

# **The Brazilian Television Mini-Series: Representing the Culture, Values and Identity of a Nation**

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## Abstract

This thesis investigates the Brazilian television mini-series as a cultural form in the media landscape of Brazil, examining it as a reflection of the political, cultural and social history of Brazil. The research question asks in what ways does the Brazilian television mini-series represent continuity and change in Brazilian national culture, values and identity. In this thesis, I construct a theoretical framework based on two strands of the concept of hybridity: the sociocultural dimensions of hybridity in the postcolonial context, and the textual-generic implications of hybridity for popular texts, their producing institutions, and their readers and viewers. Methodologically, my sample consists of 41 mini-series from a twenty-five year production history. I also engage with press commentary on the mini-series and conduct interviews with mini-series creators. The analysis examines the discourses that these sources produce in tandem with tools from television studies. In this study, I find that Brazilian national culture is represented by geography and gender. Geography serves as a physical and symbolic mode of representation in the mini-series. We witness historical and contemporary negotiations of the temporal and spatial divides that separate the foreign from the Brazilian, and we often follow stories about 'becoming Brazilian'. Gender appears through a practice-based discourse that informs the difference between the emotional and educational dimensions of the genre. Gender also appears in the mini-series narratives through the archetypes of sufferer and *malandro*, who in turn reflect the transgressions and the limits of gendered representations in Brazilian popular culture. In relation to national values, I find a continuous dialectical exchange between authority and resistance in the mini-series' historical and contemporary representations of Brazil. Not only do authority and resistance transcend the value frameworks of class, family, morals and politics in the mini-series narratives, but they also inform the ways in which creators assert their position in the space of Brazilian television production. Critics express resistance to the narratives and the institutions producing the mini-series as well, which enables us to recognize a wariness of the historical tendency of Brazilian television to insert its values into the public sphere. Finally, I find that Brazilian national identity is represented by a mix of foreign and national traditions in the mini-series form, and by strategies that differ from conventional narrative modes. These qualities demonstrate the persistence of tensions between the foreign and the national and imitation and originality that have defined negotiations with modernity in Brazil, but they also show how these tensions have shifted inward to reflect Brazil's changing awareness of its role on a global stage. In addition to the social, cultural, political and institutional dimensions of Brazilian experience that this study reveals through the mini-series, it adds to knowledge on the ways in which cultural forms enter and shape public discourse about nationhood.

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## **Dedication**

This work is dedicated to the memory of Professor Roger Silverstone, who impressed upon me the power of a nation's stories. This work is also dedicated to the memory of my uncle, Professor Paul Brennan, who, like me, made the 'foreign' his home. Finally, I dedicate this thesis to the memory of Sister Katherine Burke, 'fellow squatter', educator and mostly, friend. I wish they could see the results of what they encouraged.

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## **Note on Data and Language Translation**

I collected all data in this study in the Portuguese language. Additionally, I translated all data from the Portuguese into the English language. While my ability to speak, read and write Portuguese is proficient, there may be discrepancies in translation. To avoid what may have resulted in awkward or lengthy translations, I have therefore kept the original Portuguese where I felt necessary and in footnotes provided translation.

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# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 When in Brazil

When I moved to Brazil in 2002 it was for escape, challenge and self-discovery, nothing that had to do with a doctoral thesis. I had visited Brazil before, but moved there still not knowing its language, history or people very well. I taught English to business people in Rio de Janeiro, negotiating the city in halting Portuguese. On paydays, I waited in long bank queues to cash my check and with a wad of money in my pocket, nervously went home. It was sometimes an isolating experience, but a consistently enriching one. I came to learn Portuguese, Rio de Janeiro and the ways in which different people carry out their lives. I cannot claim to fully 'understand' Brazil now, particularly having lived in a city considered anomalous to the rest of the country. But in recognizing the difficulty of fully understanding Brazil, especially as a foreigner and a fledgling *carioca*<sup>1</sup>, I saw this same difficulty shared by Brazilians, given the diversity and changeability of Brazil. Yet in this challenge, I saw the beginnings of a project.

I spent many nights in Rio watching television due to my limited salary. I also watched television to improve my Portuguese through Brazil's most pervasive medium, and the medium most associated with Brazil globally. Indeed, my students discussed events on the nightly news, and conversations between colleagues often centered on developments in the nine-o'clock *telenovela*: the last of three nightly soap operas and the one with the most controversial themes. The *telenovela* drew me in. In 2002, TV Globo, Brazil's largest, most powerful network, broadcast the *telenovela* *Mulheres Apaixonadas* (*Women In Love*). It had the level of melodrama that I expected, but there was more to *Mulheres Apaixonadas* than simple sensation. Nor did it simply transpose the bedroom and living room scenes of American soap opera to Brazil. It raised issues of sexuality, class, 'race' and violence in a city I had come to know. And since the setting was so familiar to me, I began to wonder what the *telenovela* meant to *cariocas* or indeed, other Brazilians.

### 1.1.1 The *Telenovela* and the Mini-series

This question was worth asking. Plot leaks revealed that two characters were to be shot in a robbery scene, and the upscale neighborhood of Leblon was to be the setting. Many *cariocas* reacted adversely, particularly Leblon residents, who saw this fictionalization of crime as instigating its actual increase. Leblon would become another violent area of Rio

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<sup>1</sup> A Rio de Janeiro denizen of two types: *carioca da gema*, a native, and *carioca de coração*, a transplant.

and the *telenovela* was only provoking this. *Mulheres Apaixonadas* thus became a vehicle for mobilizing reaction to the real social conditions it sought to dramatize. In the same *telenovela*, two young actors were cast as lesbian lovers. Public response to fictionalizing this real-life issue, however, was favorable. In newspaper and magazines, the characters were upheld as role models for gay and lesbian youths. Women (and men) dressed as the characters for Pride events in Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo. Very differently than above, this fictionalization became something aspirational.

In 2002, I also watched three Globo mini-series: *Cidade dos Homens*, *Pastores da Noite* and *O Quinto dos Infernos*. I was not aware of the Brazilian mini-series and again assumed a transposed American version. While commonalities did occur to me, there was more to these mini-series than transposition. *Cidade dos Homens* (*City of Men*) was adapted from the film *Cidade de Deus* (*City of God*), and also depicts the harsh world of a Rio de Janeiro *favela* from the perspective of its inhabitants. *Pastores da Noite* (*Shepherds of the Night*) was adapted from the Jorge Amado novel, and relays the adventures a group of friends who circumvent social norms from the margins of 1960s Salvador, Bahia. *O Quinto dos Infernos* (*The Fifth Circle of Hell*) is a bawdy rendition of the Portuguese Court's 1808 transfer to Brazil, Brazil's transformation from colony into republic, and the role of Emperor Pedro I in this history. Like *Mulheres Apaixonadas*, these mini-series had the elements of emotion and excitement that I expected, and they combined real social issues with drama. In fact, by following the last nightly *telenovela* (which follows the equally-dramatic nightly news program), these mini-series easily blended with their preceding fare.

At the same time, I began to ask myself why Brazil depicts itself in such different modes of television fiction. How do a film adaptation, a literary adaptation and a satirical epic differ from and relate to each other? How do they differ from and relate to the *telenovelas* preceding them? Mostly, what do they add to the space of Brazilian television, and what do they say about Brazil? The more I watched these mini-series in relation to each other and to *telenovelas*, the more I asked questions such as these. Press coverage of these mini-series also pointed to larger issues. *Cidade dos Homens* was applauded for translating the social and aesthetic attributes of *Cidade de Deus* into television, for bringing a medium inaccessible to many Brazilians to its most accessible one, and for shifting from romantic to realistic depictions of Brazil. *Pastores da Noite* was noted for the prominence of Afro-Brazilian culture, for its fidelity to the Amado novel and again, for bringing cinema to the small screen. *O Quinto dos Infernos* generated a heated debate about whether its farcical rendition of Brazilian history was humorous or simplistic.

I therefore realized that in the broad space of Brazilian television, a form as diverse and debated as the mini-series deserves more than passing observations. Its juxtaposition of everyday life, literature, film and history is important, I believe, to understanding Brazil from perspectives both within and outside the country. This thesis, then, focuses on the Brazilian television mini-series, but it also concerns other forms and institutions – film, *telenovelas* and literature – that surround and connect with it. Thus, I seek to understand the specific place that the mini-series has assumed in Brazilian television by virtue of the broader forces that have brought its stories into being. These are historical, institutional and social forces that require definition. In turn, they form the themes that underpin my thesis and define my research question. Finally, they guide the framework that I use to examine the mini-series for both its representational and institutional significance.

### **1.1.2 Brazilian Television: Negotiating Modernity**

Television was first introduced to São Paulo in 1950 and between 1951 and 1959, spread to other Brazilian cities (Ortiz 1988b; Straubhaar 1985). With the rapid industrialization of Brazil at that time, television was thus coupled with modernization. Although similar to other countries, two aspects of television ‘modernizing’ Brazil stand out. One is that its beginnings rest on the idea of “precariousness” (Ortiz 1988b: 91). It was the “adventurer-entrepreneur” (Ortiz 1988b: 134) in Assis Chateaubriand that gambled on television to expand his traditional media empire (Mattelart and Mattelart 1990), itself “constructed on sheep’s wool, silverware and soft drinks” (Ortiz 1988b: 59). But the precariousness of television’s role in modernizing Brazil was also coupled with ideas of nationhood. As a result, what tied modernization and nationhood to television in this “fine piece of Latin American political surrealism” was the “pioneering spirit of its founder, who sought to align his innovative impetuousness with the construction of Brazilian nationality. A *bouquet* of steel, installed in a bank tower, marrying all of Brazil” (Ortiz 1988b: 59).

A second aspect of television’s role in modernizing Brazil lies in the idea of patronage. Early investment by the American media corporation Time-Life (Mattelart and Mattelart 1990; Straubhaar 1985; Tufte 2000), in addition to Chateaubriand’s financing, underscores this idea. According to Da Matta, patronage is a system that “can only be fully operative in social universes also permeated by liberal, universal laws that can also be used against (or for) political purposes” (1991a: 188). Therefore, patronage also defined early Brazilian television, as the foreign and national interests that negotiated their stakes in it did so in a process of “mediation between well-defined systems of personal relationships and clear (if idealized and unrealistic) systems of liberal norms” (Da Matta 1991a: 188). Although

envisioned as a modernizing enterprise, then, Brazilian television nevertheless took root in a system of patronage that persists in Latin American social relations. Thus, while a system of patronage underwrote the institutions and content of early Brazilian television, it would also persist in television's later states, which we shall see.

Due to such roots, we could assume that early Brazilian television was aimed at the elite, which was true due to the cost and availability of the apparatus (Rêgo 2003; Tufte 2000). In fact, working within this new vehicle, television creators sought to bring to it a sense of elite culture. *Teleteatros*, for instance, adapted the works of Hugo, Dumas and Kipling to the emerging medium, which thus "would extend itself to television as a whole, and an enterprise like [Assis Chateaubriand's TV] Tupi would be considered elite, whether by critics, or by its own members who saw themselves as promoters of culture and not as vendors of cultural merchandise" (Ortiz 1988b: 74 – 75). However, Brazilian television did not develop exclusively as a vehicle for elite culture. As Ortiz notes, "the conditions between an artistic and a market culture did not manifest in an antagonistic manner ... We saw how literature was spread and legitimized through the press. We can say the same of television in the 1950s" (1988b: 29). Rather, Brazilian television emerged without socio-economic modernization. That is, television developed as a cultural-technological phenomenon that lacked a corresponding market, despite its founders' investments.

This was compounded by the tenuous status of Brazilian film. Although characterized by the avant-garde aesthetic of *Cinema Novo* and the popular appeal of filmmaker and actor Amacio Mazzaropi, Brazilian film was "deeply impregnated by not merely techniques, but also the ideology of the Hollywood film industry," engendering "another instance of an artistic manifestation that has to be made good *in* the country, with the material *of* the country" (Bueno 1998: 46; original emphases). Early Brazilian television would therefore attract the theatre talent that it soon replaced. However, television also lured "a group of people marked by interests of the 'erudite' area [who] turned, given the impossibility of creating cinema, to television ... where, in contrast to central countries, the drama of the stage joined up with mass technology" (Ortiz 1988b: 29). The development of Brazilian television was therefore different from that of Europe and the US, in which mass culture intensified existing high/low culture debates. In Brazil, instead, where *teleteatros* played alongside new, popular genres such as the *telenovela*, the issue was not the indiscriminate character of mass culture, but the lack of deeper modernization (Ortiz 2000), as well as an "acritical" view of mass culture (Ortiz 1998b; 2000).

A brief history of Brazilian television would be incomplete without considering Brazil's modern-era dictatorships and their relationships with mass culture. Before television's introduction to Brazil, a 1930 *coup* led by Getúlio Vargas led to his presidency. In power, the Vargas government sought to bring forms of popular culture such as samba, which had been suppressed in the 1920s (Vianna 1999), into a national culture program (Rowe and Schelling 1991). With the 1937 creation of the authoritative *Estado Novo*, samba, once marginalized, was thus "thoroughly nationalized", such that the "rise of samba [became] part of a larger nationalizing and modernizing project" (Vianna 1999: 92). In fact, from a style of samba particular to Rio it was "decreed that the samba schools must dramatize historical, didactic, or patriotic themes. The sambistas of Rio accepted the regulations, and the model of Rio carnival was then extended to the rest of Brazil" (Vianna 1999: 90). Radio, too, which was nationalized and commercialized in the 1930s (Ortiz 1988b: 39), provided the *Estado Novo* with a new vehicle for articulating national unification (Vianna 1999: 77). Radio also served as a means of modernization *via* internationalization with the introduction of the *radionovela* to Brazil, following its success and appeal in Cuba and the US (Ortiz 1988b: 44 – 45). With the advent of television in Brazil, then, it was the format, appeal and profitability of *radionovelas* that would usher in the *telenovela*. In spite of these technological advances, however, or rather because of the way in which popular culture became an impetus for the coercive use of mass culture, the fact remained that in Brazil "modernism [still] occurred without modernisation, that there was a hiatus between the artistic intentions and ... the society which sustained them" (Ortiz 2000: 140).

During Brazil's 1964 – 1985 military regime, technology became even more crucial to the idea of modernization. With the growth of Brazil's technical infrastructure from 1964 to 1979 (Guimarães and Amaral 1998), military leaders supplanted Vargas's populism with control of a new communication system. Additionally, internationalization became even more crucial, as the military expanded the Brazilian economy with foreign investments. This had implications for mass culture, particularly television. The Globo network, which was licensed in 1957 but not operative until 1962 (Mattelart and Mattelart 1990), was in violation of laws against foreign (Time-Life) interests in national television (Guimarães and Amaral 1998). Globo was nevertheless legalized in 1965 and bought back Time-Life interests in 1969. It was thus centrally positioned to underwrite the 1964 *coup* and benefit from the regime's technological motivations (Mattelart and Mattelart 1990; Tufte 2000). As Mattelart and Mattelart summarize this: "The irresistible rise of Globo, supported by Time-Life, went hand-in-hand with the decline of other initiatives that more closely resembled the entrepreneurial spirit to be found at the launching of Brazilian television",

enabling Globo to put itself “at the crossroads between the interests of the state and the interests of modern capitalism, directed toward external markets” (1990: 22 – 23).

However, soaring unemployment and debt by the 1980s saw military power decline and public discontent rise. Across Brazil, protests against renewed parliamentary control by the military vocalized civil discontent. Until then, Globo had been “a docile instrument dependent on the military regime”, but quickly became “an unexpected new element in the movement for direct presidential elections” (Guimarães and Amaral 1998: 130). In its sudden shift from military to civil support, Globo thus “captured and expressed this new vision of the political process … revealed [a] less well-known ability to react to changes in public opinion and changed [its] own behaviour accordingly” (Guimarães and Amaral 1998: 128). The precarious nature of Brazilian television had changed significantly since 1950, but not the systems of patronage on which it was built. The ability of Globo to shift from foreign to authoritarian support, then rally behind popular dissent, reflects this.

In terms of civil support, however, the military dictatorship “was constructed on class alliances fundamentally different from those of 1940s fascism,” as its economic ambitions “scarcely favored the construction of a vast basis of social support and hampered the project of politically mobilizing the masses” (Mattelart and Mattelart 1990: 31). Ortiz sees similarities between the Vargas and military regimes, as both “defined their politics [by] an authoritarian vision that unfolded in a cultural plan of censorship and of the incentive of determined cultural actions” (1988b: 116). Yet the latter “inserted itself into a distinct economic frame” in which the relationship established “between the regime and business groups is different … as only starting in the 1960s do these groups assume themselves the bearers of a capitalism that gradually freed itself from its incipiency” (Ortiz 1988b: 117). If, after two regimes, however, Brazil defined modernity as capitalism propelled by authoritarian measures to free itself from ‘incipiency’, then we must consider what de Souza Martin writes: “Modernism is installed when conflict becomes a daily experience … cultural conflict, disputes over social values, the permanent need to choose between one thing and another, between the new and the fleeting … and custom and tradition” (2000: 250). Thus, if we understand modernity in terms of conflicting cultures and values, then this is further complicated by the shifting political position of Brazilian television.

### **1.1.3 Brazilian Television Today**

Today, Brazilian television no longer reflects the precariousness of its beginnings, due to economic and technological growth that have made Globo the fourth-largest network in

the world (Rêgo and La Pastina 2007). There may still be a precariousness that describes television's attempts to capture the idea of Brazilian nationhood, however. On one level, we could consider constant experimentation with forms and genres as precarious, where "the landscape of Brazilian fiction indicates not only a broad spectrum of experiences but also ... a reworking of genres of strong popular appeal, paralleled by a process of hybridization looking to amplify their efficacy in society" (Freire Lobo 2000: 328). On another level, we might consider television to have depleted all its resources in popular culture and is reinventing them, as "television ... has been taken by some to spell the end of any genuinely popular culture and by others to be the only form that popular culture can take in the late twentieth century" (Rowe and Schelling 1991: 7). On yet another level, Brazilian television is far from precarious. Instead, it deftly captures the qualities that are linked to Brazilian nationhood: "more than any other vehicle [television] penetrates the sporadic elements of Brazilian orality, but always with the controlled action of supposed patterns of collective consciousness: conciliation, verbalism, sentimentality, caring, racial democracy, [and] the benignness of the national citizen's character" (Sodré 1972: 36). In this last sense, then, it is not Brazilian television but *modernity* that continues to reflect the precariousness of Brazil, as television offers a stable notion of nationhood that modernity still has not. As Lopez writes: "Television has ... become the locus of the experiences of nationhood in Latin America, [of] modernity and post-modernity ... constituting the only possible site where its ... nations are able to imagine themselves as one" (2000: 168).

Sporadically, Globo's dominance has been threatened by networks such as SBT, which in spite of its 'popular audiences', brought (foreign) mini-series to Brazilian "classes A and B" (Mattelart and Mattelart 1990: 59). Most recently, however, networks like Record have radically experimented with the white, middle-class milieu of the *telenovela*, which stirred debate when I lived in Brazil. Globo's potency has fluctuated, in other words, despite its convenient alignment with dominant, then popular, beliefs. Yet Globo is still a Brazilian media monopoly (Amaral and Guimarães 1994), which means that television still plays a central role in projecting the idea of nationhood. Thus, television's role reflects Brazil's struggles with modernity in the 'locus of experiences' it places on the air, and in having established itself as virtually 'the only possible site' in which Brazil imagines itself as one. At the core of my thesis, then, are what these reflections mean for Brazilian society and how Brazilian television shapes them. From the above history, it has also emerged that Brazilian cultures, values and identities are key aspects of television's representations *and* its institutional history. As the central themes of this thesis, I next turn to ways in which culture, values and identity have been conceptualized. But I also seek to problematize them in terms of Brazilian conceptualizations of national culture, values and identity.

## 1.2 Locating Culture

Culture is far from being a fixed concept. Nevertheless, there have been many attempts to 'locate' culture, which only reveal contradictions in doing so. Thus, Eagleton writes: "The very word 'culture' contains a tension between making and being made, rationality and spontaneity, which upbraids the disembodied intellect of the Enlightenment as much as it defies the cultural reductionism of so much contemporary thought" (2000: 5). It is difficult to conceive of culture disembodied from political and institutional factors as well, which we have seen in Brazilian television's history. Rather, culture intersects with these and other factors, which for Bhabha means that: "Cultures come to be represented by virtue of the processes of iteration and translation ... eras[ing] any essentialist claims for the inherent authenticity or purity of cultures", but that "frequently become political arguments for the hierarchy and ascendancy of powerful cultures" nevertheless (1994: 83 – 84). Defining the 'authenticity' or 'purity' of culture has thus led to continuous debates on the exclusivity of its forms and practices, especially in the national context.

As we saw, television promised modernity for Brazil. But television's introduction to and development in Brazil reflects its relationships with modernity, and therefore the idea of Brazilian *cultural modernity*, differently than in other countries. Thus, the schism between elite and popular cultures, frequent in European and American debates, narrows with the idea of the modernizing potential of Brazilian mass culture. Moreover, the political implications of mass culture, especially its promises of modernizing Brazil, cloud deeper issues of socio-economic modernization. This means that in contrast to the "degree of banality or distinction" (Bourdieu 1984: 246) of working class and bourgeois cultures in Europe, similar polarities in Latin America and Brazil have often been consolidated into mass culture's political-institutional capacities. This is not to say that in Europe and the US mass culture does not also have political-institutional implications. But debates in these countries over elite and popular culture are amplified by mass culture and follow a different path than in Brazil or Latin America. The former path is one that I next trace in British and American thinking before discussing Brazilian conceptualizations of culture.

### 1.2.1 The Good, the Ugly and the Necessary: Elite, Mass and Popular Culture

The notion that culture has been 'disembodied' by Enlightenment intellect calls upon the thinking of Matthew Arnold. For Arnold, "exquisite culture and great dignity are always something rare and striking, and it is the distinction of the English aristocracy, in the

eighteenth century, that not only was their culture something rare by comparison with the rawness of the masses, it was something rare and admirable in itself" (1896/1993: 11). Although nostalgic, Arnold's concern for 'the masses' was also current. It reflected mass disembodiment from elite culture, thus an unthinking, indiscriminate gravitation toward mass culture. More threatening still, the indiscriminate exposure of the masses to mass culture meant that, "society is in danger of falling into anarchy" (Arnold 1896/1993: 22). Arnold was therefore aware of the political implications of mass culture. But differently than we have seen in Brazil, Arnold felt it was the responsibility of the middle classes to administer aristocratic culture to the masses. Arnold believed that the middle classes, as mediators between the elite and masses, should take a more critical view of mass culture but had forfeited this to "philistinism" (1896/1993: 76). By the early-twentieth century, mass culture presented an even larger crisis. Like Arnold, F.R. Leavis sought to revive a "minority culture" (Leavis 1930) through critical cultural administration. Leavis, too, was concerned with the national ramifications of mass culture, fearing "the plight of culture in general. The landmarks have shifted, multiplied and crowded upon one another, the distinctions and dividing lines have blurred away, the boundaries are gone, and the arts and literatures of different countries and periods have flowed together" (1930: 18 – 19).

More importantly, F.R. Leavis and Q.D. Leavis engaged directly in the critique of mass culture, as "the extension of literacy and the commercial production of popular reading-matter had increasingly overwhelmed the capacity ... to recognise serious creative work" (Bell 1988: 5). Given the growing forms, uses and audiences of 'culture', then, critique required a common denominator, which for the Leavises was language. "Underlying all academic specialisms, [F.R.] Leavis argued, there is the prior cultural achievement of language" that embodied "its community's assumptions and aspirations at levels which are so subliminal much of the time that language is their only index" (Bell 1988: 9). The social ramifications of the language used in literature, popular or otherwise, thus took precedence over its ascribed literary merits. "The kind of value that was at stake ... was not in literature but in what literature could reveal or create" (Bell 1988: 46). Again, this differs from the Brazilian context in terms of the critical view that is assumed by middle-class representatives as arbiters of mass culture and, crucially, that in the British context literacy and access to culture had reached virtually all classes.

In the postwar US, there were also concerns for mass culture. Cold War rhetoric in fact recalls Arnold's anxieties about anarchy, although in the American context anarchy was represented in foreign guises. Rosenberg cautioned that foreign mass culture serves "not merely to cretinize our taste, but to brutalize our senses while paving the way to total-

itarianism" (1957: 9). Similarly, Macdonald warned that "the U.S.S.R. is even more a land of Mass Culture than is the U.S.A.... [I]t exploits rather than satisfies the cultural needs of the masses" (1957: 60). Shils put this paranoid rhetoric into perspective by rebuking "the vulgar critics of the vulgar culture of 'mass society'" (1960/2006: 104), and by separating political ideology from its realization in 'mass society'. Thus, Shils proposed that "under normal circumstances of society, ideological receptiveness of the mass of the population would be at a low level of intensity" (1960/2006: 97), since rather than the embodiment of ideology *per se*, mass society is the "anonymous plurality of individual minds", or a "collective self-consciousness" (Shils 1960/2006: 153). Again, this differs from the relation of mass culture to political ideology in Brazil. The Vargas regime was also concerned to 'protect' Brazilians from the "threatening fluctuations of the international market" and the "contamination of tradition resulting from immigration or the destabilising forces of modernisation", but it did so *via* "a centralised cultural politics" in which "the press and popular culture ... were administered by representatives of the régime" (Sevcenko 2000: 98). Therefore, it was less an intellectual position and more a state apparatus that saw the political threats *and* the potencies of Brazilian mass culture. In relation to American anti-totalitarian thinking, then, Brazil would ironically make mass culture a part of its own authoritarianism. However, we must also remember that despite Shils's mitigation of the ideological threat of mass culture, Brazilian mass culture "was characterized by a sphere of 'restricted production' in opposition to a sphere of large production, where economic law prevails in response to the demands of the public" (Ortiz 1988b: 21).

### 1.2.2 Recovering Popular Culture

It has been useful to examine the relationships between elite and mass culture in British and American thinking, if only to identify that reconciliation has sometimes been sought between them. In fact, this introduces the role of popular culture to the idea of 'authentic' culture's rejuvenation. Leavis's call for an "organic community" (Leavis and Thompson 1933) was for a rural, agricultural way of life that did not survive industrialized England. Likewise, Arnold's "bond of a common culture" recalls pre-industrial England, in which "men [sic] of very various degrees of birth and property" united to constitute "a common and elevated social condition" (1896/1993: 3). Indeed, Hoggart called on Arnold in his appeal to the "admirable qualities of earlier working class culture" and not "its debased condition today" (1957/1998: 1). Thus, the reason that working-class culture resisted the insidious "popular Press", despite "its purported 'progressiveness' and 'independence,'" was its capacity "to live easily in compartments, to separate the life of home from the life outside, 'real' life from the life of entertainment" (Hoggart 1957/1998: 182).

Williams saw greater complexity in efforts to reclaim popular culture from its absorption into mass culture. While Williams proposed “three general categories in the definition of culture” (1961/2001: 57), he sought relations between, rather than compartmentalization of, ‘kinds’ of culture. As Williams summarizes his approach,

analyses range from an ‘ideal’ emphasis, the discovery of certain absolute or universal ... meanings and values, through the ‘documentary’ emphasis, in which clarification of a particular way of life is the main end in view, to [a social] emphasis which, from studying particular meanings and values, seeks not so much to compare these, as a way of establishing a scale, but by studying their modes of change to discover certain general ‘laws’ or ‘trends’, by which social and cultural development as a whole can be better understood” (1961/2001: 58).

While an ideal approach recalls Arnold’s definition of culture as “the best that is known and thought in the world” (1896/1993: 36; Williams 1961/2001: 57), and the documentary approach draws on Leavis’s “activity of criticism, by which the nature of the thought and experience, the details of the language ... are described and valued” (1961/2001: 57), Williams looked for greater complexities in culture, or a “theory of culture in the study of relationships between elements in a whole way of life” (1961/2001: 63). Therefore, in his own examination of the British press, “we find no simple process of desirable evolution, nor quite the simple class affiliations used in popular discussion” (Williams 1961/2000: 236). This led to Williams later reflecting that attempts to define elite and popular culture are “impenetrable without the closest consideration of the shifting structures of social class” and the implications of this for new “cultural groupings, selections and emphases, which run through ... otherwise radically different social orders” (1981: 127).

If Williams saw the increasing complexity of locating the popular in mass culture, then Hall and Whannel made precise efforts to do so. Key to their efforts is the ‘popular arts’, which Hall and Whannel define as a “closeness of audience and artist to certain shared experiences and moral attitudes” (1964: 56). By further definition, mass culture is “not a continuity from, but a *corruption of*, popular art”, whereas the “popular artist is ... closer to the high artist, since he [sic] has the capacity ... to lose himself in his material” (Hall and Whannel 1964: 68; original emphasis). Thus, in mass culture the “‘man behind the work’ is ‘sold’ to the audience – the element of manipulation is correspondingly high – instead of [us seeing] the man within the work” (Hall and Whannel 1964: 68). Differently than Arnold and Leavis, then, it was popular culture that required extrication from mass culture. Furthermore, it needed to be taught carefully, given “recognition that the media of mass communication play such a significant role in society, and especially in the lives of young people” (Hall and Whannel 1964: 21). Hall and Whannel therefore took from mass culture ‘authentic’ qualities that connected audiences and artists by means of talent,

performance and style. This, in other words, is the singularity of elite culture recovered from the massiveness that culture had otherwise become.

### 1.2.3 The Dialectics of Culture in Brazil

Conceptions of culture from British and American perspectives are deeply implicated in the emergence and growth of mass culture. Theorizing culture from these perspectives is therefore based on recovering or extricating 'authentic' forms of culture, whether elite or popular, from the morass of mass culture. Similarly, Brazilian culture is also implicated in mass culture, but Brazilian mass culture is linked with processes of modernization that have occurred in uneven ways, replicating neither 'the masses' nor the markets of North America and Europe. It is worthwhile to examine broader conceptualizations of culture from Brazilian perspectives, however. These only touch upon the role of mass culture in Brazil, but they further illustrate Brazil's contrasting processes of modernization that will allow my own analysis of Brazilian mass culture to proceed in the following chapters.

Bosi makes an important contribution to theorizing culture in the Brazilian context. Bosi explains that from the Latin word *colo*, *cultivation*, *cult* and *culture* are all derived. Despite the individual meanings that these words have acquired, their core signifies "something incomplete or transitive, a movement that passes, or has been passing, from agent to object. *Colo* is the root of ... a space in the process of being occupied, a land and people that can be worked on and subjected" (1992: 27). We can begin to understand culture in Brazil by Bosi's interrogation of both its linguistic and its socio-historical implications:

Culture thereby approximates the idea of *colo* as labor ... As culture's productive function becomes accentuated, man [sic] is obliged to gain systematic dominance over the material world and over other men. In this context, to acculturate a people means subjecting them, or in the best of cases, adapting them technologically to a social arrangement held to be superior (1992: 32 – 33).

Bosi problematizes the idea of culture in the colonial context as one aspect of the overall transformations of colonization. Therefore, the conditions of colonial Brazil meant that, "culture was rigorously stratified, allowing for social mobility only in exceptional cases of educational patronage that did not challenge the general rule. Mastery of the alphabet ... served as a dividing line between official culture and popular life. Day-to-day manifestations of colonial-era popular culture were organized and reproduced beyond the pale of writing" (Bosi 1992: 43). For Bosi, however, conceiving of Brazilian culture means looking beyond the divides that the colonial era imposed to a dialectic exchange between its oppositions: "Colonization refigured the three orders – cultivation, cult, and culture – within a dialectical structure" (1992: 37). Thus, alongside the stratification, patronage and

rule that articulated the boundaries of colonial culture so did forms of resistance to them. For Bosi, then, a dialectic exchange that occurred between “conquering, lettered cultures and conquered non-lettered cultures” exceeded the boundaries of colonial Brazil to recur throughout Brazilian cultural history:

If we make a synchronic incision through those moments from the history of popular culture in which the force of colonization renews itself, we will find cases in which the new interrupts or disorders the old and the primitive, or in which the antiquated adopts, with barely a sign of distress, a few traces of the modern wherever traditional culture has put down roots (1992: 75).

For Cândido, dialectics also characterize Brazilian culture. In certain nineteenth-century Brazilian literature, Cândido finds “a dialectic of order and disorder” (1970: 9) between the European ideals upon which Brazil based itself and the realities of the new nation. Rather than reinforcing the divides between Europe and Brazil, however, this dialectic enabled writers to play the appearance of an ordered society off of a consciousness that Brazilian reality was different. Thus, Brazil’s “young society, which sought to discipline the irregularity of its vigor in order to compare itself to the old societies that served as a model for it … developed certain ideal mechanisms of contention that appeared in all sectors.” In “the juridical field,” for instance, “norms rigidly and impeccably formulated created the appearance and illusion of a regular order that did not exist and because of this, constituted an ideal target”, and in literature, “taste was accentuated by repressive symbols, which appeared to tame the emergence of impulses” (Cândido 1970: 11).

Cândido traces a dialectics of order and disorder from the picaresque character in Iberian literary traditions to the Brazilian *malandro*, or a rogue-like figure. Cândido thus sees the “erudite influences and traces that give him the appearance of literary currents to form with the peculiar tendencies of Romanticism” (1970: 4). Particular to the dialectic that the *malandro* embodies, however, is a “certain absence of moral judgment and an acceptance of the ‘man as he is’, a mixture of cynicism and *bonhomie* that shows the reader a relative equivalency between the universe of order and of disorder; between what conventionally could be called the good and the bad” (Cândido 1970: 8). The poles of order/disorder, good/bad and the modern/traditional therefore appear consistent in conceptualizations of culture overall. But the dialectics that occur in negotiating between these poles become important to conceiving of Brazilian culture in particular.

Cultural polarities generally and the dialectics of their negotiation in Brazil specifically are central to the thinking of Bellei as well. Bellei draws on Lotman and Uspenski (1986) to conceive of culture as a semiotic system capable of encompassing as many objects as possible, but of simultaneously excluding objects that do not fit into a system. Given this

capability to include or exclude, Bellei places Brazilian culture “in the frontier”, which means it is has existed on “a borderline involving an imbalance of power and knowledge between what is central and what is peripheral, between what is regarded as a minus and what is regarded as a plus” (1986: 47). For Bellei, mediation thus becomes essential to not only articulating culture *as* central or peripheral but also to negotiating *between* cultures considered to be central or peripheral. Furthermore, Bellei sees two strategies to mediating culture *as/between* the central and peripheral: displacement and absorption. Displacement “implies a denial of the force of the original”, whereas absorption “implies its confirmation: one is motivated to take as one’s own only what is valuable in the first place” (Bellei 1986: 50). However, both reflect “an attempt to mediate between the central power and the margins to obtain some sort of identity in the frontier, either by displacing previous central identities through a certain strategy of reading, or by cannibalistically devouring them in a banquet of culture” (Bellei 1986: 50 – 51).

While Bellei finds such strategies of mediation throughout Latin American culture, he considers their implications for Brazil. Efforts to reconcile Brazil’s frontier culture have allowed mediation to become a cultural panacea, or “a kind of medicine to cure all of our cultural problems and to dissolve cultural contradictions. Like mythical discourse, the discourse of mediation constructs a fiction in which contradictory meanings may exist in harmony” (Bellei 1986: 54). Bellei therefore makes a crucial link between the dialectics of culture and struggles with modernity in Brazil, both of which have assumed a fictional harmony: “The very founding of the nation … was a question of mediation between the colonizer and the colonized. Unlike the Puritans who came to America, the intention of the Portuguese colonizer was not to create a new world … one of the reasons for our difficulty, even today, of introducing modernity to Brazil” (1986: 54).

Despite their distance from mass media, these perspectives still reflect television’s role in Brazil. We can see that in colonial Brazil and onwards, dialectic exchanges have guided expressions of culture *as* elite or popular, but also *between* the elite and popular. Literacy is therefore key to this dialectic exchange, not only in terms of ability but also in terms of acriticality, meaning recognizing whether the expression of culture indeed embodies the realities or merely reflects the promises of Brazilian modernity. But a modernity that has unfolded differently in Brazil than in Europe and the US is nevertheless at the core of a dialectical cultural exchange. As Bosi, Candido and Bellei have illustrated, the dialectics of culture in Brazil has occurred on different sides of a frontier, suggesting that while the imbalance of power and knowledge and the consistency of forces such as patronage and ‘general rule’ have favored one side, there is literacy and criticality reflected in forms of

popular culture. What these perspectives also help to begin asking is to what extent mass culture in the form of the Brazilian television mini-series, which also straddles frontiers, reflects change in the promises and the realities of modernity in Brazil.

### 1.3 Defining Values

Values are the second underlying theme of my thesis. Recalling the history of Brazilian television that I outlined above, values emerged as important to the forms and narratives and to the sponsoring institutions of early Brazilian television. Similar to culture, values have been conceptualized quite differently, however. For Connor (1992), this has to do with the aesthetic, cultural, economic, ethical, institutional, literary and scientific criteria with which values have been judged. The difficulty in conceptualizing values also has to do with a “conflict between absolute and relative value, a conflict traditionally polarized by … norms and values which are unconditional, objective and absolute,” and those that reflect “unmasterable historicity, heterogeneity and cultural relativity” (Connor 1992: 1). But by any criteria or approach, Frow argues: “There is no escape from the discourse of value, and no escape from the pressure and indeed the obligation to treat the world as though it were fully relational, fully interconnected” (1995: 134).

Above, I outlined how in European and American thinking, the prioritization of elite or popular culture often involved regarding mass culture with suspicion, if not as a ‘threat’ to the unity of a community’s or a nation’s culture. We can look at thinking about values similarly, in which “the choice of whether to assimilate the ethical to the aesthetic, or vice versa, has presented [values] as a choice between stability and turmoil” (Connor 1992: 5). We have also seen how European and American thinking assumes modernity is not only a fact but also the force that has enabled mass culture to disrupt elite or popular culture. This differs from Brazilian thinking, in which modernity contradicts a more fundamental misalignment between lived and imagined aspects of reality. These differences between European or American and Brazilian approaches to culture nevertheless reveal a similar concern for the *imperative to value* culture, which is “the inescapable pressure to identify and identify with whatever is valuable rather than what is not” (Connor 1992: 2). In turn, the imperative to value can be considered to “defer the arrival of ultimate value,” since it renders “every value subject to the force of evaluation” (Connor 1992: 3). Next, I look for similarities and differences between conceptualizations of values in European, American and Brazilian thinking. While we can look for similarities such as ‘generalized positivity’ or a ‘fully relational view’ that underpins the imperative to value, we can also anticipate

differences such as disparities in the way modernity has unfolded in these contexts and thus the implications of these differences for national values.

### 1.3.1 Conflict in National Values

If the imperativeness and interconnectedness of values reveal more conflicts than they do commonalities, then we should consider how values have been shaped by political and historical change and the implications of this for national values. Wittgenstein reflects on how the aftermath of World War II changed his assessment of aesthetic values:

My own thinking about art and values is far more disillusioned than would have been *possible* for someone 100 years ago. That doesn't mean, though, that it's more correct on that account. It only means that I have examples of degeneration in the forefront of my mind which were not in the *forefront* of men's [sic] minds then (1977/1980: 79; original emphases).

Wittgenstein is careful to distinguish ethics from aesthetics in his observations on values, however, reflected in his writing: "The spirit of this civilization makes itself manifest in the industry, architecture and music of our time, in its fascism and socialism, and it is alien and uncongenial to the author." Therefore, "the disappearance of a culture does not signify the disappearance of human value, but simply a certain means of expressing this value" (Wittgenstein 1977/1980: 6). Wittgenstein's differentiation of ethic and aesthetic values is nevertheless complicated by other values, namely economic and institutional values, which he observes by writing, "the human gaze has a power of conferring value on things; but it makes them cost more too" (1977/1980: 1).

Wittgenstein illustrates how values are shaped by political-historical turmoil and change. In this sense, values become conflicting when they are defined by precipitous change in a nation's history, thus when the interconnectedness of values is defined by the imposition of political history. Hofstede also offers a valuable perspective on the interconnectedness of national values, particularly on conflicts that can occur within and between constructs of national values. Hofstede writes, "values are mutually related and form value systems or hierarchies, but these systems need not be in a state of harmony ... Our internal value conflicts are one of the sources of uncertainty in social systems" (1980: 19). Furthermore: "Systematic value differences between countries form part of differences in culture", but [n]ational environments [also] differ in the way they handle basic dilemmas of forming societies" (Hofstede 1988: 24). Important here is Hofstede's idea of *basic dilemmas*, which he defines as the dilemmas of human inequality, human togetherness, gender roles, and dealing with the unknown (1988: 25 – 26; 1980: 313). Thus, conceiving of national values means recognizing these basic dilemmas as conflicting in internal and external relations

of interconnectedness. While Hofstede does acknowledge that the “use of *nations* as units for comparing mental programs is debatable” (1988: 17; original emphasis), he still finds that these are “four basic problems every society has to solve in its own way” (1988: 28), both within and between frameworks of national values.

Other theorists would not agree so easily, however, especially when values *are* framed by the nation. Margalit writes, “There are no supervalue of a higher order that provide us with a way of comparing the collections of values that are embodied in a society” (1997: 80). Therefore:

We cannot choose between different ways of life that we consider valuable ... we can only perform an existential act of choice that expresses our freedom to live this way rather than some other way, where both ... are valuable to us. But more often than we choose a way of life, we are born into one. National belonging is the outstanding example of this truth (Margalit 1997: 80).

From these perspectives, we can assume greater incompatibility than consensus within national values, particularly given discrepancies between political and ‘lived’ notions of what constitutes national values. Scheffler argues: “While the fact that our values are in tension means that there will inevitably be tensions within any political outlook that seeks to accommodate those values, it does not mean that all forms of accommodation are equally satisfactory” (1997: 205). Therefore, Scheffler might see Hofstede’s model as reflecting “an institutional configuration that represents a reasonable way of balancing a diverse group of values under one set of conditions [but that will] cease to do so under other conditions. And a practice or assumption that does not offend against a given value in some circumstances may do it considerable violence in others” (1997: 206).

Indeed, McElroy finds that a “breakdown” in American values since “counter-culture or alternative culture in the 1960s changed the behavior of ... Americans and did weaken the transmission of America’s capitalistic, Christian culture” (2006: 9). Therefore: “*Change* has been the password by which [counter-cultures] recognize each other, change in the name of a higher morality and a greater intelligence than American culture allegedly possesses, change as synonymous with being progressive” (McElroy 2006: 10; original emphasis). For McElroy, American values contain “beliefs [that] are positive. They affirm something. They are not negative.” Thus, American values are “contradicted by the self-conferred mission of the counter-culture movement to destroy American culture” (2006: 217). But the stability of American values weakened by counter-culture calls for change is itself contradicted by “rediscovery and rededication to America’s bedrock cultural beliefs [that are] underway” (McElroy 2006: 221), as rediscovery must also involve some kind of change. More importantly, it is ‘American values’ and ‘counter-culture values’ *both* that

reflect the 'freedom to live this way rather than some other way' and therefore the likely impossibility of the national framework 'accommodating all of society's values'.

Jacoby also examines change in American values. Contrary to McElroy's view, however, Jacoby argues that recent "unwillingness to give a hearing to contradictory viewpoints, or to imagine that one might learn anything from an ideological or cultural opponent, represents a departure from the best side of American popular and elite intellectual traditions" (2009: xix). For Jacoby, then, American values are not about "conformity to a set of simple beliefs that have been expressed through behavior for many generations" (McElroy 2006: 6). Rather, they *should* reflect change. Thus, "the 'great interests' of free inquiry and diffused knowledge will require fundamental changes in deeply entrenched attitudes that shape business, education, and the media as well as politics" (Jacoby 2009: 311). The divergence of these views on American values is significant, as they are in close proximity to each other and consider similar cultural, social and political events. This divergence is also significant, as it serves as a reflexive measure of a dialectic relationship between the desire for *cohesiveness* and the recognition of *divisiveness* in national values. Thus, it brings us back to conceiving of the dialectic nature of national values in Brazil, and at the same time, helps to further define my thesis research question.

