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Bounded Identities: Women and Religion in Colonial Brazil, 1550–1750

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This article examines the creation of women's gender identity in the religious discourse of colonial Brazil and documents the creation of two separate norms—one for elite women and another for slave, lower-class, and mixed-race women. The Roman Catholic Church, closely linked with the Portuguese monarchic state and its colonial ambitions, transmitted both norms in religious guidebooks, missionary letters and sermons. This summary centers on the defining role for women in marriage, and indicates that the epoch of colonial Brazil is particularly important for feminist study. With the increasingly disparate perspectives on women from Late Antiquity, the Humanists, and Counter-Reformation theologians, this early modern era saw conflicted discourse concerning traditional gender roles.

This study emerges from my investigations of the construction of women's identity in the religious discourse of colonial Brazil. Roman Catholic mission plans, penitential handbooks, sermons on virtue and statements of women to the visiting Portuguese Inquisition reveal that the roles for women in the colony were complex and women's identity during this period in Brazilian history was not shaped by a single model for gender role. This is particularly true when the subject is marriage—and that will be my focus here. Although the social norms of early modern Portuguese society in Brazil, under study here, repeatedly affirmed a central role for women so significant that its abrogation would surely bring social chaos, religious writers could not agree on its specific content. While the religious authorities agreed that women were distinctly different from men and saw marriage as the consummate purpose for women's existence, the emphases of their writings were not unified; the most striking differences appear when concern for maintenance of the class structure of society interrupts the religious discourse. Inevitably, it seems, the religious discourse that constructed gender in letters, sermons, laws and practices in this period in Brazilian history was not characterised by a single vision of wedded bliss to which all aspired (though few achieved), and women's identity was not shaped by a single model for gender roles. Instead, the religious discourse supported *two* dichotomies—between men and women, and between elite women and non-elite women.

This essay examines the discourse on marriage in order to discern the expectations for women and the feminine attitudes and behaviors deemed appropriate by religious writers in the first two colonial centuries. My discussion begins with a brief summary of the idealized elite role for women and statements from the writings of two religious authors supporting the elite ideal. The essay will continue with examples of women's responses to the expected roles and conclude with a summary of the contrasting gender role for non-elite women.

The ideal created for elite white women in colonial Brazil directed them to marriage, deemed natural for all and required for the elite.¹ Virginity before marriage was essential for political and family interests and the assurance of an untainted lineage; any sexual activity before marriage, even if she bore no child from it, excluded a noble girl from the best marriage prospects. Public rumors about her were perhaps even worse than her actions; she was expected to be invisible to public scrutiny, and guarded seclusion was recommended to fathers in order to prevent any damage to her reputation. Preservation of her honor, that is, the reputation of virginity, might be deemed a girl's only noteworthy accomplishment. Other virtues included beauty, nobility, wealth and youth—all intrinsic values; other inculcated attributes reinforced her self-effacement: discretion, shyness, modesty and prudence. Education in colonial Brazil was nominal for elite girls; she might learn to

‘read, write, count, sew and embroider’,² to aid in her oversight of a household. A girl’s most important instruction was in simple prayer and basic Catholic doctrines; knowing her religious duties was essential not only for her own salvation but also for her guidance of future children.³

The parents of the girl contracted her marriage, arranging her dowry or marriage settlement as they selected for her a white, well-placed husband. An economic and social relationship rather than affective bond, marriage was too important to be left to a girl’s untrustworthy emotions. Girls might be married as young as twelve or thirteen, but fourteen was an appropriately mature age for marriage. Roman Catholic Church Council decrees emphasised the creation of a holy bond between the spouses, and required the bride’s consent for marriage; before the priestly blessing, however, announcements of the upcoming wedding were posted to preclude incest or bigamy.

