

In This Issue

Historians have studied for years how racially subordinated subjects have been socially constituted, labeled, counted, and contained, as well as the activities and subjectivities of those subjects. The articles in this issue deal with this process, which began in the early colonial period, continued after independence, and was central to modernization programs sponsored by Latin American states in the early twentieth century.

The article by João José Reis and Hendrik Kraay studies some of the political conflicts surrounding the process of independence in the city of Salvador, Bahia. Traditionally portrayed as a peaceful process, particularly in comparison with the protracted struggles that led to the independence of Spanish America, the independence of Brazil was nevertheless fraught with conflicts over social and political rights. As elsewhere in Latin America, the coalitions for independence mobilized lower-class elements, including slaves and free people of color, who had their own critical perspectives on society. This popular mobilization did not disappear with independence, to the dismay of authorities. More troubling to local elites, however, was the fact that the struggles for independence produced armies that were significantly darker than those of the colonial period. This was the case of Bahia's Third Battalion, known as "Periquitos" (parakeets) because of the green trim on their uniforms. These soldiers rebelled in 1824, partly for internal military politics and partly as a reflection of liberal and regional opposition to centralist, monarchical authoritarianism. The rebellion, which was unsuccessful, showed the limits of a radical liberal project. It was quickly abandoned by a frightened leadership concerned with questions of order and with the "confidence and strength" that armed mulattoes and blacks had acquired in these conflicts.

Concerns about the strength of the black population in Brazil continued well into the twentieth century and are central to Mara Loveman's study of racial categories in late nineteenth-century and early twentieth-century censuses. The article documents how the *Directoria Geral de Estatística* (DGE), a state agency created in 1870 to collect and publish statistics about the size and composition of the Brazilian population, promoted and documented the

progress of the nation. Not surprisingly, this process was intimately connected to racial concerns. As any scholar of race in Latin America knows, by the early twentieth century the idea of progress had itself become racialized. What is surprising, however, is that DGE's increasingly racist prescriptions for the future of the nation coincided with the disappearance of racial categories in the censuses of 1900 and 1920. Indeed, the author argues that between 1872 and 1920 a significant shift took place in DGE's visions of nation and progress, a shift characterized by a gradual emphasis on race that did not exist before the abolition of slavery. To those interested in using censuses for the study of racial and other forms of social inequality, the article offers a very valuable lesson. A study of census categories that does not pay attention to the cultural and institutional conditions in which those categories are produced runs the risk of misunderstanding them.

Racial and ethnic labels, however, are not produced or used only by government officials and statisticians. Examining a collection of 381 wills from the notarial records of Lima and Trujillo (1580–1640), Karen Graubart analyzes how indigenous subjects probably invented and certainly used labels that allowed them to identify their social position and to differentiate themselves from the masses of destitute rural Indians. Changing social relations in urban colonial centers demanded a new vocabulary to describe new groups and identities. Among the vernacular categories she finds in use in early colonial Peru are those of *indio solarero* and *indio criollo*, two terms describing the new social positions of these subjects. The first referred to the ownership of urban property (*solares*), whereas the “criollos” were urban-born, Spanish-speaking city dwellers who sought to differentiate themselves from rural Indians. As Graubart asserts, the study of these terms reveals both changes in social structure and how colonial subjects perceived and rationalized those changes. In other words, a careful study of these vernaculars offers a path to studying the elusive question of the mentalities of these subjects.