

History of Brazil for the 'fair sex': appropriations of the foreign perspective for nineteenth century female readers

Mônica Yumi Jinzenji*
Ana Maria de Oliveira Galvão**

ABSTRACT

This paper analyzes some views on Brazilian history produced and appropriated in three historiographical works from the first half of 19th century: *History of Brazil*, by R. Southey, *Histoire du Brésil*, by A. Beauchamp and the content related to the history of Brazil published in the weekly publication *O Mentor das Brasileiras* (The Brazilian Woman's Mentor). The analysis of these works allows us to examine the translation and adaptation of these texts, as well the

authors' transformation of support materialities. The Brazilian version, aimed at female readers, has as a result shorter texts, with some subjects, such as Indian cannibalism and polygamy and the Portuguese conquests of sixteenth century, being left out. This indicates the adequacy of the newspaper to its readers and its engagement in a wider political project aimed at affirming Brazil as an independent and civilized nation.

Keywords: History of Brazil; history of reading; press culture.

The aim of this article is to analyze diverse perspectives of Brazil and its history, produced and appropriated in three historiographic works printed in the first half of the nineteenth century. This *corpus* consists of *History of Brazil* by Robert Southey, *Histoire du Brésil* by Alphonse de Beauchamp and the content related to the history of Brazil published in the weekly publication *O Mentor das Brasileiras*.

* Post-Doctoral Fellow, Faculty of Education, UFMG, Doctor in Education, Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais (UFMG). Faculty of Education, Department of Sciences Applied to Education, Av. Antônio Carlos 6627, Pampulha, 31270-901 Belo Horizonte – MG – Brazil. myjizenji@gmail.com

** Associate Professor, Faculty of Education, UFMG, Doctor in Education, Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais (UFMG). Faculty of Education, Department of Sciences Applied to Education, Av. Antônio Carlos 6627, Pampulha, 31270-901 Belo Horizonte – MG – Brazil. anamgalvao@uol.com.br

These three versions of the history of Brazil are connected in a particular manner, since they were produced between 1810 - 1830, although from distinct cultural traditions. The comparative analysis of these works allows us to verify the translation and adaptation of these texts and the transformation in the support materialities carried out by their authors. These operations gave rise to different texts, aimed at meeting aims and publics different from what was initially expected. The Brazilian text, published in a periodical aimed at the female public, was printed in Minas Gerais, the result of an adaptation of the French work, which in turn drew to a great extent on the English book.

THE PERSPECTIVE FROM ABROAD: SOUTHEY AND BEAUCHAMP'S BRAZILIAN HISTORY BOOKS

The English writer Robert Southey (1774-1843) was trained as a Protestant minister and became known for his poetic writings and essays, generally published in large volumes. He had a profound interest in Portugal and Brazil and his vast library, with about 14,000 books, included important works and original documents, which he used to write his *History of Brazil*,¹ published in London in three volumes *in quarto*. The first volume came out in 1810, the second in 1817 and the third in 1819, with a total of more than 2300 pages.

Despite being a work of great breadth and the first about Brazil to cover the entire colonial period until the arrival of the Portuguese court, it was only translated into Portuguese in 1862, when it was published by Garnier in six volumes, with the thousand examples taking twenty years to sell out.² Lack of familiarity of Brazilian readers with the English language and the more common use of French may have been two of the reasons why Beauchamp's work, *Histoire du Brésil* (1815),³ published shortly after Southey's first volume, became more popular on Brazilian soil. Another factor for the greater popularization of the French book may have been the publication of a Portuguese version in Lisbon in 1817, in small illustrated volumes.⁴ In Brazil the Royal Press (*Impressão Régia*) published the first two of the five volumes planned by Fr. Inácio Felizardo Fortes, who translated them directly from the French in 1818 and 1819 (Camargo; Moraes, 1993, p.xxvii).

Alphonse de Beauchamp (1767-1832) was born in Monaco and worked in various parts of the French bureaucracy and public administration and is recognized as a prolific writer, who produced various works of popular interest, especially biographies and historical compendiums.⁵ *Histoire du Brésil* is

composed of three volumes *in octavo* and covers the period from 1500 - 1810, with a total of 1404 pages. The success of the book was accompanied by an accusation of plagiarism by Southey, who in the preface to the second volume of his work (in 1817) stated that the first two volumes and part of the third volume of Beauchamp's *Histoire du Brésil* were a copy of his first volume. Beauchamp, in turn, cited the English author in his preface as one of more than fifty references used in his book, including Portuguese, French, Brazilian and Dutch authors.

