“Antônio Francisco Lisboa [O Aleijandinho]”

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Lincoln University has continued the tradition of educating students from Africa who return to their continent to assume leadership positions. Namibia’s first independence government cabinet had at least six Lincoln University graduates. This impressive record of Lincoln’s national and international alumni in various fields of human endeavor testifies to the value of a preparation solidly rooted in an education for freedom.

Since the 1960s Lincoln University has intensified its tradition of international involvement. In 1961 the U.S. State Department sponsored the African Languages and Area Studies Program at the university. From 1963 to 1971 the United States Peace Corps Training Program prepared volunteers on Lincoln University’s campus and sent them to Africa and the Caribbean. Sudarkasa, an internationally recognized anthropologist and the first African-American female to be appointed as Lincoln’s president, highlighted the international focus of Lincoln University. Under her leadership Lincoln established the Center for Public Policy and Diplomacy, the Center for the Study of Critical Languages, and the Center for the Comparative Study of the Humanities. These centers have become focal points for international studies at the university. Also, in addition to the European languages that are traditionally taught in colleges, Lincoln also teaches Chinese, Japanese, Russian, and Arabic languages.

Dr. Horace Mann Bond, a graduate of Lincoln University, was the institution’s first African-American president. He served from 1945 to 1957. Dr. Bond was succeeded by Dr. Marvin Wachman, who was white. After Dr. Wachman, the succeeding presidents—Dr. Herman Brandon (1970–1985), Dr. Sudarkasa (1987–1998), and Dr. Ivory V. Nelson (1999–)have been black. Lincoln University’s student population traditionally numbered about fourteen hundred, but by 2005 the number had risen to about two thousand. Students are recruited from various social, economic, and national backgrounds. The university has continued to expand the physical facilities on its 350 acres of land.

See also Bethune-Cookman College; Dillard University; Fisk University; Howard University; Morehouse College; Spelman College; Tuskegee University; Wilberforce University

Bibliography


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Lisboa, Antônio Francisco

C. 1738

November 18, 1814

Born in Vila Rica (now Ouro Prêto), Minas Gerais, Brazil, Antônio Francisco Lisboa, the illegitimate son of Manuel Francisco Lisboa, a Portuguese architect and master carpenter, and his African slave Isabel, was an architect, sculptor, and wood carver. Lisboa is considered the most notable artist of the colonial period in Brazil. His biography has often been mythologized in twentieth-century Brazilian history and used to solidify an artistic national heritage. Between 1796 and 1804, working primarily in wood and soapstone, the mulatto artist created an extraordinary number of baroque sculptures. Lisboa apprenticed in the workshops of his father, his uncle Antonio Francis- co Pombal, and the draftsman Joao Gomes Batista of the Lisbon Mint. All of these European artists resided in the prosperous Captaincy of Minas Gerais in the early eighteenth century, at the height of the Brazilian gold boom. Master Lisboa never left Brazil and, according to documentary sources, only made one trip to Rio de Janeiro to resolve a paternity suit. His relative isolation makes it all the more extraordinary that he adapted refined German and French rococo forms and styles in his sculptural and decorative works. His knowledge of European styles probably came from theoretical architectural treatises and ornamental engravings. Southern Germanic religious prints, particularly those by the Augsburg-based Klauber brothers, influenced Lisboa’s artistic oeuvre.

At a young age, Lisboa became one of the most respected artists of the Captancy, producing his first works in wood and stone at fourteen, and working until his death. His fame only increased with the onset of an undiagnosable disease (possibly leprosy, syphilis, or viral influenza) around the age of forty. In response to his condition, which led to the progressive deformation of his...
limbs, he was nicknamed O Aleijadinho ("the little cripple"). The disease caused him intense suffering, although he was able to keep the use of his thumbs and index fingers, essential for the more precise movements of sculpting. Nonetheless, Lisboa had an extremely prolific career and produced the majority of his documented work after the onset of the disease.

The vast majority of Lisboa’s architectural and sculptural works are located in the Minas Gerais cities of Ouro Preto, São João del Rei, Sabará, and Congonhas do Campo. Many of his statues are now in Brazilian museums (São Paulo, Museu de Arte Sacra; Ouro Preto, Museu de Inconfidência) and religious centers, as well as in private collections.

Lisboa received most of his commissions in the 1770s, immediately before the onset of his disease. His first large-scale work in soapstone was for the portal of the Church of Carmo of Sabará in 1770. In the 1780s he completed the internal ornamentation for the church. The Church of St. Francis of Assisi in Ouro Preto, another important commission, most thoroughly embodies Lisboa’s architectural and ornamental concepts. His highly original architectural design combines a Portuguese mannerist rectangular church with a curvilinear plan after Francesco Borromini. The prestige and success of this project led to many more architectural commissions.

