

The Black Hand: Notes on the African Presence in the Visual Arts of Brazil and the Caribbean

Edward J. Sullivan

PROLOGUE: A TRI-CULTURAL ZEMI FROM HISPANIOLA

The Museo Nazionale Preistorico Etnografico Luigi Pigorini in Rome houses one of the most compelling and enigmatic objects of Caribbean art from the earliest years of the colonial era. The *Beaded Zemi* (fig. E-1), which scholars now believe was created on the island of Hispaniola (present-day Haiti and Dominican Republic) around 1515, has been exhibited recently as an example of the highest point reached by the artists of the Taíno nation.¹ The Taíno, whose origins may be traced to mainland South America, inhabited the Greater Antilles until their precipitous decline by the mid-sixteenth century due to the effects of their enslavement by the Spaniards and the ravages of European diseases. In addition to its significance within the history of the liminal period of American art that straddles indigenous hegemony and Iberian domination, this *zemi* (a figure embodying the spiritual forces of the Taíno pantheon) is also a powerful indicator of the early and profound presence of African material culture in the New World.

Although the sculpture is modest in size, its visual impact is commanding. This anthropomorphic figure is meant to be seen from both front and back. It is endowed with a human face on the “front” and a skeletal, demonlike visage on the reverse, probably referring to the good/evil duality in human nature, as well as the contradictory qualities of the natural and the spirit realms. The *zemi* is composed of a wooden armature encased by a crocheted cotton covering onto which Caribbean shells and a mosaic of beads have been applied. The beads, as well as the tiny mirrors that form part of the skeletal face on the reverse, are of European (most likely Venetian) origin, yet the patterns they form are reminiscent of those on some African textiles. The human face of the *zemi* was carved from the horn of an African rhinoceros.

Recent scholarship suggests that this figure was created in the second decade of the sixteenth century, after the Taíno had come into contact with West African slaves (and with European soldiers and settlers), who introduced the Taíno to their design patterns.² The use of rhinoceros ivory indicates that even at this early date after the initial American-European contact, African luxury items were imported to the Caribbean. This *zemi* serves as an authoritative

Detail of fig. E-8



FIG. E-1
Beaded Zemi, Dominican Republic, c. 1515.
Wood, cotton, shell, glass beads, and mirrors,
height 12½ inches (32.1 cm). Museo Nazionale
Preistorico Etnografico Luigi Pigorini, Rome

metaphor for the impact and integration of African materials in a New World context. It also marks the grandeur of the Taíno, an almost completely lost ancient civilization; as an adumbration of the cultural and spiritual significance of African forms in the shaping of American art; and as a virtual icon of the artistic miscegenation that lies at the heart of the material achievements of the colonial era.

THE BLACK HAND AND THE FLASH OF THE SPIRIT

The term “black hand” in the title of this essay serves both as a bibliographical reference and as a personal homage to Emanoel Araújo, an artist, art historian, critic, and museum professional whose work, in the form of documenting, explicating, and collecting art created by or depicting Afro-Brazilians from the colonial era to the present, has been critical in disseminating knowledge of one of the most significant aspects of the Brazilian aesthetic and historical experience.³ The numerous exhibitions organized by Araújo have all presented ambitious panoramas of the visual and performing arts created by, influenced by, and representing people of African heritage in Brazil.⁴ He has maintained a deep interest in the development in the colonial period of a vocabulary of images in Christian arts that bore the stamp of the *orixas* (spiritual forces) of Yoruba-based Candomblé, Umbanda, and other belief systems that migrated westward from Africa.⁵ These syncretistic images arose from the necessity among slaves of concealing the visual concomitants of their transatlantic beliefs. This was also true in the Caribbean and other areas of intense black settlement and religious presence. After the abolition of slavery, Afro-Brazilian arts became increasingly direct in their references to African origins, and thus, for example, contemporary altars overtly honor the Afro-Brazilian deities and spirits and are steeped in the cosmologies of African religions.

Araújo has also been an assiduous gatherer of Afro-Brazilian material, first for his personal collection, but always with the intention of creating a museum where the public could have permanent access to a significant body of work by and depicting black Brazilians. The Museu Afro-Brasil, with Araújo’s collection at its core, was formally established in 2004 in the Manoel de Nobrega Pavilion in Ibirapuera Park, site of São Paulo’s Bienal since the 1950s. The museum serves a highly important function in both highlighting the inextricably important black element within Brazilian visual arts and culture and serving as a constant reminder of the shameful circumstances in which Africans were brought to the country.

Araújo’s vision parallels that of Robert Farris Thompson, another key critical voice who has served as a source of constant inspiration for scholars of African-American art worldwide.⁶ Thompson received his doctorate at Yale in 1955 and has remained affiliated with the university ever since. He has written several of the most widely read studies of the diffusion of African visual culture within the Americas. His investigations encompass the colonial era and the beginnings of slavery, including its consequences for transatlantic material culture and its ramifications for modern and contemporary times. His 1983 book *Flash of the Spirit: African and Afro-American Art and Philosophy* is a broadly based investigation into the palpable and spiritual presence of Africa in the Americas.⁷ It is significant that many of Thompson’s most important academic achievements have been made in the realm of museum exhibitions and catalogues, as this has been a common phenomenon within the development of the history of the art of the Americas. Among his most outstanding accomplishments has been the 1993 exhibition and book *Face of the Gods: Art and Altars of the African Americas*, in which Thompson offered a precise analysis of the transcultural nature of these public and private vortices of worship.⁸ That same year, Thompson’s essay (accompanied by the photography of Phyllis Galembo) in the book *Divine Inspiration: From Benin to Bahia* provided a compelling source for anyone interested in the vital links between Africa and Brazil.⁹

The work of Araújo and Thompson has created entirely new ways of conceptualizing the interpenetrations of African modes of visualization into the context of New World experience.

Without the example of their scholarship the efforts of other researchers in this field would be inexorably impoverished.

AFRICA IN THE AMERICAS

The arts of the Americas during the long era of European domination, like those of any place or time, must be examined through the widest possible lens, taking into account the relevant geographical, social, political, and historical factors.¹⁰ Contemporary scholarship on colonial Latin American art has become richer and more nuanced with every generation of researchers. Beginning approximately in the last two decades of the twentieth century, scholars in this field became disillusioned with art historical analyses that relied solely on empirical evidence as it pertained to individual works of art or to the limited and often stereotyped notions of stylistic “development” and iconographical patterns. In the most innovative writing in the field, academics and museum professionals alike continued to peel away the many layers of heretofore unanalyzed information about the place of painting, sculpture, architecture, and graphic work within the fabric of colonial society in the Spanish- and Portuguese-speaking Americas. Many of the most important examples of visual culture from the Caribbean territories, the European colonies of New Spain and Peru, and the other provinces of the South American mainland do not fall into any conventional definitions of “high art.” Several of the key instances of artistic intervention that I discuss below might be described by some critics as “popular,” “folk,” or “anonymous” art. Yet these objects, which are sometimes utilitarian and at other times highly symbolic embodiments of spiritual power, often serve as the most potent barometers of cultural exchange and transformation.