### 1.3.2 The 'Other' and Brazilian National Values

In shifting from European and American to Brazilian views on values, Silverstone offers an important transition. Silverstone argues not only for a need to be aware of the 'other' but also to be aware of *other values*, "because I and the Other share a world, because I will be your Other as much as you are mine" (1999: 134). Moreover, Silverstone sees the ways in which the other and other values are represented as "contrapuntal" forces within the national context, which fits with a dialectic of cohesive/divisive national values that we just observed. Silverstone writes: "On the one hand we find ourselves being positioned by media representation as so removed from the lives and worlds of other people that they seem beyond the pale, beyond reach of care or compassion, and certainly beyond reach of any meaningful or productive action" (2007: 172). On the other hand,

the representation, just as frequent and just as familiar, of the other being just like us, as recoupable without disturbance in our own world and values has, though perhaps more benignly, the same consequence. We refuse to recognize not only that others are not like us, but that they cannot be made to be like us. What they have we share. What they are we know (Silverstone 2007: 173).

In discussing Brazilian national values, which I also elaborate on in Chapter 2, I illustrate how the other serves as both a divisive and cohesive force. While we have just seen this

dialectic of cohesion/division in European and American theory, in the Brazilian context, forces of colonization and totalitarianism further differentiate it. In turn, these differences have implications for modernity in Brazil. Finally, some of the issues that surfaced in the history of Brazilian television and in conceptualizing Brazilian culture will reappear in a discussion of Brazilian national values as well.

We can begin to think of Brazilian national values not only in terms of the presence of the other but also in terms of reconciling the presence of the other, itself a process that often invoked ideas external to Brazil. This immediately creates a problematic relation between semblance and reality in terms of Brazilian values, or what Ortiz calls a “contradiction between ‘appearance’ and ‘essence’, between being and not being [which] is intrinsic to Brazilian society” (2000: 128). It also indicates that negotiating between appearance and essence has been largely conducted in European terms, both in spite of and *because of* the indigenous and African peoples that already or came to populate Brazil. We recall how Cândido considers some nineteenth-century Brazilian literature to have inherited traits of European Romanticism, from which emerged a figure particular to Brazil who embodied a dialectic of order/disorder indicative of European/Brazilian socio-historical dynamics. In fact, elsewhere Cândido might describe the *malandro* as the ‘essence’ of *brasilidade*, or Brazilianness, as he embodies “the presence of local, descriptive elements as a differential trace and criteria of value” within a larger “history of Brazilians in their desire to have a [national] literature” (1975: 25 – 28). Perhaps it is not surprising, then, that the Indian had a central role in Brazilian Romantic literature, since the Indian represented another kind of dialectic between an exotic and ‘truly’ national other. As Skidmore explains: “With the coming of age of literary Romanticism, the Indian became a symbol of Brazilian national aspirations. He was transformed into a literary prototype having little connection with his actual role in Brazilian history … a sentimental literary symbol who offered no threat to the comfort of his readers” (1993/2005: 7).

The African other was a far less romanticized representative of Brazilian national values, however. Not only was the African non-native, thus lacking the Indian’s “naively good and deeply spiritual source and symbol of Brazil’s nationhood” (Stam 2006: 161), but the African also jeopardized the prospect of ‘whitening’ Brazil, even after abolition in 1888, and even for some abolitionists, who still favored “white predominance described in the more polite terms of ‘fusion’” (Skidmore 1993/2005: 24). Nevertheless, the Indian and the African other, despite respectively promising or threatening a ‘whitened’ Brazil, offered a distinct national value in terms of the way they could differentiate Brazil from other countries. As Skidmore writes: “Seen through the prism of the whitening ideology, Brazil

seemed to have the best of both worlds. It had avoided the bitter racial divisions of the United States, said to have been caused by the rigid prejudices of the Anglo-Saxons – a trait supposedly absent in the more libidinous Latin Portuguese" (1993/2005: 76).

In the period before the 1930 *coup* and the *Estado Novo*, which anticipated television's introduction to Brazil, the value of the other changed significantly. The cohesive/divisive dialectic of Brazilian national values informed by the other changed significantly as well. Theorists such as Tôrres, Bomfim and Freyre played an instrumental role in this shift in thinking. For Tôrres, using European models to interpret Brazilian reality was no longer tenable, much less as a means to decipher still-nascent national values. Tôrres not only saw the position of the Romantic-inspired 'nativists' as leading to opposition to foreign influence, he also saw the "root cause of the national problem" to be "the alienation of the elite from their own national reality." Furthermore, elite "intellectual immaturity and alienation ... had a historical explanation; they were symptoms of a lack of national consciousness, the absence of an accepted set of values" (Skidmore 1993/2005: 120). Thus it was only in recognizing the value of Brazil's condition for what it was – particularly in terms of "those peoples whom historical accident had placed in an 'inferior' position" – that would enable the elite "to find *Brazilian* solutions to Brazilian problems" (Skidmore 1993/2005: 121; original emphasis).

For Bomfim, devaluing the Brazilian nation because of its others was an internal reality and an inherited condition. The Spanish and Portuguese, in Bomfim's point of view, once 'discoverers' of the New World, had become ineffectual "hangers-on of the industrialized powers" of Europe and North America. The innate "parasitic character" of the colonizers of Latin America was thus "transmitted to the lands they colonized in the New World ... causing their host to suffer a distorted development of its various natural functions" (Skidmore 1993/2005: 114). Brazil's racist regard for its others, then, was something to overcome not only because "it was scientifically false but more importantly because it was an instrument being used by foreigners to demoralize and disarm" Brazil's view of itself (Skidmore 1993/2005: 116 – 117).

Freyre's work is widely considered to have overturned conceptions of Brazilian national culture and identity (Skidmore 1993/2005; Vianna 1999; Ortiz 2000; Passos and Costa e Silva 2006), although he made important contributions to rethinking Brazilian national values based on the socio-historical role of the Brazilian other as well. In the *Estado Novo* years, Freyre's work was particularly influential, namely for Vargas's vision of a cohesive Brazilian nation. While Freyre did not serve in an official capacity for the Vargas regime

(Williams 2001: 248), their beliefs coincided in the value of patriarchy for Brazil. Much of Freyre's work focused on the value of the African other to Brazilian sociocultural history in its own right and as a rationale for a multi-racial nation in which the European, Indian and African 'races' could be seen as equally valuable (Skidmore 1993/ 2005: 192). Freyre acknowledged the violent nature by which Africans came to Brazil, but he emphasized less this oppressive foundation and more the interpenetration of Europeans and Africans in a rural society. In his most influential work, Freyre's (1946) ultimate argument is that the miscegenation which occurred between the "complex of the Big House (*casa-grande*) and its slave quarters (*senzala*) ... corresponds to an entire social, economic, and political system characteristic of the patriarchy of Brazil" (Passos and Costa e Silva 2006: 52). While many critiques have been leveled against Freyre's theory that Brazil was founded on a benevolent exchange between slaves and masters, which I also discuss in Chapter 2, Passos and Costa e Silva make the important observation that such gaps in Freyre's ideas anticipated political appropriation: "*The Masters and the Slaves* at many points makes explicit the extremes of cruelty produced by the patriarchal Brazilian system. What it does not do ... is extend its criticism to the perverse implications of a system, with its essential antidemocratic effects to Brazilian political organization" (2006: 53).

Like Tôrres and Bomfim, then, Freyre constructed an interpretation of Brazilian reality that not only re-evaluated the place of the Brazilian other but also rejected the systems by which the other was valued as Brazilian. Therefore, "the important contribution made by the Freyrean interpretive scheme ... despite the enormous gaps between the extremes of Brazilian society, [is that] profound ethnic and cultural miscegenation guaranteed that the formation of Brazil was not merely the transposition of a European civilization to the tropics" (Passos and Costa e Silva 2006: 54). In turn, this allowed conceiving of the value of Brazil, if not Brazilian values, as the result of unique ethnic fraternization, particularly given the sorts of divides over which Europe's modern wars were waged. Thus, recalling Wittgenstein's reflections on his war-torn continent, Brazilian intellectuals were "eager to believe that Europe had entered its decline. They seemed to be resuming the dream that ... civilization would find rebirth in the New World, uncontaminated by the ancient rivalries and class conflicts that debilitated the Old World" (Skidmore 1993/2005: 171).

At the same time, the value of the Brazilian other for benign racial relations is precisely what allowed the Vargas regime to create the idea of a cohesive nation. This also enabled the Vargas and later military regimes to supplant the symbol of the Brazilian other with 'higher' values and goals, such as those of modernity. As Resende notes, "only what was admirable in the Other was consumed and through this 'consumption' the uniqueness of

the Other was destroyed" during Vargas-era projects of modernity (2000: 207). This also recalls Ortiz's position on the acriticality of Brazilian modernity, in which Brazil's "first" and 'second' industrial revolutions – that of 1930 and that of the military – were carried out by authoritarian régimes, a fact frequently ignored by those who believe that the modern is intrinsically 'good'" (2000: 141). Thus, modernity became a value itself (Ortiz 2000) in much of Brazil's intellectual and political history, but a value that contradicts itself by having alternately rejected and embraced patriarchy as the means of achieving modernity. As such, Oliven's comments on the contradictory values placed on Brazilian modernity are fitting, as "the peculiarity of Brazilian society lies precisely in its capacity to take on those aspects of modernity that are of interest to it and to transform them into something suited to its own needs, in which the modern interacts with the traditional, the rational with the emotional and the formal with the personal" (2000: 70).

## 1.4 Establishing Identity

The other also provides a transition from values to identity, the third major theme of my thesis. 'Identity', like culture and values, has been theorized from many different angles. However, I focus on the constructs of 'race', gender and nation in terms of identity, both because of their overall theoretical significance and because of their place in formations of Brazilian national identity. Additionally, if one concept ties these constructs together, it is *difference* and the ways in which difference underscores the identity of the other. But difference also illustrates how *change* has occurred within thinking about 'race', gender and nation as constructs of identity. Therefore, change becomes a means to problematize and perhaps surpass the differences that the other signifies for constructs of identity. As I discuss, change in these constructs of identity is important to thinking within European, American and Brazilian traditions, both in overlapping and differing respects.

### 1.4.1 Difference in 'Race', Gender and Nation

We can begin to understand difference by Derrida's (1982) conceptualization of *différance*, a sense-making process in which meaning is both *deferred* and *differential*. It is deferred by constant reference to other signifiers and differentiated by oppositions or hierarchies that reinforce meaning itself. Hall invokes *différance* to contrast the idea of identity as "one, shared culture, a sort of collective 'one true self' ... which people with a shared history and ancestry hold in common" with a "second position [which] recognises that ... there are also critical points of deep and significant *difference* which constitute 'what we really are'; or rather – since history has intervened – 'what we have become'" (1990: 223 – 225; original emphasis). This second sense, the 'becoming' involved in establishing identity, is

therefore what gives it deferred and differential qualities: it will never be “an already accomplished fact”, since identity is defined by *what it is not*, “a subject or set of peoples as the Other of a dominant discourse” (Hall 1990: 222 – 225).

Difference in this dual sense is crucial to thinking about ‘race’ as a construct of identity, particularly in postcolonial theory. As differential, Cabral argues that the “definition of an identity, individual or collective, is at the same time the affirmation and denial of a certain number of characteristics which define … individuals or groups through *historical* (biological and sociological) factors”, while in a deferred sense “identity is not a constant, precisely because [these] factors … are in constant change” (1973: 64; original emphasis). Within the context of colonization, then, in which Cabral argues that identity becomes an inseparable part of the dominant or the suppressed culture, we “can therefore draw the conclusion that the possibility of a movement group keeping (or losing) its identity in the face of foreign domination depends on the extent of the destruction of its social structure under the stresses of domination” (1973: 66). This is even more directly voiced by Fanon, who wrote: “As long as the black man is among his own, he will have no occasion, except in minor internal conflicts, to experience his being through others” (1967: 109). Within the structure of colonization, however, in which the other is differentiated and deferred by identity *and* culture, “not only must the black man be black; he must be black in relation to the white man” (Fanon 1967: 110).

However, identity conceived in terms of polar difference and infinite deferral recalls the absolutes of debates over elite and popular culture and cohesive and divisive values. As we saw in both, absolutes deny that competing and changing, not static or innate forces, more likely guide constructs of identity. Thus, Hall’s insistence that “the question of the black subject cannot be represented without reference to the dimensions of class, gender, sexuality and ethnicity” (1989/2003: 92), reflects significant changes in the construct of racialized identities. And when Gilroy observes a “historic turn away from the simpler efficacy of blackness”, he notes that it “cannot be separated from the pursuit of more complex and highly-differentiated ways of fixing and instrumentalising culture and difference” (2002: xiv). These observations do not imply that ‘race’ should become a less politicized part of constructs of identity. Rather, ‘race’ should be conceived of as part of other, *equally* political constructs of identity, which, as Hall notes, include gender.

Not only in postcolonial theory is difference crucial to recognizing how identity has been conceived. In the construction of gender, as de Beauvoir wrote, woman “is defined and differentiated with reference to man and not he with reference to her … He is the Subject,

he is the Absolute – she is the Other" (1949/2003: 150). This has allowed for conceiving of woman as a myth, argues Witting, in which "woman" supplies a "false consciousness ... [that] consists of selecting among the features of the myth (that women are different from men) those which look good and using them as a definition for women" (1981/2003: 159). In fact, Witting equates myths of gender and 'race', in that "race, exactly like sex, is taken as 'immediate given', a 'sensible given', 'physical features,' belonging to a natural order" (1981/2003: 159). Furthermore, myths of both gender and 'race' are derived from "physical and direct perception", therefore providing "an 'imaginary formation' which reinterprets physical features ... through the network of relationships in which they are perceived" (Wittig 1981/2003: 159). The problem with conceiving of identity in terms of 'physical perception' is that it leads to difference as a basis for *social* constructions. Thus, Witting argues that, "For women to answer the question of the individual subject in materialist terms is first to show ... that supposedly 'subjective', 'individual', 'private' problems are in fact social problems ... that sexuality is not for women an individual and subjective expression, but a social institution of violence" (1981/2003: 162).

In gender as in postcolonial theory, however, difference provides a means of isolating as much as *intersecting* the subjective and social sides of identity. Crenshaw's argument is therefore especially fitting, in that "intersectionality might be more broadly useful as a way of mediating the tension between assertions of multiple identity and the ongoing necessity of group politics" (1991/2003: 190 – 191). This also connects with the ideas of Butler, who writes, "feminist theory has taken the category of women to be foundational to any further political claims without realizing that the category effects a political closure on the kinds of experiences articulable as part of a feminist discourse" (1990: 325). Invoking the postmodern critique of a unified subject, Butler asserts that as an 'identity', "the category of women is internally fragmented by class, color, age and ethnic lines", and calls for "honouring the diversity of the category [by] insisting upon its definitional nonclosure" (1990: 327). By confronting the "power relations that establish that identity in its reified mode to begin with", and therefore avoiding 'political closure' which gender theory itself can inadvertently create, Butler argues that:

The loss of that reification of gender relations ought not to be lamented as the failure of feminist political theory, but, rather, affirmed as the promise of the possibility of complex and generative subject-positions as well as coalition strategies that neither presuppose nor fix their constitutive subjects in their place (1990: 339).

Given Hall and Gilroy's positions on 'race', which they see not as an absolute, rather as one of many means to evince formations of collective identities, Crenshaw and Butler's positions are similar. They do not suggest disposing of gender as a construct of identity,

rather intersecting gender with other, more 'complex and generative subject-positions' in order to replace the notion of fixed subjectivity with coalition strategies.

Replacing fixity with coalition strategies extends to thinking about national identity. An immediate objective, then, is to avoid essentializing or universalizing notions of 'national identity', where Wittgenstein's reflections on European fascism serve as an example. We can also refer to Gilroy's interrogation of 'race' with the nation as well, "where categories formed in the intersection of 'race' and the nation state are themselves exhausted ... for studying this history for the African diaspora's consciousness of itself has been defined in and against constricting national boundaries" (2002: 207). Theorizing national identity, as with racialized or gendered identities, therefore means that difference is of continued importance and uncertainty.

In globalization theory, where the nation state may also seem exhausted, it nevertheless becomes a way to define 'globalization' through relations of difference *within* and *between* nations. According to Jameson, we can define "globalization as an untotalizable totality which intensifies binary relations between its parts – mostly nations, but also regions and groups, which, however, continue to articulate themselves on the model of 'national identities'" (2001: xii). Emphasizing the binary relations that form this totality, he adds, "such relations are first and foremost ones of tension or antagonism, when not outright exclusion: in them each term struggles to define itself against the binary other" (2001: xii). Featherstone, in somewhat similar thinking, interprets the postmodern idea of 'decentred identities' to propose the "transmodern" identity (1995: 45). If we extend this to the idea of the transmodern national identity, then according to Featherstone,

the globalization process should be regarded as opening up the sense that now the world is a single place with increased contact becoming unavoidable, we necessarily have a greater dialogue between various nation-states ... a dialogical space in which we can expect a good deal of disagreement, clashing of perspectives and conflict, not just working together and consensus (1995: 102).

Furthermore, disagreement, clash and conflict between nations also occur within nations, suggesting for Featherstone an "emotional identification" comprised both of "desire for the immersion in the directness, warmth and spontaneity of the local community" and "revulsion, disgust and the desire for distance" from it (1995: 105). By extension again, this implies that within a global framework, national identity is established not only by a dialogic exchange between the local and the distant but also 'immersion' and 'distance' *within* and *between* the local/distant, complicating how national identity might otherwise be reduced to foreign/national difference. Thus, if we accept that national identity is comprised of intersecting local/distant relations which both solidify and complicate its

formation, then we can better understand “the need to mobilize a particular *representation* of national identity, as part of the series of unavoidable contacts, interdependencies and power struggles which nation-states become locked into with their significant other” (Featherstone 1995: 112; emphasis added).

To a degree we have seen how ‘race’ and gender solidify and complicate the presence of Brazil’s ‘significant other’ in national culture and values. We have also seen some of the political and intellectual means of dealing with Brazil’s significant others, shaped by the intersection of local and distant forces. What we have not seen, however, is how ‘race’ and gender fit into changing concepts of Brazilian national identity, thus how Brazilian national identity reflects its *own* intersections of the distant and local. Ultimately, this will anticipate a landscape of national representation in the analysis that follows.

#### **1.4.2 ‘Race’, Gender and Change in Brazil**

The construct of ‘race’ from a postcolonial perspective is crucial, as Brazil’s colonial and postcolonial histories reflect many of the ideas expressed above. In particular, Brazil has also conceived of its identity in terms of racial absolutes. Thus Brazilian national identity, from colony to republic, has followed an intellectual path that has seen ‘race’ through the lenses of Romanticism, positivism and nationalism (Skidmore 1993/2005) before arriving at what de Souza Martin calls “a complicated combination of modernity and extremes of poverty” (2000: 261), in which those extremes are still primarily constituted by Brazil’s others. A significant difference between Brazil and other postcolonial contexts, however, is that efforts to come to terms with its racial identity have resulted in the “sublimation of violence in discourses on race relations”, leading to “idealization of Brazil as a country that, less affected by a rigid segregationist logic, … would have achieved the mysterious and long-desired ideal of a racial democracy” (Meira Monteiro 2008: 14). The intersection of ‘race’ with other constructs of identity has nevertheless occurred in Brazil, such that Freyre’s assertions that “the only way of being national in Brazil [is] first to be regional”, and by extension, “the only way to be universal [is] first to be national” (Oliven 2000: 59), appear to persist. On the other hand, it is believed that Freyre also wrote: “This idea of race as being synonymous with nation holds true in Brazil” (Clarana 1918/1999: 358), raising questions of the extent to which this still holds true.

Constructs of gender have also changed in Brazil, but in the same respect as ‘race’, they raise questions about how gender fits into Brazilian national identity. Representations of gender in tandem with ‘race’ in fact raise even larger questions about national identity.

Recalling the role of the Indian in Brazilian Romantic literature and the implications of this role for “the beginning of our true literature” (Candido 1975: 25), Treece follows how the Caramuru myth shifted from denoting “a strong indigenous” to “a passive colonising element” to reflect “the particular nature of Brazilian colonial society and the place of the Indian woman within it” (1984: 153). Caramuru, the name given to the Portuguese map-maker Diogo Álvares on arrival to Brazil, is debated.<sup>2</sup> However, as “mediator between the Portuguese government and the Indians, his loyalty to Portugal, his agricultural enterprise and his role as patriarchal head of the founding family of Bahia” (Treece 1984: 164 – 165), the myth of Álvares is consistent. Also important to this myth is Paraguaçú. As the daughter of a tribal chief, eventually Álvares’s wife and the mother of their many children, Paraguaçú signifies “the ideal and symbol of the Indian convert” (Treece 1984: 154). But Paraguaçú also embodies “the Brazilian landscape in its most formidable and indomitable aspect,” thus “the colonist’s most praiseworthy achievements … to tame the native creature” and, notably, fertility, which “in colonial terms [is] the Indian woman’s most important attribute, and that of the black female slave after her” (Treece 1984: 154).

But Paraguaçú is not only significant for what she symbolizes in a ‘foundational’ national legend. Symbolic conjunctions of gender and ‘race’ also carry into modern constructs of the Brazilian nation. In her study of public school textbooks from the *Estado Novo* era, Nava finds that the use of the words *pátria* (fatherland) and *mãe-pátria* (mother-country) helped to “make a connection in the children’s minds between appropriately respectful behavior in the family … and an appropriately loyal attitude of patriotism for Vargas’s New State” (2006: 102). Moreover, the feminine use of *pátria* and a masculine patriarchy symbolized by Vargas himself “helped the nationalists distance modern Brazil from the backwardness of the nation’s past”, such that if “devotion to the state would subsume differences of race, then the new national ‘family’ would be harmonious and unified” (Nava 2006: 102). Ultimately, however, this rhetoric was not intended to dispel racial and gendered difference. Rather, with gender “perceived differences were used to rationalize and promote separateness of and the hierarchical relationship between the masculine and the feminine”, and with ‘race’, “differences between white, black, and *mestiço* were acknowledged and the hierarchy remained unchanged, but the separate identities were fused into a whitened ideal” (Nava 2006: 112). What we can glean from these accounts is

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<sup>2</sup> Álvares, whose ship wrecked off the Bahian coast in the early sixteenth century, later helped to found Salvador da Bahia, Brazil’s first governing city. The indigenous word *caramuru* is largely interpreted as ‘man of fire’, due to Álvares’s use of firearms before the Indians. This is debatable, however, given “the unheroic, rather ironic overtones of [its] true meaning … ‘the Eel Man’” (Treece 1984: 161).

not as much the consolidation of gender and racial differences as their intersections in *reconstructing difference to symbolize 'Brazilianess'*.

Finally, it is worthwhile to consider gendered/racialized difference in masculine form as symbolizing Brazilianness, and within the same context of Vargas-era efforts to establish a cohesive, modernized nation. The *malandro*, recalling Cândido's relocation of him from Iberian traditions to early Brazilian literature, is a salient example of this. Webb provides a lengthy but key definition of the *malandro* in modern Brazil:

the urban black *malandro* [is] a figure associated with his ability to hustle and live off his wits from illegal or semi-legal occupations. *Malandragem* as a way of being incorporates plural and contradictory significations. It can signify anything from utter self-interest and a willingness to exploit all social relationships and values for purely selfish reasons, to a desultory antiessentialism (a refusal to abide by social rules or morality or to fit into models of national identity, scorn for the positivist work ethic), or to subaltern resistance (1998: 239).

Different from Paraguaçú or *mãe-pátria* as bases for a white patriarchal Brazilian state, the *malandro* myth "helped negotiate the terms of [his] sociocultural survival by winning and marking cultural space for the [Afro-Brazilian] community" (Webb 1998: 240). Given the late decree of abolition, the place of black men in a scheme of Brazil whitened by Indian and black women, and the replacement of slave by European immigrant labor (Skidmore 1993/2005), "work [that] was associated with slavery and the loss, not gain, of freedom and dignity" was therefore supplanted with "the world of pleasure: sex, samba, dancing, carnival, gambling and drinking", raising *malandragem* to "the status of an ethos" (Webb 1998: 242 – 243). Important, then, is the *malandro*'s representation across Brazilian culture, from Leonardo in *Memórias de um Sargento de Milícias* in the nineteenth century (Cândido 1970), to Macunaíma, 'the hero without character' (Oliven 2000); Pedro Malasartes (Da Matta 1991a); and *Ópera do Malandro* (Webb 1998) in the twentieth century. Important as well is the *malandro*'s elevation from marginalized figure to 'status of ethos' in relation to women, however. As Webb points out, the prevalence of the *malandro* in popular culture and especially samba (see also Vianna 1999) is often discussed and celebrated, but "little mention is made of the fact that *malandragem* rarely, if ever, involved a deconstruction of monolithic and phallocentric representations of women" (1998: 247). It is contradictory that the *malandro* symbolizes "an *other* against which hegemonic masculinity constructed itself, and the worker the *other* against which the *malandro* constructed his masculinity," as both rely on "the subjugation of woman ... as a passive and as an inferior *other* against which to anchor their vying subjectivities" (Webb 1998: 247; original emphases). Again, it seems that the intersections of gender and 'race' were as deeply embedded in constructs of Brazilian national identity as they were in establishing boundaries within it.

Given that Brazilian national identity is represented by the intersections as much as the limitations of 'race' and gender, it is worthwhile to briefly look at how this reflects upon Brazil in a *global* perspective. Thus, we should recall Jameson's definition of globalization as tensions and antagonisms between nations' internal and external relations with their others. Likewise for Featherstone, globalization is comprised of the desire for immersion in or distance from the local and distant. In comparison, we have seen how articulations of Brazilian national identity also involve dialogic relations of immersion in or distance from its others. If we consider how Brazil views itself globally, we see how such tensions extend beyond local or national difference. The tension between imitation and originality emerges instead, reminding us of Brazil's negotiations with modernity, and at the same time, situating its national identity in a global framework.

Schwarz has written that Brazil's efforts to adopt the Enlightenment ideals of equality and liberty reflect 'ideas out of place' (1977). In other words, Schwarz questions how these ideals could be concomitant with slavery, and following that, the institution of 'favor' established between propertied and 'free' Brazilians, engendering new but still disproportionate social relations. "Slavery gives the lie to liberal ideas; but favour, more insidiously, uses them for its own purposes, originating a new ideological pattern. The element of arbitrariness, the fluid play of preferences to which favour subjects whatever it touches, cannot be fully rationalized" (Schwarz 1973/1992: 22). However much these processes may be attributed to Brazil's imitation and then mutation of European ideals, Schwarz discerns imitation from the pressure, if not the imperative, for Brazil to situate itself in a modern, global perspective. Thus, while Brazil's "[s]olutions are reproduced from the advanced world in response to cultural, economic and political needs ... the notion of copying, with its psychologicistic connotations, throws no light whatsoever on this reality" (Schwarz 1986/1992: 7). Instead, "two Brazils", the first part of an emerging global order and the second a remnant of colonial oppression, "arose in turn out of the English industrial revolution and the consequent crisis of the old colonial system ... Thus Brazil's backward deformation belongs to the same order of things as the progress of the advanced countries" (Schwarz 1986/1992: 14). Schwarz does not propose rejecting the idea of imitation to conceive of Brazil in global terms, however much it creates "unreal oppositions" like the national/foreign and the original/imitative (1986/1992: 16). Rather, we should look for "the share of the foreign in the nationally specific, of the imitative in the original and of the original in the imitative" as aspects of *dialectical criticism*, which "investigates the same anachronism and seeks to draw out a figure of the modern world ... either full of promise, grotesque or catastrophic" (Schwarz 1986/1992: 16).

The notion of 'backwardness', or a modernity contingent on advanced countries' ideals but distorted by 'old colonial systems', therefore assumes its own global significance. It solidifies divides between 'developed' and 'developing' worlds, but it is also a common conceptual thread in thinking about the latter contexts. I discuss this further in Chapter 2. Anticipating this, Gullar offers a useful perspective on Brazil's backwardness in a global sense. Similar to Schwarz, Gullar sees the tendency to think of Brazil as having imitated and distorted advanced countries' ideals of modernity, especially European vanguards of art and literature. Thus, while a work of art "does not have the same significance in Paris and Recife for the simple fact that in these two places, it is seen in different modes, from different angles", what "Paris says, Recife hears" and what "Paris speaks, Recife repeats" (Gullar 1965/2002: 53). But if "Brazil is a country that lives for the outside" (Gullar 1965/2002: 58), its tendency to copy the outside is not this simple. First, because in Europe or in the US, "common is that the nation preexists the State, but in our case, the preexisting nation was Portuguese [so] the Brazilian nation ... needed the State created to come into existence" (Gullar 1969/2002: 167). Therefore, "the existence of nationality in Brazil was always an inquiry demanding a response ... something that was due to be constructed" (Gullar 1969/2002: 168). Second, the 'new' and therefore the original become uncertain ideals, not only because in Brazil their constructs are unfinished but also because they are situated between old and new dominating systems:

For us, the old is domination, of the past and also of the present, because our present is dominated by the same who bring us the new. We need the industry and *know-how* they have, but with that industry and *know-how*, which we need to liberate ourselves, come domination. Thus, the new for us is the contradiction of liberty and submission. But this is because imperialism is, at the same time, the new and the old (Gullar 1969/2002: 176; emphases added).

Gullar's perspective suggests that for Brazilian national identity, lodged between old and new global systems, little has changed. Human toil has been supplanted with industry 'know-how' but with both, Brazil's dependency on the outside remains the same. Again, Gullar's perspective on Brazil in a global framework is not this simple. We can in fact use his ideas to think of Brazilian national identity as formed by dialectical exchanges of both national and global forces. Thus, the "national and international are realities of the same reality, dialectically identical and distinct. At the core of international reality there are national realities that more or less have the same constitutional weight" (Gullar 1969/2002: 230). To illustrate, according to Gullar, Brazil's national realities follow its regional identities, such as those of the prosperous southeast and impoverished northeast. In turn, this reflects "broader particularities or more restricted internationalities", as with "the so-called Third World, which encompasses the underdeveloped countries of Latin America,

Asia, Africa and Oceania" in contrast with the developed countries of Europe and North America (Gullar 1969/2002: 231). Following this logic, then, the degree to which Brazil overcomes disparities between its national realities is the same "degree [to which] those countries have conscience of their own specificities and identities, a conscience [that] brings them to identify with each other, to act together, [and] have more power to change international globality" (Gullar 1969/2002: 231). In this sense, perhaps Brazil's conscience of its 'specificities and identities' may provide a means to supersede not only the idea of backwardness but also an acritical acceptance of global modernity.

## 1.5 Framing the Research Object and Question

My initial reflections defined the Brazilian television mini-series as the research object of this thesis. I then provided a brief history of Brazilian television with the mini-series an implicit part of its sociocultural and institutional fabric. From that overview emerged the themes of culture, values and identity. In the discussion that followed, I suggested that these themes are important to the ways in which national contexts are constructed and in which national contexts overlap and differ in representing their constructions. As such, I compared mostly (but not only) European, American and Brazilian ideas about culture, values and identity to arrive at some key overlapping and differing issues. The first is modernity. Modernity largely preceded the emergence of mass culture in European and American societies. Therefore literacy, democracy and socioeconomic development were also in place, even if the emergence of mass culture was contested. In Brazil, modernity is symbolized by mass culture, especially television, thus modernity's *actual* attributes have often been supplanted with their *imaginary* existence. This is particularly the case where mass culture has been used as a means for imparting political ideology or for controlling dissent against it. The second is the presence of the other. In the thinking we have seen, the other is an absolute constructed *via* myths of its subjective and social difference, the results of which create desire for or distance from it. In Brazil, this appears no different. However, Brazil is unique from other contexts, even those such as the US where the other has also been institutionally oppressed. Rather, Brazil's others have been reconstructed to symbolize political or social ideals quite separate from their realization.

Finally, there is the issue of originality *versus* imitation. In a global framework we have seen that the ideals on which Brazil has attempted to model itself, from Romanticism to fascism, have been imitations. Even the ways in which Brazil has distinguished itself, for instance, as a multi-racial society where segregation would never work (Skidmore 1993/2005), depended on American ideas in order to have national relevance. Furthermore, the

systems of colonization and slavery on which Brazil was established and which were eventually abolished left Brazil “ashamed – for these were taken to be ideas of the time – and resentful, for they served no purpose” in a new, global order (Schwarz 1986/1992: 28). Given these perspectives, the difficulty for Brazilian scholars to conceive of Brazilian national identity in terms of originality indeed becomes apparent. However, what runs through this and other issues is the conceptual thread of dialectical exchange. In Brazil and in other nations, dialectical exchange reflects the complexity of their culture, values and identity. But it also helps to locate the elements exchanged in articulating nations’ culture, values and identity to a greater extent than absolutes, which only suggest their boundaries. Therefore, the claim to Brazil’s originality perhaps lies in the particular ways these very issues are engaged in dialectical exchange, which in turn may reveal contours particular to Brazilian national culture, values and identity.

As I mentioned, the Brazilian television mini-series has been only an implicit part of this discussion of modernity, the other, imitation/originality, and the ways in which these issues shape Brazilian national culture, values and identity. But as I first observed of the mini-series, it simultaneously offers historical and contemporary perspectives on issues and themes such as these. Therefore, in the kinds of representations that the mini-series makes, it suggests *continuity* and *change* in the ways in which Brazil has negotiated such issues as part of its culture, values and identity. Taking the observational, conceptual, historical and contemporary dimensions of this chapter into account, I pose the following research question that will guide my investigation of the Brazilian television mini-series:

*In what ways does the Brazilian television mini-series represent continuity and change in Brazilian national culture, values and identity?*

## 1.6 Overview of Thesis Chapters

Chapter 2 resumes from where this one leaves off. It introduces hybridity to constructs of the nation in order to problematize the relations between them. I begin with postcolonial theory, move to Latin American scholarship, and end with Brazilian thinking about how the idea of hybridity offers an interpretation of societies and cultures shaped by histories of difference and polarity. I end Chapter 2 with extensive discussion of Brazil to further distinguish its conceptualizations of hybridity from those preceding it. Thus, I consider how Brazil defines hybridity by the implications of its history and political ideology. The resulting framework therefore places different conceptions of hybridity in the context of Brazil in order to understand how we can interpret Brazil by how it has interpreted itself.

Chapter 3 extends hybridity from postcolonial culture and society to texts and genres. I begin with a conceptual landscape of 'the life of the text' and 'the broadcast space', which illustrates the forces and agents involved in television in the national context. These ideas also illustrate that institutions and power occupy a landscape otherwise concerned with popular texts, genres, authors and audiences. Thus, I engage in both cultural studies and political economy perspectives. In areas 'traditionally' the concern of cultural studies, I question the idea that class and gender define readers and viewers of popular texts, and conversely, that the class and gender of audiences of popular texts have no implications for institutional power. Finally, I situate the Brazilian mini-series in a global context of serials, series, soap opera and the Latin American *telenovela*. This establishes a space in which I proceed to examine the mini-series for the cultural implications of its formal and narrative features, and for the institutional power behind it and the nation it represents.

In Chapter 4, I discuss the methods used in this study. Drawing from Chapter 3, I argue for the method of discourse analysis in analyzing the political and cultural dimensions of television texts. Furthermore, I argue for a Foucauldian approach to discourse analysis in relation to a structural approach. In addition to analyzing the texts, I discuss the methods of interviewing mini-series creators and accessing archival material on the mini-series in the Brazilian press. Therefore, I consider how discourse analysis provides theoretical and methodological approaches to analyzing multiple kinds of texts. I then discuss methods used in television studies, particularly the aesthetic, technical and historical concerns that they raise. Finally, I explain my sampling and implementation strategies, accounting for the implications of a study heavily populated by Globo mini-series, historical sampling, ethics, and the challenges of analysis in Portuguese, a language not natively my own.

In Chapter 5, I discuss the ways in which the mini-series invokes geography and gender to represent Brazilian national culture. In terms of geography, I find that the mini-series continuously represents tensions between centers and margins, regardless of whether the narrative is historical or contemporary. I do find change, however, in more recent mini-series that look to the foundational myths or histories of Brazil in order to interpret issues of contemporary existence. I also find that the mini-series consistently offers narratives of a desire to belong to a place, which in turn reflects continuity in larger issues of 'being' or 'becoming' Brazilian. Again, however, where we do see change in this meta-narrative is in terms of turning inwards to represent issues of inclusion, belonging and unity within Brazil. A discourse of becoming Brazilian is also reflected in the production of the mini-series. Creators and critics of the mini-series speak about foreign and national models or

modes of production in a way that calls into question the definition of the 'authentically' Brazilian. Thus, I correlate a discourse of what comprises the authentically Brazilian with the tension between imitation and originality that has defined Brazil's negotiations with modernity. In terms of gender, I find that there is a practice-based discourse informed by two, prolific women creators' entry into television production, which has come to shape the genre by the emphases these creators place on the emotional and educational aspects of the mini-series. On a representational level, I discuss the continuity of the archetypes of the sufferer and *malandro* in the mini-series. The sufferer is consistent in the way she symbolizes the political-historical sufferings of Brazil as a nation. Likewise, the *malandro* reappears across time and space to continuously represent his mix of seduction and self-interest. Given the consistency of these roles in the mini-series, I conclude the chapter by asking whether they compound or rather offer us a way to challenge representations of gender in the construction of Brazilian national culture.

In Chapter 6, I discuss the dialectics of authority and resistance in the narratives of the mini-series, and in creative and critical discourse. Authority and resistance underpin the mini-series' narratives of Brazil, from the colonial to the contemporary era, emphasizing the way that civil, political and religious authority has shaped Brazil. At the same time, we see how popular and grassroots resistance to enduring forms of authority also define Brazilian national values. I also find a marked difference in the way the mini-series either projects intimate conflicts of authority and resistance onto the national stage, or inserts national conflict into the intimate, domestic space, a difference that reveals the continuity of political, class, moral and family values in depicting Brazilian national values. Equally notable is the changing role of the Brazilian other in representations of national values. Black and Indian Brazilians assume prominent roles of resistance in foundational stories, and then vanish during the 'economic miracle' of Brazil, its erosion and disillusionment following a corrupt redemocratization process. Thus, I find that the Brazilian other plays an ambivalent role in the mini-series as either a figure in important counter-histories or a vehicle of the conciliatory hegemony that has marked Brazil's negotiations of modernity. Creators contribute to a discourse of authority and resistance by emphasizing the literary and historical authenticity of the mini-series and at the same time, distancing the form from the conventions of the *telenovela*. However, the 'rules' of authenticity generated in creating the mini-series can limit creators to the extent that the conventions defining the *telenovela* are replicated. Therefore, I find that some mini-series creators invoke intuition as a way of facilitating a more human exchange between the genre, medium and viewers, and in response to industry demands. Critics also reveal a form of resistance to the mini-series and Brazilian television. They acknowledge that the mini-series depicts important

and unresolved periods in Brazilian history, but critics are also aware of the tendency of Brazilian television, and particularly Globo, to impose its own value system on Brazilian viewers, which continues today.

In Chapter 7, I look at the ways in which Brazilian national identity is represented in the generic identity of the mini-series and in the form's narrative construction and strategies. I find that the mini-series invokes several traditions we might consider foreign, and some we might consider Brazilian. The crime/detective, horror and Western genres, as well as *chanchada*, *Cinema Novo* and magical realism, all play a role in the generic identity of the mini-series. Therefore, we see the issue of the imitative resurface, but we also see that by imitating the foreign, an original narrative of Brazilian experience emerges, as does a set of generic qualities that give the Brazilian mini-series its originality. I also find that critics and creators identify the mini-series in relation to Brazilian film and *telenovelas*, a relation that helps us see how the 'image as action' bridges popular and sophisticated production modes, and cinematic and televisual vocabularies. Additionally, I find that language and literacy play a significant part in the generic identity of the mini-series and in a discourse of education that enters the larger sociocultural space of Brazilian national identity. Both the mini-series' mis/representation of facts and the way critics defend the key events and figures of Brazilian history illustrate how this discourse takes shape. However, I also find that the mini-series facilitates *interpreting* Brazilian history through narrative strategies of multiplicity, circularity and ambiguity, which differ from the *telenovela*'s linear trajectory and suggest an alternate discourse of literacy and education. I then identify the tensions that underpin the mini-series' narratives and characterize the form: between reality and fantasy, education and emotion, and convention and experimentation. But I also find that an element of *celebrating* Brazilian national identity often underscores these narrative and formal qualities. Thus, I conclude by arguing that the hybridization of myth, history and the celebratory both provides the mini-series with a sense of narrative immediacy in the space of Brazilian television and reflects a consciousness of Brazil's role on a global stage.

My conclusions in Chapter 8 are both reflexive and expansive. I reflect on the empirical implications of the conceptual approaches to culture, values and identity I have taken in Chapters 1, 2 and 3. In terms of culture, I find that there is still a tendency to categorize culture into elite and popular camps, despite the blurring, or rather, the *remaking* of such divisions, which we have seen in the Brazilian television mini-series. Given the findings of this study, however, a significant difference I discuss between European or American and Brazilian thinking on cultural divisions is that in Brazil it is the *recognition* of these contradictions and their subsequent *absorption* into Brazilian culture that forms the fabric

of Brazilian national culture. Similarly, I discuss the significance of the dialectics between authority and resistance that characterize Brazilian national values. While a dialectics of authority and resistance has informed social, political and institutional values in Brazil, it is Brazilian television that has assumed a role of conveying the symbolic cohesion of the nation: a role that may have supplanted political and intellectual efforts of the past, but that continues to mitigate Brazil's material divisions. Finally, in terms of national identity I discuss how the findings of this study allow us to see a shift in the tensions between the imitative and original, the foreign and national, and backwardness and modernity away from Brazil's relations with Europe and North America and towards an *internal* dialectics of inclusion and exclusion. Thus, rather than the dissolution of these tensions, again, it is the role of Brazilian television to not only keep intact but also celebrate Brazil's divides as part of its overall efficacy. Expansively, I suggest the need for research on the mini-series' audiences in terms of the class, 'race' and gender constructs that this study only touched on, and perhaps in comparison with audiences of Brazilian film and *telenovelas*. There is also a need for research into the mini-series as a transnational form, especially in contexts where hybridity has not been considered in the same ways as in Brazil. Finally, my study suggests examining links between Brazil's television and online spaces. As their content and technologies increasingly overlap, there are implications for new forms, narratives, audiences and representations of Brazil.

## 2 Sociocultural Hybridity and the Brazilian Nation

### 2.1 Introduction

'Hybridity' has several definitions: as a thing made by combining two different elements; as the offspring of two plants or animals of different species or varieties; as a person of mixed racial or cultural origin; and as a word formed from elements taken from different languages.<sup>3</sup> What these definitions have in common is 'different'. Recalling the previous chapter, 'different' and 'difference' are important to conceptualizing culture, values and identity, both in terms of defining absolutes and in terms of seeking their intersections. This chapter intends to extend these lines of thinking to conceptualizations of Brazil, a nation characterized by difference and by a history of attempts to reconcile this. But the concept of hybridity, even before situating it in Brazil, raises a number of questions that guide this chapter. How does difference both define and limit the concept of hybridity? How is hybridity conceived in different contexts? What are the similarities or differences between these concepts and contexts? In Brazil, how is hybridity understood both by the similarities and differences of its conceptualization elsewhere? Thus, apart from guiding this chapter, these questions help to establish a framework for understanding the socio-cultural definitions of hybridity, which I ultimately apply to the Brazilian context.