An elite married woman contributed only within the domestic sphere; her confinement within the house guaranteed not only her own fidelity but also the family honor. Besides perpetuating the patriarchal lineage and maintaining her honor, she kept the house in order and arranged meals and clothing for her husband, servants, slaves and later, children—her own and those of the extended household. Friendship between husband and wife was possible, but husbands were advised not to love their wives too much. Friendships with religious women or servants endangered her loyalty, and superficial attachments with peers were preferable. Docile and tractable, a virtuous wife was obedient to God and her husband, quiet, chaste and frugal; she might also cultivate personal charm, grace and some little artistic achievement. Without the strict guidance of a husband, however, women were more likely to be wild, garrulous, vain and profligate, especially in the purchase of cosmetics and clothing. Religious devotions enriched her spiritual life, and she might attend the ceremonies and festivals of local religious brotherhoods.

While a woman might be equal in religious achievement to her husband, the dangers to her virtue were grave. Adultery ‘constituted an violation of the marital contract’, a ‘“theft” of honor’.⁴ Law and tradition allowed her husband to kill her and her lover on suspicion of such betrayal. If her husband traveled, she stayed at a religious house—formally or informally constituted—to ensure her chastity. Her silent tolerance was presumed, however, for her husband’s adultery and concubinage; she might even be expected to raise his children from such relationships. In her natural destiny as a mother, then, the *dona da casa* (‘lady of the house’) bore strong sons and few daughters, instructing them and all household dependents in religious doctrine and practice. Her care for her children should include breast-feeding, in order to transmit the stability and virtues of her lineage, as well as the oversight of their upbringing and, of course, strict protection for the girls.

Not surprisingly, this ideal for Brazilian elite women expounded by secular writers of the era was embraced by religious writers as well. During the late medieval and early modern periods in Portugal, the Roman Catholic Church collaborated with the imperial and colonial governments, supporting public policies and receiving, in return, considerable power in political, economic and legal spheres. This particular norm coincided with the Church’s own interests in describing the human condition, and may be found repeated and justified in the writings of two noted religious authors from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, Martín de Azpilcueta Navarro and António Vieira.

Martín de Azpilcueta Navarro (1492[?]-1586) was a scholar at the University of Coimbra and educator of the first Jesuit missionaries to Brazil, including his nephew João Azpilcueta and the more renowned António da Nóbrega.⁵ His confession guide, *Manual de confessoras y Penitentes*, was among the first reflecting the doctrines that would be promulgated by Tridentine decrees.⁶ In it, he bound women’s lives to the preservation of chastity, but his concern for the primacy of religious conformity enforced women’s submission to the sacrament of marriage. His confession guide, with its detailed lists of sins corresponding to the Biblical

commandments and canonical laws, offers a necessarily dichotomized view of women. On the one hand Catholic doctrine insisted on individual autonomy and even women—possessed of free will and a conscience—must be capable of independent agency. On the other hand it persistently infantilized women by relegating them to the dominion of their fathers and husbands. This can be seen in the section on the fourth commandment (to honor one's parents), which begins by emphasizing filial obedience. Once established in her marriage—a woman's proper place—her husband assumes responsibility for her behavior and her duty to obedience centers on him. Under the same commandment appear guidelines for the married relationship, with warnings that a woman sins grievously when she 'disobeys her husband notably', 'does not want what he wants', 'provokes him,' or 'despises to be subject to him'.⁷ His authority is needed, Navarro explains, to 'command that she abandon her superfluous vanities and dishonest habits'.⁸ If they cannot be thwarted, her vanity and even her pleasing attractiveness are only venial sins. Still, Catholic authority limits a husband's power over his wife—especially when it interferes with her religious practice or might lead her into sin. Thus, he could not prevent her from attending church or complying with commandments or canonical law or beat her 'excessively and cruelly', and she might disobey him if 'he wishes to be a vagabond'.⁹

Discussion of the marital relationship continues, as might be expected, under the sixth commandment (against adultery). Most warnings in that section are directed to men, preserving many traditional protections for women.¹⁰ Discussions of the occasions for men to sin, however, range far beyond these two commandments, while women's lives—at least in this document—have no other sphere but marriage.

