 21 de Abril de 1860,” in *Relatorio da Repartição dos Negocios da Guerra* (Rio de Janeiro: Typographia Universal de Laemmert, 1860) 45-61. There were other previous regulations in the years 1837, 1841, 1848, 1851.

⁴⁸⁴ Christiano Benedito Ottoni, “Interior – Discurso do Sr. Ottoni, por occasiao da abertura das Aulas da Academia de marinha.” in *O Brasil Maritimo* (Recife: Typ. de M.F. de Faria, Anno 1, vol.1, n.11, 1 de Maio de 1854) 91-4. See also Sebastião do Rego Barros, “Escolas Militares - Regulamento Especial da Escola Central do Imperio do Brasil” in *Relatorio da Repartição dos Negocios da Guerra, apresentado à Assembléa Geral Legislativa na Primeira Sessão da Decima Primeira Legislatura pelo Ministro e Secretario de Estado dos Negocios da Guerra Marquez de Caxias* (Rio de Janeiro: Typographia Universal de Laemmert, 1861) 48-63. The instructors of gymnastics, swimming, fencing, and equitation were military officials themselves. See Henrique de Amorim Bezerra, “Escola Militar - Mappa do pessoal administrative e instructive actualmente existente” in *Relatorio da Repartição dos Negocios da Guerra, apresentado à Assembléa Geral Legislativa na Terceira Sessão da Decima-Primeira Legislatura pelo Ministro e Secretario de Estado dos Negocios da Guerra Polidoro da Fonseca Quintanilha Jordão* (Rio de Janeiro: Typographia Universal de Laemmert, 1863) 52. Years later, instructions of those physical exercises became open also to people “unrelated to military services” under the condition of “governmental designation.” See João Lustoza da Cunha Paranaguá, “Instrucções sobre a organização e regimen dos depositos de aprendizes artilheiros,” in *Relatorio da Repartição dos Negocios da Guerra apresentado à Assembléa Geral Legislativa na Primeira Sessão da Decima Terceira Legislatura pelo Ministro e Secretario D’Estado dos Negocios da Guerra João Lustoza da Cunha Paranaguá* (Rio de Janeiro: Typographia Nacional, 1867) 85-91.

⁴⁸⁵ João Lustoza da Cunha Paranaguá, “Operações activas do exercito e factos occorridos no theatro da guerra.” in *Relatorio Apresentado à Assembléa Geral Legislativa na Segunda Sessão da Decima Terceira Legislatura pelo Ministro e Secretario de Estado dos Negocios da Guerra João Lustoza da Cunha Paranaguá* (Rio de Janeiro: Typographia Nacional, 1868) 50-178.

⁴⁸⁶ Eduardo Augusto Abreu was the son of Commander Plácido Antonio Pereira de Abreu, the barber surgeon of Dom João VI, servant of Dom Pedro I, and treasurer of Empress Leopoldina. For more about physician Eduardo Augusto Pereira de Abreu, see Carlos Leonardo Bahiense da Silva & Victor Andrade de Melo’s “Fabricando o soldado, forjando o cidadão: o doutor Eduardo Augusto Pereira de Abreu, a Guerra do Paraguai e a educação física no Brasil” in *História, Ciências, Saúde - Manguinhos* (Rio de Janeiro: v.18, n.2, abr-jun 2011) 337-53.

⁴⁸⁷ Eduardo Augusto Pereira de Abreu’s text was originally titled in Portuguese as *Estudos higiênicos sobre a educação física, intelectual e moral do soldado: escolha do pessoal para a boa organização do nosso Exército* (1867).

seemed significant to him, such as the preparation of the soldiers' bodies. In his observations, the physician defended the establishment of examinations for the removal of those who did not have the physical structure necessary for military activities. Dr. Abreu argued for prioritizing healthy and well-trained bodies as fundamental for the formation of good soldiers. To achieve those crucial premises, the physician defended the use of gymnastics as an instrument of physical preparation and maintenance of vigor, also protecting Brazilian adolescents from "idle habits." Dr. Abreu emphasized the importance of physical culture for the education of young men who, physical and physiologically sound, would be ready to serve the nation.

Even though Brazil was victorious, the difficulties faced by Brazilian armed forces during the Paraguay War exposed a national weaknesses not only in economic terms but also related to the health of Brazil's soldiers' bodies.⁴⁸⁸ The high mortality rates of Brazilian soldiers during the war was an intrinsic consequence of the penurious hygiene conditions and the poor diet of the troops, facilitating the spread of diseases that caused more deaths than the battles themselves.⁴⁸⁹

This war had a powerful impact on Brazilian society. It coincided with the peak of Brazil imperial regime. Internal and diplomatic policies aimed at the unification of the national territory, the increasing pressure to end slavery, and the idea of strengthening the esprit de corps within the Brazilian armed forces were some important outcomes of the Paraguay War. Despite the many criticisms about Brazil's participation in the war, indeed one of its ramifications was the emergence of the myth of large-scale popular support for the armed forces during the conflict, as military bodily care gained new value, becoming a symbol of nationalism.⁴⁹⁰

⁴⁸⁸ According to Carvalho (p.106), the financial consequences for Brazil were disastrous. Public spending grew by over one thousand percent and the government was forced to raise taxes, mint more money, and take out large sums of loans domestically and abroad. Carvalho also states that the total cost of the war was calculated by the government at 614 thousand contos de réis, or around 50 million US dollars. See "A vida política" in Carvalho, *História do Brasil nação*, v.2, 83-130.

⁴⁸⁹ See Armando Amorim Ferreira Vidigal, "A campanha naval na Guerra da Tríplice Aliança contra o Paraguai" in *Navigator: Subsídios para a História Marítima do Brasil* (Rio de Janeiro: vol. 5, n. 9, 2009) 9-13.

⁴⁹⁰ A remarkable work about the Paraguay War is Francisco Doratioto's *Maldita guerra: nova história da Guerra do Paraguai* (São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 2002).

The Paraguayan War also drew special attention to the physical debilities of Brazil's military, unable to assemble "robust men; in general rachitic, anemic individuals, denouncing, for the lack of physical education and the few scruple when the admission of new apprentices, the exiguity of their height and their muscular weakness."⁴⁹¹ There was an explicit need to consider strategies designed for the education of the "body and spirit" of Brazilians, something particularly marked by the reports of physicians involved in the war. As a consequence, people like Captain Pedro Guilherme Meyer, for example, an active participant in the "theatre of war" who had his "acts of admirable bravery" highlighted by Brazilian leaders, returned from the Cisplatine conflict and resumed his role as instructor of gymnastics at the Military School.⁴⁹² It demonstrated the need for profound transformations in the reorganization and deployment of the armed forces, not only for establishing compulsory military service, but also for focusing on the improvement of training and technical preparation of the soldiers' bodies.⁴⁹³

The Proclamation of the Republic was the result of an urgent need for change.⁴⁹⁴ A considerable portion of military officials played a prominent role during the republican political movement, allied with other important groups such as landowners and the urban middle classes. The so-called "Questão Militar" (The Military Question), beginning in the 1870s, comprised a series of conflicts between groups within the armed forces and the imperial government—intensifying during the following decade—culminating with the political milestone of

⁴⁹¹ "Corpo de Imperiais e Companhias de Aprendizizes." *Revista Maritima Brasileira*, Direc. Elloy Pessoa, José Egydio Garcez Palha, Alfredo Augusto de Lima Barros (Rio de Janeiro: Lombaerts e C. Editores, Anno Segundo, n.1, vol. 3, Julho 1882) 592.

⁴⁹² Ibid., 149. In 1885, Pedro G. Meyer (a Coronel at that time) asked to be dismissed from his post of "master of gymnastics." Civilian citizen Paulino Francisco Paes Barreto substituted Meyer. See "Escola Militar da Corte," in *Relatorio Organizado pelo Ex-Ministro da Guerra Conselheiro Candido Luiz Maria de Oliveira e Apresentado à Assembléa Geral Legislativa na Primeira Sessão da Decima Nona Legislatura Pelo Ministro e Secretario de Estado dos Negocios da Guerra* (Rio de Janeiro: Imprensa Nacional, 1885) 11.

⁴⁹³ See Fabricio Jesus Teixeira Neves, "Os militares e a modernização brasileira na Primeira Republica: perspectivas teóricas" in *Anais do III Seminario de Estudos: Poder Aeroespacial e Estudos de Defesa* (Rio de Janeiro: julho 2010) 469-79.

⁴⁹⁴ See Emilia Viotti da Costa, *Da Monarquia à República: momentos decisivos* (São Paulo: Unesp, 2010). Viotti da Costa refers, for example, to the decay of traditional landed oligarchies, the abolition of slavery, immigration, and the process of industrialization and urbanization Brazil was facing.

15 November 1889.⁴⁹⁵ The initial years of the Brazilian Republic, although fruitful in terms of proposals and attempts for improving and establishing new paradigms of modernity for the country, also witnessed intense disputes among the elites in the political arena.⁴⁹⁶

Several measures related to the army were taken at the beginning of the government of Marshal Deodoro da Fonseca, notably the reorganization of armed forces' technical and physical education, under the first Minister of War—the positivist Benjamin Constant de Magalhães. He sought to promote the idea of a soldier-citizen, aimed at “raising the moral and intellectual level of Brazilian soldiers (...) without distracting them from their duties as citizens in the heart of home and in the heart of Motherland.”⁴⁹⁷ The first republican constitution (1891), made military service mandatory and laid out a general reorganization of the armed forces.⁴⁹⁸ In the same year, legislation divided the Brazilian territory into seven military districts, regulated the roles of commanders and the organization of personnel, also establishing the first administrative reorganization of the Ministry of War including, for example, the Sanitary Service and military schools.⁴⁹⁹ Brazilian ministers demanded these reforms

⁴⁹⁵ See Viotti da Costa (2010); and Frank D. McCann. *Soldiers of the Pátria: A History of the Brazilian Army, 1889-1937* (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 2004).

⁴⁹⁶ See Moises Almeida, “Os primeiros anos da República Brasileira e sua conturbada estabilização: militares, civis e monarquistas” in *Perspectivas Latinoamericanas* (Nagoya: Center for Latin American Studies - Nanzan University, n.1, 2004) 193-206. See also *Decreto n.43 de 7 de Dezembro de 1889 - Eleva o soldo das praças de pret do Exercito*, available online at <https://www2.camara.leg.br/legin/fed/decret/1824-1899/decreto-43-7-dezembro-1889-506267-publicacaooriginal-1-pe.html>; *Decreto n.56 de 14 de Dezembro de 1889 - Eleva o numero dos corpos de artilharia, cavallaria e infantaria de Exercito*, available online at <https://www2.camara.leg.br/legin/fed/decret/1824-1899/decreto-56-14-dezembro-1889-519641-publicacaooriginal-1-pe.html>; and *Decreto n. 113 A, de 31 de dezembro de 1889 - Eleva o soldo dos officiaes do Exercito*, available online at http://www.planalto.gov.br/ccivil_03/decreto/1851-1899/D0113A.htm

⁴⁹⁷ See BRASIL, Decreto n° 330, de 12 de Abril de 1890, available online at <https://www2.camara.leg.br/legin/fed/decret/1824-1899/decreto-330-12-abril-1890-524468-publicacaooriginal-1-pe.html> Moreover, in December 1889, the Decree no. 56 determined an increase in the number of artillery, cavalry and infantry corps, and the decrees no. 43 and no. 113-A raised the welds of soldiers and officers, respectively.

⁴⁹⁸ See BRASIL, *Constituição da República dos Estados Unidos do Brasil (24 de fevereiro de 1891)*, available online at http://www.planalto.gov.br/ccivil_03/Constituicao/Constituicao91.htm. Also in 1891, Law no.23 of October 30, which promoted the first major restructuring of public administration in the Republican period, also changed the name of the “Secretary of State for War Affairs” to Ministry of War. See *Lei n.23 de 30 de Outubro de 1891 - Reorganiza os serviços da Administração Federal*, available online at <https://www2.camara.leg.br/legin/fed/lei/1824-1899/lei-23-30-outubro-1891-507888-norma-pl.html>

⁴⁹⁹ See *Decreto n° 277, de 22 de Março de 1890 - Reorganiza o Corpo de Saude e o serviço hospitalar do Exercito*, available online at <https://www2.camara.leg.br/legin/fed/decret/1824-1899/decreto-277-22-marco-1890-504214-publicacaooriginal-1-pe.html>; and *Decreto n. 431, de 2 Julho de 1891 - Divide em sete districtos militares o territorio da Republica e extingue os logares de commandante*

as an attempt to balance the military exercises of training and regular work with the activities of war and territorial defense.⁵⁰⁰ Although the first two presidents of the Brazilian republic were military officers, the Ministry of War continued to face old, basic problems, such as understaffing and material shortages, aggravated by the involvement of troops in the southern military “Federalist Riograndense Revolution” (1893-1895) and the northern “War of Canudos” (1896-1897).⁵⁰¹

In the late nineteenth century, military leaders participated in the main political debates in Brazil. They were protagonists in the discussions about the interests that motivated greater concerns about the bodily preparation and the measures necessary to improve the physical preparation of Brazilian troops and shape “perfect soldiers and officers with vigorous bodies.”⁵⁰² The process of nation-formation envisioned a strong, well-trained and militarized people ready to fit in among the greatest nations on the planet. In other words, improving soldiers’ bodies was not only part of the broader concern with the technical and physical preparation of the Brazilian military, but also with the standards of efficiency, discipline, and hygiene that gained greater projection with the advent of the Republic.

de armas e de brigada, available online at <https://www2.camara.leg.br/legin/fed/decret/1824-1899/decreto-431-2-julho-1891-525018-publicacaooriginal-1-pe.html>. In 1896, Law no. 403 of October 24 created the “Estado-Maior do Exército” and the “Intendência-Geral da Guerra,” replacing the offices of the “Ajudante General and the “Quartel Mestre General.” The law no. 403 also established the Directorates-General for Artillery, Engineering and Health, regulated in the following years. See Lei n. 403, de 24 de outubro de 1896 - Crea o Estado-Maior do Exército e a Intendencia Geral da Guerra, e dá outras providencias, available online at <https://www2.camara.leg.br/legin/fed/lei/1824-1899/lei-403-24-outubro-1896-540216-norma-pl.html>

⁵⁰⁰ Francisco de Paula e Azevedo Pondé, *Organização e Administração do Ministério do Exército*, História Administrativa do Brasil, v. 37 (Brasília: ENAP; Rio de Janeiro: Biblioteca do Exército, 1994) 70.

⁵⁰¹ McCann (2004) 51-52.

⁵⁰² “Escola Militar.” *Relatorio Apresentado À Assembléa Geral Legislativa na Quarta Sessão da Decima-Quarta Legislatura Pelo Ministro e Secretario de Estado Interino dos Negocios da Guerra, Visconde do Rio Branco* (Rio de Janeiro: Typographia Universal de Laemmert, 1872) 34.

4.2 Cunhambebe vs. Xerxes, or the Brazilian Citizen-Soldier

Physical culture was a fundamental part of the projects for the reorganization of Brazil's military institutions in the early republic, a recurring theme along with the concerns about tactical and technical knowledge of war. Official reports from the military ministries, submitted to the central government, constantly highlighted the preoccupation with the processes of improving the physical preparation of soldiers and sailors. The training of the military personnel was a serious problem and the lack of proper, professional education and equipment resulted in some feeble personnel. A report of the Ministry of the Navy dated 1891, for example, argued that the poor organization of apprenticeship schools "established in many states" and the lack of appropriate material for practical instruction hindered young apprentices' learning in the "arts of the sailor," made it difficult for them to acquire "the physical development required for the arduous labor on the sea."⁵⁰³ The report defended (in essence supported by other reports from the Army as well) the total reform of preparatory schools and educational trips around the country—exchanging and integrating young apprentices—as part of the solution to the problem of "manifest lack of gymnastics necessary to a serviceman," offering physical e moral education for the "citizen and soldier."⁵⁰⁴

As previously noted, Army and Navy training schools had established the obligation of regular physical activity since the first decades of the nineteenth century. Observations on bodily care and the physical preparation of combatants from military institutions in other countries reinforced the encouragement of physical culture among the Brazilian military who also considered hygiene and physical exercises as fundamental tools for

⁵⁰³ Ministério da Marinha, "Batalhão Naval." *Relatório Apresentado ao Presidente da Republica dos Estados Unidos do Brazil pelo Ministro d'Estado dos Negocios da Marinha, Contra-Almirante Fortunado Foster Vidal em Junho de 1891* (Rio de Janeiro: Imprensa Nacional, 1891) 14.

⁵⁰⁴ S.J. Gonçalves, "Exercicios Militares." *Revista do Exercito Brasileiro* (Rio de Janeiro: Typ. da Revista do Exercito Brasileiro, Anno Terceiro, 1884) 308. Also: Ministério da Guerra, "Decreto n.750 A 2 de Março de 1892 - Approva o regulamento para o Collegio Militar," *Relatório Apresentado ao Vice-Presidente da Republica dos Estados Unidos do Brazil pelo General de Brigada Francisco Antonio de Moura, Ministro de Estado dos Negocios da Guerra em Maio de 1892* (Rio de Janeiro: Imprensa Nacional, 1892) 176, and Ministério da Guerra, "Collegio Militar," *Relatório Apresentado ao Presidente da Republica dos Estados Unidos do Brazil pelo General de Divisão Bernardo Vasques, Ministro de Estado dos Negocios da Guerra em Maio de 1895* (Rio de Janeiro: Imprensa Nacional, 1895) 27.

maintaining qualified, apt, and disciplined troops. During the nineteenth century, the adoption by the Brazilian Army, mostly of the called “Prussian system” for preparation of troops and “Swedish military gymnastics”—officially amalgamated with the arrival of the French Military missions—became part of the daily lives of Brazilian military institutions.⁵⁰⁵ Training institutions such as the Military School of the Capital and the Naval School in Rio, the War Armory School for Official Artificers of Pará, the Military School of Ceará, and the Military School of Rio Grande do Sul incorporated practices of physical culture as part of their training.⁵⁰⁶

Brazilian military officials’ commitment to physical culture engrained in the armed forces the belief that bodily care would enable the development of fundamental skills for the military exercise and main duty as the nation’s defender. Increasing attention to issues related to physical culture notably involved a set of policies related to physical activity and hygiene gradually incorporated into the curricula of Brazil’s military training institutions, also becoming part of the General Hygiene Inspectorate Regulations. Brazilian military institutions constantly received visits from general health delegates who addressed their reports to the head of the Army Sanitary Service.⁵⁰⁷ The results of those hygiene inspections established in the military institutions a “for cause” standard, determining someone’s dismissal from their services based on “physical incapacity.”

⁵⁰⁵ Filipe Franco de Sá, “Projeto de Plano de Reorganização do Exercito” *Relatorio da Repartição dos Negocios da Guerra – A* (Rio de Janeiro: Typographia Nacional, 1884) 1-9; Francisco de Paula Argolo, “Apresentadas por uma Comissão de professores da Escola Preparatoria e de Tactica de Porto Alegre” *Relatorio do Ministerio da Guerra – G* (Rio de Janeiro: Imprensa Militar, 1904) 24; José Bernardino Bormann, “Collegio Militar” *Relatorio do Ministerio da Guerra* (Capital Federal: Imprensa Militar, 1910) 13. See also Ministério da Educação e Saúde, *Obras Completas de Rui Barbosa – Vol. X 1883, Tomo II, Reforma do Ensino Primário e Várias Instituicoes Complementares da Instrução Pública* (Rio de Janeiro: Imprensa Nacional, 1946) 74-98; Miguel Hoerhmann, *A Esgrima de Bayoneta: Manual pratico-theorico Dedicado aos Officiaes e Inferiores da Infantaria Brasileira* (Maranhão: Typogravura Teixeira, 1904). Miguel Hoerhmann was a military instructor in the Austro-Hungarian Imperial and Royal War Navy from 1880 to 1888. By the time his handbook was published, Hoerhmann was the Director of Physical Education in the state of Maranhão. Hoerhmann also became teacher of Swedish gymnastics of the Collegio Militar in Rio de Janeiro, mentioned by the *Diário Oficial da União* (Rio de Janeiro: Seção 1, 12 de agosto de 1911) 14.

⁵⁰⁶ BRASIL-DOU, “Ministerio da Guerra,” *Diário Oficial da União* (Rio de Janeiro: Seção 1, 24 de maio de 1890) 3; *Diário Oficial da União* (Rio de Janeiro: Seção 1, 12 de agosto de 1890) 4; *Diário Oficial da União* (Rio de Janeiro: Seção 1, 20 de agosto de 1890) 8. As we have seen in chapter 3, during the 19th century not only military institutions but also public and civil educational institutions in general had instructors for gymnastics, “military exercises,” and physical education in their faculty, a function commonly performed by military personnel.

⁵⁰⁷ Ministério da Guerra, *Boletim do Exército, Repartição de Ajudante General - Ordem do Dia n. 423 - Hygiene* (Rio de Janeiro, Imprensa Militar, 1893) 189. Arquivo do Exército.

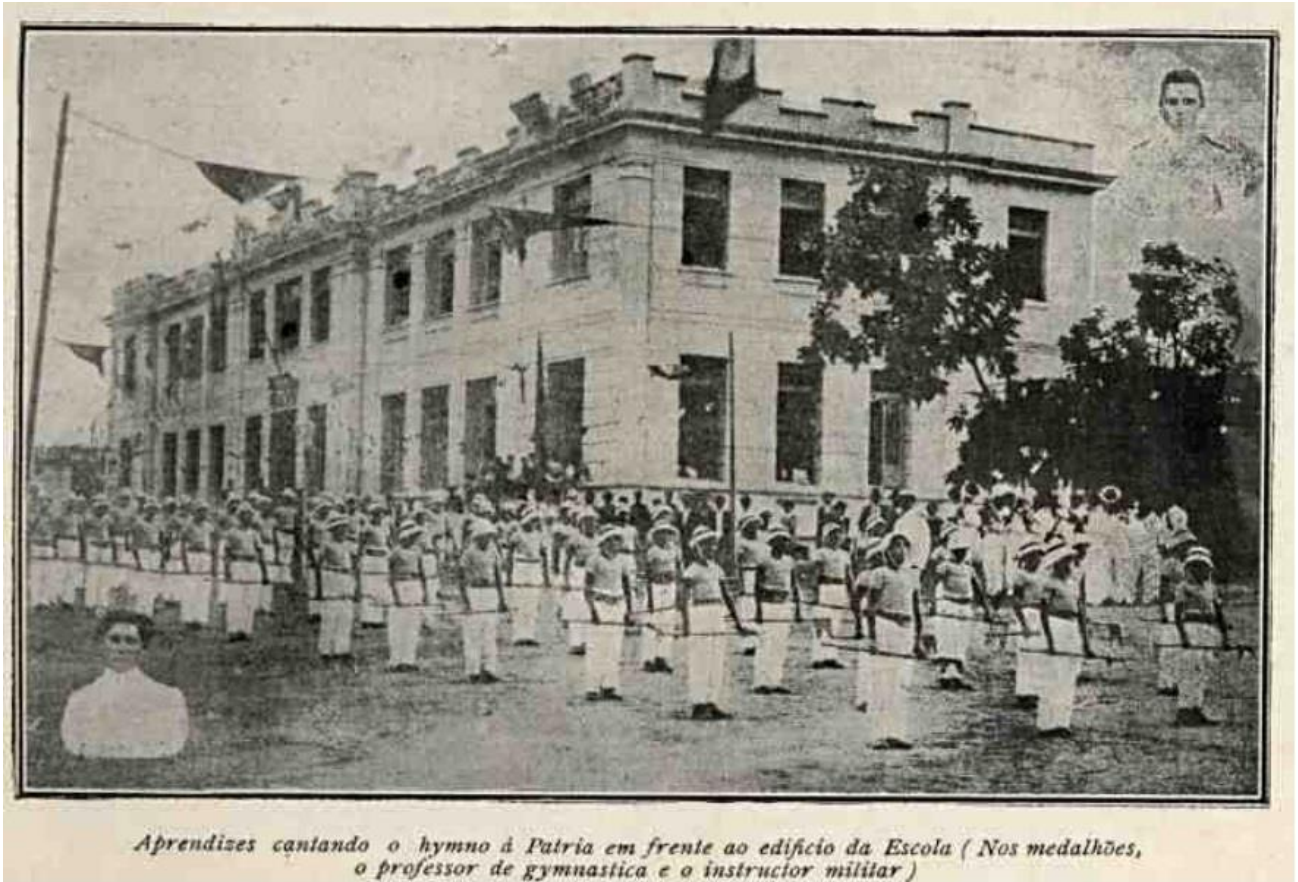


Figure 17

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Documents show that after examinations of medical boards in different states of Brazil, soldiers were removed from their military divisions under the allegations of “not possessing the precise robustness”. This was true in the cases of soldiers Victal Timotheo de Souza of the 4th Battalion of Artillery in Amazonas, Miguel Rodrigues da Costa from Ceará’s 27th Battalion, Herculano Alves da Silva Cabral of the 14th Battalion of Infantry in Pernambuco, and Luiz Romão de Andrade from the 33rd Battalion of Sergipe.⁵⁰⁹ These examples demonstrate that military officials were concerned not only with the “moral, intellectual, and civic formation” of Brazilian

⁵⁰⁸ “Apprentices singing the anthem to the Fatherland in front of the school building” [Pirapora – Minas Gerais] 1913. The image also shows the pictures of the teacher of gymnastics and the military instructor. *Revista Maritima Brasileira* (Rio de Janeiro: Officinas Graphicas da Liga Maritima Brasileira, Anno XXXIII, n.6, Dec.1913), 760.

⁵⁰⁹ Ministério da Guerra, *Boletim do Exército, Repartição de Ajudante General - Ordem do Dia n. 643 – Baixas do serviço* (Rio de Janeiro, Imprensa Militar, 1893) 440. Arquivo do Exército.

military corps, but also with the physical composition of “apt and disciplined” soldiery bodies. Physical culture offered the processes of preparation and organization of the military structure, aimed at “the patriotic mission” they would be called to accomplish for the “dear and wonderful Motherland.”⁵¹⁰ In the words of Lieutenant-Captain Frederico de Gouvêa Coutinho, the Armed Forces had the mission of educating and forming Brazilians’ citizenship, “not a privilege of a class, but of a whole nation”. They would become a people that represented “the heart of the Earth, a grandiose Motherland” destined to become “the one, the greatest among the great” when finally possessing “a multitudinous army and an immense fleet.”⁵¹¹

There were also intellectuals who believed in the fundamental role played by the military organizations in the physical improvement of the “Brazilian race”, and that these institutions represented the nation’s lifeline in the face of possible foreign threats. In a story called “Salamina,” published in 1900 by the newspaper *Cidade do Rio* (owned and directed by abolitionist José do Patrocínio), poet Olavo Bilac, member of the Brazilian Academy of Letters, used his Parnassian style to praise “the muscles and courage” young Brazilians had started to develop.⁵¹² Bilac described the naval Battle of Salamis (hence Salamina in Portuguese), fought between an alliance of Greek city-states and the Xerxes’ Persian Empire in 480 BC, to affirm that the development of muscles had been fundamental for a people with less material resources to overcome their better equipped opponents.

Likewise, Bilac associated the Brazilian naval victory of Riachuelo in the Paraguayan War with the prowess of the Tupinambá indigenous chief Cunhambebe in repeatedly defeating Portuguese ships leading his

⁵¹⁰ A.L. “Escola de Pirapora,” *Revista Marítima Brasileira* (Rio de Janeiro: Oficinas Graphicas da Liga Maritima Brasileira, Anno XXXIII, n.6, Dec.1913) 751-768.

⁵¹¹ Ibid.

⁵¹² Olavo Bilac, “Salamina” *Jornal do Rio* (Rio de Janeiro: Anno XII, n.192, 14 Agosto 1900) 1-2. Inspired by a rowing competition held at the Botafogo beach in Rio de Janeiro, in 1900, Bilac divided his chronicle into three parts. In the first one, the author described the grace of nature to which he associated the beauty of the regatta disputed at Guanabara Bay, in Rio, drawing attention to the joy of the spectators and using metaphors that refer to natural images to describe the event. Thus, he referred to the public as “waves of people”; the *baleeiras* boats were “low-flying birds, raising and lowering the shining oars, like slender wings.”

people and using simple pirogues at the beginning of Portuguese colonization.⁵¹³ For Bilac, the naval exercise of rowing not only developed “the muscles that won the Battle of Salamis”, but also, and most importantly, would strengthen “the soul (...) and the name of Brazil.”⁵¹⁴ Intellectuals like Olavo Bilac praised physical culture believing it represented Brazil’s security and the preservation of its sovereignty, regretting having neglected physical exercises during their lives: “Bad for me, bad for all those who slowly let themselves being poisoned by laziness, by the love of a lavish life!”⁵¹⁵

In defending the need for the practice of physical culture, Bilac considered the “softness and apathy” under which many Brazilians lived as the cause for the lack of awareness before “upcoming the storm” Brazil was about to face. Supporting the argument that Brazil was in danger of being subjected to imperialist ambitions and that the nation would not be safe by people like himself—whose “withered arms only served to hold a quill pen”—Bilac argued that only “the young people,” new Cunhambebes with trained muscles, could stand up against “the modern Xerxes” from Europe or the United States:

Where will he come from, the daring Xerxes? In what cold and clever chancellery of America or Europe is the terrible plan being incubated in secret at this hour? Perhaps in all chancelleries at the same time ... They all have good teeth and a good stomach; they all extend their hungry eyes to us.⁵¹⁶

All the examples used by Bilac in his text are military and the cardinal problem faced by Brazil was the defense of the homeland. The basis of this attempt to support a compelling argument was defending the country against what happened to other regions of the planet, attacked and invaded by the military powers of the time. It was

⁵¹³ Cunhambebe is described in the work of the French Franciscan friar André Thévet *Les singularitez de la France Antarctique* [1557] (Sydney: Wentworth Press, 2019) and in the work of German adventurer Hans Staden *True History: An Account of Cannibal Captivity in Brazil* [1557] (Durham: Duke University Press, 2008).

⁵¹⁴ Olavo Bilac, “Salamina” *Jornal do Rio* (Rio de Janeiro: Anno XII, n.192, 14 Agosto 1900) 1-2.

⁵¹⁵ Ibid.

⁵¹⁶ Ibid. The original in Portuguese: “De onde virá elle, o Xerxes ousado? Em que fria e esperta chancellaria da America ou da Europa, estará a esta hora sendo incubado, em segredo, o plano terrivel? Talvez em todas as chancellarias ao mesmo tempo... Todas ellas teem boa dentadura e bom estomago; todas ellas estendem para nós os olhos famintos...”

therefore crucial for the nation to prepare and develop itself for the imminent clash. Intellectuals like Olavo Bilac believed that the militaristic conception of physical culture and the military preparation of young, fit, athletic citizen-soldiers was the best way to defend Brazil. Physical culture practices, tournaments or exhibitions thus became civic events in which patriots were building the nation's future, preserving "this sweet, glorious name of Brazilian," celebrating their "beloved, tender" motherland.⁵¹⁷

Brazilian military officers corroborated this view, arguing that "contemporary historians who study the evolution of our nationality and who intend to define the causes of our development" could not avoid looking at "the excitement of today's youth" for physical culture.⁵¹⁸ They argued in favor of "this current of sympathy for vigorous exercises of inestimable worth." Military leaders believed that physical culture would provide the country with "an abundant nursery of strong young men (...) on the day that the threatened homeland call for its children to stand by in its defense." Physical culture, from the military perspective, would provide Brazil with "this youth, used to fighting in this continuous learning, stronger, more rigid, with a more vigorous pulse and a more excited look of enthusiasm for the Motherland."⁵¹⁹ This motherland—also militarily considered "a frail child"—and its "immense and weak" people became the target of constant debates on reforming the "depleted martial organization" and structure in order to offer the "indispensable intellectual and physical robustness."⁵²⁰

In a speech given at the Military Club, on October 15, 1911, diplomat José Maria da Silva Paranhos Júnior, known as the Barão do Rio Branco, emphasized his "constant appreciation of those dedicated to the career of

⁵¹⁷ Olavo Bilac, "Salamina" *Jornal do Rio* (Rio de Janeiro: Anno XII, n.192, 14 Agosto 1900) 1-2.