My first aim is to theorize hybridity, a concept that has assumed multiple, contradictory meanings, resulting in "the emptiness of employing hybridity as a universal description" (Kraudy 2005: vi). To avoid this, I approach its conceptualizations contextually: first, in the postcolonial context, then in Latin America, and finally in Brazil. By structuring my approach this way, I intend to meet Kraudy's "imperative to situate every analysis of hybridity in a specific context where the conditions that shape hybridities are addressed" (2005: vi). This will enable seeing how the concept changes as well, from underpinning the postcolonial context to problematizing Latin American modernity to framing Brazil's political ideology. Finally, by narrowing these contexts I anticipate applying hybridity to popular texts, genres and their readers and viewers in Chapter 3, which will result in a framework that encompasses both dimensions of hybridity. I begin with "the three great contemporary prophets of hybridity", Hall, Bhabha and Gilroy (Werbner 1997: 13). Then, I discuss the ideas of Anzaldúa, Martín-Barbero and García Canclini on Latin American hybridity. Lastly, I consider hybridity in Brazil in the work of many scholars we have just seen, as well as others, to understand how the concept has been shaped by intellectual

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<sup>3</sup> *Oxford American Dictionary* (2005).

and political ideologies, and how it continues to problematize Brazilian national culture, values and identity today.

## 2.2 Hybridity and the Postcolonial Context

We saw in the previous chapter that there are questions to ask about the common bonds of a society, experienced through shared culture, values and identity. This is particularly so, given the intersections and dialectic exchange we have also seen, which are the result of conflict or abrupt change in a society's culture, values and identity. In general, conflict and change describe the experiences of the *postcolonial context*, in that the "nations of the three non-western continents (Africa, Asia, Latin America) are largely in a situation of subordination to Europe and North America, and in a position of economic inequality" (Young 2003: 4). Social and cultural inequalities also describe the postcolonial context, however. I next examine ideas that are key to understanding not only how sociocultural inequality but also *difference* define the postcolonial context. They also establish bases for understanding hybridity in the Latin American and Brazilian contexts.

### 2.2.1 The Dimensions of Difference

Hall would respond to the common bonds of a society as an "essentialising conception" (1996: 3). It denies that as a consequence of abrupt or violent change, difference serves to disengage a society from the 'singularity' of its past. Hall would contrast such thinking with the experiences of many postcolonial contexts, in which "[f]ar from being eternally fixed in some essentialised past, [they] are subject to the continuous 'play' of history ... and power" (1990: 225). As difference defines power, both are critical to thinking about the postcolonial context. Hall uses Derrida's notion of *différance* to view culture in postcolonial contexts as a "movement that produces ... effects of difference" and "a system where every concept or meaning is inscribed in a chain or a system within which it refers to the other by means of the systematic play of differences" (2001: 11). Furthermore, by identifying how power is implicated in not only the effects but also the systemization of difference, Hall considers what this means for representations of the postcolonial context:

The European presence interrupts the innocence of the whole discourse of 'difference' in the Caribbean by introducing the question of power. 'Europe' belongs irrevocably to the 'play' of power, to the lines of force and consent, to the role of the *dominant*, in Caribbean culture ... [T]he European presence is that which, in visual representation, has positioned the black subject within its dominant regimes of representation (1990: 232 – 233; original emphasis).

However, Hall avoids replicating the binaries of colonial domination within postcolonial theory. By challenging 'the postcolonial' with the systemization of difference that shapes

it, Hall recognizes a “shift from circumstances in which anti-colonial struggles seemed to assume a binary form of representation to the present when they can no longer be represented within a binary structure” (1996: 247). This is “a move from one conception of difference to another … [or] what the serialised or staggered transition to the ‘post-colonial’ is marking” (Hall 1996: 247). The ‘progression’ from colonization to liberation, however, still reflects that which is “external to the societies of the imperial metropolis” (Hall 1996: 246). We must therefore avoid thinking about the “‘post-colonial’ *in the same way*” as much as thinking of a context as “not ‘post-colonial’ *in any way*” (Hall 1996: 246; original emphases). Thus, when *diaspora* is assumed to be part of ‘postcolonial identity’, the “notion that only the multi-cultural cities of the First World are ‘diasporised’ is a fantasy which can only be substantiated by those who have never lived in the hybridised spaces of a Third World, so-called ‘colonial’ city” (Hall 1996: 250).

This problematizes how the power of difference defines the postcolonial context, or, in fact, limits ‘the postcolonial’ to the ‘non-western continents’. Instead of the binaries that separate colonizer from colonized, or a progression from colonization to liberation, Hall sees cultural identity as “‘framed’ by two axes or vectors, simultaneously operative: the vector of similarity and continuity; and the vector of difference and rupture” (1990: 226). Again, this requires thinking of a “dialogic relationship” between them: “one gives us some grounding in, some continuity with the past. The second reminds us that what we share is precisely the experience of a profound discontinuity” (Hall 1990: 226 – 227). The idea that diaspora underpins postcolonial experience and defines its contexts is therefore equally problematic. Given axes of similarity/rupture and dis/continuity, diaspora is not a means for preserving the ‘roots’ of “scattered tribes whose identity can only be secured in relation to some sacred homeland to which they must at all costs return” (Hall 1990: 235). Rather, it is “recognition of a necessary heterogeneity and diversity; by a conception of ‘identity’ which lives with and through, not despite, difference; by *hybridity*” (Hall 1990: 235; original emphasis).

If difference is not a ‘feature’ of the postcolonial context but the result of power, which frames its axes of rupture and continuity, then *representation* follows accordingly. With representation, Hall acknowledges thinking in terms that we have already seen, in which “common historical experiences and shared cultural codes” provide “‘one people’ with stable, unchanging and continuous frames of reference and meaning, beneath the shifting divisions and vicissitudes of our actual history” (1990: 223). But as discontinuity shapes postcolonial experience, representation also reveals “a second sense of difference [that] challenges the fixed binaries which stabilise meaning”; thus, “meaning is never finished

or completed, but keeps on moving to encompass other, additional or supplementary meanings" (Hall 1990: 229). Like the lived realm of postcolonial experience, "what is then constituted within representation is always open to being deferred, staggered, serialised" (Hall 1990: 229). Hybridity is therefore not simply the representation of difference; nor is it "an essence, but a *positioning*" (Hall 1990: 226; original emphasis). Moreover, hybridity is a position in which "cultural life ... is nowhere to be found in its pure, pristine state. It is always-already fused, syncretised, with other cultural elements. It is always-already creolised ... traversing and intersecting our lives at every point" (Hall 1990: 233). Next, we will see how hybridity has been conceptualized in terms of the nation.

### **2.2.2 The Third Space and the Postcolonial Nation**

Like the 'becoming' in Hall's approach to identity, Bhabha thinks of a nation as 'coming into being' through "a system of cultural signification, as the representation of social *life* rather than the discipline of social *polity*" (1990: 1 – 2; original emphases). The approach that Bhabha takes to hybridity also reflects that of Hall, as a *representational* position, but Bhabha provides a specific way to understand representing the postcolonial nation. For Bhabha, difference is also an important concept. But Bhabha takes a linguistic approach to difference, focusing on how a nation's culture and identity are *articulated differently* in postcolonial contexts. To make this connection we must think of the "linguistic difference that informs any cultural performance", or a gap between "the subject of a proposition" and a "subject of enunciation" (Bhabha 1994: 53). This gap substantiates a "Third Space, which represents both the general conditions of language and the specific implication of the utterance in a performative and institutional strategy" (Bhabha 1994: 53). If we take this further, a Third Space implies "an ambivalence in the act of interpretation", meaning that "there is no way that the content of the proposition will reveal the structure of its positionality; no way that context can be mimetically read off from the content" (Bhabha 1994: 53). We can therefore see problems similar to those of originality/imitation, such as 'miming' the content of the center in the cultural production of postcolonial contexts.

By further analogy, ambivalent meanings produced in the Third Space can be extended to experience in the postcolonial space. A Third Space thus substantiates the "discursive conditions of enunciation that ensure that the meaning and symbols of culture have no primordial unity or fixity", which means in the postcolonial space, "that even the same signs can be appropriated, translated, rehistoricized and read anew" (Bhabha 1994: 55). This suggests equating postcolonial and Third spaces, however, which would privilege the geo-political over the temporal dimensions of postcolonial experience (Bhabha 1994:

53). Nevertheless, the idea of space does provide a connection. Both represent “a space of separation”, but in which “authority in the authenticity of ‘origins’” becomes a common struggle for colonizers and colonized. Thus, it “is precisely as a separation from origins and essences that this … space is constructed” in both senses (Bhabha 1994: 171).

To understand postcolonial constructs of ‘nation’, Bhabha likewise looks at how literary forms substantiate “the national text” (1994: 55). But again, Bhabha invokes the idea of ambivalence to problematize the task of “narrating the nation” (1990: 1) in the same way as the center. Therefore, “in that large and liminal image of the nation … is a particular ambivalence that haunts the idea of the nation, the language of those who write of it and the lives of those who live it”, which exists “despite the certainty with which historians speak of the ‘origins’ of nation as a sign of the ‘modernity’ of society” (Bhabha 1990: 1). The ambivalence between imagining, representing and living the ‘nation’ provides yet another way to conceive of the Third Space. This is because to “encounter the nation *as it is written* displays a temporality of culture and social consciousness”, confronting us with “the problem of closure which plays enigmatically in the discourse of the sign” (Bhabha 1990: 2; original emphasis), or indeed, the ‘national text’. The national text, then, namely that which *does* reflect postcolonial experience, serves as both a mirror and an alternative to “the traditional authority of those national objects of knowledge” whose “pedagogical value” relies on an “evolutionary narrative of historical continuity” (Bhabha 1990: 3).

‘Pedagogical value’ in fact suggests another uneasy aspect of conceptualizing the nation. In the national text, it suggests the permanence of language and the linearity of history, whereas the nation’s *peoples* represent a different narrative, characterized by the iterative, everyday experiences of *performing the nation*. As Bhabha summarizes this tension:

The scraps, patches and rags of daily life must be repeatedly turned into the signs of a coherent national culture, while the very act of the narrative performance interpellates a growing circle of national subjects. In the production of nation as narration there is a split between the continuist, accumulative temporality of the pedagogical, and the repetitious, recursive strategy of the performative. It is through this process of splitting that the conceptual ambivalence of modern society becomes the site of *writing the nation* (1994: 209; original emphasis).

What Bhabha elsewhere refers to as “the enunciating I” in tension with the pedagogical nation in fact has global implications, in that “it is precisely there, in the ordinariness of the day-to-day, in the intimacy of the indigenous … we become unrecognizable strangers to ourselves in the very act of assuming a more worldly, or what is now termed ‘global’, responsibility” (1996: 202). Therefore, the act of *translation*, which underscores much of Bhabha’s thinking, is critical. Translation allows conceiving of the postcolonial nation in

terms of internal and external, local and distant forces, or what we saw in the previous chapter as Brazil's national identity formed by a dialogic exchange between regional and global modes of consciousness. Thus, translation suggests an act, but also an unfinished representation of what is captured in these exchanges. It also leads to Bhabha's definition of hybridity as a "process of cultural translation", in which "there opens up a 'space-in-between'", or an "interstitial temporality, that stands in contention with both the return to an originary 'essentialist' self-consciousness as well as a release into an endlessly fragmented subject in 'process'" (1996: 204). Like Hall's conception of hybridity, then, Bhabha's also extends beyond postcolonial contexts "to address the issue of the subject of a 'translational'" position within the continuity of global transformation (1996: 204).

### 2.2.3 The Black Atlantic and Double Consciousness

Gilroy's conceptualization of hybridity corresponds with those of Hall and Bhabha, but it also differs in crucial ways. He argues for the incompatibility of diaspora experience and uniform constructs of the nation for reasons we shall see. However, Gilroy also illustrates how the nation is defined by over-determined constructs that contradict the complexity of diaspora identity. It is therefore useful to begin with the metaphorical relations Gilroy creates between the consciousness and politics of black identity in terms of constructs of the nation. As Gilroy explains these relations:

The specificity of the modern political and cultural formation I want to call the black Atlantic can be defined ... through this desire to transcend both the structures of the nation state and the constraints of ethnicity and national particularity. These desires are relevant to understanding political organising and cultural criticism. They have always sat uneasily alongside the strategic choices forced on black movements and individuals embedded in national political cultures and nation states in America, the Caribbean, and Europe (1993: 19).

The black Atlantic requires unpacking in order to understand its implications. On one level, it signifies the geo-historical consequences of slave ships crossing the Atlantic from Africa to the Americas.<sup>4</sup> On another level, it symbolizes moving hitherto separate modes of political-cultural expression across the globe: "ships were the living means by which the points within the Atlantic world were joined. They were mobile elements that stood for the shifting spaces in between the fixed places that they connected" but also "a means to conduct political dissent and possibly a distinct mode of cultural production" (Gilroy 1993: 16 – 17). On yet another level, the black Atlantic signifies the ambivalent relations between black identity and Western modernity, an ambivalence we have seen paralleled in Brazil. As Gilroy sees these relations, "enthusiasm for tradition therefore expresses not

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<sup>4</sup> From 1519 to 1866 in all of the Americas, the most slaves were shipped from Africa to Brazil (Rawley and Behrendt 2005: 368).

so much the ambivalence of blacks towards modernity, but the fallout from modernity's protracted ambivalence towards the blacks who haunt its dreams of ordered civilization" (1993: 191).

Gilroy frames these relations with DuBois's (1903/2008) concept of double consciousness and Wright's (1965) dreadful objectivity to ask a number of questions best summarized by the following: "How [does] this doubleness ... the 'dreadful objectivity', which flows from being both inside and outside the West ... signify anything more than the reluctant intellectual affiliation of diaspora blacks to an approach which mistakenly attempts a premature totalization of our infinite struggles, an approach which itself has ... roots within the ambiguous intellectual traditions of the European enlightenment" (1993: 30)? This question echoes the concerns of Hall and Bhabha with conceptualizing culture and identity in the postcolonial context: how to 'reconcile' the irreconcilability of difference with the mechanisms and in the framework of Western modernity? As we have seen, this is a question that has underscored thinking in Brazil as well.

A key reason for Gilroy's concerns is the construct of the nation. In Britain, Gilroy found that, "The politics of 'race' in this country is fired by conceptions of national belonging and homogeneity which not only blur the distinction between 'race' and nation, but rely on that very ambiguity for their effect" (2002: 44). Such ambiguity is expressed through appeals to class and family, not only in political rhetoric but also from the academy itself (Gilroy 2002: 42 – 80). The sum of effects, Gilroy writes, is that "the language of nation has become an inappropriate one for the black movement ... in Britain" (2002: 78). To exceed "the limits of the nation state", Gilroy argues for a "need to develop international dialogues and means of organization which can connect locality and immediacy across the international division of labour", and particularly for "black populations who define themselves as part of a diaspora, and who have recent experience of migration as well as acute memories of slavery and international indenture" (2002: 79).

However, when the nation *is* adopted as a framework for redressing racial injustices, the outcome is anything but ambivalent, although equally limited. In constructing narratives that counter the destructive forces of modern slavery, there is the tendency among black absolutists to invoke "the anti-modern as the pre-modern in its frequent appeals to the legitimating potency of African alterity and anteriority" (Gilroy 1996: 25). In effect, this is an inversion of "the willful innocence of those Eurocentric theories", or the creation of a "determinedly non-traditional tradition", which restores a "foundational destructiveness [that] no more belongs to Europeans than the history of slavery is the exclusive property

of blacks" (Gilroy 1996: 23 – 25). What makes a counter-narrative of 'imaginary African homogeneity' especially contradictory, Gilroy points out, is that its expression is "once more lodged in and signified by special properties discernible in black bodies", recalling "biological codes of the eighteenth century" revitalized "to produce tantalizing glimpses of a redemptive and compensatory black superiority" (2000: 211). While this is far from replicating the ambivalent situation that Gilroy found of black identity in Britain, it does create an equally problematic relationship between 'race' and nation.

Either situation Gilroy presents – of a nation idealized or essentialized; or of a nation that embraces or rejects modernity according to 'race' – reflects a double consciousness that resounds across the black Atlantic. But this provides us with Gilroy's conceptualization of hybridity, and at the same time, problematizes what hybridity seeks to represent: "the processes of cultural mutation and restless (dis)continuity that exceed racial discourse and avoid capture by its agents" (1993: 2). Therefore, hybridity does not reconcile the ambivalent relations between black identity and Western modernity, nor does it alleviate the contradictions in attempts to counteract these relations. However, it does suggest "a means to figure the inescapability and legitimate value of mutation ... and intermixture en route to better theories of racism and of black political culture than those so far offered by cultural absolutists of various phenotypical hues" (Gilroy 1993: 223).

## 2.3 Latin America and Hybridity: From Pre- to Postmodernity

The concept of hybridity is important in thinking from Latin America. However, shifting from postcolonial to Latin American thought implies that hybridity is defined differently, which is problematic, intentional and necessary. It is problematic because Latin America is part of the postcolonial space, thus I will discuss how Latin American conceptions of hybridity overlap with those above. Intentionally and necessarily, I will consider Latin American interpretations of the incongruities between Western modernity and 'residual' cultures and identities. Additionally, Latin America is understood as having 'jumped' from pre- to postmodernity, which despite its problems, is recognized by Latin American scholars. Thus, there are overlaps and difference but also approaches we might consider 'between' these contexts. Finally, Latin America anticipates conceptualizing hybridity in Brazil, which, to invoke Gilroy, lies 'both inside and outside' Latin America.

### 2.3.1 *Mestizaje*, or a 'Web of Times and Places'

*Mestizaje* is a concept crucial to understanding hybridity in Latin America. In Spanish, it means miscegenation or mixed-race people (*mestiçagem* in Portuguese). *Mestizo/a* means a

mixed-race man or woman (*mestiço/a* in Portuguese). Geo-ethnically, the words refer to peoples of Amerindian and European 'race', but as I discuss, they have been interpreted to have wider sociocultural implications. For Anzaldúa, *mestizaje* reflects the geo-ethnic story of the American southwest, where "Indians and *mestizos* from central Mexico intermarried with North American Indians" and "continual intermarriage between Mexican and American Indians and Spaniards formed an even greater *mestizaje*" (2007: 27).

To invoke Gilroy again, this has also resulted in 'fallout': not from transatlantic diaspora, however, but from intra-American migration or exile, in which "convergence has created a shock culture, a border culture, a third country, a closed country" in the space between the US and Mexico (Anzaldúa 2007: 33). Therefore, in both physical and spiritual senses Anzaldúa observes how the "infusion of the values of the white culture, coupled with the exploitation by that culture, is changing the Mexican way of life" (2007: 32 – 33). But as Chicana<sup>5</sup> and lesbian, Anzaldúa conveys an even greater sense of borderland existence when she writes: "Women are at the bottom of the ladder one rung above the deviants. The Chicano, *mexicano*, and some Indian cultures have no tolerance for deviance" (2007: 40). However, when Anzaldúa also observes that "[n]ot only was the brain split into two functions but so was reality... people who inhabit both realities are forced to live in the interface between the two, forced to become adept at switching modes" (2007: 59), she suggests more than a duality of experience. She conveys multiple forces across time and space that are involved in negotiating *mestiza* experience.

Anzaldúa's reflections on *mestiza* identity are crucial, as they differentiate intra-national from transnational diaspora experience and begin to suggest issues specific to the Latin American context. This difference is intensified, however, by the ways in which it has been regarded within academia itself.

Most of the post-colonial intellectuals are writing about their being in exile from one country or the other. Some of the work I am doing now looks at us Chicanas and the way we are internal exiles within our own country. But there is a difference with regard to post-colonialism ... [In] academic circles there is a prejudice against that ... [B]eing an internal exile ... we don't receive much attention and often aren't listened to at all (Anzaldúa 2007: 243 – 244).

Martín-Barbero extends the meaning of *mestizaje* from its geo-ethnic 'origins' to a means of interpreting Latin American culture and society as well. In doing so, Martín-Barbero offers an important tool for understanding Latin America's negotiations with modernity. This first requires acknowledging how following colonization and independence, Latin

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<sup>5</sup> A North American woman of Mexican descent.

America experienced a new dependency on the international market, creating “unequal development” in “the basic inequality on which capitalist development rests” (Martín-Barbero 2001: 626). Martín-Barbero conceives of this overall history by its *discontinuity*, a concept that begins to contextualize discrepancies between European or North American and Latin American versions of modernity and is an essential premise of *mestizaje*. While discontinuity has manifested in Latin American countries differently, its commonalities, according to Martín-Barbero, are the uneven rate at which nations and states developed; the unorthodox ways in which popular classes have participated in political systems; and the political role that mass media have played in incorporating the masses into the nation (1993: 150 – 186). As we have seen, these aspects of discontinuity apply to Brazil as well.

Martín-Barbero, like his contemporaries, would consider the linear progress of a nation’s culture to reflect the Enlightenment’s “paradigm of accumulative rationality” (2001: 627). Instead, Martín-Barbero traces the ways in which not only culture is expressed unevenly but lives are also experienced in great disparity in Latin America, resulting in the idea of its backwardness, which we have also seen in Brazil. But in this same sense, discontinuity defines a different kind of modernity in Latin America, or “the nature of a ‘modernity which is not contemporary’, in order to free the concept from misunderstandings that ... limit its usefulness” (Martín-Barbero 1993: 151). Therefore:

The ‘non-contemporary’ of which we speak must be clearly separated from the notion of constitutive backwardness ... made the explanation of cultural differences. There are two versions of this conception of discontinuity as backwardness. One suggests that the originality ... of Latin America as a whole has been constituted by factors which lie outside the logic of capitalist development. Another thinks of modernization as the recovery of lost time ... the definitive leaving behind of what Latin America once was in order to become, at last, modern (Martín-Barbero 1993: 151).

By interrogating the idea of discontinuity, Martín-Barbero raises another issue we have seen in Brazil: that of Latin America’s ‘originality’, problematized by its imitation of the ideals and the mechanisms for achieving them of modernity. Discontinuity therefore also has implications for the *material dimensions* of modernity, especially in terms of how mass culture symbolizes Latin America having become modern, as opposed to having actually realized modernity. This further defines Martín-Barbero’s conceptualization of *mestizaje* and begins to contextualize hybridity in Latin America.

If we understand discontinuity as reflecting both the ideological and material disparities of Latin American experience, then the ways in which it contrasts “the linear process of upward social progress” (Martín-Barbero 1993: 188) become even clearer. To understand *mestizaje* as a “sense of continuities in discontinuity and reconciliations between rhythms

of life that are mutually exclusive" (Martín-Barbero 1993: 188), however, suggests that there is *continuity* in not only ideological or material disparities in Latin America but also in the ways in which they are expressed. Better yet, *mestizaje* describes a consciousness of the 'rhythms of life' whose contradictions are represented in their own conflicting forms. It is mass culture in Latin America that perhaps best represents such a consciousness.

Martín-Barbero describes mass culture in Latin American as "the hybrid of foreign and national, of popular informality and bourgeois concern for upward mobility", and as "an urban culture which compensates its open materialism ... with a superabundance of the sentimental and the passionate" (2001a: 633), which indeed conveys a sense of how the lived contradictions of Latin America are reflected in symbolic forms. Thus, if we return to the idea that *mestizaje* is a geo-ethnic feature of Latin America's history of colonization and miscegenation then it indeed becomes an exceedingly limited one. Like Anzaldúa, however, Martín-Barbero does not reject the origins of the term. He does, however, offer a more comprehensive idea of what *mestizaje* means for Latin America:

*Mestizaje* is not simply a racial fact, but the explanation of our existence, the web of times and places, memories and imagination ... open to the institutions and realities of daily life, to the subjectivity of the social actors and the multiplicity of loyalties ... operating simultaneously in Latin America. It uses a new language to express the interweaving of the economics and politics of symbolic production in the culture without remaining at the level of dialectics for it blends the tastes and feelings, seductions and resistances that dialectics ignore (1993: 188).

We can therefore think of *mestizaje* as reflecting the 'made' and 'remade' contradictions of Latin America. In turn, *mestizaje* expands our understanding of hybridity in the context of Latin America as "not just the racial mixture that we come from but the interweaving of modernity and the residues of various cultural periods, the mixture of social structures and sentiments" (Martín-Barbero 1993: 2).

### 2.3.2 Hybrid Cultures and Postmodernity

The economics and politics of symbolic production frame García Canclini's conception of hybridity and distinguish his approach from that of Martín-Barbero. García Canclini also illustrates the need to contextualize hybridity in Latin America, although according to Escosteguy (2001), the theorists are divided on the modern and postmodern implications of hybridity for Latin America. They are also divided over concerns for the politics or the economics of Latin American culture (Escosteguy 2001), which I will discuss.

One similarity between the theorists' approaches, however, is that Latin America is seen as having contradicted modernity by 'catching up' to it. Another is the unevenness of life

in Latin America, which reflects its uneven political, economic and cultural development. This leads to García Canclini's primary question: "How to study the hybrid cultures that constitute modernity and give it its specific profile in Latin America", which is coupled with his aim of uniting "the partial knowledges of the disciplines that are concerned with culture in order to see if it is possible to develop a more plausible interpretation of the contradictions and the failures of our modernization" (1995b: 3). Finally, these concerns lead to García Canclini's questions about modernity: "what to do – when modernity has become a polemical or suspect project – with this mixture of heterogeneous memory and truncated innovations" (1995b: 3)?

Modernity in Latin America poses other problems for García Canclini. It assumes that the processes of emancipation, renewal, democratization and expansion have been equally met (García Canclini 2000). In Latin America, however, "the problem does not lie in our not having modernized but rather in the contradictory and unequal manner in which these components have been articulated" (García Canclini 1995b: 265). Modernity is thus viewed as "a priority for our countries to incorporate technological advances, modernize the economy, and overcome informal alliances in the structures of power, corruption, and other premodern defects" (García Canclini 1995b: 6), which conveys the pressure to 'catch up' for fear of reverting to 'premodernity'. Postmodernism therefore offers García Canclini a distinct alternative to the conundrum of catching up and premodernity. As the "inverse" of the "modernity canonized by the metropolis",

we have had the pride of being postmodern for centuries, and in a unique way. Neither the 'paradigm' of imitation, nor that of originality, nor the 'theory' that attributes everything to dependency, nor the one that lazily wants to explain us the 'marvelously real' or a Latin American surrealism, are able to account for our hybrid cultures (García Canclini 1995b: 6).

However, García Canclini finds that "the whole crisis of modernity, traditions, and their historical combination leads to a postmodern problematic (not a phase) in the sense that the modern explodes and is mixed with what is not modern; it is affirmed and debased at the same time" (García Canclini 1995b: 266). As neither resolutely modern nor deficiently premodern, then, Latin America requires analysis through another lens: that which looks at migration and informal markets, for instance, and not as aspects of Latin American popular culture, for that would only perpetuate "conventional categories and pairs of oppositions ... employed for talking about the popular" (García Canclini 1995b: 206). This is where García Canclini departs from Martín-Barbero's approach significantly. As we have just seen, *mestizaje* represents the simultaneous made/remade contradictions of Latin America, but its conception is inextricably linked to forms of popular culture. This is evident in Martín-Barbero's "lesson ... for all who want and are able to hear and see it:

melodrama and television, by allowing the people as a mass to recognize themselves as the authors of their own history, provided a language for ‘the popular forms of hope’” (1993: 240). Instead, García Canclini uses “different conceptual instruments” (1995b: 206) to analyze different modes of cultural life in Latin America. In turn, this requires a shift in sites of meaning from where elite is separate from popular culture, the modern from the traditional, and the foreign from the national, to where they converge in *urban culture*.

Urban culture allows identifying the “three key processes for explaining hybridization”, *decollection*, *deterritorializing* and *impure genres*, from which tensions between modernity, postmodernity and power materialize as well (García Canclini 2001: 488 – 510). García Canclini defines decollection by what it disrupts: “cultural systems’ finding their key in the relations of the population with a certain type of *territory* and history that would ... prefigure the behaviors of each group” (2001: 494; original emphasis). Decollection thus breaks apart the “formation of specialized collections of high art and folklore [that] was a device in modern Europe”, and which became a system “for ordering symbolic goods in separate groups and hierarchizing them” (García Canclini 2001: 494). In the context of Latin American urban culture, decollection is evident in the ways that mediated cultures are concentrated in particular, as are new and appropriated technologies for breaking them apart (García Canclini 2001: 497).

Deterritorialization and its counterpart *reterritorialization* involve the “loss of the ‘natural’ relation of culture to geographic and social territories”, and thus “certain relative, partial territorial relocalizations of old and new symbolic productions” (García Canclini 2001: 498 – 499). The subject is thus de- and reterritorialized not only spatially but also through the production and consumption of cultural goods. In addition to questioning the fixed relations between culture and geography, the concepts question Latin America’s “equally a priori opposition with the international”, such as “multidirectional migrations” of Latin Americans not only beyond but also *within* Latin American nations (García Canclini 2001: 500). Deterritorialization is not a new idea. It has already been ‘explained’ by “political-economic and cultural antagonisms: colonizer versus colonized, cosmopolitanism versus nationalism” and recently, “dependency theory [in which] everything was explained by the confrontation between imperialism and national popular cultures” (García Canclini 2001: 499). With the breakdown of unidirectional physical/cultural movement, however, such unilateral explanations are broken down as well.

This suggests that constructs of nation and citizen are dissolved, but García Canclini has other conclusions. In Mexican (1995a;), Brazilian and Argentinian (1995b) cities with high

immigration and emigration, there is the “dissolution of urban monoidentities; the loss of weight and the repositioning of traditional-local cultures” (García Canclini 1995a: 102). But this means that neither identity nor community is eroded. Rather, migration reveals two interconnected capacities of subjects to reorganize and reposition themselves across spatial-temporal change. First, by reconstituting their identities with new resources and contexts; second, by re/attaching subjective and symbolic meaning to the new physical context, in which the “same people who praise the city for being open and cosmopolitan ... fix signs of identification and rituals that differentiate them from those who are just passing through” (García Canclini 1995b: 238 – 239). Nation, citizen and national culture are therefore not dissolved or lost. Rather, they are fragmented and reconstituted by and within Latin American urban culture. This leads to García Canclini’s third key process of hybridization, impure genres, which he describes as “places of intersection between the visual and the literary, the cultured and the popular, they bring the artisanal nearer to industrial production and mass circulation” (1995b: 249). García Canclini’s illustrates the concept with graffiti and comics, but impure genres become more widely evident in the decollection of modernity’s great repertoires of and the de/territorialization of nations’ ‘inherent’ goods and citizens. Thus, the three concepts should be considered in tandem.

However, a major aspect of García Canclini’s approach to hybridity is its implications for the market, which raises questions about a postmodern framework. Decollection puts to rest linear history and narrative finality. The disintegration of modern collections with “devices that we cannot define as either cultured or popular” means that they are “lost, and images and contexts – along with the semantic and historical references that used to bind together their meanings – are destracted” (García Canclini 1995b: 224). With these new cultural configurations, it could be assumed that old concentrations of power are disintegrated as well. However, García Canclini asks if culture reconfigured by “extreme discontinuity” does not obscure “opportunities for understanding the reelaboration of ... meanings of some traditions and for intervening in their change” (2001: 497). Thus, he asks if the “irreverent crossings” that destabilize old binaries do not also “reinforce the unconsulted power of ... understanding and managing the great networks of objects and meanings: the transnationals and the states” (García Canclini 2001: 497). Decollection therefore means the power of the market is also reconfigured, but not dissolved.

With deterritorialization, García Canclini cautions that its “advantages or inconveniences ... should not be reduced to the movements of ideas or cultural codes, as is frequently the case in the bibliography on postmodernity. Their meaning is also constructed ... in struggles for local power, and in the competition to benefit from alliances with external

powers" (1995b: 241). To the extent that postmodernism offers useful tools for analyzing Latin American culture, it also clouds issues of culture's relations with power. This raises García Canclini's other critique of postmodernism, that the "scarcity of empirical studies on the place of culture in so-called postmodern processes has resulted in a relapse into distortions of premodern thought" (1995b: 6). Furthermore, while postmodernism is seen for its aesthetic aspects in the US and Europe, "in Latin American economics and politics modernizing objectives prevail" (1995b: 6). But García Canclini also sees a distinct value to postmodernism, namely that it provides an alternative to thinking of Latin American modernity as backward once again (1995b: 9).

In many respects, García Canclini anticipates postmodernism by integrating Bourdieu's theories of fields (1971) and cultural capital (1990) into the landscape of Latin American cultural circulation, realizing their value and limitations. The issue of originality versus imitation therefore surfaces once again. While useful, "Bourdieu's work does not help us to understand what happens when even the signs and spaces of the elites are massified and mixed with those of the popular" (García Canclini 1995b: 136). Cultural capital, on the other hand, "has the advantage of not representing ... stable and neutral goods with values and meanings that are fixed once and for all," but is "accumulated, reconverted, produces yields, and is appropriated in an unequal way by different sectors" (García Canclini 1995b: 136). However, García Canclini also notes that cultural capital evades the persistent presence of *patronage* in Latin America. Thus, it requires that "any importation of concepts from one field to another [should] state the epistemological conditions and limits of its metaphoric use in an area for which it was not developed" (García Canclini 1995b: 144). For García Canclini, then, hybridity is cultural, political and economic, but with epistemological and methodological implications for the ways in which the multiple dimensions of hybridity are contextualized in Latin America. Hybridity is also urban, but it extends from the artisanal to the transnational. In the conceptual and empirical span of hybridity that García Canclini constructs, then, it may very well capture Latin America's ambivalent position between the pre- and the postmodern.

## 2.4 Hybridity, Brazilian National Culture and Identity

I next discuss Brazil separately from Latin America, which suggests different 'versions' of hybridity. But again, I do this to emphasize the importance of thinking about hybridity contextually. I will therefore seek differences and similarities between the Brazilian, Latin American and larger postcolonial contexts. For instance, the systemization of difference that flows across the black Atlantic will also surface in Brazil. But Brazilian constructs of

hybridity will also differ significantly from the Latin American or the larger postcolonial space. For instance, to conceive of hybridity in Brazil is romantic and problematic, for “it presents our country as a model of racial coexistence”, but also reveals a “pathology of normality” (Nascimento 1999: 380). Therefore, while *différance*, double consciousness, the Third Space, *mestizaje* and hybrid cultures all relate to Brazil, its intellectual and political histories have significantly different implications for conceiving of hybridity.

#### **2.4.1 ‘Race’, Geography and Popular Culture in the Early Brazilian Nation**

The ideas I discuss next supplement a conceptual framework of hybridity in important ways. Some are by scholars with whom we are already familiar and some are new, but together they help us to understand how Brazil has conceived of itself and how concepts we have seen elsewhere apply to it. These ideas also demonstrate the measures Brazil has taken to construct national identity both *in spite of* and *upon* its hybridity. Mostly, it is the reflexivity of these ideas that conveys how Brazil has ‘become’ a nation by negotiating its hybridity. These perspectives thus contribute to an understanding of the Latin American and postcolonial contexts, namely in the contradiction that Brazil’s profound differences and constructs of a cohesive national identity poses to them. In particular, I will consider the ways in which ‘race’, geography and popular culture have underscored the internal differences and defined the national cohesiveness of Brazil.

Understanding these contradictions involves returning to the nineteenth century, when Brazil was a new a nation and thinking about its identity was equally nascent. During the Empire period (1822 – 1889), which spanned from Brazilian Independence to Declaration of the Republic, Brazilian philosophy and political theory tended toward Eclecticism, or “a curious amalgam of ideas imported from France”, which in its vagueness, lacked any overriding principles (Skidmore 1993/2005: 4). As we have seen, Romanticism was also influenced by European thinking and acted as a literary counterpart to Eclecticism. But in the political climate of independence, Romanticism enabled Brazilian writers to articulate a symbolic national consciousness, “glorifying *Brazilian* natural splendors” (particularly the Indian) and serving “as a literary mantle for the anti-Portuguese campaigns of the politicians” (Skidmore 1993/2005: 6; original emphasis). In the period anticipating the Republic, then, Brazil’s Portuguese ‘origins’ were radically altered by Enlightenment and Romantic ideals, “bringing into the traditional culture a dose of political liberalism, thus producing the Brazilian hybrid of a liberal monarchy” (Skidmore 1993/2005: 7).

If Brazil's political/intellectual framework was considered to be 'hybrid', then so too was its ethnic constitution, which had implications for not only hybridity but also modernity. Following abolition, intellectuals were less concerned with the indigenous, European and African peoples that already or also populated Brazil, and more with ethnic mixture, or *mestiçagem*.<sup>6</sup> Furthermore, intellectuals correlated 'race' with geography as a means of 'explaining' Brazil's *mestiçagem*. Rodrigues (1894/1938) was notable for emphasizing the differences between Brazil's regions in assimilating Africans. However, he "opposed the 'unjustifiably' optimistic view of most Brazilians toward the *mestiço*'s 'social value'", which also placed him at odds with a "commonly accepted belief among the elite - that miscegenation would sooner or later lead to a white Brazil" (Skidmore 1993/2005: 61).

Romero (1888/1943) correlated 'race' and geography differently. Romero recognized that using European theories to interpret Brazil's realities revealed incompatibilities. In fact, he was one of the first Brazilian intellectuals to argue for the strengths of *mestiçagem*, thus that like any nation, Brazil "is the product of an interaction between the population and their natural habitat" (Skidmore 1993/2005: 33). However, Romero was uncertain about his position. Lacking were better theories than those of geographical determinism, upon which racial determinism was based. As Skidmore writes: "His equivocation was hardly surprising ... European science tended to denigrate human mixed bloods as weak and potentially sterile. Romero thought this was probably nonsense, but did not yet have any scientific basis for saying so" (1993/2005: 36).

Da Cunha (1902/1947) wrote *Os Sertões* (*Rebellion in the Backlands*) when the Republic was still new and its command over the Brazilian territory equally tenuous. The 'rebellion' da Cunha described was a battle between the Brazilian Army and a vast number of rural workers expelled from their lands due to post-abolition change in the demand for labor. Already marginalized and now dispossessed, the workers followed a charismatic leader nicknamed Antônio Conselheiro (the Councilor) to settle Canudos in the backlands, or *sertão*, of Bahia. Canudos not only grew exponentially but it was also a model for social organization and innovation, providing its inhabitants with "the strength and courage to react against all forms of exploitation to which people of humble origin were subjected in the Brazilian backlands" (Sevcenko 2000: 83). When the government learned of Canudos, it saw the settlement as a threat to the new Republic and dispatched a series of armed units to subdue the *sertões*, which the rebels repeatedly defeated. Finally, the government

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<sup>6</sup> As Skidmore importantly notes, the term *mestiço*, or 'mixed-blood' in Portuguese, "can be any mixture of racial backgrounds", very different from the Spanish *mestizo*, "which has primarily entered English with the primary meaning of a European-Indian mixture" (1993/2005: 23).

marshaled an army that eventually defeated the resistant backlanders but in the process, slaughtered every inhabitant of Canudos and burnt it to the ground (Sevcenko 2000).

Da Cunha was sent as a journalist to cover the rebellion, but *Os Sertões* became a major literary work. His accounts are sympathetic to the Canudos settlers and condemnatory of the army's brutal response, "demonstrat[ing] that successive expeditions were defeated above all by their total ignorance of the land, people, customs and Brazilian popular culture", therefore that the "elite of the coastal cities [were] forever turned towards and identifying with the Old Continent, on the other side of the Atlantic" (Sevcenko 2000: 83). But in ultimately seeking to understand the largely black and *mestiço* peoples of the *sertão* in relation to Brazil's complete disregard for them, da Cunha's conclusions about 'race' and geography were also ambivalent. First, as Borges notes, because da Cunha depicted "the hybrid mestizo [as] strong and ugly, adapted to context but still backward", thus the Canudos massacre suggests that not only the *mestiço* but also the *sertão* "might have been civilized into a strong, racially unified nation" (2006: 34), if both had not resisted this. Second, then, da Cunha's work is about modernity, or Brazil's form of resistance to it. For although *Os Sertões* reflects "nineteenth-century evolutionary theory and its assumptions that peoples of mixed race, less amenable to the to the civilizing process, tended to be left behind in the progress of 'civilization'" (Schelling 2000: 11), to a greater extent it reflects how Brazil's brutal response to its realities left its claims to 'civilization' behind.

The idea of backwardness, which we have seen ascribed to versions of modernity in the postcolonial and Latin American contexts, thus appears in Brazil as well. A distinction to make about Brazil, however, is that the young Republic saw itself as backward, so it used the mechanisms of modernity to rectify this. Furthermore, *mestiçagem* was the basis of this dilemma. It was seen as an aspect of Brazilian reality that both compounded and explained its backwardness. The motto 'order and progress', inscribed on the Republic's new flag, thus symbolized more than abstract ideals; it meant conscripting Brazil's land and peoples into realizing them. And even if these ideals were not unique to Brazil – the words of Comte inspired them (Oliven 2000) – Brazil's geography and 'race' were, so would require unification in order to realize them. Geography and 'race' had additional implications for Brazil's order and progress, however. As Ortiz notes, "environment and race translate ... into two elements indispensable to the construction of Brazilian identity: the national and the popular" (1985: 17). The relationships between the popular and the nation also anticipate a significant shift in thinking about 'race' in Brazil: from an element that would prevent the nation from achieving modernity to one by which Brazil should

distinguish itself, even if 'race' still presented a hurdle in the path towards modernity. Popular religion best illustrates this.

Ortiz reflects on Rodrigues's observations about Brazilian popular religion in the late-nineteenth century, writing: "if it is true he sought to understand religious syncretism, it is because he considered it an inferior form of religion" (1985: 20). This was more the case for Rodrigues because the "incomplete absorption of Catholic elements by Afro-Brazilian cults demonstrated ... the incapacity of the black population to assimilate elements vital to European civilization", therefore that "[s]yncretism attested to the different degrees of moral and intellectual evolution of two unequal races placed in contact" (Ortiz 1985: 20). Indeed, the religious practices that Africans brought to Brazil, even after abolition, were viewed as "attacks on order and morality – in fact as witchcraft", to the extent that rituals were banned and their participants imprisoned (Sevcenko 2000: 85). As Ortiz observes elsewhere, this resulted in *xangô-rezado-baixo*, in which Afro-Brazilian religions practiced through dance and music were supplanted with whispered prayers (2000: 130).

I noted in the previous chapter that the work of Bomfim and Tôrres was significant for rejecting the racist theories on which the Brazilian other was valued, and in the case of Bomfim, for seeing Latin America's backwardness as relative to that which its colonizers transmitted to it (Skidmore 1993/2005). But neither scholar engaged very effectively with Brazilian popular culture as a way to critique Brazil's disregard for its others. Bomfim's arguments came across as "sentimental and non-objective", while Tôrres's "program of popular mobilization" was seen as impractical (Moreira Leite 2002: 330 – 338). Bomfim's efforts to disprove the racist theories on which Brazil modeled itself, however, were both popular and nationalist in orientation. Bomfim's nationalism meant realizing that history still shaped the ways in which Brazil was defining itself, including its popular cultures:

We came from Portugal mired in an abundant infusion of bloods, tempered by other traditions which, quite simply, were never the least long-lasting; we came from there, but we formed a new tradition, distinct, diverse, increasingly more diverse, a path that distinguished itself, and the more it distanced itself, the more it embraced and extended itself towards life ... Brazilians have had to accentuate and characterize their nationalism in opposition to the Portuguese, as this is the law of historical differences. By the same impulse in which a nation affirms its existence, it takes control of its characteristics, that is, those which already belonged to it; it carefully cultivates them, giving to that culture the validity of a fight for its tendencies ... Reinforced in these conflicts are [our] divergent qualities (1935: 94).

Tôrres also appealed to the diversity of the Brazilian people to express his nationalism: "Brazilians, our patriotic affection should encompass, in equal and complete cordiality, the descendants of the Portuguese, blacks, Indians, Italians, Spanish, Slavs, Germans, of all the other peoples that form our nation" (1914/1938: 69). Like Bomfim, Tôrres saw the

ideas by which Brazil was defining itself as the result of its colonial history, therefore as an unfinished process which also included its cultural 'tendencies': "Our disorganization is entirely explained by ... the discovery and population of a nation of strong natural qualities, but ... after discovery entered into a long state of subordination", thus a history in which "the disparity of a land colonized by a land of colonizers introduces problems of adaptation and culture that, until today, are not resolved" (1914/1938: 47). Therefore, Bomfim and Tôrres were concerned with popular culture and its implications for Brazil's negotiations with 'race'. Although they have been largely neglected (Moreira Leite 2002), their ideas anticipate subsequent, if also unacknowledged, changes in thinking about the relations between 'race', popular culture and the Brazilian nation.