The sections that follow will address, in the broadest possible terms, issues stemming from the complex question of African intervention within the panorama of colonial art. As in the case of the impact of Asian elements on the material and visual cultures of the Americas in the viceregal era (see Gauvin Alexander Bailey’s essay in this volume), the question of the African presence and its bearing on articles of New World manufacture has been analyzed with evolving sophistication and nuance by scholars in recent decades. It is an immensely important theme, one that lies at the backbone of many cultures in the Americas. In the case of Caribbean and Brazilian colonial cultures, art produced by Africans and those of African descent from the sixteenth through the nineteenth century, as well as forms of artistic production—including domestic objects but also “official” or ecclesiastical art—rooted in categories of utilitarian or aesthetic manufacture developed in Africa, comprise some of the quintessential components of the colonial visual experience. In this essay I will concentrate on these two cultural focal points. First, I will examine art objects in a variety of media that reflect the direct impact of African ways of seeing and employ materials that recall African modes of manufacture. Second, I will examine some depictions of Africans and people of African heritage within the representational arts of the Caribbean and Brazil, as well as some key art historical monuments of the colonial era created by Afro-Caribbean and Afro-Brazilian master painters, sculptors, and architects.

Before looking at any specific works of art, it is necessary to stress a point regarding nomenclature that is as fundamental as it is overlooked. In the United States and Europe, terms such as “Latin America,” “Asia,” or “Africa”—phrases of convenience to define large geographical areas—often turn into catch-all axioms to signal exotic “otherness” within the context of conversations about culture. In studying the older literature on the art of the Americas, for instance, one often comes across phrases such as “African influence” or “Asian” (or even “Oriental”) “inspiration” to define a vague set of characteristics associated with places outside the area under consideration. More recently, scholars have taken greater care to explicitly define such influences, pinpoint their sources of origin, and decode their meanings. There are, of course, many “Asias” and many “Africas,” just as the Americas are composed of a multiplicity of (often radically diverging) cultures.

In the case of Africa, much of the material culture that reached the Americas directly (as opposed to the indirect importation of African objects via Europe) came from the western part of the continent. Unlike Asian goods such as textiles, ceramics, lacquerware, and paintings (e.g., screen paintings known as *biombos*), which were imported as luxury arts, principally through the trade route of the Manila Galleon,¹¹ relatively few African items were imported as aesthetic objects per se. While knowledge of Asia, as well as concrete objects of Asian manufacture, came to the New World during the course of trade relations, from the mid-sixteenth to the late nineteenth century “Africa” had one principal connotation in the minds of the inhabitants of the Americas: it was the source of slave labor. The slave traffic between Africa and Brazil, for example, started in the early sixteenth century and did not end until 1851, and slavery itself was not outlawed until 1888.¹² What reached the New World directly from Africa in the early phases of the development of the slave system were mostly small and ephemeral objects of wood or metal, not “works of art” in the conventional sense. But more important, in many ways, than the items themselves were the memories of how they functioned, the materials from which they were made, and the practical or spiritual purpose they served. The transmutation and accommodation to new geographical and social circumstances undergone by material objects propelled them into new realms of existence. Yet, perhaps the most transcendent transatlantic migrations were not those of the objects themselves but rather what we could call spiritual essences or ethereal presences, which continue to travel within the constantly refigured diasporas that crisscross the Americas and, with the help of contemporary forms of communication, return to Africa in new forms.

The powerful presence of African spiritual beliefs in an American context—what Thompson calls the “flash of the spirit”—is manifested in a multitude of objects that refer to the *orishas* (*orixas* in Portuguese), or forces of spiritual power that were born within a West African context and took on new dimensions, names, and additional levels of personality when

coming into contact with the (sometimes nominally) Christian cultures of places such as Brazil or Cuba. Brazilian *oratórios* offer a case in point. These domestic shrines or private altars, fashioned from polychromed wood and imitating the architectural styles popular in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, usually contain images of Christ, the Holy Family, or the saints. Some of them are substantial in size, while others, especially those made for traveling and provided with doors that enclose the central image, are modest or even miniature. The Museu do Oratório in Ouro Preto, Minas Gerais, is the largest single repository of Afro-Brazilian *oratórios*. Comprising the Angela Gutierrez Collection, the museum houses outstanding examples of home altars that embody the dynamic religious *métissage* (hybridization) of West African and Catholic belief systems (fig. E-2).¹³ These Afro-Brazilian examples contain images of the saints (including the “black saints,” on which I will comment shortly), as well as additional items such as coins, jewelry, and charms, which may be understood both as objects of everyday or popular cultural use and as embodiments of the spiritual powers or specific talismans associated with the *orixas* of Candomblé and other Afro-Brazilian religions.

Oratórios played a vital role in domestic religiosity, serving as the focal point for familial devotions such as novenas (a nine-day period of prayer practiced by Catholics), or as miniature

FIG. E-2
Afro-Brazilian *oratório*, Minas Gerais, Brazil,
nineteenth century. Painted wood, 24¼ × 15¼ inches
(61.6 × 38.7 cm). Museu do Oratório, Ouro Preto,
Brazil





FIG. E-3
Ex-votos, Brazil, nineteenth century. Wood.
Vilma Eid Collection, São Paulo, Brazil

chapels within the recesses of the bedchamber. In the Afro-Brazilian examples, not only the specifically religious content of the diminutive altars, but also the form of the carved images included within them recall modes of African manufacture. While the overall format of the Gutierrez *oratório* may derive from Western categories of religious visual expression, the art of fashioning human and animal figures from wood was equally related to traditions imported to Brazil from West Africa. This is also evident in the widely popular carvings of saints (*santos*) and ex-voto images (called *milagres*, or “miracles”) that form an integral node of intersection between Christian imagery and African-based artistic practices.¹⁴ Many cultures throughout the world have fashioned objects that are imbued with spiritual power and carry with them specific meanings as offerings of thanks for favors received from deities. Brazilian votive sculptures have an especially visceral impact. Ex-voto images (a genre whose surviving examples are principally from the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries) play a significant part in any discussion of Afro-Brazilian imagery, and their importance for postcolonial spirituality continued to imbue them with emotional and visual vibrancy until recent times. Linked as much to the traditions of African carving as to Western (and, specifically, Mediterranean) sacred imagery, ex-voto images come in many forms, most often depicting human figures or parts of the body (fig. E-3),¹⁵ though ex-votos in the shape of animals or inanimate objects associated with rural life, such as farm implements, are by no means uncommon. All of these small sculptures were created as offerings for the cure of a person or animal or for other miracles attributed to the divine intervention of a saint. Many of these Brazilian *milagres* would be deposited in a “house of miracles,” a room devoted to them within a church. The spiritual power ascribed to these images parallels that of the fetish objects so critical to the sacred material culture of many African peoples. The links between these forms of religious commodity within the transatlantic dialogue occasioned by the institution of slavery are unavoidable facets of the circulation of objects in the colonial and post-colonial eras in the Americas.