⁵¹⁸ MARINHA, "Campeonato de 1902 - Club de Natação e Regatas," *Revista Marítima Brasileira* (Rio de Janeiro: Anno XXII, n.1, Julho 1902) 381-388. The original in Portuguese, "Para nós officiaes de marinha essa corrente de symphatia pelos exercícios vigorosos é de inestimável alcance, porque la encontraremos um viveiro abundante de moços fortes, habituados ao mar, e aos trabalhos, no dia em que a Pátria ameaçada chame a postos seus filhos para defenderem-na. Nesse dia então essa mocidade toda affeita as lutas, nessa aprendizagem continua, mais forte, mais rija, tem para secundar o seu entusiasmo pela pátria o pulso mais vigoroso e o olhar mais excitado."

⁵¹⁹ MARINHA, "Campeonato de 1902 - Club de Natação e Regatas," *Revista Marítima Brasileira* (Rio de Janeiro: Anno XXII, n.1, Julho 1902) 381-388.

⁵²⁰ Liberato Bittencourt, *Reforma do Exercito: Questões de Estado-Maior* (Rio de Janeiro: Typ. Altina, 1904) 9-10, 100-101.

arms, indispensable for the security of the rights and honor of the motherland.”⁵²¹ Differently from Olavo Bilac’s bellicose fear, Rio Branco believed that the Brazil’s demand for “a civic and military education of its people”—as he argued also happened “in the most cultured democracies of Europe and America”—did not mean a desire for war: “on the contrary, it means desiring to ensure peace, avoiding the possibility of affronts and disastrous campaigns.”⁵²²

In common, nonetheless, was the issue of national defense and the need to strengthen the Armed Forces’ personnel during the years that preceded World War I.⁵²³ In the 1910s, the Brazilian General Staff restructured its armed forces through the decrees no. 11.497 and no. 11.498, establishing the reorganization of the active troops and their distribution throughout the national territory.⁵²⁴ Moreover, decree no. 11.853-A stated new regulations for the departments subordinate to the Ministry of War, whose central structure highlighted a Directorate of Health among other crucial departments, such as a Directorate of Engineering and a Directorate of War Material. The

⁵²¹ Barão do Rio Branco, “No Clube Militar” [1911]. Ministério das Relações Exteriores, *Discursos – Obras do Barão do Rio-Branco IX* (Rio de Janeiro: Imprensa Nacional, 1948) 278. Rio Branco gave his speech when the Brazilian Military Club, headquartered in Rio de Janeiro, presented a portrait in his honor. To learn more about the key influence the Military Club had throughout the history of Brazil’s national politics, see Henry H. Keith and Robert A. Hayes, eds., *Perspectives on Armed Politics in Brazil* (Tempe: The State Press-Arizona State University, 1976).

⁵²² Barão do Rio Branco, “No Clube Militar” [1911] 179. José Maria da Silva Paranhos Jr. (April 20, 1845 - February 10, 1912) was a Brazilian diplomat, geographer, historian, monarchist, politician, and professor. The Barão do Rio Branco was a member of the Brazilian Academy of Letters, occupying its 34th chair from 1898 until his death in 1912. Rio Branco began his political career as a congressman in the House of Commons. From 1876 on, he was the Brazilian Consul General in Liverpool, England, also becoming Brazil’s Ambassador in Berlin at the beginning of the 20th century. Rio Branco’s most important legacy to Brazil was his successful effort, as Minister of Foreign Affairs, in peacefully defining the country’s borders with all of its neighbors. For his diplomacy, Rio Branco is considered “the father of Brazilian diplomacy.” For more about Rio Branco and Brazil’s diplomacy, see the collection organized by José Vicente de Sá Pimentel *Brazilian Diplomatic Thought - Policymakers and Agents of Foreign Policy (1750-1964)* (Brasília: FUNAG, 2017); and Luís Cláudio Villafañe G. Santos’ *O evangelho do Barão: Rio Branco e a identidade brasileira*. (São Paulo: Ed. Unesp, 2012).

⁵²³ According to Carvalho and McCann (2004), the involvement of Brazilian military troops in the Contestado War (1912-1916)—in the region of the states Paraná and Santa Catarina—reinforced this concern. See José Murilo de Carvalho, *Forças armadas e política no Brasil* (Rio de Janeiro: Jorge Zahar, 2019).

⁵²⁴ See *Decreto nº 11.497, de 23 de Fevereiro de 1915*, available online at <https://www2.camara.leg.br/legin/fed/decret/1910-1919/decreto-11497-23-fevereiro-1915-513642-publicacaooriginal-1-pe.html>; and *Decreto nº 11.498, de 23 de Fevereiro de 1915*, available online at <https://www2.camara.leg.br/legin/fed/decret/1910-1919/decreto-11498-23-fevereiro-1915-509952-publicacaooriginal-1-pe.html>.

Directorate of Health was in charge, among other things, of studying all questions related to sanitary material, analyzing food issues, individual and collective hygiene of the troops, and organizing a hygiene handbook.⁵²⁵

The atmosphere surrounding the Great War, by bringing the issue of national defense to the center of Brazilian concerns, also favored the emergence of nationalist movements with the strong participation of urban bases. Not only intellectuals but also leftist organizations as well as movements of the so-called “men of color,” and other social categories, contributed to the debates in the public sphere about the strengthening of the citizen-soldier body, especially through the armed forces.

Specifically targeting an Afro-Brazilian public, the newspaper *O Exemplo*, from Porto Alegre—a post-abolitionist publication and considered one of the most important voices for blacks in the south of the country—reproduced in 1916 the Aviso n. 777 of August 19 with Brazil’s Minister of War “instructions for admission of volunteers into the Army ranks.” Following the legislation of 1900, *O Exemplo* reminded its readers of the importance of “physical fitness for military service, guaranteed in health inspection,” a proof of the so-called “numerical index of robustness” (identified through a formula that calculated height, weight, and chest circumference). It also called for “the verification of vital energy” through “examination of the body’s organs, knowledge of family history, harmony of the constituent parts, and an expression of health indicating good constitution.”⁵²⁶ In the northern extreme of the country, newspapermen in the city of Manaus emphasized that “just at this time when our government is reorganizing our army,” physical culture “will greatly assist this arduous task that, in order to achieve complete success, requires the voluntary cooperation united to the good will of all

⁵²⁵ See *Decreto n° 11.853-A, de 31 de Dezembro de 1915*, available online at <https://www2.camara.leg.br/legin/fed/decret/1910-1919/decreto-11853-a-31-dezembro-1915-519208-publicacaooriginal-1-pe.html>

⁵²⁶ “Voluntariado de manobras – Instruções,” *O Exemplo: Jornal do Povo* (Porto Alegre: n.31, 3 Sep 1916) 2. *O Exemplo* was founded in December 1892, circulating until 1897 in its first phase. It continued to be published with some gaps. The second phase began in 1902, the third in 1910 and the last in 1916. *O Exemplo* ended its activities in the first half of 1930s. To learn more, see Jandira M.M. da Silva, Elvo Clemente & Eni Barbosa’s *Breve histórico da imprensa sul-rio-grandense* (Porto Alegre: CORAG, 1986) and Ana Flávia Magalhães Pinto, *De pele escura e tinta preta: a imprensa negra do século XIX (1833-1899)* (Brasília: UnB, Masters thesis in History, 2006).

Brazilians.”⁵²⁷ In order to achieve a better understanding about the profile of the national physical type—specifically that corresponding to those individuals suitable for the military career—military physicians such as Colonel Dr. Arthur Lobo da Silva and José Ribas Cadaval encouraged the armed forces to adopt the use of those anthropometric features.⁵²⁸ They understood, however, that in order to forge the Brazilian soldier, in “a vast country that contains such varied climates, so unequal,” the outcome would be “the types that the respective geographical zones allow us to form.”⁵²⁹

From Rio Grande do Sul to Amazonas, the idea of a partnership between the people and the state could not “lay on the inkwell alone nor pass to the Greek calends.”⁵³⁰ Brazilians had to demonstrate their “duty as a cultured people, contributing with all the resources within our reach for the aggrandizement of our dear homeland.” The national press also understood physical culture as “a major factor within the great European armies” and Brazil had to organize its nation based on this ideal, drawing inspiration from nations like England where “an army of 3 million soldiers actually represents 3 million sportsmen.”⁵³¹

⁵²⁷ “Pedestrianismo - Grande prova historica de fundo – Corrida de marathona organizada pelo Correio Sportivo,” *Correio Sportivo* (Manaus: Typographia do Cá e Lá, Anno 1, n.4, 15 Abril 1916) 2.

⁵²⁸ Dr. José Ribas Cadaval, “Considerações geraes sobre a utilidade palpitante da publicação de um tratado de Hygiene Militar para uso do Exercito Brasileiro e de um Vade Mecum do soldado patricio”, *Medicina Militar* (Rio de Janeiro, Ano II, n.2, Ago. 1911) 99-111. See as well Dr. José Ribas Cadaval, “A Hygiene Naval Brasileira” *Revista Maritima Brasileira* (Rio de Janeiro: Officinas Graphicas da Liga Maritima Brasileira, Anno XXXIII, n.4, Out. 1913) 481-496. Gaúcho Ribas Cadaval (1863-1920) also wrote importante military medical works such as “Reorganização e regulamentação do Corpo de Saúde Naval” (1907) and “Tratado de Higiene Naval Militar” (1908). See as well Jorge de Moraes, “A Higiene Militar Brasileira. Passo do Soldado Nacional. I” *Medicina Militar* (Rio de Janeiro, Ano I, n°5, Out. 1910) 271-9.

⁵²⁹ Arthur Lobo, “Higiene Militar”, *Medicina Militar* (Rio de Janeiro, Ano I, n°12, Ju. 1911) 730-40. Born in Pernambuco in 1873, Arthur Lobo da Silva graduated from the Medical School of Rio de Janeiro and worked in several regions of Brazil, such as Paraiba and Mato Grosso. He was also appointed by the Ministry of War to supervise health visits to the battalions 16th and 18th of the Army from his position at the Military Hospital of Recife. “Noticias militares,” *A Província: Órgão do Partido Liberal* (Recife: Anno XXXII, n. 31, 9 de fevereiro de 1909) 1; “Noticias militares,” *A Província: Órgão do Partido Liberal* (Recife: Anno XXXII, n.71, 30 de março de 1909) 2.

⁵³⁰ *Correio Sportivo* (Manaus, 15 Abril 1916) 2. The idiom “the Greek calends” means (in Portuguese as in English) a time that is expected to never arrive or occur. It is a translation of Latin *kalendas graecas* from the fact that the Ancient Greeks did not reckon time by calends, a feature of the Roman calendar.

⁵³¹ *Ibid.*

This nationalist propaganda and mobilization aimed at bringing together the patriotic feelings of Brazilians from all classes, spreading the ideal of physical culture symbiotically connected to a fervid love and worship for the motherland. Defenders of the military service conceived of it as an instrument capable of erasing the borders between civilians and the armed forces through the spread of a civil conscience within the barracks and the shape of citizen-soldiers to serve the country's diverse institutions. The result of this amalgamation would lead to the identification of Brazil as an Army-nation, constituted by a national force of great importance for the solution of the country's problems:

We need military education and a national army, for the defense of our territory and of our civilization, and for the individual defense of the physical and moral organism of each Brazilian. We want a truly national army, the nation itself being composed of citizen soldiers, in which each Brazilian is the army itself and the army is the entire people. (...) How to achieve it? Through a methodical and progressive education, through the physical and moral gymnastics. (...) The improvement of each one must be a part of the whole. Thus, through cohesion, unity, and civism, the national defense is made.⁵³²

Alongside of the legal and institutional conditions for the modernization of the armed forces, the Brazilian leaders understood that there was still much to be done in terms of training and physically educating soldierly bodies. This ideological inspiration, based on the "citizen-soldier" principle since the foundation of Brazil's republic, although utopian from a practical point of view, confronted beliefs that Brazil could not "pursue a perfect nationality" based on the idea that the country "had not a finished race and an excellent climate." Brazilian citizen-soldiers characterized the conception of one key military function, i.e. shaping the Brazilian race and proving wrong "these poor professors of false science, maniacs of scientific sorcery, which is more ridiculous and more sinister than religious fanaticism."⁵³³ At a time of vigorous debates about national identity, the armed forces

⁵³² Olavo Bilac. "A Defesa Nacional – Conferencia publica realizada no Rio de Janeiro, no Rio Grande do Sul e no Paraná." *A Defesa Nacional (Discursos)* (Rio de Janeiro: Edição da Liga da Defesa Nacional, 1917) 130-8. On September 7, 1916, Olavo Bilac, Pedro Lessa and Álvaro Alberto, among others, founded the Liga da Defesa Nacional-LDN (League of National Defense) in Rio de Janeiro, a civil association that became of "public utility" by the Decree 67.576, on November 16, 1970. See the decree online at <https://www2.camara.leg.br/legin/fed/decret/1970-1979/decreto-67576-16-novembro-1970-409239-norma-pe.html>

⁵³³ Olavo Bilac, "A Defesa Nacional – Conferencia publica realizada no Rio de Janeiro, no Rio Grande do Sul e no Paraná." *A Defesa Nacional (Discursos)* (Rio de Janeiro: Edição da Liga da Defesa Nacional, 1917) 130-8.

sought to produce model citizens through physical culture, that is, through the perfection of key morphological and physiological characteristics and the development of policies to aid this pursuit. “Give this weak and discouraged man good food, work, exercise, instruction, and he will be as good as any of the strongest men in the strongest nations of the world.”⁵³⁴

Just about a century after independence, there was still no consensus in Brazil, among the many political, literary and intellectual groups, on what was the nerve center of the country’s nationality. In common between North and South, nevertheless, was the idea that military personnel were always ready “to pay blood tribute” and sacrifice their lives in defense of the Fatherland.⁵³⁵ At this point, it was not only French Positivism and intellectual currents that influenced many military officers and students.⁵³⁶ In the context of the Great War, Brazil joined the Allied Powers against Germany, subsequently sending the influential senator from the state of Paraíba, Epiácio Pessoa, to the Paris Peace Conference in January 1919.⁵³⁷ Moreover, São Paulo had, since 1905, a French military mission to train its state Public Force “in order to spread, as much as possible, the love for physical culture in the country,” and in 1917 Brazil sent an important mission to Paris, with officers who fought in the ranks with the French Army, to purchase military equipment.⁵³⁸ In addition, the War Minister, Pandiá Calógeras, had a personal

⁵³⁴ Olavo Bilac, “A Defesa Nacional – Conferencia publica realizada no Rio de Janeiro, no Rio Grande do Sul e no Paraná.” *A Defesa Nacional (Discursos)* (Rio de Janeiro: Edição da Liga da Defesa Nacional, 1917) 130-8.

⁵³⁵ “Um século de evolução política,” *A Federação – Orgam do Partido Republicano* (Porto Alegre: Anno XXXIX, n.208, 7 de setembro de 1922) 1-2.

⁵³⁶ For more about the influence Positivist thought had on Brazilian institutions, see Oséias Faustino Valentim’s *O Brasil e o Positivismo* (Rio de Janeiro: Publit, 2010).

⁵³⁷ To know more about the role Epiácio Lindolfo da Silva Pessoa (Paraíba, 1865 - Rio de Janeiro, 1942) had during the Paris Conference, see Michael Streeter’s *Epiacio Pessoa: Brazil*, series The Makers of the Modern World (London: Haus Publishing, 2009).

⁵³⁸ See Euclides Andrade & Hely F. da Camara, *A Força Pública de São Paulo: esboço histórico: 1831-1931* (São Paulo: Sociedade Imprensa Paulista, 1931) 145. Also: Jean-Claude Devos et al. *Inventaire sommaire des archives de la guerre, série N: 1872-1919* (Troyes: Imprimerie La Renaissance, 1974) Ministère d’Etat Charge de la Defense Nationale, État-major de l’armée de terre, Service Historique: “Attachés militaires - ARGENTINE ET BRESIL. 7N 1732: Brésil: missions militaires françaises, contrats, rapports des attachés militaires concernant l’armée, les relations franco-brésiliennes, l’activité allemande; notamment: situation politique au Brésil (16 janvier, 12 février 1912) 1873-1919; 7 N 1733: 7 N 1734: Brésil : enquêtes à propos du lieutenant-colonel Balagny et du lieutenant Forzinetti en mission à Sao Paulo (nombreux extraits de presse) 1911-1912.” Available online at https://www.servicehistorique.sga.defense.gouv.fr/sites/default/files/notices_files/SHDGR_INV_1N_14N_1872_1919.pdf

connection with France. Although there was no consensus within the Brazilian Armed Forces on the option for France, these key factors were crucial in the decision in favor of a more vigorous French military mission in Brazil.

During the meetings at the Paris Peace Conference, Epitácio Pessoa became President of Brazil, via an electoral process without precedent.⁵³⁹ In May 1919, French President Raymond Poincaré offered a gala dinner in honor of President Pessoa “tous fortifier, dans la paix, entre Brésil et la France, les liens qui les ont unis dans la guerre.” President Poincaré not only emphasized the bonds of friendship between both countries but also, and most importantly, the concept of a Latin commonality, a “civilisation latine, dont le Brésil est, lui aussi, un des glorieux héritiers.”⁵⁴⁰ The French president dedicated part of his speech to remember the “alliance née d'intérêts permanents et de sympathies reciproques,” not only responsible for economic, political, and cultural affairs, but also for the French Military Mission in Brazil, “premier gage de notre durable intimité.” President Pessoa, in his response speech, also highlighted Brazil’s understanding of those cultural, political, and military relations as proof of “the strength of resistance, the spirit of sacrifice and the sense of organization of which we, the Latins, are capable, and of the inviolable reliquary of the most beautiful traditions of the Latin race.”⁵⁴¹

The French Military Mission arrived in Brazil with the objective of modernizing the instruction of troops with great influence in the process of training officers, especially in the area of military doctrine, during the interwar period, from 1919 to 1940.⁵⁴² Adapting the teachings of the French Army to the Brazilian national reality,

⁵³⁹ The curious election of April 1919 took place out of the official electoral season. In January, Brazil witnessed the death of President-elect Rodrigues Alves, victim of the Spanish flu. From November 1918 on (the period Rodrigues Alves should have taken office) Brazil was temporarily governed by Vice-President Delfim Moreira. When the unexpected electoral campaign started, Epitácio Pessoa was already in Paris. See “A chegada do Dr. Epitacio Pessoa,” *O Paiz* (Rio de Janeiro: Anno XXXV, n.12.702, 21 Jul. 1919) 1.

⁵⁴⁰ “Partie Non Officielle” *Journal Officiel de la République Française* (Paris: Cinquante et unième année, 28 Mai 1919) 5513.

⁵⁴¹ “Partie Non Officielle.” *Journal Officiel de la République Française* (Paris: Cinquante et unième année, n.144, 28 Mai 1919) 5514. The original in French: “la force de résistance, l'esprit de sacrifice et le sens d'organisation dont nous, les Latins, nous sommes capables, et des le reliquaire inviolable des plus belles traditions de la race latine.”

⁵⁴² Ibid. “Cabinet du Ministre 5-6 N - Brésil. Renseignements provenant des affaires étrangères, de l'attaché militaire à Rio de Janeiro et du général Gamelin, concernant les transactions commerciales, les personnes suspectes, l'armée, le matériel français et les missions

the French Military Mission, led by General Maurice-Gustave Gamelin, introduced physical education techniques further developed by the Brazilian Army and extended them to the schools. He aimed at “disseminating and transmitting across all the corners of Brazil the necessary instruction to the true soldiers, the future leaders ready to defend the Nation’s territory, independence, and security.”⁵⁴³ The techniques emphasized mental and physical discipline. In 1921, President Pessoa signed the Regulation of Military Physical Instruction.⁵⁴⁴ The Regulation focused on “the physical preparation of soldiers” from all forces, based on “the physiological laws that regulate the growth and development of man”, that is, on the French Project of *la culture physique* whose doctrine, organization, and instruction were directly linked to French neo-Lamarckian thought on eugenics and biopower.⁵⁴⁵ Moreover, after properly formed under this system, military instructors would direct, coordinate, and disseminate “the excellence of the results obtained” by the French method, guaranteeing its application in Brazil “both for the education of children up to 16 years old and for adults.”⁵⁴⁶ By hiring a foreign mission, the Brazilian Army was inspired by the European military scenario, dominated at that time by the notion of the “nation in arms,” for which the military forces had to be not only responsible for defending, but also be a kind of “school of nationality.”⁵⁴⁷ In other words, the state would ideally recruit elements from all sectors of the population, from

françaises envoyées dans ce pays; mouvement en vue d’une coopération militaire plus active (16 août 1918); le moment est venu d’envoyer ici une grande mission militaire, politique et commerciale (13 novembre). avril 1917 - décembre 1919.”

⁵⁴³ Brig.-Gen. Alberto Cardoso de Aguiar - Ministro da Guerra, “Ensino Militar e Missão Franceza.” *Relatorio do Ministerio da Guerra 1919* (Rio de Janeiro: Imprensa Militar, Maio 1919) 24-32.

⁵⁴⁴ “Decreto 14784, de 27 Abr 1921 - Aprova o Regulamento de Instrução Física Militar para tôdas as armas – 1ª Parte.” *Boletim do Exército N. 339* (Rio de Janeiro: 10 de agosto de 1921).

⁵⁴⁵ To learn more on neo-Lamarckian French physical culturists, masculine ideals, and the body of the citizen-soldier, see Joan Tumblety’s *Remaking the Male Body: Masculinity and the Uses of Physical Culture in Interwar and Vichy France* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).

⁵⁴⁶ Decree n. 14.784, 27 April 1921. Regulated the Military Physical Instruction to all forces. Available at: Portal Câmara dos Deputados – Legislação Informatizada, <http://www2.camara.leg.br/atividade-legislativa/legislacao> The original in Portuguese: “O presente regulamento baseia-se nas leis physiologicas que regulam o crescimento e o desenvolvimento do homem e nos methodos preconizados em França para a preparação physica dos soldados. Tal tem sido a excellencia dos resultados obtidos com esses methodos, que haverá certamente interesse em applica-los no Brasil, quer para a educação das creanças até 16 annos, quer dos adultos.”

⁵⁴⁷ See Frederick M. Nunn, *Yesterday's Soldiers: European Military Professionalism in South America, 1890-1940* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1983).

all social backgrounds, giving them “a good and solid military organization,” a sense of national unity, “the unique existing way to prevent, or at least immensely decrease the greatest danger” of Brazil’s states “loosening the bounds that strictly fasten them to one another.”⁵⁴⁸

The Brazilian Armed Forces increasingly used the French approach to physical culture throughout the 1920s. The efforts of Military School officers and cadets, including Lieutenant Newton Cavalcanti, for example, culminated in the creation of the Escola de Educação Física do Exército (Army School of Physical Education) in 1922.⁵⁴⁹ A few years later, in 1926, Captain João Barbosa Leite and Lieutenant Jair Ribeiro Dantas, instructors at the School of Sergeants of Infantry, published their “Manual de instrução física,” a physical education manual inspired by the French mission.⁵⁵⁰ A few years later, the Brazilian Army initiated the “Curso Provisorio de Educação Physica,” a physical education course aimed at “spreading, unifying and intensifying the teaching of physical education within the Army, making the modern French method of physical education, which we have adopted, practically known among the officers.”⁵⁵¹ The Minister of War authorized each regional commander to

⁵⁴⁸ Brig.-Gen. Alberto Cardoso de Aguiar - Ministro da Guerra, “Sr. Vice-Presidente da Republica,” *Relatorio do Ministerio da Guerra 1919* (Rio de Janeiro: Imprensa Militar, Maio 1919) 4.

⁵⁴⁹ “Portaria de 10 JAN 1922 - Cria o Centro Militar de Educação Física na Villa Militar, junto à Escola de Sargentos de Infantaria e aprova as instruções para o seu funcionamento.” *Boletim do Exército N. 431* (Rio de Janeiro: 20 de janeiro de 1922). Born in the state of Alagoas, Newton de Andrade Cavalcanti (1885-1965) became commander of the 9th Military Region, based in Mato Grosso (1933), head of the Military House of the Presidency of the Republic (1935), and federal interventor in the states of Mato Grosso and Rio de Janeiro under Getúlio Vargas’ administration.

⁵⁵⁰ João Barbosa Leite & Jair Dantas Ribeiro, *Manual de instrução física* (Rio de Janeiro: Imprensa Militar, 1926). For more, see Peter M. Beattie’s *The Tribute of Blood* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2001); and Celso Castro’s *Exército e nação: estudos sobre a história do Exército Brasileiro* (Rio de Janeiro: FGV, 2012).

⁵⁵¹ “Curso Provisorio de Educação Physica” *Boletim do Exército N.535 2ª Parte* (Rio de Janeiro: 5 de Julho de 1929) 9-10. According to the officio n. 1.076, from the Secretary of War and dated 29 June 1929, the Escola de Sargento de Infantaria received to its Course of Physical Education, all from the 2nd Military Region (São Paulo): 2nd Sergeant Hermann Ramalho Campos and Armando Leonardi from the 4th battalion of hunters; the 3rd sergeants Walfredo Campos Marija and Caetano Espirito Santo Bahia from the 6th Battalion of Hunters; the 3rd sergeants Bruno Stefani and Casemiro Leopoldino Lamin from the 4th Infantry Regiment; the 3rd sergeants João Baptista de Godoy and Bernardino da Silva Guilherme from the 5th Infantry Regiment; and Antonio Renó Ribeiro (2nd sergeant) and Paulo Vieira Asp from the 6th Infantry Regiment; from the 4th Mounted Artillery Regiment, 2nd sergeants Hildebrando Sant’Anna de Figueiredo and Lemirio Ferreira; from the 2nd Group of Mounted Artillery, 3rd sergeants Argeo de Carvalho Moraes and Affonso Blum; from the 2nd Independent Group of Heavy Artillery, 2nd sergeant José Olegario Dias; from the 2nd Divisional Cavalry Regiment, 3rd sergeants Alberto Alevate Rodrigues and João Silveira; from the Engineering Transmission Company, 3rd Sergeant Benedicto Luiz Rodrigues. According to the document, the 3rd Coastal Artillery Group declared not having eligible candidates. “Frequencia no Curso de Educação Physica,” *Boletim do Exército N.535 2ª Parte* (Rio de Janeiro: 5 de Julho de 1929) 13-4.

choose the officers who would join a “special school regimen, receiving practical and theoretical knowledge” on physical education at the School of Infantry. Proportionally, Rio de Janeiro and Espírito Santo would send three officers (1st or 2nd Lieutenants) and two 1st Lieutenant doctors; São Paulo and Goiás, as well as Minas Gerais would send two officers (1st or 2nd Lieutenants) and one 1st Lieutenant doctor each.⁵⁵² All officers appointed by their commanders should have “served in the troop for more than two years and satisfy the condition of robustness.”⁵⁵³ Before an examining board, indicated by the General Staff of the Army, the trainee officers finally provided “the necessary practical and theoretical tests, physical and physiological examinations combined with class instruction exams on the different degrees of physical education)” for the final judgment of their abilities.⁵⁵⁴

The eminent voices of Dr. Murillo de Campos and Afro-Brazilian physician and psychiatrist Juliano Moreira also reiterated the argument that physical culture within the military service would serve as a model for the entire nation. Scientifically preparing militarized bodies for individuals from the lower classes also helped produce better “mental hygiene” and better citizens “from the point of view of physical, civic and, sometimes, even intellectual education.”⁵⁵⁵

⁵⁵² Based on articles 40, 41, and 42 of the Decree 14.397, published on October 9, 1920, “the territory of Brazil was divided into seven regions and two military circumscriptions: 1st Region (Federal Capital, states of Rio de Janeiro and Espírito Santo.); 2nd Region (S. Paulo and Goyaz.); 3rd Region (Rio Grande do Sul); 4th Region (Minas Gerais); 5th Region (Bahia, Sergipe and Alagoas.); 6th Region (Pernambuco, Parahyba, Rio Grande do Norte and Ceará); 7th Region (Piauhy, Maranhão, Pará, Amazonas and Acre); 1st military circumscription (Matto Grosso), 2nd military circumscription (Paraná and Santa Catharina).” See *Decreto nº 14.397, de 9 de Outubro de 1920 - Approva o regulamento do Serviço Militar*, available online at <https://www2.camara.leg.br/legin/fed/decret/1920-1929/decreto-14397-9-outubro-1920-511088-publicacaooriginal-94126-pe.html> It is important to say that, according to Art. 58, only “individuals of notorious and indisputable incapacity for military service, that is to say, the crippled, paralytic, mutilated, completely blind, and mentally ill” would be dismissed in advance.

⁵⁵³ “Curso Provisorio de Educação Physica” *Boletim do Exercito N.535 2ª Parte* (Rio de Janeiro: 5 de Julho de 1929) 9-10.

⁵⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵⁵ Murillo de Campos, “Notas sobre a hygiene mental no Exercito.” *Archivos Brasileiros de Hygiene Mental - Órgão official da Liga Brasileira de Hygiene Mental* (Rio de Janeiro: Typ. do Jornal do Commercio, Anno I, n.1, Março de 1925) 97. Born in 1887 in the state of São Paulo, in the 1920s hygienist Murillo de Campos was in charge of the psychiatric clinic at the Hospital Central do Exercito, producing his studies on themes related to issues of hygiene, diseases, and the mental and physical problems that afflicted soldiers who entered the military service. Juliano Moreira (Bahia, 1873 - Rio de Janeiro, 1933) graduated from the Medical School of Bahia in the late nineteenth century and became the first Brazilian university professor to incorporate psychoanalytic theory into medical education. To know more about the role of Juliano Moreira in the history of medicine in Brazil, see Ronaldo Ribeiro Jacobina & Ester Aida Gelman’s “Juliano Moreira e a *Gazeta Medica da Bahia*.” *História, Ciências, Saúde-Manguinhos* (Rio de Janeiro, vol.15, n.4, 2008) 1077-97.

In order to promote physical preparation in the armed forces, Brazilian military authorities early on pursued “an easy manner of propaganda,” promoting athletic tournaments, pitching in together in favor of “developing the taste for this genre of sport, without controversy crucially important under the view point of national security.”⁵⁵⁶ Brazilian military leaders justified their concern about the need to promote sports and physical culture on “didactic compendiums, old and contemporary wars,” arguing that “the balance of muscular strength in each of us has a profound influence on morale and, therefore, on cerebral vigor.” Physical education and “the various genres of sports must be equally practiced” as part of Brazil’s citizen-soldier’s daily life, “customs, and progressive and salutary hygiene.”⁵⁵⁷

4.3 Athletic Soldiers for the Nation

At the beginning of the twentieth century, the Brazilian armed forces launched policies aimed at the institutional recognition and organization of sports practices within their structures. Some sports were commonly practiced by officers and soldiers of both the Army and Navy, many of them even became involved in the dissemination and organization of those sporting activities. As we will see in the next chapter, sports became extensively diffused as part of a project aiming at modernizing Brazilian society, conceived as a strategy for controlling bodies, forging and framing the population within the critical values of discipline, hygiene, and social order. These prototypical characteristics were part of an idealized modern country, effectively integrated with the military ideals for the nation. In that context, different social groups increasingly disseminated sports, each one of them—from the elites to the most popular sectors—re-signifying sporting activities their way in a process of cultural interpenetration and “circularity.”⁵⁵⁸

⁵⁵⁶ Mar. João Nepomuceno de Medeiros Mallet - Ministro de Estado da Guerra, “Tiro Nacional.” *Relatorio Apresentado ao Presidente da Republica dos Estados Unidos do Brasil* (Rio de Janeiro: Imprensa Nacional, Maio 1901) 70.

⁵⁵⁷ Ibid. 118.

⁵⁵⁸ For more about “circularity”—the idea culture is not merely unidirectional, flowing only from lower to upper classes or vice-versa, but that in fact it represents “a circular relationship composed of reciprocal influences”—see Carlo Ginzburg’s *The Cheese and the Worms: The Cosmos of a Sixteenth-Century Miller* (NY: Penguin Books, 1987).

In an article called “Cavalry combat against infantry,” Ensign Enéas Pires discussed the need for better organizing rows of snipers to keep their horses from falling. To exemplify his explanation, Pires stated that, “this phenomenon is easily observed in racing hippodromes. There we have seen it several times, and neither the jockey nor the horse could avoid it.”⁵⁵⁹ The use of sport-specific terms and elements to illustrate some situations of military daily life demonstrates an important sign of approximation between the military and sports practices. Members of the Navy were also important for the diffusion and regulation of sports, notably rowing, within Brazilian society. Since the mid-nineteenth century, rowing competitions were organized by the Brazilian Navy and the races promoted by the military became common in different Brazilian cities such as São Luís, Salvador and Belém.⁵⁶⁰ Rowing became more prominent with military’s rise to power after the proclamation of the republic and the Navy also regulated this sport within institutions.