For Schelling, "Popular memory in Latin America has never been thoroughly secularized ... magic, myth and a strong sense of the sacred – originating in the traditions of popular catholicism, indigenous cosmology and African religious rituals – continue to play an important role in popular culture" (2000: 14). Schelling's observation reflects a dialogical relation between the sacred and the popular not only in Latin America but also Brazil. It also suggests a dialogical relation between the historical suppression of popular religion and resistance to this as a response to Brazil's negotiations with 'race'. Da Cunha's *Os Sertões* reflects this as well. Canudos was more than a model of social organization. It was a diasporic manifestation of popular religions. As Sevcenko notes, the Feast of the Holy Spirit, a popular catholic ritual banned in Portugal, was brought "to the islands of the Atlantic and, in a more direct and exalted form, to the remote territory of Brazil" (2000: 84). Therefore, "the advent of a new time, in which all people would be equal, goods redistributed and prisoners freed", would not only guide Antônio Conselheiro's vision of Canudos but would underpin "belief in social redemption through epiphany" to become "one of the main axes of the history of Brazil" (Sevcenko 2000: 84). We can also see this in African religious beliefs, brought to Brazil and suppressed through slavery. The qualities of "enchantment, possession and direct contact with the sacred", shared between African and popular catholic beliefs, not only provided survival strategies for African slaves but also became "amalgamated with elements of Brazilian popular catholicism, giving rise to derivative forms such as *umbanda* and *candomblé*" (Sevcenko 2000: 85).

We can see these accounts as reflecting the 'validity of a fight for tendencies' or indeed, as Bomfim also observed, as conflicts through which Brazil's others have come to express their 'divergent qualities'. At the same time, Tôrres's 'problems of adaptation and culture that are not resolved' resonate, particularly if we think about popular religion in Brazil as forms of recovering origins, memories and practices that have been distanced if not taken

away. But this also raises the issue of imitation/originality that has surfaced repeatedly. De Souza Martins observes that “*Umbanda* is an inauthentic form of *candomblé* distorted by police repression” and “popular catholicism is fundamentally an inauthentic form of Roman Catholicism” – therefore, the “authenticity” of popular religion in Brazil “resides in the inauthentic” (2000: 256). This is an idea we can consider the result, if inadvertent, of Bomfim and Tôrres’s ideas about Brazilian popular culture as well.

#### **2.4.2 *Mestiçagem* and Authoritarianism**

Bomfim and Tôrres’s ideas represent an important turning point in Brazil’s negotiations with national identity: one in which Brazil began to see racial hybridity as resulting in its distinctiveness. Thus, we will see that the appeals of Bomfim and Tôrres to Brazil to ‘take control of its characteristics’ of ‘equal and complete cordiality’ would become influential in subsequent thinking about its national identity. However, Brazil remained ambivalent about the realities of *mestiçagem*, despite intellectual change. In a landscape in which the implications of *mestiçagem* were unclear, political power therefore entered in decidedly unambiguous ways. Next, I discuss the ways in which political ideology further shaped the relations between ‘race’, geography and popular culture in Brazil.

The 1930 *coup* led by Getúlio Vargas, which I mentioned briefly in the previous chapter, had implications for Brazil other than the purely political. Williams provides a sense of its transformation to the political history of Brazil: “the Vargas coalition transfigured the coup of 1930 into a Revolution, remaking the first Republic (1889 – 1930, also known as the Old Republic) into the *ancien régime* and the post-1930 regime into a purifying force of redemption” (2001: 5). In transforming Brazilian culture, however, “the *Estado Novo* ... was supposed to restore to the Brazilian people an organic political culture that had been corrupted by liberalism during the First Republic and threatened by communism in the constitutional period” (Williams 2001: 6). One way to restore ‘organic political culture’, which we also saw briefly, was to bring marginalized forms of popular culture such as samba into the new political order, an example of the Vargas regime’s larger efforts “to enlist the black population into the social imaginary” (Webb 1998: 243).

The work of Freyre was crucial to these efforts. Freyre “emphasized culture not race as the marker of distinction. He thus has a major responsibility for the myth of Brazil as a ‘melting-pot of races’, which in the Getúlio Vargas regime ... became a key feature of a populist programme of national integration” (Rowe and Schelling 1991: 42). Indeed, we saw in Chapter 1 that Freyre emphasized culture, not ‘race’, in terms of the other’s value

to Brazil. Furthermore, Freyre believed the patriarchal character of slaveholding in Brazil engendered “reciprocity between the cultures … not a domination of one by the other”, and made Brazil “hybrid from the beginning” (1936/1986: 420). Like Bomfim and Tôrres, Freyre therefore saw Brazil’s *mestiçagem* in historical terms. But again, this led from the amicable nature of rural, colonial Brazil, in which slaves were treated better than in other colonies: “among the Portuguese of the continent, theological hatreds and violent racial antipathies or prejudices were rarely manifested … those hatreds, such as marked the history of other slave-holding areas in the Americas, were seldom carried to any such extreme in Brazil” (Freyre 1933/1946: xii). Freyre’s *Casa-Grande e Senzala* (*The Masters and the Slaves*) is thus a metaphor for Brazil’s historical route to *mestiçagem*:

The Portuguese *casa-grande* (that is, big house or mansion in English) and the African *senzala* (slave quarters) – have here a symbolic intention … the cultural antagonism and social distance between masters and slaves, whites and blacks, Europeans and Africans, as marked by the residence of each group in Brazil … Without for a moment forgetting the fact that the antagonism and distance of which we are speaking had their force broken by the interpenetration of cultures and by miscegenation – the democratizing factors of a society that otherwise would have remained divided into two irreconcilable groups (1933/1946: xvi).

In geographical terms, Freyre was a regionalist, writing: “the regions or areas of greatest miscegenation are those which have been most productive of great men” (1936/1986: 430). This reflected his belief that *mestiçagem* manifested differently in Brazil’s regions, especially the northeast, Freyre’s home, which became influential in regional movements (Resende 2000: 203). Despite Freyre’s importance to rethinking the implications of ‘race’ for Brazil, his work has been criticized for its nationalistic overtones. Additionally, much of this lies in the contradictory nature of Freyre’s nationalism, a sentiment that differed from Bomfim and Tôrres’s in its political utility. Freyre’s early work coincided with the Modernist movement of the 1920s. The Modernists’ most notable idea was to return to the ‘native’ practice of cannibalism, or the symbolic act of ingesting the foreign in order to find the ‘truly Brazilian’, declared by Oswald de Andrade in his *Manifesto Antropófago*. Their claim that to be universal meant first to be national overlapped with Freyre’s, who believed that to be national meant first to be regional (Oliven 2000). Oliven observes that Freyre’s nationalism was “the opposite of the Modernists’, however, as it was not based on the need for cultural modernisation through external influence, but … on the criticism of the evils of progress and the importation of foreign customs and values” (2000: 59). For Ortiz, there is a contradiction between modernity and the patriarchy on which Freyre based the uniqueness of Brazil: “it is not difficult to reencounter in his work the polarity between the traditional and the modern, only in this case it is reinterpreted as valorizing an oligarchical order” (1988b: 36). Unresolved conflicts between tradition and modernity in Freyre’s work would translate into *Estado Novo* ideology of the value of patriarchy.

A second contradiction in the nationalistic character of Freyre's work lies in its impetus, or even its 'origins', in relation to rethinking the role of 'race' in Brazil. Vianna points out that Freyre regarded his reinterpretation of *mestiçagem* as "the result of a sudden spiritual illumination, leading to 'a kind of psychoanalytic cure' for the whole country" (1999: 13). This 'illumination', however, contradicts Brazil's foundational myths – of Caramuru, for instance – which Freyre supported with his accounts of the organic nature by which the Portuguese, of 'mixed-race' themselves, brought miscegenation to Brazil. But reaction to Freyre's work gave the impression that it was revelatory, or "as if Brazil had awaited the 'revolution' unleashed by Freyre, as if 'all Brazilians' eagerly took up his version of social history as a mirror" (Vianna 1999: 54). Perhaps even more conflicting is the impetus for Freyre's revelations, however. Although he was inspired by regional manifestations of *mestiçagem*, it was Freyre's studies in Europe and the US that led to this realization. Thus, "only outside his country did the young Brazilian intellectual learn to place a positive value on the race mixing that he later came to regard as the source of our true national culture" (Vianna 1999: 55), which Freyre himself acknowledged. Nevertheless, this new "praise of the Brazilian *mestiço*" again relied on foreign intellect (Vianna 1999: 56).

These contradictions lead to the most significant criticism of Freyre's work. Although he recognized tensions between tradition and modernity, region and nation, and the foreign and Brazilian, Freyre ultimately mitigated these antagonisms by asserting the singularity of *mestiçagem*. This would anticipate the ways in which the *Estado Novo* treated these very tensions in seeking Brazil's unification. To a large extent, the regime attempted to do so through Modernism. "The regime hit upon *modernismo* as the carrier of national identity ... an entirely appropriate choice, because the *modernistas* employed cultural idioms of modernity accessible to international audiences, while maintaining a commitment to Brazilian sensibilities" (Williams 2001: 207; emphases added). 'Ingesting' the foreign was therefore not only a means for the Modernists to express 'Brazilianness'; for the regime, it also meant that the emblems of Brazilian tradition could be situated in an international perspective, thereby alleviating Brazil of its backwardness. However, the Vargas regime administered Brazilian culture carefully, both popular culture, which we have seen, and now its modern symbols. This initiated what Williams calls Brazil's culture wars, or "the poetics, geopolitics, and imagery of culture during [the] Vargas era, when the struggle for controlling national identity was fought over objects, images, and locales that the central state presented as carriers of *brasilidade*" (2001: 24; emphasis added). As Resende notes, Brazilian Modernism, once revolutionary, became "canonized" in the *Estado Novo* culture wars, thereby curtailing artistic expression "for not being modern enough or for

being excessively popular" (2000: 209 – 210). Although only one example, this represents a broader, total vision of Brazilianness that would link *Estado Novo* authoritarianism with Freyre's version of nationalism. Passos and Costa e Silva also make this link by writing: "the impossibility of an all-inclusive and accomplished democracy in the Brazilian public sphere is substituted in *The Masters and the Slaves* for an analysis of the historical and cultural function of the patriarchal family in the configuration of Brazilian nationality" (2006: 54). This, in other words, is an absence of agency in historical, cultural and political interpretations of Brazil's *mestiçagem*, despite the complexities of its tensions.

During the same era, Buarque de Holanda revisited Ribeiro Couto's idea that the cordial man defined the Brazilian character, an idea we also saw in Tôrres's appeal to Brazilians. As Buarque de Holanda wrote, this cordiality is also traceable to Brazil's colonial era:

the Brazilian contribution to civilization will be cordiality – we will give to the world the 'cordial man'. The sincerity of acts, the hospitality, the generosity, virtues so praised by foreigners who visit us, effectively represent a definitive trace of the Brazilian character at the same time, at least, in which remains active and productive the ancestral influence of patterns of human conviviality, informed within the rural, landowning environment (1936/2005: 146 – 147).

In Freyre's interpretation of Brazilianness, "certain psychological traits, dispositions, and potentialities" are the result of a basic historical process (Passos and Costa e Silva 2006: 55). This differs significantly from Buarque de Holanda's cordiality, however, which is a means of describing the individual's response to the structural forces of Brazilian society. For Buarque de Holanda, cordiality 'describes' the Brazilian character, but it "can [also] elude appearances", acting as an "organization of defense against society", or "a disguise that permits each one to preserve intact his sensibilities and his emotions" and reveal "a decisive triumph of the spirit over life" (1936/2005: 147). As Resende elaborates further, "cordiality as a presumed national characteristic, is not synonymous with courtesy; it has nothing to do with the cordiality evident in elaborate formal rituals, which do not have a marked presence in Brazilian everyday life" (2000: 207). Different from Freyre as well, Buarque de Holanda challenged "the optimism of the Modernists" and "the conformist nationalism of the authoritarian régime" in his work (Sevcenko 2000: 98), emphasizing instead a dialogic exchange between appearances and reality in the historical, social and political negotiations of the idea of Brazilianness.

Although intellectuals such as Buarque de Holanda challenged the *Estado Novo*, it was still successful in building an image of national cohesiveness. Education, popular culture and Modernism were used to achieve this, as we have seen. They were also means for conveying the notion that national cohesiveness had never previously existed. As Ortiz

writes: “Different *Estado Novo* proposals … began on the principle that it was necessary to build a reality that had still not been realized among us. The State would be the space in which the integration … of the nation was realized” (1988b: 50 – 51). But cohesiveness conveyed through cultural administration would extend beyond the Vargas years. After all, as Williams notes, Brazil’s culture wars were “about more than the *Estado Novo*. At stake was the power to define and control Brazilianness” (2001: 255).

The 1964 coup and twenty-one years of military rule that followed would reflect *Estado Novo* efforts to define and control Brazilianness. But they would also differ considerably. It is therefore worthwhile to briefly consider the two regimes’ similarities and differences in respect to *mestiçagem*. One difference is that instead of breaking with the past, military absorption of the state “established a connection between the present and the past”, thus the new regime “ideologically positioned the movement of 1964 as continuity, and not as rupture, concretizing an association with the origins of thought about Brazilian culture … developed since the work of Sílvio Romero” (Ortiz 1985: 91). However, a similarity between the two regimes was to invoke intellect that supported the idea of an integrated nation, particularly since differences in geography and ‘race’ continued to challenge this. The military drew on Durkheim, for instance, to show “the necessity of functional culture as cementing the organic solidarity of the nation”, therefore that “integration, worked by authoritarian thought, served as a premise for an entire politic that sought to coordinate differences, submitting them to the call of National Objectives” (Ortiz 1985: 82).

Ortiz also points out, as Williams did of the *Estado Novo*, that the work of Freyre had no causal relations with authoritarianism. Nevertheless, it was instrumental to the military’s visions for Brazil. Freyre’s regionalism, which formed the ethnic, cultural and physical plurality of Brazil, was a useful ‘social philosophy’ for the military, namely in integrating the Amazon region culturally (Ortiz 1985: 93), but also economically, which we will see. Above all, *mestiçagem* was a useful concept in establishing the still-difficult link between Brazil’s geo-ethnic diversity and its national-political unity:

The element *mestiçagem* contained the precise traces that naturally defined Brazilian identity: unity in diversity. This ideological formula condensed two dimensions: the variety of cultures and the unity of the national. Within this perspective the [military] document ‘National Political Culture’ would define Brazilian culture as the product of the acculturation of diverse origins (Ortiz 1985: 93).

According to other scholars, however, Freyre’s conceptualization of *mestiçagem* was not only reflected in the modern regimes’ ideologies but his work also anticipated them. At the same time, these scholars remind us that Brazil’s ideals of modernity depended on where its others would fit into them. For Bosi, Freyre’s regionalism virtually anticipated

military expansionism. But Bosi also makes a link between colonial and contemporary rationale for modernizing Brazil through its 'other' lands and peoples: "Gilberto Freyre, an apologist for Portuguese colonization in Brazil, ... wrote that 'sugar eliminated the Indian.' Today, we might add that cattle, soy and sugarcane expel small and marginal landholders. The expansionist project of the 1970s and 80s was, and continues to be, nothing more than an equally cruel extension of colonial-era military and economic incursions" (1992: 40). For Schwarz, writing and exiled during the military regime, the relationship between Brazil's colonial and authoritarian goals becomes even clearer, as "repeated in these comings and goings is the combination, in moments of crisis, of the new and the old: more exactly, of the most advanced manifestations of international imperialist integration, and of the most ancient ... bourgeois ideology, centred on the individual, on the indivisibility of the family and on its traditions" (1970/1992: 139). Given all the above perspectives, we might conclude that conceptions of *mestiçagem* have undergone remarkable change, from 'explaining' the mixed lands and peoples of Brazil to carrying out measures that seek their unification. At the same time, we might conclude that the social, cultural and political terms that have been used to interpret *mestiçagem* continue to present deeply contradictory versions of what it means to be Brazilian.

## 2.5 Sociocultural Hybridity and Brazil: A Partial Conclusion

These perspectives on *mestiçagem*, from the nineteenth century to the 1980s, are crucial to identifying 'race', geography, popular culture and the nation as constructs that underpin and problematize what it means to be Brazilian. However, I left the above discussion just before Brazil's re-democratization, so I will pick it up from there. Thus, we will be able to see how certain social, cultural and political interpretations of *mestiçagem* persist, while historical factors have changed. This will provide a contemporary view of Brazil, and at the same time, facilitate relating its interpretations of hybridity to those of Latin America and the postcolonial space. I will conclude with critiques of hybridity in order to place them in a critical conceptual framework, which will carry through to my analysis of the Brazilian television mini-series.

### 2.5.1 Contemporary Brazil

Transition from nineteenth-century 'race' theories to *Estado Novo* paternalism to military expansionism reflects Brazil's continuous negotiations with unity in diversity. However, Brazil's contemporary landscape has changed even further. "Growing rates of violence and criminality are an indication of decreasing social solidarity" (Reis 2000: 190). This, in

addition to expanding forms of private intervention, suggest “a new consent ideology”, which is the result of “new values and beliefs providing for social solidarity and political compliance” unprecedented in Brazilian society (Reis 2000: 191). Reis adds that increased concern for civil rights, greater political participation, higher literacy rates, lower voting ages, and less corruption and intimidation have all “contributed to weaken patron-client networks and other forms of personal influence” (2000: 191). However, this shift from centralized rule to a combination of foreign, local and special interests has complicated the idea of unity in diversity even more than before in Brazil.

At the same time, Brazil has continued to use foreign ideas and apply them to its own realities. Examining affirmative action in Brazil, Fry (2000) refers to many of the theorists we have just seen, who either reinforced or romanticized Brazil’s problematic relations with ‘race’. However, this should be prefaced with the ways that ‘race’ has given over to ‘type’ as “a descriptive term that serves as a kind of shorthand for a series of physical features” in Brazil (Fish 1999: 392). A 1970s census, for instance, gathered 134 different responses to skin color (Levine and Crocitti 1999: 386), which renders the American “one-drop rule” that classifies anyone with at least one African ancestor as ‘African American’ (Fry 2000: 87) as indeed ‘out of place’. Nevertheless, Brazil has enacted affirmative action policies, illustrating the ways in which “‘foreign’ ideas are interpreted in local terms” with “considerable symbolic and practical efficacy” (Fry 2000: 111). More than imitation, however, this policy has “gone to the heart of the most potent of Brazilian nationalisms,” such that the “hybrid ideas and institutions that have begun to emerge over the issue of affirmative action” reflect a “potency of the desire to maintain primacy of the individual over his or her ‘nature’”, or “what Brazilians call *jeitinho*<sup>7</sup> over rigorous classificatory discipline” (Fry 2000: 112). Applying foreign ideas to Brazil’s realities continues, but the aspects of Brazilian life to which they are applied have changed considerably.

Brazil’s ambivalent relations with ‘race’ have shifted in contemporary popular culture as well. This is illustrated by Treece’s (2000) analysis of funk, a musical trend that combines soul, rap and hip-hop and comes from Brazil’s *favelas*. Unlike the national resonance and global appeal of *bossa nova*’s “ethos of intimate dialogue and existential ‘grace’”, or the criticism of the pro-capitalist military of *Tropicália*, which engendered “a shared identity of popular, democratic interests opposed to a single, clearly defined common enemy” (Treece 2000: 34 – 38), funk expresses a very different sense of being Brazilian. It conveys “a refusal to participate in the dominant consensual culture with its mythology of cordial

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<sup>7</sup> Levine defines *jeitinho* as “the ‘way’ to grease the wheels of government or the bureaucracy to obtain a favor, or to bypass rules or regulations” (1999: 403).

race and social relations”, reflected in constructs of *mestiçagem* that we have seen; thus, funk confronts “the failure of the democratic transition since the 1980s to address … the institutionalization and racialization of violence and the social segregation of Brazilian cities” (Treece 2000: 30). Funk does, therefore, articulate a sense of Brazilianness for the communities from which it emanates, although compared to *bossa nova* or even *Tropicália*, in a radically new way. As Treece writes, this occurs by funk “simultaneously mobilizing and uniting its listeners in a common project of self-identification and rupture from the bankrupt culture of consensus” (2000: 41 – 42). Thus, funk prompts new questions about the ways in which ‘race’ and popular culture continue to represent Brazil, as well as the extent to which Brazil’s regard for ‘race’ has changed.

This look at contemporary Brazil also reflects its ongoing negotiations with modernity. Whether concern is for civil society, education or popular culture, residual issues such as inclusiveness imply that modernity has not yet been realized in Brazil. In turn, this raises the persistent question of imitation and originality: in order to achieve modernity, must Brazil continue to use ideas from the outside? Modernity and its attendant issues of the other and imitation/originality therefore provide a link between Brazil, Latin America and the larger postcolonial space. Discontinuity, however, provides the fundamental link between different, but persistently ‘backward’, versions of modernity in the postcolonial space. In concluding, I will discuss how discontinuity is reflected in Brazil. But I will also discuss how discontinuity differentiates Brazil from the larger contexts to which it has also been applied. Finally, I will discuss critiques of hybridity to show that in spite of the importance of its contextualization, there are persistent gaps in its conceptualization.

### 2.5.2 Moving Outward

As opposed to the flow of discussion above, I start here by considering discontinuity in Brazil against the ways it has been conceptualized in the larger Latin American and post-colonial contexts. For Martín-Barbero, discontinuity is reflected in the tensions between the popular and the political in Latin America. In Brazil, however, these tensions are exacerbated by histories of political engagement with the popular for nationalistic, if not coercive, purposes. In other words, discontinuity in Brazil not only manifests in tension between the popular and the political; it has also meant absorption of the popular by the political. García Canclini’s conceptions of decollection, deterritorialization and impure genres also assume a distinctly political nature in Brazil. Samba, for instance, which has traces of European, African, popular and elite traditions (Vianna 1999), thus embodies not only the decollection of ‘pure’ genres, but also the deterritorialization of its ‘origins’

due to nationalistic causes. Conversely, we have seen how funk, another impure genre, serves as a response to the ways in which Brazil has de- and re-territorialized its others.

Moving further outward, conceptualizations of discontinuity in the larger postcolonial space also require rethinking in Brazil, due to the implications of 'race', geography and popular culture for constructs of the nation. The 'effects-producing movement' of Hall's play of difference applies to Brazil. This is evident in the way 'race' has been historically treated in Brazil, but also in the correlations of geography, 'race' and popular culture used to explain variations of difference in Brazil. Additionally, Brazil reflects a political history of appropriating modes of expressing difference in order to construct ideological consensus. Thus, difference has provided the basis for a geo-ethnic topography of Brazil, for its foundational myths, and for its backwardness. We have seen other examples, all of which point to how difference is 'effects producing', not only in colonial Brazil but also after Independence. These continuous negotiations with difference have implications for not only the discontinuity but also the continuous discontinuity of Brazil.

The Third Space also helps us to understand how discontinuity defines the postcolonial context, but requires rethinking in Brazil as well. One way to conceive of the Third Space is ideologically, or a space between Enlightenment ideals and pre-modern deficiencies in which much of the postcolonial world is placed. In the political history of Brazil, we can therefore better understand this Third Space by viewing it through the pedagogical lens of the nation, a role pronounced during Brazil's regimes, when the state sought to realize modern ideals through anti-democratic measures. The performative aspect of the nation thus emerges through Brazil's regions, ethnicities and popular cultures. But again, this performativity has met with political measures seeking to control it, or intellectual ones seeking to 'explain' or romanticize it. The performativity of the Brazilian nation is also distinguished by the self-awareness its political and intellectual actors seem to possess, even the most reductive or censorious ones. We might think of this as an awareness of the social, cultural and political roles that Brazil performs on a global stage, of critical response to them, and of internal and external factors that might change its performance. It is modernity, however, that underpins the pedagogical and performative dimensions of Brazil. Schwarz considers Modernism to have "brought about a profound change in values: for the first time the processes under way in Brazil were weighed in the context of the present-day world, as having something to offer in that larger context" (1986/1992: 8). At the same time, we might also consider the Third Space to exist between the ideals and realities of modernity, which have had the most serious implications for the discontinuity of social, cultural and political experience in Brazil.

Brazil forms part of the black Atlantic, although it does not appear in Gilroy's analyses of the overall space. Brazil's part in the black Atlantic should therefore be distinguished by conceptualizations of the relations it holds across it. Portugal, the colonizer, is the source of Brazil's backwardness. But Portugal is also the originator of Brazil's uniquely 'cordial' colonial history, reflecting how Brazilian popular culture has invoked and transformed European traditions. More recently, the US has replaced Europe as a source of economic, technological and political 'know how', and with unparalleled implications for Brazilian life. Double-consciousness, then, is key to interpreting Brazil's part in the black Atlantic. But similar to other ideas we have looked at, it requires reworking in Brazil. We might consider double-consciousness manifest in *candomblé* or other forms of popular religion in Brazil, which "maintain a tradition fixed in times past" (Ortiz 1985: 132). For Bosi, like Bellei, however, such popular practices are part of Brazil's frontier culture which, rather than fixed in times past, "exhibits a certain permeability with regard to symbolic forms from other eras ... indicative of a different historical consciousness: a broad, knowing synchrony that makes the most of its particular circumstances" (1992: 83). But again, the Brazilian state has played a significant role in regulating historical consciousness. We can therefore conceive of double-consciousness in Brazil as the conflict between political and popular forces over not only origins and modernity but also unity and diversity.

Discontinuity in Brazil is distinguished from the Latin American or postcolonial contexts by a distinct intellectual and political history of negotiating *mestiçagem*. In turn, political and intellectual negotiations of *mestiçagem* have been distinguished by the ways in which Brazil has attempted to define its national consciousness through differences in 'race', geography and popular culture. Therefore, when Ortiz writes: "All ... are dedicated to an interpretation of Brazil, its identity being the result of a game of relations learned by each author" (1985: 139), he is referring to one period in Brazil's ongoing intellectual-political negotiations with *mestiçagem*. However, this intellectual-political history has had significant implications for the ways in which *mestiçagem* has been mediated in Brazil, to invoke Bellei, which brings us even closer the analytical concerns of my thesis.

### 2.5.3 Critiques of Hybridity

One issue for critics of hybridity is its *translatability*, or how the concept has been applied across the postcolonial world, suggesting uniformity to complex contexts, practices and identities. In other words, hybridity has been criticized for universality despite the ways in which it seeks to understand how cultures, values and identities in the postcolonial

context are shaped differently. It is important to acknowledge the discrepancies between context and universality in critiques of hybridity. In doing so, however, I will also argue for the relevance of hybridity to the context of Brazil and its importance to my overall conceptual framework.

Hybridity is a concept that works against essentializing the social, cultural and political conditions of postcolonial contexts. Despite its anti-essentialist thesis, critics see hybridity as creating a generalizing discourse that not only reaffirms difference but also prioritizes experience. To Hall's (1989) claim of 'the end of the innocent notion of the essential black subject', Hutnyk finds "that this point is as important as it is banal", adding, "what needs to be debated is whether or not this recognition of the *constructed-ness* of the category 'black' and its political importance is any less constructed than any other categories, and if so, what it means to become less 'innocent' and 'essentialist'" (1997: 120; original emphasis). Similarly, Papastergiadis asks to what extent those suppressed by colonial histories possess hybrid identities when, according to Spivak (1993), there are differences between diasporic and subaltern subjectivities. Papastergiadis writes: Hall "presupposes that translation across cultural difference is always possible. But how do we map a culture whose own references do not correspond to ours ... whose historical memory and conceptual apparatus have been so damaged by the colonial encounter that the very possibility of exchange or dialogue seems no longer to exist" (1997: 275)? Hutnyk and Papastergiadis make crucial points, but ones I believe I have addressed by not looking at hybridity uniformly. Rather, I have looked at hybridity with concepts that reflect specific contexts but also require re-contextualization when more generally considered.

A related critique of hybridity is concerned with the forms and practices under analysis. It questions the paradigms of 'hybrid' forms and practices, how they come to represent individuals or groups in undifferentiated ways and therefore, the ways in which power is allocated *within* diasporic and subaltern groups. Friedman critiques Bhabha in these respects by writing, "the 'third space' ... if it is a space, must have boundaries of its own, and thus be based on opposition to its own others" (1997: 79). Thus, where Hutnyk and Papastergiadis question translating hybridity between *different* groups, Friedman asks to what extent certain forms or practices represent hybridity *in the same way*, as well as for whom. "In the works of the post-colonial border crossers, it is always the poet, the artist, the intellectual, who sustains the displacement and objectifies it in the printed word. But who reads the poetry, and what are the other kinds of identification occurring in the lower reaches of social reality" (Friedman 1997: 79)? Van der Veer echoes these concerns with power and representativeness, asking how the center's emblems of modernity can

also embody hybridity: “Bhabha’s claim that one can bring newness into the world, that one can reinvent oneself when one is writing from the cultural interstices, is a conceit of the literature-producing and consuming world. Literary texts are the very sites of self-fashioning in modern, bourgeois culture” (1997: 102). This leads Yuval-Davis to question the extent to which *all* forms from the ‘interstices’ reflect alterity and thus the tendency to think of *all* culture in the Third Space as transgressive, pointing to “what Homi Bhabha fails to consider: that ‘counter-narratives’, even if they are radical in their form, do not necessarily have to be progressive in their message” (1997: 202).

These issues are indeed legitimate, but are further problematized by the ways in which the ‘hybrid’ peoples, cultural forms and practices of Brazil have been conceptualized by intellectuals and appropriated by political systems. More specifically, these are processes that have contributed to constructing the Brazilian nation by translating hybridity into a *national popular culture*. In many respects, then, this echoes the concerns we have seen above, as not only has hybridity become part of a larger structure but it has also been stripped of geographical, ethnic and popular ‘origins’ in efforts of de-radicalization. At the same time, however, geo-ethnic and socio-economic differences in Brazil do not allow conflating diasporic and subaltern peoples into a uniformly ‘hybrid’ constitution. Brazil, although part of the black Atlantic, has other external and internal narratives of diaspora and alterity, which continue to go unnoticed (Lesser 1999). These critiques of hybridity are therefore reflected in Brazil as much as Brazil’s hybridity further complicates them.

A third critique of hybridity has to do with *feasibility*. This questions whether hybridity is simply an intellectual conceit or capable of reflecting change in the politics of culture and identity in the postcolonial space. Additionally, this ties into the concern with replicating essentialism by prioritizing certain ‘hybrid’ practices or experience. Thus, not only does the overall issue of translatability resurface, but the concept is also questioned for the ways in which it *actually* translates ‘hybrid’ cultural experience. Hutnyk writes: “When Gilroy does get around to mentioning Asian musicians, it is in terms that can be read as somewhat begrudging of Asian creativity and participation” (1997: 125). This is reflected in “words carry[ing] a specific tone: reinvention, borrowed, invention, attempts, debates, authenticity, unprecedented” that Hutnyk considers to be “hedging words which would probably not be deployed to explain the same processes accompanying innovations in the UK” (1997: 125). New cultural forms may therefore reflect new ways to contextualize hybridity, but this is limited by the pre-established orders within its conceptualization.

Finally, Papastergiadis provides a response to these critiques, but perhaps one that only compounds the ways in which Brazil has negotiated hybridity: "if we are all hybridised subjects, but our encounters with otherness and our flexing of translation are not equal, then we may well need to return to a theory of ideology to demonstrate how the gaps and slants of representation have various effects on the subject" (1997: 279). 'A theory of ideology', in other words, is what has been continuously invoked in Brazil's intellectual-political history of negotiating hybridity. Therefore, it is Brazilian scholars who perhaps provide the most proximate criticism of the ideological implications of hybridity. If we recall Bellei's strategies of mediating culture in the frontier, then we must also consider their deeper repercussions: "We have lived with the ideology of mediation for some time now, and the chances are it will be with us for as long as residual cultural forces do not grow powerful enough to propose alternatives to it" (1995: 59). What Bellei suggests is that mediation has become so firmly entrenched in negotiating the frontiers of culture in Brazil that it may only reify the forces of oppression and domination it once resisted. We should also consider Bosi's reflections on popular religious aesthetics in Brazil. In what is now a familiar narrative, once they were 'discovered' by prevailing modes of thought, they confirmed again how "elitism becomes an inescapable feature of Latin American ideological development ... as the general ideas of evolution, progress and civilization remain divorced from the values of social and cultural democracy" (Bosi 1992: 85).

The ways in which hybridity is problematized by ideology are not only that it has been invoked to build consensus and construct myths, as we have seen in Brazil, but that it has generated a tradition of compromise which seeks to dissolve contradictions (Bellei 1995). However, if we believe, as Friedman does, that the "rise of diasporic identities, just like the rise of all subnational identities, is directly related to the decline of the nation-state" (1997: 85), then we would have no basis for exploring the contradictory process by which Brazil's hybrid cultures, values and identities nevertheless constitute a distinct sense of nationhood. This contradiction between hybridity and nationhood brings us even closer to the Brazilian television mini-series. In order to arrive there, however, we must consider a parallel set of contradictions that emerge in textual representations of nationhood.

### 3 The Politics of Representation: Text, Genre, Nation and the Brazilian Television Mini-Series

#### 3.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I expand on the concept of hybridity by shifting from its sociocultural to its *textual-generic* implications. As in the previous chapter, I am therefore concerned with examining a 'version' of hybridity – here, a textual-generic one – that will also relate to its sociocultural interpretations. Thus, I will look for similarities and differences between the textual and social dimensions of hybridity. This also involves moving from the politics of culture and identity in postcolonial contexts to the politics of representation in these and other contexts in order to encompass issues not previously considered. By shifting from the sociocultural to the textual-generic dimensions of hybridity, I will examine tensions between concerns for the conditions in which popular texts are produced, circulated and consumed and concerns for the interest readers and viewers take in their representations. These tensions between conditions and interests are also reflected in a disciplinary gap between political economy and cultural studies. In this chapter, it is therefore my aim not only to identify these structural and subjective tensions but also to incorporate political economy and cultural studies' perspectives. Ultimately, this will allow me to combine the textual-generic and sociocultural implications of hybridity into a common framework.

I first examine the idea of the 'life of the text', which provides a means of interpreting the relations between addresser, addressee and 'superaddressee'. The concept also provides a means of bridging structural/subjective tensions. Second, I question the ways in which the idea of a 'broadcast space' consolidates institutional power, or facilitates an exchange between audiences, texts and genres within a communication system. Third, I discuss the ways in which genre serves as an interface between language and power by considering its ideological, aesthetic and ritual constructs. Instead of these discrete constructs, I argue for overlap between them, using concepts from literary and film criticism. Next, I look at the meeting points of genre and nation, examining the social and institutional relations that emerge from the idea of a 'national genre'. Following this, I discuss the politics of popular texts, particularly the ways in which class and gender have been conceived to constrict and resist assumptions about reading or viewing popular texts. Finally, I turn to genres of popular television, examining formal and institutional relations between them. This allows me to introduce and discuss the Brazilian television mini-series in a context of Latin American traditions of serialized, popular texts as well as a global exchange of genres, viewers and institutions.

As before, I pose questions that guide this chapter and also relate to my primary research question. How is power located not only in cultural institutions but also in popular texts and genres, and how does this define the relations between institutions and readers or viewers? How do political economy's concerns with power manifest in representations of a nation, and how does this translate into the power of readers or viewers? What issues define the interests of readers and viewers of popular texts, and how do these relate to institutional power? How does 'the life of the text' define these relations and conversely, how do institutional conditions and cultural interests guide the life of the text? Finally, how does the television mini-series genre, including Brazil's, reflect cultural interests and political-economic conditions? By asking and finally returning to these questions, I aim to supplement my existing framework of sociocultural hybridity with an understanding of the ways in which popular representations of the nation are negotiated by institutions, creators and audiences. Ultimately, the politics of culture and identity and the politics of representation will form my conceptual framework for analyzing the Brazilian television mini-series in the chapters that follow.

### **3.2 Institutions and Power: Texts, Genre and Audience**

#### **3.2.1 The Interests of Cultural Studies, the Conditions of Political Economy**

The disciplines of cultural studies and political economy are important to this research. Overlap between them is infrequent and uneasy, however. Cultural studies tend to focus on the subjectivity of individuals and groups, and political economy on institutions and power: what I will refer to as the *interests* of cultural studies and the *conditions* of political economy. Therefore, my goal is to incorporate cultural interests and political-economic conditions into the framework of this chapter not to confirm their points of conflict but to identify points of exchange between them. This framework cannot include all interests or conditions, however, so I consider some key observations that will help to define them.

For Nelson, television research involves looking at production contexts, textual qualities, or viewers' "active engagements" with texts (2001: 9). However, the gap between cultural studies and political economy grows with concern only for texts and viewers, or only for institutional power. This is reflected in Livingstone writing, "the way in which cultural studies privileges the discursive and the cultural over the material and economic creates a missing link in cultural studies theory" (1998a: 210). Lewis and Jhally would agree, writing, "textual analysis that takes place without examining the institutional, cultural, and economic conditions in which texts are produced and understood is necessarily

limited" (1998: 111). In his study of British popular culture, Shiach found that previous analyses of audience engagement with popular texts were "articulated in cultural terms, as if such differences were simply a matter of taste, and very rarely refers explicitly to the assumptions about class and gender which underpin them", resulting in a "tendency to see the universal popularity of television as a symptom, or perhaps a source, of national homogeneity" (1989: 174). These comments also reflect how cultural interests are often reduced to preferences, and institutional conditions to power and profitability.

Besides a division between structure and subjectivity, these observations underscore the ways in which class and gender are treated disciplinarily. Gender studies have received little recognition from political economy (Mutari, et al 1997; Peterson 2006), for instance, as they are seen to fall into the larger discipline of cultural studies. This raises additional questions about why the class and gender of audiences are concerns for cultural studies when a political economy analysis might help locate the power structures that determine how this comes to be. Also problematic is conflating 'popularity' and 'homogeneity', as Shiach observed, because it suggests that cultural interests and institutional conditions should be treated uniformly. Two starting points emerge from these comments: texts and institutions, and thus the possibility of overlaps between them. I next introduce the 'life of the text' and the 'broadcast space' as concepts that will help identify these overlaps.

### 3.2.2 The Life of the Text

Bakhtin's life of the text (1981; 1986) offers a way to bridge the gap between disciplinary concerns. Given that this chapter focuses on popular texts and that Bakhtin focused on the politics of the text, namely the novel, which was "the genre that obsessed him all his life" (Holquist 1981: xvi), his ideas are even more fitting. Additionally, Bakhtin's mode of analyzing texts, in his words, seeks to "move in the liminal sphere, that is, on the borders of ... disciplines, at their junctures and points of intersection" (1986: 103). The text, then, is a means to join disciplines, or to intersect "linguistic, philological, literary, or any other special kind of analysis", as: "Where there is no text, there is no object of study" (Bakhtin 1986: 103). In an approach that might now be familiar, Bakhtin's argues for the dialogic nature of the text, or "its plan (intention) and the realization of this plan", whereby the "dynamic interrelations of these aspects, their struggle ... determine the nature of the text" (1986: 104). *Intention* and *realization* are therefore the two poles between which the text moves in dialogic relation. Intention represents "a language system", or "Everything in the text that is repeated and reproduced, everything repeatable and reproducible, everything that can be given outside a given text" (Bakhtin 1986: 105). Intention also

signifies that “each text (as an utterance) is individual, unique”, which reveals the text’s “entire significance (its plan, the purpose for which it was created)” (Bakhtin 1986: 105).

Bakhtin describes the second pole as the “inhered (essential)” existence of the text, which is “revealed only in a particular situation and in a chain of texts” (1986: 105). This recalls the differed/differential components of *différance*. Contrasting the systemic quality of the first pole, the second pole is not linked with reproducible elements of language, but with “other texts (unrepeatable) by special dialogic … relations” (Bakhtin 1986: 105). For the text to move between poles thus means it is “possible to proceed toward the first pole, that is, toward language – the language of the author, the language of the genre, the trend, the epoch; toward the national language”, while moving towards the second pole means moving “toward the unrepeatable event” or the *instance* of the text (Bakhtin 1986: 107). At the core of Bakhtin’s model, however, is his concern for the “human sciences”, which means that the text’s movement between system and instance relies on “cognizing and evaluating thought”, or the “meeting of two texts … the ready-made and the reactive text being created – and, consequently, the meeting of two subjects and two authors” (Bakhtin 1986: 106 – 107). The meeting of two texts, subjects and authors therefore forms the “life of the text” or “its true essence”, which “always develops *on the boundary between two consciousnesses, two subjects*” (Bakhtin 1986: 106; original emphasis).

A boundary between two consciousnesses recalls the gap between origins and modernity of Gilroy’s double-consciousness, as well as Bhabha’s space between the pedagogy and performativity of narrating the nation. In other words, this suggests a way to examine an exchange between structure and subjectivity and especially the *representation of exchanges*, such as between imitation/originality, tradition/modernity and unity/diversity, which we have seen in Brazil. Bakhtin also argues that the “intonation [of] the author’s voice in drama” is either *explained* to or *comprehended* by the receiver, which constitutes a “double-voicedness” (1986: 111). “With *explanation* there is only one consciousness, one subject; with *comprehension* there are two consciousnesses and two subjects”, which means that “explanation has no dialogic aspects”, while comprehension “is always dialogic to some degree” (Bakhtin 1986: 111; original emphases). Again, this suggests a dialogic relation between representing a nation and the ways in which it may be interpreted. However, it also suggests that the dialogic relation between explanation and comprehension involves degrees of adherence or resistance to the national narrative.

This exchange between systems that produce a text and the instance of understanding its meaning is paralleled by an exchange between the consciousness of author and reader.

This is a dialogue we might consider to exist between the conditions of authorship and the interests of readership. For Bakhtin this means that, “juxtaposed utterances belonging to different people who know nothing about one another ... converge on one and the same subject (idea), [and] inevitably enter into dialogic relations with one another” (1986: 114 – 115). However, convergence on the same subject still requires a particular property on which either agent will focus. Bakhtin assigns *words* with this property, as words are “interindividual”, transforming the life of the text from a binary to a tripartite model:

The word cannot be assigned to a single speaker. The author (speaker) has his [sic] own inalienable right to the word, but the listener also has his [sic] rights, and those whose voices are heard in the word before the author comes upon it also have their rights (after all, there are no words that belong to no one). The word is a drama in which three characters participate (1986: 121 – 122).

In particular, the ‘inalienable right to the word’ is the transformative aspect of Bakhtin’s model. Since the word cannot be taken away from its ‘possessor’, whether the author or reader, this makes it impossible to circumscribe the dialogue occurring between the text, reader and author. This also begins to suggest the importance of not only identifying but also interrogating assumptions made about the conditions surrounding and the interests in popular texts and genres, including their producers and readers. As Eagleton writes, the “text is not the production ‘in rest’, nor is the production the text ‘in action’; the relation between them cannot be grasped as a simple binary opposition” (2006: 65). For Bakhtin, this means expanding the dialogue between author and reader, and indeed the limits of the ‘production’ of the text, to include “a *third* party in the dialogue”:

Any utterance always has an addressee ... whose responsive understanding the author of the speech work seeks and surpasses ... But in addition to this addressee (the second party), the author of the utterance ... presupposes a higher *superaddressee* (third), whose absolutely just responsive understanding is presumed, either in some metaphysical distance or in distant historical time (1986: 126; original emphases).