My second source, António Vieira (1608–97), was a controversial Jesuit missionary and author. Renowned as 'the greatest Portuguese and Brazilian preacher of the seventeenth century',¹¹ he gave his influential sermons in the royal chapel in Lisbon and the bishopric cathedral in Bahia. His writings also reveal the deep contradictions between the Catholic—nearly humanistic—doctrine of autonomy and the unrelenting struggle to exercise control over women. His statements on the place and value of women swing between exhortations on the centrality of religious commitment for the Christian soul and demands that women renounce their unfeminine independence; his actions as missionary supported the conversion of individual women—especially to the imperial civilization he introduced.

His classically baroque sermons, especially the series on the Rosary, focus on proper piety; in them he calls women to religious devotion, but repeatedly castigates them as foolish, vulgar and prone to evil. His arguments reveal that virtue and vice in women are solely determined by their submission to marriage and to a husband's authority. In the 'Sermão Sétimo do Rosário', he contends that the women listed in Jesus' genealogy are notable only for their sexual infidelity. That sin, while found among men, is characteristic of women, and in women it is 'more offensive [and] more dangerous and pernicious'. Since their sole duty is to keep chaste before and in marriage, that single sin undoes the very nature of women, and 'encompasses all sins' they might commit.¹²

Even in the convent, a woman could escape neither her marital duty nor Vieira's criticism. In a sermon preached at the Convent of St Bernard, he reminded the nuns that they were 'wed to the Son of God' and so should forswear their natural inclination as 'daughters of Eve' to vanity. Those who admire themselves in mirrors are 'worse than idolators' since they have not only abandoned their religion but also their true spouse, and have put their own image before his.¹³ Such a warning, cloaked in religious terms, might also serve for all women: their husbands must come first. And when Vieira considers the theme of spiritual blindness in another sermon, he turns his admonitions to men, advising each to end his wife's vanity and commence his daughters' seclusion from the public sphere.¹⁴

In the ‘Sermão Décimo Sétimo do Rosário’ he returns to this second theme, insisting that women ‘must pray at home, and never outside of it’.¹⁵ His biblical exegesis leads to the remarkable assertion that Eve encountered the beguiling snake outside the walls of Paradise, and had passed to her daughters an inclination to leave their own proper enclosures. The proper isolation of women would make them invisible to the public and their existence null, following God’s plan:

The Author of nature did not wish that woman be counted among the movables (i.e., the furniture). An edifice does not move from the place that it is put; and so should a woman be such a great friend of her house as if the woman and the house are the same thing.¹⁶

He argues that women’s failure has again become a sin against fidelity in marriage, shifting the theme to focus on the single role that women may inhabit, that of submissive wife. Any activity beyond the domestic bounds—even attendance at religious devotions—is infidelity, for he contends that women feign religious piety as a pretext to go out to meet friends: it ‘seems to be devotion but it is . . . licentiousness’.¹⁷ Several years later in Lisbon, however, in the ‘Sermão Vigésimo Segundo do Rosário’, Vieira laments the privatization of religion among elite women who preferred the Latin offices said at home over the vernacular rosary and had left church attendance to ‘common women’:

Of old the greatest splendor in the churches . . . were the Portuguese ladies, when they came to worship God with their faces covered. They used to confess in the church, take communion in the church and hear the mass and sermon in the church. But what was once only permitted for extreme infirmity today is conceded for extreme vanity: the confessor must go to their houses [to] hear confessions there, say mass there, give communion there. You see whether it is more disrespectful for them to want God to go to their houses, or that they go to find Him. If the church (itself) could go there, they would have to wait till it does; but because the church cannot, they want the sacraments to go.¹⁸

These apparent contradictions in specific advice—stay home and pray but leave home to pray—may be reconciled if we recall that Vieira was not offering a detailed set of rules for women’s lives, but was elaborating a single principle for the female gender. His repeated theme through all these writings was, again, the control of women through marital submission. This is presented clearly in the material above, even in the two contradictory passages: fidelity, whether to father, husband, God the Father or Padre Vieira, was the solitary virtue to which women must be dedicated.