In 1896, the Naval Club created a statute and a code of rules for the rowing championships in Rio de Janeiro. A year later, on July 31, 1897—under the presidency of Eduardo Ernesto Midosi, a Captain in the Brazilian Navy—the creation of the “União de Regatas Fluminense” (Fluminense Regatta Union) became official. Midosi played a key role in directing and coordinating the activities of the institution, remaining responsible of the presidency until 1906. After him, numerous military personnel were in charge, which demonstrates the importance of this sector in fostering the organization of modern sports in Brazil.⁵⁶¹

⁵⁵⁹ Enéas P. Pires, “Combate de cavallaria contra infantaria.” *Revista Militar* (Rio de Janeiro: 1ª. Secção do Estado-Maior do Exercito, Anno VI, 1904) 166.

⁵⁶⁰ “Noticiario - Regata Club,” *Diario do Maranhão* (São Luis: Anno V, n.370, 27 Oct. 1874) 2; “Publicações Diversas - Club de Regatas Bahiano,” *Jornal da Bahia* (Salvador: Anno XXI, n.293, 29 Dec. 1874) 2; “Notícias - Festa do Arsenal da Marinha,” *Diario de Belém* (Pará: Anno XIII, n.73, 1 Apr. 1880) 2.

⁵⁶¹ See Victor Melo, *Cidadesportiva: Primórdios do Esporte no Rio de Janeiro* (Rio de Janeiro: Relume-Dumará, 2001). Three years after its foundation, the União de Regatas Fluminense underwent a reformulation and had its nomenclature changed to Conselho Superior de Regatas (Superior Council of Regatta) on March 2, 1900. This change occurred due to an attempt by the Council to dominate the racing societies, controlling the organization of Brazilian rowing, but this objective received a lot of resistance from entities that regulated the sport in other regions of the country. According to Cancellata and Dos Santos, “the code of the Superior Council of Regatta pointed out, as its objectives, to represent Brazilian water sports, defending its interests, promoting its aggrandizement and proposing the coverage of the code to all existing racing clubs in the country, once its proposals were fully accepted.” The authors show that with the existence of sports regulatory institutions in other states, such as the Comitê de Regatas do Rio Grande do Sul (1894) and clubs that did not express interest in having a regulatory council outside their states, this attempt to unify rowing control did not have the success

Since the nineteenth century, the establishment of rules and regulations reflected the concern within Brazilian military institutions about centralizing the control and organization of the sports frequently played by officers and soldiers. The concern of the military about standardizing the processes of participation followed the dynamics of structuring and regulating sporting organizations and clubs within civil society throughout the transition to the twentieth century.⁵⁶² Over the first decades of the new century, the Brazilian Army and Navy intensified the policies on the physical training of their personnel through the organization and regulation of military sporting leagues, as several officers and soldiers were already part of teams in major clubs or promoted friendly competitions and tournaments between the regiments where they served.⁵⁶³ Sports were deemed an asset to help create “the healthy bodies and energetic and resolute morale” of military personnel, additionally becoming “a guarantee against the degeneration of the race.”⁵⁶⁴ Thus, sports were also responsible for the bodily health of the military, “in peace as in war,” and a means to make physical culture “the first factor of victory and the hope of a strong race in the future.”

expected by its creators in Rio de Janeiro. However, the attempt persisted with the change (on November 29, 1902) of its name to Federação Brasileira de Sociedades de Remo-FBSR (Brazilian Federation of Rowing Societies), reinforcing the unifying perspective of Brazilian rowing sought by the Carioca institution. See Karina Barbosa Cancelli & Leonardo José Mataruna Dos Santos, “Para o ‘desenvolvimento físico do pessoal da Armada’, institucionaliza-se o esporte: análises sobre as primeiras aproximações da Marinha do Brasil com as práticas esportivas e o processo de fundação da Liga de Sports da Marinha,” *Navigator* (Rio de Janeiro: DPHDM, v.8, n.15, 2012).

⁵⁶² As chapter five shows, during the transition from the nineteenth to the twentieth century, institutions governing the organization of sport emerged having a great diversity of modalities and clubs coming out. In this context, governing entities such as the Federação Brasileira de Sociedades de Remo (Brazilian Federation of Rowing Societies) and many metropolitan leagues of soccer already stood out. For more details, see Francisco Carlos Teixeira da Silva & Ricardo Pinto dos Santos (Orgs.) *Memória Social dos Esportes: futebol e política – A construção de uma identidade nacional* (Rio de Janeiro: Mauad Editora, FAPERJ, 2006).

⁵⁶³ One example of the influence military personnel had was the case of Lieutenant Francisco Mendes, also an athlete from the Fluminense Football Club. According to André Ribeiro, the 1st. Mounted Artillery Regiment installed a field at the Military Village to carry out soccer matches at Mendes’ initiative. See André Morgado Ribeiro “Contribuições da Missão Militar Francesa para o desenvolvimento do desporto no Exército Brasileiro: Comemoração aos 100 anos do início da orientação daquela Missão,” *Revista de Educação Física* (Rio de Janeiro: IPCFEx, 2009) 9-15.

⁵⁶⁴ “No Hospital de Marinha – A inauguração de dous retratos do almirante Alexandrino de Alencar.” *Gazeta de Noticias* (Rio de Janeiro: Typ. Sociedade Anonyma Gazeta de Noticias, Anno XXXIX, n.110, 21 de Abril de 1914) 3.

In 1915, Minister José Caetano de Faria authorized the Brazilian Army to create the Military Football League of the Army, allowing all personnel to join and participate in its activities.⁵⁶⁵ The first president of the league was Colonel Crispim Ferreira and, although mainly devoted to soccer, the league also sent water-polo and swimming teams to the Army-Navy championships in the 1910s and 1920s.⁵⁶⁶ In 1916, the Minister of War approved the adoption by the Army of the “gymnastic regulation for mounted corps,” organized by artillery first-lieutenant Bertholdo Klinger.⁵⁶⁷ In the same year, Admiral Alexandrino Faria de Alencar, Minister of the Navy, ordered the Navy Chief of Staff to authorize the operation and institutional regulation of the Navy Sports League “in order to contribute to the physical development of Navy personnel through games and exercises, with annual championships.”⁵⁶⁸ The first tournaments organized by the Navy Sports League gathered different sporting practices such as soccer and water sports like rowing, sailing, water polo and swimming, these last traditionally practiced by the Brazilian Navy personnel since the end of the nineteenth century.⁵⁶⁹ In 1920, the Military Football

⁵⁶⁵ BRASIL-DOU, “Aviso do Ministério da Guerra n.º 966 de 22 de junho de 1915,” *Diário Oficial da União* (Rio de Janeiro: Seção 1, 29 de junho de 1915) 5.

⁵⁶⁶ Through the records of competitions and correspondence of Liga de Sports da Marinha (the Navy Sports League), it was possible to identify the participation of Army teams in events of different sports modalities such as the annual disputes between Army and Navy in soccer, tug of war, and baton relay race held between the years of 1917 and 1924. Arquivo da Marinha DPHDM - Centro de Educação Física Almirante Adalberto Nunes, BR CEFAN, Cf. 533.1. Comissão de Desportos da Marinha: *Livro Histórico Departamento de Esportes da Marinha*, Volume I, Anexo I (1915-1920); *Livro Histórico Departamento de Esportes da Marinha*, Volume I, Anexo II (1920-1922); *Livro Histórico Departamento de Esportes da Marinha*, Volume I, Anexo III (1922-1924); *Livro Registro de Competições* (1923-1928).

⁵⁶⁷ Ministerio da Guerra - Departamento do Pessoal da Guerra 25 de Dezembro de 1916, “Aprovando o regulamento de gymnastica para os corpos montados,” *Boletim do Exercito N.66* (Rio de Janeiro: Imprensa Militar, 1916) aviso n.1.201 de 20-12-916. Arquivo do Exército

⁵⁶⁸ “Liga dos Sports da Marinha - Ministerio de Negocios da Marinha N.1 – Rio de Janeiro, 4 de janeiro de 1916,” *Revista Maritima Brasileira* (Rio de Janeiro: Imprensa Naval, Anno XXXV, n.7, Janeiro 1916) 160. Despite being officially regulated by the Aviso n.º 1 of January 4, 1916, the Navy Sports League was founded as a governing institution for naval sports on November 25, 1915 by a group of officers at the headquarters of the Clube Naval, in Rio de Janeiro. The original in Portuguese: “Sr. Chefe de Estado Maior da Armada, declaro-vos, para fins convenientes, que, aprovados os intuitos da Liga de Sports da Marinha, fundada por oficiais com o fim de concorrer para o desenvolvimento physico do pessoal da Armada, por meio dos jogos e exercicios, com campeonatos annuaes, resolvi permittir que a citada Liga se corresponda com as autoridades da Marinha, em relação ao que for necessário a seus fins, e que as autoridades lhe facilitem os meios de acção, sem prejuizo para o serviço, fazendo-se os jogos sob direcção da referida Liga e seus representantes nos navios, corpos, estabelecimentos, ficando a acção destes últimos sujeita a aprovação dos respectivos comandantes. Saúde e fraternidade. Assignado Alexandrino Faria de Alencar.”

⁵⁶⁹ Between 1915 and 1940, when the Liga de Sports da Marinha (Navy Sports League) was extinguished for the creation of the Departamento de Educação Física da Marinha (Navy Department of Physical Education), the league registered competitions and teams’

League of the Army was renamed the Army Sports League, more effectively incorporating other sports under the influence of the French Military Mission.⁵⁷⁰ Through this influence, concepts about sporting practices became frequent in the daily life of Brazil's armed forces basically following the protocol of the French Joinville-le-Pont military school.⁵⁷¹

Military leaders participated in the process of regulating sports in Brazil and the actions of officials committed to the principles of physical culture contributed to the dissemination of its practices among the general public. In the words of academic Coelho Netto, sporting education “will create a race worthy of its greatness, the progeny sound and robust of body” and “the gymnasiums are laboratories of health and nucleus of civic preparation,” as the Great War “had tragically demonstrated.”⁵⁷² Sports would thus prepare Brazilian “athletes for the day the Nation call them, strong combatants, a warlike people.”

Through the material produced by Admiral Alencar, for example, we can identify how the Ministry of the Navy participated in the organizational processes of sporting activities. Documents underscore the need for authorization by commanders and senior officers for their subordinates to participate in the activities of the league and that this institution should communicate to the higher naval authorities its proposals and decisions. This correspondence also demonstrates that physical culture mattered for the military high command. In addition to

participations in different sports. The competitions were between the sports groups that represented the ships and establishments of the Navy, between these groups and teams of the Army, and against civilian teams. Arquivo da Marinha DPHDM - Centro de Educação Física Almirante Adalberto Nunes, BR CEFAN, Cf. 533.1. Comissão de Desportos da Marinha: *Livro Histórico Departamento de Esportes da Marinha - Volume I - Anexo I (1915-1920)*; *Livro Histórico Departamento de Esportes da Marinha - Volume I - Anexo II (1920-1922)*; *Livro Histórico Departamento de Esportes da Marinha - Volume I - Anexo III (1922-1924)*; *Livro Registro de Competições (1923-1928)*.

⁵⁷⁰ BRASIL-DOU, “Aviso do Ministério da Guerra nº. 534 de 31 de julho de 1920,” *Diário Oficial da União* (Rio de Janeiro: Seção 1, 06 de agosto de 1920) 10. See also João Pandiá Calógeras, “Aviso de 31 de Julho de 1920” *Relatorios do Ministerio da Guerra – B Avisos e Portarias* (Rio de Janeiro: Imprensa Militar, Estado-Maior do Exercito, 1921) 77.

⁵⁷¹ The regulations of the military school of Joinville-le-Pont were also adopted in the United States. See [Translated and edited in English by] R.L. Tilmont, Geo. H. Breed and W. Scott O'Connor, *Fencing; foil, épée, sabre, theory, method, regulations, practiced at the Military school of Joinville le Pont. Approved by the Department of war of France 1908. Endorsed by the Amateur fencers league of America 1927* (New York: Theo. Gaus' Sons Printers, 1927).

⁵⁷² Coelho Netto [speech] “SPORT – Water-Polo – A inauguração oficial da piscina do Fluminense F.C.” *O Paiz* (Rio de Janeiro: Anno XXXV, n.12.530, 30 de Janeiro de 1919) 5.

organizing competitions, military sports leagues not only regulated practices and established the criteria for the participation and composition of their teams for both the internal competitions and the disputes to which they were frequently invited against civil teams, but also they trained military athletes to represent “the physical culture of [Brazilian] youth” internationally.⁵⁷³

In 1926, the Navy Minister made the practice of physical education compulsory within the armed forces, embracing sporting activities such as water polo, swimming, basketball, boxing, and running.⁵⁷⁴ Sports not only involved the ideal of recreational activity, but officially became a commitment of the military to daily training and internal competitions promoted within the corps of the Brazilian Navy, definitely endorsing the military’s adherence to the concepts of physical culture.⁵⁷⁵ Regulation and organization also involved the creation of boards with the responsibility to act not only in the administrative sectors and in the structure of the leagues but, crucially, in medical matters.⁵⁷⁶

The Ministry of War considered that the practice of individual and collective sports should be prohibited to those under the age of sixteen “for physiological reasons.”⁵⁷⁷ Moreover, under the age of eighteen, soldiers and

⁵⁷³ Half, “Desportos” *O Índio: Semanario Independente* (Palmeira dos Índios, Alagoas: Anno 1, n.43, 24 de Abril de 1921) 2. The text praised physical culture among Brazilian youth and national military personal noting a gold medal earned by Lieutenant Guilherme Paraense during the 1920 Summer Olympics in Antwerp, Belgium. The author emphasized the necessity of physical culture in the small city of Palmeira dos Índios as a means of forming “robust elements” to the “progress and aggrandizement” of his town.

⁵⁷⁴ “Noticiário – Educação physica na Marinha” *Revista Marítima Brasileira* (Rio de Janeiro: Imprensa Naval, Anno XLVI, Ns. 1-2, Julho-Agosto de 1926) 585-6.

⁵⁷⁵ The Armed Forces also participated in the process of organizing the Escola Nacional de Educação Física e Desportos (National School of Physical Education and Sports) at the University of Brazil in 1939, during the dictatorship of Getúlio Vargas.

⁵⁷⁶ In addition to the functions of Chief Executive Officer, Secretary Director and Director-Treasurer, the Navy Sports League also created the Rowing Services, Sailing Services, and Football Services boards. Departamento do Pessoal da Guerra, “Liga de Sports do Exercito,” *Boletim do Exercito N.301 de 5 de Abril 2ª Parte* (Rio de Janeiro: Imprensa Militar, 1926) 527. In the Army, the following directory was elected to direct the destinies of the League in the 1926-27 biennium, in session of the general assembly held on January 23, 1926: “Presidente, general Tertuliano de Albuquerque Potyguara; 1º vice-presidente, tenente-coronel Euclides de Oliveira Figueiredo (em exercício); 2º vice-presidente, general Alfredo Malan d’Angrogne; Secretario, 1º tenente Antonio Carlos Bittencourt; Thesoureiro, major Corbiniano Cardoso; Consultor tecnico, capitão Newton de Andrade Cavalcanti; Engenheiro tecnico, capitão João Marcellino Ferreira da Silva; Medico, 1º tenente medico Dr. Agnello Ubirajara da Rocha.”

⁵⁷⁷ Ministerio da Guerra - Departamento do Pessoal da Guerra 20 de Setembro de 1929, “Educação physica,” *Boletim do Exercito N.550 2ª Parte* (Rio de Janeiro: Imprensa Militar, 1929) 330. [aviso n.720, de 13-9-929].

pupils from schools and establishments subordinated to the Ministry of War were “restrained and deprived of any spirit of competition”. They were not allowed to participate in official or unofficial sporting competitions because the military considered sports a “superior form of game” that would bring “intense pleasure” to the teenagers who were too young to indulge in it. The restrictions also applied to those over the age of eighteen “who have not been practicing physical education normally for at least a year.” Poorly prepared and “not having accumulated sufficient capital of health and strength to be sacrificed in exaggerated expenses, adolescents would be prematurely wasted, hindering their development.” The government worried about the behavior some officials had of authorizing instructors to enroll military teenagers in sporting competitions “often without the slightest medical examination.”⁵⁷⁸

Physiological concerns drove Brazilian military policy on sports because these activities represented a complement, the final stage, of the whole process of physical culture. The level of sporting activities was still considered deficient within the armed forces as neither the military educational institutions, nor even the general troops had regularly conducted physical education exercises. To this end, the armed forces sought to solve the problem of “the small number of specialized instructors and trainers and the deficient number of physical education schools to prepare them.” The Brazilian government considered that the practice of sports should be carried out “after a normal, methodical and rational work of physical education,” because only “a particularly robust and well-formed organism” would “safely endure the demand for the energy expended” during sporting activities. For military administrators, “sports should be the crowning of all scientific method of physical education, without which its practice is harmful.”⁵⁷⁹

Another crucial factor to note is the important socio-racial contradictions in the relationship between military institutions and modern sports. In a process of “cultural omnivorism”, “highbrow” genres of sports and

⁵⁷⁸ Ministerio da Guerra - Departamento do Pessoal da Guerra 20 de Setembro de 1929, “Educação física,” *Boletim do Exército N.550 2ª Parte* (Rio de Janeiro: Imprensa Militar, 1929) 330.

⁵⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

“lowbrow” appropriations of them intersected.⁵⁸⁰ For example, equestrian activities—with their high costs for maintaining and treating horses and directly linked to the typical activities of the Brazilian rural aristocracy and the elitist hippodromes—represented a common practice among the Army because of the cavalry. The less affluent strata of society had access to equestrian practices via some of the training in the Army that widely employed horses. Meanwhile, members of the aristocracy pursuing a military career commonly turned to the Navy, also being drawn to rowing, an urban sport closer to the audience of a simpler public of the cities that regularly watched the races from the riverbanks. Nonetheless, the composition of sports teams and the participation in internal competitions clearly reflected the profound social stratification in Brazilian society and the military.

Soldiers, sailors, corporeals, sergeants and non-commissioned officers were allowed to participate in competitions only if duly authorized by their commanders.⁵⁸¹ In addition to not being able to run for leadership positions—thus being out of the process of organizing sports and setting its rules and priorities—the institutional resolutions also prohibited the participation of low-ranking military personnel “in public” games and practicing exercises alongside commissioned officers.⁵⁸² According to the “regulations for the instruction of servicemen and

⁵⁸⁰ For more about “highbrow” and “lowbrow” categories, see Pierre Bourdieu’s *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1984) and Bourdieu’s “Sport and Social Class” In C. Mukerji & M. Schudson, eds., *Rethinking Popular Culture: Contemporary Perspectives in Cultural Studies* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991) 357-373. For more about “cultural omnivorism,” see Richard Peterson’s (2005) “Problems in Comparative Research: The Example of Omnivorousness,” *Poetics*, 33(5/6), 257-282. Néstor García Canclini uses the ideas of “hybrid cultures” and “interculturality.” See his *Hybrid Cultures: Strategies for Entering and Leaving Modernity* (Minneapolis: Minnesota University Press, 2005) and *Diferentes, Desiguales y Desconectados, Mapas de la Interculturalidad* (Barcelona: Gedisa Editorial, 2004).

⁵⁸¹ “1ª. Assembleia de Representantes de 24 de dezembro de 1915”; and “1ª. Assembleia Geral de 20 de novembro de 1916,” *Livro Histórico Departamento de Esportes da Marinha - Volume I - Anexo I (1915-1920)*, Comissão de Desportos da Marinha. On 27 December 2015, the Director Secretary Captain-Lieutenant Alberto de Lemos Basto, informed that: “(...) a intenção da Directoria é estabelecer logo que possa os campeonatos de foot ball e water polo e que, para permitir que todos os navios tomem parte nestes jogos se estabelecer campeonatos separados para officiaes, sub officiaes e praças o que, ao menos ao principio, não e possível, pensa propor que o campeonato de foot ball seja desde já estabelecido para as praças (...)” Comissão de Desportos da Marinha; “2ª. Assembleia de Representantes, de 27 de dezembro de 1915,” *Livro Histórico Departamento de Esportes da Marinha - Volume I - Anexo I*, Comissão de Desportos da Marinha, p.4. Arquivo da Marinha DPHDM.

⁵⁸² Setembrino de Carvalho, “Solução de consulta,” *Boletim do Exercito N.294 de 28 de Fevereiro* (Rio de Janeiro: Imprensa Militar, 1926) 255-6 [Aviso n.43, de 18-2-926]. The original in Portuguese: “Sr. Commandante da 1ª R.M. – O 1º tenente da C/C/C/ Antonio Carlos Bittencourt, tendo duvida sobre a interpretação dos arts. 88, 109, 121 e 126, do regulamento para a instrucção dos quadros e da tropa e por consignar os diversos regulamentos de exercícios de todas as armas que os officiaes devem, pelo seu exemplo, guiar os seus

troops,” officers were responsible “by their example, to guide their soldiers not only in the practice of physical exercises but also in the other instructions.” The determination was that officers and servicemen would participate in separate events “in order to avoid competition between teachers and disciples.”⁵⁸³ Documents indicate that regulations established distinct categories of sporting competitions for officers, noncommissioned officers and enlisted men, maintaining the structure of separation based on social hierarchies, showing institutional barriers for the coexistence between different social groups even within sporting events.

In the 1920s, the Ministry of War stated that physical culture, “by cultivating the most recommended sporting games,” was “of full advantage” to men incorporated into the military forces because it would make them “agile and strong.”⁵⁸⁴ The institution, however, forbade “commissioned officers to take part in sporting tournaments or jointly compete in any event alongside troops.” The Ministry’s official statement answered an inquiry made by the command of the 9th Heavy Machine Gun Company about the participation of an officer rowing along with his soldiers at a public nautical party. The high command of the armed forces understood that “a superior officer should treat his subordinate with esteem, consideration, and kindness” but “without ever descending to familiarity,” discerning that intimacy and interaction between military personnel of different ranks,

soldados, não só na pratica dos exercícos physicos mas tambem nos demais ramos da instrucção, consulta se a resolução do aviso n.23, de 14 de outubro de 1922, publicada no ‘Boletim do Exercito’ n.51, do referido mez, restringe a actuação dos officiaes nos jogos e exercícos de treinamento com as praças. Em solução à mesma consulta, vos declaro, para conhecimento do consulente, que a disposição do aviso n.23, de 14 de outubro de 1922, ao commandante da 2ª C.M., não restringe a actuação dos officiaes nos jogos e exercícos de treinamento das praças, desde que não sejam feitos em publico; (...)”

⁵⁸³ Setembrino de Carvalho, “Solução de consulta,” *Boletim do Exercito N.294 de 28 de Fevereiro* (Rio de Janeiro: Imprensa Militar, 1926) 255-6 [Aviso n.43, de 18-2-926]. The original in Portuguese: “(...) que convem, entretanto, que nas competições desportivas officiaes nas unidades ou estabelecimentos militares, na Liga de Sports do Exercito, consignadas no capitulo X dos seus estatutos, aprovados pelo de n.376, de 2 de junho do dito anno, e nas suas congengeres militares ou civis, os officiaes e praças disputem provas distinctas para uns e outros a fim de evitar a concurrencia entre mestres e discípulos, estimulando, assim, estes ultimos, o que já está sendo observado na mencionada Liga.”

⁵⁸⁴ José Calógeras, “Aviso n.º. 23 de 14 de outubro de 1922.” In *Ministerio da Guerra - Relatório Apresentado ao Presidente da Republica dos Estados Unidos do Brasil Pelo General de Divisão Fernando Setembrino de Carvalho, Ministro da Guerra em Setembro de 1923*, Anexo B – Avisos e Portarias. (Rio de Janeiro: Imprensa Militar - Estado Maior do Exercito, 1923) 136-7. Available online at http://memoria.bn.br/pdf/720950/per720950_1922_00001.pdf

“in complete promiscuity,” would bear “serious prejudice to discipline.”⁵⁸⁵ Responding to the Army League of Sports, the Ministry of War reemphasized, “It is inconvenient the promiscuity of military personnel from different circles in sports tournaments, as stated in the art. 292 of the Internal Regulations of the General Services for the Army Corps.”⁵⁸⁶

Discipline defined the armed forces’ activities, from behavior and dress norms (namely the uniforms) to bodily movements and physicality, and also exercised a form of power and control over the body aimed at its domestication. Obedient or domesticated bodies become easier to master and manipulate and the specific use of terms such as “promiscuity” to describe the approximations between officers and their subordinates underscores a facet of the social rigor within military hierarchical circles at that time. The prohibition of mixed-teams in tournaments and disputes between superiors and subordinates—reinforced at the beginning of the 1930s—illustrated the “prejudices to discipline” that the participation of officers and soldiers, side by side in sporting competitions, could bring to the strictness of hierarchical cleavages among military personnel.⁵⁸⁷ Institutions, such as the armed forces, are subject to forced discipline and, at the same time, acquire a disciplinarian role, as a continuous and circular movement where order and control take on the main role of regulators of society in its multiple aspects.

⁵⁸⁵ José Calógeras, “Aviso n.º. 23 de 14 de outubro de 1922”, Op. cit. The original text in Portuguese is: “a) Que o regulamento interno dos serviços geraes, sem cogitar propriamente de casos relativos aos jogos sportivos, manda que o superior deve tratar seu subordinado com estima, consideração e bondade, sem nunca descer a familiaridade; b) Que a observância de círculos, fora do serviço onde estejam separados os officiaes graduados, e as simples praças, mostra a inconveniência de qualquer promiscuidade; c) Que não devem ser usados entre indivíduos que fazem parte dos círculos diferentes os jogos que dependem sobretudo de agilidade e do emprego de força physica, taes como foot-ball, o Box, a luta romana e outros; d) Que será de inteira vantagem que os homens, uma vez incorporados ao exercito, se tornem ágeis e fortes, pelo cultivo dos jogos sportivos mais aconselhados; entretanto, a pratica delles, em promiscuidade completa, traz serio prejuízo a disciplina, não podendo guardar compostura que devem ter officiaes e praças em quaesquer situações em que se encontrem; e, e) Que, em taes condições, não é permitido aos officiaes tomar parte em torneios sportivos, ao lado de praças, afim de disputarem em comum quaesquer provas. Saude e Fraternidade – Calógeras.”

⁵⁸⁶ BRASIL, “Soluções ministeriais,” *Boletim do Exercito N.601* (Rio de Janeiro: Imprensa Militar, 5 de Junho de 1930) 811-2. The document refers to the Aviso no. 720 of September 13, 1929 that consolidated the Avisos no. 23 of October 14, 1922 (Minister José Calógeras) and n.43 of February 18, 1926 (Minister Fernando Setembrino de Carvalho).

⁵⁸⁷ See Michel Foucault, *Discipline & Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (New York: Vintage Books, 1995).

Equally crucial to disciplining the body was its medical control. Before any sporting competition, military doctors would submit the soldiers to a physical examination in order to authorize their participation. According to the Armed Forces' criteria, for sporting purposes the physiological age of the soldier was more important than the chronological age. In other words, once the physicians certified that the soldier had already practiced physical education before entering the barracks and that, after a physical examination, they considered him "strong or standard," there would be no inconvenience in his participation in the tournaments. For this reason, it was essential to present the individual's physiological record with the observations and periodic examinations under the responsibility of the doctor of the unit who accompanied the preparation of the soldier, attesting that he was "physiologically over eighteen years old."⁵⁸⁸ Paying "attention to the differences of origin" of Brazil's servicemen, the Ministry of War declared that the standard adopted by the armed forces "for the diffusion of physical culture" strived to attain and "restore healthy and physically strong, the great majority of military conscripts, the conscripts that, in a frightening proportion of alcoholics, syphilitics, with tuberculosis or pre-tuberculosis, etc., have attracted the attention of the Military Health System." According to the minister's determination, without previous medical treatment and preparation, "conveniently systematized," any other major physical effort or sporting practice "could aggravate the soldier's pathological conditions."⁵⁸⁹

As we have seen, the strict distinctions, distances, and essentially disciplinary actions also regulated physical, sporting, and recreational activities, reinforcing the political organization of military institutions and their rigorous relationship to both hierarchy and discipline. These factors, therefore, would define not only rank and hierarchy within military institutions, but also the political and social spaces individuals occupied. Sports also offered a scale to distinguish permitted interactions from those considered "promiscuous" between Brazilian

⁵⁸⁸ "Aviso n.489, 03 de junho de 1930," BRASIL, "Soluções ministeriais," *Boletim do Exercito N.601* (Rio de Janeiro: Imprensa Militar, 5 de Junho de 1930) 811-2.

⁵⁸⁹ "Soluções ministeriais," *Boletim do Exercito N.601* (Rio de Janeiro: Imprensa Militar, 5 de Junho de 1930) 811-2. In Portuguese: "O objectivo é restituir sãos e physicamente fortes, a grande maioria de conscriptos, que em proporção assustadora de alcoolatras, syphyliticos, tuberculosos ou pre-tuberculosos, etc., vem despertando a atenção da Saude da Guerra, e aos quaes sem um tratamento e preparo physico convenientemente systematizados, qualquer esforço maior póde agravar as suas condições pathologicas."

officers and soldiers. Evidence shows that, although the hierarchical criteria of the military institutions structured, framed, and defined sporting practices—the military was also deeply concerned about the physical development, health, and bodily hygiene of individuals. A healthy and robust body was necessary for the Armed Forces—and for the country.



Figure 18

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⁵⁹⁰ “Equipe esportista da Escola de Aviação Naval” Rio de Janeiro, 1916/1923. *Diretoria de Aeronáutica da Marinha, Escola de Aviação Naval* (founded in 1916). Arquivo da Marinha DPHDM: RJDPHDM AVNAVAL 1ªFASE-DE-IC-FAG-47769.

4.4 “Doctrinal Unity”

On January 11, 1930, Minister of War Nestor Sezefredo dos Passos, on behalf of President Washington Luís, issued regulations for the Centro Militar de Educação Physica-CMEP (Military Center of Physical Education). They were directed at “the subordinate officers in the ranks of arms and to the sergeants” with the purpose of “preparing instructors and monitors of physical education” in addition to “disseminating, unifying and intensifying the teaching of physical education within the Army.”⁵⁹¹ To achieve these ends, military leaders established that the center would have a course to form instructors of physical education targeting subordinate officers, a course to prepare sergeants as monitors of physical education, and a specialization course for medical lieutenants under the responsibility commissioned medical officers such as Dr. Cicero Pimenta de Mello and Dr. Augusto Sette Ramalho. Sette Ramalho, in particular, substituted Mello in the Centro Militar de Educação Física and became a quintessential figure responsible for studies of biometry and biotypology in the following years.⁵⁹²

The courses in Physical Education lasted approximately nine months. Nevertheless, participants in the course could only be those between twenty and thirty-five years old, for Instructor, and between nineteen and thirty years old, for Monitor, “with good conduct, and excellent health and physical robustness, proven after a rigorous medical inspection”. Each application included, among other documents, photographs of the candidates’ front and profile, wearing only athletic shorts.⁵⁹³ A commission was in charge of translating the standards for physical education from French to Portuguese and the Technical Director of the Center organized the programs

⁵⁹¹ Ministerio da Guerra – Departamento do Pessoal da Guerra, “Instruções para o Centro Militar de Educação Physica,” *Boletim do Exercito N.576 1ª Parte* (Rio de Janeiro: Imprensa Militar, 1930) 121-2.

⁵⁹² “Centro Militar de Educacao Physica,” *Boletim do Exercito N.587 2ª Parte* (Rio de Janeiro: Imprensa Militar, 1930) 464. The original: “O Sr. Ministro da Guerra, por despacho de 25 de fevereiro findo, mandou substituir o 1º tenente medico Dr. Cicero Pimenta de Mello, da 5ª bateria independente de artilharia de costa, pelo de igual patente Dr. Augusto Sette Ramalho, para frequentar no corrente anno, o Centro Militar de Educacao Physica (officio n.84, de 19-2-930, do 1º Districto de Artilharia de Costa).”