As I have done previously with thinking from outside Brazil, I add some concerns to Bakhtin’s life of the text and the agents or forces that it implicates. This will allow us to anticipate how the life of the text might apply to Brazil and therefore anticipate the uses and limitations of the concept in the Brazilian context. We recall from Chapter 1 the rigid stratification of culture in colonial Brazil, with implications not only for literacy but also for the divisions between elite and popular cultures, which Bosi pointed out. Of course, literacy is not now what it was in colonial Brazil, as we read in Chapter 2, but we must nevertheless account for this legacy in terms of not only the ‘text’ but also the agents and forces implicated in its lifecycle. This means that the text, particularly the popular text, in Brazil must be interpreted more widely than the novel, for instance, which was Bakhtin’s central concern. It also suggests significant differences between the addresser, addressee and superaddressee implicated in Bakhtin’s analysis of the novel and those implicated in

the *non-literary* popular memories and practices that we have seen throughout Chapters 1 and 2, which we should include in an expanded definition of the popular text in Brazil. By way of further contextualization, I have been referring to the 'conditions' that are the concern of political economy and the 'interests' of cultural studies. However, Bosi offers a useful interrogation of conditions, which also involves rethinking the significance of a 'system', such as that in which popular texts are produced and circulate. As Bosi writes: "The term *condition* comprehends a more diffuse set of experiences than the regular movements of production and trade described by *system*. To speak of a *condition* implies ways of living and surviving [in colonial Brazil]" (1992: 46; original emphasis). I maintain the distinction between political economy's conditions and cultural studies' interests. But Bosi's observations again illustrate that Brazil's colonial legacy has repercussions for the ways we might otherwise think about the boundaries between structure and subjectivity.

### 3.2.3 The Broadcast Space

Another way to bridge the gap between conditions and interests emerges from thinking about their concerns within a common space. This space also begins to assign the agents in the life of the text more tangible roles. The power of this space, or the *broadcast space*, according to Scannell, "like that of any institution, lies in the way it can define the terms of social interaction in its own domain by pre-allocating social roles and statuses, and by controlling the content, style and duration of its events" (1991: 2). Scannell's description captures the institutional and cultural dimensions of the broadcast space by introducing 'social roles and statuses' to 'content, style and duration'. Scannell also defines the space in which these elements meet as a "burden of responsibility ... on the broadcasters to understand the conditions of reception and to express that understanding in language intended to be recognized as oriented to those conditions" (1991: 3).

A 'language intended to be recognized' and 'the conditions of reception' suggest both the institutional and cultural dimensions of the broadcast space. Therefore, they guide my discussion of genre, audience and the exchange of interests and conditions between them in the rest of this section. As conceptual categories and points of convergence, genre and audience provide a way to bridge the disciplinary gaps between cultural interests and institutional conditions. As Neale writes, "generic norms and conventions are recognized and shared not only by theorists but also by audiences, readers and viewers", thus the "classification of texts is not just the province of academic specialists, it is a fundamental aspect of the way texts ... are understood" (2001: 1). Turner also writes that the exchange between genre and audience is informed by "repertoires of cultural knowledge around

individual personalities and other intertextual experiences" (2001: 5). Therefore, we can anticipate thinking about exchanges between genre and audience as based on experience as much as on institutional constructs.

I next turn to conceptions of genre to add to my framework of analyzing the interests and conditions implicated in popular texts. Understanding the ways in which genre has been conceived will also better illustrate the dimensions of the broadcast space and ultimately, Brazil's broadcast space. Thus, concepts of genre will not only anticipate the institutional and cultural dimension of Brazilian television, but they will also frame my discussion of the ways in which the Brazilian television mini-series entered that broadcast space.

### 3.2.4 Conceptualizing Genre

Theorists conceive of genre in several ways. For Martín-Barbero, genre mediates between "the logic of the productive system and the logics of use" (1993: 222 – 223). Feuer writes that Hollywood formulas create "difference by producing their own differences within very circumscribed structures of similarity" (1992: 142). Both theorists describe the *ritual* aspect of genre, in which "culture speaks for itself" through industry/audience exchange (Feuer 1992: 145). An *ideological* approach sees "genre as an instrument of control" within "the dominant ideology of the capitalist system" (Feuer 1992: 145). An *aesthetic* approach views genre as "a system of conventions that permits artistic expression" and determines "whether an individual work fulfills or transcends its genre" (Feuer 1992: 145), as well as whether an author's 'signature' adheres to or varies from a style.

Epistemological considerations should be added to these approaches. Todorov identifies differences between *historical* and *theoretical* genres, which either observe literary reality or deduce an abstract order (1975: 13 – 14), raising questions about a text's purpose and the codes or systems used to construct it. In other words, if genre is based on historical (biographical) or theoretical (poetic) premises (Todorov 1990: 25), then the ways in which it should be evaluated widen considerably, as do the bases for questioning its construct. This also suggests problems with conceiving of genre by one approach only. Film *noir* is often seen for its aesthetic, not ritual or ideological, qualities, which leaves the genre only partially defined (Kerr 1988: 377). Other genres reflect overlapping approaches, however. Science fiction is evaluated for its aesthetic, ritual and ideological aspects, as it creates a "space for authorship ... appreciated by fans because it works within and expands the mythology of the institution" (Tulloch and Alvarado 1988: 311). Perhaps it is most useful, then, to conceive of genre as involving all of these approaches.

This is further supported by generic crossover between institutional formats and cultural experiences, which means that the criteria that make a novel 'good' will not be the same for a film version (Feuer 1992: 141). Epistemologically, this brings into question the *power* of genre in terms of the allowance for 'deviance' from its standards and the implications of deviation for generic 'legitimacy'. Therefore, Todorov argues:

That a work 'disobeys' its genre does not mean that the genre does not exist ... because, in order to exist as such, the transgression requires a law – precisely the one that is to be violated. We might go even further and observe that the norm becomes visible – comes into existence – owing only to its transgressions (1990: 14).

Given the implications of deviance from generic 'rules', literary and film criticism offer useful concepts, as they often identify generically deviant texts. Thus, they offer tools for examining how the conditions of power are implicated in cultural interests such as genre. The novel is again important, as it is comprised of different conventions that can make it difficult to categorize. Identifying this, Holquist thus considers the novel "best conceived either as a supergenre, whose power consists in its ability to engulf and ingest all other genres ... or not a genre in any strict, traditional sense at all" (1981: xxix). Said addressed the power of the novel extensively, arguing for the ways its "structure of attitude and reference" implicate larger value or belief systems (1994: xvii). "Of all the major literary forms, the novel is the most recent, its emergence the most datable, its occurrence the most Western, its normative patterns of social authority the most structured; imperialism and the novel fortified each other to such a degree that it is impossible ... to read one without in some way dealing with the other" (Said 1994: 84).

Said's structure of attitude and reference is a crucial concept. It helps to reveal the ways in which power is concealed in texts and genres, and it prompts such an examination of genres other than the novel. However, Said primarily examined attitudes and references in Western texts toward colonial contexts. His concept therefore merits consideration in the reverse sense, in the attitudes and references of *colonial* texts towards *central* contexts. In Chapter 1, I discussed Cândido's dialectic of order/disorder in Brazilian literature and the ways in which it reflected a conscious play between European traditions and Brazil's colonial conditions. Cândido's idea therefore complements that of Said, but also offers an alternate to it. Cândido writes, "it is not the representation of particular concrete facts in fiction that produced a sense of reality; but instead the suggestion of a certain generality, which looked to the two sides and gave consistency as much to particular facts of the real as particular facts of the fictitious world" (1970: 10). This additional dialectic of the real/fictitious in referring to a 'certain generality' suggests a different structure of attitude and reference. It invokes the imaginary to describe colonial reality, contrasting the realities of colonial experience *imagined*, but often never realized, in European literary traditions.

Concepts from film criticism also complement structures of attitude and reference. They help to identify and examine dialectical relations between cinema as a social practice and an institutional apparatus. Thus, Neale's conception of genre as "systems of orientations, expectations and conventions that circulate between industry, text and subject" (1980: 19) is especially useful. Far from exclusively a ritual, ideological or aesthetic construct, genre instead reflects a circulation between the social, institutional or artistic dimensions these approaches otherwise favor. As Neale explains his approach further:

What is required is a set of concepts with which the pressure of genre can begin to be located: in terms of the relations of subjectivity involved; in terms of the structures and practices both of the cinematic institution as a whole and of that sector known variously as 'Hollywood' or as 'the commercial cinema'; and in terms of the determinants and effect of each of these within and across the social formation and its component areas (1980: 17).

However, the historical dimensions of genre should be added to Neale's approach, or the way a genre may remain the same while narratively reflecting social or cultural change. In her analysis of science fiction film, Sobchak found "a basic structure which informs the genre – a kind of push-pull configuration in which what is repressed will return in disguise to become overtly articulated" (1990: 113). The genre's structure is thus "able to accommodate historical and cultural change – for what will be repressed ... will alter with the times and will also emerge in a disguise which responds to historical concerns" (Sobchak 1990: 113). But the processes of displacement and condensation, in which "one representation comes to stand for many", or emotion is transferred "from an original to a secondary representation" (Sobchak 1990: 111 – 112), contradict overall narrative change. To an extent, this recalls Bellei's strategies of displacement and absorption for mediating culture in the frontier, which ultimately have implications for creating new ideologies of conciliation and harmony. Similarly, Sobchak notes that science fiction film is thrilling and threatening, creating a play between desire and fear. But these are tensions based in the genre consistently "repressing women and sexuality, in a culture which semiotically links biology and sexuality to women and technology to men" (1990: 113 – 114).

A fundamental point to make about these concepts, however, is that the exchanges they interrogate between the social and institutional aspects of genre have not been the same in Latin American and in central countries. This is reinforced by the unevenness of Latin American modernity in contrast with that of central countries, but also by discrepancies between the expectations and experiences of Latin America modernity: or what we might consider a divide between the political-economic conditions of, and cultural interests in, Latin American modernity. Lopez writes about the arrival of cinema to Latin America:

“the cinema fed a nation’s self-confidence that its own modernity was ‘in progress’: we can share and participate in the experience of modernity as developed elsewhere … Yet in order to do so, the national subject is also caught up in the dialectics of seeing: s/he must assume the position of spectator, becoming a voyeur of, rather than a participant in, modernity” (2000: 152 – 153). Lopez’s comments do not make these approaches to genre any less important, but they do make the structural/social relationships they interrogate of cinema in central contexts relative to Latin America. Thus, while these ideas indicate the ways in which power is implicated in genres from many different nations, they merit an even closer focus on genres from postcolonial, Latin American and Brazilian contexts.

### 3.2.5 The Politics of Genre and Nation

Mittel begins his study of American television genres by writing, “histories of particular genres would be quite different across different national and international contexts … By limiting myself to American television genres, I hope not to limit the possibilities of applying this approach to a range of media practices throughout the world” (2000: xv). Similarly, I first look at other nations’ genres in order to seek their relevance to analyzing the Brazilian television mini-series. These intersections of genre and nation will also help bridge divides between cultural interests and political-economic conditions, which Mittel also seeks: “If we accept that genres are constituted by cultural discourses, we need to acknowledge that those enunciations are always situated within larger systems of power that cannot be effaced from our analyses” (2000: 27). My approach involves first looking at media other than television, which Mansell helps to identify, as “there is considerable work that we can build on in the tradition of the political economy of the ‘older’ media … to establish a basis for joining perspectives” with cultural studies (2004: 97). In older media, the press and again, the novel, are useful. While both consist of different genres, they help to define key issues in representing the nation.

Conboy analyzed how the tabloid press, namely its traditions of “popular miscellany and its prioritization of entertainment” and its “normative influence through … narratives of nation and community”, consolidates “idealized readership into a discourse apparently divorced from mainstream political-economic coverage” (2002: 180). However, a divorce from the political-economic renders the tabloid’s “worldview all the more powerful for it is located within the rhetoric of the everyday and the common-sense of popular culture” (Conboy 2002: 180). Anderson sees the press as having created ‘imagined communities’, or the way a nation comes together through the common act of reading, further reducing the compression of time and space in modernity: “the newspaper reader, observing exact

replicas of his [sic] own paper being consumed by his subway, barbershop, or residential neighbours, is constantly reassured that the imagined world is visibly rooted in everyday life", engendering "that remarkable confidence of community in anonymity which is the hallmark of modern nations" (1983: 35 – 36). While imagined communities and idealized readerships are important ideas for conceptualizing a nation *via* its engagement with the press, they conflate the social and institutional dimensions of popular genres and assume that 'modern nations' is a consistent construct. These ideas reflect their own structures of attitude and reference and require adding other issues to the idea of a 'national genre'.

Another 'older' form of media is the novel, and important work has been done on the ways in which the novel intersects with constructs of the nation. I mentioned above the gap between gender studies and political economy. Thus, as a 'gendered' form, the novel anticipated this disciplinary boundary in many ways. In analyzing the role of the novel in nineteenth-century British society, Poovey found that "novelists deployed a mode of representation that individualized characters and elaborated feelings in order to engage their readers' sympathy", which contrasted the appeal "to readers' rational judgement" of political economy (1995: 133). Therefore, not only was abstract reasoning "considered a masculine epistemology", while "the aesthetic appreciation of concrete particulars and imaginative excursions was considered feminine", but crossover between the disciplines meant "that men who wrote poetry and novels struggled to acquire the dignity generally attributed to masculine pursuits", while "women who addressed political and economic subjects ... had to contend with the charge that they were 'masculine' or 'unsexed'" (Poovey 1995: 133). In sum, Poovey comments, "[s]eparating the social domain from the political and economic – while still subjecting the former to government oversight – enlisted assumptions about gender in the defense of national unity" (1995: 21).

In her study of the relations between British romance genres and constructs of national order during an earlier time period, Burgess also found the tendency to polarize abstract and aesthetic concerns into incompatible fields. However, Burgess also found that:

as a genre cross-cut by the narrative conventions and obsessions of political economy as they evolve and are transformed throughout the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, romance provides a mutually recognized field for thinkers about and debaters of social and national order whose backgrounds, assumptions, and principles seem otherwise irreconcilably diverse (2000: 7).

On the whole, then, the romance genre "is never so formless or so borderless that writers do not know, in employing or encountering 'romance' and the associated terminology it often shared with political philosophy, ... [the] genre is their referent and meeting-place" (Burgess 2000: 7). O'Cinneide ends her study of upper-class women writers' influence on

nineteenth-century British politics with a related comment: "The social as an interpretive category comes into its own when we seek to understand the position of women acting in this ostensibly private yet potentially politically charged role" (2008: 154).

However, Said might respond that these challenges to disciplinary and gendered divides still constitute "Being on the inside", which therefore "shuts out the full experience of imperialism, edits it and subordinates it to the dominance of one Eurocentric and totalizing view" (1994: 31). In the colonial context, then, it is perhaps even more possible to identify the politics of a national genre, namely in terms of a dialectic exchange between *internal* and *external* structures of attitude and reference, which to an extent we have seen. For Ferris, the power of Ireland's romantic tale in the period before Independence "lies precisely in its status as such a second-order genre ... an explicit response to the civic and English genre ... at once complementing and targeting the travel-text and its civic assumptions" (2002: 11). By "rewriting" the metropolitan English traveler to the context of colonial Ireland and "mobilizing the old romance plot", this figure was subjected to "a disorientation of personal and national being" (Ferris 2002: 11 - 12), which among other strategies, helped to overturn the genre's familiar devices. Ireland's romantic tales thus "seek to displace the civic English genre they invoke (precisely by repeating it), so that the interlocutory relation to the implied reader is a peculiar mixture of the combative and the conciliatory" (Ferris 2002: 48). In this sense, genre is not as much a means to construct the nation as a way to subvert the orders imposed upon it.

As we have seen, the romance genre in Latin America has also been rewritten in dialectic exchange with European literary traditions. But it has not been polarized from political-economic genres in ways we have also seen. For Sommer, the Latin American romance genre relies on melodrama, allegory, the erotic and the sentimental, or traditions from which it never departed. More importantly, however, it has reflected the deep political transformation of Latin American liberation. As Sommer notes, this was done in a mode "more projective than retrospective, more erotic than data driven" as, after all, the "genre is romance, which is itself a marriage of historical allegory and sentimentality" (1990: 84). But in the foundational period during which Latin American nations sought to construct themselves by rewriting histories of domination and oppression, the sentimental served as "the supplement or the correction for a history of non-productive events" (Sommer 1990: 84). Referring to the most evident ways in which the political and romantic have joined in constructing the Latin American nation, Sommer asks: "Why else would Latin American political and military leaders cultivate and promote the romantic novel as ... the most significant discursive medium for national development?" To which she replies:

"they assumed an analogy, commonplace in political philosophy, between the nation and the family and, by extension, between ideal history and (domestic) romance" (1990: 82).

Joining the political and the romantic to construct the Brazilian nation is also evident in its early literary genres. In her exhaustive study of Brazil's *romance-folhetim* – or serialized tales in newspapers which often later appeared as novels – Meyer explains how the form not only cut across Brazil's institutional and social divides but also helped to establish its literary identity: "In Brazil, although there was difference between 'serious', informative newspapers ... and half-serious, recreational journalism with supposedly more 'popular' traces, ... the *folhetim* was indispensable to both journalistic categories and fit into their repertoires of not excluding native content, [including] the work of authors who today have little recognition" (1996: 381). Moreover, the *romance-folhetim* was not an exclusively gendered genre, despite its origins in the work of Eugène Sue or Alexandre Dumas. This would "open a space to feminine literary production, urging emancipation from 'marital tyranny', beckoning to the political, women's right to vote, the valorization of their work and their autonomy, the abolition of slavery", although Meyer also notes that this space would "never forget that the woman is mother, educator of her children, therefore the citizen of tomorrow [and] queen of the home" (1996: 298). Perhaps the most significant feature of the *romance-folhetim*, however, despite crossing between institutional and social boundaries, is that its basic melodramatic form "also appealed to the representation of justice" (Meyer 1996: 385). The representation of justice, in other words, is not only what drew Brazil to the *romance-folhetim*, but it would also inform subsequent genres and the ways in which Brazil has come together around them.

### 3.3 Popular Texts, Genres and the Brazilian Television Mini-series

#### 3.3.1 Class, Gender and Reading Popular Texts

I next focus on contemporary popular texts and genres, their readers and viewers, and key interrogations of the relations assumed between them. As I have done before, I first consider these relations in European and American contexts in order to seek similarities with or differences from Latin American and Brazilian contexts. Of ongoing importance, then, is the tension between the conditions and interests of engaging with popular texts and genres. Structures of attitude and reference also play an essential role in interpreting tensions between the pleasures of popular texts and the value systems implicated in their creation and consumption. This discussion will introduce the Brazilian television mini-series to a trajectory of popular texts and genres, including novels, television serials and series and, most importantly, the *telenovela* in Latin America and Brazil.

Adorno was critical of the idea that there should be any relation between audiences and popular texts: "division of television content into various classes ... pre-established the attitudinal pattern of the spectator before he [sic] is confronted with any specific content and which largely determine the way in which any specific content is being perceived" (1972/2001: 169). Adorno's view certainly confirms an ideological approach to television genres, but it extends beyond them as well, since this "conditioning to universal patterns ... scarcely stops at the television set" (1972/2001: 170). According to Fiske, the very idea of 'audience' is problematic, as it has "no meaningful categories beyond its boundaries", as is that of the text, which is seen as "a unified whole delivering the same message in the same way to all its 'audience'" (1991: 56). The only way to avoid "easy categorization" of audience and text, then, is "to dissolve both categories" (Fiske 1991: 56).

In her pioneering study of women's engagement with popular novels and soap opera, however, Modleski not only found that the text is important but she also speculated that audience interpretation constitutes "an enormously tricky business", in which "the gap between what is intended and what is actually spoken is often very wide" (1982: 99). Soap opera, rather than confirming a "naive belief in the beneficence of communication", is loaded with ambiguous consequences, at any moment "providing relief for some of the characters and dreadful complications for others" (Modleski 1982: 99 – 100). Complexity in the text therefore has implications for assumptions made of its audiences, such that: "Perhaps more than men, women in our society are aware of the pleasures of language – though less sanguine about its potential use as an instrument of power" (Modleski 1982: 100). Nonetheless, there is the belief that the gendered orientation and reception of these genres consolidate the institutional power of not only their broadcasters and publishers but also their critics. Within criticism, however, Modleski found a particularly revealing contradiction that "helps us to understand how certain critics can insist ... on the purely escapist nature of mass art while others persuasively argue ... mass art legitimates the status quo. Both sides are partly right; where they err is in regarding the phenomenon as a simple one" (1982: 105).

Modleski found another contradiction between what is seen to be the effects of engaging with 'mass art' and the pleasures to be found in actually engaging with it, or a discourse which both "challenges and reaffirms traditional values, behavior, and attitudes" (1982: 105). We might even think of this as a contradiction between structures of attitude and reference *surrounding* and *within* the popular text. On one hand, it is easy to link the "the texts' popularity to the successful conspiracy of a group of patriarchal capitalists plotting

to keep women so happy at home" (Modleski 1982: 106). On the other, this is challenged by the pleasure of the texts themselves, for they "do speak profoundly to us, even those of us who like to think we have shed our 'false consciousness' and are actively engaged in challenging patriarchal authority" (Modleski 1982: 106).

Radway engaged with women readers of romance fiction to also identify contradictions. One is that her participants read to escape: "to deny their presence in the family context", while "they also read to learn" (Radway 1991: 479). Another is that the "*act* of romance reading as goal-directed work" gave it "higher value in the male world", or the value of "labor, self-improvement, and achievement" (Radway 1991: 479; original emphasis). A third contradiction for Radway's participants was "temporary release from the demands of the social role that defined them, and psychological gratification for the needs they experienced because they had adopted that role" (1991: 481), or the space into which they stepped to validate the needs and desires otherwise displaced by the selflessness of daily life. Radway's work therefore reveals quite a different structure of attitude and reference: one in which the reader of the popular text is conscious of *what* mechanisms have been engaged in its creation, of negotiating *how* the text suitably fits her interests and indeed, *which* text over others will meet them. Radway sees this as "not a form of partial literacy, but a different form of literacy altogether, founded on its own conception of the word and what can be done with it" (1991: 474). There are "as many different forms of literate behavior as there are interpretive communities", as Radway concludes (1991: 484), or any number of attitudes and references mobilized in response to prevailing ones.

Geraghty takes the contradictions between the social space and institutional apparatus of popular texts even further. Examining soap opera and women viewers, Geraghty found that "soaps offer a space for women ... which not only acknowledges their existence but demonstrates their skills and supports their point of view" (1991: 196). Yet this space can be as restricting as it is reassuring. While soaps "present a version of a universal 'female condition' which cuts across age, race and class and allows women to recognise each other across the barriers", they also create an "essentialism which is both a source of pleasure and a problem" (Geraghty 1991: 196). Taken further, the space soap opera offers women is constructed on the personal and domestic, despite forays into the professional world or the introduction of timely social issues. It is thus a space in which the "female viewer may welcome the valuing of her competencies and experiences", or one in which she might "reject the programmes as too restrictive or limiting" because of feelings of "ambiguity towards the terrain which soaps map out" and a "fear of male mockery" (Geraghty 1991: 197). The space of soap opera may therefore also represent a ghetto, for it

raises questions about the extent to which the “values sustaining us simply because we are women” have been institutionally, and not socially, constructed (Geraghty 1991: 197).

In her study of the ways in which class informs women’s response to television sitcoms, Press found that working-class women search for realism in the texts. For working-class women viewers, a literal reading of the texts therefore “accounts for the paucity of their identification with comic television characters” (Press 1989: 235). However, middle-class women viewers “more easily move back and forth between their own experience and ... television characters and situations” (Press 1989: 241), even if they perceived the lack of realism in the text. For working-class women viewers, then, “television should reflect the world they would like to see” (1989: 235), which means engaging with critical modes of interpreting the texts. Elsewhere, Press observes that this is not a difference in cultural interests, but working-class women’s awareness of the conditions of social status, which means that the ‘reality’ encoded in the texts reflects a difference in class-consciousness when decoded by working- *versus* middle-class women viewers. “Working-class women are particularly vulnerable to television’s presentation of the material accoutrements of middle-class life as the definition of what is normal in society” (Press 1991: 138).

Butsch’s historical study of American audiences reveals other contradictions, particularly in conceptions of television viewers. Working-class viewers of early television were seen as “Embracers” or “stereotypic TV fans”, whose viewing habits meant that their “choice of program was secondary to watching at certain hours”, and which in turn “contributed to the larger discourse that used television use as an indicator of status” (Butsch 2000: 260). In contrast to Embracers were the “Protesters”, or upper-middle-class viewers who “objected to television’s detrimental effects” and “to the waste of its potential for social good” (Butsch 2000: 260). Between them were middle-class “Accommodators”, who had the ability to balance “the indiscriminate indulgence of the working class and the overly critical and puritanical upper middle class” (Butsch 2000: 261). Despite its absoluteness, this schematization reveals a few contradictions. First, the innocuousness of upper-class inattention before the twentieth-century became a negative characteristic of the working-class television viewer. Second, ‘constant television’ and ‘undivided attention’ became a matter of class differentiation, with implications for class also based on the programming selected. And third, while working-class theatre or radio audiences engaged in multiple activities during a performance, this would become the ‘distractedness’ of working-class television audiences (Butsch 2000: 264).

Underpinning all these contradictions is *passivity*. It becomes a means of correlating class and popular texts, such that the greater the concern for passivity, the more 'popular' the class and the text. On one hand, then, concern with passivity suggests a new structure of attitude and reference. As Shiach observes, "worry about passivity is one in which critics feel themselves much more seriously implicated. It is a worry about the cultural and spiritual health of television viewers, a fear about erosion of cultural and social values and judgements" (1989: 189). On the other hand, while concern for passivity reflects new technologies, class structures and forms of popular culture, it seems structures of attitude and reference have not changed, since "interests in peasant poetry or in folk song ... were also symptomatic of concerns about the erosion of the power and significance of the dominant culture" (Shiach 1989: 189).

In Latin America, discourses of class, gender and passivity also inform studies of readers' interactions with popular texts. In addition, scholars in Europe, North America and Latin America all recognize tensions, if not contradictions, between the sociocultural space the popular text provides and the institutional structures it reinforces. One crucial difference between analyses of Latin America and central contexts, however, is the very significance of space. In Latin America, the space defined by readers' engagements with popular texts has implications for constructs of community and even nation in ways we have not seen above. Another crucial difference is that one genre in particular appears to form the locus of spatial constructs in Latin America: the *telenovela*. This is not to suggest that, unlike the many different texts, genres and readers I discussed above, the *telenovela* and its viewers are uniform. But the *telenovela* both reaches across geographical and institutional spaces in Latin America and underpins the physical and symbolic negotiations of space in Latin America, from the local to the transnational. In turn, this raises other issues particular to Latin America, namely its relationship with modernity. Next, I briefly discuss some key scholarship on class and gender in relation to viewer engagement with the *telenovela* in Brazil. This will carry into my final section on television serials and series and will allow me to discuss the Brazilian mini-series on formal, institutional and social levels.

Perhaps the most contradictory feature attributed to the *telenovela* is the way in which it unites Latin American countries characterized by deep socio-economic disparities. In the context of Brazil, Mattelart and Mattelart write: "The *novela* has been the centerpiece of ... unanimity in a society developing at two speeds: a minority keeping up with the pace of modernization and the others trampled into an increasingly limited horizon" (1990: 81 - 82). Vassallo de Lopes describes the Brazilian *telenovela* in terms of its capacity to serve as a made/remade 'mirror' for the nation. "What makes the *telenovela* a strategic enclave for

Brazilian audiovisual production is its weight in the television market and the role that it plays in the production and reproduction of images that Brazilians create of themselves and through which they recognize themselves" (2004: 17). Neither author is so sanguine about the unifying capacity of the *telenovela*, however, that they do not see incongruity in what it portrays of Brazil. For Mattelart and Mattelart, the "cathartic power of the genre and its empathy with the audience, both of which define it as an exceptional, trans-class form of communication, should not overshadow the way in which it represents social life" (1990: 80). And for Vassallo de Lopes, the *telenovela* represents the epicenter of "a hegemonized television market", but one which is "also fragmented and segmented in its consumption and complicated by the appearance of new social actors and new collective identities" (2004: 19). I next discuss class and gender as aspects of identity mobilized in response to the hegemonic role of the Brazilian *telenovela*, as well as ways in which these responses do represent social life in Brazil otherwise absent from the genre's depictions.

La Pastina and Straubhaar examined the popularity of a Mexican *telenovela* in Brazil and found that the success of the text outside its native country contradicted existing theory. Previously, Straubhaar (1991) argued that cultural proximity is the reason why television viewers prefer locally over foreign produced programs. The more recent study, however, found that national boundaries are not enough to validate cultural proximity, as "within cultural-linguistic spaces, many other forces also apply" (La Pastina and Straubhaar 2005: 272). One such force is class identification. The authors' rural, working-class Brazilian viewers preferred the Mexican *telenovela* for its 'realistic' depictions of class ascension. It was preferred over a Brazilian *telenovela* with a rural setting as well that was successful in the industrial southeast, but that had less allure for the rural viewers. Thus, "there are ... major differences between classes in terms of cultural capital in Brazil, which powerfully affects what [viewers] watch and how they interpret it" (La Pastina and Straubhaar 2005: 279). Another such force is gender depiction. Again, the authors' rural Brazilian viewers preferred the Mexican *telenovela* for its realism, but also because the Brazilian production prioritized sex over romance and generally modernized the genre instead of retaining its melodramatic roots (2005: 281 – 282). As La Pastina and Straubhaar conclude: "viewers' local culture and the perceived challenges posed by urban Brazilian *telenovelas* to local values generated a positive atmosphere that facilitated the reception of a foreign text, that felt more proximate because it did not overtly challenge notions of gender roles and relationships while upholding more conservative gendered behaviors" (2005: 283). With regards to space, however, the authors reveal the way in which regionalism is mobilized to challenge and therefore transcend the limits of representation in Brazilian television.

In a different context, Tufte looked at the ways in which women living in *favelas* relate to the Brazilian *telenovela*. One of Tufte's key findings also has to do with space. In *favelas*, standard spatial arrangements are transformed by close living conditions, such that even Da Matta's (1991b) distinction between *casa e rua*, or the home and the street in Brazilian society, is blurred (Tufte 2000: 192). As a way of negotiating the porousness of this space, Tufte's found that *favela* residents established a "hybrid sphere", or "a social and cultural field of everyday practices mediated by the contradictions between urban and rural life ... tradition and modernity... and masculine and feminine norms" (2000: 192). Therefore, while the kitchen and garden are considered women's spaces, and the bar, street corner and square men's, the "hybrid sphere is not defined as either the woman's or the man's spatial domain", but "a mutual space of social interaction" (Tufte 2000: 188). Moreover, the living room formed a hybrid sphere and at its center, the television, thereby defining structures of "time, space and social relations, in which the everyday flow of *telenovelas* and the specific viewing situation are substantial interactive agents" (Tufte 2000: 192).

In terms of engaging with the *telenovela*, class and gender were factors in the production of the texts and in the reproduction of meaning for Tufte's participants, although not in the same way that Vassallo de Lopes argued above. The women related to one character that joined "traditional virtues with a new strong female type, a modern woman's role" (Tufte 2000: 201). Additionally, the series of stormy relationships this character endured reflected the lives of many viewers. As Tufte notes, however, the *telenovela*'s progression from a situation of conflict to one of harmony "only partially reflects the social reality in which the women live", for although "harmony is what many of the women explicitly describe as the principal asset of the *telenovela* ... It is something they also continuously seek in their own lives" (2000: 202 – 203). The women's response to class depictions were similar, in that they voiced "ambivalence between dreaming about an easier life, envying the *telenovela* characters, their houses, cars and clothes, but on the other hand focusing on the positive elements among themselves and their equals" (Tufte 2000: 213). This reflects a form of literacy, to cite Radway, which forges a space between fantasy and reality, even in the *telenovela*'s most 'realistic' depictions of lower-income Brazilians (Tufte 2000: 214), and despite the pleasure of its happy endings.

### **3.3.2 Serials, Series, the *Telenovela* and the Brazilian Television Mini-series**

In the last part of this chapter, I discuss serialized television genres. This will allow me to introduce the Brazilian television mini-series by first contextualizing it. I will discuss the importance of the episode to both the serial and series format, as well as the implications

of 'episodicity' for ideological and ritual approaches to genre. The episodic structure will also inform my discussion of soap opera and the *telenovela*, both serials, but perhaps with more differences than similarities between them, due to institutional and cultural factors in their respective contexts. Despite their differences, soap opera and the *telenovela* are arguably the closest 'kin' to the television mini-series. Thus, I discuss their inflections on the mini-series, but also the ways in which the latter genre differs due to the influence of the Brazilian series, literature and film and the implications of these forms for discourses of the everyday *versus* history. These considerations, both from within and outside Latin America, will help to situate the Brazilian mini-series in a cultural and political-economic framework that I have attempted to construct throughout this chapter.

Hagedorn distinguishes serialized television from other television formats and indeed, from film and the novel, forms with which I have also been concerned. For Hagedorn: "Episodicity is *the* crucial trait which distinguishes the serial (and the series) from the 'classic' narrative text", which means that a 'classic text' like the novel may be consumed however a reader wants, while serialized television puts "consumers at the whim of the medium that presents them" (1995: 28; original emphasis). Ideologically, 'episodicity' is therefore "a textual sign of the serial's material existence as merchandise", while in the ritual sense it reflects "the discourse established between the producing industry and the consuming public" (Hagedorn 1995: 28). I have not explicitly addressed episodic formats until now, but this is a key feature of virtually all of the popular genres discussed so far, from the *romance-folhetim* to soap opera and the *telenovela*. Hagedorn thus points out that far from being limited to television, "serials have been introduced into every medium precisely at the point at which they are emerging as a mass medium ... establishing and then developing a substantial consuming public for that medium" (1995: 28 – 29).

Geraghty delves deeper into the implications of episodicity for not only the formal but also the ritual features of the serial. At the same time, Geraghty distinguishes the serial from the series. By its "organisation of time", the *series* normally contains a story within an episode, but it also maintains elements such as characters and setting across a number of episodes (Geraghty 1981: 10). In *serials*, however, when characters are "abandoned at the end of an episode," they continue with an "unrecorded existence" until the beginning of the next (Geraghty 1981: 10). For the series, then, "narrative time within the episode is the only criterion for time passing", whereas the serial "appears to have gone through a similar period of time as its audience" (Geraghty 1981: 10). By further distinction, the *continuous serial*, such as the American and British soap opera, provides a "sense of the future" through inextricably linked plots and the everyday passing of time and events,

which “encourage us to believe that this is a narrative whose future is not yet written” (Geraghty 1981: 11). Additionally, the continuous serial interweaves multiple stories and characters “without disturbing the serial format by playing them against very familiar elements”, allowing viewers to experience “a rich pattern of incident and characterisation ... mixed in with the everyday” (Geraghty 1981: 12).

There are further differences between serialized forms that reflect national, cultural and institutional differences and bring us even closer to the Brazilian television mini-series. Allen (1995) distinguishes the *open* from *closed* serial. The open serial, such as British and American soap opera, is “predicated upon the impossibility of ultimate closure”, which means that it not only trades “narrative closure for paradigmatic complexity”, but that neither the “ultimate moment of resolution” nor a “central, indispensable character” will change “the overall world of the serial” (Allen 1995: 18). This also suggests that “[e]vents in daytime soap are less determinate and irreversible than in other forms of narrative, and identity, indeed ontology itself, is more mutable” (Allen 1995: 19). For Livingstone, the ‘openness’ of soap opera has implications for reading its narratives:

Soap opera thus cannot offer clear and singular solutions to the personal and moral problems portrayed. For example, there can be no ‘happy ever after’, for marriages never last. Rather they explore a multiplicity of relevant perspectives on the issues ... which implicate but are not resolved by cultural myths, social knowledge and commonsense discourses. There are no objective truths, no answers, no permanent securities, no uncompromised actions, no absolutes (1998b: 52).

In contrast to soap opera, the *telenovela* is a closed form, although as Allen points out, not for “several months or 200 episodes” (1995: 23). This also has implications for reading the text, as the *telenovela* ultimately provides “viewers an opportunity ... to look back upon the completed text and impose upon it some kind of moral or ideological order” (Allen 1995: 23). There is important scholarship on the *telenovela* from Latin America that further distinguishes it from soap opera. In turn, this work underscores the role the *telenovela* has played formally, culturally and institutionally in Brazil, with implications for differences in modernity between the contexts in which these forms are located.

We recall that the success of the Brazilian *romance-folhetim* was due to the ways it crossed between ‘newsworthy’ and popular publications and forged a space for new themes and authors. The success of the *romance-folhetim* also first relied on imitating European serials, although Brazil never established the same institutional space. As Meyer writes: “Let us return to the publication of the *folhetim* in the large informational newspapers in order to insist ... on the question of frontiers, or on the absence of them, which plays on the [idea of a] ‘literary’ genre” (1996: 381). Ortiz echoes Meyer’s comment, noting that the *romance-*

*folhetim* would never replicate Europe's literary spaces because "literary Brazilians, when they published their novels in parts in the newspapers of the times, were ... strategically utilizing the only means of expression given to them, rather than properly producing a serialized literature of entertainment" (1988a: 16 – 17). Thus, while the *romance-folhetim* "consolidated the interest of the larger public," this was because it had to "distance itself from erudite culture *or* popular tradition" (Ortiz 1988a: 12; emphasis added). With its origins in the *romance-folhetim*, the *telenovela* would therefore continue to transcend these distinctions, if it did not question the extent to which they existed in Latin America.

In addition to the *romance-folhetim*, the *fotonovela* (Butler Flora 1985), theater (Ortiz 1988a) and circus (Martín-Barbero 1993) have contributed to what Lopez sees as the "essentially melodramatic narrative mode" of the *telenovela* (1995: 258). Furthermore, Lopez argues that the "*telenovela* is not explicitly associated with female consumption" (1995: 260), thus contrasting the ways in which soap opera has been characterized and derided (Geraghty 1991; Livingstone 1998b). As Ortiz clarifies this distinction, the *telenovela* did draw on the model of American soap opera, but equally so on the Cuban *radionovela*, meaning that, "the Cuban tradition was rooted in another culture, one that led to privileging the tragic, melodramatic side of life", thus that like the *radionovela*, the *telenovela* would ultimately be oriented to a general, and not a female, public (1988a: 24). As Lopez also argues, then, the absence of a specific gendered orientation has allowed the *telenovela* to address more social than 'gendered' themes, further facilitated by the ways in which "its very name actively seeks prestige by citing an élite genre – *novela* – and a new technological medium associated with a much desired modernization" (1995: 260).

These differences between soap opera and the *telenovela* are not merely formal, but rather indicative of sociocultural and institutional differences between Europe, North America and Latin America. In turn, they reflect different constructs of modernity, particularly the tendency to define modernity by distinct kinds of texts and readers *versus* looking at the ways in which new texts, technologies and readers blur such distinctions, or question if they similarly existed. However, it is not only the distinctions between soap operas and *telenovelas* but also differences *within* the *telenovela* that reveal Latin America's 'version' of modernity. Martín-Barbero argues that there are two, distinct subgenres of the *telenovela*: one is a "serious genre, in which heart-rendering, tragic suffering predominates ... [and which] depicts exclusively primordial feelings and passions, excluding all ambiguity or complexity from the dramatic space"; the other is a *realistic* genre, placing "the narrative in everyday life" to represent "a specifically national reality" (1995: 279 – 280; original emphasis). Furthermore, Lopez differentiates between national versions of the *telenovela*,

such as the realism and technical sophistication of Brazilian, the social conservatism of Mexican, and the use of literary or historical themes in Columbian *telenovelas* (2000: 169). Again, however, if we look beyond the formal qualities of *telenovela* subgenres we will find that they have institutional, cultural and political implications for Brazil.

According to Napolitano, the realistic Brazilian *telenovela* appeared in 1968, and was not only a departure for the genre but also a defining moment for Brazilian television:

*Beto Rockfeller* ... introduced another type of television drama. The story had a more sociological bias, depicting a poor man who wanted to rise in life at whatever cost, surviving on small triumphs. The dialogue was more colloquial and humorous and the setting was natural and everyday ... The *novela* demonstrated that it was possible to bring to the air typically Brazilian characters ... tuned-in to the social problems and characteristics of the times (2001: 75 – 76).

However, 1968 was also the year in which the military regime enforced Institutional Act 5, revoking the Brazilian Constitution and curtailing civil freedoms. As Napolitano also notes, then, *Beto Rockfeller* reflected the larger political-institutional climate of the times, which included “exile and censorship imposed on leading artists and intellectuals” who did not adhere to the “jingoistic propaganda of the military regime”, but also “the search for new spaces and styles of cultural and behavioral expression”, particularly within the “notable growth of means of mass communication” (2001: 81). Indeed, as Porto observes, the 1973 *telenovela*, *O Bem-Amado* (*The Beloved*), “offered audiences a subtle critique of the military dictatorship,” despite having endured government censorship and TV Globo’s self-censorship, although such “challenging and oppositional representations of Brazil’s process of modernization were often restricted to late-night melodramas ... broadcast in the now-extinct 10:00pm time slot” (2011: 59). Porto also suggests that the more evident it became that the regime’s political-economic vision was not working, the more Brazilian *telenovelas* reflected this, such that “critical views about the development model adopted by the military started to emerge in ... *telenovelas* during the process of political opening. The previous emphasis on national integration ... was not abandoned, but a more critical and pessimistic view of the process of modernization emerged” (2011: 59).

Brazil has, of course, been re-democratized since 1985 and the *telenovela* has reflected this and other significant changes accordingly, from disillusionment following corruption in the Collor administration to the increasing force of previously repressed social and civil movements, such as agrarian reform (Porto 2011: 65). Therefore, the ways in which the *telenovela* and its subgenres reflect Brazil’s changing political-economic and sociocultural landscapes suggest more than an ‘essentially melodramatic narrative mode’. As Simões Borelli writes, “we can also observe, starting in the 70s, a decentralizing of the hegemony

of melodrama evoked by the invasion of other 'territories' of fictionality, such as comedy, adventure, police narratives, the fantastic and the erotic. These are plots that, parallel to the conducting melodramatic thread, insert themselves into the context ... and engage in a dialogue with the matrices of these other constitutive territories" (2001: 34). Thus, if we consider Simões Borelli's 'territories of fictionality' to reflect the formal, institutional and political aspects of the *telenovela*, then we see how it has been "articulated, conflictingly, in a chain of mediations that do not dilute hierarchies, but also do not exclude any of these elements from the composition of its totality" (2001: 35).

The idea of a territory of fictionalities is useful because it can be expanded to include the larger landscape of serials and series that I discussed above. An expanded landscape will therefore allow me to introduce the television mini-series and subsequently, the Brazilian mini-series, to serials, series *and* film and the novel: those 'classic' texts with which I have also been concerned. What will emerge are interests and conditions specific to the mini-series that in turn contribute to larger discourses of class, gender and nation. Finally, this discussion will allow me to consider similarities and differences in the television mini-series between its European, North American and Brazilian contexts.

In an *ever-expanding* territory of fictionalities, Creeber notes, "the increased serialisation and complexity of television drama means that it becomes increasingly difficult to make clear distinctions between the series, serial and mini-series" (2001a: 35). Nevertheless, he clarifies that while "the never-ending serial is frequently associated with soap opera", the mini-series is "linked with less 'formulaic' drama. Because of its inbuilt narrative arch, it is arguable that characters and storylines are given more room to change, evolve and develop" (2001a: 35). By further clarification, we might understand the 'inbuilt narrative arch' of the mini-series as allowing for the crescendos of plot and character development typical of any serial, yet within the finiteness of a closed form, such as the single-play or film. Creeber therefore sees the influence of both continuous serials and closed forms on television serials like the mini-series: "the *personal* and *domestic* narrative of the soap opera is frequently the central narrative thread of the television serial, but the possibility of closure provided by the serial form also allows a greater depth and coherence for the discussion of wider themes and issues" (2001b: 442; original emphases). What confuses the definition of the mini-series in an already complex territory, however, is not only its nomenclature – for the series can continue over any number of episodes, while the *mini-series* is ultimately a closed form – but also its "generic hybridity", in which "questions of power and politics" and the personal and domestic "can be successfully combined and contained" (Creeber 2001b: 443).