Lisboa’s most important sculptural legacy lies in the pilgrimage church of Bom Jesus de Matazinhos, Congonhas do Campo. Aleijadinho and his assistants sculpted a total of sixty-six life-size figures of Christ’s Passion (1796–1799). These sculptures stand in six chapels forming the Via Sacra, or Way of the Cross, ending on a sacred hill. At the top of the hill lie twelve life-size soapstone sculptures of the Old Testament prophets (1800–1805). The ensemble of statues is emotionally evocative in the tradition of medieval religious drama, allowing worshipers to participate in the staging of sacred theater as they climb the stairway and view the sculptures from varying angles.

Called “the new Praxiteles” by his fellow artists, Lisboa died in Vila Rica at the age of seventy-six, having never accumulated great wealth or social prestige.

See also Painting and Sculpture
LITERACY EDUCATION

Literacy is a process by which one expands one’s knowledge of reading and writing in order to develop one’s thinking and learning for the purpose of understanding oneself and the world. This process is fundamental to achieving competence in every educational subject. Since literacy is a necessary foundation for educational achievement and it has not always been legal for black people to be literate in the Americas, an understanding of historical approaches to literacy education for black children can elucidate larger relationships between individuals, communities, and the world. In an effort to ensure children’s success and ability to be self-determined in a largely literate society, approaches to literacy education have included multilingual, multicultural, and multimedia resources.

The institution of slavery and subsequent racialization of Africans in America in isolated speech communities contributed to the development of what is now termed African American English (AAE). Many scholars have noted the effects of slavery on literacy education; they have also noted the effects that isolation had on language acquisition and development (Baugh, 1999; Morgan, 2002; Rickford and Rickford, 2000; Smithertman, 2000). Just as efforts were made to categorize enslaved Africans as inferior to European settlers, similar campaigns were also made to stigmatize the language of African Americans. The outcome of these subjugation strategies contributes to negative language attitudes concerning AAE today. Negative language attitudes can be a barrier to literacy education because literacy draws upon the linguistic and cultural knowledge of language learners as they create and interpret texts. In response, various researchers have empirically countered trends to designate AAE (and the related inferences regarding the cognitive abilities of African Americans) as different and somehow deficient compared to a European-centered norm. Moreover, educators have combated such educational practices by incorporating culturally and linguistically relevant curricula.

Enslaved Africans developed strategies to acquire and maintain literacy. Despite legislation forbidding literacy, some enslaved Africans were nevertheless literate in various languages, such as Arabic, English, French, Spanish, and Portuguese. After Emancipation and the passing of amendments that secured citizenship rights, examples of literacy education in schools began to emerge. Efforts such as the use of spirituals and other cultural materials to facilitate multiple literacies of black youth are evident throughout the era of segregation (Yasin, 1999). As integration policies began to be enforced, the number of black schoolteachers declined, as did linguistically and culturally relevant literacy education. During the 1970s, with civil rights legislation and the advent of the Black Power movement, there were increased efforts to include alienated African-American learners from language study. Civil rights legislation, Title VI in particular, protected students against discrimination and also served as the basis for cases (e.g., Lau v. Nichols) that protected the rights of other language minorities in the United States. Ensuring equitable education for African-American children did not end with legal and policy changes. The Black Power movement revolutionized societal values and perspectives regarding African culture, language, and history. Such attitude shifts were reflected in curricula that were intended to support African-American youth. Theories of how to best make curricula culturally and linguistically relevant flourished.

SESD Approaches to Literacy

One of the most noted programmatic changes in literacy education resulted in readers for Standard English as a Second Dialect (SESD). These programs approached the literacy of African-American children much like English as a Second Language (ESL) programs approach nonnative English speakers: They introduced standard English (SE) grammatical structures while attempting to respect students’ home dialects/languages. SESD programs were launched in urban areas around the United States, such as Los Angeles, Chicago, Washington, D.C., and Detroit, as well as in rural areas where large numbers of African-American children were schooled (e.g., north and central Florida). Similar programs were initiated in urban areas throughout the Caribbean as well. According to Marcy-liena Morgan, in Chicago and Florida, for example, the curriculum of SESD programs included (a) culturally relevant material such as “dialect stories and folk tales . . . ,” (b) grammatical exercises that reviewed AAE exclusively, (c) grammatical exercises that tested General English (GE) exclusively, and (d) contrastive exercises that included both forms” (Morgan, 2002, p. 141). Morgan criticizes SESD programs for not adequately informing students’ parents about the functions of dialect readers and how