⁵⁹³ Ministerio da Guerra – Departamento do Pessoal da Guerra, “Instruções para o Centro Militar de Educação Physica,” *Boletim do Exercito N.576 1ª Parte* (Rio de Janeiro: Imprensa Militar, 1930) 127-8. This determination followed the instructions for the doctors to the execution of the “regulation of Physical Instruction” published in the *Boletim do Exercito* n.408 of 1921.

annually submitting them to the Chief of Staff of the Army through the Director of the Center.⁵⁹⁴ In addition to classes on anatomy, physiology, biological chemistry, and hygiene, students also learned about the history of physical education, psychology, anthropology and morphology, as well as didactics and pedagogy. The Centro de Educação Physica demanded a broad knowledge in physiology and mechanics of movements, orthopedic gymnastics, and physiotherapy techniques such as mechanotherapy, hydrotherapy, heliotherapy, and electrotherapy. The objective of “the general study on the education and harmony of movements” also aimed at the application of this knowledge to the physical education of women by instructing the students on techniques of rhythmic gymnastics, regional and classical dances.⁵⁹⁵ Instructors and monitors completed their formation on the different elements of the General Regulation by preparing for practical demonstrations, individual and collective execution of all elements of the method, and for the pedagogical and anatomic-physiological study of physical education. Instructors and instructors had to leave their units to be able to prepare, compose, and conduct classes for different physiological ages, organize sporting meetings, and teach physical education not only to military corps and schools, but also to diverse institutions of primary, secondary, and higher education. For this matter, a part of the course destined specifically to Instructors determined “visits to military, federal, municipal, and private educational establishments during hours dedicated to the practice of physical education; visits to schools of physical education in the Federal District and neighboring states; and visits to regional centers of physical education.”⁵⁹⁶

⁵⁹⁴ According to the Aviso no. 414 dated May 6, 1930, Captain João Barbosa Leite was appointed military attaché to the Legation of Brazil in Paraguay. The Minister of War then declared 1st Lieutenant Ignacio de Freitas Rolim (instructor of the Military Center of Physical Education) to substitute Leite in the commission in charge of continue translating the French regulation. “Regulamento francez de educação physica,” *Boletim do Exercito N.596* (Rio de Janeiro: Imprensa Militar, 11 de janeiro de 1930) 710.

⁵⁹⁵ Ministerio da Guerra – Departamento do Pessoal da Guerra, “Instruções para o Centro Militar de Educação Physica,” *Boletim do Exercito N.576 1ª Parte* (Rio de Janeiro: Imprensa Militar, 31 de janeiro de 1930) 123-4. Also “Centro Regional de Educação Physica,” *Boletim do Exercito N.574* (Rio de Janeiro: Imprensa Militar, 20 de janeiro de 1930) 81-2.

⁵⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

The Minister of War appointed all teaching personnel through a process forwarded by the Center's technical director to the Army Chief of Staff.⁵⁹⁷ Legislation also established that the Centro de Educação Physica was subordinant to the Army Chief of Staff and to the Minister of War “in all matters concerning administration and discipline”. It also incorporated a specialization course for medical lieutenants. For five months, the specialization course prepared physicians within “the general pedagogical and anatomo-physiological study” of the different elements established by the General Regulation of Physical Education and for the composition of lessons to the different degrees of physiological ages aiming at “a better cooperation with the instructors and monitors of physical education at the troops and educational establishments.”⁵⁹⁸

Military physicians working at the Centro de Educação Physica were in charge of materials and tools such as publications, maps and various anatomical mannequins, graphics, skeletons, and devices necessary for the different courses. In addition, they were responsible for treating students and their families, providing medical aid not only to the Center’s officers and its civilian and military employees, but also to their families, and immediately informing the Director of the Center about signs of contagious diseases or epidemics manifested in the establishment, indicating the proper means to solve the problem. The medical board was responsible for the Centro Militar de Educação Physica in giving support to its director when informing the Minister of War about the dismissal of students who, “for any reason of health, organic weakness or inability” could not endure, “without any danger to their health, the intensive physical work the Center demanded.”⁵⁹⁹

In order to guarantee what Brazilian military leaders called “a doctrinal unity” in the procedures administered, they mandated a “close link” between the Centro de Educação Physica, the regional centers, and all other military educational establishments and schools. This relationship, they hoped, would create a national

⁵⁹⁷ Ministerio da Guerra – Departamento do Pessoal da Guerra, “Instruções para o Centro Militar de Educação Physica,” *Boletim do Exercito N.576 1ª Parte* (Rio de Janeiro: Imprensa Militar, 11 de janeiro de 1930) 126.

⁵⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 125.

⁵⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 137-9.

control by the Center, which was instructed to request the Minister of War's intervention whenever the Center believed any "irregularity, deficiency or divergence in the teaching method" existed. Brazilian military leaders believed this central control would convey "benefits for the physical education of the soldier, facilitating everyone's task, and the organization of statistics."⁶⁰⁰ To this end, the regional centers—also responsible for preparing monitors of physical education—would send to the Centro de Educação Physica a list of all students enrolled (according to the order of classification obtained in their admissions), informing their age, place of birth, marital status, and the results of their first medical and physical exams. After the end of the student's work, each center would send a list with the final grades and result of individuals' medical and physical exams, and a copy of the report to the commander of the specific military region.⁶⁰¹ In addition, periodic shipments had to be sent with the subsequent medical and physical examinations, the results of sporting competitions and observations on the teaching of physical education, data on the troops, in short, "all the information and studies that may interest the Military Center for Physical Education."

The Center would also send "all data and considerations that may be of interest to the regional centers and circumscriptions" and this body of statistics, also shared with the Minister of War, would "promptly attend to the inquiries from educational establishments, troop bodies, centers of veterans, schools for military instruction, and other private centers of physical culture."⁶⁰² The Centro Militar de Educação Physica also received officers and

⁶⁰⁰ Ministerio da Guerra – Departamento do Pessoal da Guerra, "Instruções para o Centro Militar de Educação Physica," *Boletim do Exercito N.576 1ª Parte* (Rio de Janeiro: Imprensa Militar, 11 de janeiro de 1930) 140.

⁶⁰¹ Each regional center had a 1st lieutenant as its physician, being governed by the Instructions for the Centro Militar de Educação Physica. "Centro Regional de Educação Physica," *Boletim do Exercito N.574*, 20 de janeiro de 1930 (Rio de Janeiro: Imprensa Militar) 81. The Minister of War informed—by the Aviso no. 30, Aviso n.32, and Aviso n.33 of January 1930—that the 1st Military Region [Federal Capital] received twenty sergeant instructors; that the 4th Region's [Minas Gerais] Regional Center for Physical Education received the instructors 1st lieutenants Pindaro Santos da Fonseca and Jacy Guimarães, and monitors 2nd sergeants José da Silva Albuquerque, Leovegildo de Campos Martins and 3rd sergeant Lindonor Alves Cabral; and that the 2nd Military Region's [São Paulo] Regional Center for Physical Education received the instructors 1st lieutenants Abilio Cunha Pontes and José Carlos de Freitas, as well as monitors 2nd sergeants Argeu de Carvalho Moraes, Antonio Renô Ribeiro and Lemirio Ferreira. "Centros Regionaes de Educação Physica," *Boletim do Exercito N.575* (Rio de Janeiro: Imprensa Militar, 25 de janeiro de 1930) 96-7.

⁶⁰² *Ibid.*, 141.

sergeants from auxiliary forces, as well as federal, state, municipal, and civil teachers for its courses.⁶⁰³ Documents reveal the “unavoidable need” to provide Brazilian armed forces with “good monitors of physical education” decades before the inauguration of the national and regional centers for physical education. Brazilian military leaders believed that the mission of the military centers of physical education was—in addition to preparing specialists for the teaching and practice of bodily hygiene, exercise, and constant monitoring of methods and practices in all military educational establishments across the country—to promote advanced studies in biometrics, a central element for the promotion of physical culture.

Transition to Authoritarianism

The initiatives to set up biometric offices for physical education were tied to the emergence of biotypology work among Brazilian military physicians.⁶⁰⁴ The beginning of the so-called Vargas Era brought with it the creation of the Gabinete Biométrico of the Escola de Educação Física do Exército, in Rio de Janeiro, and the

⁶⁰³ “Centro Militar de Educação Physica,” *Boletim do Exercito N.575*, 25 de janeiro de 1930 (Rio de Janeiro: Imprensa Militar) 96. The Minister of War appointed the technical director, instructors and monitors of the Centro Militar de Educação Physica: “Technical director - captain Orlando Eduardo da Silva; Instructors - 1st lieutenants Ignacio de Freitas Rolim, Laurentino Lopes Bonorino, and 1st medical lieutenants Drs. Virgilio Alves Bastos and Hermilio Gomes Pereira; Monitors - 1st sergeants Bento de Souza Lima, Maximiano Ferreira, and Leandro de Oliveira Barros Filho; 2nd sergeants José João Medeiros and Durval Bellini Ferreira Lima. (aviso n.33, de 17-1-930).”

⁶⁰⁴ Augusto Sette Ramalho, “O Gabinete Biométrico na educação física moderna” *Revista de Educação Física* (Rio de Janeiro, n.3, 1932); Augusto Sette Ramalho, “Das fichas biométricas: técnicas para a escolha e organização de dados biométricos e sua disposição em uma ficha de educação física” *Revista de Educação Física* (Rio de Janeiro, n.10, 1933a) 3-5; Augusto Sette Ramalho, “Representação gráfica das qualidades biomensuráveis: perfis” *Revista de Educação Física* (Rio de Janeiro, n.10, 1933c) 6-7; Augusto Sette Ramalho, “Ficha morfológica tipo-brasileiro a ser adotada nos corpos de tropa e estabelecimentos militares” *Revista de Educação Física* (Rio de Janeiro, n.6, 1933d); João Carlos Gross, “O exame físico: provas práticas” *Revista de Educação Física* (Rio de Janeiro, n.29, 1935) 30-32; “Estudo Morfológico dos Atletas: Aplicação da Forma ao Desporto.” *Revista de Educação Física do Exército* (Rio de Janeiro, Ano V, n.33, 1936) 5-6; Arthur Ramos, “Educação física elementar sob o ponto de vista da caracteriologia” *Revista de Educação Física* (Rio de Janeiro, n.33, 1936) 35-6; Floriano Stoffel, “Biotipologia” *Revista de Educação Física* (Rio de Janeiro, n.37, 1937) 17-24; Lauro Studart, “Índices biométricos femininos” *Revista de Educação Física* (Rio de Janeiro, n.35, 1937) 25-28; Aureo Moraes, “Contribuição ao desenvolvimento da biotipologia no Brasil” *Revista de Educação Física* (Rio de Janeiro, n.35, 1937) 29-30; Augusto Sette Ramalho, “A correlação capacidade vital e estatura” *Revista de Educação Física* (Rio de Janeiro, n.45, 1939) 28-29; Washington Augusto Almeida, “Ficha biométrica simplificada para os corpos de tropa e estabelecimentos militares” *Revista de Educação Física* (Rio de Janeiro, n.53, 1942) 55-60; Waldemar Berardinelli, *Noções de biotipologia. constituição, temperamento, caracter* (Rio de Janeiro: Francisco Alves, 1933); Isaac Brown, *O normotipo brasileiro* (Rio de Janeiro: Guanabara, 1934); João Peregrino Junior, *Biotipologia pedagógica* (Rio de Janeiro: Odeon, 1940); Augusto Sette Ramalho, *Lições de biometria aplicada v.1* (Rio de Janeiro: Papelaria Velho, 1940); Augusto Sette Ramalho, *Antropologia do brasileiro do interior paranaense* (Rio de Janeiro: Laemmert, 1941); Waldemar Berardinelli, *Tratado de biotipologia e patologia constitucional* (Rio de Janeiro: Francisco Alves, 1942).

intensification of biotypological studies influenced by the anthropological and criminological classifications of the nineteenth century.⁶⁰⁵ Seeking to measure various morphological and physiological characters of military individuals and generate data, Brazilian military institutions started to classify soldiers' bodies into types. Beyond the Gabinete Biométrico of the Army Physical Education School, regional biotypological studies emerged with efforts to construct a Brazilian biological discourse about the national identity, in the 1930s. This deterministic discourse perfectly fitted the requirements of the "New State" and the "new man" idealized by the regime, based on "modern" physical education and scientific knowledge.⁶⁰⁶

Studies on the bodily profile of specific regions, like the Northeast and the Southeast, reveal the context in which contemporary debates on race, miscegenation, and national identity, intertwined with investigations about biological determinism and the influence of regional environments, social and cultural aspects on the bodily development of Brazilians. Regional biotypological studies also contributed to the construction of racialized discourses about a miscegenated Brazilian bodily identity. During Vargas' authoritarian regime, biotypological research was meant to determine the "new" normal body type of the Brazilian, using its own peculiar classificatory lexicon. Military institutions thus continued to play a crucial part in supporting the argument of "the capital importance" physical culture had as "the only way to regenerate a Latin race like [Brazil]" and as a means for policies and practices attempting to standardize and normalize Brazilian bodies aiming at defining national physical types.⁶⁰⁷

⁶⁰⁵ Dr. Sette Ramalho, "O Gabinete Biométrico na educação física moderna." *Revista de Educação Física* (Rio de Janeiro: Ano 1, n.3, Julho 1932) 21-2.

⁶⁰⁶ Álvaro Ferraz and Andrade Lima Junior. *Morfologia do Homem do Nordeste – Estudo Biotipológico* (Rio de Janeiro: José Olympio Editora, 1939).

⁶⁰⁷ 1st Lieutenant Antonio de Mendonça Molina, "Importancia da Educacao Fisica Para Um Povo - O Metodo Adotado - Razoes de Sua Adoção." *Revista de Educação Física* (Rio de Janeiro: Ano 1, n.3, Julho 1932). 37-8.

The military brought people together from various ethnic groups—blacks, mulattos, whites and indigenous individuals.⁶⁰⁸ Permanent displacements of such heterogeneous military bodies throughout the territory—either in missions or by other contingencies within the career—then functioned as a connector, not only a physical but a symbolic linkage between regions, playing the “doctrinal unity” as a fundamental binding structure for the nation. The military institutional presence nationwide was a key element in spreading the ideals of physical culture to a broader population.

Due to the decisive importance military forces also had in the consolidation of the 1930 Revolution, the first years of the Vargas Era marked their strong presence in key political positions in the new government. For the most part, the main representatives of the military that supported Vargas became the so-called “federal interventors,” who discharged (due to a presidential directive) both the legislative and executive powers in each Brazilian state. During this gestational period leading up to Vargas’ dictatorship—the Estado Novo (1937-1945)—Brazil also witnessed the rise of the Frente Negra Brasileira (FNB), in September of 1931, and the Ação Integralista Brasileira (AIB), in October of 1932, two important political movements that also reinforced the discourse physical culture’s fundamental importance to the nation.

The Frente Negra Brasileira was the most prominent black organization in Brazil during the first half of the twentieth century.⁶⁰⁹ The FNB expanded with homonymous groups in several states, such as Rio de Janeiro, Minas Gerais, Espírito Santo, Pernambuco, Rio Grande do Sul, and Bahia with a program aimed at gaining

⁶⁰⁸ Beattie (2001) explains Brazilian armed forces’ long reliance on nationwide coercive recruitment to fill their lower ranks and how enlisted men also became associated with criminality, perversion, and dishonor, as nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century Brazilian officials assembled the “dishonorable” poor.

⁶⁰⁹ For more about the FNB and Brazil’s black movement in the beginning of the twentieth century, see Lilia Moritz Schwarcz, *Retrato em branco e negro: jornais, escravos e cidadãos em São Paulo no final do século XIX* (São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 1987); Márcio Barbosa, org., *Frente Negra Brasileira: depoimentos* (São Paulo: Quilombhoje, 1998); George Reid Andrews, *Negros e brancos em São Paulo(1888-1988)* (Bauru: Edusc, 1998); Petrônio Domingues, *Uma história não contada: negro, racismo e branqueamento em São Paulo no pós-abolição* (São Paulo: Ed. Senac, 2004).

positions for blacks in all sectors of Brazilian society.⁶¹⁰ The Frente Negra Brasileira also published the newspaper *A Voz da Raça* that openly declared its support for the 1930 Revolution and to the “dear” Getúlio Vargas, “a friend of the national Black people,” clearly indicating the proximity that the black movement had to the political leader and its hope for a “Brazil for Brazilians” under the Vargas’ administration.⁶¹¹

At a time when scientific racism and eugenics flourished—preaching the idea that blacks and mulattos constituted a degenerate group and, therefore, were predestined to disappear—the Frente Negra Brasileira defended a political and ideological program with authoritarian and ultranationalist characteristics, giving “support to the Dictatorship and to the National Army in the person of General Góes Monteiro.”⁶¹² Praising the unity of the country” against what they called “the ferocious menace of separatists, clannish groups, and internationalists,” the members of the Frente Negra Brasileira saw themselves as “a small portion of Brazilianness and patriotism”. They championed the “absolute right of the *Bugre* [native people], the Negroes, the Portuguese and their descendants—builders of our nationality—upon the destiny of our Fatherland.”⁶¹³

⁶¹⁰ Enlisting thousands of people of African descent, the FNB became a true mass movement. It provided the excluded and marginalized Afro-descendant population not only with social assistance, but with a means to face and combat prejudice, developing a significant socio-educational and cultural work with schools, courses in political training, arts and crafts, musical and theatrical groups, a soccer team (the Frenetenegrino FC), a legal department and medical and dental care. According to Florestan Fernandes, the FNB was the best “attempt at organically structuring people within a well-defined bureaucratic leadership, with a more or less defined discipline.” See Florestan Fernandes’ *Significado do protesto negro* (São Paulo: Cortez, 1989) 73.

⁶¹¹ “Missa votiva em ação de graças ao casal Getulio Vargas” *A Voz da Raça* (São Paulo: Anno 1, n. 14, 24 Jun 1933) 1; “Caixa Postal d’A Voz da Raça” *A Voz da Raça* (São Paulo: Anno 1, n. 15, 01 Jul 1933) 2; “Visita Honrosa” *A Voz da Raça* (São Paulo: Anno 1, n. 15, 01 Jul 1933) 4.

⁶¹² Santos, Arlindo Veiga dos. “Irmãos Negros!” *A Voz da Raça* (São Paulo: Anno 1, n. 5, 15 Apr. 1933) 1. Pedro Aurélio de Góes Monteiro was born in the state of Alagoas in 1889. In 1930, he took over the military command of the revolutionary movement to depose President Washington Luís. Góes Monteiro was appointed Minister of War by Vargas in 1934. In May 1935, Góes Monteiro left the ministry, but continued to exercise crucial influence being responsible for the proposal to close the Aliança Nacional Libertadora (ANL), a political front that brought together various leftist sectors in the fight against fascism and imperialism. Even without occupying any formal position in the government, but having assumed the presidency of the Military Club and the command of the Army’s General Staff, Góes Monteiro became one of the central figures in the coup that installed the Estado Novo dictatorship, in November 1937. An admirer of Adolph Hitler, Góes Monteiro was sent to the United States in 1939, by President Vargas, on a military mission aimed at promoting closer integration between the two countries at the time World War II began. See Peter Seaborne Smith’s *Góes Monteiro and the Role of the Army in Brazil* (Melbourne: Institute of Latin American Studies, La Trobe University, 1979).

⁶¹³ Dias, Henrique. “O discurso que eu não disse!!” *A Voz da Raça* (São Paulo: Anno 1, n. 5, 15 Apr. 1933) 1.

At that time, the main leaders of the FNB, such as Arlindo Veiga dos Santos, publicly exalted the patriotic fundamentalism of European authoritarian governments, defending the construction of a “Brazilian race” inspired by the motto “God, Fatherland, Race and Family.”⁶¹⁴ Veiga dos Santos criticized the “uproars of ignorance” against the “dictator Hitler who, in a violent desire to restore Germany to the path of its traditions, began the campaign for the practical affirmation of the Germanic race.”⁶¹⁵ According to Veiga dos Santos, if “the Germans affirm their Germanic race,” they were giving Brazilians a “beautiful example, a grandiose lesson!” Brazil’s mission had to be “affirming the Brazilian Race! And lock Brazil’s doors up for twenty or more years to upright this!” The Frente Negra Brasileira denounced “this mania that countless imbeciles have of making the Brazilian Nation an Aryan people, thus destroying the Mestizo Race that Brazilians are!”⁶¹⁶ Brazilian Black activists argued that Brazil “has its own Race, too!,” even though representing not “only one National Type.” For them, the physical figure of the “Brazilian race” was therefore the result of “our Negroes, Cafusos, Cabôclos, Negroid, Caucasoid, and (even!) Bugres that still live in the bush.” In order to preserve, improve, and perpetuate these physical characteristics, the Frente Negra Brasileira argued for the maintenance of “our intellectual and military traditions within the Brazilian nationality.”⁶¹⁷

⁶¹⁴ The motto “God, Fatherland, Race and Family” was the subtitle of the FNB’s newspaper “A Voz da Raça.” The Kantian concept of “incongruent counterparts” perhaps explains this contradiction for it illustrates objects that are similar except for being mirror of each other, such as left and right human hands. Kant called them ‘counterparts’ because they are similar in roughly every way, ‘incongruent’ because, despite their similarity, one could never be put in the place of the other. For more, see James Van Cleve & Robert E. Fredrick, eds., *The Philosophy of Left and Right* (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1991).

⁶¹⁵ Arlindo Veiga dos Santos, “A Afirmação de Raça.” *A Voz da Raça* (São Paulo: Anno 1, n. 12, 10 Jun. 1933) 1. See also Arlindo Veiga dos Santos, “Resposta a um boletim lançado pela canalha anarquista-comunista-socialista, que obedece aos padrões judeus e estrangeiros.” *A Voz da Raça* (São Paulo: Anno 1, n. 27, 9 Dez. 1933) 1.

⁶¹⁶ Ibid. For more about Arlindo Veiga dos Santos and his leadership within Brazil’s black movements in the early twentieth century, see Petrônio Domingues “O “messias” negro? Arlindo Veiga dos Santos (1902-1978): “Viva a nova monarquia brasileira; Viva Dom Pedro III !”” *Varia Historia* (Belo Horizonte: vol.22, n.36, July/Dec. 2006) 517-36.

⁶¹⁷ Rodolpho Xavier, “Frente Negra Brasileira,” *A Voz da Raça* (São Paulo: Anno 1, n. 10, 20 Maio 1933) 4. The text was written in Pelotas on 7 July, 1932.

The Ação Integralista Brasileira (AIB) complained about what “was done to preserve and invigorate the health of the race.”⁶¹⁸ For the Integralistas, physical culture was key to defending the consolidation of a centralized government, capable of leading the nation to its “great destiny.” Despite the “inefficiency” with which Brazilian public institutions of health and education conducted and cared about “teaching gymnastics and hygienic habits for children and young” citizens, the national military forces represented “the biggest factor in the progress of physical culture in Brazil.”⁶¹⁹ Integralistas condemned those who did not pay attention to “the magnificent development of physical education” in smaller federal unities like Espírito Santo and Pará made by the “effort and enthusiasm” of military personnel, also organizing “promising courses of orientation” within the educational system of São Paulo, Minas Gerais, Rio de Janeiro, and Pernambuco.⁶²⁰

Led by Plínio Salgado, Brazilian Integralistas were inspired by Italian fascism, eugenics, and Christian fundamentalism to strengthen the “physically and spiritually strong integral-soldier,” calling for the development and defense of the Nation from a “moral, intellectual, and physical” point of view.⁶²¹ Physical health and bodily care constituted for the Integralistas “the objective of all the peoples that wanted to consolidate or grow their strength, muscular efficiency, organic resistance and physical beauty of their children,” proof of the “magnificent

⁶¹⁸ For the Brazilian Integralists, this “great destiny” would only be possible with the end of democratic freedoms, the persecution of communist movements, and the maximum intervention of the State in the economy. Little has been written, however, about the importance given to the physical culture of Brazilians. See Renata Duarte Simões & Silvana Vilodre Goellner, “A educação do corpo para o “soldado integral”, “forte de físico, culto de cérebro e grande de alma”” *Motriz* (Rio Claro: v.18 n.2, abr./jun. 2012) 327-37.

⁶¹⁹ Rômulo Almeida, “A Educação Physica no Brasil,” *A Offensiva* (Rio de Janeiro: Sigma Jornaes Reunidos, Anno III, N.223, 4 Jul. 1936) 8. The newspaper *A Offensiva* was founded by Plínio Salgado on May 17, 1934, and became the vehicle for spreading the Brazilian Integralist doctrine, attacking communists and Jews and promoting wide coverage of the rise of European fascism. To learn more about Rômulo Almeida (Bahia, 1914-1988) see his *Rômulo: Voltado para o Futuro* (Fortaleza: BNB, 1986). There is also an oral history testimony Rômulo Almeida gave to Dulce Chaves Pandolfi and Daniela Maria Moreaux: “Rômulo Almeida” (Rio de Janeiro: CPDOC/FGV, interview conducted on 25, July, 1984). To know more about the influence Plínio Salgado (São Paulo, 1895-1975) had on young Bahian intellectuals like Almeida, see Jacira Cristina S. Primo’s doctoral dissertation, *Nas Fileiras do Sigma: os integralistas na Bahia e a política brasileira na década de 30* (Salvador: UFBA, 2013).

⁶²⁰ Rômulo Almeida, “A Educação Physica no Brasil,” *A Offensiva* (Rio de Janeiro: Sigma Jornaes Reunidos, Anno III, N.223, 4 Jul. 1936) 8.

⁶²¹ *A Offensiva* (Rio de Janeiro: Sigma Jornaes Reunidos, Anno I, 8 Nov. 1934) 6.

movement of a sound nationalism.”⁶²² Considering the “technical and scientific studies, orientation, and encouragement” provided to benefit the physical culture of Brazilian people, the Integralistas praised the military institutions’ “invaluable service of benevolence” because, according to them, “there are no good soldiers without a strong people.”⁶²³

Right after the beginning of his dictatorship, Getúlio Vargas took on the Frente Negra Brasileira and the Ação Integralista Brasileira. He dissolved and extinguished both along with all other political parties, following the authoritarian Constitution of 1937.⁶²⁴ The ideas of physical culture, though, were preserved and developed by Getúlio’s “Estado Novo.” Scientific practices developed in military institutions revealed that Vargas’ dictatorship also understood the crucial governmental role in mobilizing its political, medical (hygiene, biometrics, biotypology), and economic resources in favor of Brazilian physical culture as a way of controlling and molding bodies. Military bodily knowledge and practices served as the foundations for Vargas’ dictatorship attempts to identify morphophysiological and biotypological profiles of Brazilians in its broader and more ambitious project of shaping the Brazilian population the regime’s own image.

⁶²² “A atividade ‘esportiva’ dos estudantes paulistas em S. Salvador,” *A Acção* (São Paulo: Sigma Jornaes Reunidos, Anno i, n.1, 7 de outubro de 1936) 4. *A Acção* was an Integralista newspaper directed by Miguel Reale.

⁶²³ Rômulo Almeida, “A Educação Physica no Brasil,” *A Offensiva* (Rio de Janeiro: Sigma Jornaes Reunidos, Anno III, N.223, 4 Jul. 1936) 8.

⁶²⁴ BRASIL - Presidência da República, *Constituição dos Estados Unidos do Brasil* (Rio de Janeiro, 10 de novembro de 1937). Available online at http://www.planalto.gov.br/ccivil_03/constituicao/constituicao37.htm Although the Constitution transformed Getúlio Vargas in Brazil’s plenipotentiary leader, the extinction of the political parties was only formalized on December 2, 1937, through the Decree-Law number 37, available online at <https://www2.camara.leg.br/legin/fed/declei/1930-1939/decreto-lei-37-2-dezembro-1937-354175-publicacaooriginal-1-pe.html>

EXAME FÍSICO

ANNEXO I

MODELO DA FICHA INDIVIDUAL

Nome	Naturalidade
Posto	Origem
Unidade	Estado civil

EXAME MEDICO		Mez
1— Idade		
2— Altura (descalço)		
3— Envergadura		
4— Altura (sentado)		
5— Peso (nú)		
6— Perimetro xiphoidiano:		
a) inspiração maxima		
b) expiração maxima		
c) elasticidade (diferença)		
7— Coeficiente thoracico:		
altura sentado		
———— = (média 0,53)		
altura em pé		
8— Capacidade vital (espirometria)		
9— Coeficiente pulmonar (indica a resis-		
tencia):		
capacidade vital		
———— = (média 0,05)		
peso		
10— Segmentos anthropometricos (indica a		
corpulencia, magreza ou obesidade):		
peso		
———— = (média 3,9)		
altura (cms.)		
11— Dynamometria:		
a) flexores dos ante-braços		
b) musculos escapulares		
c) musculos lombares		
12— Urina		
13— Sangue		

....., em de de 19...

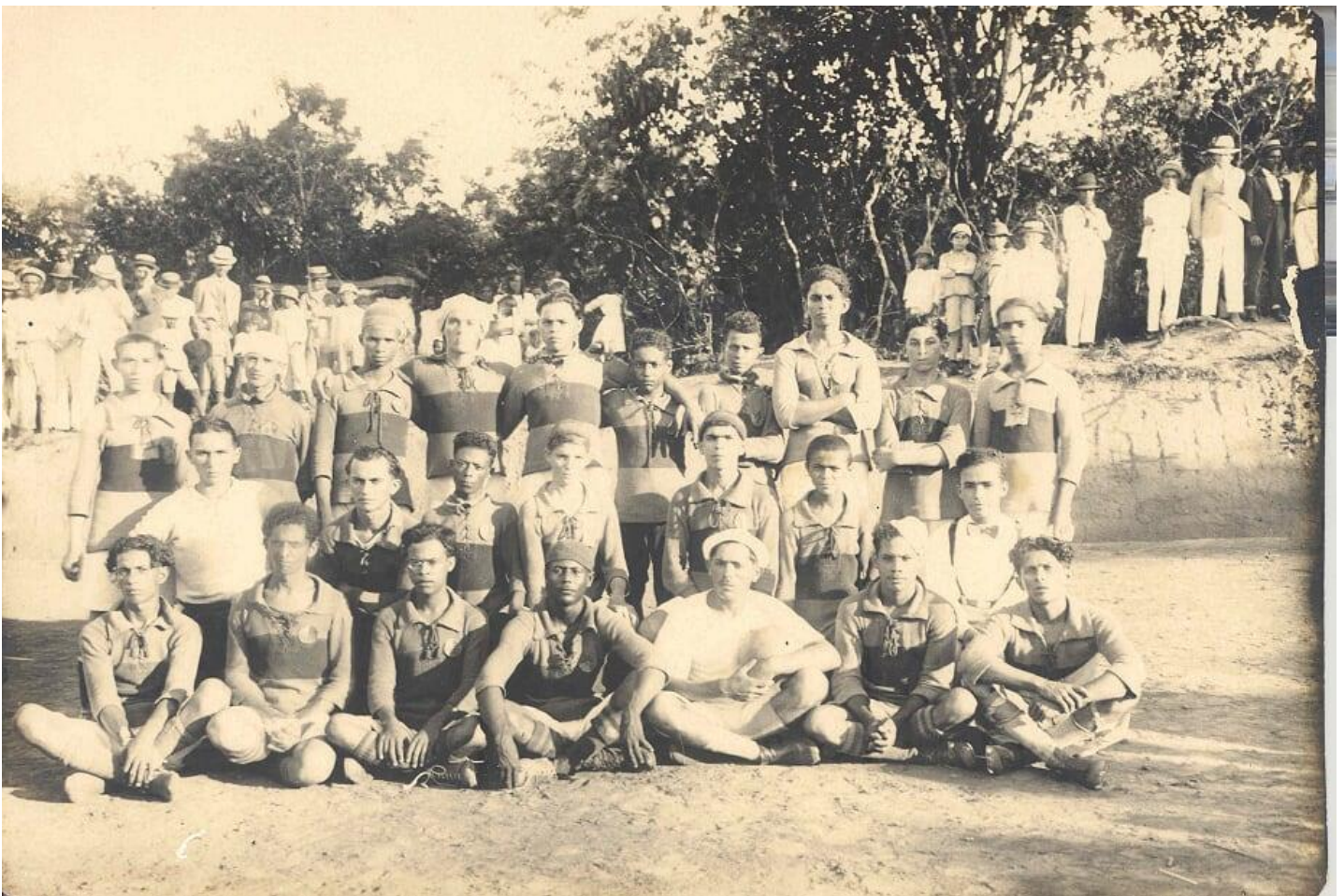
O medico,

Figure 19

⁶²⁵ Military medical anthropometric file. Ministério da Guerra, *Boletim do Exército n. 576 – 2ª Parte* (Rio de Janeiro, Imprensa Militar, 1930) 143. Arquivo Histórico do Exército Brasileiro, acervo “Boletins do Exército.”