Some critics of European and American mini-series find that the form does successfully combine power and politics with the personal and domestic, while others are ambivalent about the ways in which this is achieved. According to Creeber, the intent of the German mini-series *Heimat* was “not to give *the* history of modern Germany, but to give *a* history, a history from the point of view of those who may have lived it” (2001b: 451; original emphases). From *Heimat*’s soap opera-like, “intimate” point of view, German history was therefore “transformed into memory that, by implication, reveals the complexity and not the simplicity of historical ‘truth’” (Creeber 2001b: 452). In related analyses with different conclusions, however, Kansteiner (2004) and Alexander (2002) examined reception of the American mini-series *Holocaust* in the US and Germany. In comparison with Germany’s “one-dimensional” portrayals of the Holocaust in the 1960s, Kansteiner found that the 1978 mini-series “offered for the first time a conceptual strategy of collective memory that could handle the conflicted and ambivalent realities of the [N]azi years” (2004: 586). However, he also notes that the mini-series reflected how “younger generations explored the burden of the past with less circumspection” (2004: 586), which in tandem with a shift from depicting the motives of perpetrators to the experiences of survivors, meant that it emphasized normality over conformity and consensus over conflict (2004: 587). Similarly, Alexander comments on the way *Holocaust*, amongst other dramatizations like *The Diary of Anne Frank*, “portrayed the [Holocaust] in terms of small groups, families and friends, parents and children, brothers and sisters. In this way, the victims … became everyman and everywoman” (2002: 35). At the same rate, Alexander sees supplanting the political-historical context with the subjective experience as a “process of material deconstruction and symbolic inversion further contribut[ing] to the universalization of the Holocaust: It allowed the moral criteria generated by its earlier interpretation to be applied in a less nationally specific and thus less particularistic way” (2002: 40).

However, these commentators do seem to agree on the political discourse the mini-series is capable of generating by situating history in the everyday, as well as the way in which the form appeals to “high-, middle-, and low-brow audiences alike” (Alexander 2002: 35). Indeed, the mini-series’ “high production values, location shooting, and star casting” can attract a diverse range of viewers, which includes “those who read the book on which a particular mini-series is based” and “viewers who would not generally watch television, including the up-scale viewers sponsors are interested in reaching” (Hagedorn 1995: 38). The mini-series is mostly adapted from works of literature or based on historical events, thereby potentially attracting more ‘literary’ viewers. This raises additional issues among critics, however. White notes that analyses of the mini-series tend to linger on the very

gap between history and its dramatization, which the form attempts to cross: "They tend to assess television's 'fidelity' to reality in these dramatic formats, raising questions about dramatic license, entertainment versus instruction, the distortions of the medium, the excitement of the 'reality' which is ignored in television's dramatizations, and so forth" (1989: 299). This is especially apparent in critiques of well-known American mini-series.

Tucker and Shah analyzed *Roots* to find that: "Content and characterizations were altered by the series' creators, obscuring any connection between Haley's collective indictment of the white establishment responsible for slavery and the identity of the white audience" and thus that, "TV *Roots* invites white audience members to identify with the struggles of Kunta Kinte's family while relieving them of the ... social and political contradictions underlying race relations in the United States" (1992: 335). For Thornburn, *Lonesome Dove* "is radically flawed, its vision of human experience is reductive and self-canceling ... [It] does not attain to the coherence of truly serious narrative art" (1993: 126). In his review of *Space*, Osterholm writes, "if the miniseries does not grossly distort Washington politics, it is because it is already simple-minded enough. If the miniseries does not grossly distort the ... astronauts, it is because they are already popular enough", suggesting that while dramatizing history is acceptable, *Space* "demeans intelligent experience and morality. Honest novels and titillating network television are the common natures of the popular beast", so what we see is "former at its best and the latter near its standard vacuousness" (1989: 63). If we recall Todorov's distinction, these critiques stress the incompatibility of historical and theoretical genres. Additionally, there is more criticism in this respect for American than German mini-series, although all these critiques point to questions about the extent to which the genre may 'legitimately' blur the boundary between the political-historic and fictional-dramatic. I conclude this chapter by looking at the Brazilian mini-series in order to determine the extent to which these issues persist in Brazil, particularly against the issues of modernity, imitation and originality that are specific to Brazil.

As Porto noted above, the most controversial *telenovelas* during the military regime were relegated to the 10-o'clock slot, which began in the late 1960s and ended in 1979 (Rêgo 2003). In 1982, this became the time slot for the first national mini-series, produced by TV Globo. By replacing the 10-o'clock *telenovela*, the Brazilian mini-series would thus retain its "highly educated segment of the audience with more compact stories, often literary adaptations" (Tufte 2000: 106), and its tradition of dealing with controversial themes. The emergence of the mini-series was also a way of asserting the national character of Brazil's broadcast space, given growing "rejection by ... Brazilians of series and sitcoms mostly imported from the United States" (Aronchi de Sousa 2004: 136). Brazil's networks would

therefore “invest in their own series and mini-series genres to meet the need for national fiction consistent with horizontal programming, namely during prime time” (Aronchi de Sousa: 135). As Aronchi de Sousa indicates, the Brazilian *series* was also fundamental to establishing a national television space, both institutionally and in terms of reflecting the profound social changes occurring during Brazil’s re-democratization. Given the primacy of the *telenovela*, the Brazilian series is under-recognized in the institutional and cultural space of Brazilian television. As Napolitano observes, however, in the interim between the disappearance of the 10-o’clock *telenovela* and the appearance of the mini-series:

In 1979, Globo launched another form of television drama during the same scheduling period, the so-called ‘Brazilian series’. Besides transforming *O Bem-Amado* into a series ... there were other successful productions: *Malu Mulher* ... whose central theme was the struggle of a separated women to assert herself professionally and personally; *Carga Pesada*, with ... popular heroes who fought to maintain their dignity in a society full of conflict and injustice; *Plantão de Polícia*, a series that showed the inner-workings of a police station and urban violence from the perspective of a reporter. These series expressed a new demand from the average television viewer of the times, anxious to see a little more of a real Brazil on the small screen, after years and years of censorship and political repression (2001: 115 – 116).

Freire Lobo also considers the Brazilian television series fundamental to establishing the space of national television drama: not only was it “antecedent to the mini-series” but it also became the new “*novela das dez*” (2000: 81). Drawing on Calabrese (1984), Freire Lobo views the Brazilian mini-series as a cultural-institutional palimpsest, as its emergence not only meant a situation in which a “previous text was withdrawn and in its place another was written” (2000: 37), but it also reconstituted “the experience of the 10-o’clock time period” and its “emphasis on realism, assimilating new tendencies from literature such as fantastic realism” (2000: 88). While the Brazilian series and 10-o’clock *telenovela* served as ‘traces’ for the mini-series, film also played a key role in its conception. According to Freire Lobo, “the mini-series also went in search of cinema from the point of view of its form, something that *telenovelas* still cannot largely offer it: cultural prestige in technical and artistic respects” (2000: 121). However, in Europe and the US, the television mini-series is often compared, if not directly tied, to cinema, such as the comparison between the film *Schindler’s List* and the mini-series *Holocaust*, or the way Alex Haley’s novel *Roots* was seen as better adapted to a mini-series than film (Creeber 2001b: 447 – 449). In Brazil, such relations are only so valid, as Lopez notes, because “cinema was one of the principal tools through which the desire for and imitation of the foreign became paradoxically identified as a national characteristic” (2000: 168). Thus, it was not film but television that would capture Brazil’s “most ‘spectacular experiment’ with mass-mediated modernity” (Lopez: 2000: 169), and perhaps even more so, the space the mini-series opened to film and literature in the institutional, social and national significance of Brazilian television.

If we seek similarities between national versions of the television mini-series and at the same time, identify that which makes the form distinct, we might agree with Freire Lobo, who writes: "Being a closed work and one of greater authorial presence, [the mini-series] could be characterized from the beginning, within and outside of Brazil, as a chronicle of origins, seeking the prestige of literature and drawing itself closer to a cinematographic project with cultural ambitions of discussing national identities" (2000: 18). As we have also seen in the debates above, while the mini-series, both nationally and globally, might 'manipulate' history and politics by hybridizing them with fiction and drama, this does not mean it distorts historical or political understanding. Perhaps it is this hybridity that instead contributes to *new* interpretations of national reality, both on the television screen and for viewers. What remains to be seen, then, is the way in which the mini-series offers an interpretation of Brazilian reality, both in its narratives and for its audiences.

### **3.4 Conclusion: Where Textual-Generic and Sociocultural Hybridity Meet**

The institutions that produce popular texts and genres, such as those I discussed above, hold a great deal of power, something on which political economy and cultural studies scholars would likely agree. However, popular texts are not often the focus of political-economic discourse, nor does institutional power often frame cultural studies analyses. In this chapter, I have attempted to bridge concerns for institutional conditions and for cultural interests, as well as the disciplines of political economy and cultural studies that guide their concerns. Moreover, I have attempted to do this by considering the interests of readers and viewers in popular texts and genres and the ways in which institutional power informs readers and viewers' engagement with popular texts and genres.

In my attempt to bridge these concerns, certain concepts have emerged that illustrate the structural and subjective dimensions of not only of engaging with popular texts, but also of representing the nation. One such concept is *displacement*, which I traced to the idea of the 'sentimentality' of fiction and 'rationality' of history and politics. In turn, these came to signify both feminine and masculine genres and disciplines. Thus, even in the most 'modern' of nations, these textual-disciplinary divides mean that "the 'what' and 'how' in the representation of 'things', while allowing for considerable individual freedom, are circumscribed and socially regulated" (Said 1994: 95). We have also seen that in colonial and postcolonial contexts, circumscribing and regulating representation is perhaps even more pronounced. However, these structural limits call upon the additional concepts of *dispersion* and *appropriation*, such as the "elusive and deterritorialized being who belongs

nowhere [and] typically operates in the interstices of culture" in colonial Irish literature (Ferris 2002: 76), or indeed, the *malandro* Beto Rockfeller of the eponymous, military-era Brazilian *telenovela*, "a charming, cunning and deceptive" character who appropriated an elite identity in order to enter the world of upper-class Brazil (Porto 2011: 57). In these examples, among others, it is not only the character but also the form itself that reflects a dispersed and appropriated identity as a mechanism of responding to larger social and political constraints. Therefore, character and form embody García Canclini's concepts of decollection and deterritorialization expressed through impure genres, as well as Bellei's strategies of mediating culture in the frontier expressed as the subjectivity of decentered experience within the structure of 'acceptable' forms of national popular culture.

The concept of *supplementation* also emerged as means of negotiating subjectivity within structural boundaries. We saw this with the role of the romance genre in Latin America. While romance allowed authors to "fill in a history that would increase the legitimacy of the emerging nation" (Sommer 1990: 76), it was the form, again, which provided "a freer hand to construct history, not despite, but thanks to the gaps and absences" of colonial experience (Sommer 1990: 77). Thus, the idea of supplementation recalls the way Hall conceptualized representation in the postcolonial context, as a process that never entirely reaches completion but instead continues to acquire supplementary meanings. Outside Latin America, we have also seen supplementation illustrated in the relations between popular texts and their readers. It is both the never-ending quality of soap opera and its open-ended readings, for instance, which suggest the idea of supplementary meaning. In fact, it is the serial form itself and its 'unrecorded existence' that suggest supplementing one kind of everyday experience with another. However, perhaps it is the mini-series and the way the form supplements politics and history with the personal and domestic that best illustrates the concept. In returning to my question of how power is located in both institutional conditions and popular interests, it is therefore the symbolic power of popular texts conveyed at the institutional level that represents the political or historical boundaries of community or nation. But equally so, it is strategies such as displacement, dispersion, appropriation or supplementation mobilized on subjective and imaginative levels that work in response to the boundaries of such representations. In many respects, this recalls Bhabha's problematization of "narrating the nation": or an image that draws "from those traditions of political thought and literary language" to enable the nation to become "a powerful historical idea", yet an idea whose "cultural compulsion lies in the impossible unity of the nation as a symbolic force" (1990: 1).

I next asked how political economy's concern with power is reflected in representations of the nation and in turn, how this might translate into the power, if any, of readers and viewers of those representations. If we think of this as a dialectical exchange of cultural interests and institutional conditions, then it is possible to conceive of a common place, or the *broadcast space*, in which they meet. Recalling the elements Scannell considered key to the idea of the broadcast space – language and reception – we can understand these as constructs of genre and audience. Within a framework concerned with power, however, we can readily see the ideological implications of genre and audience. This is particularly so from a critical perspective such as Adorno's, or given the institutional predominance of the *telenovela* in Latin America and the ways in which it was regulated during Brazil's military regime. Beyond these obvious displays of power, we should recall concerns for women's consumption of popular novels and soap opera in Britain and the US and how this was seen to consolidate traditional roles, legitimize the status quo or, in the case of working-class American viewers, establish a whole stratum of Embracers. In these cases, concern is not only for what the popular text depicts but also for the ways it threatens the moral fabric of society. This is a concern for the popular text's erosion of national values that appears with new technologies, but is traceable to the ideas of Leavis and Arnold.

At the same time, we should recall that forms of literacy and interpretive communities among romance-fiction readers, working-class women's critical response to sitcoms, and the limits of the 'realistic' *telenovela* for *favela* residents are not just means of resisting the power of the broadcast space, but rather a consciousness of the pleasures *and* the limits of that space. This does not lessen the power of the broadcast space, but it does suggest an exchange between readers and viewers of popular texts and their producing institutions, as well as various tools of reception and interpretation mobilized in that exchange. Thus, as Livingstone comments, to claim that "audiences are conservative or subversive must be qualified by a careful consideration of the contingent limits to audience activity and resistance", which if we apply to the nation's broadcast space and its dialectic exchange between structure and agency, means that "the identification of resistant or marginalized voices needs contextualizing in relation to the identification of normative or mainstream voices" (1998a: 202). Regarding the subsequent question I asked, then, it seems useful to conceive of the interests of readers and viewers of popular texts as in dialectic exchange with the conditions of institutional power, and to think of the broadcast space as defined by its political-economic traits and its *symbolic-imaginative* terrain. Thus, Simões Borelli's territories of fictionality has even more weight in Brazil's broadcast space, for in addition to audience engagement and resistance, the idea suggests a dialogue of adherence and opposition to hegemonic forms of popular culture that we have seen since colonial Brazil.

I then asked how the life of the text could be used for interpreting institutional/cultural exchanges and conversely, how institutional conditions and cultural interests guide the text through its lifecycle. In this chapter, we have seen many different kinds of popular texts. If there is commonality between them, this is reflected in ambivalent feelings about the social or cultural value of popular texts. Such ambivalence includes whether popular texts are complex or simplistic, and whether their imaginative qualities are emancipating or distracting. Furthermore, we have seen class and gender invoked to discern kinds of popular texts, or to interpret habits of engagement. As I pointed out, however, if there is a line to draw between Brazilian and European or American contexts in these regards, it is a blurring *versus* an underscoring of such distinctions. In turn, this reflects the ways in which the popular text has defined the material and symbolic dimensions of modernity differently in Latin America than in central contexts. Bakhtin's role of the superaddressee in the life of the text perhaps best illustrates this difference.

Bakhtin defined the superaddressee as a force whose 'understanding is presumed, either in some metaphysical distance or in distant historical time'. Regarding the popular texts I discussed in this chapter, and in terms of the ambivalent qualities attributed to them, the superaddressee may very well represent an 'understanding' of the need to escape or seek distraction from, or even simplify, modern experience, reflecting a kind of pact between addresser and addressee. In the case of the mini-series, it could be the personal-intimate inserted into the temporal-spatial distance of history that facilitates this understanding as well. Within the political-historical context of Brazil, however, and bearing in mind the issues of otherness and imitation/originality that have characterized Brazil's modernity, the superaddressee takes on added dimensions. One, Bellei points out, is the "imbalance of power" in frontier culture, "which justifies the confrontation with, and subordination to, a centre outside which must be respected and imitated" (1995: 56). Bellei suggests that if we were to locate a superaddressee in frontier culture, it might signify less a common understanding of the purpose of the text and more the 'origins' of the text itself. In turn, this suggests that the superaddressee references the signs of modernity of the center and the ways in which they have been replicated by culture in the frontier. However, if we also think of the superaddressee as a way of *mediating* culture in the frontier by imitating the forms of the center, then it becomes "a cultural strategy to simultaneously affirm and deny the dominance of any central power, or, more precisely, to deny that power in the very act of affirming it" (Bellei 1995: 56). We might therefore think of the life of the text in the context of Brazil, and based on what we have seen from the *romance-folhetim* to the *telenovela*, as a process by which the forms of the center have been appropriated, but also

*supplemented*, with their own national significations. What remains to be seen is how this process is reflected in the Brazilian television mini-series.

I then focused on the television mini-series, identifying it as the object of my study and as a form that depicts political-historical events by situating them in the personal-domestic space: in a sense, joining the preserves of structure and subjectivity in a television serial. I also discussed how the mini-series draws from different narrative traditions: series and serials, literature and film, fiction and reality, blurring the distinction between Todorov's historical and theoretical genres. Similar to the all-encompassing character of the novel, the mini-series suggests another kind of 'supergenre'. However, the power implicit in the idea of a supergenre recalls the way Said described the novel: not by its porousness, but as "a cultural form consolidating but also refining and articulating the authority of the status quo" (1994: 91). In the context of Brazil, I situated the television mini-series in a cultural, institutional and political space. The mini-series emerged at the time of Brazil's re-democratization and resumed from the now-defunct 10-o'clock *telenovela* and series a tradition of depicting timely and realistic themes. The Brazilian mini-series also invokes literature and film, but differently from its European or American counterparts, in mode that confers on it the prestige of modernity, thus in its appeal to not only literature and film but also 'literary' Brazilian audiences, perhaps the power of the status quo as well.

By illustrating the subtle ways in which power is embedded in the work of fiction, Said's concept of structures of attitude and reference reveals both the political nature of popular texts and the political capacity of their representations. However, I have also directed the concept toward the way readers and viewers negotiate meaning within popular texts and challenge dominant beliefs about their engagement with popular texts. This is supported by Neale's argument for a circulation of orientations, expectations and conventions that constitutes film genre, or the idea that genre is an exchange of subjective and institutional forces within a social space. I added to this the historical implications of genre, however, namely Sobchak's analysis of the way film narratives can reflect social change while the basic structure of the genre remains the same. All of these approaches will be important to identifying continuity and change in the formal and narrative features of the Brazilian mini-series. But perhaps more importantly, they will help to identify the implications of larger institutional and social forces in Brazil for continuity and change in the television mini-series' representations of Brazil.

In many respects, there has been overlap between ideas in this and the previous chapter. In general, *difference* is an underlying concept. As an integral component of power, it has

shaped the articulation of cultures and identities in the postcolonial space, and it informs the way popular texts and genres have been classified, consumed and critiqued. Another underlying concept is that of *doubleness*, an idea that underscored negotiating between modernity and backwardness in the previous chapter. Here, doubleness reflects a duality between the pleasures and stigmas of the popular text, or a conflict between imitation and originality in generating new kinds of popular texts. In fact, it captures the tensions between structure and subjectivity, conditions and interests, or indeed, political economy and cultural studies that have been my concerns in this chapter. Finally, the idea of *unity in diversity*, not only in Brazil but throughout Latin America, is another common thread: it has underscored various interpretations of *mestizaje* and drawn Latin America around its diverse forms popular culture, from the *romance-folhetim* to the *telenovela*.

However, in defining the space in which textual-generic and sociocultural hybridity meet it is important to avoid the idea that this is simply a mixing of different kinds of texts and genres and different kinds of social and cultural experience. What needs to be retained of hybridity in both senses is its underlying *political* element: that difference and doubleness underscore hybridity in made and remade respects but conflictingly, these are what unite the forms, practices and practitioners of 'hybrid cultures' in coalitions, communities and perhaps even nations. What must also be retained of hybridity in both senses, then, is the tension between conditions and interests in a sociocultural and political-economic space. In fact, it might be these tensions which begin to define the mini-series itself, as: "Implicit in its very form is the concept that every individual and personal action ... has potential political consequences and that politics itself is woven deep within the fabric of all our lives and is not only the preserve of the mighty and the powerful" (Creeber 2001b: 453).

## 4 Research Methods, Design and Operationalization

### 4.1 Introduction: Operationalizing Hybridity

In my introduction, I addressed conceptual differences in thinking about culture, values and identity, and in the last two chapters I attempted to illustrate both the sociocultural and the textual-generic dimensions of hybridity. In this chapter, I discuss methodology. More particularly, I will discuss the methodological framework I have devised to engage both these dimensions of hybridity in analyzing the Brazilian television mini-series. My objectives in this chapter are therefore to frame the main research question of this study with a series of methodological concerns; to operationalize my research question into a research design; to determine suitable research methods; and then to conduct them. As I have done before, I ask questions that will guide these objectives, and that I will return to and answer at the end of this chapter. First, how should I approach examining the socio-cultural and textual-generic dimensions of hybridity from a methodological standpoint? Second, in addition to the mini-series, what other sources can add to our understanding of the ways in which the form represents Brazilian national culture, values and identity? Third, which methods are suitable for examining both the textual-generic and the socio-cultural dimensions of representation in the mini-series? And fourth, how will I put these methods into operation, what is my research design, and how should it be conducted? In order to connect these questions with my main research question, we can therefore think of them as framing an inquiry into finding the best methods for examining how national culture, values and identity are represented in the Brazilian television mini-series, and at the same time, as looking for tools that will help us to better understand the form itself.

I concluded the last chapter by finding overlaps between the sociocultural and textual-generic dimensions of hybridity, or how power manifests in the politics of difference on made and remade levels. In this chapter, I consider the methodological implications of studying power. Although Brazilian television is at the core of this study, I consider other cultural and institutional forces that both reinforce and question the power of this institution in Brazil. Specifically, I will discuss my approach to, and the actual process of, interviewing creators of the mini-series, as well as engaging with critical commentary on the mini-series by television writers. First, however, I will describe my overall approach to analyzing the representation of Brazilian national culture, values and identity in the mini-series, including these other creative and critical sources. Then, I provide rationale for using all of these sources by drawing on key literature. Following that, I outline my research design and sampling strategies, including the mini-series and related sources. I

end by discussing issues that occurred during analysis, as well as what my methodology can offer to operationalizing a study of the concept of hybridity.

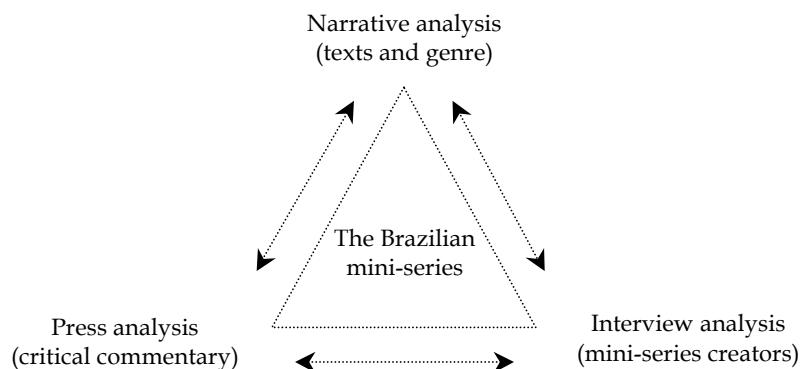
## **4.2 Approach and Sources: The Framework**

My overall method in this study is discourse analysis. I chose discourse analysis because as a method, it seeks to interrogate the power structures that are explicitly and implicitly manifest in the social and textual dimensions of representation. As a method, discourse analysis also seems appropriate for interrogating continuity and change in the ways that power is articulated through the social and textual dimensions of representation. Above, I briefly mentioned the sources of data for this study, which are the mini-series programs themselves, interviews with mini-series creators, and commentary in the Brazilian press. To connect analysis of the mini-series programs with discourse analysis, this has meant looking for the ways that discourses of Brazilian national culture, values and identity are constructed in and through the texts. In other words, discourse analysis of the mini-series has involved analyzing the social, cultural and political histories of Brazil that the mini-series represents, *and* the way in which these histories have been constructed within the institutional practices of Brazilian television. As this involves analyses of historical and institutional modes of representation, as well as the power structures that are implicitly and explicitly present in these modes of representation, I chose to adopt a Foucauldian method of discourse analysis, which I will explain in greater detail below.

I employed interviews because the method engages with perspectives that represent the conception and creation of the mini-series. These are perspectives, in other words, which can speak to the remade dimensions of Brazilian experience. However, the interpersonal nature of interviewing also suggests a way of interrogating the made dimensions of my theoretical framework. Put differently, creators offer a perspective on what it means to insert one's subjective and professional self into the mini-series' representation of 'being Brazilian'. In relation to the method of discourse analysis, then, mini-series creators can provide a valuable perspective on the ways in which the language of Brazilian television helps to construct Brazilian national culture, values and identity. At the same time, I do not wish to overlook the crucial discourse that interviews provide to not only subjective but also historical constructs of what it means to 'be Brazilian', and especially in relation to the institutional language of Brazilian television. Interviews therefore offer a valuable means of identifying a space between the subjective and structural forces involved in the creation of the mini-series. Thus, interviews also suggest adopting an analytical approach that looks at the historical and institutional dimensions of representing Brazilianness.

In analyzing critical commentary on the television mini-series, my objective was to locate a voice that would mediate between the subjective and structural dimensions of the mini-series' representations of Brazilian national culture, values and identity. The Brazilian press is, of course, another media institution, but it introduces to the configuration of the mini-series, its creators and its sponsoring institutions an important *public* perspective on what the mini-series attempts to say about Brazilian national culture, values and identity. Additionally, the press has the potential not only to provide a public perspective but also to claim the *national reach* that Brazilian television can practically assume. In these senses, the press constitutes an important national institution parallel to that of television. There are notable ways in which the readership of the Brazilian press might differ from either Conboy's idealized or Anderson's imagined readerships, however, which also implicate power in assumptions of access and literacy. I will address these assumptions below.

Engaging with these three sources suggests a methodological framework that will allow comparing and contrasting the information each produces, which Fig. 4.1 illustrates:



**Fig. 4.1:** Methodological framework.

In the next section, I discuss to a greater extent the selection of these sources in relation to my conceptual framework and research question. These are also relations I support with key studies from the literature. Additionally, I will use this as an opportunity to discuss a few problems that arose from these conceptual/methodological relations. Following this, I provide the framework of my research design and discuss how it has worked with my conceptual framework and research question. Finally, I conclude by discussing some of the implications that my methodology and research design have had for data collection, analysis and interpretation.

## 4.3 The Methods and the Literature

### 4.3.1 The Structure of Texts

The aim of this study is to understand in what ways the Brazilian television mini-series represents continuity and change in Brazilian national culture, values and identity. There have been important studies in particular and more general respects that could serve as a model for this one, such as Freire Lobo's (2000) analysis of political representations in the Brazilian television mini-series, Silverstone's (1985) account of the production of a British television documentary, or Gitlin's (2000) examination of prime time television in the US. Although these studies do serve as models for my own, this study differs in that it is an analysis of representation in the Brazilian mini-series *and* the way in which this is created within the space of prime time Brazilian television. In this sense, this study reflects those of Freire Lobo, Silverstone and Gitlin and, hopefully, adds an important element to the larger picture of television research around the world. Despite entering into the different research arenas of representation, production and the television industry in Brazil, I have identified the starting point of this study as the analysis of a television genre. If we recall some of the ways in which genre was theorized in Chapter 3, one notion is that within a genre there are standard and divergent texts. However, if we recall Todorov's conception of genre, we can argue that even the most divergent text reinforces the formal, social and institutional parameters of a genre. By starting with the analysis of a television genre and recognizing the different ways in which its construction can be reinforced, this suggests taking a structural approach to analyzing the Brazilian mini-series, which I discuss next.

A structural approach to analysis calls on ideas that illustrate the structure in which texts are produced, circulated and received. Hall (1980b) conceived of the encoding/decoding process as the 'production practices and structures in television' encoded into a message, which in turn depends on the perception that it is a 'meaningful discourse' in order for it to be 'meaningfully de-coded'. Silverstone conceived of the "material creation" of the text and thus its subsequent "material" re-creation ... in the cultural environment" (1988: 31). And Hannerz articulated a process by which "ideas and modes of thought" are put into "forms of externalization", and then into "social distribution" (1992: 7). While there are differences between these models, they all view production, circulation and consumption as key components of the life of the text. However, Barker notes that television research often overlooks one of these key components, such as when production ignores reception (1985: 179). Therefore, I attempt to examine the production, circulation and reception of the Brazilian television mini-series in this study by asking, "how meaning is created" and "what the meaning is" (Seiter 1992: 31).

Barthes sought to understand how meaning is created and what meaning is by devising a structural approach to analyzing texts, especially the way in which *myth* is represented in popular texts. As Barthes stated his approach: "since myth is a type of speech, everything can be a myth provided it is conveyed by a discourse ... not defined by the object of its message, but by the way in which it utters this message", which means that there are no "formal" or "substantial" limits to myth (1972/2000: 109). This recalls Bakhtin's notion of the superaddressee, in that myth also suggests an entity that exists above the relationship between addresser and addressee, but that relies on this relationship for an *understanding* of myth. Thus, for Barthes: "Mythical speech is made of a material which has *already* been worked on so as to make it suitable for communication; it is because all the materials of myth ... presuppose a signifying consciousness, that one can reason about them while discounting their substance" (1972/2000: 110; original emphasis).

We could also make a connection between the ways in which myth is made of 'material already worked on' and the way that the superaddressee calls upon 'voices heard before the author comes upon it' in terms of mythical constructs of the nation. Thus, in respect to analyzing mythical constructs of the nation, Barthes's analytical model of the signifier, signified and sign (1972/2000: 113), which he used to reveal not only myths of patriotism but also imperialism in French popular culture, for instance, could be particularly useful to analyzing the ways in which Brazilianness is constructed in the television mini-series. As with Bakhtin's life of the text, however, Barthes's analytical model opens up a large interpretive space, which Barthes himself acknowledged:

what is invested in the concept is less reality than a certain knowledge of reality; in passing from the meaning to the form ... the knowledge contained in a mythical concept is confused, made of yielding, shapeless associations. One must firmly stress this open character of the concept; it is not at all abstract, purified essence; it is a formless, unstable, nebulous condensation, whose unity and coherence are ... due to its function (1972/2000: 119).

What is most significant about the 'open character' of Barthes's analytical model, then, is the way in which it reveals how *discourse* is implicated in meaning and in the creation of meaning. As an analytical unit, discourse presents other methodological issues, however. Barthes defined discourse as the "formal description of groups of words superior to the sentence", but he also problematized the very approach to this definition by adding that, "the universals of discourse (if they exist)" must "obviously decide if structural analysis permits retaining the old typology of discourse" (1989: 127). Thus, Barthes's reservations about a structural approach to analysis, as well as the importance he continuously placed on discourse, prompt a shift to discussing discourse analysis and its role in this study.

### 4.3.2 From Discourse to Discourse Analysis

As a method, discourse analysis opens a wide range of approaches that make adopting one over another a difficult decision. In addition to Barthes's definition, interpretations of discourse are equally broad. According to Jäger, discourse is "the flow of knowledge ... throughout all time which determines individual and collective doing and/or formative action that shapes society, thus exercising power" (2001: 34). Laclau and Mouffe (1985) define discourse as a structural totality of difference resulting from articulatory practices (see also Andersen 2003). For van Dijk, discourse is "a 'communicative event', including conversation interaction, written text ... facework, typographical layout, images and any other 'semiotic' or multimedia dimension of signification" (2001: 98). The latter definition leads to another that is perhaps the most useful to thinking about not only the mini-series but also interview and press material in terms of identifying discourses of representation in and between them. For Chouliaraki and Fairclough:

Discourse ... includes language (written and spoken and in combination with their semiotics, for example, with music in singing), nonverbal communication, (facial expressions, body movements, gestures, etc.) and visual images (for instance, photographs, film). The concept of discourse can be understood as a particular perspective on these various forms of semiosis – it sees them as moments of social practices in their articulation with other non-discursive moments (1999: 38).

Given the breadth and overlaps of these definitions, for the purposes of this study I view discourse as comprised of a series of expressions (in televisual, spoken and written form) articulated within systems of practice that implicate knowledge and power in the act of expression. This notion suggests that power is manifest in the structural and subjective sides of discourse, or what we might think of as the overall power of the communication act. As Barthes wrote, "language is always on the side of power; to speak is to exercise a will to power" (1989: 317). Thus, discourse analysis should include highly codified and "more loose and undecided" contexts (Andersen 2003: 2), both of which can facilitate the formation of discourse. Discussion of Barthes's approach to analyzing texts, and of the concept of discourse, suggest turning to Foucault, who is perhaps most associated with discourse analysis and whose analytical approach underpins this study's methodology.

I have based my approach to discourse analysis on that of Foucault. For Foucault, it was not discourse but *discursive formation* that reveals the way power is structured in systems of practice: "Whenever one can describe a number of statements ... whenever, between objects, types of statement, concepts, or thematic choices, one can define a regularity ... we are dealing with a *discursive formation*" (1972: 38; original emphasis). Foucault's stress

on the continuous manner in which discourse is constructed is crucial to my theoretical framework as well. For many of the concepts we have seen in the previous chapters, such as *différance*, doubleness and unity in diversity, all illustrate the ways in which constructs of culture and identity in postcolonial contexts have been articulated through the process of becoming. Moreover, in the context of Brazil the formation of a discourse of becoming a people and a nation has often been articulated through systems of practice that seek to define national culture and identity by what they are not and therefore, by a discourse of what Brazil *hopes* to become.

Foucault devised a specific approach to analyzing discursive formation, which in general I have applied to analyzing the mini-series, interview and press material. This approach can be explained by four sequences, as Foucault described it. The first sequence identifies the presence of a 'given' knowledge, practice or belief (Foucault 1972). In recognizing the unified character of this knowledge, practice or belief, a second sequence interrogates the premises on which its unity is based. Therefore, one sequence recognizes that there is "a full, tightly packed, continuous, geographically well-defined field of objects", while the second assesses if the "formulations were much too different ... to be linked together and arranged in a single figure", or "a great uninterrupted text" (Foucault 1972: 37). A third sequence, then, looks within this well-defined field of objects for "concepts that differ in structure and in the rules governing their use, which ignore or exclude one another, and which cannot enter the unity of a logical architecture", followed by a final sequence that finds the "strategic possibilities that permit the activation of incompatible themes," or the "establishment of the same theme in different groups of statement" (Foucault 1972: 37).

In a different manner, we can ask a few questions that interrogate discursive formation, which Foucault posed. First, is there a "definitive, normative type of statement" being made? Second, is there "a well-defined alphabet of notions", or is there the "permanence of a thematic"? Lastly, "instead of reconstituting *chains of inference*", or "drawing up *tables of difference*", is that field of knowledge, practice or belief better described by "*systems of dispersion*" (Foucault 1972: 37; original emphases)? The notion of dispersion is also central to my framework. On the sociocultural level, it suggests processes of decollection and deterritorialization and concepts such as the black Atlantic. On the textual-generic level, it suggests the strategies of displacement and absorption alternately or concurrently used to mediate culture in the frontier. Indeed, Foucault saw dispersion as underpinning both discursive formation and discourse, since "discursive formation ... is the principle of dispersion and redistribution ... of statements." Therefore, "discourse can be defined as the group of [many] statements that belong to a single system of formation" (1972: 107).

Two additional concepts connect my conceptual framework and research question to the analytical approach of Foucault. One is *archaeology*, which should not be thought of in the disciplinary sense, since this reflects discursive formation. Continuing in a Foucauldian fashion, we can conceive of archaeology by what it is not. Archaeology is not “thoughts, representations, images, themes, preoccupations … concealed or revealed in discourses”, rather “discourses as practices obeying certain rules” (Foucault 1972: 138). Archaeology “does not seek to rediscover the continuous, insensible transition that relates discourses”, rather “to show in what way the set of rules that they put into operation is irreducible to any other” (Foucault 1972: 139). Furthermore, it is “not ordered in accordance with the sovereign figure of the *oeuvres*”, but defines “types of rules for discursive practices that run through individual *oeuvres*, sometimes govern them entirely … to such an extent that nothing eludes them” (Foucault 1972: 139; original emphasis). Finally, archaeology is not restoring “what has been thought, wished, aimed at, experienced, [and] desired by men [sic] in the very moment at which they expressed it”; instead it involves, “rewriting … a regulated transformation of what has already been written” (Foucault 1972: 139 – 140). Since archaeology examines the rules governing individual works and the practices used to rewrite them, it relates to the textual-institutional side of my conceptual framework. It interrogates the text and *oeuvre* by their generic-institutional norms, seeking solidification or “break … up” to “see whether they can be legitimately reformulated” (Foucault 1972: 26). Thus, archaeology is concerned with regularity and dispersion, or rather, *regularities in dispersion*, in a discourse of practice. In this sense, archaeology analysis asks why one discursive formation has occurred and not another in its place (Andersen 2003: 97).

*Genealogy* is also crucial to Foucault’s approach to discourse analysis. It connects with my conceptual framework and research question as well by focusing on factors of *continuity* and *discontinuity*. Opposing linear historiography, “genealogy retrieves an indispensable restraint: it must record the singularity of events outside of any monotonous finality; it must seek them in the most unpromising places, in what we tend to feel is without history” (Foucault 1977/1991: 76). Taking up Nietzsche’s questions of ‘origin’, Foucault rejected the “attempt to capture the exact essence of things, their purest possibilities, and their carefully protected identities” and sought “‘something altogether different’ behind things: not a timeless and essential secret, but the secret that they have no essence or that their existence was fabricated in a piecemeal fashion” (1977/1991: 78). Genealogy lacks the sequence of archaeology analysis, but it does entail two precepts. One is *emergence*, or a “moment of arising” that questions “descent in an uninterrupted continuity” (Foucault 1977/1991: 83). The other is *interpretation*, or a “violent or surreptitious appropriation of a

system of rules", which in addition to emergence means that the "emergence of different interpretations ... must be made to appear as events on the stage of historical process" (Foucault 1991: 83 – 86). Finally, to avoid reaffirming "suprahistorical history", Foucault argues for three "uses" of emergence and interpretation to counter history's "modalities" (1991: 93). These modalities are the monumental, or the "connections and continuity of greatness of all times"; the antiquarian, or "blinded collection ... and restless amassing of things of the past"; and the critical, in which "the past must be broken up and annulled in order to allow the living to exist" (Andersen 2003: 18). Instead, Foucault argues for use of the *parodic*, which opposes "history as reminiscence or recognition"; the *dissociative*, or that "directed against identity, and [against] history given as continuity or representative of a tradition"; and the *sacrificial*, which " opposes history as knowledge" (1991: 93). The uses of the parodic, dissociative and sacrificial as means of creating history 'in the most unpromising places' is, in many respects, how we might interpret frontier culture.

Genealogy analysis is not anti-history, but it does examine the power manifest in creating 'versions' of history. Thus, genealogy seeks "a history of the present designed to outline the historical conflicts and strategies of control by which knowledge and discourses are constituted" in order to "use these descriptions as a counter-memory" (Andersen 2003: 19). There is a correlation, then, between archaeology's concern for *regularity/dispersion* in discourses of practice and genealogy's concern for *continuity/discontinuity* in discourses of history. Questions that are imperative to a genealogy analysis are: how are discourses of history formed? Are these formations continuous? Have they been transformed? In this sense, archaeology and genealogy are coterminous tools in discourse analysis. But their modes of application are quite different. Archaeology seeks structures of regularity first, and then sees if dispersion in them substantiates discursive formation. However, without a set of "criteria for when we can identify regularity and hence discursive formation, our designation of discourses is based ... on intuition" (Andersen 2003: 105). Genealogy, on the other hand, does not seek any sort of regularity, even in a 'dispersed' sense. Thus, it works "in strict opposition to archaeology, since genealogy is almost anti-analytical in its rejection of any naturalisation of change" (Andersen 2003: 106).

Despite the ambiguities of Foucault's approach, it is strengthened by links to my research question and conceptual framework. Besides seeking historical dis/continuity, genealogy calls to mind the postcolonial space in general, namely the ways in which histories *other* than those offered by the center characterize that space. In many ways, then, a genealogy analysis anticipates 'postcolonial history' and its conceptualization through narratives of difference and doubleness and the contradictions of unity in diversity. Nevertheless, it

was important to consider alternate approaches, such as Laclau's discourse theory (1993; Laclau and Mouffe 1985), and critical discourse analysis (CDA) (Wodak and Meyer 2001; Chouliaraki and Fairclough 1999). Discourse theory is criticized for lacking an empirical layer and thus concrete analytical strategies (Andersen 2003). It is also aimed at political communication with little regard for analyzing popular culture. CDA draws heavily on Foucault (Jäger 2001), thus it does not hesitate to engage in the politics of culture (Wodak 2001). Its premises of analyzing "relations of struggle and conflict" and bridging research interests and political commitments mean investigating "critically social inequality as it is expressed, signaled, constituted, legitimized and so on by language use" (Wodak 2001: 2). However, in the postcolonial space in general and Brazil in particular, I did not see the need to introduce explicitly 'critical' elements to an analysis in which, following Wodak's definition, this should *already* be the case. It was not only the sites that Foucault entered in his analyses, many of which constituted society's margins, but also the ideas we have seen in the preceding chapters that prompt interrogating discursive formations of power.

#### **4.3.3 Discursive Formation in Television**

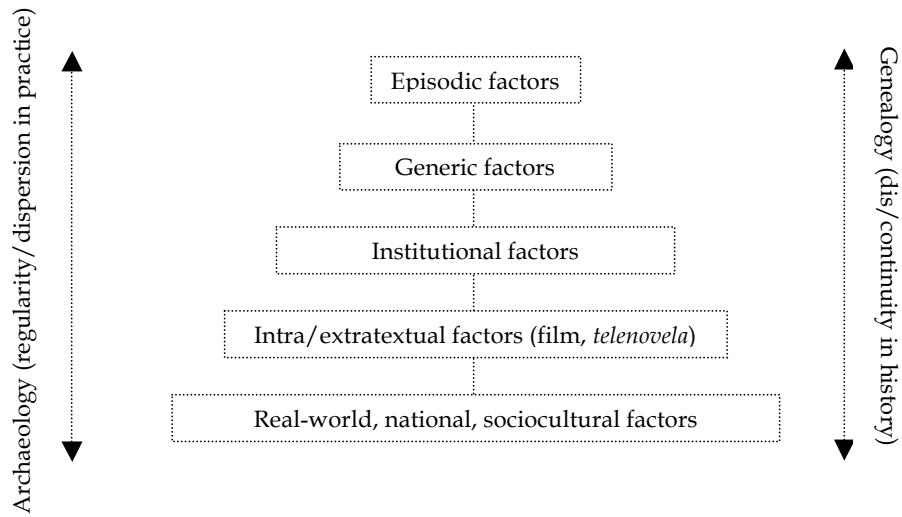
In order to situate discourse analysis in the representational, institutional and national contexts that concern the Brazilian mini-series, I discuss key tools from television studies. At the same time, these tools help to identify the ways in which television can act as a social and cultural 'mirror' in many different settings. Thus, in discussing the ways that television can contribute to the formation of larger social and cultural discourse, my aim is to align the analysis of television programming with my other methods, as well as with my conceptual framework and research question.