To better understand the content of this accusation in the analysis of the written production of this period, it is important to take into account that the concept of authorship was not at that time very rigidly established and that the transcription of tracts of books, laws and journals was a common practice – while the absence of references to the original text was not considered a serious problem. This was a characteristic of “an unbridled intertextuality” in which authors “drank from common sources, copied passages from each other with the same freedom that they exchanged fragments of news in cafés”.⁶

To deepen this analysis, it is important to look at not only the content of the two texts listed here, but also the style of writing and the materiality of non-textual devices. A first point to be emphasized is the similarity between the books of Southey and Beauchamp in relation to narrative style. Both develop the writing by introducing, each at their own pace, the personalities of the history: the first conquistadores and their interactions with the Indians, the perseverance of the Jesuits, the courage and ability of the explorers, the setbacks, defeats and victories of the Portuguese against the Indians and/or against invaders from other countries.

Books about the history of Brazil and existing narratives of journeys were in general characterized by a detailed description of the natural conditions of the new continent, including the flora, fauna and indigenous populations, and marked by a Edenic vision or by an emphasis on the corporal, moral and behavioral deformities of the peoples of the New World. This is the case of *Historia da America Portuguesa* (1730) by Sebastião da Rocha Pitta, *A primeira história do Brasil – História da Província de Santa Cruz a que vulgarmente chamamos Brasil* (1576) by Pedro de Magalhães Gandavo, *History of Brazil* (1809) by Andrew Grant, *Corografia Brazílica ou relação histórico-geográfica do Reino do Brasil* (1817) by Manuel Aires de Casal, and a little later *Résumé de l'Histoire du Brésil* (1825) by Ferdinand Dennis.

The narrative formula adopted by Southey was also used by Beauchamp, who

actually did use the English writer's book as a basic text: some chapters are very similar, while in others the events reported are presented in the same sequence. Nevertheless, Beauchamp produced a more summarized version, suppressing the tracts in which Southey sticks in long and detailed descriptions, especially when he deals with various indigenous groups and their characteristics and habits. The omission of descriptive tracts resulted in a work with the similar number of volumes as Southey, but in a smaller and finer format, as can be seen in Figure 1.

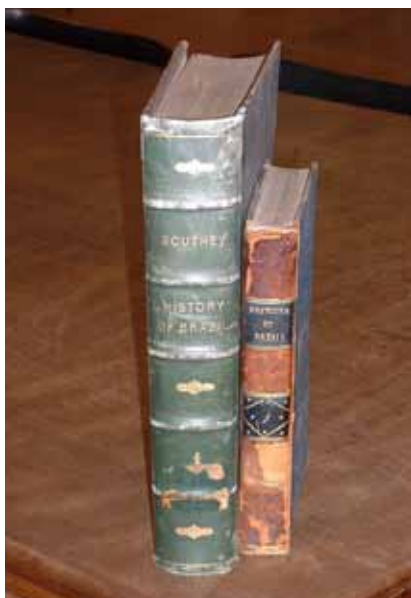


Figure 1 – Volume I of History of Brazil by Robert Southey, 1810 (27 cm x 22 cm) and Volume I of Histoire du Brésil by Alphonse de Beauchamp, 1815 (20,3 cm x 13 cm). Both examples are from the Rare Books Sector of UFMG Central Library.

Variation of the original format and the alteration of the content resulted in a new book. The suppressions were not made by chance nor for a mere question of economy, since the excluded content predominantly refers to the description of the exotic behavior and values of Indians, such as polygamy and anthropophagic rituals. These passages were treated by Southey with great fluency and naturality. The sources used by Southey were the travel narratives of Hans Staden and Jean de Léry in which 'extravagant' descriptions predominant, with the Indians being principally characterized by cannibalism, witchcraft and lust. It is important to emphasize, as Raminelli notes⁷, that these descriptions constitute representations of native populations of the new continent from a European perspective, mainly based on Christian tradition

and the colonizing ideal. Thus, “representing Indians as barbarians (inferior beings and almost animals) or demonic (oppressed subjects of the prince of darkness) was a form of legitimating the conquest of America” (Raminelli, 2007, p.12). Travelers and chroniclers produced their own versions of these Tupinambá habits – on the white page produced in the New World.⁸ Raminelli also states that these pictorial images produced in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries often re-signified the texts through which they were produced. In these images there is a hypervalorization of the participation of women in anthropophagic rituals, absent in the texts, indicating the misogyny that reigned in Europe, according to which women, both Europeans and Indians were daughters of Eve and had the worst type of abilities.