Both religious writers directed their varied discussions to emphasize the need for control over women. For them, the proper woman was isolated within her marriage and household, and her activities, thoughts and sense of herself found their essential beginnings in her marital status; otherwise she defied God and man alike. Vieira found in women’s essential nature a tendency to disturbance, chaos and sin owing to their inheritance from the sinful Eve. In so doing, he made their sin almost inevitable, their guilt undeniable and the need for religious control imperative. Navarro’s text assigned sinfulness and guilt to men and women equally, but, as surely as Vieira, identified true womanhood with the role of the dutiful religious wife.

While we cannot know the responses of women to these authors, the records of the visiting Tribunal of the Portuguese Inquisition preserved statements of contemporary women’s attitudes toward marriage. In Bahia in 1591, for example, Paula de Siqueira confessed to problems in her marriage. Siqueira had sought out a local woman who claimed to have had two husbands, both loving and ‘tamed’ by her powers, and from her learned

magical words that would make a husband love his wife. Siqueira admitted that the magic had not improved her husband, and the Inquisitor ruled that she should be given 'spiritual penances' to mend her ways.¹⁹ That same year, Antonia de Bairos, an elite woman in her seventies, told the Inquisitor that she had been exiled from Portugal for adultery on the testimony of her husband, and had subsequently entered a false marriage with a boat owner and fisherman in the colony. They had arranged false witnesses to swear to her first husband's death and were married with the license of the episcopal official. Having lived with the second husband for fifteen years, she fled the house fearful of 'the wounds and blows' that he dealt her, sought refuge in her local church, and confessed all to the pastor.²⁰ These two women, both of the elite classes, struggled with their husbands in conditions far from the idealized marriage of the era. Both had, however, clung to the possibility of amelioration for their inescapable condition. A different view comes from Pernambuco in 1594, when the wife of carpenter offered evidence that her married life exceeded expectations and that her satisfaction led her into sin. Breatriz Martins confessed that she had committed heresy: she had asserted to friends visiting in her yard that the married state, 'made and ordained by God', was religiously superior to the orders of monks and nuns begun by mere humans. She explained further that she had learned this as a girl from a childhood instructor who had also taught her the wifely skills of cooking and washing.²¹

These three episodes reveal the continuing influence of the ideal directed to the elite European-descended women amidst the changing economic conditions of the colony and indicate that the social norms of Portugal might be subverted in Brazil. Still, as Brazil grew prosperous from its sugar cane industry and colonization expanded, the need for a regulated society was repeatedly articulated as a need for white women bound within the institution of marriage.²² It is, in fact, this ideal that we find repeated by Brazilian historians through the early twentieth century and by English visitors to colonial and imperial Brazil as well. In their various accounts, the ideal is made real by addition of specific examples from the elite classes, and is often presented as the sole model for Brazilian womanhood. I would suggest, however, that the continuation of this ideal-turned-historical-fact served the purposes of historians and outsiders who wished to emphasize the (past) degeneracy of a society whose dominance was waning. The inclusion of evidence from the lives of slave, lower-class and mixed-race women changes the portrait that has been thus created and reveals the dichotomy I noted.

When we turn to consider women outside the elite group, we find little prose directed to Brazilindian, Africans and mixed-race women or to the Portuguese women of the lower classes in Brazil—no confession books offered advice on slave marriages, no sermons addressed the struggles of abandoned mothers. The ideals for elite white women certainly extended to them, such that they and the dominant class might use the preferred standard to enjoin cooperation or castigate failures. Still, within the colonial records there can be found expectations for a significantly divergent role, a role constructed by tradition, religion and law.