Wood carving often provides a barometer of the inextricable melding of the African past with the American present in colonial forms of visual expression. While the Brazilian examples offer clear indications of the amalgam of transnational material cultures, others from the Caribbean are equally potent. In Puerto Rico, as in other parts of the Americas, the tradition of carving small wooden *santos* was one of the principal embodiments of popular spirituality in the colonial period (and later). The rich visual vocabulary and extensive iconographic repertory of these images have been discussed from a variety of points of view by numerous scholars, among them the critic Marta Traba.¹⁶ Traba analyzed *santos* from the perspective of their relationship to the Spanish metropolitan traditions of polychromed *tallado* (carving) that has its roots in the Middle Ages. Its manifestations in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries produced such universally recognized artists as Juan Martínez Montañés (1568–1649), Juan de Mesa (1583–1627), Luisa Roldán (1650–1704), and many others. The (often anonymous) Puerto Rican *santos* created by artists far removed from an academic tradition equally embody, as Traba argued, a rebellion against the canonical proportions and accepted European values of “beauty” or “quality” to exemplify a *sui generis* mode of creativity. As in the case of Brazilian ex-voto carvings, the Puerto Rican figures play a key role within the domestic spirituality of their creators and their owners. The saints are often considered essential components of the household and are integrated within the familial realm as protectors and guides of both devout and mundane activities. Throughout the years the *santos* acquire the physical marks of ownership, in that they are often repainted (sometimes in different colors from one generation to another) to signify the shifting nature of their owners’ aesthetic personalities. Puerto Rican *santos* perform—in both the literal and the figurative sense—a highly important role in their domestic settings. If an individual or family prays for the *santo* to come to their aid in a given situation and it does not, the figure is turned against the wall, *castigado* (punished) until the desired favor is granted. While the performative nature of these saint images has been analyzed



FIG. E-4
Virgin of Montserrat/Miracle of Hormigueros, Puerto Rico, nineteenth century. Painted wood. National Museum of American History, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C., Teodoro Vidal Collection



FIG. E-5
The Three Wise Men, Puerto Rico, nineteenth century. Painted wood. National Museum of American History, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C., Teodoro Vidal Collection

from a sociological point of view, it is equally significant for what it indicates about some of the fundamental roots underlying the meanings *santos* have acquired within Afro-Caribbean society. *Santos* may be linked to the many wood-carving conventions brought to the Americas during the era of slavery. I do not wish to deny their relationship with European sculpture, but I would suggest that a richer, more nuanced understanding of these quintessential contributions to the colonial art of the hemisphere emerges when we recognize some of the parallels they have with the physicality and even theatricality of many works of African art (masks, fetish objects), which may be inert in themselves but are viable as objects of power once they are utilized and placed (literally and/or figuratively) in motion.

Within the history of Puerto Rican *santos* there are several iconographies that have significant local associations and, in addition, underscore the important role of black culture within visual traditions of the island. Best known among these is the image of the Virgin of Montserrat (also called the Miracle of Hormigueros; fig. E-4). In 1599 a peasant named Gerardo González from the countryside near the village of Hormigueros (in southwest Puerto Rico) was menaced by an enraged bull. Afraid for his life, he prayed to the black Virgin of Montserrat, a medieval advocacy of Mary venerated at the famous shrine of the same name near Barcelona, and she appeared with the Christ Child. The bull suffered a broken leg before attacking González, who later founded a church in the Virgin's honor in Hormigueros. This black Virgin subsequently became the patroness of the island. A second extremely popular *santo* image is that of the Three Wise Men, the kings from Asia and Africa who visited the Christ Child at the place of his birth in Bethlehem (fig. E-5). The black Magus, Melchior, is much revered in Puerto Rico, a country that has special reverence for the Three Wise Men. According to folklorist and historian Teodoro Vidal, "no other country in Spanish America . . . has as many depictions of the Three Kings as the ones found [in Puerto Rico]."¹⁷

Blackness permeates the art historical experience in the colonial Americas, as it does the social fabric of the hemisphere, from the first instances of slavery's scourge to its final moments in the late nineteenth century. The terror of displacement made all the more poignant the presence of those material goods that managed to survive the Middle Passage. Much of the African-based visual culture of the Americas during the long colonial era (which, of course, did not end until 1898 with Spain's loss of her last two American colonies, Cuba and Puerto Rico) was born of pain itself. In public institutions in the Americas devoted to the history of slavery, such as the Kura Hulanda Museum in Willemstad, Curaçao, we may observe the material heritage of slavery in the form of shackles, manacles, yokes, and other implements of corporeal oppression and physical abuse. The horrendous circumstances in which an estimated 9 to 18 million Africans were transported to the New World, as seen in diagrams of slave ships such as that published in Thomas Clarkson's well-known anti-slavery treatise, could not be erased from the collective consciousness. Such physical torments often left indelible marks on the visual imagination, evident in the iconography of colonial art in the Americas.¹⁸

In a lithograph from 1834–39 Jean Baptiste Debret (1768–1848), who studied with the French neoclassical artist Jacques-Louis David (1748–1825) and was active in Brazil from 1816 to 1831, depicts the punishment for a runaway or recalcitrant slave (fig. E-6, top).¹⁹ Flogging at a public whipping post (*pelourinho*), often located in the center of town (as in the old Pelourinho district of Salvador da Bahia, perhaps the spiritual nexus of the unbreakable umbilical cord linking Africa and Brazil), was one of several common forms of castigation for slaves who had attempted to escape or had performed some other misdeed.²⁰ (Another, equally humiliating method of punishment is seen on the same page [see fig. E-6, bottom], in which Debret depicts several slaves with their legs locked in wooden stocks languishing in a jail cell.) It is not surprising, therefore, that the extended and bloody episode from the

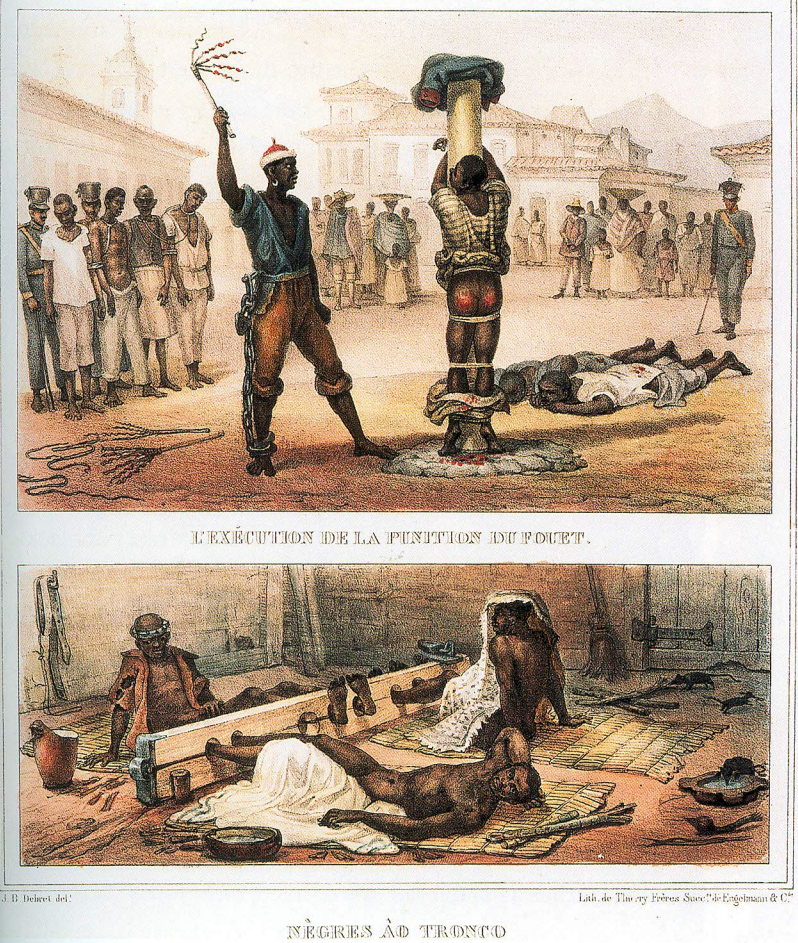


FIG. E-6
Jean Baptiste Debret (French, 1768–1848),
L'exécution de la punition du fouet; Nègres à [au] tronco (Slave being whipped; Negroes in stocks)
from *Voyage pittoresque et historique au Brésil* (Paris: Fermin Didot Frères, 1834–39), pt. 2, plate 45.
Hand-colored lithograph. Print Collection, Miriam and Ira D. Wallach Division of Art, Prints and Photographs, The New York Public Library, Astor, Lenox and Tilden Foundations