Barker's (1985) analysis of camera techniques in American television sitcoms illustrates the ways in which they reinforce the texts' narratives. His analysis also suggests a way to identify how narrative and technical practices in television production help to reinforce larger social and cultural discourses. Barker found that the static camerawork of *All in the Family* emphasized the single, axial character of Archie Bunker, which differed from the dynamic camerawork of *M\*A\*S\*H* and the way this reinforced the 'even distribution' of its ensemble cast. In spite of variation in not only camerawork but also lighting and set design between the sitcoms, however, both solidified a certain kind of television creation and therefore the sitcom genre (Barker 1985: 189 – 192). Similarly, Timberg analyzed the "rhetoric of the camera" in American soap opera to find that many different emotions are conveyed through consistent techniques, which enable viewers to grasp their significance (1981: 164). These modes of analyzing television programs by their stylistic and narrative

qualities in conjunction with a circulation of orientations, expectations and conventions indicate the ways in which a system of practices creates regularity within diverse genres. Moreover, these studies showed how camerawork, lighting, set design and casting could be used in my approach to analyzing the creation of meaning in the Brazilian mini-series.

In a historical mode of analyzing television, Chesebro (1978) looked at the classification of American television genres and the themes they relayed against a backdrop of change in American social values over a four-year period. Using a framework of Burke's (1966) pentad of drama and Frye's (1967) forms of communication, Chesebro found that while there was change in the way television series used the "mimetic form" to "create the *impression* that typical behaviors and values are being reflected", it was "less evident that the actual behaviors and values of 'average' Americans have been captured" by the television series themselves (1978: 29 – 30; original emphasis). However, Gomery (1983) and Schudson (1980) found respectively that the *Lou Grant* series and television movie *Brian's Song* did reflect change in social issues and values. Additionally, Wright (1975) subcategorized the Western film by the way its narratives mirrored social change in the US. In respective analyses of television institutions and viewer interests, Feuer (1985) and Anderson (1985) examined the American production company MTM and the detective series *Magnum P.I.* and found that industry "quality" and textual "ingenuity" can exist, although in an unusual exchange of the industrial and the artistic. These studies indicate that real social and cultural factors can lead to changes in television genres, but that the television industry also creates change within its own practices.

On a comparative basis, Liebes and Livingstone found that "both America and Europe sustain, at various times, various examples of [soap opera's] dynastic model", since "the patriarchal and primordial themes which structure social relations in these soap operas draw on common and fundamental themes in western culture" (1998: 171). At the same time, "British soaps are always community soaps" and efforts to produce other types of soap opera have failed, which reflects the strong public broadcasting tradition of Britain (Liebes and Livingstone 1998: 175), and perhaps less concern in the US for community-oriented soap operas. This also suggests continuity to relations between texts, genres and the social environment *and* discontinuity in and between them in terms of how different countries 'fill' their forms. While my study is neither cross-national nor comparative, this does suggest examining the mini-series against other forms like the *telenovela* to identify dis/continuous relations between them. In fact, all these studies suggest analyzing the mini-series in a micro-to-macro approach, taking into account discourses of practice and history from the episodic to the real-world level. I illustrate this approach in Fig. 4.2:



**Fig. 4.2:** Micro-to-macro framework for discourse analysis.

In many respects, this framework for analyzing the mini-series, from its episodic features to its reflection of real-world issues, recalls my concern for the dialectics of an exchange between structure and subjectivity in Chapter 3. In fact, in their approach to analyzing a dialectics of structure and subjectivity, Chouliaraki and Fairclough stress that, “analysis of all forms and types of discourse should include a structural dimension as well as an interactional dimension” (1999: 59). Thus, with relevance to my conceptual framework, the authors argue that the “hybridity of modern communicative interaction is a matter of it being ... framed by and oriented to (structured by, but capable of structuring) ... the semiotic as a network of orders of discourse” (1999: 59). In this sense, the ways in which discourse analysis seeks to interrogate the structural and the interactional dimensions of discourse is not far from Barthes’s original concerns. In fact, it seems to still require them.

#### 4.3.4 The Press: Structure, Interaction and Interrogation

Despite my having adopted one approach to discourse analysis, it clearly contains “many different styles of analysis that all lay claim to the name”, but that share “a rejection of the realist notion that language is simply a neutral means of reflecting or describing the world, and a conviction in the central importance of discourse in constructing social life” (Gill 2000: 172). Thus, discourse analysis can apply to different texts while retaining the premise of rejecting the neutrality of their use of language. This allows me to move from the mini-series as my primary analytical source to material from the Brazilian press as a secondary source, using the same approach to examine it. Using press material to look at discursive formation also recalls one of my initial objectives, which was to move beyond the textual-institutional realm of television and retain the key framework of the nation.

Given the semiotic premises of discourse analysis, press material therefore also serves as a “significant unit of synthesis, whether verbal or visual” (Barthes 1972/2000: 111).

Similar to television texts, analyzing press material raises questions of whether regularity and continuity truly inform our perception of discursive formation within it, or if instead we are relying on intuition. Stated differently, Deacon, et al. advise us to ask “questions of evidence” alongside “questions of meaning” in such an analysis (1999: 17). However, I have used press material with an understanding that it also reveals an exchange between structure and interaction, such as between the institution of the press, journalists and the public. As with my study’s other “cultural texts”, I have thus used “newspaper stories … as frozen moments in a continuous stream of social interactions,” reflecting “meanings in play within public culture” (Deacon, et al. 1999: 8). Despite the useful tension this play suggests, discourse analysis of press material does not often appear in television studies. The press is more often a primary source and content analysis is the principal method. There are studies that use secondary material to probe exchanges between structure and agency in a national framework. Although not many use the press, they do illustrate how secondary texts can also contribute to identifying discourses of national representation.

Costera Meijer (2005) used production documents, policy documents and interviews to examine the discourses of quality and success that often divide public from commercial television broadcasting. Documents “were analysed for recurring metaphors or figures of speech, networks of terms and stylistic and grammatical constructions,” with a focus on “productive rather than … descriptive aspect of the documents and interviewee’s talk”, and with the purpose of evincing “the effects or consequences of language use” (Costera Meijer 2005: 38). For Costera Meijer, discourse analysis thus revealed that “repertoires do not merely describe a situation, they also produce evaluations, position individuals and groups” and “construct, rationalize and naturalize ‘reality’” (2005: 38 – 39). Significantly, Costera Meijer found that *enjoyers* emerged as a distinct type of viewer not only situated between the realms of public and commercial broadcasting, but also as a viewer which suggests a discursive category separate from the citizens and consumers associated with these broadcasting institutions, respectively (2005: 47).

Dhoest (2004) used television texts, interviews and production documents to analyze the ways in which Flemish national identity has been portrayed in television drama. In the production documents in particular, Dhoest found that “‘our’, ‘own’ and ‘Flemish’ were important themes in the broadcasters’ discourse about television”, thus that there was a concern not only to protect and promote but also to enrich the idea of “Flemish cultural

heritage" (2004: 399). Koukoutsaki's (2003) analysis of production documents, interviews and press material sought to identify the central themes in the history of Greek television drama, and to understand differences between the ways producers and scholars classify television genres. Regarding her latter aim, Koukoutsaki found that producers categorize texts according to their place in Greek television history, whereas scholars classify texts according to theoretical models. More specifically, Koukoutsaki found that categorizing actual television programs based on theory "implies the possibility of being able to view them in order to evaluate and characterize them", which "proved to be impossible, as a large number of the programmes to be analysed no longer existed" (2003: 719). The value of press material, then, was not only that "the information and the terminology used in weekly television guides" substituted the missing programming but also that it eased the "restriction imposed on the construction of a categorization model" based only on theory (Koukoutsaki 2003: 719).

In a study quite relevant to my own, La Pastina (2002) analyzed television texts and press material to better understand representations of sexual difference in Brazilian *telenovelas*. While La Pastina affirmed that "superficiality and lack of depth in the representations of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered characters in Brazilian *telenovelas* has been the norm" (2002: 90), discourse of sexual difference in the press was different. In general, the *telenovelas* avoided, caricatured, demonized or eliminated sexual difference, whereas the press saw sexual difference as inadequately or irresponsibly portrayed in the programs. Additionally, the press considered the issue of sexual difference inadequately discussed by television producers when interviewed by journalists (La Pastina 2002: 89 – 95).

These 'many different styles' of secondary-source discourse analysis provide a few ways to integrate the approach into my framework. First, 'repertoires of speech and grammar' are key to understanding how the mini-series is received and interpreted by television writers, particularly their interpretations of the mini-series' representations of Brazil. In other words, written discourse about the ways Brazil represents itself in the mini-series should be as revealing as the institutional/creative practices and the narrative treatments in the texts themselves. Second, press material can offer the opportunity to verify factual information concerned with both narratives and productions. Third, press discourse can aid in identifying gaps between the conceptualization and production of the mini-series. Finally, it can allow for a national discourse to emerge, either parallel to or different from what the mini-series conveys. In my methodological framework, then, the press assumes an important analytical role in interrogating relations between the mini-series texts, the

genre, the Brazilian broadcast space and the nation. Fig 4.3 illustrates the integration of press material with my methodological framework.

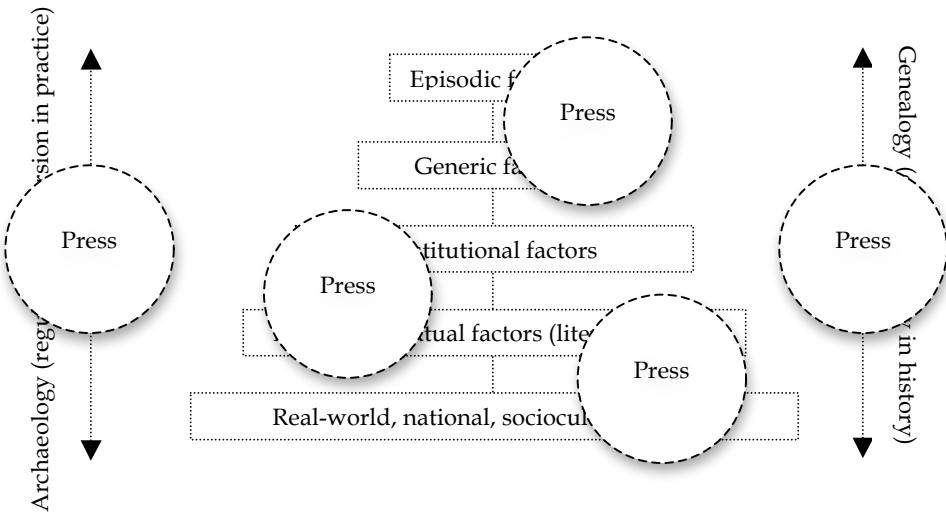


Fig. 4.3: The role of press material in the methodological framework.

#### 4.3.5 Interviews: Subjectivity and the Television Institution

There are two primary reasons for my selection of the interview method. The first is that both mini-series and interviews tell a story: the mini-series tells the story of Brazil, while the interview tells a story of experience and insight into mini-series creation. This begins to suggest a relation between an institutional representation and subjective *re-presentation* of Brazil *via* the mini-series. A second and related reason, then, is that interviews suggest a relation between the made and remade dimensions of Brazilian national culture, values and identity as represented by the mini-series. Recalling the sociocultural dimensions of hybridity and the textual-generic features of the mini-series in Brazil and elsewhere, the interview implies a dialogue between 'being' and 'becoming' from the perspective of the creator as both citizen and storyteller of Brazil. I will explore these possibilities with key literature about interviewing, namely interviewing television creators.

Deacon, et al. make a key point about the challenges of interviewing: "although giving a straight answer to a straight question is widely considered to be a social virtue, asking and answering questions is rarely ever a straightforward matter" (1999: 62). Moreover, since questions are never asked in "a social vacuum", often "people give answers they think the interrogator(s) would like to hear, that they believe are socially acceptable or that they wish were the case", although people primarily "tell the truth (or at least their perception of it)" (Deacon, et al. 1999: 62). Thus, for "all these reasons ... all answers need

to be appraised carefully and occasionally taken with a grain of salt" (Deacon, et al. 1999: 62). While the nature of interviewing means possibly straying from the 'real story', this can also reveal tacit information about structure and agency and the implications of such an exchange for theoretical and empirical findings. As Dhoest reflects on the method:

interviews provide personal and subjective recollections of the production process. However, this subjectivity is not necessarily problematic, as it allows the reconstruction of a way of thinking and the perception of the broadcasters. Their stories show to what degree they are the product of their time and of the prevailing broadcasting policies. Together, the interviews form a discourse about television drama, about its function and purposes ... [which] contains significant contradictions, between theory and practice, official and semi-official versions, between the view from above and the view from below ... of continuous negotiation between different parties and considerations (2004: 396).

Dhoest therefore suggests that the 'personal and subjective' recollections of creators can help in asking questions of the 'prevailing policies' of a broadcast space. After discussing relevant studies that used interviews, I will return to my methodological framework to see how this exchange fits into it.

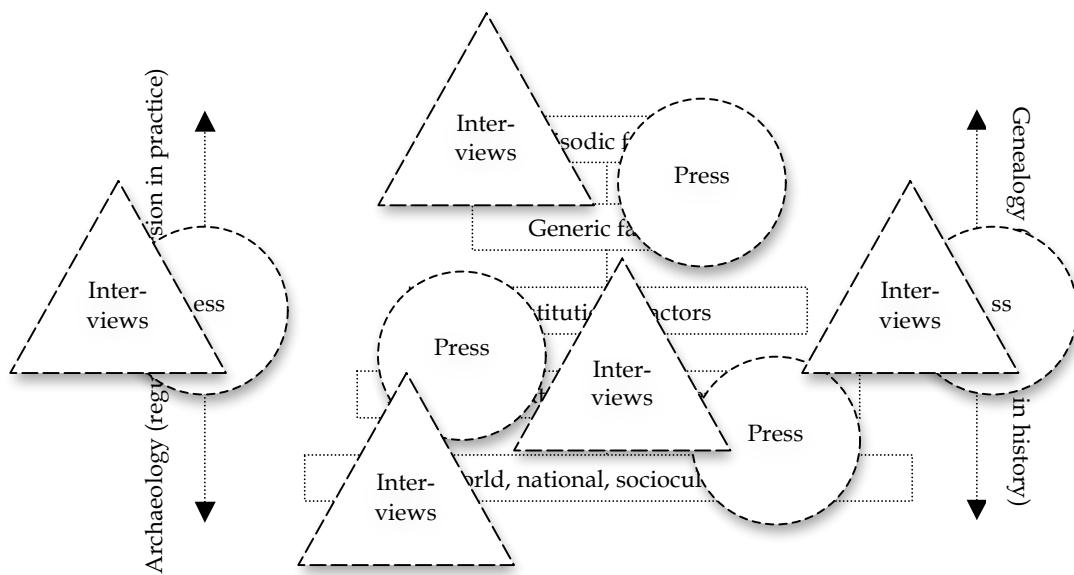
Blumler and Martin Spencer (1990) examined how the American broadcast space opened up to independent producers. Their approach is outlined as a process, in which each step relates to the next, conveying a sequence to their findings. The primary research question also guided the authors' choice to conduct interviews, and it framed the interview guide and flow of questions. In the study, 150 diversely employed television professionals were interviewed in individual, semi-structured sessions that were recorded and transcribed. According to the authors, this approach created an informal context in which informants could speak freely, although they were required to adhere to the question guide to avoid extraneous topics. Additionally, the authors illustrate ways in which the personal quality of the interview can reveal a great deal about the institutional process, which Dhoest also found: "Interviews give access to undocumented information and allow the exploration of underlying, often implicit, factors in the production process" (2004: 396). For example, Dhoest's interviews suggest a relation between a general regard for Flemish culture and professional status, such that "cultural-educational, heavily literary and Flemish-minded ideals were less important in the lower ranks of production" (2004: 400). Koukoutsaki's interviews also helped her to understand the ways in which Greek television drama has been classified, again, from a valuable firsthand perspective:

interviews with Greek television professionals ... were indispensable for interpreting the results ... and enriched the study in two ways: on the one hand, by supplying expert knowledge of drama production, and on the other by adding their personal perspective as regards the evolution of the sector within the Greek television system (2003: 718).

Elsewhere, Costera Meijer (2001) examined differences between ethnic representation in Dutch television drama and the ways in which ethnicity was referenced in the discourse of television producers. Adopting an 'interventional' approach to interviewing, Costera Meijer "consciously intervened in their professional repertoires and practices", thereby prompting producers to reconsider their views and "encouraging ... alternative choices" (2001: 227). The author therefore considers interviewing to have had a cathartic effect, as "soap experts' willingness and generosity to openly discuss their work and share their dilemmas and solutions was heart-warming", but this also "may have encouraged them to express themselves in new ways" about the role of ethnicity in their work (2001: 209). Intervention is not an aspect of my approach, but it demonstrates the subjective nature of interviewing and the implications of this for analysis and findings.

My approach to interviewing is based, first, on Deacon, et al's (1999) review of the aims, benefits and drawbacks of different approaches to the method. They compare structured, semi-structured and unstructured approaches, as well as the ways posing questions can have implications for respondents' behavior, beliefs and attitudes. The authors also stress the importance of question order and flow, examine the consequences of poorly worded questions and impart the strengths and weaknesses of open or closed questions (1999: 63 – 70). Second, I considered Gaskell's (2000) analysis of the advantages and disadvantages of individual and group interviewing; Berger's (1988) account of the rationale, procedure and problems of in-depth interviews; and Kvale's (1996) description of the seven stages of interview-based research. In considering both studies using interviews and reviews of the method, I determined that an individual, semi-structured approach best fit with my own study's objectives.

My approach to the method is also based on the status attached to certain professions or roles in the television industry. Thus, the semi-structured, individual interview allowed respondents to speak to their experiences independent of status or peers in an open and uninhibited way. Drawbacks, however, are that television workers can be responsible to millions of viewers. Commercial broadcasting in particular involves the added pressures of advertising revenue and audience share, reflecting the success or failure of programs (Gitlin 2000: 10). Additionally, due to the potential strength of production-writing teams in commercial television (Gitlin 2000: 122), I considered group interviewing as a means of providing even more information. However, my main objective was to allow informants to speak without the implications of peer presence. Thus as Fig. 4.4 illustrates, interviews become a crucial method for further interrogating the relations between subjectivity and structure in the television mini-series' representations of Brazil.



**Fig. 4.4:** Introduction of interviews to the methodological framework.

Interviews parallel the role of press material, in that both seek to interrogate regularity in the practice and continuity in the history of the mini-series' representations of Brazil. The difference between these sources, however, has to do with different relations of structure and subjectivity. It is a difference, in other words, in which tensions between mini-series creators and the television institution are those that I actively seek. I discuss my research design, data collection and analysis procedures next, which will help to clarify this.

## 4.4 Research Design, Data Collection and Analysis

The research design and implementation procedures I discuss next are more descriptive than conceptual. But they are necessary to provide a design that could be used in similar studies. As I discuss, however, there are concerns about the replicability of this study due to structural constraints on researching Brazilian television. However, the premise of my design adheres to the analytical bases of my approach: seeking regularity and dispersion in the practice of representing Brazil, and dis/continuity in what this says about Brazil's historical representations. My research design is therefore driven by the key components of the research question: *continuity and change* in the Brazilian mini-series' representation of national culture, values and identity, which I explain next.

### 4.4.1 Population, Access and Sampling: The Mini-series

As we read in the previous chapter, the Brazilian mini-series has been produced since the early 1980s, which means that there is a large body of work. To evaluate this population

and derive a sample from it, I obtained a list from a research unit at the University of São Paulo<sup>8</sup> of all mini-series produced in Brazil. I cross-referenced this list against TV Globo's production catalogs (2003; 2006), as well as a web site<sup>9</sup> used by scholars and aficionados of Brazilian television drama. From this, I produced a list of all the Brazilian mini-series produced since the genre's beginning to the end of this study (Appendix 1). As shown, this is over 100 mini-series, a population from which I needed to derive a sample. My sampling strategy was based on that of Koukoutsaki, who similarly surveyed the history of Greek television drama to find generic definitions according to programs, interviews and the press (2003: 716). The strategy is also appropriate, in that the boundaries of her sample were from the first year of Greek television drama production to the point when, "for practical reasons, the collection of data came to a halt" (2003: 716). My study begins in 1982, when Brazil began producing mini-series, and ends in 2007, when my period of field research ended. Furthermore, there are structural similarities between researching older Greek and Brazilian television: a lack of accessible, archived material, in spite of the level of production (Koukoutsaki 2003: 716), which I explain next.

Five producing networks form the population: Globo, Cultura, Bandeirantes, Record and Manchete. However, only Globo has produced mini-series since 1999. Additionally, the other networks have not produced mini-series at the volume and consistency of Globo, with Record (1997), Manchete (1990 - 1991), Bandeirantes (1989) and Cultura (1981 - 1982) producing mini-series sporadically. In further arriving at a sample, Bandeirantes, Cultura and Record did not consistently archive programming in the periods when they steadily produced mini-series. In addition, these networks did not avail their existing archives to researchers. Manchete abruptly went bankrupt in 1999, resulting in the loss or selling-off of the majority of its archives. Finally, various fires and floods have destroyed many of these networks' archives. Globo is therefore not only the primary, continuous producer of mini-series but also the only network with an intact and available archive. However, I attempted to refine a sample mostly populated by Globo productions by purchasing two Manchete and one Bandeirantes mini-series available from a private vendor. This was an acquisition in which I sought to expand a discourse of practice to include as many other networks as possible, and which allowed me to practically complete a 25-year historical sample of the mini-series genre. Most importantly, by acquiring archived and purchased material I sought to best address my research question's concern for *continuity* and *change*

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<sup>8</sup> Núcleo de Pesquisa de Telenovela (NPTN) was a unit in the School of Communications and Arts at the University of São Paulo that researched Brazilian television drama. It has since expanded to include Ibero-Latin American television drama and has been renamed *Centro de Estudos de Telenovela* (CETVN).

<sup>9</sup> Teledramaturgia: <http://www.teledramaturgia.com.br/>.

in the way Brazil has represented its national culture, values and identity in that same 25-year period. My final sample of 41 mini-series (Appendix 2) therefore reflects the ways in which Globo has dominated the broadcast space of Brazil, including with the mini-series. This most likely has analytical implications for discourses of historical representation and institutional practice in a space, and a genre, dominated by Globo.

#### **4.4.2 Relevance, Reach and Reading: Sampling the Press**

I selected press material according to my sample of mini-series. This reduced my concern for achieving a representativeness of the Brazilian press, since I was able to focus instead on issues of representation in material already concerned with my sample of mini-series. Institutionally, Brazil's press is closest to the systems of Southern European countries. In the national broadsheets, content is politicized, aimed at highly literate, smaller publics, and a "*horizontal process of debate*" indicates "negotiation among elite factors" (Hallin and Mancini 2004: 22; original emphasis). However, unlike Southern European countries, the Brazilian press is profitable and not politically subsidized; thus in theory, it lacks the obvious connections between "professionalization and political parallelism" (Hallin and Mancini 2004: 38) of the former contexts. Nevertheless, we need only recall Globo's role in supporting the military regime, then re-democratization, to realize that the Brazilian press has assumed a political role. Additionally, a male-dominated press, such as in some Italian operations (Hallin and Mancini 2004: 101), does not appear to be the case in Brazil. As we will see in the following chapters, there is an apparent balance between men and women writers, at least among television journalists and according to bylines, in Brazil. Brazil's literacy is less than that of Southern Europe, however, meaning lower readership of print material and a higher reliance on television for news and entertainment<sup>10</sup>. These factors influence to what extent the press reaches Brazil. Nevertheless, I consider Brazil's press an important voice, and one that potentially challenges Brazilian television.

My ability to sample press material was eased by a database<sup>11</sup> available to researchers of Brazilian television. However, the database contains 40 years of matter from 50 Brazilian newspapers and magazines with national, regional, local or special-interest readerships, which made the amount of material overwhelming. Unlike arriving at a sample of mini-series, then, there were neither the institutional nor historical limitations on sampling the press. Many publications ceased operation before the first mini-series productions, which allowed me to eliminate them. Selecting matter according to national reach also reduced

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<sup>10</sup> The UN Development Programme Report (2009) lists Brazil's adult literacy rate at 90 percent.

<sup>11</sup> *TV Pesquisa*: <http://www.tv-pesquisa.com.puc-rio.br/>.

the sheer amount of information. Of 17 newspapers, I reduced my final sample to seven titles, listed in Table 4.1. The table includes base city, region and degree of reach. From 33 magazines, I arrived at the sample of five listed in Table 4.2, which includes the genre/interest of the magazine, its base region and degree of reach as well.

**Table 4.1:** Sample of Brazilian newspapers.

| Newspaper                    | Base City      | Base Region      | Degree of Reach      |
|------------------------------|----------------|------------------|----------------------|
| <i>Correio Braziliense</i>   | Brasília       | Federal District | Regional-to-National |
| <i>O Dia</i>                 | Rio de Janeiro | Southeast        | Regional-to-National |
| <i>O Estado de São Paulo</i> | São Paulo      | Southeast        | National             |
| <i>Folha de São Paulo</i>    | São Paulo      | Southeast        | National             |
| <i>O Globo</i>               | Rio de Janeiro | Southeast        | National             |
| <i>Jornal do Brasil</i>      | Rio de Janeiro | Southeast        | Regional-to-National |
| <i>Valor Econômico</i>       | São Paulo      | Southeast        | National             |

**Table 4.2:** Sample of Brazilian magazines.

| Magazine         | Genre/Interest            | Base Region | Degree of Reach |
|------------------|---------------------------|-------------|-----------------|
| <i>Contigo!</i>  | Television entertainment  | Southeast   | National        |
| <i>Época</i>     | News and general interest | Southeast   | National        |
| <i>Isto É</i>    | News and general interest | Southeast   | National        |
| <i>Tele Viva</i> | Television entertainment  | Southeast   | National        |
| <i>Veja</i>      | News and general interest | Southeast   | National        |

In this sample, it is noteworthy that all the publications are based in the southeast, with the exception of *Correio Braziliense*, based in Brasília, Brazil's capital. This reflects the way in which Brazil's political, economic and cultural power is concentrated in two regions, and in particular, Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo. My sample therefore suggests regularity and continuity in relation to cultural production in Brazil, which is problematic given my research question's objective of understanding national representation.

After reducing press material by relevance and reach, I still had a large amount of data. Thus I applied an additional sampling criterion, the subject of the article itself. Within the database, the search option of 'statistic' allowed me to retrieve information on audiences, production costs, ratings, purchasing power, preferences, remuneration, value, and all of the above: in other words, criteria which reflect both institutional conditions and cultural interests. As I discussed in Chapter 3, I intend to engage in both dimensions of cultural production, so I did not limit my search to material by these criteria, but instead accepted all results for all the mini-series in my sample. Even with the limits of the production and

publication in place, my results were still vast. However, each result was given a 'topic', which I list in Table 4.3, and with the topics I selected from that entire list in bold type.

**Table 4.3:** Press material topics (with topics selected in bold type).

| Topic                       | Topic                          | Topic                         |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Actor information           | Exportation                    | Merchandising                 |
| <b>Audience preference</b>  | <b>General information</b>     | <b>Network information</b>    |
| <b>Audience ratings</b>     | <b>Historical information</b>  | <b>Production costs</b>       |
| <b>Author information</b>   | Interview with actor           | <b>Production information</b> |
| Cast information            | <b>Interview with author</b>   | <b>Technical information</b>  |
| <b>Commentary/critique</b>  | <b>Interview with director</b> | <b>Thematic information</b>   |
| <b>Director information</b> | <b>Literature/adaptation</b>   | Weekly plot synopses          |

It is evident that I selected the majority of topics. However, I further reduced the volume of material by excluding the topics of acting and casting, exports and merchandising, and plot synopses, as they do not enter my conceptual framework and I am familiar with the plots of my sampled mini-series. Nevertheless, there was still a vast amount of material. Depending on the mini-series as well, material was uneven due to less writing on older productions and more on newer ones, which probably reflects the advancing state of the database. I therefore arrived at my final sample by reading a lot of material in order to discern key conceptual and analytical themes. This also allowed me to identify key mini-series by the ways in which these themes overlapped in reporting. The link between key mini-series and press material, however, was strengthened by interviews, which not only helped to reduce my sample from 500 to 125 valuable articles but they also allowed me to triangulate textual, press and interview data. I discuss my interview strategies next.

#### 4.4.3 Regularity, Roles and Experience: Interviews

As I mentioned, interviews act as a bridge between two kinds of stories: the stories that the mini-series represents, and stories of personal and professional experience in creating the mini-series. The interview also offers a bridge between the subjectivity of the creative process and the structure of working in the television industry. However, the interview was particularly valuable for me in that it bridged the limited availability of mini-series and the vast amount of press material. Methodologically, I followed Kvale's (1996) seven stages of interview-based research, which are: selection of themes; informant pool design and selection; conducting interviews; transcription; analysis; verification; and reporting. I followed these in a slightly different order, however, which I explain below. A reordered sequence had very much to do with gaining access to Brazilian television creators, whose

fame is often equal to that of actors (Ortiz, et al. 1988; Vink 1988; Tufte 2000), as well as with the hierarchies of television production (Gitlin 2000) and Brazilian society (Da Matta 1991a). What I confronted, then, was access less than the amount of mini-series available to me but information possibly greater than the volume of press material. This required an interview strategy that would bridge the gap between lack and excess of information. I first focused on creating an informant pool, and then on themes, after which I followed the rest of Kvale's stages. This was also guided by my research question, which I explain.

As I did with press material, I targeted my interviewees according to my sample of mini-series. However, I further designed my informant pool according to two main objectives: *change* within *low-level* experience and the *continuity* of *high-level* experience, although as I ultimately reflect, these analytical/professional correlations are permeable. My points of entry were two: a Brazilian colleague formerly employed by Globo, who put me in touch with a low-level gatekeeper currently employed by the network; and *Globo Universidade*, a unit at Globo that facilitates researchers' access to the network's creative, technical and archival resources. Through the first gatekeeper, I interviewed several people involved in low-level capacities of mini-series production. High-level creators were more difficult to access, which in fact was intensified by the role that *Globo Universidade* plays. However, many high-level creators are also filmmakers, novelists or playwrights and have personal web sites or belong to creative organizations through which I was able to make contact with them directly. Additionally, high-level creators readily referred me to peers, which proved to be an invaluable strategy for expanding my pool of informants.

Another strategy I employed was to consolidate access to high-level creators through the sample of mini-series themselves. Within the sample, there was a well-defined group of television screenwriters, producers and directors whose work and collaboration outside television helped to further bring them together, as I mentioned. Additionally, these are creators who prefer working on the mini-series because of the form's overlap with their interests in literature and film, and therefore over the *telenovela* because of its formulaic qualities. In other words, within Brazilian television production it appears that a small group of people has produced many mini-series. Therefore, between the breadth of low-level experience across the industry and the depth of high-level experience on preferred kinds of production, my interview profile consisted of 13 individuals involved in diverse aspects of mini-series production (Appendix 3).

I formed my interview themes while I worked to build an informant pool. Furthermore, my interview themes are derived from key conceptual and analytical threads (Appendix

4). I began with questions about professional history in order to initiate the narrative of the interview with the informant's background. This also anticipated the fourth theme of continuity and change, in which interviewees spoke about dis/continuity in the body of their work. The theme of national culture, values and identity addresses my research question, but I asked interviewees questions about specified mini-series in order to avoid abstraction of an already broad topic. The questions in this theme also focus more on the narrative features of specific mini-series and less on overall dis/continuities in historical representation. The theme of texts and genre focuses on inter- and extra-textual relations, given that most mini-series are adaptations. However, I asked about 'remaining true to the original work' in order to include issues of dis/continuity in the adaptation process. Questions about continuity and change clearly address my research question, but again, I asked about narrative features of specific mini-series to avoid generalization. This theme also attempts to evince dialogue about interviewees' more subjective interests in relation to the institutional conditions in which they must operate. My last theme of audiences is intended to get interviewee's general perspective on Brazilian mini-series viewers, rather than contact they may have had with viewers. My last question concludes the interview, but it was also intended to tie together the sociocultural and textual-generic dimensions of my conceptual framework. It seeks interviewees' opinions on what is particular about the mini-series, but it also broadens out from individual work or professional history.

I conducted interviews in various settings: studios, offices, homes and cafés. They were less impeded by television workers' time than I had anticipated, but it was in fact high-, rather than mid- or low-level, creators who seemed to have the fewest time constraints. I followed the interview guide but stressed the open-ended nature of the session, so that informants could introduce additional topics and information as they saw fit. I informed all my interviewees of the nature of my research, the context in which their information would appear, and that it would ultimately become available in a university library. All my interviewees gave me consent to use their names and positions in my thesis, although I have taken the decision to maintain their anonymity. However, it is important to note that with high-level creators in particular, it is still easy to identify them through their roles in the creation of specific mini-series. I alerted my informants of this fact, and they assured me that they did not consider this to be a problem.

It is also important for me to briefly discuss Portuguese, as all mini-series, interviews and press material are in the Portuguese language. I am proficient in speaking, reading and writing Portuguese, so have not been hindered by conducting research in a language not natively my own. Transcribing the interviews, however, was a task with which I was not

familiar, and transcription in Portuguese compounded the laboriousness of the process. I contracted most of the transcription work to a Brazilian colleague who is also a journalist, and therefore clearly familiar with the language and process. My interviews lasted about one hour each, although depending on the number of mini-series the interviewee could speak about, some interviews are longer than others.

#### **4.4.4 Analysis, Verification and Reporting**

I open Kvale's fifth stage of interview-based research, analysis, to all the data my sources generated, not just interviews, thus to comparing all the data according to the framework I initially set forth. Despite the different formats in which data appear, all were rendered into text. In addition to transcribed interviews and written press material, I took copious notes on the mini-series in my sample while I watched them, which I then rendered into electronic text. In order to analyze both different types of data and large volumes of it, I followed Gaskell's advice to create a "matrix [that] structures the data, bringing [them] together in an accessible way" (2000: 54). I used this principle to employ NVivo, software for qualitative analysis, which was available to me and that I had been trained to use.

There are advantages and disadvantages to using software like NVivo, however, which I mention briefly. One disadvantage is the potential loss of the integrity of the data, which occurs by turning "words into numbers": this could be the software "merely assisting in this process", or it could also be the software "somehow actually driving the abstraction in unintended ways" (Crowley, et al 2002: 193). Another is that automated analysis might encourage the analyst to believe s/he is achieving the objectives of reliability and validity of quantitative research, which in a qualitative analytical framework are not the same. A qualitative framework suggests alternatives, such as trustworthiness and rigorousness (Welsh 2002). An advantage of NVivo, then, is that it offers a trustworthy and rigorous approach to analyzing qualitative data, especially through automated features that help to eliminate human error (Welsh 2002). Additionally, NVivo enables the analyst to tackle large quantities of data, such as my corpus, which would have been a daunting prospect if left wholly to manual methods. However, to over-assume the capabilities of automated analysis is to ignore the fact that the analyst must still use "manual scrutiny techniques so that the data are ... thoroughly interrogated" (Welsh 2002).

My process of analysis therefore involved bringing all the data into NVivo to code them against a matrix roughly based upon the sociocultural and textual-generic themes of my conceptual framework. However, analysis also involved adopting a strategy that allowed

themes to emerge through interpretation, which NVivo enables, but which still requires manual scrutiny. In relation to the advantages and drawbacks of an automated *versus* a manual approach, this enabled me to only *intuit* rigor and transparency in my procedure. But compared to manual coding and in fact because of the volume of data, I was able to apply the analytic strategies of emergence and interpretation with increasing confidence (Welsh 2002), especially as discursive formations became increasingly apparent.

To verify data, I relied foremost on triangulating texts, press and interview data in terms of production names, dates, networks, individual roles and responsibilities, and so forth. Triangulation also included less apparent information, such as plot sequences, character names and sources of adaptation. Together, this presented a lot of information to verify, although this was not insurmountable, again aided by electronic means. As I established an informant pool based on different contributors to the same mini-series, or amongst a small, collaborative group of informants, this served as an additional way to verify data. In order to verify judgments such as opinions in press or interview material, however, I relied much more on the strategies of emergence and interpretation. Divergence from a predominant opinion, on the other hand, is also a crucial aspect of discursive formation, and one that reflects my research question and analytical framework. This in fact leads to the penultimate task of verifying data against my frameworks and the research question. Again, this meant using an interpretive strategy, whereby my conceptual and analytical frameworks of hybridity and discursive formation served to work with and against each other. Thus, the slippage between concept and evidence was as important as agreement between them. The final sequence of interview-based research is reporting, which the next three chapters entail. Before proceeding, I return to the questions I first asked about operationalizing hybridity to see how this chapter has gathered the tools to do that.

## 4.5 Conclusion: Operationalization and Reflection

Returning to my question of how both the social and textual dimensions of hybridity in the mini-series should be examined, I have argued that discourse analysis, specifically archaeology and genealogy analyses and their concerns with regularity/dispersion and dis/continuity in discursive formation, provide ways to do this. This is not only because archaeology interrogates the *practices* involved in discursive formation – or that aspect of my conceptual framework concerned with the politics of representation in the practice of producing and interpreting popular texts – but also because archaeology asks what is missing from those practices, which connects with the discontinuity of the ways in which Brazil has been narratively represented in the television mini-series.

Genealogy examines the dis/continuous ways that *history* has been represented through discursive formation. This approach offers a link with the sociocultural dimension of my framework, or how the hybrid cultures, values and identities of the postcolonial context reflect modes of consciousness and versions of modernity beyond the 'finality' of history. By questioning how history has been formed discursively, genealogy analysis thus links to archaeology's question of regularity/dispersion in the practice of historical formation. In spite of the relevance of these tools to my conceptual framework, I also acknowledged that there is room for slippage, given the subjective, *interpretational* position both require. I have also argued for analytic tools specific to television in order to situate discourses of practice and history in the cultural-institutional milieu with which I am concerned.

I have argued that two sources will expand a sociocultural understanding of Brazil from a study focused on television: the Brazilian press, which offers a parallel set of relations between structure and subjectivity, as well as an additional interpretation of the ways in which the mini-series represents Brazil; and mini-series creators, whose perspectives can provide insight into the practice of such representations. Beyond the immediate textual-institutional sphere of the mini-series, these sources suggest a proxy audience, if not a parallel public, by virtue of their own subjective exchanges with institutional structures, as well as their own positions on 'being Brazilian' within larger institutional and social forces. However, the perspectives and positions that the press and creators offer should be considered in terms of a viewing public potentially disengaged from what the mini-series represents of Brazil. In other words, these are privileged positions from which to offer social, institutional and subjective viewpoints on issues of being Brazilian that the mini-series conveys, and in a country with large structural and experiential disparities.

Thus, I have established a framework for analyzing discourse between the mini-series, its creators and the national press on the representation of Brazilian national culture, values and identity. The following chapters therefore reveal what constitutes that discourse and the ways in which it is formed. Finally, I believe I have devised a methodology that could be used in other contexts in which there are questions about national representation and about the agents and forces involved in its creation. As my conceptual, methodological and analytical frameworks allow for emergence and interpretation, however, I recognize that what this chapter operationalizes only suggests the discourse that would come from other contexts. My methodology may therefore be specific to Brazil, but I hope that it can be considered, applied and modified in other contexts.

## 5 Representing Geography and Gender in the Mini-series: The Boundaries of Brazilian National Culture

### 5.1 Introduction

To approach how national culture is represented in the Brazilian mini-series, I return to a few conceptual underpinnings of culture that will guide this chapter. First, we have seen how culture is polarized into elite and popular forms, and conceived in terms of made and remade qualities. Second, we have seen how culture has been dichotomized by the pull of pre-modern 'origins' and the push of modernization. Third, we have seen the ways in which culture becomes a form of power itself when administered within political ideology, but also a vehicle for resisting or negotiating ideology. These are fundamental tensions that will frame my analysis of representations of national culture in the Brazilian television mini-series. While the mini-series is my main focus, however, I will also look at how the press and creators contribute to a discourse of constructing Brazilian culture.

As I have done previously, I pose certain questions that will guide this chapter towards its conclusions. My first question is, how does the mini-series represent Brazilian national culture, and how do its representations relate to discourses of culture in the press and in creative commentary? Second, how is Brazilian national culture constructed through the discourses of practice and history in the mini-series, and to what extent do they overlap or compete with critical and creative perspectives? Finally, how do discourses of practice and history in the mini-series reflect continuity or change in representations of Brazilian national culture, and how do they reflect issues faced within contemporary Brazil?

As I will argue throughout this chapter, geography and gender are prevalent constructs through which Brazilian national culture is articulated in the mini-series. However, they take shape in a number of nuanced themes. Within a discourse of geography, centers and margins are articulated physically and symbolically, and among creators, institutionally. Additionally, geography is invoked as a reflection of Brazil's historical negotiations with 'race' as an aspect of both national culture and identity. What I explore in this chapter are therefore not only the physical and symbolic boundaries of national culture in the mini-series but also the negotiation of its limits in an ongoing discourse of what it means to be Brazilian. Gender is another prevailing mode of representation that brings into question what constitutes Brazilian national culture as much as what it means to be Brazilian. In the mini-series themselves, we will see how gender is a constrictive and a transgressive force in articulating the boundaries of national culture. In the discourse of creators and

the press as well, gender is invoked to reinforce the limits and challenge the boundaries of Brazil's powerful television institution. In many respects, then, gender works in the same capacity as geography to define the im/permeability of Brazilian national culture. In my conclusion, I will therefore not only consider the implications of geography and gender for constructs of Brazilian national culture in the mini-series but also what gender and geography imply about Brazilian culture beyond the realm of television drama.

## 5.2 Center/Margin Boundaries: Geography in Brazilian Culture

Geography is a key aspect of the mini-series' representation of Brazilian national culture. Geography is invoked not only to remind us of the strong force of regionalism in Brazil but also as an element of Brazil's modernization. In my sample of mini-series, nearly half are set in or concerned with Brazil's distinctly *urban* geographies. We see a nostalgic, pre-regime Rio de Janeiro in *Anos Dourados* (*Golden Years*) and *JK* (a biopic about Juscelino Kubitschek, the twenty-first president of Brazil), and then Rio as the epicenter of anti-regime revolt in *Anos Rebeldes* (*Rebel Years*) and *Hilda Furacão* (*Hurricane Hilda*). Rio is also the setting for post-regime despondency in *Quem Ama Não Mata* (*Those Who Love Don't Kill*) and *Bandidos da Falange* (*Bandits of the Phalanx*), or it adds a secretive air to the crime-thriller *As Noivas de Copacabana* (*The Brides of Copacabana*). São Paulo is a nexus for multiculturalism and modernization in *Um Só Coração* (*An Only Heart*), glamour and hedonism in *Sex Appeal*, and pleasure and violence in *Presença de Anita* (*Anita's Presence*). Rio and São Paulo also form the locus of contemporary black experience in *Cidade dos Homens* and *Antônia*. Beyond the Rio/São Paulo axis of urban Brazil, we also see the underworld of Salvador, Bahia, in *Capitães da Areia* (*Captains of the Sand*), *Dona Flor e Seus Dois Maridos* (*Dona Flor and Her Two Husbands*) and *Pastores da Noite* (*Shepherds of the Night*), Brasília's precipitous '50-year growth in five years' in *JK*, and belle-époque Manaus in *Amazônia*.