The suppression by Beauchamp of tracts describing the ‘exotic’ customs of the indigenous peoples illustrates, as highlighted by Schwarcz (2008), that French authors were responsible for ‘humanizing’ the Indians, relativizing the pessimistic vision of these peoples. In this way domesticated natives were harmonized with Edenic nature.⁹

A long tract in which Southey describes a ‘cannibal banquet’ was omitted by Beauchamp who, before jumping the 18 pages referring to the issue, made a critical observation, as if he were addressing Southey, with the title the Influence of Religion in Brazil:

If in the serious lessons that history offers for men to meditate on crimes are in greater numbers than virtues, historians have an even greater obligation to highlight generous actions, though they are rare, that honor and console humanity. In this way, describing the apostolic lives of these celebrated missionaries, to whom the Brazilian Empire owes a large part of its politics and prosperity, we follow them step by step through the forests of America, where we see them stripped of all the vanities of the world and moved by divine inspiration to confront savage and cruel bands, to turn them human... (Beauchamp, 1815, pp.191-192, authors’ translation).

The ‘crimes’ against customs, morality and civilization are reported by Southey in great detail. In the anthropophagic rituals of the Indians women have an important role, often being the main protagonists:

While preparations were made for the banquet a woman was chosen to guard the prisoner or to cohabit with him; the one who captured the prisoner used his

sister or daughter without any scruples. If she became pregnant, that was everything they wanted. They believed that the child came entirely from the father, receiving from the mother only nutrition until birth and nothing more. This belief produced a horrible consequence; the descendent of a prisoner was taken to be raised; the circumstances of his birth and childhood led to the absence of human feelings towards him; he was always reminded that he was the blood and flesh of his enemies and when they considered him ready, they killed him and devoured him. (Southey, 1810, p.218, authors' translation).

Instantaneously the body was taken by the women; they dragged it to the fire, boiled it and took off the skin. The woman who had cohabited with him forced some tears over him and thought it to be an honor to be able to have the first portion. The arms were cut off close to the shoulders and the legs below the knees, while four women got a member each and danced with it nearby. The trunk was then divided. The intestines were left for the women, who boiled them and ate them as a broth; the head was also divided; though the tongue and the brains were given to the children, who were also stained with blood. The thumb was cut off because of its use in archery, an art in which they were singularly superstitious... (Southey, 1810, pp.221-222, authors' translation)

This and various other passages referring both to anthropophagy and the concubinage of Indian women with the Portuguese and the sale of Indian women were referred to with 'anthropological naturality' by Robert Southey and omitted by Beauchamp.

Another part of Beauchamp's process of 'humanizing' the Indians was the construction of affective connections in episodes that involved polygamy. As an example of this narrative strategy we can cite chapter II of volume I in Southey and its reworking by Beauchamp. The chapter starts with the narration of the shipwreck of Diogo Álvares Correa de Viana close to the coast of Bahia in 1510, when he was en route to the Indies. Diogo saved himself from being devoured by the Tupinambás by impressing them with a firearm, for which reason he was baptized Caramuru, and came to be respected by them, living among them. Southey refers to the polygamy of Caramuru as the result of his adaptation to Tupinambá culture:

The leaders of the savages were happy if he accepted their daughters to be his wives ... From a distance a French ship came into the bay and Diogo decided to

take advantage of this opportunity to see his native land again. He loaded himself with Brazil wood and embarked with his favorite wife, Paraguaçu... the Great River. The other wives could not take this abandonment, they thought it would only be for a time; some of them swam after the ship with the hope of being taken on board, and one followed him so far than before she could reach the coast again, her strength ran out and she died. (Southey, 1810, p.31, authors' translation)

Caramuru's polygamy and the despair of his wives, throwing themselves into the sea in an almost humiliating form are also present in other books about the history of Brazil, including Beauchamp, the latter emphasizes the fact that Caramuru brought his "esteem wife Paraguaçu, from whom he did not want to be parted". In relation to the Indian who drowned the author refers to her as "a victim of her love for Caramuru" (Beauchamp, 1815, p.155, authors' translation)

Beauchamp used Southey's book as the basic text for his history. In addition to the suppressions presented here and other typographic alterations, such as the division of long paragraphs into two or more parts, he added tracts from *Chronica da Companhia de Jesu do Estado do Brasil: do que obraram seus filhos nesta parte do novo mundo* (1663), from the Portuguese Jesuit Simão de Vasconcellos (1597-1671) and *Histoire d'un voyage fait en la terre du Bresil, autrement dite Amerique* (1578) by the French Calvinist Jean de Léry (1534-1611), both of which were travel reports written in a narrative format. From the former specific tracts were taken about the actions of Jesuits at certain times of the history, emphasizing their conciliatory role in conflicts between Indians and colonizers and the catechistic mission, seen as badly understood by indigenous peoples. Passages about the maritime and colonizing enterprise of the French official Villegaignon (1510-1571) in Brazilian territory were taken from the latter book.