eled to northeast Brazil in the retinue of Prince Johan Maurits van Nassau Siegen. Between 1637 and 1644 Johan Maurits served as governor of the province of Nieuw Holland, which had been established in February 1630 by the Dutch West India Company in the region comprising the present-day cities of Recife and Olinda (and the island of Antonio Vaz).²² This cultivated ruler established two palaces there, complete with botanical and zoological gardens, and brought scholars, scientists, and several artists with him to the Dutch outpost. The two painters were Eckhout and Frans Post (1612–1680),²³ whose landscapes painted in situ represent the earliest on-site renditions of the American terrain. The National Museum in Copenhagen now houses the series of twelve large-scale still lifes by Eckhout in which New and Old World fruits and vegetables are depicted together, serving as metaphors, according to art historian Rebecca Parker Brien, of the desired peaceful convergence of the cultures (fig. E-7).²⁴ Also in the Copenhagen museum are Eckhout's twelve "ethnographic portraits" representing the various racial "types" found in Brazil, including individuals indicative of the miscegenation, or blending of races, in colonial society. While it is unclear whether these pictures were executed in Brazil or in Holland after the artist's return, they were the products of his direct observations in northeast Brazil.²⁵ Danish historian Mogens Bencard has argued that these paintings were intended as models for tapestries, and there are indeed elements of theatricality, drama, and even exaggeration in some of them.²⁶ The ethnographic depictions include male and female figures and, in some instances, their children. This is the case with the two representatives of African groups in Brazil (figs. E-8, E-9). The woman holds an elegant African basket filled with New World fruits and wears an elaborate African hat, possibly of Angolan origin. In her waist is tucked a Dutch clay pipe, a common allusion to prostitution in Dutch Golden Age art.²⁷ The African man has an elaborate ceremonial sword in his waist and stands next to an African date palm. While the depictions of the objects they hold are realistic, and

Passion when Christ is tied to the column and whipped became a particularly cherished scene in the visual hierarchy of Afro-Brazilian spirituality. Numerous examples of this iconography are found in the art of colonial Brazil, especially by the hands of masters from the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century centers of northeast Brazil, where the African impact was most profoundly felt. These images stand not only as paradigms of Christ's mortification and steadfastness, but also as highly charged metaphors for the physical suffering and spiritual redemption of Afro-Brazilians. Perhaps one of the most outstanding examples is the highly dramatic work (see cat. v-48), now in the Museu de Arte Sacra of the Universidade Federal da Bahia in Salvador, Brazil, by Manoel Inácio da Costa (c. 1763–1857), who has been called the most outstanding sculptor of his generation by art historian Myriam Andrade Ribeiro de Oliveira.²¹ In this work Christ's massive hands strain at the (real) ropes that bind him to the column. His bloodied, muscular body presents a combination of resignation and imminent triumph over pain and servitude.

AFRICANS AS SUBJECTS

The earliest surviving depictions of Africans in the Americas are in paintings by Europeans. Perhaps the first such representations of Africans in a New World setting were those by Albert Eckhout (c. 1610–1665), the Dutch painter who trav-



FIG. E-7
Albert Eckhout (Dutch, c. 1610–1665), *Still Life with Gourds, Fruit, and Cactus*, c. 1641. Oil on canvas, 38 $\frac{3}{4}$ × 35 $\frac{3}{4}$ inches (98 × 90 cm). National Museum of Denmark, Copenhagen

undoubtedly are based on things seen by the artist in Brazil or Holland, the overall impression of the African family unit is somewhat puzzling. Africans in Brazil were there as slaves, brought from the area between the Gulf of Guinea and the Congo, and not as elegantly adorned individuals with fine baskets, headdresses, and weapons, as shown by Eckhout. Nonetheless, these images are significant as monumental representations of African types whose presence in Brazil would become, throughout the colonial period and beyond, a crucial component of society and culture.

While in the bulk of this essay I deal with art and visual culture from the Caribbean and Brazil, it is instructive, as a corollary to this material and to widen the frame of our discussion, to consider some key examples from outside these regions. In some of these works the subject of blackness is dealt with in the most negative possible way, while in others there is a more “objective” reading of the presence of Africans or persons of African descent within an increasingly multiracial society. The series of six paintings executed in Quito in 1783 by the late-eighteenth-century artist Vicente Albán show, in a way not unrelated to Eckhout’s project of representation of the racial “types” in Brazilian society, the various social and ethnic levels of what was then a part

of the Viceroyalty of Peru. The figures are set within landscapes that appear more ideal than real. They include Africans, Indians, and Caucasians meant to stand for the various regions of the territory. Curiously, there is an equal emphasis on the objects that accompany the human figures in the paintings. Each of the “types” stands next to a large table or other support on which there is an outsized profusion of fruits. Other fruits as well as local birds and animals complete the scene. One of Albán’s paintings, *Lady with Her Black Slave*, depicts an elaborately dressed Creole woman in a heavily embroidered dress, holding a type of hat considered fashionable by Andean women of the time. Her jewelry includes gold hair ornaments, a choker of black pearls, and two pendants of pearls and gold. Gold and pearls also adorn her waist. Behind her is her slave, who motions toward the piece of papaya held by her mistress. The slave’s feet are clad in black stockings, although she wears no shoes. Her elaborate garb (designating her as a city as opposed to a rural slave) indicates the high social status of her owner, not the slave’s own personal wealth.²⁸ The woman and slave are, collectively, labeled as exhibit A, and the inscriptions continue with letters B through F, signaling the types of trees and fruit present in the scene.

These Ecuadorian works are inevitably reminiscent of the now well-studied genre of Mexican *casta* paintings.²⁹ Principally an eighteenth-century phenomenon, *castas* for the most part are family scenes depicting the many racial blendings found in New Spain. The vocabulary of the classifications (most *castas* feature texts describing the details of the *mestizaje*, or racial mix, written directly on the surface of the image) is rich and complex, as many recondite terms had been devised by the eighteenth century to describe the variety of mixed-blood categories. The majority of *castas* were done in series of sixteen (or sometimes more) elements painted individually or (more rarely) on a single surface. The human taxonomies represented in these series served, in part, as tools to control and classify the collective identities of a highly complex society that had taken on a multicultural character, far beyond anything early-sixteenth-century Spanish settlers could have imagined.³⁰ Perhaps the most convincing reason for their creation was to suggest a semblance of order to the intricate racial and social



FIG. E-8
Albert Eckhout (Dutch, c. 1610–1665), *African Man*,
1641. Oil on canvas, 104 × 63¾ inches (264 × 162 cm).
National Museum of Denmark, Copenhagen

FIG. E-9
Albert Eckhout (Dutch, c. 1610–1665), *African Woman
and Child*, 1641. Oil on canvas, 111 × 74¾ inches
(282 × 189 cm). National Museum of Denmark,
Copenhagen

combinations found in Spain's most important colony. Sent to Iberia, these concrete almanacs of Mexico's ethnicities created a tangible way of visualizing and understanding colonial life.