Girls outside of the elite group prepared themselves for marriage and for a working life. Virginity before marriage was valued among lower-strata white and mixed-race women, and was especially promoted by the missionaries among the converted Brazilindians: the Jesuit José de Anchieta reported with pride in 1554 that a recent Indian convert and his (unnamed) wife 'have taken care to keep their daughters virgins'.²³ Virginity was not, however, expected of most Brazilindian or African women; slave women were usually perceived as licentious and corrupting, and, when unsupervised or freed, tending toward prostitution. Among the lower classes, education might better be understood as training in domestic service. Rarely literate, a girl would instead be taught to spin, sew, cook and complete other household production tasks. Missionaries separated Brazilindian girls from boys for doctrinal instruction, thus depriving the former of the additional education in

reading and writing provided to the latter; plans were made but never realized for 'virtuous women' to teach girls to sew and spin, so that they might marry converted youths.²⁴

Following the emphatic decrees of the Council of Trent, marriage under a priest's blessing was preferred for aspirants to higher position in society, but was rarer among the lower classes. Women who had some white parentage, especially those whose parents had married, expected marriage with artisans, merchants, sailors and even small landholders. Marriage for slave women, whether native or African, was nearly impossible. Native Brazilindians were barred from marriage, often by the very missionaries who condemned their 'loose morals' and early colonists routinely disregarded the 'natural' marriages of native Brazilians when separating families in order to enslave the adults. Vieira himself denounced the practice of separating Brazilindian wives from their families to serve colonists, but later endorsed domestic service and slavery for Indian women, in tasks as wet-nurse, table-server, or maid for 'some poor [white] woman' who had no other servant. He stipulated that these 'exceptional cases' were only appropriate for older 'unattached' women, and that harvest work could be undertaken by some Indian women 'with their husbands'; otherwise, he warned, their salvation might be compromised.²⁵ African women, who made up fewer than forty percent of the slave population, had few opportunities to marry. Slaveholders preferred to prevent permanent relationships, especially those condoned by the church, so that they might sell individual slaves without legal or ecclesiastical reprisals. Colonial law inhibited marriages with its stipulation that free men took on the bondage of their wives. Furthermore, the Catholic Church itself made marriage more difficult for the lower-strata women, requiring publication of banns in the couple's home towns—a nearly insuperable obstacle for African slaves—and fees for performing the ceremony.²⁶

Rather than marriage, mixed-race women and native Brazilian women faced long- or short-term consensual unions, such as concubinage or cohabitation with single men (including priests), and clandestine or coercive sexual relationships with married men. The sexual exploitation of native Brazilian women was encouraged in several ways by the colonial system. For example, marriage could only be contracted if a woman were baptized, active in the church and understood Christian doctrine. White men of the upper strata forced enslaved women into concubinage, while poorer men, especially those who traveled frequently or had left wives in Portugal, might live 'as if married' with freed or biracial women apparently unhampered by resident priests and local church mandates.²⁷ Support for consensual rather than sacramental unions may be seen in the heretical claim repeated in Inquisition confessions that a man's sexual relations with an unmarried woman, especially an enslaved African or Brazilindian woman, was not a mortal sin.²⁸

Women of the lower strata brought little property to a marriage, although the Brotherhood of the Misericórdia in Bahia set aside a small fund for the daughters of freed black women and 'unknown' fathers.²⁹ Once married, only the women of the sugar cane farming families might remain cloistered within the home; considered to be or aspiring to higher status, they avoided acquaintance with other women and men. Most poorer women prepared for an independent existence as innkeepers, bakers, 'shopkeepers, vendors, peddlers . . . seamstresses or laundresses'.³⁰ Since the norms of the Brazilian slave society tied the upbringing of children to their mothers, these women might also expect to be single parents and heads of households; in the 1789 census of São Paulo, forty-six percent of the households were reported to be headed by women.³¹ Their burden was increased by prevailing suspicions that fostered such Inquisition charges as witchcraft against a 'woman who has no husband' or homosexual sins against 'a single woman with children'.³²