CHAPTER V

Invigorating Sports for a Degenerate People: Nation, Race, Identity⁶²⁶



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Figure 20

⁶²⁶ This chapter is a broader analysis from my “Sportsmen in the Tropics: Institutions, Public Spaces, and Social Relations in Modern Brazil” published in *The International Journal of Sport and Society* and “Let the Aryanists know! Brazilian race and nation in the 1938 France World Cup” published in *Soccer & Society*, both in 2019.

⁶²⁷ Team Guarany Sport Clube. Camaragibe (Pernambuco) early 1920s. Joaquim Nabuco Foundation: Coordination of Iconography (ICONO), Arnaldo Guedes Pereira collection, AGP.318.

Initiative: This quality which sociologists consider the true spring of the Anglo-Saxon psyche, the source of all social achievements of this race, its coefficient of superiority over the Latin race, is also one of the most molded by the exercise of football.

Monteiro Lobato, 1905

Monteiro Lobato's blissful statement in favor of physical exercise was the result of his observing how English institutions and activities vigorously flourished in Brazil during the nineteenth century.⁶²⁸ The British presence in Brazil also created a new sensibility and lifestyle for some Brazilians *vis-à-vis* the native way, foremost in cities like Belém, Recife, Rio, and Salvador, notably in the creation of new activities and institutions. The impact of British presence in Brazil had begun even before independence in 1822 and was not restricted to politics and economics.⁶²⁹ Throughout the nineteenth century, British cultural influence permeated Brazil and changed old habits and customs.⁶³⁰

Every literary work by Monteiro Lobato has a strong political connotation. As a quintessential figure in Brazil's cultural history, Lobato was always present in the political debates on national problems, constantly giving his opinion on issues that affected the life of the country. As a journalist or editor, and even in his most known literary work of children's fables, racial and nationalist issues guided Lobato's work. Monteiro Lobato's intention and motivation were political.⁶³¹

Lobato emphasized the "gentle, velvet revolution" produced by a multitude of British manufactures, ideas, and habits that invaded Brazil producing a profound English cultural influence in the country.⁶³² In addition to

⁶²⁸ See Maria Lúcia Garcia Pallares-Burke, "The English in Brazil: A Study in Cultural Encounters," *Portuguese Studies* 27.1 (2011): 20-32.

⁶²⁹ See Henry Koster, *Travels in Brazil* (London: Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, and Brown, 1817).

⁶³⁰ Plus the infrastructure of trams and railways, gas lamps, cemeteries, hospitals, business houses, industries, foundries, the reading of translated English texts, newspapers, some schools, charities, clubs, sporting associations, the import of household goods (such as cutlery and crockery), clothing items (fabric and hats), food items, and even the most modern models of carriages were assimilated in Brazil as "English contributions." Gilberto Freyre also mentioned Britons as introducers of "white suits and waistcoats, tea, wheat bread, beer and whiskey, gin, rum, steak with potatoes, roast beef, lamb chop, sleeping pajamas," the direct interference in the Portuguese language, with the adoption of elements in the words and verbs used by Brazilians, especially in terms of the vocabulary used in sports. Freyre, 66.

⁶³¹ José Bento Renato Monteiro Lobato (1882-1948) is well-known in Brazil as the forerunner of children's literature in Brazil. The children's books written by Lobato became several very successful television series. There are numerous references in Brazil in memory of Monteiro Lobato, including several places and institutions named in his honor. To learn more about Monteiro Lobato, see Elisângela da Silva Santos, *Monteiro Lobato e seis personagens em busca da nação* (São Paulo: Unesp, 2011).

⁶³² In 1948, Brazilian polymath and socio-anthropologist Gilberto Freyre used those words in the first edition (in Portuguese) of "The English in Brazil: aspects of British influence on the life, landscape and culture of Brazil." Gilberto Freyre, *Ingleses no Brasil* (Rio de

the fundamental role played by Britons in political and economic activities, Lobato believed that soccer, in the English style, would bring “initiative” to Brazilians, providing moral and physical benefits to its practitioners and, consequently, to the nation itself. Monteiro Lobato advocated for the improvement of the inferior, “neo-Latin” Brazilian people through physical culture, which would bring “more fruitful benefits to the present and future of our race than all law academies, all school groups combined, multiplied and raised to the tenth power.”⁶³³ At this point, the first practitioners of modern sports in Brazil came from British companies. Notably, in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, sports had an eminent part in the development and maintenance of the British Empire, but it also played a crucial role in non-British colonies especially for the transmission of British values.⁶³⁴

An enthusiast of eugenics, Monteiro Lobato admired bodies “muscularly trained by wise sports.”⁶³⁵ In addition, Lobato especially praised soccer because, in his opinion, “it gives a great physical strength in the first place” and he saw it as one of the reasons for the “the eminent superiorities of English and American people” who, in his opinion, “religiously” practiced physical activities almost as a “ritual,” as if accomplishing “a duty.”⁶³⁶ This testimony reinforces the prominent moral dimension of the British Empire and the influence British physical culture had in the debates on the Brazilian national identity in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

As the earlier chapters explained, the promotion of physical education was not restricted to schools but also to other social institutions. The edification of the body came with a clear social hierarchy, and clear

Janeiro: Topbooks, 3rd edition, 2001). There is also an English edition published by Boulevard in 2011 under the title *The English in Brazil: Aspects of British Influence on the Life, Landscape and Culture of Brazil*.

⁶³³ Monteiro Lobato, “Futebol” [1905], *Literatura do Minarete* (São Paulo: Brasiliense, Obras Completas v. 14, 1959) 179-86.

⁶³⁴ For more about sports and the British Empire, see Roger Hutchinson, *Empire Games: The British Invention of Twentieth Century Sport* (Edinburgh: Mainstream Publishing Co., 1996); J.A. Mangan, *The Games Ethic and Imperialism: Aspects of the Diffusion of an Ideal* (London: Routledge, 1998).

⁶³⁵ Monteiro Lobato, “Eficiência e eugenia” [1926], *A Onda Verde e O Presidente Negro* (São Paulo: Brasiliense, Obras Completas v. 5, 1949) 232. To know more about scientific racism and eugenics in Monteiro Lobato’s work, see José Wellington de Souza, *Raça e eugenia na obra geral de Monteiro Lobato* (Juiz de Fora: UFJF, Doctoral dissertation, 2017) available at <https://repositorio.ufjf.br/jspui/handle/ufjf/5888>

⁶³⁶ Monteiro Lobato, “Futebol” [1905].

conceptions of moral and mental health. The healthy body was central to constructing the nation. As stated by Carl Betz in 1886, “Physical Culture aims to unfold the natural and symmetrical beauty of the human body, making it fit and capable in every phase of moral life to obey and carry out the will of its supreme master, the mind.”⁶³⁷ Brazilian intellectuals and policymakers had a similar understanding of physical culture. In the case of modern sports as part of physical culture, its genealogy in Brazil is closely linked to the major coastal cities.

The Atlantic framework is crucial for thinking about the early history of sports in Brazil and the many forms of the dissemination of physical culture throughout the country since the nineteenth century. Brazil was a territory with a thriving cultural diversity, continental dimensions, and a struggle to construct a strong sense of nationhood.⁶³⁸ The long history of contact and exchange of the coastal parts of Brazil with the Atlantic world is key in this analysis. Previous scholarship has indeed reinforced the idea that modern sports came first to places in southern Brazil and, consequently, spread throughout the rest of the country. An important part of Brazilian historiography affirms that the case of Rio de Janeiro would be very interesting “to understand the country as a whole” and even a bit of Latin America as well.⁶³⁹ Moreover, this argument states that gymnastics and sporting practices emerged in Brazil from the “immense South and part of the Southeast,” especially through German

⁶³⁷ Carl Betz, *A System of Physical Culture, Designed as a Manual of Instruction For the Use of Schools* (Kansas City Press, Missouri, 4 vols., 1886) frontispiece. Available at: <https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=loc.ark:/13960/t95728c26;view=1up;seq=2>. According to the website “Carl Betz Collection” at the Kansas City Public Library, Betz was born on June 1, 1854, in Belleville, Illinois, of German parents. He was educated in St. Paul, Minnesota schools and in 1876 completed the course of the Seminary of the Turnerbund in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, which prepared him to teach physical education in the gymnasiums of the Turner societies, a German-American group located in the states of Indiana, Kentucky, Minnesota, and Missouri. While in Kansas City, Betz presented a report to the school district concerning the importance of physical education and the health of children. By January 1886, he became director of physical training for the schools. See http://kchistory.org/sites/default/files/MVSC_PDFs/SCs/SC88%20Betz_0.pdf

⁶³⁸ Marshall Eakin states that the biggest challenge faced by the State in the nineteenth century was to create the idea of Brazil: “Before becoming Brazilian one must first become aware of the very notion of something called Brazil.” Eakin believes that the Brazilian imagined community and the idea of nationalism shared by its population did not exist concretely before the twentieth century. See Marshall C. Eakin, *Becoming Brazilians: Race and National Identity in Twentieth-Century Brazil* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2017).

⁶³⁹ Leonardo Affonso de Miranda Pereira, *Footballmania: uma história social do futebol no Rio de Janeiro, 1902- 1938* (Rio de Janeiro: Nova Fronteira, 2000); Victor Andrade de Melo, *Cidadesportiva: primórdios do esporte no Rio de Janeiro* (Rio de Janeiro: Relume-Dumará/ Faperj, 2001); Fabio Franzini, *Corações na ponta da chuteira: capítulos iniciais do futebol brasileiro - 1919-1938* (Rio de Janeiro: DP&A, 2003).

immigrants and their recreational associations.⁶⁴⁰ According to this scholarship, the status of the South/Southeast—due to its political and economic importance—could explain why this region experienced, in an intense way, the first steps in popularization of sports.⁶⁴¹ This “south-centric” historiography has limitations mainly from the still insufficient number of works on other regions and the lack of access to primary documents in regions outside the South/Southeast.⁶⁴²

Notwithstanding the particularities of Brazilian cities, looking at primary documents from other regions than the heavily studied cases of São Paulo and Rio contributes important insights to the study of Brazilian physical culture development and sports, specifically, as an instrument of social transformations. For that reason, this chapter explores new primary sources, investigating the reception of modern sports in less studied regions of Brazil. Physical culture quickly evolved into popular forms (such as sports), recasting the rules of the public realm and discussions about ways to produce robust and healthy bodies for the nation. This chapter also delves into the social, multifaceted character of modern sports, along with the power of the press, helping to understand how sports reached different strata of society, as well as some of the specificities of key social institutions. The use of newspaper and magazine source material is crucial in this chapter given the habitually neglected relationship between the industries of physical culture (modern sports in this case) and media. This chapter also makes a modest contribution about the symbolic amplification of British imperialism and the transmission of its values to

⁶⁴⁰ Carmen Lucia Soares, “Da arte e da ciência de movimentar-se: primeiros momentos da ginástica no Brasil,” In *História do Esporte no Brasil – do Império aos dias atuais* edited by Mary Del Priore and Victor Andrade de Melo (São Paulo: Unesp, 2009) 133-77. According to this kind of scholarship, the status of Brazilian South/Southeast—for their political and economic importance—could explain why this region experienced, in a closer and intense way, the steps of popularization of sports and its consequences.

⁶⁴¹ Conclusions like that were and still are produced by inserting and strengthening the “*saquarema* tradition of Brazilian historiography”. Historian Evaldo Cabral de Mello used that term to criticize historiographical understandings that only see the nation's destiny “through Rio, thanks to Rio and for Rio.” See Evaldo Cabral de Mello, “A festa da espoliação,” interview in *Jornal do Commercio* (Recife: 22 January, 2008).

⁶⁴² I found that between 1995 and 2015 only 89 History M.A. (77%) and Ph.D. (23%) theses and dissertations on soccer and/or sports in general were officially registered in Brazil. I used as my main source the database of the *Coordenação de Aperfeiçoamento de Pessoal de Nível Superior* (CAPES), the Brazilian Federal Agency for the Support and Evaluation of Graduate Education, working as an office of the Brazilian Ministry of Education. I also searched the database of the Brazilian Digital Library of Theses and Dissertations (BDTD) maintained by the *Instituto Brasileiro de Informação em Ciência e Tecnologia* (IBICT). In the state of Pernambuco, academic works dedicated to the theme are mostly restricted to departments of physical education.

non-British territories (with a distinct colonial background). During this era, Britain glorified its Empire through moral and corporal dimensions. I hope to shed some light on how this external influence affected the domestic debates on Brazilian national identity.

The passage of Monteiro Lobato cited at the beginning of the chapter shows how important it is that we seek to understand why one of the most notable Brazilian intellectuals of the early twentieth century dedicated part of his time to scrutinize the importance physical culture should have in Brazil and on nationalism. This chapter scrutinizes the pivotal role modern sports came to play in the networks of Europeans and Brazilian local elites who strengthened forms of control over bodies in order to “civilize” Brazilian society. Moreover, it argues that physical culture—notably sporting activities as social practices—played an important role, evolving alongside and in conjunction with urban reforms. Finally, this chapter focuses on the expansion of sporting activities in Brazil as a sign of “civilization and modernity,” as another pivotal way to understand how physical culture and nationalism interact. It also delves into how the pioneers brought to Brazil the germ of the modern sports ethos, the doctrine and principles of “civilization” the Brazilian elites desired, in which the new bodily practices were accepted and diffused through modernist ideas. Hence, I will concentrate on how the emergence of modern sports and its adoption by the Brazilian bourgeois elites represented a strategy of social stratification through clubs and organizations. They aimed to consolidate a process of symbolic differentiation that would set them apart from the subaltern classes.⁶⁴³

5.1 Sportsmanship in the tropics

During the second half of the nineteenth century, the practice of modern sports took place in Brazil primarily within social clubs.⁶⁴⁴ Social clubs, as institutions of the modern bourgeoisie, appeared in various

⁶⁴³ See Pierre Bourdieu, *Language and Symbolic Power* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1991).

⁶⁴⁴ As Norbert Elias and Eric Dunning explained, the concept of ‘sport’ itself takes particular historical configurations with the passage of time. Conceptually, Elias divides modern sport into various differential categories. The complex nature of Elias's categorization is

Brazilian cities as centers of physical culture, emulating Europe in its efforts to popularize sports through the elite in a more effective way. These institutions arose as a result of the transformations of the public realm in the midst of the formation of a bourgeois social space.⁶⁴⁵ Scholarship has highlighted the affinity between sports and the urbanization of the areas where sports developed worldwide.⁶⁴⁶ According to this argument, between the final decades of the nineteenth century and particularly during the early years of the twentieth century, the populations of Brazilian cities experienced a new urban reality, with the prevailing ideals of speed, dynamism, and innovation. This new urban atmosphere largely favored the flourishing of a taste for sports and physical activities. Another significant aspect of modern sports is that they were an important tool for political projects and ideals of physical culture. With the rise of the twentieth century, and the educational reforms proposed both nationally and locally, social clubs began to share a key political role along with schools. As chapter three explored, physical culture gained strength in the educational environment through the political projects of the State and developed in schools as institutions of discipline.⁶⁴⁷

Brazilian cities suffered a profound process of urban and social reforms in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Prompted by political and economic changes in the country—the end of slavery (1888) and the first republican government (1889)—sports arrived in Brazil at the end of the empire and took shape along with

evident. Nevertheless, I will use the one referring to “active leisure sport” undertaken by people either as individuals or in a group. See Norbert Elias & Eric Dunning, *Quest for Excitement: Sport and Leisure in the Civilising Process* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1986).

⁶⁴⁵ Arendt understood the “public realm,” the “public spaces” as the places where someone could act and speak in ways that matter in the public world. For her, public freedom requires spaces where human actions are attended to, considered, and taken seriously enough to merit a response. Arendt states that, “Only the existence of a public realm and the world’s subsequent transformation into a community of things which gathers men together and relates them to each other depends entirely on permanence. If the world is to contain a public space, it cannot be erected for the one generation and planned for the living only; it must transcend the life-span of mortal men.” See Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2nd edition, 1998) 55.

⁶⁴⁶ See, for example, James Riordan, *Sport in Soviet Society: Development of Sport and Physical Education in Russia and the USSR* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977); Allen Guttmann, *Women’s Sports: A History* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991); John F. Reiger, *American Sportsmen and the Origins of Conservation* (Corvallis: Oregon State University Press, 2001); Mike Huggins, *The Victorians and Sport* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2007); Brenda Elsey, *Citizens and Sportsmen: Fútbol and Politics in Twentieth-Century Chile* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2011).

⁶⁴⁷ For more about the theme in the British context, see J.A. Mangan’s *Athleticism in the Victorian and Edwardian Public School* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1981).

the development of an incipient republic. Other changes would come, linked to the ideas of modernity and progress, as Brazilian elites endeavored to adopt European standards of “civilization.”⁶⁴⁸ Aesthetic and hygienic concerns also characterized this process of modernization.⁶⁴⁹ Reforms sought to transform the cities and bringing the urban population into a “civilizing mission” fostering notions of modernization and modernity.

The first sporting institutions were officially founded in Brazil in the mid-nineteenth century and references to the term *sportsmen* can be found not only in official documentation of the ‘Jockey Clubs’ but also in Brazilian newspapers since at least the early 1850s.⁶⁵⁰ Moreover, Brazilian newspaper also reported the results of horseracing in England, such as this 1869 curious report:

Everyone believed that the electric telegraph would entirely supplant the use of pigeons for carrying messages. However, the opposite has happened. This ancient means of transmitting messages has just been renovated in England by the telegraph companies themselves. In Goodwood, for example, the Duke of Richmond did not allow the telegraph companies to install poles or wires on his property, where the racetrack for the horseraces is located. Consequently, it was necessary to organize for the week of races a service of courier pigeons between Goodwood and the telegraph station of Chichester. Fifty winged messengers there found employment, broadcasting regularly and promptly the news of the turf. So informs the *International*.⁶⁵¹

⁶⁴⁸ In this chapter related to modern sports, I will also use the idea (or concept) of Civilization developed by Norbert Elias, who defined it as expressing “the self-consciousness of the West. One could even say: the national consciousness. It sums up everything in which Western society of the last two or three centuries believes itself superior to earlier societies or “more primitive” contemporary ones. By this term, Western society seeks to describe what constitutes its special character and what it is proud of: the level of *its* technology, the nature of *its* manners, the development of *its* scientific knowledge or view of the world, and much more.” See Norbert Elias, *The Civilizing Process: Sociogenetic and Psychogenetic Investigations* (Massachusetts: Blackwell, 2000) 5.

⁶⁴⁹ For an extensive analysis on the term “hygiene” (hygienic, hygienism), used in the historical context this chapter observes, see Anson Rabinbach, *The Human Motor: Energy, Fatigue, and the Origins of Modernity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992); Georges Vigarello, *Concepts of Cleanliness: Changing Attitudes in France since the Middle Ages* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008); Kathleen M. Brown, *Foul Bodies: Cleanliness in Early America* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009).

⁶⁵⁰ *Diário de Pernambuco* (Recife, Year XXX n.48, 28 February 1854), 1. Published in the newspaper *Diário de Pernambuco*, the feuilleton ‘Os Netos de Lovelacio’ (The Grandchildren of Lovelacio) was a kind of serial novel written by Amadeu Achard, set in Paris, and regularly found in the newspaper in fragments. The first chapter of the story was published on 28 February 1854. In the feuilleton, we find several references to the turf activity throughout the life of the character Adriano “[who] in his blind admiration for all things coming from Sport, bet with a heroic constancy on the favorite of the races, and lost hardly.”

⁶⁵¹ “Courier pigeons,” *Diário de Pernambuco* (Recife, Year XLV, n.214, 20 September 1869), 1. In Europe, the earliest newspapers dedicated to sports were born in England and quickly reached all other countries. The sporting press was born not only with the mission to inform, but also to educate. Some quintessential examples are *Bell’s Life in London & Sporting Chronicle*, founded in London in 1822; *Sporting Life*, first published in 1859, in London, and best known for its coverage of horse racing; and *The Sportsman*, which began publishing from 1865. For more, see The British Newspaper Archive, available at <http://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/>

In September 1872, the newspaper *Jornal do Commercio* commented on a cricket match that took place in Recife, the capital of the northern state of Pernambuco. The text was not written in Portuguese, but in English:

Cricket - Pernambuco v. Excelsior

On the 7th, instant the opening match of the Season was played by these two Clubs on the ground of the former at Santo Amaro. Heavy rains fell the morning but as the day lengthened the sun broke forth with all its usual brilliancy, and the Pernambucanos having won the toss seat in as their representatives Mess rs. Himming & Timmis to the Bowling of Mess rs. Power and R. Brotherhood.⁶⁵²

The manager of the Pernambuco Street Railway Company was responsible for offering a silver cup to the winners and “Champagne in honor of the occasion” as part of a ceremony attended by “ladies and gentlemen,” British and Brazilian who attended the event, carefully decorated with rows of bunting.⁶⁵³ The author ended his text by wishing success to the group of “eleven gentlemen,” selected from the two teams, who were going to play against a British club from Salvador, in the state of Bahia. The frequency of this genre of publications also reinforces the argument that physical culture began to be more frequent the Brazilian daily life, progressively familiarized to the practice of physical activities.

On September 7, 1878, *The Anglo Brazilian Times*—a newspaper from Rio de Janeiro published in English—referred to the annual match between “the ‘married’ and the ‘single’” at Campo Grande, in Salvador, conducted by the members of the Bahia Cricket Club.⁶⁵⁴ In May 1886, hundreds of people went to the banks of the Capibaribe River in the city of Recife to celebrate the one-year anniversary of the foundation of the Club Regatas Pernambucano. The public occupied the Boa Vista Bridge and took dinghies and boats to the edge of the racetrack to watch the third nautical competition in the city. The closing of the celebration included the National

⁶⁵² “Cricket,” *Jornal do Commercio* (Recife, Year I, n. 12, 14 September 1872) 3. The newspaper was published every Saturday by the *Associação de Guarda-Livros de Pernambuco*.

⁶⁵³ After describing (with many details) the way the game occurred, the text informed that the silver cup, held by the Pernambucanos (winners of two out of three matches), was exhibited on the grounds.

⁶⁵⁴ “Bahia Cricket Club” *The Anglo Brazilian Times* (Rio de Janeiro: Year XIV, n.17) 3. Available at <http://bndigital.bn.br/acervo-digital/anglo/709735>, access on 30 March 2019.

Anthem and one big display of fireworks: “The evening was splendid, and the place of the race gaily adorned with flags and pennants, excelling the bleacher seats, occupied by about 500 spectators, including a large number of women, the first provincial authorities, and many other important people.”⁶⁵⁵

In societies of the late nineteenth century, the social club is the first formal space of reception for modern sports activities, in which sporting expressions are rooted.⁶⁵⁶ In Brazil, specifically, cities witnessed urban forms of popular culture appearing in innovative ways.⁶⁵⁷ Popular arts, in general, and venues for popular entertainment rapidly diversified and multiplied. Jazz bands in teahouses, carnival groups, and dance parties at the jockey clubs, not to mention the theaters and small venues for concerts, circuses, serenades, and festivals at social clubs, bars, and sports fields rose in popularity.⁶⁵⁸ The use of public places and the creation of other private spaces for activities related to physical culture were crucial for the growth and development of Brazilian cities during the nineteenth century. Social clubs served as the center of public life, spaces that allowed the communication of the new values of a modern, urban culture. These institutions appeared as centers of physical culture emulating Europe in its efforts to popularize the cult of the body through the elites in a more effective way.⁶⁵⁹ Thus, spaces

⁶⁵⁵ *Diário de Pernambuco* (Recife, Year LXII, n.112, 18 May 1886), 4. Decades before soccer turned out to be the most popular sport in Brazil, horseracing (*turf*), cricket, and rowing were the seminal sports followed by the people during the second half of the nineteenth century.

⁶⁵⁶ Elias & Dunning (1986).

⁶⁵⁷ For Michel de Certeau ‘popular’ is not defined itself by hierarchical social classes, but by its own logic to do the everyday within a social environment in which the marginalized make up the majority. See Michel De Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984).

⁶⁵⁸ At the turn of the century, British sports expanded with various competitions held around the country. A newspaper described how turf, for example, as a social practice had become very common among the elites from the nineteenth to the twentieth century: “Never before has the Prado Pernambucano [the Race Park of Pernambuco] presented such a vibrant character, enhanced even more by the gentle presence of a large number of ladies wearing emerald toilettes.” *Diário de Pernambuco* (Recife, 13 June 1905), 4.

⁶⁵⁹ In 1868, the *Jornal do Recife* called for those who wanted to become part of the Gymnastics Society: “Sociedade gymnastica – São convidadas todas as pessoas que desejarem pertencer à Sociedade gymnastica, cita no Caes de Capibaribe, a comparecerem no dia 31, às 7 ½ horas da noite na mesma casa, onde haverá uma reunião geral para a nomeação da directoria que tem de tomar conta do estabelecimento gymnastico que se acha quasi concluído.” *Jornal do Recife* (n.73, 28 March, 1868) 3. The same newspaper also informed about the Gymnastics Club: “Caes Capibaribe – Está aberta nas terças e sextas-feiras, das 7 às 9 horas da noite, o Club de Gymnastica: os senhores sócios são convidados a comparecerem. *Jornal do Recife* (n.232, 8 October, 1868) 3.

and venues engaged with the ideals of physical culture often emerged because of their “interdependency chains,” both local and global.⁶⁶⁰

Social clubs also represented a means for generating opinion. These institutions used the press as a vehicle for conveying their values. Throughout social meetings and sporting events at the clubs, private persons met as a public and the press played a fundamental role by publicizing it. It allowed the local bourgeoisie to distinguish itself from the old elites and show itself—in front of the popular sectors—as an influential new group.⁶⁶¹ This bourgeoisie created its own identity by stating its “urban” and “modern” condition, not binding it with other identities of the lower classes because it was based on the logic of opposition, preventing equivalence and, therefore, the connection with lower classes.⁶⁶²

In a country historically marked by major cities on major rivers or coastlines like Belém, Rio, Recife, Salvador and even São Paulo (to give only few examples), it was no surprise that rowing races would ultimately become important sports competitions. Moreover, those cities—along with other important urban centers—faced reforms in which houses, skewed streets, alleys, arches, churches, and other landmarks were demolished to open way for new, modern neighborhoods with a “European aspect.”⁶⁶³

⁶⁶⁰ See Elias & Dunning (1986). The authors speak of “interdependency chains” to express the production of these social facts.

⁶⁶¹ A very interesting work on early history of Association Football in South America and the first translations of the rules of the game from English into Portuguese and Spanish is Matthew Brown’s recent “Translating the Rules of Football in South America, 1863-1914,” in *Revista Estudos Históricos* (Rio de Janeiro, v. 32, n. 68, Dec. 2019) 569-588.

⁶⁶² As stated by Laclau and Mouffe, equivalence is the principle of all articulatory practice based on antagonism. In other words, it is the possibility of subverting the differences, such as fully identities, to manifest them as the expression of something externally common to them and, thus, is none of them. Identities can be linked in a system of differences based on antagonism: “In the case of real opposition, it is because A is also fully A that its relation with B produces an objectively determinable effect. But in the case of antagonism, we are confronted with a different situation: the presence of the ‘Other’ prevents me from being totally myself. The relation arises not from full totalities, but from the impossibility of their constitution. The presence of the Other is not a logical impossibility: it exists; so, it is not a contradiction.” This situation permits the identity to fracture itself, allowing the articulation with other identities in a new and partial identity. See Ernesto Laclau & Chantal Mouffe, *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy: Towards a Radical Democratic Politics* (London: Verso, 1985) 124-5.

⁶⁶³ In the case of Recife, some “improvements” were made on its port, on the buildings of the Legislative House, the Courts, the *Gymnasio Pernambucano*, and the *Casa de Detenção* (the main prison of the city). The primary source analyzed is the *Mensagem do Exm. Sr. Dr. Herculano Bandeira de Mello, Governador do Estado, lida por ocasião da instalação da sessão ordinária da 6ª. legislatura do Congresso Legislativo do Estado aos 6 de Março de 1909* (Recife: Typ. do Diário de Pernambuco, 1909) 5-6. Drs. Francisco Saturnino de Britto, Constancio Pontual and Oliveira Penteado were in charge of the commission for sanitation. See also *Mensagem do*

Nevertheless, reshaping, sanitizing, and making cities more cultured and hygienic was not enough. Reformers' aspirations also aimed to achieve "modern" standards by redesigning the habits, behaviors and, consequently, the bodies of the population. In this context, physical culture—notably sporting activities as social practices—played an important role, evolving alongside and in conjunction with urban reforms. The importance of physical education, for example, was addressed by some directors of the Central Board for Public Hygiene, which had been responsible for sanitation issues in the country since 1850.⁶⁶⁴ The connections among physical culture, hygiene, and the urbanization of the areas where those activities developed also explains how the new urban atmosphere largely favored the flourishing of a taste for physical culture. They were yet additional important tools for the political projects for nationhood.

As previously explained, gymnastics and modern sports are part of the ideology of physical culture, a "transnational movement" that first began to appear in the Brazilian press in the middle of the nineteenth century, strongly influenced by the English press.⁶⁶⁵ Although the emergence and disappearance of publications dedicated to those activities were a constant in the period, the publications reflected the popularity that physical culture began to achieve at the time. The way the Brazilian press treated physical activities during the nineteenth century is characterized by an interesting diversity of coverage. Despite the predominance of gymnastics and horse racing news, the press also reported about cricket and rowing not only on local events but also on national and international ones as well. The first practitioners of modern sports in Brazil came from British companies on

Exm. Sr. Dr. Herculano Bandeira de Mello...7ª. legislatura do Congresso Legislativo do Estado aos 6 de Março de 1910 (Recife: Typ. do Diário de Pernambuco, 1910) 7-8.

⁶⁶⁴ Lourival Ribeiro, *O barão do Lavradio e a higiene no Rio de Janeiro* (Belo Horizonte: Itatiaia, 1992). Two other presidents of the entity also wrote about the subject: Domingos José Freire, a renowned bacteriologist and public figure in nineteenth-century Brazil, and Francisco de Paula Cândido, a leading physician and sanitarian. See Jaime L. Benchimol, "Domingos José Freire e os primórdios da bacteriologia no Brasil," *História, Ciências, Saúde – Manguinhos*, v.2, n.1 (1995) 67-98.

⁶⁶⁵ To learn more about how gymnastics was divided into numerous branches, deriving from specific national origins, see Gertrud Pfister, ed., *Gymnastics, a Transatlantic Movement: From Europe to America* (London: Routledge, 2011).

Brazil's Atlantic coast. With that in mind, it is clear that, in a country that was predominantly rural, the genealogy of a sportsmanship code and cult of the body in Brazil originated in coastal cities.

The pioneers—laborers and, markedly, a constituent part of the progressive elites of a new English national bourgeoisie—brought with them regulations, clothing, and equipment for bodily practices. They brought to the Brazilian elites what we can consider the germ of the modern sports ethos, the doctrine and principles of “civilization” in which the new bodily practices were accepted and diffused with the ideas of progress. The first associative groups also had a common character—their members were people belonging to the main foreign communities and local elites.⁶⁶⁶ These groups had enough free time to play, the money to import sports equipment, and they were concerned about physical health, bodily shaping, and supporting their own recreation centers. Hence, the emergence of modern sports and its adoption by the Brazilian elites represented a strategy of symbolic differentiation through social clubs and institutions of physical culture.

It is curious to observe that the practices of British sports, played “in the tropics” by “noble men,” were also written up in English newspapers and documented by British expeditions. In May 13, 1865, for example—exactly twenty-three years before the official abolition of slavery in Brazil—the English newspaper *Bell's Life in London and Sporting Chronicle* published a text sent by the British community in the Brazilian state of Pernambuco informing about a game of cricket played on January 6:

CRICKET AT PERNAMBUCO - Pernambuco v Excelsior

Mr. Editor: After an interval of some years the English residents here have again revived the national game of cricket, and, two clubs have been formed, respectively named ‘Pernambuco’ and ‘Excelsior,’ and the interest created greatly tends to relieve the monotony of life in the tropics, by awakening up pleasant reminiscences of the many hours we have enjoyed in this noble game at home.