While most *casta* paintings serve as harmonious metaphors for the desired amicable co-existence of the multiple levels of society under Spanish rule, certain examples reveal instances of violence. These may be construed as similes of a slowly deteriorating social structure during the waning decades of Iberian hegemony in Mexico. Racial discord is often shown in representations of the mix of Spanish and African blood. According to the codification of the *castas* within eighteenth-century Mexican society, the mixings in which black blood formed a component were the lowest on society's scale. Blackness denoted slavery, and slaves were not accorded any of the social or moral considerations given to other ethnic groups. Whiteness could be re-obtained, it was thought, after several generations of marriage between racial types in all cases except those that involved Africans or their descendants. *De Español y negra nace mulata* (From a Spaniard and a Black Woman Is Born a Mulatta) of 1774 (Museo de América, Madrid) is part of a *casta* series by the late-eighteenth-century Mexican painter Andrés de Islas. As in many similar paintings, the stereotypical hot-bloodedness of the person of African descent is graphically depicted: the black woman is about to hit her white male companion with a hammer or kitchen implement, while their mulatta daughter wails in fear and clings to her mother's skirts.

THE BLACK ARTIST'S HAND

Secular images such as the ones discussed above should be looked at in conjunction with other depictions of Africans and persons of African descent in the colonial art of the Americas, in order to obtain a more nuanced view of the integral role of black subjects and artists within viceregal societies. In this regard, one of the most significant genres of colonial art is the depiction, in both two- and three-dimensional works, of black saints. Foremost among these is Martín de Porres, the first African-American to be canonized. Born in Lima in December 1597, an illegitimate son of a Spanish nobleman and a freed black slave, Martín entered a Dominican monastery at age eleven. Despite the order's stricture against allowing blacks to serve as monks, he took holy orders and soon became renowned for his devotion to the poor and sick in the Peruvian capital. Martín de Porres died in 1639, and, although he was not beatified until 1873 (and canonized in 1962), he quickly became one of the most venerated figures of sanctity throughout the Americas. Accordingly, the iconography of Martín de Porres forms a rich subchapter of the history of viceregal art. An early representative example is an anonymous eighteenth-century Peruvian painting that depicts him standing in an interior space, wearing the Dominican habit, and holding a broom, his principal attribute indicating his dedication to labor, no matter how menial (Collection of Manuel Mujica Gallo). In this straightforward, compassionate rendition, one is tempted to link Martín's broom with the sword or spike held in the hand of other triumphal saints, such as Saint Michael in depictions of his battles with Satan. Martín de Porres's broom thus becomes a potent symbol of triumph over evil and heresy—as well as social injustice and prejudice.

Such a reading of this saint's attribute may be strengthened when considered in a comparative context with the many black saints whose representations form a critical facet of the visual landscape of colonial Brazilian art. In many parts of the country, including Minas Gerais and northeast Brazil, confraternities were established by and for slaves that had saints of African origin at the core of their cults. Among the most well-known of such confraternities was that of Nossa Senhora do Rosário dos Homens Pretos (Our Lady of the Rosary of Black Men) in Recife, whose church included altars dedicated to Saints Elesbaan, Benedict of Palermo, Anthony of Catalagirona, Moses the Hermit, Iphigenia, and Melchior (the black Magus who visited the infant Christ), all of whom were of African origin.³¹

Saint Elesbaan (Elesbão in Portuguese) was a sixth-century Ethiopian Christian king. He ruled over the Axoum people and was a great adversary of a neighboring pagan monarch, Dhu-newas, the Arabian king of the Hamerites, who vigorously persecuted Christians. Elesbaan later gave up his crown to become a monk and died in about 555. Brazilian baroque images of him, such as an example from the black brotherhood of Our Lady of the Rosary in Olinda, show Elesbaan triumphant over his (white) adversary, holding a small replica of his church in his left hand (cat. v-49). While this is an overt expression of the victory of Christianity over paganism, we may read the rhetorical gesture of Elesbaan (who would originally have had a staff or spear in his right hand) as related to that of Martín de Porres in the Peruvian painting discussed previously. For the slave population of the Americas, the principal audience for whom these images were created, notions of liberation would have meant considerably more than references to the historical emancipation of the Catholic Church from the threat of oppression from other religious beliefs in its early centuries.

Given the number of prominent artists of African descent in Brazil in the colonial period, it seems likely that the creators of black saint sculptures were black or mulatto, although we cannot be certain because the pieces are not signed and there are no records attesting to their authorship. Many of the paradigmatic and well-studied examples of Brazilian baroque sculpture, architecture, and painting, however, are known to be by Afro-Brazilian artists.³² Several remarks on the most famous of these masters, along with some notes on the Afro-Puerto Rican painter José Campeche, may serve to close this section on the theme of Africa in the Americas.



FIG. E-10
João Francisco Muzzi, *Reconstruction of the Retreat of Nossa Senhora do Parto* (cat. vi-95, detail)

The high point of Brazil's baroque opulence in the visual arts came in the eighteenth century, coinciding with the colony's increased wealth from the gold and diamond riches of the inland region of Minas Gerais. While the cities there, principally the capital, Ouro Prêto (then known as Vila Rica), but also smaller towns like Mariana, Sabará, Diamantina, São João del Rei, and Congonhas do Campo, grew in size and architectural splendor, the country's principal metropolis, Rio de Janeiro, became even more sophisticated and endowed with impressive buildings and graceful urban design schemes. One of the artists most responsible for the elegance and modernity of Rio in the last quarter of the eighteenth century was the Afro-Brazilian sculptor and architect Valentim da Fonseca e Silva, called "Mestre Valentim" (c. 1750–1813).³³ Mestre Valentim, whose father was Portuguese and mother a black Brazilian, executed commissions from lay congregations and the government. Much of his work survives, including elements of his most ambitious project, the Passeio Público (Public Promenade) in the center of the city, an urban space akin to a courtly garden that was reminiscent of analogous aristocratic promenades at the Palace of Queluz in Portugal.³⁴ This venture consisted of terraces, benches, pavilions, fountains, a series of allegorical sculptures, an entrance gate, and two obelisks. The viceroy under whose direction the Passeio Público sculptures were executed, Dom Luis de Vasconcelos, was an admirer of Mestre Valentim's work. And yet, although Valentim is known to have executed the project, there are no specific documents related to it that mention him by name. Indeed, the position of the black artist within the hierarchy of Brazilian society was ambiguous. Mulattos were allowed to own workshops (as Valentim did) but could not be the directors of the works themselves. However, a painting of 1789 by the Italo-Brazilian artist João Francisco Muzzi (late eighteenth century–1802) offers powerful visual evidence of the deference with which Mestre Valentim was treated and the esteem in which his work was held (cat. vi-94).