We thus have two version of the history of Brazil, produced by different cultural traditions. The distinct characteristics of their contents, the narrative style, typographic aspects and differentiated access to the different works constituted in our opinion the criteria for the choice of the French book as the history of Brazil that the *O Mentor das Brasileiras* intended to disseminate. It can be said that the history of Brazil written by Beauchamp closer approximates the 'image that Brazil had of itself' in the nineteenth century, or the image it wanted to construct and disseminate through its past, at a time when the country aimed to affirm itself as an independent and civilized nation. It also

indicates the meticulous role of complicity established by the writers with his readers, specifically in relation to the moral and religious aspects and the relativization of misogyny, most strongly present in Robert Southey's work.

THE PERSPECTIVE FROM ABROAD: THE APPROPRIATION¹⁰ OF *HISTOIRE DU BRÉSIL* BY *O MENTOR DAS BRASILEIRAS*

We will now analyze the appropriations of Beauchamp's book made in *O Mentor das Brasileiras*. What selections did the editor of that publication make? Why did he choose to publish these tracts? What modifications were made? What interferences were made to adapt the foreign perspective to a national public? What were the implications for the readers of the transposition of the text from the support of a book to a newspaper?

Among the important contributions of Roger Chartier to the study of the history of reading one of the most important is his thoughts about the influence of non-textual devices in reading and the production of meaning by the reader. This allows us to think that 'authors do not produce books' or newspapers, but rather produce *texts*. The content of the texts constitute an essential part of what is printed, but the final product receives the collaboration – or intervention – of various other participants in the production process, such as printers, typographers, cover artists and editors, amongst others, who defined the types and sizes of letters, the introduction of figures and notes, the preparation of book flaps and covers and the forms and distribution and division of texts, for example.¹¹ The multiple re-publications of books transformed the format and content to meet purposes and publics different from those originally intended.

According to Chartier, knowing the exact authorship of this work of adaption and revision is not an easy task,¹² since many people can have contributed to its production, even in Brazil in the nineteenth century at the beginning of the production of printed materials. In the case of periodicals it is difficult to state who was responsible for choosing the texts to be compiled, the authorship of particular essay, and principally adaptations, omissions and additions made to the original texts. There is a final product to be analyzed as a result of this intervention process, of which only an imprecise part can be attributed to the editor of the periodical. Certainly, in this process, the works chosen were not selected solely for their wide circulation, and therefore due to ease of access, but because of their 'pedagogical usefulness', since the suggested interpretation accompanied the prescribed readings. Moreover, the texts introduced in the paper

did not just undergo typographic adaptations, but their content was also changed, suggesting a *model reader*¹³ that would be delineated for each book adapted.

*O Mentor das Brasileiras*¹⁴ was published in São João del-Rei,¹⁵ Minas Gerais, between 1829 and 1832.¹⁶ Its editor, José Alcibíades Carneiro, professor of Latin Grammar and collaborator of the newspaper *O Astro de Minas*, soon afterwards became a member of various other public entities in the town, becoming *deputado geral*. *O Mentor* is considered to be the second newspaper specifically aimed at women in Brazil.¹⁷ Eight pages long and small in size in relation to other periodicals circulating at that (14.7 x 19.7 cm),¹⁸ it was published once a week and sold for 80 réis, the same amount charged by the principal periodicals with large circulation at that time which in general had four pages. *O Mentor* was distributed in the principal towns in Minas Gerais and the Imperial capital. Its points of sale and subscriptions indicate a connection to a broader sociability network, formed by representatives of the moderate liberal political elite (see, Silva, 2002).

O Mentor emerged in a context of the proliferation of periodicals in Brazil. In São João del-Rei itself eight periodicals were printed between 1827 – 1835 (see Xavier da Veiga, 1898, p.202, and Campos, 1998, p.176), of which *Astro de Minas*, whose editor was Baptista Caetano d'Almeida, also the person most responsible for the founding of the public library, had the highest circulation and the greatest longevity (1827-1839).