Religious devotions and church activities were deemed the province of women, even among the poorer women. Praised for their dedication to the Church, they might also find some solace there. Indeed, a sizable proportion of confessions and denunciations made by women to the Inquisition of the era was brought by those

of the lower strata, and their statements suggest that they overcame the fear that that institution might provoke to call for justice for wrongs done by neighbors and husbands. Women of African descent found a unique welcome in the lay religious brotherhoods such as Our Lady of the Rosary in Salvador and Our Lady of Mercies in Minas Gerais. The Rosary brotherhood, usually established for enslaved men, admitted all blacks ‘regardless of social position and sex, both free and slave’. Single as well as married women might be members, and several leadership positions were reserved for married women. In addition, ‘[f]emale members of the brotherhood played a vital and essential role in providing social services for brothers and their families stricken by sickness or poverty’.³³

As can be seen, the expectations present in the gender role for women of the lower classes were not the same as those for elite women, but, I would contend, they still formed part of the same discourse expressing the concerns of the Luso-Brazilian governing classes. The elite ideal served to maintain the illusion of a unified society while dichotomizing the ranks of women. At the same time, the barriers to marriage for poorer, biracial and enslaved women not only guaranteed the normative power held by the elites but also supported the priests’ claim that such a depraved people required proper religious control. The reserve of unmarried and sexually available women was assured for the male-dominated colonizing enterprise that the Portuguese political and religious authorities planned.

The extent of the efforts to manipulate the gender role for women of the lower strata indicates, I argue, the growing power that the non-white, non-elite Brazilians were gaining in the colonial society. The repeated calls for control over women were in fact calls for renewed control in society articulated by those most observant of what they felt to be the dangers in the social reorganization of the colony. While contemporary political authority borrowed the language of politics and government to discuss the roles of women, religious authors extolled the virtues of hierarchical religious dominion for the control of colonial society and personal life. Their insistence on sharp dichotomies between the sexes and complicity in the maintenance of class differences reinforced the dichotomous discourse that supported the power of the Portuguese crown over its colonists and the authority of the missionaries over Indian lives. The growing influence of humanism and the living examples of exceptional women (such as the queens of England and Spain) heightened the pressures that these writers might have felt and threatened the traditional concepts of authority in the government and church. Their responses, not surprisingly, were to re-establish economic and religious control by re-establishing their power—especially in power over women.

Notes

¹ The sources consulted for this overview were Asunción Lavrin, ‘Introduction: The Scenario, the Actors, and the Issues’, in Asunción Lavrin (ed.), *Sexuality and Marriage in Colonial Latin America*, Lincoln, University of Nebraska Press 1989, pp. 1–43; Maria Beatriz Nizza da Silva, *Sistema de casamento no Brasil colonial*, Estudos brasileiros, vol 6, São Paulo, Editora da Universidade de São Paulo 1984; A. J. R. Russell-Wood, ‘Women and Society in Colonial Brazil’, *Journal of Latin American Studies* 9 (1977), pp. 1–34; Anna Maria Moog Rodrigues (ed.), *Moralistas do século XVIII*, Rio de Janeiro, Editora Documentário 1979; and Madre Maria Angela [Leda Maria Pereira Rodrigues], *A Instrução feminina em São Paulo, subsídios para sua história até a proclamação da República*, São Paulo, Faculdade de Filosofia ‘Sedes Sapientiae’ 1962.

² José Joaquim da Cunha de Azeredo Coutinho, *Estatutos do Recolhimento de Nossa Senhora da Glória do lugar da Boa Vista de Pernambuco*, Lisbon, Typographia da Academia Real das Ciências 1798, p. 86, quoted in Maria Beatriz Nizza da Silva, *Cultura no Brasil colônia*, Petrópolis, Editora

Vozes 1981, pp. 74–6.