In late August 1789 a hospital and asylum for women in the center of Rio, known as the Recolhimento de Nossa Senhora do Parto (Hospice of Our Lady of Birth), burned to the ground. Its destruction was chronicled by Muzzi in a work whose title, *Fatal e rápido incêndio do Antigo Recolhimento de Nossa Senhora do Parto* (Deadly and Rapid Fire in the Old Hospice of Our Lady of Birth), attests to the swiftness with which the flames consumed the structure. The picture itself, now in the Museu da Chácara do Céu in Rio de Janeiro, serves as an important visual document of contemporary clothing, modes of public transport, and other aspects of urban existence in the late eighteenth century.³⁵ For our purposes, its companion, *Feliz e Pronta Reedificação do Antigo Recolhimento de Nossa Senhora do Parto* (The Successful and Quick Reconstruction of the Old Hospice of Our Lady of Birth), offers the greatest interest. The new building, with its white facade and red tile roof, was a point of pride in the swiftly growing modern city. A detail of the foreground of the painting signals this and also indicates

the importance of its architect, Mestre Valentim (fig. E-10). Here the master, with dark skin and wearing a dark brown coat, is positioned in front of virtually all other participants in the scene, including the viceroy Dom Luis de Vasconcelos. Mestre Valentim stands before Vasconcelos in a deferential pose, holding his plans for the structure. The viceroy hails him enthusiastically, as do other members of his retinue. While this is a modest detail of a relatively small genre painting, it is a critically significant record of the contribution of this Afro-Brazilian artist to the urban fabric of Rio during one of its most optimistic epochs.

Considerations of the “black hand” in artistic creation throughout the Americas in the colonial era has led me to think beyond individual works of art by Afro-Brazilian or Afro-Caribbean artists, beyond representations of people of African descent in art, and beyond the African artisanal traditions that were transmitted to the Americas during the era of slavery. Contemplating images such as that of the hospice of Nossa Senhora do Parto, designed according to the plans of a black architect, or the elegant Passeio Público in Rio de Janeiro, as well as any of the large or small monuments (domestic, religious, and official) throughout Latin America that define the “masterpieces” of colonial construction, I am obliged to think not only of who planned them, but also who carried them out. Inevitably, we come face to face—again—with the realities of slave labor, the forced black participation in the built environment in both urban and rural settings. While we generally associate the work of slaves with rural agriculture such as sugar plantations, or with the mining regions of Brazil, it is also true that the grand

churches and cathedrals, the viceregal palaces, and the opulent dwellings of the upper classes would have been impossible without the participation of African and African-American workers. The grandeur of the American baroque must be thought of not solely in terms of its “success” as a “style” or its achievements in the aesthetic rivalry with European models, but also as a product of the sweat, strength, and tenacity of the thousands of anonymous workers of African (and, of course, indigenous, in the case of other regions of the Americas) heritage who literally put the buildings together.

When discussing the multit talented mulatto artist Mestre Valentim, the work of his contemporary Antônio Francisco Lisboa (c. 1738–1814) is inevitably called to mind. Lisboa, known by his nickname “O Aleijadinho” (“The Little Cripple”), has been cited as the most outstanding representative of the Brazilian baroque in architecture and sculpture, and indeed, the best-known scholarship on the colonial art of Minas (and Brazil in general) has been dedicated to him.³⁶ Born in Vila Rica as the illegitimate son of an African slave mother named Izabel and the well-known Portuguese architect Manoel Francisco Lisboa, Aleijadinho was active throughout the region, leaving Minas only once to travel to Rio. He acquired the name “Aleijadinho” because he suffered from a degenerative disease that caused his arms to wither and lose strength. According to his early biographers, as an adult he was obliged to work with tools strapped to his forearms. As Oliveira has argued in her fundamental texts on the artist, Aleijadinho created a highly original style that manifests itself in his sculpture through the intensive, expressive quality and prominent, almond-shaped eyes of his figures, whose bodies are often elongated and contorted (see cat. v-40). In many examples of his work, these elements bear similarities to contemporary Central European sculpture. While original works of art by German, Swiss, or Austrian artists may not have been known in Brazil, Aleijadinho and his contemporaries had access to prints of such works, brought to Minas by the clerics who came from Bavaria and other regions of the Alps and beyond. Aleijadinho’s greatest

FIG. E-II

O Aleijadinho (Antônio Francisco Lisboa) (Brazilian, c. 1738–1814), *Our Lady of Sorrows*, eighteenth century. Polychromed wood with silver, 32 $\frac{1}{2}$ × 18 $\frac{1}{2}$ × 13 $\frac{3}{4}$ inches (83 × 48 × 34 cm). Museo de Arte Sacra, São Paulo, Brazil





FIG. E-12
O Aleijadinho (Antônio Francisco Lisboa) (Brazilian,
c. 1738–1814), Facade of the Church of São Francisco
de Assis, 1766–94. Ouro Preto, Brazil

the extraordinary decoration of the ceiling painted by one of the artist's closest collaborators, Manoel da Costa Ataíde (also spelled Athaide or Atayde; 1762–1830).³⁹ The highly idiosyncratic perspective, ultimately reminiscent of the most extravagant examples of late Roman baroque paintings by Andrea Pozzo (1642–1709) and his contemporaries in both Italy and Central Europe, was executed between 1801 and 1812 on a ceiling of long wooden slats, as was customary in Brazilian colonial religious structures.⁴⁰ Ataíde's São Francisco ceiling (fig. E-13) shows the Glorification of the Virgin, a dramatic heavenly glory, painted in pastel tones, with scores of angels and the Old Testament King David playing musical instruments and singing to the Virgin Mary, whose large, imposing body breaks through the clouds in a burst of glory, and whose features clearly indicate someone of African descent.

The most highly accomplished painter in the Caribbean during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, José Campeche (1751–1809), was the son of a freed slave, Tomás Campeche y Rivafrecha, and a Spanish woman, María Josefa Jordán.⁴¹ Campeche studied with noted Spanish artist Luis Paret y Alcázar (1746–1799) while the latter was in political exile in San Juan, Puerto Rico, and achieved widespread fame in his day as a creator of religious images in a rococo style. He was most renowned as a portrayer of the wealthy and politically well

large-scale masterpiece is the project realized (with many assistants) between 1796 and 1799 for the pilgrimage church of Bom Jesus de Matozinhos at Congonhas do Campo. This consisted of sixty-four wood images of Christ's Passion and Death for a series of chapels located on a hill leading up to the church, as well as a series of life-size Old Testament prophets to decorate the monumental outside staircase of the sanctuary.³⁷

Many controversies surround attributions of works to Aleijadinho. Although some of these arguments have been settled by the research of Oliveira and her colleagues, only a few Aleijadinho works have been securely documented; most are attributed to him through stylistic analyses. The intimate, highly affecting *Our Lady of Sorrows* (fig. E-11), generally accepted as by his hand, embodies many of the characteristics often linked to the production of Aleijadinho, including complex angular carving, an overall triangular composition, and an elongated, dramatic face.³⁸ The elegant mother of Christ looks heavenward for divine sustenance in her time of greatest anguish. Her pain has been actualized by the addition of seven real swords that pierce Mary's body, referring to the seven sorrows she suffered in her adult lifetime.