In its prospectus the editor of *O Mentor* explain some of the themes that would appear in the pages of the newspaper:

- 1) politics, specifically about the current system of government, “succinct reports on what was happening (if interesting) in Courts, Assemblies and in national and foreign governments”;
- 2) works whose narrations have a moral purpose;
- 3) tracts of modern history with examples of virtuous actions by heroines which deserve to be followed;
- 4) fine arts, to direct the intellectual potential of women;
- 5) current affairs related to moral education, fashion and embellishments related to the 'fair sex'.

The editor also explained that restrictions would be imposed on correspondence that demoralized women, or which was critical of political authorities and other people.

Although these themes were recurrent in the newspaper, an analysis of its different issues reveals that *O Mentor* did not have a 'routine' in terms of sections and reports. It is not possible to perceive a regularity that makes this perceptible, since it was much more marked by flexibility than 'stability'.

Aimed at the female public, *O Mentor* made concrete in its pages the project that it was necessary to form virtuous male and female citizens for the new nation which was being constructed. The religious connotation associated with the virtuous being seems undeniable, to the extent that for both men and women the moderation of sentiments and impulses was the regulatory key of matrimony. Implicit in the expression virtuous is the valorization of chastity, faithfulness and devotion to the family. Added to these virtues, present in the Western world since the medieval period at the very least, coexisted the idea of *civicism*, according to which the virtuous being is the one capable of renouncing personal interests for the common good. The fusion of these two ideas allows us understanding the construction of representation of gender built into and inseparable from the political role;¹⁹ men should always be ready to pick up arms and defend their Patria, as well as providing it with citizens; women are responsible for administrating the family and educating citizens and whenever necessary supporting them in defense of the Patria.

Given this editorial project, why did the editor dedicate in so many issues of the paper a section to the history of Brazil? And why select passages from works with a wide circulation in Europe and Brazil, such as Beauchamp's book?

Initially, it is necessary to point out that the practice of 'unbridled intertextuality', as stated above, was common and inherent in the production of periodicals at that time. The editor of *O Mentor das Brasileiras* used at least 46 different newspapers to prepare his reports, as well as more than a dozen books. Among the periodicals most cited in *O Mentor* were *O Simplício* (24 citations), *Aurora Fluminense* (11 citations), *Nova Luz Brasileira* (6 citations) and *Tribuna do Povo* (6 citations) from Rio de Janeiro; *Manual das Brasileiras* (11 citations) from São Paulo; *Universal* (7 citations) from Ouro Preto; and *O Popular* (6 citations) from Pernambuco. This clearly shows the circulation of information, texts and ideas among some of the principal Brazilian provinces at this time. This analysis also allows us understand the newspaper itself resulted in a text that induced readers to a more *extensive reading*.

In relation to books, it can be stated that their presence was also constant in the periodicals published at that time. Newspapers used to reserve on the last

page of each copy a space for advertisements and notices; *Astro de Minas* published them for subscribers for free (no. 2, 22 Nov. 1827, p.4); *Universal* charged 20 rs per line (no. 1, 16 July 1827, 3rd Year). It was in these spaces where for example the sale of printed material in typesetters and shops was announced – bound versions of laws, pocket diaries and books – as well as interest in the purchase of printed material, such as certain books and back numbers of newspapers. These advertisements generally included the respective prices and the variety of titles indicated the presence of foreign- both translated and in their original languages – and Brazilian works.

If the space reserved for advertisements allows by itself a study of the circulation of books and other printed material in the daily life of cities and towns, the presence of excerpts from works, book chapters, or even the printing of whole books in successive issues of newspapers, allows a discussion of one of the ways this printed material was used, in other words the appropriation operated by the editors of these newspapers, who incorporated philosophical, moral, religious, educational and literary works in their publications in a wide range of forms, with the aim of producing a vehicle with an educational focus.

The uses of printed material, as highlighted by Chartier, were linked to various dimensions of daily life, such as devotion, entertainment, information and knowledge,²⁰ while there were also other forms of its signification related to the *status* conferred on the possession of books and ornamentation.²¹ Associated with the idea of the erudition and distinction of book owners, the idea that the book was a source of knowledge and could be used for the purposes of instruction also became important.

In the research process we had difficulties identifying the origin of the works cited in *O Mentor das Brasileiras*, since the majority of times they were not accompanied by complete references. The practice of referring only to the author or to provide rather imprecise data about the titles of works (at least for current day researchers) seemed to be very common in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, since it was also recurrent in the lists of books delivered to be acquired in Portugal, as well as in the catalogues of private libraries.²² Of the books that could be identified, located and read, what predominates is a bibliography of a French and English origin.