Llewelyn Jones, Hon Sec P.C.C.⁶⁶⁷

⁶⁶⁶ For more about the British presence in Recife, see Koster; José Antônio Gonçalves de Mello, *Ingleses em Pernambuco: história do Cemitério Britânico do Recife e da participação dos ingleses e outros estrangeiros na vida e cultura do Pernambuco, no período de 1813 a 1990* (Recife: IAHP, 1972); and Gilberto Freyre, *The English in Brazil* (Oxford: Boulevard, 3rd edition, 2011). According to Vittorio Cappelli, from a quantitative point of view, the Italian presence in Recife, for example, is the most consistent of all the northeastern region. Recife confirms the fundamental characteristics of the Italian presence throughout the neighbor states during the nineteenth century. Italian immigrants in Recife had the same geographical origin (the small Trecchina and other parts of Basilicata) as those Italians in Salvador and Aracaju. Finally, the Portuguese community grew and consolidated in Recife, during the nineteenth century, as one of the main economic and political groups. See Vittorio Cappelli, “A propósito de imigração e urbanização: correntes imigratórias da Itália meridional às “outras Américas”,” *Estudos Ibero-Americanos* XXXIII (1) 2007: 7-37.

⁶⁶⁷ *Bell's Life in London and Sporting Chronicle* (London, 13 May 1865) 9.

The Secretary of the Pernambuco Cricket Club also informed readers in London about the game played in Recife detailing what happened in the match and the names of the players on each team, emphasizing that the practice of British leisure activities in the state of Pernambuco had begun prior to 1865.⁶⁶⁸ In September 1873, Dr. John James Wild (a Swiss), who accompanied a scientific expedition to Brazil as “Artist and Private Secretary” to the Director of the Civilian Scientific Staff, illustrated one of the first pictures of a Cricket game played in the country.⁶⁶⁹ The image shows a match of cricket in Campo Grande—a neighborhood in Salvador—between the officers of the H.M.S. Challenger and the Bahia Cricket Club, as indicated in the expedition reports.



CAMPO GRANDE, SAN SALVADOR.

Figure 21

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⁶⁶⁸ During the following years, other editions of English newspapers continued to report on British games played in Brazil: ‘Cricket in the Tropics’, in *Bell’s Life in London and Sporting Chronicle* (London, 21 December 1867) 9; or ‘Cricket at the Brazils – The following match was played in Pernambuco on November 1, at 120 deg. temperature,’ in *The Sporting Life*, (London, 7 December 1867) 4.

⁶⁶⁹ See *Report on the Scientific Results of The Voyage of H.M.S. Challenger During the Years 1873-76*, “Narrative of the Cruise” (London: Johnson Reprint Company Limited, 1885). The expedition was under the command of Captain George S. Nares (R.N., F.R.S.), Captain Frank Tourle Thomson (R.N) and prepared under the superintendence of Sir C. Wyville Thomson (Knt., F.R.S. and Regius Professor of Natural History in the University of Edinburgh, Director of the Civilian Scientific Staff on board). John Murray was also one of the naturalists of the expedition. The photo was originally published in J.J. Wild’s own work *At Anchor: Sketches from the Many Shores Visited by HMS Challenger from 1872 to 1876* (London: M. Ward and Co., 1878) 45.

⁶⁷⁰ Cricket game in Salvador, Bahia. Picture by Dr. John James Wild, 1873.

A few years later, a passage from of the newspaper *O Sportsman*, published in Recife, advocated for the ideal behavior of the young Brazilian leaders, presenting themselves “simply as the most illustrious sportsmen of all time and place.” The text also stated that, “In the monotonous life that takes place in Recife, the hippodrome was a necessity. A place was needed where the crowd would gather to amuse themselves with a noble, regulated exercise. (...) the appearance of Sportsman does not need explanations and justifications. A sportsman does not show up to win neither to lose nor to clap a eunuch pasha!”⁶⁷¹ In order to achieve this vision, nevertheless, sportsmen needed to convince the public, “the muse of happiness,” to become as sympathetic to them “as the sun gives protection to the race park.” The young sportsmen aimed at having the audience’s “sweet and serene look,” to inspire their courage and verve, grace and politeness. The author noted that it was a difficult task, considering “our environment, where foolishness cannot be saved from raising a barrier against the spirit, where brutality rules against delicacy.”

Curiously, the English newspaper *Bell’s Life in London and Sporting Chronicle*, in 1867, and Recife’s newspaper *O Sportsman*, in 1888, used the expression “monotonous life” to describe how important sports were to bring more dynamism to Brazilian public spaces. Moreover, expressions of emotions and violence were controlled by a new regulation, the sportsmanship code. Being a *sportsman* was behaving politely, honestly, and gently. This mutual connection between both sides of the Atlantic became part of a process in which sporting news and manuals of behavior were instruments for the discipline of bodies and the control of emotions, a way through which only specific groups should have access, as a symbol of distinction and civilization.

Brazilian elites introduced the sportsmanship code for which to be a sportsman was “not enough to have a horse, [but it was] indispensable to have a spirit, to be polite, to know how to talk to the ladies, a difficult task, for which a great deal of tact and taste is required.” The arrival of physical culture in Brazil thus had a mark of elitism, advocating for the ideal behavior of young Brazilians, the country’s future leaders, presenting themselves

⁶⁷¹ “O SPORSTMAN,” *O Sportsman* (Recife: Year I, n.1, 22 April 1888) 1.

“simply as the most illustrious sportsmen of all time and place.” Following the code, the young sportsmen should aim at having the audience’s “sweet and serene look,” to inspire their courage and verve, grace and politeness. Press accounts indicate that behaving as an English gentleman was considered a ‘difficult task’ due to the Brazilian environment, “where foolishness cannot be saved from raising a barrier against the spirit, where brutality rules against delicacy.” According to the code, under these conditions “the appearance of a sportsman does not need explanations and justifications.”⁶⁷² Considering themselves “energetic and valiant soldiers of the just and patriotic cause” of physical culture and defenders of “the interests of Brazilian sports,” being a sportsman in Brazil— emulating an idealized image of Britishness—became synonymous with gentleness, honesty, and politeness; both mind and body control.⁶⁷³

In Brazil, rowing, “turf” (horse racing), cricket, and cycling were elitist activities driven by wealthy personalities who offered the novelty entertainment to “the *dilettanti*.”⁶⁷⁴ Moreover, the appearance of such activities during the period is also the result of the institutionalization of sports, establishing their respective federations and associations whose main functions were to disseminate and regulate sports practices worldwide.⁶⁷⁵ By the end of the century, velodromes were present from São Paulo to Pernambuco, from Espírito Santo to Maranhão and cycling clubs like the *Radfahrer Club* and the *Velo-Club do Pará* active in cities such as Curitiba and Belém.⁶⁷⁶ Another important example of how modern sports became representative of society in

⁶⁷² *O Sportsman* (Recife: Year I, n.1, 22 April 1888), 1.

⁶⁷³ “O Nosso Programa,” *A Vida Sportiva* (Rio de Janeiro: Imprensa Mont’Alverne, 1 Agosto 1889) 3.

⁶⁷⁴ *Novidades* (Recife, Year I, n.1, 14 July 1888), 1. The newspaper declared itself “impartial, informative, and literary,” explaining to its first readers that “the *Novidades* will analyze all the issues that stir up within our parties, calmly and dispassionately, obeying its motto that will be: impartiality and justice.”

⁶⁷⁵ The participation of traditional English universities, such as Cambridge and Oxford, in promoting rowing competitions was first recorded in 1829. In 1892, rowing had its first nautical associations in the United States and Europe, such as the Fédération Internationale des Sociétés d’Aviron (FISA), which is still the most important rowing entity and authority.

⁶⁷⁶ “Velodromo Gremio Bibliothecario,” *O Cachoeirano* (Cachoeiro de Itapemirim: Anno XVIII, n.46, 1 Dezembro 1895) 3; “Corridas de Velocipedes,” *Jornal do Recife* (Pernambuco: Anno XXXVIII, n.48, 28 Fevereiro 1895) 4; “O amor pelo Cyclismo,” *A Republica* (Curitiba: Anno X, n.70, 26 Março 1895) 1; “Velocipedia,” *Folha do Norte* (Belém: Anno 1, n.240, 27 Agosto 1896) 3; “União Velocipedica Maranhense – Velodromo S.Luiz-Tivolvy,” *Pacotilha Jornal da Tarde* (São Luis: Anno X, n.206, 30 Agosto 1900) 3.

Brazil took place in May 1889, during the celebrations of the first anniversary of the abolition of slavery, the “liberation of the Brazilian fatherland.”⁶⁷⁷ There were horseracing events with the names of the races related to abolitionists and abolition itself enthusiastically publicized by the newspapers.⁶⁷⁸ These activities added several sites dedicated to its practice.⁶⁷⁹

Horsereading, rowing races, cricket, and cycling were among the preferences of the wealthy classes in Brazil until about the last decade of the nineteenth century when soccer started to become essentially the national sport. In the major Brazilian cities at the beginning of the twentieth century, a new urban popular culture appeared in innovative ways.⁶⁸⁰ Soccer emerged using existing institutions and creating other private spaces. This sport, “the child of Britain’s global economic presence,” became inextricably linked to the social construction of dominant ideologies and policies of Brazil’s national identity.⁶⁸¹

⁶⁷⁷ *O Sport* (Recife, 13 May 1889), 1-4. In Rio de Janeiro, the *Regata da Abolição* (Regatta of Abolition) took place in Botafogo Bay on 19 May 1888. *Jornal do Commercio* (Rio de Janeiro: Year 66, n.139., 18 May 1888), 6. *Jornal do Commercio* (Rio de Janeiro, Year 66, n.138, 17 May 1888) 6.

⁶⁷⁸ In Recife, the Confederação Abolicionista and the Club Cupim also promoted a horseracing event with the names of the races related to abolitionists and abolition as occurred. *Jornal do Commercio* (Rio de Janeiro: Year 66, n.138, 17 May 1888) 6. To know more about the abolitionist association “Club Cupim” see Castilho, *Slave Emancipation and Transformations in Brazilian Political Citizenship*, 123.

⁶⁷⁹ On 16 December 1888, in the neighborhood of Derby, the Sociedade Hípica Derby Club (Equestrian Society Derby Club) began operating in the city of Recife. Newspapers like the *Diário de Pernambuco* reserved special spaces in their issues to announce the new venture. *O Sport* announced it in its first page: “Inauguração do Derby Club Pernambucano” (Recife: Year I, n.1, 15 December 1888), 1. There were two more horseracing parks in Recife at that time, one founded in 1859 in the neighborhood of Magdalena and another in the neighborhood of Campo Grande. It is no surprise that in 1895 the *Revista do Turf* came to be published. The magazine dedicated its activity exclusively to reporting news about horse races—especially racing programs—while also presenting some humorous notes. According to Nascimento’s study on the history of the press in Pernambuco, the *Revista do Turf* came into circulation on 6 October 1895, in 22 x 16 cm format. The magazine had four pages, and its editorial was located at *Beco do Ouvidor* n° 41a (currently Marquês do Recife Street). The publication was released on Sundays, costing \$500 monthly and \$100 per single issue. The second number came out on 13 October 1895. See Luiz Nascimento, *A História da Imprensa de Pernambuco* (Recife: Arquivo Público – Imprensa Oficial, 1962).

⁶⁸⁰ See Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984). According to Certeau, ‘popular’ is not defined itself by hierarchical social classes, but by its own logic to do the everyday within a social environment in which the marginalized make up the majority.

⁶⁸¹ The expression was used by Eric Hobsbawm in his *Age of Extremes: The Short Twentieth Century, 1914-1991* (London: Abacus, 1995), 198.



Figure 22

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5.2 From elitist clubs to the underprivileged suburbs

It seems clear that the practice of sporting activities became popular among the Brazilian elite of the period. Modern sporting practices and venues are inextricably linked to the social construction of dominant ideologies and policies of identity. By engaging in physical exercise, Brazilians would not only achieve the characteristics of “strength, beauty, and health,” but would also acquire the “patriotic,” nationalist factors responsible for the “improvement of the race.”⁶⁸³ The task of correcting the deficiencies of the “Brazilian race” was also part of the responsibility of physical culture. As previous chapters have shown, these ideals and practices

⁶⁸² Cover of the second number of the *Correio Sportivo*. State of Amazonas, 1916.

⁶⁸³ “Força, Belleza e Saúde Se obtêm com os exercícios physicos do prof. Enéas Campello,” in *ALMANACH Estatístico, Administrativo, Mercantil Industrial e Literário do Estado do Ceará para o anno de 1920* (Fortaleza: Typ. Moderna - Carneiro e C^a., 1920) 289. At the beginning of the 1920s there was a center for physical culture called “Centro de Cultura Physica Enéas Campello” in the city of Fortaleza. See also “Estado do Ceará – Capital,” in *Almanak Laemmert* (Rio de Janeiro: Typ. Almanak Laemmert, vol. III, ed.77-78, 1921) 3383.

had the support of medical, educational, military institutions, and were not restricted to men, but also directed at women as the propagators of the race.

Brazilians were considered fragile, poorly disciplined, and dedicated to idleness by most of the scientific community of the period. Intellectuals like Monteiro Lobato, although considering Brazilians as “neo-Latins” and a “degenerate and outworn race,” also believed in the possibility of a national racial regeneration through physical culture. The “loose, weak, hesitant” Brazilians would become “a confident, a solid” people, acquiring “a thousand other moral faculties and physical qualities” enhanced by sports, “the regenerators of our blood.”⁶⁸⁴ Sports thus would also play the role of race regenerators, and for that reason, physical culture would only bring benefits to the Brazilian people.

Elites intended to change this scenario by creating a new conduct for the Brazilian people and found in the physical education of bodies the ideal way to carry out their project. Representing the national upper classes and influenced by scientific racist theories, Brazilian sportsmen also began to express their eugenic thinking. In April 1906, the newspaper *A Província* reported on “the opening of the foot-ball season” in the state of Pernambuco with a match between the Sport Club do Recife and the English company Western Telegraph. Below the announcement, the newspaper transcribed a letter sent to the newspaper (not mentioning the name of the author) which described the “very interesting and complicated” soccer as responsible for “a magnificent result for the physical development of young men.”⁶⁸⁵ The author of the letter gladly praised “the good acceptance and development of these sporting games, which until recently were completely unknown to us,” emphasizing the

⁶⁸⁴ Lobato, “Futebol” [1905], (1959) 179-86.

⁶⁸⁵ “Sport Club Recife,” *A Província* (Recife: Anno XXIX, n.95, 28 Abril 1906) 1. The original in Portuguese of the entire text: “Felizmente parece que vão tendo boa aceitação e se desenvolvendo em nosso meio estes jogos esportivos, que nos países mais civilizados e mesmo em alguns estados do Sul do Brasil se acham em pleno vigor, completando a educação dos moços, e que até bem pouco tempo nos eram inteiramente desconhecidos, porquanto temos cuidado exclusivamente da educação do espírito, deixando inteiramente ao lado a educação física do homem, a qual tão poderosamente contribue para o aperfeiçoamento da raça: não se pode esperar uma prole sã e robusta de indivíduos franzinos e raquíticos. O Sport Club, se não nos enganamos, foi quem introduziu nesta cidade o jogo de foot-ball, jogo interessantíssimo e bastante complicado, que deve ser de um resultado magnífico para o desenvolvimento físico dos moços.”

crucial role sports had in “completing the education of young” Brazilians. He also saw the moment as a wake-up call for the political and intellectual leaders of the country “exclusively concerned with the education of the spirit, leaving entirely aside the physical education of man, which so powerfully contributes to the betterment of the race.” Almost a manifesto in defense of physical culture—ignoring the long history of policies and claims for the same cause or believing those attempts failed in their achievements—the author ended the letter with the clear-cut message that Brazil could “not expect a healthy and robust offspring from puny and rickety individuals.”⁶⁸⁶

The promotion of physical activities and sports was absolutely linked to the nationalist policies in vogue.⁶⁸⁷ Building a strong body, based on the concepts of ‘health,’ ‘strength,’ and ‘beauty’ meant to foster a generation of new creatures forging, thus, a new country. This policy based its action on neo-Lamarckian eugenics and on hygienist thought that identified the body as the prime location for the construction of a “new race.”⁶⁸⁸ The idea of progress based neo-Lamarckian beliefs in Brazil, postulated that physical changes in individuals’ bodies occur due to a complex and dynamic interaction between organisms and environment.⁶⁸⁹ Bodies therefore would be transformed when roused by external changes. Brazilian neo-Lamarckians adopted the concept of the transmission of acquired characteristics. In other words, habits, ways of life, and a myriad of other external circumstances, such as sporting activities, constituted over time influences on the form of the body and its new physical characteristics, fixed and transmitted to the new generations persisting the conditions for those bodily improvements. To understand the history of sports in Brazil—as well as the widespread diffusion of physical

⁶⁸⁶ “Sport Club Recife,” *A Província* (Recife: Anno XXIX, n.95, 28 Abril 1906) 1.

⁶⁸⁷ See Mary Del Priori, Victor Andrade de Melo, orgs., *História do esporte no Brasil – do Império aos dias atuais* (São Paulo: Unesp, 2009); Steven W. Pope, John Nauright, eds., *Routledge Companion to Sports History* (New York: Routledge, 2009); J.A. Mangan, ed., *Shaping the Superman: Fascist Body as Political Icon—Aryan Fascism* (London: Frank Cass, 1999); Pablo Alabarces, ed., *Futbologias: futebol, identidade y violencia en América Latina* (Buenos Aires: Clacso, 2003).

⁶⁸⁸ For more about neo-Lamarckian eugenics, see Nancy Leys Stepan, *The Hour of Eugenics: Race, Gender, and Nation in Latin America* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1996); Marius Turda & Aaron Gillette, *Latin Eugenics in Comparative Perspective* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2014).

⁶⁸⁹ Jean-Baptiste de Lamarck, *Zoological Philosophy* [1809], translated by Hugh Elliot (London: MacMillan and Co. Limited, 1914). See in particular, chapter VII “Of the influence of the environment on the activities and habits of animals, and the influence of the activities and habits of these living bodies in modifying their organization and structure.”

culture within sporting institutions—is also to analyze the transmission of European ideological thinking on body hygiene and eugenics. The practice of sports had characteristics not only of healthy, aristocratic practice, but it was also considered as one of the factors responsible for the “improvement of the race” and “hygienically recommended.”⁶⁹⁰

Moreover, the diffusion of sports and their impact in Brazilian social life are also simultaneously connected to the politics of racial and social segregation, undergoing important changes from the end of the nineteenth century to the first decades of the twentieth.⁶⁹¹ The first sporting clubs exemplified the tendency of the new bourgeoisie to quickly become solid oligarchies. The segregationist exclusivism of the dominant group sought a public expression, a place where its members could manifest this exclusivism. The members of the first clubs were the same that directed the social, political, and economic life of the country. For the members of these clubs, rivalries were therefore secondary compared to the need to defend physical vigor, discipline, and sportsmanship. Brought together among the various sports clubs, young people considered sports a strong bond that united them all in a common mission. The disputes often ended in “busy celebrations and reciprocal greetings,” demonstrating “the maxim of joy and cordiality” of the relationship within the clubs, after all sport—especially soccer—turned to be considered “a magnificent diplomat!”⁶⁹² The Barão do Rio-Branco, Brazil’s Minister of Foreign Affairs, also expressed how sports served as diplomatic soft power among the elites while

⁶⁹⁰ “Lawn Tennis,” *Correio Sportivo* (Manaus: Typographia Cá e Lá, Anno 1, n.1, 19 Março 1916) 3. According to writers for the newspaper in Manaus, A. Guinard and C. Couto, the outdoors practice of tennis “improves the breathing organs and, by the various movements it demands, also makes the abdominal and dorsal muscles work effectively,” becoming very popular because “because it can be practiced by both sexes for fun or physical exercise and at any age without a player looking ridiculous after a certain age.”

⁶⁹¹ For more about racial relations in Brazil, see Thomas Skidmore, *Black into White: Race and Nationality in Brazilian Thought* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1974); Lilia Moritz Schwarcz, *The Spectacle of the Races: Scientists, Institutions and the Race Question in Brazil, 1870–1930* (New York: Hill & Wang, 1999); Darcy Ribeiro, *The Brazilian People: The Formation and Meaning of Brazil* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2000); José Murilo de Carvalho, *The Formation of Souls: Imagery of the Republic in Brazil* (Notre Dame, Ind: University of Notre Dame Press, 2012); Stanley E. Blake, *The Vigorous Core of Our Nationality: Race and Regional Identity in Northeastern Brazil* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2011).

⁶⁹² “SPORT - Foot-Ball,” *Jornal Pequeno* (Recife: Anno XI, n.165, 26 Julho 1909) 2. The document describes a match played at the British Club in Recife between Club Náutico Capibaribe and Sport Club do Recife (the first game between the two teams), with a 3-1 score in favor of Club Náutico. Another demonstration of the behavior displayed by the practitioners were the greetings and the English songs performed by the *sportmen* after the match, also described by the journal's chronicler. The three clubs mentioned still exist today.

addressing a welcoming speech to the “distinguished members of Buenos Aires society, the honorable Minister of Argentine Republic and the young representatives of the brilliant group of footballers” during a lunch at the Itamaraty Palace, praising “this very useful sport” on July 12, 1908:

It is these vigorous, calm, agile, well-trained boys who are the heroes of the day, the ones we all celebrate, Argentinians and Brazilians, wishing that those of Brazil, by methodical and persistent exercise, might match them up one day.⁶⁹³

Nevertheless, perhaps the main side effect of boosting sports among the elites was its spread over suburban districts and communities around Brazilian cities and the consequent introduction of sports in ways that finally helped to form the identity of the subaltern, predominantly Afro-Brazilians. More than just an opportunity for recreation, sports were a means to increase physical and social mobilization into elite spaces, but they also became a liberating path for some subalterns. Elite clubs stood apart spatially with the practice of sports like cricket, horseracing or rowing, and they were less accessible to the average public, because of their location in city centers, in contrast with the impoverished urban peripheries. At that time, a growing wave of lower-class clubs emerged in the Brazilian suburbs, usually as soccer teams.

In a relatively short period, the practice of soccer spread out to the underprivileged suburbs, gathering enough players and teams making the staging of championships possible.⁶⁹⁴ The composition of these new sporting clubs is significant. As the example of the Liga Nacional de Futebol Porto-Alegrense in the state of Rio Grande do Sul, the members of these tournaments were often underprivileged young men, mostly Afro-

⁶⁹³ Barão do Rio Branco, “Aos Footballers Argentinos” [1908] *Ministério das Relações Exteriores, Discursos – Obras do Barão do Rio Branco IX* (Rio de Janeiro: Imprensa Nacional, 1948) 175. The original in Portuguese: “É com o maior contentamento que vejo reunidos nesta mesa alguns dos mais distintos membros da sociedade portenha, cavalheiros estimáveis e damas e senhoritas que nos vieram trazer o encanto da sua graça e beleza, ao lado do digno Ministro da Republica Argentina e dos jovens representantes da brilhante turma de footballers que, a convite dos nossos, veio mostrar à mocidade brasileira quanto no pais vizinho se tem desenvolvido e aperfeiçoado, ao mesmo tempo que outros, esse utilíssimo sport. São esses mocos vigorosos, calmos, ágeis e bem adestrados os heróis do dia, os que festejamos todos, argentinos e brasileiros, desejando que os do Brasil, pelo exercício metódico e persistente, os possam igualar um dia.”

⁶⁹⁴ In the state of Pernambuco, for example, teams such as Guarany Sport Clube, *Centro Sportivo do Peres*, *João de Barros Foot-Bal Club*, *Santa Cruz Foot-Ball Club*, *Coligação Sportiva Recife*, and *Clube Sportivo Beberibe* among others, were founded in the suburbs of the metropolitan area of Recife. These teams had, in most cases, a short life; others, the minority, still exist today. These are the cases of *Santa Cruz Foot-Ball Club* and *João de Barros Foot-Bal Club* (today called América Futebol Clube).

Brazilians.⁶⁹⁵ Most importantly, the diffusion of soccer teams throughout neighborhoods on the peripheries and suburbs of Brazilian cities is evidence of how sports were no longer a restrict activity, beginning to be a normal social practice in the country in the early twentieth century.⁶⁹⁶ It is also interesting to notice that teams from different social groups had their statutes and represented their institutional lives in forums of public debate, especially the official press, or through their own publications.⁶⁹⁷ Another example of this transition from a foreign domain to local organizations is the formation of leagues and the inclusion of soccer tournaments as part of their programs to organize and develop this sport in the “far-flung regions” of Brazilian cities.⁶⁹⁸ The popularization of sporting activities nevertheless entailed ferocious debates on amateurism *versus* “the plague of professionalism”—also a case of discrimination and exclusion.⁶⁹⁹

At the beginning of the twentieth century, sports had become an activity performed through institutional channels. First, sports developed within educational and military spaces under the direct influence of physical culture; second, they were practiced by the employees of multinational companies; and, finally, sports clubs also

⁶⁹⁵ The “Liga Nacional de Futebol Porto-Alegrense” (LNFP) was founded in the city of Porto Alegre on May 13, 1920 (the anniversary of Brazil’s abolition of slavery) and their members/players were all Afro-Brazilians. The original name of the league, with the expression “national” in it, intended to counteract the elite teams of white immigrants and the black community claimed an origin for itself, which would be its birth on the Brazilian soil. For more about it, see José Antônio Santos’ *Liga da Canela Preta: a história do negro no futebol* (Porto Alegre: Diadorim, 2018).

⁶⁹⁶ See Nicolau Sevcenko, “A capital radiante: técnica, ritmos e ritos do Rio de Janeiro” in *História da Vida Privada no Brasil* (São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, vol.3, 1998). For Sevcenko, the “sporting fever” in Brazil is concretely represented by the victory of the Brazilian national football team had in the 1919 South American championship, played in Rio de Janeiro.

⁶⁹⁷ *Estatutos do Clube Sportivo Beberibe* (Recife: Typ. a vapor – J. Agostinho Bezerra, 1909).

⁶⁹⁸ Cicero Costa, “Traços,” *Correio Sportivo* (Manaus: Typographia Cá e Lá, Anno 1, n.2, 26 Março 1916) 1. The newspaper mentioned the role of the “Liga Amazonense de Sports Athleticos” in diffusing not only soccer but other sports, such as ju-jitsu, rowing, and tennis among others, in the state of Amazonas.

⁶⁹⁹ *Liga Pernambucana dos Desportos Terrestres* (Recife: LPDT, 1926). In this document, published to explain “to the Brazilian sporting society” the disaffiliation requested by the clubs America, Peres, and Sport Club do Recife, the Liga Pernambucana dos Desportos Terrestres-LPDT (created in 1918) stated that as early as 1919 these clubs had disobeyed the highest authority in its “memorable campaign against professionalism.” Strongly pro-amateurism and accused by the three institutions for being “intolerant,” the LPDT sharply defended its position against a “disastrous passion” demonstrated by the dissidents. In 1925, Sport, America and Peres founded the Associação Pernambucana de Esportes Athleticos. To learn more on the debates about professionalism and amateurism in the Brazilian cities, see Roger Kittleston’s *The Country of Football: Soccer and the Making of Modern Brazil* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2014) and Gregg Bocketti’s *The Invention of the Beautiful Game: Football and the Making of Modern Brazil* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2016).

expressed a very distinct form of civil association. In that context of modernization and building nationalism, physical culture also reached the popular sectors themselves, adapted to their social-economic-cultural contexts.⁷⁰⁰ In other words, considering the number of sports practitioners or followers in the first decades of the twentieth century, it is noticeable that sports encompassed a large and diverse sort of people, from the clubs of European heritage to the groups of young individuals living on the peripheries.⁷⁰¹ They founded new institutions and participated in independent leagues.⁷⁰² In this context, the public space of sports can be understood as a space where physical culture was also an arena of political and racial power relations; a dispute between subjects with asymmetrical social, economic, and political possibilities.

Sports came to Brazil through the proponents of modernity and foreign investment, especially the British, characteristics of an expanding capitalism. The enthusiasts of bodily care had an unquestionable commitment to create a new and civilized society—spiritually and physically—that was complemented by rational and hygienic policies against the “moral and physical indolence and dismay,” advocating for “the greatest idea in favor of physical culture.”⁷⁰³ Not only physicians and policymakers embraced it, but physical culture also gained “energetic support” in the public space of the “journalistic arena” also concerned with building a “vigorous youth”

⁷⁰⁰ The formation of modern civil associations among the elites was a process that has emerged since the last years of the colonial period. Throughout the history of Brazil, many examples of cooperation were given by the Jesuit participation during the Portuguese colonization, so by the European immigration. Nevertheless, only after the Proclamation of the Republic (1889) these forms of association began assiduously to take action among Brazilian popular sectors as socioeconomic movements and as a way of doctrine. Thus, the process of foundation of many sports clubs ran parallel to the formation of the first trade and labor unions, recreational and cultural clubs. For more about the formation of modern civic associations among the elites in Brazil, see Carlos Guilherme Mota, org., *Viagem incompleta: a experiência brasileira* (São Paulo: Senac, 3rd edition, 2009); Murilo de Carvalho, *The Formation of Souls*.

⁷⁰¹ Henrique Sena dos Santos has been working on Bahia. For more, see his “Entre Negros e Brancos: Considerações sobre a formação da cultura futebolística em Salvador, 1901 – 1910” in *Revista de História do Esporte* (Rio de Janeiro: UFRJ, v.2, n.1, 2009) and “Notas sobre a popularização do futebol em Salvador, 1901 – 1912” in *Revista de História do Esporte* (Rio de Janeiro: UFRJ, v.1, n.16, 2010/2011).

⁷⁰² These groups could be divided in three types, according to their origins: 1) schools that formed their sports teams to represent them in competitions; 2) foreign companies that supported their workers in the formation and direction of clubs/teams; 3) young boys (from the elite or not) that formed a considerable number of clubs.

⁷⁰³ “Solidariedade que conforta,” *Correio Sportivo* (Manaus: Typographia Cá e Lá, Anno 1, n.2, 26 Março 1916) 1.

for Brazil.⁷⁰⁴ Sporting practices passed through a process of becoming integrated into the local customs of Brazilian cities and developed within the dynamics of (re)invention of the idea of nationality in the country. The popularization of sports was not only part of the history of a nation seeking to become modern and civilized but was also crucial for the popular sectors in their struggle to be integrated into the nation.

The way the Brazilian press treated sports, in the last decades of nineteenth century, is characterized by an interesting diversity of coverage. Despite the predominance of horse racing news, the press reported about different sports (such as cricket and rowing) not only on local events, but also on national and international matters. In the first decades of the twentieth century, new sports became increasingly important in the articles published in the newspapers, especially soccer. It is clear that the distribution of sporting clubs throughout the Brazilian cities—from the rowing races, cricket, and horseracing, in the nineteenth century, to the soccer clubs in the suburbs and the formation of leagues in the early twentieth century—was connected to class structure. Nevertheless, there were also those who believed modern sports would never reach the same popularity in the Brazilian *sertões* (hinterlands).

In a provocative, sarcastic article published in 1921 in the newspaper *O Índio*, from the state of Alagoas, novelist Graciliano Ramos (under the pseudonymous J. Calisto) intrepidly affirmed his disbelief in British-born sports reaching out the lives of Brazilians from the hinterlands.⁷⁰⁵ According to Ramos, “this foreignness does not easily come into the land of thorns. Soccer, boxing, turf, nothing of this will stick around.”⁷⁰⁶ Ramos believed

⁷⁰⁴ “Solidariedade que conforta,” *Correio Sportivo* (Manaus: Typographia Cá e Lá, Anno 1, n.2, 26 Março 1916) 1.

⁷⁰⁵ Graciliano Ramos de Oliveira (1892-1953) was a Brazilian modernist writer, politician, and journalist. In most of his novels, more prominently in *Vidas secas* (Barren lives) from 1938, he depicted the precarious situation of the poor inhabitants of the Brazilian *sertão*. For more about Graciliano Ramos, see Graciliano Ramos, *Barren Lives*, translated by Ralph Edward Dimmick (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1965); Russell G. Hamilton, “Character and Idea in Ramos’ *Vidas secas*,” *Luso-Brazilian Review*, vol. 5, n. 1 (1968) 86-92; Marie L. Sovereign, “Pessimism in Graciliano Ramos,” *Luso-Brazilian Review*, vol. 7, n. 1 (1970) 57-63; Joanna Courteau, “The World View in the Novels of Graciliano Ramos,” University of Wisconsin, Doctorate dissertation, 1971; Dorothy M. Atkinson, “The Language of *Vidas secas*” in Anthony H. Clarke, ed., *Hispanic Studies in Honour of Joseph Manson* (Oxford: Dolphin Book Co., 1972) 9-20; Ronald Max Harmon, “The Conveyance of Ideology through Style in the Novels of Graciliano Ramos,” Doctoral dissertation, University of California, 1978; Darlene J. Sadlier, “Reading Graciliano Ramos in the United States,” *Revista do Instituto de Estudos Brasileiros*, n.54 (2012) 31-52.