Of Aleijadinho's architectural projects, one of the most celebrated is his first major commission, the Franciscan Third Order Church of São Francisco de Assis in Ouro Preto, built in 1766–94 (fig. E-12). With its undulating facade and sensuous bell towers, São Francisco epitomizes the most theatrical phase of the Brazilian baroque. The sense of drama established by the outside of the church is amply continued inside, not only in the details of the building itself but in



FIG. E-13
Manoel da Costa Ataíde (Brazilian, 1762–1830),
Glorification of the Virgin, 1801–12. Paint on wood
(ceiling above the nave). Church of São Francisco
de Assis, Ouro Preto, Brazil

connected in contemporary Puerto Rican society. I have not been able to identify any portraits by Campeche of people of color. However, in his compelling representation of a young boy from an impoverished family outside the capital who was born without arms Campeche addresses members of the economically disenfranchised classes of colonial society. The portrait of Juan Pantaleón Avilés (see cat. VI-123) of 1808, a late work by the artist, falls somewhere between several art historical categories. With its sorrowful subject, a two-year-old boy displayed on a bed with foreshortened legs and armless torso, this picture is reminiscent of the ex-votos that give thanks to God for a favor received. Its legend, written in archaizing fashion on a strip of canvas at the lowest register of the painting, reminds us of the descriptions of miracles performed by Christ, the Virgin Mary, or the saints, to whom hapless people pray for restoration of health or alleviation from a crisis. However, in this case no miracle

has occurred and no favor has been granted. The text describes how the child was taken to the capital city and given the sacrament of Confirmation in April 1808.⁴² Its matter-of-fact account reminds us of the Enlightenment fascination with depictions of natural aberrations. On the other hand, it also brings to mind the Spanish baroque taste for representations of physical deformities in works such as Jusepe de Ribera's *Boy with a Club Foot* of 1642 in the Louvre. While Campeche's work is unusual within his oeuvre, the artist draws upon the qualities of compassion and insight that were characteristic of his other works painted from the live model.

CODA: A BLACK MASTER'S CLASSROOM

Although the present exhibition examines works of art principally from the sixteenth to the early nineteenth centuries, the history of colonialism in the Iberian Americas did not end until 1898, with Spain's loss of Cuba and Puerto Rico (as well as the Philippines). I will conclude this essay by considering an image redolent of meaning within the context and readings of works of art associated with blackness in the colonial Americas that I have proposed here. *La escuela del maestro Rafael* (The School of Rafael Cordero), by Puerto Rican artist Francisco Oller y Cestero (1833–1917), was painted about 1890–92, a moment at the extreme end of the colonial experience (fig. E-14). An evaluation of the art and material culture produced during the later part of the nineteenth century serves to underscore the protracted agony of this form of government and the societal attitudes that accompanied it. Such an analysis may also function as something of a preamble to an encounter with reconfigured forms of colonialism that came about immediately after the end of Spanish hegemony in the Americas. At that time Cuba became a de facto economic colony of the United States, and Puerto Rico experienced U.S. annexation, eventually assuming the ambiguous denomination of “free associated state” (*estado asociado libre*), thus entering another era of colonial existence that continues to the present. As for the rest of the Americas, many of the former Spanish colonies also developed (or were obliged to develop) an economic (and, in an increasingly globalized age, cultural) dependency on the United States that, combined with the many American expansionist and protectionist campaigns throughout the twentieth century, introduced new forms of colonial governance in the hemisphere that continue to provoke acute tensions in many quarters.



FIG. E-14
Francisco Oller y Cestero (Puerto Rican, 1833–1917),
The School of Rafael Cordero, c. 1890–92. Oil on
canvas, 39 × 62½ inches (99 × 159 cm). Ateneo
Puertorriqueño, San Juan, Puerto Rico

Oller was Puerto Rico's most distinguished late-nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century painter.⁴³ He was also the principal agent for opening the art scene in that country to broader, more international aesthetic currents, having studied in 1851 in Madrid at the Real Academia de Bellas Artes de San Fernando (with Federico de Madrazo) and (between 1858 and 1863) in Paris at the École Impériale et Spéciale de Dessin, the ateliers of Thomas Couture and Charles Gleyre, and the Académie Suisse. Oller's friendships and professional relationships with Camille Pissarro and Paul Cézanne were also crucial for the development of his art, which was strongly influenced by Impres-

sionism as well as by the Realism of Gustave Courbet and the members of the Barbizon group of landscape painters. Oller was highly attuned to the social realities of Puerto Rico and could be considered a nationalist, judging by his writings and his art. He founded the Academia Gratuita de Dibujo y Pintura (Free Academy of Drawing and Painting) in 1868, and his interests in promoting literacy and art education formed an integral component of his activity.

Puerto Ricans of African descent are the protagonists of several of Oller's most important works. His most famous painting, *El velorio* (The Wake) of 1893 (Río Piedras, Museo de Arte y Antropología de la Universidad de Puerto Rico), depicts the *baquiné* (wake) for a small child in a modest house located in the mountainous central part of the island. There is an almost bacchic feeling to the picture, as many participants in the scene play music, sing, gossip, and drink, paying little attention to the baby laid out on a simple kitchen table in the center of the composition. The one exception is a tall, thin black man who peers down at the child with a mixture of sadness and compassion.⁴⁴

Another composition in which an Afro–Puerto Rican plays a key role is *La escuela del maestro Rafael*, a painting that offers an apt summation of some of the principal observations in this essay. Rafael Cordero was a well-known educator. A former slave who had worked in the tobacco fields (tobacco leaves at the table at the extreme right suggest this occupation), Cordero had purchased his freedom and, in 1810, opened a free primary school in San German, and later in San Juan, for the instruction of indigent young boys in the rudiments of arts and letters. This institution soon attracted the sons of well-to-do citizens, a number of whom later became leaders of the country's independence movement. When observing this work, I cannot help but think of Oller's own school for the advancement of arts on the island. It is not at all outside the realm of possibility that the painter was expressing an autobiographic identification with Cordero here.

In the painting Cordero, who looks out at the viewer, is surrounded by art: four pictures (including a Madonna and Child in the manner of José Campeche) as well as a sculpted crucifix hang on the wall. The black man, a turban on his head indicating his earlier days as a slave, embodies the importance of intellectual and artistic advancement. Cordero here holds the key to the future of the country—the enlightenment of the nation's children of all racial backgrounds. He denotes, furthermore, the integral significance of the African presence and the African integration within the intellectual and artistic fabric of the hemisphere.⁴⁵ We understand his presence as a metaphor of nationalism, in its most positive aspects, and, by extension, a signifier of the inextricable links with the cultural heritages of Africa.⁴⁶