Among the books cited, selected and adapted, as well as the history of Brazil, it was possible to identify fables of Phaedrus, an English bibliography – including Adam Smith, Jane Marcet, Jonathan Swift and Thomas Paine –, as well as the French authors Volney, Montesquieu, Voltaire and Pierre Blanchard. This heterogeneity

raises questions about the library of the editor, José Alcibíades Carneiro, which supposedly was composed of books written in English and French. This leads us to think about his reading abilities, since he also knew Latin, a language in which he still gave classes while he was editor of *O Mentor*.

What space did the history of Brazil have in the pages of *O Mentor*? Table 1 shows this, based on a brief description of the newspaper's different sections.

Table 1 – Sections of *O Mentor das Brasileiras*

Title	Description	Occurrence
Anecdote	Short stories, both fictitious and non-fiction, about some daily life situation	18
Notices	Termination of quarterly cycles of subscription to the newspaper and local events	5
Correspondence	Readers' letters to the editor	26
Education	Reflections on education	3
Primary School	Prescriptions on what a school for small children should be like	3
Fables	Fable followed by prescriptive moral commentary	27
Interior	Subjects related to the town and province	44
Fashion	Clothing and hairstyles	3
Foreign News	Reports from various places	4
National News	Political reports from different parts of the Empire	24
Historical Part	Transcription of parts of the book on the history of Brazil	94
Politics	Reports on elections and public administration	6
Varieties	Content equivalent to the Anecdotes	15

Source: *O Mentor das Brasileiras*, 1829-1832.

The history of Brazil, under the title 'Historical Section' was the most long-lasting and stable part of the newspaper, always occupying at least one of its eight pages and was present in 94 of the 129 issues. Its publication began in number 3, with these words:

Since in the Prospectus of our paper we promised to give extracts from modern history, we are keeping our promise, starting with Brazil, our beloved *Patria*. We would like to inform our esteemed readers that we will not use long narrations or miniscule facts; the small size of our paper does not allow this; we will look quickly at the most interesting pages in the history of Brazil. (*O Mentor das Brasileiras*, no.3, 14 Dec. 1829, p.17)

To the contrary of what is proposed, our analysis indicates that what was published was not a 'quick look' at the history of Brazil. Rather this section was characterized by long narrations and meticulous facts.

When the publication of this section was suspended for a number of issues, a reader's letter was published in the *Correspondence* section asking for its return. 'One who does not forget' wrote to *Mentor das Brasileiras*:

Since I know when you promise something (especially to the Public) then the person making the promise has the obligation to keep this promise, I hope that it will not be taken badly if I make a promise. Why has the History of Brazil not been continued, having performed so worthily until now the political part to which it corresponds? I do not know what to attribute such a criminal absence to... (*O Mentor das Brasileiras*, no. 31, 30 June, 1830, p.245)

Shortly after this letter the editor apologized, justifying the removal of the subject, which had been substituted by others at the suggestion of some friends. After that the section, which had been absent since issue 18, was printed in the issue following the reply (32) and remained present in each issue until *O Mentor* stopped circulating.

The striking presence of this content in the newspaper reveals the notion of positivity attributed to the reading of history, especially by women, in contrast, for example, with the reading of novels, considered to be noxious due to their capacity of altering behavior, corrupting innocence, drawing them away from virtue and favoring crime (Abreu, 1999, p.12). David Hume in *Of the Study of History* (1741)²³ contrasts history told in novels with historic studies; novels,

according to Hume offer a false representation of human nature, since they encourage the expectation of perfection and belief that love is the primary passion that governs the masculine world. Also according to Hume, the taste for narrative can be much better satisfied with real stories of kings and queens, battles and leaders, than by fictional tales of passionate conflicts led by unknown and common youths; the reading of history promotes the improvement of the mind, without exciting the passions. The other convenience of the reading of history mentioned is that it is apparently 'safe', while the sciences, the classics and philosophy are not. History was believed to promote a moderate and agreeable learning, without involving much abstraction or difficult research which could transform the typically feminine delicateness into harshness. From the point of view of nineteenth century women writers in the US it was the study of the history of one's own history that produced knowledge about one's own patria. Associated with the study of the constitution and the system of government it could provide help for women to have greater clarity of their role in society.²⁴

History written on the basis of the narrative model was seen as the ideal, perhaps because it resembled the plots of novels, meaning it would suit the tastes of female readers. This may have been one of the reasons why the editor chose to publish in his newspaper, from among the various books on the history of Brazil in circulation at that time, Alphonse de Beauchamp's *Histoire du Brésil* (1815).