³ The last years of the colonial period saw considerable changes: the statutes for a school for poor white girls declared that ‘women need education equally’ with men, since they are the partners of their husbands and ‘First Teachers’ of their children. Girls enrolled there needed to know how to ‘read, write, count, sew, embroider, etc.’, before their novel studies in morality, clothing construction, ‘Grammar and Orthography’, and the history of Portugal. ‘Estatutos do Collegio de Educação de Meninas, denominado de ‘Nossa Senhora dos Humildes’ fundado . . . na Capitania da Cidade da Bahia no anno de 1813’, Rio de Janeiro, Biblioteca Nacional, Seção de Manuscritos.

⁴ Angela Mendes de Almeida, *O Gosto do pecado: casamento e sexualidade nos manuais de confessores dos séculos XVI e XVII*, Rio de Janeiro, Rocco 1992, pp. 96–7.

⁵ Nóbrega received his baccalaureate from Navarro and corresponded with him from Brazil; the opinions of the senior Azpilcueta influenced Jesuit policies on catechizing Brazilindians. See Serafim Leite (ed), *Cartas dos primeiros jesuítas do Brasil*, São Paulo, Comissão do IV Centenário da Cidade de São Paulo 1956, I, pp. 132–45, 361.

⁶ Martin de Azpilcueta Navarro, *Manual de confessores y Penitentes, que contiene quase todas las dudas que en las confesiones suelen ocurrir de los peccados, absoluciones, restituciones, censuras, & irregularidades*,

Valladolid, Fernández de Cordova 1570. First printed in Latin in 1554, it was subsequently printed in 1560, in Portuguese in Coimbra by J. de Berreyra. It is supposed to have been based on Rodrigo do Porto’s 1549 *Manual de confessores*, which was—according to its extended title—‘approved . . . by Dr. Navarro’.

⁷ Ibid., p. 137.

⁸ Ibid., p. 138.

⁹ Ibid., pp. 137, 138, 173.

¹⁰ Ibid., pp. 158–73.

¹¹ Eduardo Hoornaert, *História da Igreja no Brasil*, 2 vols., *História Geral da Igreja na América Latina*, nos. 2 and 3, Petrópolis, Editora Vozes. 1977, I, p. 331.

¹² António Vieira, *Sermões*, Gonçalo Alves (ed.), 5 vols, Porto, Lello & Irmão, Editores 1959, IV, pp. 43–50.

¹³ From the ‘Sermão do Demónio Mudo, pregado no Convento de Odivelas, Religiosas do Patriarca S. Bernardo, no ano de 1661’, *ibid.*, I, pp. 328, 333.

¹⁴ ‘Sermão da Quinta Quarta-Feira da Quaresma, pregado na Misericórdia de Lisboa, no ano de 1669’, *ibid.*, II, p. 119.

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¹⁵ Ibid., p. 414.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid., p. 418.

¹⁸ Ibid., p. 153.

¹⁹ Heitor Furtado de Mendonça, *Primeira visitação do Santo Ofício às partes do Brasil: confissões da Bahia, 1591–1592*, Rio de Janeiro, F. Briguet, 1935, p. 50.

²⁰ Ibid., pp. 66–7.

²¹ She was admonished by the Inquisitor that she should not discuss ‘what she did not understand’ and was sent to repeat her confession at the Jesuit monastery for her penance. Heitor Furtado de Mendonça, *Primeira visitação do Santo Ofício às partes do Brasil: confissões de Pernambuco, 1594–1595*, José Antônio Gonsalves de Mello (ed.), Recife, Universidade Federal de Pernambuco 1970, p. 43.

²² Ilana Novinsky, in ‘Heresia, mulher e sexualidade: algumas notas sobre o Nordeste Brasileiro nos séculos XVI e XVII’, argues that the economic success of the colony also engaged the interest of the Portuguese Inquisition in establishing religious conformity and detecting hidden Jews. In Maria Cristina A. Bruschini and Fúlvia Rosenberg (eds), *Vivência: história, sexualidade e imagens femininas*, São Paulo, Livraria Brasiliense Editora, s.a. 1980, p. 229.