⁷⁰⁶ J. Calisto [Graciliano Ramos], “Traços a esmo,” *O Índio* (Palmeira - Alagoas: Anno 1, n.11, 10 Abril 1921) 2.

that the attempt to introduce the practice of soccer among the population of the Brazilian interior would be “a flash in the pan, a fickle enthusiasm able of lasting about a month” due to Brazilians passing excitement for foreign “novelties.” Graciliano Ramos argued that for “the establishment of an intruder custom in a country, a gap has to be filled” and if the case is positive then “inseminate it, germinate in it a hybrid progeny that can live here in our home.” According to Ramos, “soccer fills nothing.”⁷⁰⁷

Five years earlier, Liberato Bittencourt, lecturer of the *Escola Superior de Guerra* (Brazil’s academy of military studies) and principal of the *Gymnasio Federal*, listed some physical and moral “capital causes” against the popularization of soccer. He noted that “its violence, for being inappropriate to Brazil’s environment, for attacking the intellectual culture of the youth, and for deadly hurting the culture and formation of character of the future Brazilian citizen.”⁷⁰⁸ Bittencourt argued that soccer was “an addiction, and as such must be tenaciously fought,” claiming for “God [to] spare us from this ungovernable evil” because if soccer developed “a little more, as it seems”, Brazilians would soon become “a people of consummate and perverted players,” menacing Brazil’s “nationality and sovereignty!”⁷⁰⁹ Carlos Sussekind de Mendonça, a juvenile court judge, shared the similar concern that “sport misinstructs the Brazilian youth,” implying that sports had brought more harm than good to Brazil, morally and physically.⁷¹⁰ Sussekind de Mendonça considered sports unhygienic for causing excessive fatigue that unbalanced the body. He also believed that sports (especially soccer) would keep Brazilian youth away from books and from a healthy intellectual life.

Graciliano Ramos insisted that, “the hinterlands are different” because Brazilians there are “more or less mestizos, a mixed race with smatterings of Cabinda and Gallego blood,” while the important capitals were “replete

⁷⁰⁷ J. Calisto [Graciliano Ramos], “Traços a esmo,” *O Índio* (Palmeira - Alagoas: Anno 1, n.11, 10 Abril 1921) 2.

⁷⁰⁸ Liberato Bittencourt, “Contra o foot-ball,” *Diario de Pernambuco* (Recife: Anno 92, n. 355, 25 Dezembro 1916) 4. The text was originally published by the *Revista pedagogica* and reproduced by the *Diario de Pernambuco*. Liberato Bittencourt also wrote the book *Reforma do Exército: questões de Estado-Maior* (Rio de Janeiro: Typ. Altina, 1904) cited in chapter 4 of this dissertation.

⁷⁰⁹ Liberato Bittencourt, “Contra o foot-ball,” *Diario de Pernambuco* (Recife: Anno 92, n. 355, 25 Dezembro 1916) 4.

⁷¹⁰ See Carlos Sussekind de Mendonça, *O sport está deseducando a mocidade brasileira* (Rio de Janeiro: Empreza Brasil Editora, 1921).

of people from different races or who intend to be of other races.”⁷¹¹ Nevertheless, his critical approach was not restricted to sports but also addressed cultural manifestations such as the Fox-Trot, One-Step, Tango, “plays people barely understand but applaud” and others with “jumble names.” Graciliano Ramos denied the need to promote physical culture, among the “entirely neglected” Brazilian hinterlanders “in general puny, withered, weak and of a pitiful poverty of muscles.”⁷¹²

Graciliano Ramos devoted an ample part of his article to considering the physical state of Brazilians’ bodily composition, “without energy to attack anybody and even lacking the necessary vigor to retreat.” Using military references, Ramos’ understood conceptions of physical culture neatly tied to ideas of nationality, defined in terms of bodies’ morality and strength. The “regrettable state of inertia,” which Ramos outlined as responsible for the “clumsy, indolent, awkward” condition of a considerable number of Brazilians, had to be tackled by “strengthening the flaccid flesh, the rotten nerves, and the damaged bones.”⁷¹³ Although arguing that soccer and other British sports would bring no practical results for Brazil, Ramos acknowledged the “lack of healthy, robust creatures” and deployed his peculiar, dry irony to blame Brazil’s “sweep-kick” political tradition as the legitimate national sport—a capacity that, according to Ramos, “all the nation’s saviors” had who were responsible for the country’s negative situation.

The concern for the physical condition of bodies was not only a medical but also a political objective and, therefore, a way to legitimize the modernizing project of the nation’s restorers. Even some severe critics of sports as Liberato Bittencourt, Sussekind de Mendonça, and Graciliano Ramos argued for the necessity of effective policies in favor of physical culture.⁷¹⁴ Permeating this controversy was the old debate on what would be the most

⁷¹¹ J. Calisto [Graciliano Ramos], “Traços a esmo” (1921) 2.

⁷¹² Ibid.

⁷¹³ Ibid.

⁷¹⁴ In his article, Bittencourt argued in favor of “intelligent physical exercises” and “hygienic education.” Liberato Bittencourt, “Contra o foot-ball,” *Diário de Pernambuco* (Recife: Anno 92, n. 355, 25 Dezembro 1916) 4.

appropriate strategy for the bodily care of Brazilians. Driven by the medical knowledge that had circulated in Brazil since the mid-nineteenth century, there were scientific arguments and counterarguments about sporting exercises related to the physical and moral impact on the future of the nation, the backdrop of the discussion.⁷¹⁵ *Sportsmen* saw themselves as protagonists in a struggle that aim to regenerate their own country. They were supported by people like Arthur Neiva—a physician member of the Eugenic Society of São Paulo—who argued that, “the rational and regulated practice of sports would improve the Brazilian race” and redeem the country when “power be at the hands of representatives from a generation that practices sports”.⁷¹⁶

Sporting clubs as physical educational institutions had a crucial role in changing the dynamics of the country and its public space. By promoting celebrations, exchanging mutual pleasantries, and by lending each other their sports fields, elite clubs confirmed for themselves the warmth of their social equals, who they envisioned as the vanguard of future doctors, educators, and political leaders who would create a modern Brazil. Their fellow elite members helped them to forge the idea of a unified identity, based on the character the British stamp gave to modern sports, earning its social legitimacy through the principles of hygiene and civilization.

Modern sports were, for many decades, an instrument of representation of the superiority of elites, a tool for legitimizing an oligarchic society, strongly exclusionary and not intended to open their world to popular participation. At the same time, sporting practices also favored—as a constitutive element—the associative character of Brazil’s lower-class groups in the early twentieth century. In addition to expressing this associative

⁷¹⁵ Other interesting works on this matter are Fernanda Simone Lopes de Paiva, “Sobre o pensamento médico-higienista oitocentista e a escolarização: condições de possibilidade para engendramento do campo da educação física no Brasil,” Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais, doctoral dissertation, 2003); José Gonçalves, *Artes de civilizar: medicina, higiene e educação escolar na Corte Imperial* (Rio de Janeiro: EdUERJ, 2004); Meily Assbú Linhales, “A escola, o esporte e a “energização do caráter”: projetos culturais em circulação na Associação Brasileira de Educação (1925-1935),” Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais, doctoral dissertation, 2006; Marcus Aurelio Tabora de Oliveira & Meily Assbú Linhales, “Pensar a educação do corpo na e para a escola: indícios no debate educacional brasileiro (1882-1927),” *Revista Brasileira de Educação*, v. 16, n. 47 (Mai 2011) 389-515.

⁷¹⁶ Arthur Neiva “Do Esporte II,” *O Estado de S. Paulo* (20 Março 1922) 2; Arthur Neiva, “Do Esporte V,” *O Estado de S. Paulo* (9 Julho 1922) 3. Arthur Neiva, born in Bahia in 1880, was one of the most important Brazilian physicians of the early decades of the twentieth century. Neiva held important positions, combining political activity and scientific practice. For more about Arthur Neiva’s activity, see Vanderlei Sebastião de Souza, “Arthur Neiva and the 'national question' in the 1910s and 1920s,” *História, Ciências, Saúde-Manguinhos*, vol.16, Suppl 1 (July 2009) 249-64.

character, supported by its development through institutional frameworks, sports also expressed the conflictive social character and the existing segregation between groups, reflected in their participation at the public dimension of the Brazilian cities. The need to distinguish oneself through certain behaviors such as singing English songs, or toasting with whiskey or champagne, demonstrates that sporting practices were not restricted just to the elites. Instead, sports and physical activities were practiced in other locations by poor citizens and workers as well. By seeking to limit the practice of sports to their elitist circles, young *sportsmen* tried to make those activities a proof of their superiority, with speech that did not reflect reality after the first decade of the twentieth century. Sporting institutions exemplified that even though the differentiation existing among men was explicit within the public sphere, the institutional space of sports could also be (in theory) a space of symmetrical possibilities of achieving the physical ideal desired for the nation, a symbolic imminent power between subjects with different social, political, and economic references.

Sports in general, and soccer in particular, gained appreciation and distinction for being considered not only the one, “among all sports, that best unifies all wills; that best disciplines temperaments, modifying the various instincts of those who practice it” but also for embodying the physical culture mission of “invigorating the physical and moral of the Brazilian people, civil or military.”⁷¹⁷ As clearly stated in 1920 by São Paulo gubernatorial candidate Washington Luís in his electoral program, “the creation of a sporting society is as valuable as the creation of schools [because] it is crucial to physically develop people for all the struggles of life, even for the intellectual ones. Let’s fortify and, above all, bring Brazilianness to Brazilians”.⁷¹⁸ Washington Luís believed that “our duty as Brazilians” was not only building schools, but “supporting sports institutions” and to multiply them “in every city, every village, and every farm.”

⁷¹⁷ “Liga Militar – O Football e o Exercito,” *O Imparcial* (Rio de Janeiro: Anno X, n.1375, 22 de Janeiro de 1920) 8.

⁷¹⁸ “O Futuro Presidente de S. Paulo e o Sport,” *O Imparcial* (Rio de Janeiro: Anno X, n.1382, 29 Janeiro 1920) 7.

Not only schools and military institutions, but also sporting clubs can be understood as a space of power, a space appreciated for being a site of recognition, where individuals were exposed to public eyes. The decade of the 1930s reflected a moment of various transformations in Brazilian history. Parallel to the popularization of physical culture, a nationalist and more centralized ideological movement emerged, witnessing the rise of a dictatorship as its culminating point. The “patriotic revolution” of 1930, commanded by Getúlio Vargas, promoted industrialization, modernization, and the “conciliation of the country.”⁷¹⁹ Vargas’s political movement created new economic and social strategies aimed at promoting a common idea of Brazil that would bridge the abysmal differences existing in Brazilian society. From the political changes to the academic debates on eugenics, sports served as a crucial ally in disseminating the national project professed by the authoritarian *Estado Novo* (New State).

In the first years of the twentieth century, Monteiro Lobato believed that “a dictator who would take over this Republic and crush the factories of law graduates and schoolteachers, replacing them with serious football teams, would do more for Brazil than the ten generations of Feijós, Zés Bonifácios, Cotegipes, and other statesmen who have ruled us.”⁷²⁰ During the 1930s, Getúlio Vargas’ dictatorship attributed to sports a key role in the formation of a ‘new Brazil,’ using soccer as a crucial element to promote the state’s nationalist policy, as Monteiro Lobato had desired decades earlier. A propitious moment for this attempt would be an international event, a space in which Brazil could demonstrate to the “civilized nations”—especially to European countries—the best qualities

⁷¹⁹ Getúlio Dornelles Vargas was born in São Borja (state of Rio Grande do Sul) on 19 April 1882. He was the Head of State of the provisional government after the 1930 Revolution. He was elected president by the Constituent Assembly on 17 July 1934, and ruled the country until the implantation of a dictatorship called the “New State” on 10 November 1937. After World War II, on 29 October 1945, Vargas was deposed. He ran for the presidency under the PTB (Brazilian Labour Party) defeating the National Democratic Union (UDN) and the Social Democratic Party (PSD) and being elected President of the Republic with 3,849,000 votes. As he was confronted with the threat of being forced to renounce or being deposed after a political turmoil, Vargas committed suicide in August 1954. For more, see Bradford Burns, *A History of Brazil* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993); Leslie Bethell, ed., *Brazil Since 1930* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

⁷²⁰ Monteiro Lobato, “Futebol” [1905], *Literatura de Minarete* (São Paulo: Brasiliense, Obras Completas v. 14, 1959) 179-86.

of “the Brazilian race.” This arena was the 1938 World Cup, played in France, a quintessential event not only for the history of Brazilian sports but also for the debates on scientific racism and the construction of national identity.

5.3 “Let the Aryanists take note of this!”

In 1914, the Liga Amazonense de Football, “naturally supported by the state” of Amazonas, organized a soccer match intending “to pay tribute” to “illustrious and talented” visitor Theodore Roosevelt. They hoped to show to the former North American president that “our Fatherland knows how to break through its own jungles and chase the nations that march proudly and unmistakably along the glaring path of progress,” striving to give Roosevelt “irrefutable proof” of Brazil’s “attention to physical culture.”⁷²¹ Years before the World Cup of 1938, Brazilian authorities had already assessed the political potential of soccer. The event hosted by France had a broader impact, shaping the ways sports articulated with Brazilian society and becoming one of the key elements to understand the discursive strategies to build Brazil’s national identity.

During the preparation of the Brazilian national team for the trip to France in 1938, important journalists such as Afranio Vieira, Everardo Lopes, Thomaz Mazzoni, and the press in general intensely and systematically participated in a campaign launched by the Confederação Brasileira de Desportos (Brazilian Sports Confederation) to collect funds to support the team.⁷²² In his article, “One can go to Paris for 500 Réis,” Mazzoni explained to his readers in São Paulo that “the well-inspired initiative” became an unusual success in Rio, selling almost one hundred thousand stamps within only a few days. Mazzoni reinforced that the Brazilian Sports Confederation was raffling off a ticket to one fan, among those who bought the stamp, to follow the delegation at the World Cup: “Those who acquire the stamp will not only patriotically aid Brazil's appearance in the Third

⁷²¹ “Uma boa ideia,” *Jornal Sportivo* (Manaus: Anno 1, n.2, 12 Abril 1914), 1.

⁷²² Thomaz Mazzoni was born in Polignano a Mare, Italy, in 1900. He arrived in Brazil with his parents still a child. As a journalist, the quality of his work gave credibility to Mazzoni and led to the publications (during the 1930s) of his sports almanacs in other Brazilian states and even in Argentina. Mazzoni wrote more than twenty books related to sports and earned the moniker “Olimpicus.”

World Cup but will also become candidates for a place in the delegation for... 500 réis".⁷²³ The press supported the idea that raising funds to finance "the comfort of the Brazilian players" was not only the hope of going to Europe to attend the World Cup, but also a patriotic act better to serve the country. It would increase "the margin to impose our [Brazil's] value" abroad, leading the Brazilian "aces to fight" in the tournament with "real possibilities" to conquest the World Cup while serving the nation "common ideal of seeing Brazil achieving a supreme place" internationally.

The Brazilian Sports Confederation understood, nonetheless, that the 1938 World Cup was more than just a sporting competition and, for that reason, the more financial support they could raise, the better. They wanted to support the Brazilian delegation so the national team could "act at the World Cup with its best possibilities." The Brazilian Sports Confederation wanted to give the delegation the best moral and material support, so the players could not only "show their sporting value in France but also make a great and efficient advertisement of Brazil in Europe."⁷²⁴ Due to the great amount of expenses for the national team to have all the necessary comfort, the Brazilian Sports Confederation, a private entity, sought to raise financial resources among federal officials in many states. Letters were sent to the interventors (governors indicated by Vargas) in states such as Pará, Amazonas, and Maranhão, as well to the directors of Companhia Light (the power company from Rio de Janeiro), the Instituto do Açúcar e do Alcool (Sugar and Alcohol Institute), Banco do Brasil (the most important bank), and to businesses in São Paulo. All the efforts would prove to be worthwhile.

The preparation of the Brazilian team had moments of tension, however, testing the delegation's discourse about cohesiveness and organization. With the provocative headline 'Unpatriotism from some carioca clubs' the newspaper *A Notícia*, from Santa Catarina, criticized the attitude of clubs in Rio for negotiating financial compensation for their players to serve on the national team. While the clubs from São Paulo were just "waiting

⁷²³ Thomaz Mazzoni, "Pode-se ir a Paris por 500 réis," *A Gazeta*, São Paulo (6 April 1938) 9.

⁷²⁴ "Para que o Brasil compareça condignamente à "Taça do Mundo"," *A Gazeta*, São Paulo (26 April 1938) 11.

for orders” and “offering their services for free,” Fluminense demanded “a payment for the rental of its pitch” for the training of the national team. “Let us confront then this kind of attitude so we can see how different is the sense of responsibility, discipline, obedience, and patriotism of the paulista clubs, for the great cause of Brazil in the World Cup, and the selfish gestures from the clubs of Rio.”⁷²⁵

Days before the team traveled to France, *O Estado de S. Paulo* published a story about what appeared to be a crisis between players and the managers of the Brazilian Sports Confederation. In a letter addressed to Mr. Castello Branco, the president of the confederation, the players “sincerely thanked the honorable visit” made by him to the Brazilian training camp in Caxambu (in the state of Minas Gerais), bringing “the moral aid so necessary for the arduous mission” that they would face in France. Stating that their gesture did not represent “any requirement”, the players claimed, nevertheless, a daily payment of \$25 from the day of boarding to their return to Brazil, a monthly wage of \$1,500, a bonus of \$500 per game won and \$250 per game tied.⁷²⁶

Despite the players’ justification that the cost of living in Europe was much more expensive and that most of them were breadwinners (not exempting them from their obligations with their families while in France), the head of the Brazilian Sports Confederation did not receive the request positively. Although arguing it was only an “unpleasant episode,” Castello Branco stated to the press his disagreement with the players’ request and reinforced they would have all their expenses in France paid by the Brazilian Sports Confederation. Motivated by the negative repercussion of their claim, the players accused “irresponsible individuals” for attaching to them “an infamous exigency.” In a telegram sent to the president of the Brazilian Sports Confederation, the players explained it was only a “claim not a demand,” assuring the president and the whole country of their commitment “to serve the confederation and Brasil” in Europe.⁷²⁷

⁷²⁵ “Impatriotismo de alguns clubes cariocas,” *A Noticia*, Joinville (9 April 1938) 8.

⁷²⁶ “A Representação Brasileira no Campeonato Mundial de Futebol,” *O Estado de S. Paulo*, São Paulo (17 April 1938) 15.

⁷²⁷ *Ibid.*

The Brazilian delegation was received by Jean Picquenot, a member of the Fédération Française de Football, and R. Conrado, the Brazilian consul in Cherbourg-Octeville. By the time the British transatlantic liner *Arlanza* brought the Brazilian national team to France for the 1938 World Cup, football was, not only socially but also politically, *the* sport of the nation, a “mania that galvanized the youth” in Sevchenko’s (1994) words. The press had an important role in motivating the fans and it is not a coincidence that journalists Afranio Vieira, Everardo Lopes, and Thomaz Mazzoni accompanied the delegation. When they arrived in France, they gladly informed the Associated Press that nobody suffered the effects of the long journey especially because Maria Bretas, the cook, made them all feel at home preparing typical Brazilian food on board.⁷²⁸

The Brazilian delegation in France also received the unrestricted support of President Getúlio Vargas’ government during the 1938 World Cup. Besides financial assistance from the government, the president’s own daughter Alzira Vargas was the ‘godmother’ of the national team.⁷²⁹ Still, according to the newspaper *Correio da Manhã*, the Brazilian players were avid for news from their homeland. Coach Adhemar Pimenta informed the Associated Press that the players complained about the “desolating scarcity” of letters from their families, and they also wanted to know about the insurgence of the Integralista Movement against President Vargas.⁷³⁰ Vargas’ government used sports as a great ally in disseminating the political project that the president wished to implement, trying to crystallize the ideals of social harmony and nationalist fervor.⁷³¹

Vargas’ *Estado Novo* intensified its interest in sports, especially through official actions of government authorities and propaganda. Symbolically, the success of the national soccer team in France would demonstrate

⁷²⁸ “O Brasil no Campeonato do Mundo – O primeiro contacto dos nossos jogadores com os francezes,” *Correio da Manhã*, Rio de Janeiro (17 May 1938) 7.

⁷²⁹ Ibid.

⁷³⁰ For more about the Ação Integralista Brasileira (AIB) see Hélió Trindade’s *A tentação fascista no Brasil: imaginário de dirigentes e militantes integralistas* (Porto Alegre: Editora UFRGS, 2016); and Giselda Brito Silva’s *Estudos do Integralismo no Brasil* (Porto Alegre: EdUPUCRS, 2ª ed, 2016).

⁷³¹ See Pereira (2000). An interesting perspective on this matter can be seen at Melina Miranda Pardini’s masters thesis, “A narrativa da ordem e a voz da multidão: o futebol na imprensa durante o Estado Novo 1937-1945,” Universidade de São Paulo, 2009.

Brazil's potential. The press reported on the involvement of the authorities with the national team, as government officials encouraged and cheered on the Brazilian players. Among the biggest fans of the Brazilian soccer team was Luiz Martins de Souza Dantas, the Brazilian ambassador in France. To the national public, newspapers informed that Souza Dantas demonstrated great interest in the progress of his countrymen, being named "the number one fan of Brazilian footballers."⁷³² Every sector of Brazilian society, from the president's daughter to the average citizen buying stamps, from public authorities to the private sectors of the economy, became increasingly involved with the national team, as if the whole nation were represented by those players at the 1938 World Cup.

Official announcements were made to inform the population about the game broadcasts, boosting the connection of the Brazilian fans with their players and the national euphoria of following Brazil in this major soccer championship. For the very first time Brazilians would listen to the games of the national team from another continent. The *Rádio Clube do Brasil* did not measure efforts to obtain the broadcasting rights.⁷³³ By selling advertisements and with the Urca Casino's sponsorship (of two hundred contos de réis, each game cost around one hundred contos by using a telephone line), the voice of soccer announcer Gagliano Netto was heard not only in Rio but also in many other Brazilian cities. The transmissions of games on the *Rádio Clube do Brasil* were shared with many other stations.⁷³⁴ In Recife, for example, "cinematographic reports" of the games (bought

⁷³² Thomaz Mazzoni, "O Embaixador Souza Dantas tornou-se o "fan" nº 1 dos brasileiros." *A Gazeta*, São Paulo (28 May 1938) 12. During World War II, Ambassador Souza Dantas suffered official retaliation for disobeying the Brazilian government when he provided thousands of visas to Jewish refugees, against President Vargas' orders. See Fabio Koifman's *Quixote nas trevas: o Embaixador Souza Dantas e os refugiados do nazismo* (Rio de Janeiro: Record, 2002).

⁷³³ "Todas as atenções voltadas para a estréia dos brasileiros na "Taça do Mundo"," *A Gazeta*, São Paulo (4 June 1938) 11.

⁷³⁴ "Gagliano Netto (Metralha)," *Diario de Pernambuco*, Recife (12 June 1938) 3. Gagliano Netto, nicknamed "Metralha", was born in Recife in 1911 and became the main "speaker" of the *Rádio Clube do Brasil* during the international matches of the Brazilian national team since the South American Championship played in Buenos Aires in 1937.

from Fox Movietone News) could also be seen by the public at the Parque Theater.⁷³⁵ The press publishing many articles on the expectations on the team's debut, stressing the importance of the kick-off against Poland.

The day before the first game against Poland, the Brazilian press enthusiastically affirmed that “all Brazilians, sportsmen or not, will turn their attention tomorrow to the debut of the national team in the III World Cup.” There was a strong feeling that for the first time Brazil was confident in playing on the other side of the Atlantic, “perfectly organized”, and with the moral and material support of the whole nation. *A Gazeta* explained that all the anxiety was perfectly justifiable because never before “has the soul of the Brazilian people been so vibrant around the campaign of a national representation in a sports competition.”⁷³⁶ Football became, from that moment on, the focus of all Brazilians' attention. The national team materialized the forces and union of the whole nation; therefore, no one could be indifferent to such an expected event.

The dramatic 6-5 victory against Poland caused the most extreme results in the Brazilian population. In Rio, the head of the postal telegraph, the 49-year-old Mario Balesdent, suddenly died while cheering for the Brazilian sixth goal, overwhelmed by the emotional victory of the national squad.⁷³⁷ In São Paulo, it was reported that “a thousand, ten thousand, two hundred thousand or more people, perhaps the entire population of the city” expressed their joy after the triumph of the Brazilian team in its first match of the World Cup. Under the curious title of “Foreigners, but Brazilians” the newspaper *A Gazeta* reported that, “millions of Brazilians suffered, but thousands of foreigners also suffered”. Together, “Italians, Portuguese, Hungarians, Spaniards, the children of other countries engaged with our patriotic sentiments.”⁷³⁸ Not only Brazilians, but also a mix of nationalities living in São Paulo wanted Brazil's victory over Poland, “foreigners who work and collaborate with our greatness

⁷³⁵ “Hoje no Parque, Brasil x Polônia – A melhor reportagem cinematográfica sobre o jogo de football,” *Diario de Pernambuco* (13 June 1938) 13.

⁷³⁶ “Todas as atenções voltadas para a estréia dos brasileiros na "Taça do Mundo”” *A Gazeta* (4 June 1938) 11.

⁷³⁷ “Torcendo pela vitória dos brasileiros - matou-o a emoção!” *Correio da Manhã* (7 June 1938) 20.

⁷³⁸ “Estrangeiros, mas brasileiros.” *A Gazeta* (7 June 1938) 10.

and our progress”. São Paulo was “more Brazilian than ever, denying what has been said of this great and working city.” Immigrants in São Paulo, at least during that Sunday, were “all Brazilians and good Brazilians.”⁷³⁹

Talking to the United Press, Brazilian Ambassador Souza Dantas gently stated his joy after the game, congratulating the Polish team and declaring his gratitude to the French crowd who “continuously motivated the Brazilian players to the victory.” Ambassador Souza Dantas was not surprised by the victory because “it perfectly reflected the gentle treatment my country and I have got here in Strasburg by its Mayor and authorities.”⁷⁴⁰ Karel Lothy, representative of the Royal Dutch Football Association at FIFA, believed “Brazilians have a very offensive, really dangerous, and intelligent style. They have one of the strongest squads to win the World Cup.”⁷⁴¹ There were sharp critiques of Brazil’s defensive system, nonetheless. For Commander Attila Soares, the Federal District’s secretary of Interior and Justice, “the defense played terribly. We could have won easily without going to overtime.”⁷⁴² Lieutenant Euzebio Queiros, chief of the Special Police, strongly emphasized, “I am satisfied. They played well and accomplished their mission, bringing terror to the Polish forces. Especially Leônidas.”⁷⁴³ Nevertheless, the ones in charge of the defense acted cowardly and retreated, allowing the Europeans to react.”⁷⁴⁴

The press rested its case by showing that every citizen was talking about the World Cup and patriotic demonstrations, all over the country, proved Brazil was capable of uniting for a common cause. News from

⁷³⁹ “Estrangeiros, mas brasileiros.” *A Gazeta* (7 June 1938) 10.

⁷⁴⁰ “O embaixador Souza Dantas e os jogadores falam sobre o match,” *Diario de Pernambuco* (9 June 1938) 8.

⁷⁴¹ *Idem*.

⁷⁴² “Leônidas é um espantalho – Disse o Comandante Attila Soares,” *Diario de Pernambuco* (9 June 1938) 8.

⁷⁴³ Leônidas da Silva, known as ‘The Black Diamond’, was born on 6 September 1913 in Rio de Janeiro. He was one of the most extraordinary players of all times. A fast attacker, and skillful opportunist, he gained fame in the 1930s and 1940s. He played for the Brazilian national team and for football clubs like São Cristóvão, Sírio Libanês, Bonsucesso, Peñarol (Uruguay), Vasco da Gama, Botafogo, Flamengo and São Paulo. He won the following titles: Carioca Championship for Vasco da Gama in 1934; Carioca Championship for Botafogo (1935); Carioca Championship (1939) and Rio-São Paulo Tournament (1940) for Flamengo; Paulista Championship for São Paulo Football Club (1943, 1945, 1946, 1948 and 1949); Rio Branco Cup (1932), 3rd place in the World Cup (1938) and Copa Roca (1945) for the Brazilian National Team. In Brazil, he is known as the inventor of the ‘bicycle kick’.

⁷⁴⁴ “Leônidas é um espantalho” *Diario de Pernambuco* (9 June 1938) 8.

distinct parts of the country multiplied. Enthusiastically, journalists claimed that they had never witnessed such an exalted demonstration of sympathy and patriotism proclaiming “Brazilians in general have never had the opportunity to assess the enormous advantage of football as an element of propaganda abroad.” In addition, public statements made by Brazilian and foreign authorities in Europe attested that “what our diplomacy can hardly do, what our missions of expansion in the rest of the world can hardly do, football carried it out in the blink of an eye.”⁷⁴⁵ The triumph against Poland, thus, was more than simply a football victory. It was a political conquest, it reaffirmed “the value of the Race and exalts Brazil.”⁷⁴⁶

In their second game, Brazilians played against Czechoslovakia. A tie brought new and strong emotions to those who followed the game. By the tournament rules, a rematch was necessary. On 15 June 1938, after the victory against Czechoslovakia (2-1) in the tie-breaker game, the *Diario de Pernambuco* printed on its pages a picture of the black player Argemiro and rejoiced saying that the whole city of Recife lived moments of “intense vibration” on the streets:

Public offices and commerce closed their doors. This made the streets look extraordinary. All the cafes and restaurants that had radio were invaded by the crowd. In front of the *Diario de Pernambuco*, a powerful speaker was installed. Around 10 thousand people listened to the broadcasting of the game. When the final score was announced, applause took on enormous proportions. The *chauffeurs* from all over the city honked their cars’ horns. There were whistles from the factories, rockets, sirens. Some young men of the commerce organized a march, leading the national flag under enthusiastic acclamations. In the suburbs, the enthusiasm was not lower. In all the sporting clubs, national flags were hoisted. Once again, congratulations to the Radio Club de Pernambuco.”⁷⁴⁷

⁷⁴⁵ “O jogo Brasil-Polônia e a confraternização das colônias,” *A Gazeta* (8 June 1938) 1.

⁷⁴⁶ “A Victoria dos Brasileiros contra os poloneses é mais do que um triumpho esportivo, reafirma o valor da raça e exalta o Brasil,” *O Imparcial* (São Luiz: 6 June 1938) 1. In studies on Brazil's diplomatic history, the tendency among historians is to emphasize the Brazilian participation during the League of Nations as a fiasco. When it comes to the period around the 1930 Revolution led by Getúlio Vargas, studies have stated that Brazil had little interest in foreign policy. Moreover, during his authoritarian regime, initiated in 1937, Vargas’ guiding principles towards the international scene ranged from pragmatism to contradictory policies. By observing the dilemmas of Brazil’s international politics on the eve of World War II, it is not surprising that the Brazilian press took advantage on the success of the national football team in France to promote the country’s diplomacy. For more on the diplomatic history of Brazil, see Albuquerque, Seitenfus, and Castro (2006).

⁷⁴⁷ “A Vibração da Cidade pela Victoria do ‘Scratch’ Nacional,” *Diario de Pernambuco* (15 June 1938) 11.