O Mentor das Brasileiras published almost all of Beauchamp's first volume, excluding the first four parts; afterwards he published the second part, interrupting publication at page 112, when the newspaper closed down. The parts of the first volume that were not published were:

Book I: The origin of the Portuguese monarchy; discoveries and conquerors of the Portuguese in Africa and India;

Book II: Pedro Álvares Cabral's journey to Africa; the discovery of Brazil;

Book III: The condition of Brazil at the time of discovery;

Book IV: Hereditary *capitanias* at the time of João III.

The suppression of Books I and II seems to us to be coherent with the moderate liberal project, in a context that sought to distance itself from any reference to the Portuguese monarchy. While on the one hand, it was impossible to deny the Portuguese presence in Brazil since the sixteenth century, on the other

hand it was possible to treat with disdain its history and the maritime ventures achieved before arriving in Brazil. Books III and IV, in turn, are more descriptive and deal with the natural characteristics of the inhabitants of Brazil and the division into *capitanias* (captaincies). After Book V the history of Brazil came to be told in a narrative form, and from then on, from the titles to the contents, the translation and its compilation in the newspaper were very faithful to Beauchamp's work.

The passage compiled began with the title 'The Shipwreck and Adventures of Caramuru', which we discussed above. The version of this story published in the newspaper omitted Caramuru's polygamy and thus the episode of the Indians throwing themselves into the sea and swimming towards the French ship. Similar to Beauchamp, the affectionate bond between Caramuru and Paraguaçu is also mentioned, but in this case it is monogamous (*O Mentor das Brasileiras*, no. 6, 6 Jan. 1830, p.46).

Understanding that this was the history of Brazil that was intended to be disseminated in the newspaper and to be preserved for posterity, we have to consider not just the 'form' in which the history is told, but also the 'content'. Although it was not solely aimed at women, it was understood that women would 'also' be part of the reading public, which leads us to attribute a particular meaning to the choices made to produce the newspaper.

The work carried out indicates the complexity involved in the preparation of an educational instrument, in the materiality of a support paper aimed at a female public which used elements from other cultural and religious traditions. As a result questions such as adultery, cannibalism, chastity, love and property, amongst others, had to be banned or dealt with in a manner different to what was originally the case.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

At least two important considerations have to be mentioned here. In first place it is important to highlight, as we have sought to demonstrate during the text, that in the first decades of the nineteenth century there did not exist a unique European perspective of Brazil. Different countries with distinct cultural, religious, territorial and political traditions constituted the 'invisible cage' which Ginzburg²⁵ speaks to us about. This allows the production by subjects

– men and Europeans – of narratives which although they are similar in some aspects, are substantially differentiated in others.

The second consideration that can be made is that the works written by foreigners about Brazil underwent a process of appropriation in Brazil. This process was neither unique nor homogenous, but it was related – very concretely in the case analyzed – to the objectives of the newspaper: to educate women – who were lettered and from an urban background in the province of Minas Gerais – to fulfill their roles as moral and politically virtuous citizens as part of a wider project linked to the ideals of moderate liberals. In a context of political instability – it took place during a regency –, it was sought to remove a certain part of the past – dependence on the Portuguese monarchy, cannibalistic and polygamous Indians – and to affirm Brazil as a nation: young, independent and civilized.

NOTES

¹ Southey, Robert. *History of Brazil*. London: Printed for Longman, 1810-1819.

² Hallewell, Laurence. *O livro no Brasil*. Sua história. 2.ed. revisada e ampliada. São Paulo: Edusp, 2005.

³ Beauchamp, Alphonse de. *Histoire du Brésil: depuis sa découverte en 1500 jusqu'en 1810*. Paris: Librairie d'éducation et de jurisprudence D'Alexis Eymery, 1815.

⁴ Camargo, Ana Maria de Almeida; Moraes, Rubens Borba de. *Bibliografia da Imprensa Régia do Rio de Janeiro, 1808-1812*. São Paulo: Edusp, 1993.

⁵ The New Encyclopaedia Britannica, 15 ed., vol. 2, 1990, p.18.

⁶ Darnton, Robert. *Os dentes falsos de George Washington: um guia não convencional para o século XVIII*. São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 2005, pp.88-89.

⁷ Raminelli, Ronald. Eva Tupinambá. In: Del Priore, Mary (Org.). *História das mulheres no Brasil*. São Paulo: Contexto, 2007, pp.11-44.

⁸ Certeau, Michel de. *A escrita da história*. Rio de Janeiro: Forense-Universitária, 1982.