²³ From Letter Four, ‘Do José de Anchieta ao Ignacio de Loyola, September 1, 1544’, in Hélio Abranches Viotti (ed.), *Cartas do Pe. José de Anchieta: Correspondência ativa e passiva*, 2nd ed, São Paulo, Edições Loyola 1984, p. 63.

²⁴ Leite, *Cartas dos primeiros jesuítas*, III, pp. 37, 365, 514, 466.

²⁵ Serafim Leite, *História da Companhia de Jesus no Brasil*, 10 vols., Lisbon, Livraria Portugália 1938–1950, IV, p. 121, quoted in Hoornaert, *História da Igreja*, I, p. 375.

²⁶ Hoornaert, *História da Igreja*, vol 1, pp. 312–15; Donald Ramos, ‘Marriage and the Family in Colonial Vila Rica’, *Hispanic American Historical Review* 55: 2 (1975), pp. 209–21; and Stuart B. Schwartz, ‘A população escrava na Bahia’, in Iraci del Nero da Costa (ed.), *Brasil: história econômica e demográfica*, São Paulo, Instituto de Pesquisas Econômicas 1986, pp. 52–55.

²⁷ C. R. Boxer, *The Golden Age of Brazil: 1695–1750*, Berkeley, University of California Press 1962, pp. 17–21; Hoornaert, *História da Igreja*, I, pp. 316–17; Silva, *Cultura no Brasil colônia*, p. 16; and Leite, *Cartas dos primeiros jesuítas*, I, pp. 270, 438–39. Ecclesiastical and colonial powers forbade concubinage and cohabitation, usually blaming immoral women, but the repetition of condemnations suggests that few heeded the laws.

²⁸ This heretical statement about ‘simple fornication’ appears regularly among men’s confessions and denunciations in the Inquisition records of the late 1500s and early 1600s. Cf. Heitor Furtado de Mendonça, *Primeira visitação do Santo Ofício às partes do Brasil: denúncias da Bahia, 1591–1593*, São Paulo, Ed. Paulo Prado 1925, pp. 376, 498; Mendonça, *Confissões de Pernambuco*, pp. 48–9, 76–7; Heitor Furtado de Mendonça, ‘Denúncias de Pernambuco 1593–1595’, in Leonardo Dantas Silva (ed.), *Primeira visitação Santo Ofício às partes do Brasil: confissões e denúncias de Pernambuco 1593–1595*, São Paulo, n.p. 1929; facsimile ed., Recife, Fundação do Patrimônio Histórico e Artístico de Pernambuco 1984, pp. 73–4, 107–8, 114–5, 118; and Marcos Teixeira, ‘Segunda visitação do Santo Ofício às partes do Brasil: . . . confissões de Bahia, 1618–1620’, *Anais do Museu Paulista* 17 (1963), p. 407.

²⁹ A. J. R. Russell-Wood, *Fidalgos and Philanthropists: The Santa Casa da Misericórdia of Bahia, 1550–1755*, London, Macmillan 1968, pp. 192–3.

³⁰ Susan A. Soeiro, ‘The feminine orders in colonial Bahia, Brazil: economic, social and demographic implications, 1677–1800’, in Asunción Lavrin (ed.), *Latin American Women: Historical Perspectives*, Westport, Connecticut, Greenwood Press 1978, p. 187.

³¹ Mary Lucy M. del Priori, ‘O corpo feminino e o amor: um olhar (século XVIII, São Paulo)’, in Maria Angela d’Incao (ed.), *Amor e família no Brasil*, São Paulo, Contexto 1989, pp. 33–4.

³² Mendonça, *Denúncias de Pernambuco*, pp. 24, 39, 108–10.

³³ A. J. R. Russell-Wood, 'Black and Mulatto Brotherhoods in Colonial Brazil: A Study in Collective Behavior', *Hispanic American Historical Review* 54 (1974), pp. 580, 584.

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