The Radio Club de Pernambuco's broadcast was also heard in the neighboring state of Alagoas. In the capital, Maceió, a multitude gathered on the streets singing the national anthem and applauding the end of the game in front of the editorial department of the *Gazeta de Alagoas*. Intellectuals such as Valdemar Cavalcanti talked to the newspaper *Jornal de Alagoas* enthusiastically saying that, "Europe will bow before Brazil, and this time before Leônidas and Peracio's feet." Manuel Diegues Junior declared that it was "the first time Brazil shone to the whole world, becoming more known than when Rui Barbosa spoke at the Hague Conference." Finally, Carlos Paulo said that "the Brazilian players synthesize the soul of their country."⁷⁴⁸

The Minister of Education Gustavo Capanema followed the game from his home and after the victory officially manifested his joy addressing a telegram to coach Adhemar Pimenta and the Brazilian delegation in Marseille. Capanema wrote that, "Today's victory has a sense: everything for Brazil. I ask you to bring our words of enthusiasm and praise to our invincible fighters."⁷⁴⁹ In turn, the Brazilian Sports Confederation sent a collective telegram "signed by three hundred people" to the delegation in France saying, "To the brave legionnaires of Strasburg and Bourdeaux, the gratitude of all Brazilians."⁷⁵⁰

Representing the Civilian and Military Office of President Getúlio Vargas, secretary Luiz Vergara and General Francisco José Pinto (Military Chief of Staff) also welcomed the "brilliant victory of our valiant and hard-working players."⁷⁵¹ The president's daughter Alzira Vargas sent "enthusiastic greetings for the magnificent" performance, demonstrating her confidence that the Brazilian team would win the World Cup.⁷⁵² The entire

⁷⁴⁸ "A Europa Curvou-se Ante o Brasil..." *Diario de Pernambuco* (15 June 1938) 5. Valdemar Cavalcanti (1912-1982) was one the most important journalists in Brazil at his time and a pioneer as a literary critic. Manuel Diegues Junior (1912-1991) was a member of the American Anthropological Association, the Brazilian Historical Institute, among other cultural institutions, and was the president of the Latin American Sociological Association.

⁷⁴⁹ "A palavra de entusiasmo do Ministro da Educação," *Correio da Manhã* (15 June 1938) 1.

⁷⁵⁰ "Bravos Legionários," *Correio da Manhã* (15 June 1938) 1.

⁷⁵¹ "Da Presidência da República," *Correio da Manhã* (15 June 1938) 1.

⁷⁵² "Da Srta. Alzira Vargas," *Correio da Manhã* (15 June 1938) 1.

population, along with political leaders, engaged with the players of the national team. From the enthusiasm felt on the streets of Belo Horizonte to the popular marches of joy in Fortaleza, all shared the feeling that the whole nation was playing at the World Cup. The city of Guaxupé (in the state of Minas Gerais) informed that Hércules, “son of the city” was to receive a celebrating gold medal upon his return from Europe for his participation in the World Cup.⁷⁵³ The various manifestations represented the phenomenon of “national unity,” forged by the circumstances in France and the actions of various sectors of the Brazilian society.

On 16 June 1938, the newspaper *Correio da Manhã* published a comment made by “Professor Gilberto Freyre” to the *Diario de Pernambuco* the day before speaking about the triumphs on French soil. Gilberto Freyre stated that one crucial condition for the success Brazilians were having in France, against the Europeans, was “the courage we had this time to send to Europe a genuinely Afro-Brazilian team.”⁷⁵⁴ One day later, the *Diario de Pernambuco* published one of Freyre’s most iconic texts, “Foot-ball mulato”, in which the socio-anthropologist emphasized the notion of body, movement, and action of the Brazilian mulatto as a symbol of national identity. According to Freyre, the choice of bringing to the National Team only white players in former international competitions followed the same criteria used by the *Itamaraty* (Brazilian Ministry of Foreign Affairs) when choosing the diplomatic corps, not representing the real Brazilian people.⁷⁵⁵ The physical activity of soccer was thus employed by Freyre as the special arena where the multiracial, ‘Dionysian’ Brazilian nation could stand out and show the world a unique and superior way of being, opposed to the ‘Aryan,’ ‘rational,’ ‘Apollonian’ Europeans, and the 1938 World Cup (an international event) had proved that. In Recife, a journalist approached Gilberto Freyre, “surrounded by the masses of people” that, like him, had just listened to another broadcast of the

⁷⁵³ “...E em Belo Horizonte”; ‘Passeata em Fortaleza’; ‘Uma medalha de ouro a Hércules, oferta da população de Guaxupé,’ *A Gazeta* (15 June 1938) 9.

⁷⁵⁴ “Um team afro brasileiro...” *Correio da Manhã* (16 June 1938), 6.

⁷⁵⁵ Freyre, Gilberto, “Foot-ball mulato,” *Diario de Pernambuco* (17 June 1938), 4. The article was written for the *Diarios Associados*, an important group of Brazilian newspapers.

World Cup in front of the *Diario de Pernambuco*. The man asked Freyre's opinion about the victories of the Brazilian team in France. Gilberto Freyre's answer was published by the *Diario de Pernambuco* as follows:

I believe that one of the conditions for the victory of Brazil in the matches against the Europeans is the fact that, this time, we had the courage to send to Europe a genuinely Afro-Brazilian team. Let the Aryanists take note of this!⁷⁵⁶

This thought was shared by the column "Cousas da Cidade" of the *Diario de Pernambuco*, a very popular space in the newspaper. The text could not be more explicit:

We can say that the Brazilian 'foot-ballers' have made, in recent days, more for Brazil and its reputation than any paid advertisement ever made until today. The victory of the national 'scratch' [team] is also the victory of discipline, bravery, endurance, the spirit of sacrifice and solidarity that animated our men. In times when the apology for the pure races are made, the Brazilian mestizos defeat not only Czechoslovakia; they put against the wall the Gobineaus and Rosenbergs, who want to impose to the world the primacy of the Aryans as an act of faith.⁷⁵⁷

Curiously, in the same page, the newspaper published a long text entitled "Imagem ethnica do Brasil" (the ethnic image of Brazil). Its author, Xavier Marques, was a very prestigious intellectual and member of the Academia Brasileira de Letras. In a dense article, Marques affirmed, "There is no issue of races in Brazil. What exists is a problem of settlement and foreign colonization, leading us to think indirectly about the future of the race."⁷⁵⁸ Xavier Marques reminded his readers that while the experts devoted themselves to the study of selective breeding, the classification of their racial products, experiments, research, measurements and eugenics, the main "enigma" in Brazil was to know what the country will look like ethnically "in this distant stage of historical evolution." Xavier Marques quickly answered that, "the white man's victory is predicted by scientific foundations." He finished his article affirming that, "within three centuries it will be reigning in our entire country,

⁷⁵⁶ "O Team Afro-Brasileiro e a sua Admirável 'Performance' – como aprecia a victoria do nosso 'team' o escriptor Gilberto Freyre," *Diario de Pernambuco* (15 June 1938), 16.

⁷⁵⁷ "Cousas da Cidade – A Victoria dos Brasileiros," *Diario de Pernambuco* (15 June 1938), 4.

⁷⁵⁸ Francisco Xavier Marques, "Imagem ethnica do Brasil," *Diario de Pernambuco* (15 June 1938), 4-10. Francisco Xavier Ferreira Marques (1861-1942) was a journalist, politician, novelist, poet, biographer, and essayist.

without contrasts, characterized in its Caucasian appearances, the typical Brazilian, the Brazilian man, who must overcome all his antecessors.”⁷⁵⁹

Before the semi-final match against Italy, Brazilian minister of Foreign Affairs Oswaldo Aranha and the Italian Ambassador Vicente Lojacono exchanged diplomatic telegrams. Lojacono expressed to Aranha his “admiration for the success of the Brazilian players,” extremely confident that “no matter the outcome of the game, it will constitute a great title of honor to the Fascist sport”. Oswaldo Aranha thanked the ambassador’s words, reassuring “the higher honor for the national team playing against our great sister nation, sure that together they will demonstrate the friendship of our peoples and the great Latin virtues.”⁷⁶⁰

Popular manifestations, from various spectrums of society, continued to support the players. Many messages and telegrams of greetings can be found in the press. From the customs officers of Santos and the inspectors of the police department in São Paulo to the students of the polytechnic school and the Israeli community, “all the social classes” trusted in victory over the Italians.⁷⁶¹ The result of the match turned to be the opposite of what the country expected. The Italians won the controversial game by the score of 2-1. Even in facing defeat, Brazilian public authorities tried to capitalize on the best performance of Brazil in three world cups. Minister of Education Gustavo Capanema sent an “effusive congratulations to the brave Brazilian players” in France, reassuring the national delegation that the loss against “a valiant opponent” did not change the “vertiginous succession of hard fighting and the admirable affirmation of Brazil” in Europe.⁷⁶²

⁷⁵⁹ Francisco Xavier Marques, “Imagem ethnica do Brasil,” *Diario de Pernambuco* (15 June 1938), 4-10. Francisco Xavier Ferreira Marques (1861-1942) was a journalist, politician, novelist, poet, biographer, and essayist.

⁷⁶⁰ “Troca de Telegrammas entre o Embaixador da Italia no Brasil e o Ministro Oswaldo Aranha.” *Correio Paulistano* (16 June 1938) 6. For more about the political and diplomatic bonds between Brazil and the totalitarian regimes in Europe (specially Italy and Germany) before the World War II, see the classic article written by Samuel Putnam in 1942, “Brazilian Culture under Vargas” and the remarkable book by Tucci Carneiro, *O anti-semitismo na era Vargas* (1988).

⁷⁶¹ “Todas as classes sociais enviam telegramas de incitamento aos brasileiros,” *A Gazeta* (16 June 1938), 9.

⁷⁶² “O ministro Capanema telegrafou à delegação,” *A Gazeta* (17 June 1938), 7.

The frustration after the game was explicitly demonstrated by coach Adhemar Pimenta who sharply shouted to the press, “Europe doesn’t care about anything from South America! We’ve been victims here, nothing more. Today, we were robbed once again. When the referee signaled the penalty kick, the ball was in the hands of a boy, completely out from the game’s field.”⁷⁶³ The public outrage was also shared on the part of the press. Informing the readers about the upcoming game against Sweden in Bourdeaux, *Correio do Parana* wrote that, “third place would be an honored achievement for a team that fought abroad against the rigorous crowd, the hostilities of its adversaries and was persecuted by partial European referees.”⁷⁶⁴ The victory against Sweden was considered “boring” by part of the press, after the Brazilian “via-crucis” and the many cases of “fraud” across the French fields.⁷⁶⁵ Diplomacy and courtesy, at the end of the World Cup, was no longer unanimous. Curiously, almost a year later the polemical game ‘Italia 2x1 Brazil’ was still the subject of debate. In a visit to Santos, the English referee Isaac Caswel was asked by the journalists, “why Brazil did not win the World Cup.” Caswel stated, in a straightforward answer that, “they did not know how to convert all the opportunities they had, losing control of their nerves. It was sad because they presented a valorous squad, full of valuable players, but a little disoriented by the wrong interpretation of the British rules.”⁷⁶⁶

Brazilian participation in the 1938 World Cup, boosted by the positive environment it created, showed that sports had acquired a different status in Brazil. It had become an articulator of national identity and social unity. It was around 3:30 p.m. when the ship *Almanzora* began to maneuver for mooring in Rio de Janeiro with the Brazilian team. At the Mauá Square there was a great crowd enthusiastically expressing their gratitude to the players. The police station set up barricades to facilitate the landing of the team. Several aircraft and numerous

⁷⁶³ “O Brasil foi outra vez roubado!” *Correio do Paraná* (17 June 1938), 4.

⁷⁶⁴ “Brasil jogará contra a Suécia amanhã em Bordeaux,” *Correio do Paraná* (17 June 1938) 4.

⁷⁶⁵ “Reagir enquanto é tempo,” *Pacotilha* (20 June 1938) 1.

⁷⁶⁶ “Porque os brasileiros não venceram a Copa do Mundo,” *O Estado* (9 March 1939) 3. Leônidas did not play the semi-final match against Italy and the reason is a controversial point. Some narratives say Leônidas was constantly hit by the Czechoslovakians and that he was not healthy enough to play against Italy. Others say that the Brazilian coach was arrogant in benching Leônidas.

boats received the English transatlantic liner. On board, Leônidas was questioned why he did not go down with his mates: “In Pernambuco and Bahia there were also barricades, but I was almost victimized by the crowd. In the city of Salvador, I even lost a shoe.”⁷⁶⁷ Leônidas, the “Black Diamond,” became the number one figure of the championship in France, a popular phenomenon in Brazil. President Vargas himself publicly appeared in a picture with the new “national hero.” Soccer was no longer just a game in Brazil.⁷⁶⁸

Although all the athletes who traveled to France with the national squad were originally from clubs in São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro, the image constructed and reproduced for the rest of the country was that those players truly represented Brazilian soccer and, therefore, the Brazilian population. They truly represented the ethnic spectrum of Brazil. In addition, the perception of Brazilian leaders, intellectuals, and the press was that—from the preparation to the 1938 World Cup to the matches in France—soccer had far exceeded the limits of a sporting activity, becoming a means through which all sectors of Brazilian society engaged materially and symbolically. In fact, the official discourse and propaganda, supported by public manifestations, transformed all Brazilians into participants in the nation’s success abroad. Whether from the public or private sector, a common sentiment emerged, that the 1938 soccer championship was indicative of the nation’s possibilities. The political and intellectual leaders of the country used an international sporting event to create an image of Brazil on the global arena, to showcase the levels of progress and development reached by the country with its success against the “civilized” nations on the sports fields.

⁷⁶⁷ “A recepção dos futebolistas brasileiros no Rio,” *O Estado de S. Paulo* (12 July 1938) 5.

⁷⁶⁸ See Roberto DaMatta, *Universo do futebol: esporte e sociedade brasileira* (Rio de Janeiro: Pinakotheke, 1982); Anatol Rosenfeld, *Negro, macumba e futebol* (São Paulo: Editora Perspectiva, 1993); Ronaldo Helal, Antonio Jorge Soares, Hugo Lovisololo, *A invenção do país do futebol: mídia, raça e idolatria* (Rio de Janeiro: Manuad, 2001); Alex Bellos, *Futebol, the Brazilian Way of Life* (London: Bloomsbury, 2002); José Miguel Wisnik, *Veneno remédio: o futebol e o Brasil* (São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 2008); Roger A. Kittleston, *The Country of Football: Soccer and the Making of Modern Brazil* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2014).



Figure 23

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By the 1930s, physical culture had become an important tool in the development of the discourse on the health and the physical vigor of society. Intellectuals, scientists, and politicians combined the principles of hygiene and moral with physical education and urbanity. Hence, the culture of the body became a republican and modern reality when sports began to articulate their practices around the discourse of national identity, playing a crucial role within the debates of nationhood. Sporting clubs were the space where Brazilian youth would receive not only the complement of its intellectual education—reinforced by the sportsmanship code—but also the physical education necessary to help the ideological process of forging healthier and stronger generations. Through building both minds and bodies, schools, military and sporting institutions converged.

⁷⁶⁹ “Estou satisfeito com vocês!” *Sport Illustrated*, Rio de Janeiro, Anno 1, n.16 (27 Julho 1938) 15. Dictator Getúlio Vargas meet the players Leônidas da Silva, Domingos and Walter, and “honored the three compatriots with a sincere hug” stating, “I am pleased with you!”.

A positive view of mixed-race nations was not very common before the 1930s. As explained in chapter one, in the last decades of the nineteenth century, Brazilians had debated about how long the existence of the “black contingent” would last in the Brazilian society before a eugenic “whitening” of the population would take place. The whitening ideology dominated among intellectuals and policy makers. This line of thought persisted due to the strong influence of European racial theories and the racist bias of a considerable part of Brazilian elites. Although this was the dominant ideology, it was not completely hegemonic.

There were intellectual antagonists who emerged by the 1920s to challenge scientific racism and whitening theory. They took up a nationalist and anti-European attitude, as was the case of the precursors of the Modernist Movement of 1922. This movement started in São Paulo, a city where Afro-Brazilian influence was diminishing as a result of the arrival of a large number of European immigrants in the city and state.⁷⁷⁰ Others, such as those who belonged to the Regionalist Movement (also in the 1920s) were more conservative in relation to “modernity”. They advocated for the recognition of the “Brazilian Northeast” as the space where the true, racially and culturally mixed Brazilian originated and thrived. The rich cultural production and symbolic codes of the Northeast—preserved within a specific, invented community—offered an alternative vision of national identity distinct from that of the “modern” Southeast.⁷⁷¹ Although each of these movements had its own unequivocal regional character, they reflected the nationalism of radical politicians during the 1920s and were highlighted during the 1930 Revolution, when Getúlio Vargas took power.⁷⁷²

⁷⁷⁰ See Barbara Weinstein, *The Color of Modernity: São Paulo and the Making of Race and Nation in Brazil* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2015). In 1920, thirty-five per cent of the population of São Paulo were foreigners.

⁷⁷¹ The *Manifesto Regionalista* (Regionalist Manifest) was a result of the Regionalist Congress organized in Recife where essayists, novelists, musicians, painters as well as historians, sculptors, engineers, economists, biographers could discover and articulate a legacy of peculiar myths, landscapes and memories from the influence of Portuguese, African, Dutch and Brazilian-Indian cultures. Gilberto Freyre is one of the most important names among the articulators and propagators of the *Manifesto Regionalista*. See David Brookshaw, *Raça e cor na literatura brasileira* (Porto Alegre: Mercado Aberto, 1983) and Durval Muniz de Albuquerque Jr., *The Invention of the Brazilian Northeast* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2014).

⁷⁷² To better understand the antecedents and the context of the 1930 Revolution, see Daryle Williams, *Culture Wars in Brazil: The First Vargas Regime, 1930–1945* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2001); Todd A. Diacon, *Stringing Together a Nation: Cândido Mariano da Silva Rondon and the Construction of a Modern Brazil, 1906–1930* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2004); and José Murilo de

Amidst the debates on nationalism, *mestiçagem*, Aryanism, and scientific racism, this chapter has showed how sports turned out to be a space in which Brazil could demonstrate to the “civilized nations”—especially to the Europeans—the best qualities of “the Brazilian race.” It is not an exaggeration to say that sports shaped the ways through which physical culture articulated with the Brazilian society, becoming a key element to understand Brazil’s history of nationalism. The symbolic figure of the mulatto—an invented mediator in the relations of social conflict between different social, cultural, racial spheres—again emerged directly linked to the social meaning of physical activities through which the Brazilian being could manifest itself with greater intensity. The mulatto came to be considered the creator and the symbol of “Brazilianess” and Brazilian pride.

Physical culture played an active role in the recognition of this “racially mixed” component. Soccer demonstrated that Afro-Brazilians could be the axis of a new social model destined to equip Brazil with “Brazilianness.” Debates within Getúlio Vargas’ regime reformulated the old theories on *mestiçagem*, scientific racism, and physical culture. Beginning in the 1930s, and with official government endorsement, physical culture and *mestiçagem* became central to the process of constructing Brazilian national identity. Physical culture became crucial to the transition from the “superior white race” to a “de-anglicized,” outstanding, “democratic as no other people” and original “Brazilian Mulattism.”⁷⁷³ From political changes to academic debates on race and identity, chapter six shows the ways through which physical culture served as a crucial ally in disseminating the national project idealized by the Brazilian *Estado Novo*. By gathering elements of child rearing, physical education, and militarism, Getúlio Vargas’ dictatorship capitalized on the idea that the physical culture of bodies had a fundamental role in promoting the regime’s nationalist policy of a “new Brazil.”

Carvalho, *The Formation of Souls: Imagery of the Republic in Brazil*, trans. Clifford E. Landers (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2012).

⁷⁷³ See also Gilberto Freyre’s preface to Mário Filho’s *O negro no futebol brasileiro* (Rio de Janeiro: Irmãos Pongetti Editores, 1947); and Gilberto Freyre’s preface to the second edition of his *Ingleses no Brasil* (Rio de Janeiro: Topbooks, 3rd edition, 2001) 66.

CONCLUSION

On October 3, 1945, the Brazilian Estado Novo inaugurated the new building of the Ministry of Education and Public Health, on the anniversary of the 1930 Revolution. The event marked, in the words of Minister Gustavo Capanema, the plan of Getúlio Vargas “of raising the quality of the Brazilian people.”⁷⁷⁴ Employing the discourse of a new Brazil designed for the future, Vargas’ dictatorship was the quintessential exponent of nationalist imagery—developed during the course of the nineteenth century from different nuances and influences—designed to “prepare, constitute and enhance the people of Brazil.”⁷⁷⁵ Capanema declared that the Ministry represented “an era of fruitful achievements” in the formation of the “Brazilian race.” The Brazilian Estado Novo embodied, in fact, the future of Brazil through timeless and universal symbolic values. The healthy and hygienic bodies of infants would represent the young nation; the militarized man in a vigorous and robust body would represent the powerful, industrialized, and modern nation; the mother, with a strong and beautiful body, would represent her own motherland. Youth, mothers, citizen-soldiers, defenders of the country, were the exalted figures, ideally sculpted in their corporal integrity, scientifically, politically, and socially; people transformed into symbols that would lead the nation’s perfection.

This dissertation has shown the crucial role of physical culture in discourses about nationalism and nation building in Brazil in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. As I have argued, physical culture during this period refers to the policies and methodological practices aimed at achieving healthy, vigorous, hygienic bodies. This dissertation has revealed the wider processes, discourses, and institutions to which physical culture connected to shape future generations for the benefit of the nation. Physical culture had several social and political functions. It contributed to the discourses advocating the formation of a harmonious community; to the need for

⁷⁷⁴ Gustavo Capanema, *Discurso*, 3 October 1945. Fundação Getúlio Vargas, Arquivo Gustavo Capanema, GC f 1945.10.00, Série: f - Ministério da Educação e Saúde - Assuntos administrativos.

⁷⁷⁵ Gustavo Capanema, *Exposição de Motivos a Getúlio Vargas*, 14 June 1937. Fundação Getúlio Vargas, Arquivo Gustavo Capanema, GC f 1945.10.00, Série: f - Ministério da Educação e Saúde - Assuntos administrativos.

a socially integrated country; to political, moral, mental, and aesthetic education of individuals and their physical capabilities; to the accumulation, transmission and what was called the “rational utilization” of knowledge and the forging of national cultural bonds. For many advocates, physical culture in Brazil was as important as mental culture. It had important functions, not only for governmental policies but also for private measures taken to make people healthy, hygienic, ‘civilized,’ and ready to represent and defend their homeland.

Yet, through this examination, we also learn more about physical culture as an ideological construct for thinking and building the Brazilian nation, a system of ideas guiding individual and collective attitudes. The wide variety of discourses addressing physical culture played a decisive role in the historical formation of Brazilian national identity, as elites attempted to shape a modern Brazil in the image of Europe. This dissertation has stressed the significance that hygiene, and the care and enhancement of bodies had as a means of governance, as a *mentalité* that permeated different historical periods for more than a century.

By using a wide array of sources, such as medical journals, newspapers, records of educational institutions, laws and legislation, this dissertation also shows how intellectuals, politicians, bureaucrats, and policy makers sought to shape Brazilian bodies. They did this through assertive, aggressive propaganda, educational policies, and bodily interventions aiming to discipline, standardize, and improve citizens from the moment of conception to mature adults, and thereby to shape the nation. The main goal of this study is to examine the conditions in which, over a long period of Brazilian history, bodies were subjected to the regulations inflicted by the State as well as the values at stake in the control carried out on individuals (through their bodies and minds) from independence through abolition and the Old Republic.

From the late nineteenth to the early twentieth century, the expression “physical culture” frequently appeared in Brazil to promote the corporeal, moral, and intellectual formation of “civilized” citizens committed to their nation. Brazilian schools, military institutions, national and local laws, and discussions in newspapers are filled with this language and its proposals. In addition, the backers of a desired, but unattainable, “modern” nation

focused on what to teach, and how to enhance, disciple and control people's bodies. The proponents of physical culture wrote pamphlets and textbooks for young men and women, proposing hygienic and sanitary measures, physical education, military gymnastics, sports, and a whole spectrum of bodily practices as the path toward accomplishing their vision of national unity and order.

Over decades, Brazilian leaders ensured that ideas of physical education were widely taught and practiced through a “selective transport,”⁷⁷⁶ creating programs in the military, public health, and education among others. Followers of physical culture theories believed that external, environmental changes could cause transmutation, therefore improving future generations. Thus, the dedicated advocates of physical culture produced a hegemonic discourse—even though heterogeneous—that bodily care would influence not only the adherence of men and women to hygiene and physical exercises, but also their behavior in a more general context.

From diverse types of documents, we see that there were great hopes for physical culture and its ability to transform the Brazilian nation through the bodies of Brazilians. Disciplined education, bodily hygiene and exercises would sanitize society, forging people with the body and character strengths necessary to serve their country. The relationship between education, the military, and hygienists' ideas about physical culture principles converged among a wide variety of professionals all with a common interest in improving the Brazilian body politic. Families, schools, military institutions as well as private clubs endeavored to moralize the human body with the narrative of progress and nationalism.

This dissertation also highlights how historical actors—i.e. scientists, political leaders, and educators—did not simply import foreign ideas about physical culture and apply them to Brazil. On the contrary, they created, developed, and incorporated concepts and theories in a particular context and under distinct influences. They were not simply propagandists of knowledge, apostles of science. They were also the result of the circumstances of a certain, specific cultural environment that fostered a culture of the body in multiple formats. Physical culture

⁷⁷⁶ John Harley Warner (1985).

would be responsible for developing disciplinarian and moral values that would (re)shape the bodies of young Brazilian citizens. Brazilian leaders believed that the health and physical capacity of enhanced young generations could transform the country's once assumed "inferiority" to a "civilized" and modern Brazil.

The main argument of this dissertation is that physical culture served as a powerful means to build the nation by molding Brazilian bodies and played a key role across many decades in multiple nationalist discourses. By exploring the policies on this matter and ideas at the local, national, and transnational levels from the beginning of the nineteenth century through the first three decades of the twentieth—a critical period in Brazil's history—this work demonstrates the importance of physical culture in processes of nation building. It analyzes how nation-builders thought about the relationship between the body and the nation, and how they put their ideas into practice. Thus, physical culture, as used in this project, was central to an ideological process of thinking and building the Brazilian nation.

Physical culture was not simply a tool strictly expressed by bodybuilding and sports. These were, in fact, components of physical culture and not its entirety. Rather, it was a system of ideas guiding individual and collective attitudes of explanation and intervention. Physical culture played a decisive role as intellectuals and policy makers attempted to move Brazil from what they considered to be national inferiority to civilization in the model of Europe. This project stresses the significance of the hygiene, care, and enhancement of bodies as a means of governance. It was a *mentalité* that permeated different historical periods across decades.

By tracking the concern and care for shaping better bodies, through time and within institutions, and its role in the history of the Brazilian national identity, this work addresses three basic interrelated points. First, it lays out the various forms of intervention upon the body and the diverse official calls for the need to build better Brazilians from independence to the first decades of the twentieth century. Second, my analysis focuses on the many elite discourses linked to the physical education of the Brazilian people, from statesmen to medical practitioners and intellectuals. The dissertation investigates how the body served elite intentions to forge an ideal

nation and insert Brazil within the “civilizing process” of modern Western countries. Finally, this work aims to see beyond the common trend of the scholarship that understands physical culture as a tool strictly expressed by bodybuilding and sports. These are, in fact, components of physical culture and not its entirety. I believe this focus on physical culture, the body, and nation building will compel us to rethink previous arguments about nationalism and national identity in Brazil, and other nations.

My arguments, nevertheless, have some limitations. Most of the interpretations of national identity and of relations between Brazil and the world that this dissertation presents come from major cities on the Atlantic coast. When the sources discuss other regions or provinces, they are from intellectuals and scientists who work and live in central cities and institutions. This dissertation on physical culture and the Brazilian nation is one of the few that steps away from Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo to contemplate the subject before the Vargas’ era and in other regions. Although I have brought Bahia, Pará, and Pernambuco into a systematic analysis along with Rio and São Paulo, there is little to no discussions of the important provinces/states of Paraná, Rio Grande do Sul, Minas Gerais or Amazonas. There is still plenty of room for future studies that focus on physical culture in those regions.

Another notable limitation to this dissertation is that, while it incorporates medical studies, educational legislation and conferences, military programs, sporting events, it does not incorporate a deep study on the “degrading bodies” and the physical punishment within institutions as an obscene contradiction of those who championed for physical culture. This dissertation provides a rationale and framework for additional studies of physical culture in mental health hospitals, prisons, factories and rural institutions.

The diverse historical approaches to the body compel us to think about the importance of physical culture in the humanities. Although I have approached physical culture through a variety of angles--*puériculture*, physical education, bodily hygiene, military gymnastics, and modern sports—there are still much we still need to know about physical culture in Brazil. This dissertation analyzes the diffusion process of physical culture in Brazil during the nineteenth century and the first decades of its Republican system. This dynamic was connected to the

dissemination of an idea of a “civilizational process” initiated still during the process of Brazil’s independence. This work tracks early ideas of childbearing, the schooling system for the physical education of young girls and boys, passing through the militarization of the bodies, and the influence of scientific movements on sports, searching for the “improvement of the race.”

This work intends to contribute to the historiography by showing the roles played by physical culture on the debates to construct a Brazilian national identity. Moreover, it is also important to make clear that the concept of physical culture was not limited to a particular worldview. Understanding the dynamics of physical culture as a fundamental part of the debates on national identity reminds us of Fernand Braudel’s *longue durée*. In the case of Brazil, the need to create a “people” or “nation” determined, for more than one century, deep political attitudes and social behaviors towards the construction of the idea of a “Brazilian race.” As Georges Duby once said, these mental structures of a specific society change through time “in such a slow motion that escape us.”⁷⁷⁷ The bodies of children, men, and women are not only representative of a stage of human development or a biological or psychic condition. More than this, the body is a cultural definition, it is a product of culture, and therefore of pre-established values. Culture establishes an intimate relationship with the political, scientific, and moral values of a society that forges this culture, and culture creates systems of values in a constant dialectic.

Conversations around the body continue to push political, ethical, and cultural debates in historical studies. These discourses carry real consequences for real bodies, in both the public and private spheres, and are precisely the issues that I wanted to explore with this study. Thinking about the human body has been a constant in modern Brazilian history, from contentious stances on the topic of migration, to questioning the responsibility of those in positions of power to those subjugated, and even within international considerations of what it means to be “Brazilian.” Nevertheless, stories of physical culture and its diverse relations to the construction of Brazilian national identity are still very neglected. The position and invested value of the body remains central in cultural

⁷⁷⁷ George Duby, *Para uma historia das mentalidades* (Terramar: Lisboa, 1999), 41.

development, expression, and policing. To understand the means through which physical culture lies at the roots of a society's values, ideals, and identity is also my goal for further studies.

Bodies are a space of reference for families, students, military personnel, and sportspeople, among others, who recognize and identify themselves in the image of the other. People crave interpretations of corporeality and identity that are derived from their own bodies. The importance of understanding representations and corporeal identifications in the history of nations is because bodies are conceived of as part of a national territory, filling spaces, moving, but also being subject to the injunctions and influences of social values and political decisions. Even today, institutions (public or private) create meanings for actions and movements that reinforce the idea of corporeal beauty, health, rigidity, discipline, and mechanical movement, practices developed over long periods and materialized in what this dissertation has studied as physical culture.

There is in Brazil, historically, an intense mobilization around the body as a possible solution to the problems faced in the “national question”, using mythical rhetoric curiously much more focused on an intended future than on a common past.⁷⁷⁸ This phenomenon is a cyclical product of the historical construction of modern nations. It is important not only from the point of view of the history of human institutions (and their risks when taken to extremes) but also of their actuality. This culture of corporeality, constructed from scientific conceptions and extended throughout life, begins with intrauterine development and continues throughout the history of each individual. The body desired by the Brazilian state and now devised in private institutions, nationally and abroad, is a healthy, muscular body, not restricted or limited by financial conditions. White bodies are still considered the most desirable sign of beauty, hygiene, and health among Brazilian elites. Understanding the history of the body

⁷⁷⁸ The mythic rhetoric refers to the instrumental use of legends and stories related to the common past pretext of the group in question. This effort serves to create a timeless connection between the individual and the group, linking the individual inextricably to the other living beings of a national order. The ‘national question’ is an object of study with long antecedents. See Anderson, *Imagined Communities*; Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1790*; Smith, *National Identity in Comparative Perspective*; Geary, *O Mito das nações*.

in Brazil is also to speak of identity, the representation of the subject within the imagined community and its expression towards its alterity.

The body is not an immutable document. It reveals itself in its historicity, being the origin and the result of a long historical process of social elaboration. From this perspective, the practices of physical culture cannot be understood as simple and homogeneous realities, but as the intersection of the multiple social, political, and cultural elements. Under the tutelage of the State, the joint action of diverse historical actors took place in complementary directions, for the regularization and homogenization of behavior. In this complex universe of relations between the people and the State, intellectuals, military institutions, educators, doctors, and the press produced a long and ongoing conversation about the progressive and collective transformation of the Brazilian nation, and each and every Brazilian.

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