⁹ Schwarcz, Lilia M. *O sol do Brasil: Nicolas-Antoine Taunay e as desventuras dos artistas franceses na corte de d. João*. São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 2008, pp.45-48.

¹⁰ Certeau, Michel de. *A invenção do cotidiano: artes de fazer*. v.2. Petrópolis (RJ): Vozes, 1990.

¹¹ Abreu, Márcia. Introdução. In: Chartier, Roger. *Formas e sentido: cultura escrita – entre distinção e apropriação*. Campinas (SP): Mercado de Letras; Associação de Leitura do Brasil, 2003, p.9.

¹² Chartier, Roger. *A história cultural: entre práticas e representações*. Rio de Janeiro: Bertrand Brasil, 1990, p.176.

¹³ Eco, Humberto. *Lector in Fabula: a cooperação interpretativa nos textos narrativos*. São Paulo: Perspectiva, 1986.

¹⁴ For a deeper analysis of *O Mentor*, see Jinzenji, Mônica Yumi. *Cultura impressa e educação da mulher: lições de política e moral no periódico mineiro - O Mentor das Brasileiras*. Doctoral Dissertation, Postgraduate Program in Education, Faculty of Education, UFMG. Belo Horizonte, 2008. See also Silva, Wlamir. 'Amáveis patrícias': *O Mentor das Brasileiras* e a construção da identidade da mulher liberal na província de Minas Gerais (1829-1832). *Revista Brasileira de História*, São Paulo, vol. 28, no. 55, pp.107-130, 2008.

¹⁵ São João del-Rei was one of the principal urban centers in Brazil in this period. It was the first town in Minas Gerais to have a operational public library (1827) and the second to have a typesetters (1827). Its geographic location made it a route of passage to/between the provinces of Minas Gerais, São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro, and it was this a region of intense circulation of people and goods, exercising a fundamental role in the supply of the province of Minas and the Court (with food products and consumables). See Campos, Maria Augusta do Amaral. *A marcha da civilização: as vilas oitocentistas de São João del-Rei e São José do Rio das Mortes* (1810-1844). Masters Thesis, Department of History, Fafich, UFMG. Belo Horizonte, 1998, p.44; SILVA, Wlamir. *Liberais e povo: a construção da hegemonia liberal-moderada na Província de Minas Gerais* (1830-1834). Doctoral Dissertation, Postgraduate Program in History, Institute of Philosophy and Social Sciences, UFRJ. Rio de Janeiro, 2002, pp.39-40.

¹⁶ In 1833 São João del-Rei had 1442 hearths, a free population of 5235 and a slave population of 1823, and was one of the most populous towns in the province. Cf. Arquivo Público Mineiro, PP 1/33, Caixa 271, pacotilha 11, 10/01/1833. Martins, Maria do Carmo Salazar. Revisitando a província: comarcas, termos, distritos e população de Minas Gerais em 1833-1835. In: SEMINÁRIO SOBRE A ECONOMIA MINEIRA, 5. Belo Horizonte, UFMG: Cedeplar, 1990. mimeo., p.23.

¹⁷ The first was *O Espelho Diamantino*, published in Rio de Janeiro between 1827-1828.

¹⁸ One of the possible explanations for the size of the publication was that it was similar to other works, including books, aimed at women. See Jinzenji, 2008.

¹⁹ Bloch, Ruth. *Gender and morality in Anglo-American Culture, 1650-1800*. Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 2003, (The gendered meanings of virtue, p.138).

²⁰ Chartier, Roger. *As utilizações do objecto impresso (séculos XV-XIX)*. Portugal: Difel, 1998, p.1.

²¹ Villalta, Luiz Carlos. Os leitores e os usos dos livros na América portuguesa. In: Abreu, Márcia (Org.). *Leitura, história e história da leitura*. Campinas (SP): Mercado de Letras, ALB; São Paulo: Fapesp, 1999, p.204.

²² Abreu, Márcia. *Os caminhos dos livros*. Campinas (SP): Mercado de Letras, ALB; São Paulo: Fapesp, 2003, pp.32-37.

²³ Cited in Kerber, Linda. *Women of the Republic: intellect & ideology in Revolutionary America*. New York; London: W. W. Norton, 1980, pp.246-247.

²⁴ Tuthill, Louisa, cited in Baym, Nina. *American women writers and the work of history, 1790-1860*. New Brunswick (NJ): Rutgers University Press, 1995, p.13.

²⁵ Ginzburg, Carlo. *O queijo e os vermes: o cotidiano e as ideias de um moleiro perseguido pela Inquisição*. São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 1987.