NOTES

1. Bercht et al. 1998.
2. See Taylor et al. 1998, in Bercht et al. 1998, pp. 158–69.
3. For an overview of the historiography, see the editor's introduction to Araújo 1998, pp. 9–19. Araújo notes the pioneering work of Clarival do Prado Valladares in the study of black visual culture in Brazil, especially in his series of journal articles published in the 1960s. Araújo presented an updated overview in his essay "Exhibiting Afro-Brazilian Art," in Sullivan 2001, pp. 312–25.
4. Araújo organized the groundbreaking exhibition at the Museu de Arte Moderna de São Paulo titled *A Mão afro-brasileira: significado da contribuição artística e histórica* (The Afro-Brazilian Hand: Significance of the Artistic and Historical Contribution) to celebrate the one-hundredth anniversary of the end of slavery in 1988. This project mined the talents of many major figures in the Brazilian art world and demonstrated that within Brazil (and, by extension, the rest of the Americas) the impact of the African presence on the visual arts is an ongoing process that cannot be categorized into inadequate historical periods. This has been made abundantly clear by Araújo's more recent curatorial and critical work. As director of the Pinacoteca do Estado de São Paulo, Araújo was responsible for many important exhibitions, including *Arte e religiosidade no Brasil: heranças africanas* (Art and Religiosity in Brazil: African Heritages) in 1997, which presented a wide selection of images and texts that dealt with historical and spiritual issues related to the intersection of Christianity and the principal African religions that were imported into the country and refashioned during the era of slavery. *Arte e religiosidade* was, in a sense, a prelude to one of his most significant museological achievements, the exhibition *Negro de corpo e alma* (Black in Body and Soul), held in São Paulo in 2000 as part of the series of exhibitions known collectively as *Brasil 500 anos: mostra do redescobrimento* (Brazil 500 Years: Rediscovery Exhibition), which presented an in-depth analysis of virtually every possible area of the visual arts in which the black presence made itself known in Brazil from the sixteenth century to the beginning of the twenty-first. The 2001 show at the Museu Histórico Nacional, Rio de Janeiro, entitled *Para nunca esquecer: negras memórias: memórias de negros* (To Not Forget: Black Memories: Memories of Blacks) represented an equally trans-historical effort to showcase black achievements in all facets of Brazilian culture.
5. See Araújo 1997.
6. I use the term "African-American" in its widest, hemispheric sense.
7. Thompson 1983.
8. Thompson 1993 *Face*.
9. Thompson 1993 "Countenance."
10. Space prohibits extensive commentaries on the large body of recent literature in this area. Throughout the text I will simply refer to some of the most salient studies as they pertain to the images reproduced and discussed here.
11. On the Manila Galleon trade route, see Schurz 1939; and Hospicio de los Venerables et al. 2000.
12. In Puerto Rico the Proclamation of the Abolition of Slavery was issued in 1873.
13. Gutierrez and Avila 1999.
14. See Bercht 1989. On the relationship between African wood sculpture and Brazilian wood carving, see Barata 1998, in Araújo 1998, pp. 183–92.
15. Art historian Lélia Coelho Frota notes the African elements in the treatment of the human face in many *milagres*. See Frota 1989, in Bercht 1989, p. 29.
16. Traba 1972 *Rebelión*. See also Vidal 1994.
17. Vidal 1998, in Hermandad de Artistas Gráficos de Puerto Rico 1998, p. 105. See also Vidal 1979.
18. See, for example, the diagram of a slave ship published in various editions of Thomas Clarkson's *Lettres nouvelles sur le commerce de la Côte de Guinée*. Clarkson (1760–1846) was significant for his tracts against the slave trade, published in his native England, France, and elsewhere. For a reproduction from the 1815 edition, see Moura 1997, in Araújo 1997, unpaginated.
19. Debret was an important member of the French Artistic Mission, which had been invited to Brazil by the Portuguese government in 1816. The aim of the Mission was to "modernize" (read "Europeanize") Brazilian art. While Debret's paintings of Brazilian scenes and daily life are well known, his most important contribution to the description of the country's customs, the variety of its inhabitants, and the profusion of its natural life can be found in the lithographs for his immense three-volume publication, *Voyage pittoresque et historique au Brésil*, containing over 150 plates (Debret 1834–39). The scenes of punishment are found in plate 45 of the Second Part of the *Voyage*. Debret was also instrumental in founding the Academia Imperial de Belas Artes in Rio de Janeiro.
20. Hugh Honour calls such drawings and prints by early-nineteenth-century foreign travelers in Brazil (including the German artist Johann Moritz Rugendas) "picturesque" scenes, "one of the 'sights' of Brazil viewed by the traveler." Honour 1989, part 1, p. 141.
21. Oliveira 2000, p. 62.
22. There is a large bibliography on Dutch Brazil. See especially Boxer 1957; Boogaart et al. 1979; Whitehead and Boeseman 1989; and Herkenhoff 1999.
23. See Larsen 1962; Sousa-Leão 1973; and Parker Brien 2001, in Sullivan 2001, pp. 62–74.
24. See Parker Brien 2001.
25. The controversy surrounding the place where Eckhout painted his Brazilian pictures is summarized in Parker Brien 2001; and in the texts by Barbara Berlowicz and Peter Mason, respectively, in two exhibition catalogues: Berlowicz et al. 2002; and Buvelot 2004.
26. Bencard 2002, p. 288.
27. Parker Brien 2001, p. 66.
28. O'Phelan Godoy 2003, p. 108.
29. On *casta* painting, see García Sáiz 1989. For the most recent history and interpretation and for further bibliography, see Katzew 2004.
30. See Klor de Alva 1996, in Katzew et al. 1996.
31. Whistler 2001, p. 49.
32. For a discussion of the position of black and mulatto artists in Brazil at this period, see Tribe 1996.
33. On Mestre Valentim, see Carvalho 1999.
34. Carvalho 1999, p. 15.
35. There are two other paintings of the same subject by Leandro Joaquim, who collaborated on works for the Passeio Público with Mestre Valentim, in the collection of the Museu de Arte Sacra, Cathedral of Rio de Janeiro.
36. International interest in the art of Aleijadinho was inspired by the work of French art historian and curator Germain Bazin. See Bazin 1972, originally published in French as *Aleijadinho et la sculpture baroque au Brésil* (1963). For the state of current research, and for an up-to-date bibliography, see Oliveira et al. 2002.
37. For the best photographs of this series (especially of the soapstone sculptures of the prophets decorating the monumental staircase in front of the church at Congonhas), see Mann and Mann 2002. For history and criticism of the series, see Oliveira 2002.

38. According to Oliveira and her colleagues, this sculpture was “possivelmente feita para altar de pequena capela de fazenda, oratório particular ou mesmo para retábulo lateral de igreja mineira” [possibly made for an altar of a small chapel on a farm, a private *oratório*, or even for a side chapel of a church in Minas Gerais]. See Oliveira et al. 2002, p. 106.
39. See Frota 1982; and Menezes 1989.
40. Ataíde was very likely aware of Pozzo’s widely disseminated treatise *Perspectiva pictorum et architectorum* (Rome, 1693–1700).
41. The most complete study of Campeche’s work is in Taylor et al. 1988. For the most recent study of Campeche’s portraits and an overview of his career, see Vidal 2004.
42. “Juan Pantaleón, hijo legítimo de Luis de Avilés y de Martina de Luna Alvarado vecinos labradores de la villa de Coamo esta isla de San Juan Bautista de Puerto Rico. Nació el día 2 de Julio de 1806, y conducido por sus padres a esta Capital. Le confirió el Sacramento de la Confirmación el 6 de abril de 1808 el Illmo. Sr. Obispo Diocesano D.D. Juan Alexo de Arismendi por cuya orden se hizo esta copia cogida del natural. José Campeche” [Juan Pantaleón, legitimate son of Luis de Avilés and Martina de Luna Alvarado workers from the town of Coamo on this island of San Juan Bautista de Puerto Rico, was born on 2 July 1806 and brought by his parents to this capital. The sacrament of Confirmation was conferred upon him in 6 April of 1808 by His Excellency Bishop Juan Alexo e Arismendi on whose orders this copy (painting) was made from life by José Campeche.]
43. See Benítez 1983.
44. For an interpretation of Oller’s *El Velorio* as a representation of “spiritual grace,” see Boime 1990, pp. 120–24.
45. Art historian Osiris Delgado stresses Oller’s staunch nationalist sensibility and also underscores the importance for this artist of the figure of the Afro–Puerto Rican. See Delgado 1998.
46. See the interpretation of this painting by Boime 1990, pp. 79–86. While I agree with many of the author’s observations, I vigorously disagree with the following comment on the representation of Maestro Cordero: “It shows the able pedagogue looking wistfully at the spectator—seemingly overwhelmed by boisterous and mischievous children. Cordero is not shown as the austere teacher, but as a kind of comical, touching creature unable to control his pupils.”