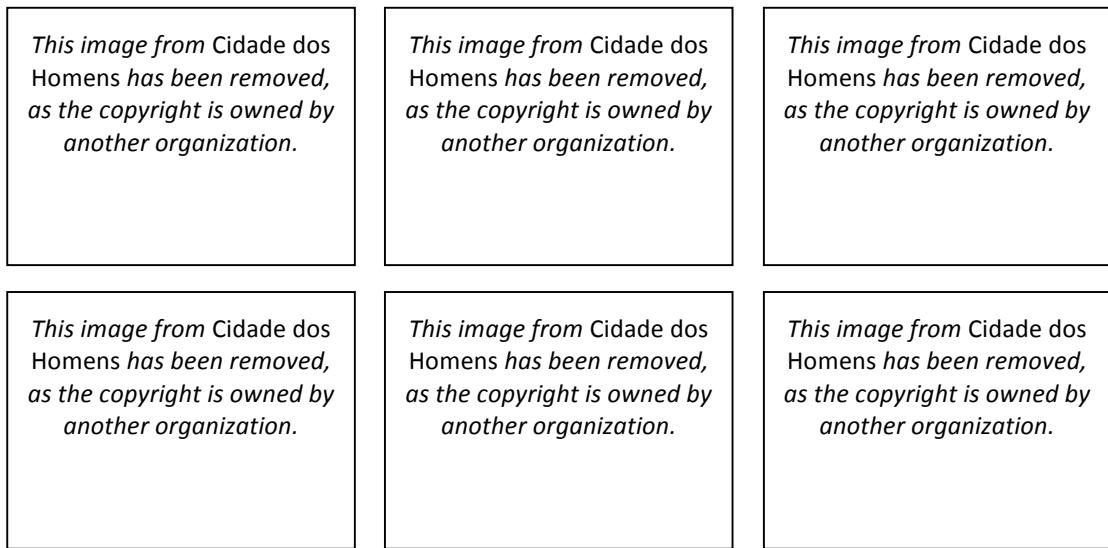
However, *rural* Brazil is also a distinct part of representing Brazilian culture in the mini-series. Furthermore, the rural setting consists of two representational threads. One is an identifiable rural setting, such as the *sertão* in *Lampião e Maria Bonita* (*Lampião and Maria Bonita*) and *O Pagador de Promessas* (*The Payer of Promises*), or the Bahian coast in *Riacho Doce* (*Sweet Stream*). We can also identify the hostile Spanish/Portuguese colonial border in *O Tempo e O Vento* (*The Time and the Wind*), the coastline where Diogo Álvares washed ashore in *A Invenção do Brasil* (*The Invention of Brazil*), the inland jungle of *A Muralha* (*The Wall*), into which the prospecting/slave-hunting *bandeirantes* forged from the coast, and finally, the vanishing forests of *Amazônia*. The other is a mythical rural setting. While this setting lacks precise features, it imparts a similar sense of isolation and brutality, such as

the secluded plantation in *Escrava Anastácia* (*Anastácia the Slave*), the tenuous outpost of civilization in *Memorial de Maria Moura* (*Memorial to Maria Moura*), or the dangerous and magical wilderness of *Hoje É Dia de Maria* (*Today is Maria's Day*).

In both their polarity and consistency, these geographies impart a fundamental tension in the representation of Brazilian culture. It is a tension not only between the sophisticated, cosmopolitan city and a crude, hostile *sertão* but also between the appearance of modern existence and the reality of what Brazil abandoned in order to attain it. It is necessary to delve further into this tension, however, to better understand the role of geography in the mini-series' representations of Brazilian national culture. In particular, we will see the ways in which 'race' and popular culture are interwoven into the spatial/social tensions of Brazilian geography, and thus how a dialogic exchange between centers and margins, empire and colony, and the foreign and national continue to physically, symbolically and institutionally inform the ways Brazil has conceived of and interpreted national culture.

### 5.2.1 From Europe to Brazil

The *Cidade dos Homens* episode "A Coroa do Imperador" (The Emperor's Crown) opens with a classroom scene in which Acerola and Laranjinha, the young black protagonists of the mini-series, are learning European history. Their teacher shouts above the din of the students to explain how Napoleon's invasion of Portugal led the royal family to flee and establish the Brazilian Empire. Acerola listens distractedly, sketching war ships on a page in his notebook. Suddenly, the ships come to life, carrying the royal family across the sea (see Fig. 5.1). Later, Acerola is pursued by local drug dealers, beaten up and robbed of his money for a school trip to the royal family's summer retreat. When we return to the next history lesson, it becomes a very different one, taught by Acerola to us. He explains how drug lords battle each other in his *favela*. Like the coalitions of the Napoleonic Wars, each faction presides over a part of the disputed terrain, seeking to gain complete control over it (see Fig. 5.1). Acerola's attempt to flee from the drug dealers becomes a metaphor for the historical founding of Brazil, and his *favela* becomes a metaphor for historical conflict over the Brazilian territory. Acerola's most important lesson to us, however, is about the implications of Brazilian history for contemporary Brazilian geography. In the sense that Brazil was distanced from the centers of Europe despite its constant comparison to and emulation of them, Acerola finds himself at the center of urban existence, and at the same time, at the margins of Brazilian society.



**Fig. 5.1:** European history meets *favela* geography.

“A Coroa do Imperador” illustrates contemporary geography through Brazilian history. Furthermore, Acerola’s *favela* becomes a symbol of Brazil’s historical negotiations with its status on the margins of European society. Yet this narrative is turned inward to reflect Brazil’s power struggles with its own boundaries between centers and margins. This is a narrative that occurs in other mini-series as well, although in different ways. *O Quinto dos Infernos* is a spoof of Brazil’s liberation through the sexual exploits of Emperor Pedro I. On arrival to Brazil, the royal family is astounded by the physical conditions of Brazil. They quickly assimilate, however, which we see through a brood of ‘mixed-race’ children produced by Pedro’s countless affairs. Recalling the foundational myths of Brazil from Chapter 1, *A Invenção do Brasil* (*The Invention of Brazil*) begins in Portugal, where explorers Vasco da Gama and Vasco de Ataíde compete to first reach India by sea, a competition in which Diogo Álvares is unwittingly ensnared. After Ataíde’s vessel wrecks, the hapless Álvares washes ashore the Bahian coast, where the Tupi Indians name him Caramuru for misfiring a gun in front of them. However, Álvares soon finds himself in a state of bliss, carrying on romantic affairs with Paraguaçú and her sister Moema. In a memorable scene of the mini-series, their father, Tupi chief Itaparica, hawks the foods, women and ocean views of pre-colonial Bahia to Álvares, as if Itaparica were a beach peddler. Furthermore, Álvares marries Paraguaçú and brings her back to Portugal. But neither is happy there and long for the uninhibitedness of Brazil. They return, upon which Diogo founds the colony’s first capital, Salvador – a symbol of Brazil’s ethno-cultural fusions – produces a large family, and lives a long, happy life. *O Quinto dos Infernos* and *A Invenção do Brasil* also personalize Brazilian history by introducing humor and sexuality to its foundational events and figures. But there is a significant difference between the way in which Acerola and his *favela* embody Brazil’s historical geo-ethnic tensions and the way the latter mini-

series invoke Brazil's utopic 'roots' in miscegenation. Thus, these mini-series represent significantly different interpretations of the intersections of 'race' and geography in reconstructing the historical narrative of Brazilian national culture.

By looking at mini-series set outside Brazil, in Europe, a discourse of the ways in which geography is invoked to represent Brazilian national culture widens considerably. Few Brazilian mini-series are set outside Brazil or are adapted from the work of non-Brazilian authors. *O Primo Basílio* (*Cousin Bazilio*) and *Os Maias* (*The Maias*), however, are two such mini-series. Both were adapted from novels by the Portuguese writer José Maria de Eça de Queiróz, and are set in and around Lisbon. In spite of the geographical, historical and cultural distance of these adaptations (Eça de Queiróz wrote the novels in 1878 and 1888, respectively), they have a great deal to say about 'race' and class in contemporary Brazil from the reenacted perspective of nineteenth-century Portugal.

*O Primo Basílio* centers on Luísa, a bourgeois woman whose husband Jorge goes away on business, and on Basílio, her cousin and childhood friend, who reappears just when Jorge leaves. Basílio seduces Luísa and the two have an affair in Jorge's absence. But Juliana, Luísa's embittered housekeeper, discovers the affair. Attempting to reverse her wretched lot, Juliana blackmails Luísa and subjects her to humiliating tasks. Juliana derives even greater pleasure from watching Luísa's pained attempts to keep their sudden reversal of roles a secret from the neighbors and their servants, whose relationships retain the status quo. Jorge returns from his trip and discovers Luísa's affair with Basílio, who smoothly disappears. Mustering forgiveness for Luísa, Jorge confronts Juliana, who, in the grip of desperation, has a heart attack and dies. Agonized by guilt, however, Luísa succumbs to illness and also dies. The mini-series is seemingly connected to Brazil only by Basílio's return from the ex-colony, but in fact it makes relevant statements about contemporary Brazil. A critic writes, "no one should be put off by a story that took place 100 years ago in another country. It's incredible, but everything seems exactly like our reality." The critic adds: "Whenever the [character] Viscount Reynaldo speaks of the 'abjection of the country', I think of Brazil today and the close similarities with our prejudices, hypocrisy, stupidity, inertia." Moreover, "the constructs of [Queiróz's] characters can also be found today, as they symbolize [his] critique of society ... the petty bourgeoisie, forbidden from seeking pleasure ... women such as Luísa, who don't belong exclusively to nineteenth-century Lisbon but emanate from it, posing themselves against and making themselves easy prisoners of people like Juliana" ("No Fim do Século..."). It is not situating *O Primo Basílio* in present-day Brazil, then, but the ways in which it connects with contemporary Brazil from a temporal/spatial distance that gives the mini-series its particular relevance.

Indeed, for another critic, the ability of *O Primo Basílio* to cross temporal/spatial distance and provide contemporary relevance is its greatest source of pleasure. "It's as if Luísa's treachery, Juliana's power, Basílio's seduction and Jorge's innocence ... really existed." Moreover, "the identification of the public with the characters, its identification with *any* of them," is enough "to make you, dear reader, go to the corner to talk about what you saw on the mini-series." However, for this critic both the pleasure and the relevance of *O Primo Basílio* have an even greater contemporary significance. In spite of "obliging more people to stay awake and watch the story", this critic knows they "never could, as at ten-thirty at night, the peripheries of greater Rio and São Paulo are already asleep. Neither Basílio nor Luísa nor anyone can keep them in their seats." Thus, despite the fact that "it is this population that in reality determines ... the television audience of this country, Rio and São Paulo's working classes need to sleep early to work early. And can't experience this pleasure" (Leme: 1988). It is the relevance of *O Primo Basílio* to class stratification in contemporary Brazil that makes a paradoxical statement. For the mini-series does reflect Brazil's present-day realities and translates them through the temporal/spatial distance of the narrative, but *O Primo Basílio* also depicts boundaries that continue to define social status in Brazil, which the appeal of good television drama cannot eliminate.

*Os Maias* also has implications for representing contemporary Brazil from the temporal/spatial distance of nineteenth-century Portugal. In particular, the mini-series and critical and creative commentary surrounding it suggest the continuous history and practice of comparing Brazilian culture to the models and traditions of Europe. However, what also surfaces is a more complex, internal regard for Brazilian culture according to European standards, which we saw of Brazil's intellectual and political history in Chapters 1 and 2. *Os Maias*, similar to *O Primo Basílio*, and a theme in much of Queiróz's work, is about the upper class Maia family's attempt to preserve social status in spite of the hypocrisy and deceit that tear it apart. Also like *O Primo Basílio*, *Os Maias* makes only passing references to Brazil. In *Os Maias*, however, it is not only that such references emphasize Brazil's peripheral relationship with Portugal, but they also highlight Portugal's peripheral status to France and Italy, Europe's 'proper' centers. These references are especially evident in Manuel and Maria Monforte, wealthy father-and-daughter émigrés who arrive to Lisbon from Brazil. Lisbon's tight-knit, close-minded elite not only eschew the Monforte's for the mysterious circumstances of their arrival, but they also marginalize Manuel and Maria for being of 'mixed-blood', that nineteenth-century quality associated with the Brazilian character with which we are familiar. It is thus to the perverse delight and expectations of Lisbon's elite that soon after marrying Pedro da Maia, and despite the apprehensions

of patriarch Afonso, Maria abandons him and escapes to Italy with their daughter Maria Eduarda and her Italian lover, Tancredo. Her brother, Carlos Eduardo, is left in the care of Pedro, who is inconsolable after Maria Monforte's abandonment and commits suicide, leaving Afonso to care for Carlos. Queiróz's novel is a commentary on the decline of the Portuguese empire, symbolized by the Maias' disintegration, which the mini-series keeps intact. As we will see in the following discussion, Queiróz's critique is not only renewed but also inverted by a discourse in the press that elevates Brazil's national-cultural status in relation to Portugal. This is contradicted, however, by creative discourse that reveals the tendency to still look to Europe for models of Brazilian cultural production.

Like *O Primo Basílio*, *Os Maias* attempted to create a bridge between the temporal/spatial divides of nineteenth-century Portugal and present-day Brazil, and between literary and popular audiences. According to critics, however, *Os Maias* was unsuccessful, which was due to the way it *imposed* temporal/spatial overlaps in order to *make* the mini-series more relevant. "Os Maias is happening abroad", a critic writes, and the "Maias are presented as we would believe them, but they aren't convincing in this move to a country that is not Brazil." Whether this means imposing nineteenth-century Portugal on present-day Brazil or transposing contemporary Brazil into nineteenth-century Portugal, the remaining fact is that the mini-series invented significations for contemporary viewers that did not exist in Queiróz's novel. For instance, instead of the ostracism the Monfortes experience in the mini-series, "in the text of Eça de Queiróz it is Brazil, and in particular a Brazilian mother and daughter, who arrive carrying exotic signifiers that structure the imagination of the empire." What becomes important in this discourse is not simply retaining the original features of the novel but maintaining Brazil's emerging significance from the perspective of the waning Portuguese empire. In the process, the critic reveals a *national* sensibility in assessing the mini-series' representations of shifting imperial/colonial relations: "It will be interesting to see the old colonial metropolis represented in this production by the ex-colony, which ironically ... specializes in the arts of spectacular television, inverting the sense of flux of cultural products." With suggestions of what this inversion might mean for Portuguese audiences, she concludes: "It will be curious to see how the Portuguese, avid consumers of products of this economy, who enjoy ... images 'made in Brazil', a bit like how they consumed the wood, the sugar, gold and coffee of the colony, appreciate appropriation" (Hamburger: 2001). As we saw in Chapters 1, 2 and 3, appropriation is a strategy that has been invoked in various ways to negotiate the boundaries of culture in the frontier. What this commentary brings into question, however, is the extent to which appropriation continues to serve as such a strategy, or if instead it now serves to smooth over the imbalances of imperial/colonial history.

While this critic suggests an ambivalent relation between the way Brazil is depicted from a temporal/spatial distance and the strength of Brazil's contemporary modes of national representation, there are further contradictions in practice. A producer of *Os Maias* found Portugal "very difficult to work in [because of] the unions over there. Their rules are very restrictive, working hours very restrictive, penalties very restrictive. Everything is much ... more closed." In comparison, "Brazil is more, much more, flexible in relation to this." However, even though in Brazil "we have TV Globo, we don't have the force they have over there ... That force of 'okay, we're stopping everything ... no one is doing anything more'. That is really difficult to [see] happen ... It wouldn't happen here in Brazil." The ability to not simply imitate but to exceed the cultural models of Europe, in other words, is hampered by a need to assert the strength of Brazil's cultural industries. Put differently still, while Brazilian culture has surpassed its legacies of dependency, and in fact *reversed* these legacies due to the global renown of Brazilian television, structures of attitude and reference towards the centers of culture remain. This is especially evident in the way this producer refers to relying on British models of production to create *Os Maias*:

In England ... they have the BBC standard of production ... The historical films of the BBC are marvelous! We don't know how to do this ... If you take films such as *The Reference* or *The Viscount* ... they're dazzling works! There is a ... persistence in all of them ... on all sides. So this is what we needed (interviewed December 5, 2006).

This tension between imitating and surpassing European modes of cultural production is complicated further by critics who engage with the viewing public. A critic writes, "the reconstitution of the era in *Os Maias* is perfect", and confirms this and other impressive details of *Os Maias* with Portuguese viewers who immigrated to Brazil: "Portuguese who adopted Brazil as their second home also eulogize the interpretation of the actors." Her ultimate opinion, however, is that "nothing is perfect, the rhythm of the mini-series ... leaves something to be desired." As if deliberating her opinion, she consults with another Portuguese viewer, who says: "The only ones complaining are those who like popular programs, such as those live-audience shows. Those who appreciate more elaborate and produced attractions love *Os Maias*" (Mousse: 2001). What this critic implies, then, is an internal debate, complicated by voices that invoke the very legacies Brazil has surpassed, about the extent to which Brazilian television can create its own 'cultured' standards of production, given the continued strength of popular culture and audiences in Brazil.

From this discussion of a dialogical exchange that appears to still exist between Brazil's colonial history and the ways this has been rewritten and reinterpreted to reflect present-day Brazil, we can identify two discursive strands. One looks to Europe from a spatial/

temporal distance, but offers an interpretation of contemporary Brazil by suggesting the continued relevance of these geographical/historical links. In these kinds of depictions, what appears to occur is a process of making 'the European' a part of Brazilian cultural experience, or the idea of 'ingesting' the foreign, which we have seen recur in artistic and intellectual movements in Brazil. The other discursive strand revives the old relationship between Europe and Brazil defined by empire and colony, the foreign and the national, or, in essence, centers and margins. The discourse here is not one that succumbs to these antiquated relations, but in the process of articulating its own 'cultured' tradition, there is awareness among creators and critics that Brazilian television must still look to Europe in order to do so. In the next section, I take an even closer look at mini-series and engage with creative and critical viewpoints that reveal how the 'the foreign' becomes Brazilian.

### **5.2.2 Calling the Foreign, Reaching the National**

*Um Só Coração* is an important mini-series for two reasons: it represents the experience of becoming Brazilian, and metaphorically, of Brazil attaining modernity. Once run by the old-world elite, São Paulo, the mini-series' setting, becomes a vibrant, cosmopolitan city. The path to this, however, is marked by a turbulent history. In a 1932 counterrevolution intended to overthrow the *Estado Novo*, characters Samir, Rita and Joaquim volunteer to fight. As Lebanese, Japanese and Portuguese immigrants, they shed their foreignness to become part of a movement to defend the 'true' fabric of Brazil. Their determination to defend Brazil and 'become Brazilian', however, meets with the resistance of their origins. When Rita asks her father Kazuo, a plantation farmer, to allow her to join the resistance, he responds angrily in Japanese. Rita tells the plantation owner Guiomar that Kazuo will not let her join. Guiomar tells Kazuo, "São Paulo needs Rita", to which Kazuo responds (in Portuguese), "I am foreign. I do not want to be involved in these affairs of the nation." Guiomar tells Kazuo that Rita is Brazilian, as Brazilian as is she. Kazuo, kneeling in front of his Shinto shrine, looks up and concedes to the call of the nation (see Fig. 5.2). Samir's mother Sálua also attempts to prevent him from joining the resistance, as does Joaquim's uncle, Avelino. Both resist the pull of origins, however, to become 'legitimate' Brazilians. So does Maria, who is transformed from a black servant into Soldier Maria (see Fig. 5.2). *Um Só Coração*'s narrative is therefore based on the traditions of the epic drama, in which families are often torn apart by the atrocities of war and the call of revolution. However, the mini-series is also about overcoming the pull of one's roots in order to form the fabric of an emerging, democratic and modern nation.

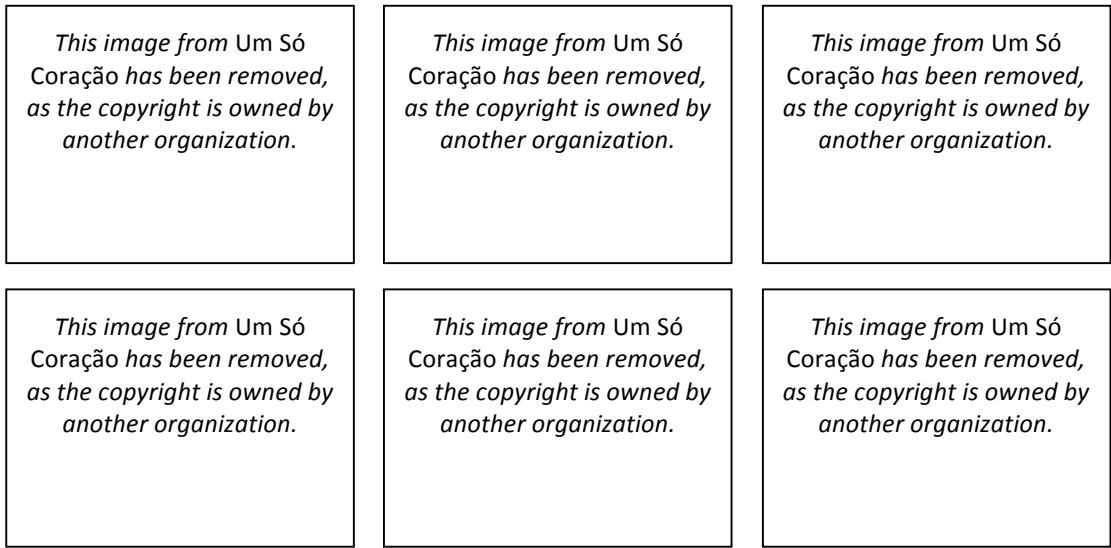


Fig. 5.2: Shedding one's roots in order to become Brazilian.

In fact, *Um Só Coração* forms part of a trilogy of mini-series that commemorate São Paulo, although the third was never made. The first, *A Muralha*, tells the story of São Paulo 450 years earlier, when *bandeirantes* dove inland in search of gold, but captured and enslaved Indians more successfully, as well as the Jesuits' drive to convert Indians to Christianity. Between these mini-series, there is an overall narrative of being foreign, struggling with the foreign, and overcoming the foreign in order to form the core of an emerging nation. As a director of both mini-series describes this trajectory:

*Um Só Coração* is a continuation ... All that experience, that consciousness of taming [in *A Muralha*] was inserted into *Um Só Coração*, which is a more artistic movement ... A movement of Brazilian formation, more from the point of view of Brazilian culture, which was, at that moment, breaking with external references ... We dove into the heart of Brazil to create these mini-series, because these mini-series, for the first time, began looking at the green of Brazil, at the yellow of Brazil, at Brazilian colors. Their creation ... is the need to break away in order to assume being a people (interviewed August 15, 2008).

The theme of 'breaking with external references' to become Brazilian appears in other mini-series as well. In these, however, a break is not with the foreign in order to become Brazilian, but rather representing the upheaval, exile and subsequent search for identity within Brazil. In *O Tempo e O Vento*, Ana Terra must abandon her farm on the disputed Portuguese/Spanish colonial border after marauders destroy it. Having fled a childhood of abuse, Tereza of *Tereza Batista* (*Teresa the Baptist*) must escape from additional forms of injustice across the northeast of Brazil for the next 13 years. Maria of *Memorial de Maria Moura* leaves her innocent childhood behind in order to find her ancestral home, all that is left to her when her parents are murdered. Despite its themes of immigration to Brazil, *Um Só Coração* depicts migration and exile within Brazil. David Rosenberg, a Holocaust survivor, arrives in São Paulo and finds the boarding house where his family took refuge

earlier. Discovering they no longer live there, David leaves, passing two immigrants not from Europe, but from Brazil's impoverished northeast, laboring outside. They stop their work to watch David's receding figure in a scene that symbolizes a passage from external to internal exile. The scene thus symbolizes new issues of what it means to 'be Brazilian' from within Brazil's own geographical boundaries.

Within this discourse of remaining outside the fabric of a nation still negotiating its own cultural identity, other mini-series are important. *Agosto (August)* is a crime thriller set in 1954, Rio de Janeiro. It situates fictional and real characters around the suicide of Getúlio Vargas of that same year. At the start of the mini-series, a businessman is murdered and Inspector Alberto Mattos (both fictional) is called on to investigate. Mattos learns that the murder was sexually motivated. Furthermore, evidence points to a black man – Gregório Fortunato, the real (and supposedly homosexual) head of Vargas's private guard – as the suspect. In addition to his homosexuality, Fortunato was suspected of orchestrating the attempted assassination of Carlos Lacerda, an opponent of Vargas, which Mattos is also called on to investigate, and a scandal that led Vargas to kill himself. As an investigator, Mattos thus acts as a symbolic bridge between unanswered questions of Brazil's political history and contemporary questions of belonging in terms of 'race' and sexuality. It is the retrospective vision of the mini-series as well that leads us to ask to what extent issues of internal belonging still underscore contemporary existence in Brazil.

In *Agosto*, 'race' is invoked in other ways to reflect contemporary Brazil, particularly in the fictional characters Alice and Salete, Mattos's lovers. However, Alice and Salete are also significant to a discourse of looking beyond the representational and institutional mechanisms of Brazilian television drama in order to make sense of what it means to be Brazilian. A journalist writes: "the two characters maintain the psychological profiles of the original work [by Rubem Fonesca]." But while "Alice ... reminds us of Grace Kelly" in her "refinement of a princess", Salete "could appear like Elizabeth Taylor." However, "Elizabeth Taylor's blue eyes don't go with the latinity that Rubem Fonesca imprinted on the character." Therefore, "the model of Gina Lolobrigida" was the basis for Salete's appearance (Antenore: 1993a) (see Fig. 5.3). What this critic only suggests is how 'race' is invoked to describe Salete and Alice. Salete is kept in opulent conditions by the corrupt Luiz Magalhães. One day, she spies her estranged mother, a black woman from a *favela*, on the street. Salete's 'latinity', in other words, is due to her 'mixed race'. Salete moves her mother into her apartment, where Magalhães thinks she is the new maid. She also brings her mother to restaurants and nightclubs, where they are scorned, leading Salete to question her own appearance (see Fig. 5.3). The contrast between a 'princess-like' Alice

and Salete's insecurity with her ethnic background is further contradicted by Vargas-era populism, which, as we know, attempted to bring black Brazilian culture into a cohesive order. This theme also resonates in a city in which conflicts of 'race' and space persist.



Fig. 5.3: Alice and Salete, where 'race' meets space.

Questions of what it means to be included in the cultural fabric of Brazil extend from the narratives of the mini-series to comments on the genre and on Brazilian television, again contributing to a discourse of the boundaries between imitative and 'authentic' cultural production in Brazil. A critic comments on *Agosto*: "Never has Globo invested so much money, resource, talent and hope as in the mini-series taken from the novel by Rubem Fonesca." The mini-series director is compared to the director of epics like *Gone With the Wind*, and *Agosto* is seen as being so close to Hollywood films that this critic "refuses to believe the series has the face of television." Instead, "*Agosto* is a film", "transforming Globo studios into ... the Warner [Bros. Studios] of the 1940s", and "nourishing us with what we're accustomed to seeing on the big screen" (Augusta: 1993). Other critics appear not to agree, however. For them, the mini-series prioritizes the traditions of Hollywood more than it tells the story of Brazil using Brazilian modes of narration. Thus for another commentator, *A Muralha* is "lacking something of independent cinema in its *tupiniquim* Hollywood."<sup>12</sup> Moreover, *A Muralha* is "well done ... cast, scenes, costumes, soundtrack, everything seems perfect," but "like whichever blockbuster from the American-cinema mecca, where it doesn't matter which cast member stars, ... the story has something of *déjà vu*" (Barros Pinto: 2000).

<sup>12</sup> *Tupiniquim* has two meanings, which are both relevant here: it refers to the Tupiniquim peoples who are indigenous to Brazil, and to something 'natively' Brazilian, ironically, a 'Brazilian Hollywood'.

The imitative implications of *déjà vu* also apply to comments on *Um Só Coração*. The mini-series' constant references to Brazilian Modernism are contrived to look natural, but they serve to create a false impression of this important cultural movement. A critic observes: "real characters are addressed by first and last name. Whenever possible, they ... proffer lines or even passages from their poems, which become famous in the middle of informal conversation. More artificial, impossible" (Monzillo: 2004). Another critic writes: "there could not be a greater excess of didactic intention ... São Paulo of the 1920s characterized as a mini-New York is in fact a fictionalized privileged space." Although the mini-series recalls Merchant Ivory films or *Titanic*, the writer continues, this "type of reconstructive force of the past, besides being 'faithful', also wants to be pretty, dressed in a beauty at times in cosmetic excess of the reality of poverty in the slums where immigrants lived" (Abramo: 2004). Again, these critics acknowledge the ways in which the television mini-series has invoked foreign models to represent Brazilian cultural history. However, they also make it clear that certain boundaries should be kept intact in order to represent the authenticity of that history and the modes of representing it.

The other discursive strand that I identified above, which revives old imperial/colonial, foreign/national, center/margin tensions, also resurfaces here. As a television producer explains, *telenovelas* commonly begin by establishing this kind of tension. "It's clear that if you show Paris, the Eiffel Tower, or whatever other place, Spain, New York, you want it to be differential for Brazilians ... to be able to put them in another environment. We're ... always looking for this appeal. There almost always has to be this appeal ... because the audience is like that." Indeed, the nine-o'clock *telenovela* often begins in a European or American setting, creating an appeal for viewers through its geographical remoteness. *O Primo Basílio* and *Os Maias*, which he also produced, had similar appeal, because "it's the reading of the audience, and it's the market that needs, or that's interested in, filming abroad." "But we also don't have to do to this," he adds, referring to *Dona Flor e Seus Dois Maridos*, a mini-series he also produced set in Salvador, Bahia (interviewed December 5, 2006). Yet *Dona Flor* draws heavily on Afro-Brazilian culture to signify the distinctiveness of Bahian geography, which suggests a different but related practice of establishing that spatial 'differential' in the manner of the *telenovela*, but situating it in the foreignness of Brazilian terrain. This still creates 'another environment', but one in which the appeal of geographical remoteness lies within the borders of Brazil. Additionally, this might begin to suggest why critical response to the mini-series is negative when the techniques and modes of European and American culture industries are prioritized over the authenticity of Brazil's cultural geographies.

The question that arises, then, is how the mini-series can invoke the appeal of the foreign, and at the same time, convey a cultural relevance that does not fall into the 'inauthentic'. One response appears to emerge from mini-series that engage with 'authentic' Brazilian culture and resonate with audiences by drawing on themes of centers and margins *within* Brazil's cultural geography. In these respects, *Memorial de Maria Moura* and *Engraçadinha: Seus Amores e Seus Pecados* (*Engraçadinha: Her Loves and Her Sins*) stand out. These mini-series were adapted from novels by the popular Brazilian writers Rachel de Queiróz and Nelson Rodrigues. They also earned ratings that made them truly popular productions ("Antares Tem Boa..."; Migliaccio: 1995). Both mini-series depict women whose stories of tragedy, shame and grief force them to flee their homes and reinvent themselves in a new environment. The precipitous geographical move the protagonists must make in order to reinvent themselves reflects the theme of becoming Brazilian that we have seen in several other mini-series. In order to convey the authenticity of this experience, a screenwriter of both mini-series relays how he inserted his own feeling of distance from many of Brazil's physical and symbolic cultural spaces. It was therefore his sense of unfamiliarity with the cultural geographies these mini-series depict that allowed him to remain faithful to the protagonists' experience. As he explains, to impart the physical and symbolic dimensions of Brazil's cultural geographies is to recognize the distance and proximity they represent.

As *cearense* is Rachel de Queiróz and as *carioca* is Nelson Rodrigues, the question was, why were *gaúchos* contracted to adapt [the work of] a northerner and a *carioca*, so *carioca*, like Nelson Rodrigues? And the answer is ... 'because [we] are going to have a very critical vision of the work'. [We] weren't interested in fidelity, in that 'stupid fidelity', as Nelson Rodrigues put it ... and the distance helped us. So the fact of not being these great cultural protagonists helped us write good scripts.<sup>13</sup>

The same screenwriter explains the sense of distance within proximity of *Engraçadinha*, or her experience of living in the cultural epicenter of Rio de Janeiro and at the same time, experiencing physical and psychological distance from it: "Rio de Janeiro in the 1950s ... was a marvelous city ... the best city in the world ... To go to Rio de Janeiro is precisely what *Engraçadinha* did to be in that marvelous place." She "had a really difficult, really complicated life", however, "so she couldn't enjoy the city much." Moreover, this creator relates *Engraçadinha*'s experience to that of many Brazilians. "This idea of ... being in the city but being separated from it ... this is an important fact, Brazilian as well. There are millions of people who live in the city ... but they're absolutely beyond the best parts of the city because they live in *favelas* ... So they're at the margins of all the best things the city has [to offer]" (interviewed July 31, 2008). It is not only *Engraçadinha* and *Memorial* that capture the feeling of distance within proximity; to an extent, *Os Maias, A Muralha*,

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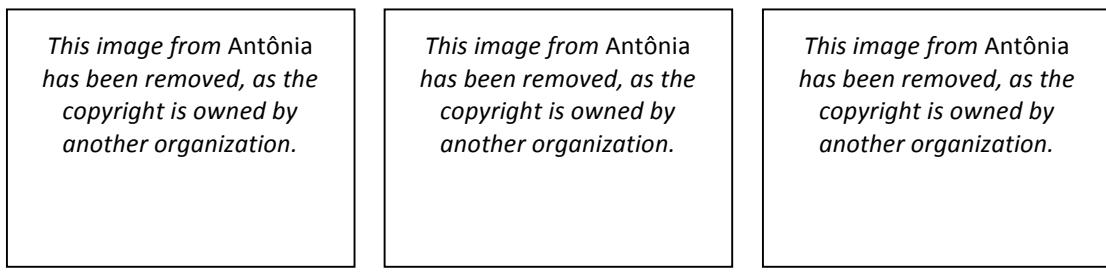
<sup>13</sup> A *cearense* is someone from the northeast state of Ceará; a *carioca*, from the city of Rio de Janeiro; and a *gaúcho*, from Brazil's southern-most state, Rio Grande do Sul.

*Um Só Coração* and *Agosto* do as well. However, it seems that *Engraçadinha* and *Memorial* were particularly forceful in capturing the experience of simultaneously living inside and outside Brazil. I next look at how this has translated into more recent representations of what it means to be Brazilian from the cultural and geographical peripheries of Brazil, as well as the debates this has stirred about bringing the margins of Brazil to its centers.

### 5.2.3 Peripheral Brazil: Bringing the Margins to the Center

A discourse of centers and margins – or rather, the simultaneous distance and proximity of Brazil's cultural geographies – shifts considerably with more recent mini-series, which resume the tradition of realistic depictions of contemporary Brazil perhaps not seen since the 10-o'clock *telenovela* or the Brazilian television series. At the same time, a discourse of more 'authentic' modes of representing Brazil emerges, which conveys the idea that not only is Brazilian television returning to a more faithful set of self-representations but also that Brazil is asserting its own technical and aesthetic 'know-how' by no longer relying on the techniques and traditions of Europe and the US. However, debate is divided over whether a more recent emphasis on peripheral Brazil indeed reflects new narratives and modes of representation or if this is a continued negotiation with the aspects of Brazilian reality that prevent Brazil from achieving modernity.

A critic provides background to these mini-series that resumed the tradition of depicting Brazil realistically: "No one knows exactly when it began, everyone figures at some point during the 90s, but little-by-little the universe of those who are poor and have to kill ten lions a day in order to survive overflowed into the news and occupied other spaces on television. Now, it's public and widely known: the periphery is on the air." Dramatizing the margins of Brazil, the critic adds, goes back to films of the late 1990s and early 2000s such as *Diário de um Detento* (*Diary of a Prisoner*) and *Cidade de Deus*, and the television programs *Brava Gente* (*Brave People*) and *Programa Legal* (*The Cool Show*), which makes it "difficult to be certain who unleashed this phenomenon." The important feature of these dramas, however, is that they "show what is good about the peripheries," and thus "aim to improve the life of their inhabitants" (Fernandes: 2006). This preamble introduces the mini-series *Cidade dos Homens* and *Antônia*. As we saw above, *Cidade dos Homens* contrasts the honesty and integrity of Acerola and Laranjinha with the widespread corruption and violence in their *favela*. *Antônia* is about Barbarah, Preta, Mayah and Lena, young black women from the São Paulo *favela* Vila Brasilândia, who form the hip-hop group 'Antônia' as a way of responding to the sexism, racism and violence around them, while holding down jobs and raising families (see Fig. 5.4).



**Fig. 5.4:** *Antônia*: representing ‘what is good about Brazil’s peripheries’.

Echoing the critic above, a producer of the mini-series says: “The overall objective of the shows is to reveal the good sides of the bad. That there are normal people who work and carry on with normal lives in the *favela*. That the peripheries aren’t all drug dealers.” She also highlights the importance of maintaining the alternative forms of cultural expression that permeate the mini-series, such as *Antônia*’s hip-hop music or the funk performances of *Cidade dos Homens*, in relation to the way that Brazilian television drama has seized on the popularity of the peripheries: “Radio and television have always been at the center. But in the peripheries, there’s a different way of disseminating using the same media. It relies on word of mouth. Productions are independent … communication networks are beyond the mainstream, and Brazilian television is obliged to absorb this.” Furthermore, while these mini-series continue to underscore the fact that “Brazil is countries inside a country”, the central position that Brazil’s peripheries have taken in Brazilian culture “is creating a pattern and becoming an influence within and outside [television]. And *Cidade dos Homens* and *Antônia* are primary examples of this” (interviewed November 16, 2006).

Critics also recognize the way these mini-series insert new narrative and representational modes into the formal and institutional limits of Brazilian television drama. A television critic writes as if covering a crime scene, but in fact describes the backdrop of *Antônia*:

Brasilândia, a periphery of São Paulo’s northern zone, ten in the morning. In this poor neighborhood … considered in 2000 to be one of the city’s homicide champions … traffic is blocked from at least three streets and a petrol station. Police tape and cones close off the area, men redirect traffic and request silence from those trying to get through a swarm of onlookers … Lights, cameras and microphones search for the best position to capture the scene … No, the reason for the crowds isn’t another homicide … rather a TV mini-series that chose Brasilândia as its principal setting.

The critic assumes an even more edifying tone by not only correcting the reader on how to refer to Vila Brasilândia but also by drawing it closer to modern Brazil: “Periphery yes, … *favela* no, as where *Antônia* takes place there are already masonry houses, new cars, cable TV, asphalt and plumbing.” Moreover, “we see a big mixture of social classes here … There’s an integration to the community, children playing in the street, something that

at times recalls [another] city." Thus, "there are grave problems in Vila Brasilândia", but there is "also a beauty, an interactivity to the area ... [and] the scenery is perfect for this ... because the aim is to find beauty where it apparently doesn't exist" (Jimenez: 2006).

Through Brazilian film and television, including the mini-series, the peripheries of Brazil have attained a certain beauty. Similar to criticism of 'realistic' *telenovelas*, however, this beauty does not capture the realities of peripheral Brazil. Other critics are aware of this contradiction. One critic writes, these "musical productions, which appear from the eyes of the center, are too popular to be authentically popular", especially the ways in which they oversimplify the "complex ties between poverty and violence." In turn, this creates a "schizophrenic, bipolar behavior" in which "television creates a visual inclusion ... by using black women from the peripheries to sell cellular telephones." Thus, "television drama comes from behind with programs like ... *Antônia*." However, this critic's most penetrating indictment of the way Brazilian television has absorbed peripheral culture is that "the cultural innovation" it attempts to depict and integrate "isn't coming from the middle class or the rich," but from the "guy who does hip-hop or funk [and] could be killed tomorrow by police ... shooting without knowing whether he's a criminal or not" (Cariello: 2006).

Despite these critiques, which see *Cidade dos Homens* and *Antônia* as romanticizing if not capitalizing on Brazil's peripheries, the mini-series do engage the familiarity of serialized drama with aspects of life that even Brazilian television's tradition of realism has rarely offered. Thus another critic notes, "the qualities as much as the defects vitalize this small radiography of urban war" in *Cidade dos Homens*. So, "for this very reason, the program, besides being good, squeezes the throat." At the same time, however:

The problem is not the display of hyperviolence, but the ethical direction – or could it be the lack of it? Preoccupied with banalizing the armed conflicts devastating Rio, taking focus away from the hail of bullets that serves as a soundtrack to its landscape, *Cidade dos Homens* neglects treating local criminality with necessary seriousness.

The underlying issue, at least for this critic, then, is the ambivalent ethical treatment that these mini-series give the cultural geography of Brazil's urban peripheries. On one hand, "to walk into the scene in which drug traffickers control the community where the protagonists live ... leaves a tone of glamour that contaminates its description, showing bandits as young warriors, powerful, firm and strong." On the other hand, this "painting of the *favelas* ... despite weak colors, does not have the rose-color tint that, from the mid-90s until now, dominated television drama" (Fonesca: 2002).

Brazil's cultural geographies not only have a consistent place in the mini-series, but they also appear to be invoked in a way that consistently conveys the imbalances of Brazilian experience. Perhaps the consistencies and imbalances of the ways in which geography is represented in the mini-series suggest an important contradiction of Brazilian television, which a screenwriter of several mini-series expresses:

Brazil isn't ... images seen from the outside like Carnival, samba and poverty. But then Brazil *is* this ... Unfortunately, television ends up falling into this stereotype and we can't seem to move past this barrier ... It ends up being inevitable, that we're always going to have this ... even in the most careful productions, because the rhythm of television ends up passing over the details. So we always end up like this, living a little bit on top of certain stereotypes we can't ever seem to delve into (interviewed August 4, 2008).

What this screenwriter also suggests, then, is that the consistent/contradictory role that geography assumes in Brazilian television has served to both solidify and gloss over the disparities of Brazilian existence. This is most apparent in the mini-series' contradictory representations of inclusion, in which characters struggle to find a place in Brazil, while Brazil itself experiences events that challenge its ideals of inclusiveness and unity. Thus, modernity also serves a dual role in the mini-series' representations of Brazilian cultural geography. Modernity underpins stories of becoming Brazilian, while Brazil itself seeks a modern national identity. In parallel, modernity is an ideal by which the mini-series has negotiated an aesthetic-technical identity. In its own process of 'becoming', the Brazilian television mini-series has invoked tools and techniques, and perhaps even the personas, of Europe and Hollywood in order to depict Brazil's political and social histories. But this also serves to perpetuate a tension between imitation and originality that extends beyond Brazil to characterize Latin America's negotiations with modernity. In more recent mini-series like *Cidade dos Homens* and *Antônia*, the issue of imitating the modes of Hollywood seems to have disappeared. Indeed, in tandem with films such as *Cidade de Deus* (and the subsequent film versions of both *Cidade dos Homens* and *Antônia*), Brazil has generated an original dramatic form in the mini-series. The issue that emerges from this, however, also has to do with modernity. For as much as these mini-series reflect Brazil's sophisticated means of drama production, they also starkly reveal the ways in which Brazil continues to reckon with modernity from the margins of its geographies.

### 5.3 Gender and Representing Brazilian National Culture

As I illustrate in the following discussion, there are several overlaps between discourses of gender and geography in the mini-series. These overlaps will provide an even closer understanding of the importance of geography and gender to Brazilian national culture. Additionally, I will discuss how geography and gender overlap in representational and

institutional discourses of Brazilian culture: both in terms of what the mini-series depicts of Brazil and in terms of how this has been constructed and critiqued. Despite overlaps, gender is regarded as a construct of identity, as we saw in Chapter 1. My argument here is thus to consider the ways in which gender has significantly contributed to constructs of Brazilian national culture in addition to those of identity. Moreover, as gender is often articulated in terms of difference, as I discussed in Chapter 1, underscored by the gaps between cultural studies and political economy, as we saw in Chapter 3, in this chapter I examine both the subjective and structural dimensions of gender in relation to the mini-series' representations of Brazilian national culture. As in the previous section, then, I will look at the mini-series, creative testimony and critical commentary for the cultural and institutional aspects of representing gender in Brazil.

### **5.3.1 Representations of Gender in Practice**

We also saw in Chapter 3 that fiction genres were historically considered feminine genres because of the absence of men engaged in producing them, or because to consume them meant taking part in 'feminine' activity. This was further underscored by epistemological divides between feminine interests in aesthetics and emotions and masculine concern for philosophy and politics. If we looked at the mini-series in this study in terms of similar divides, we would see their continuation. Many of the mini-series feature women as the central protagonist (and whose names are often the title of the mini-series), but who are mostly fictional characters (with the exception of *Maria Bonita*, the *Marquesa de Santos* and *Chiquinha Gonzaga*). Furthermore, the emotional extremes these characters endure recall the gendered/generic divides of Chapter 3. In contrast, only a few mini-series have titles of men's names, but those that do (such as *JK*) refer to notable figures in Brazilian political history. More important are the number of mini-series that relay some aspect of Brazilian history from the perspective of a male character, whether he is real or fictional (*Agosto*, *Decadência*, *A Muralha*, *Amazônia*, etc). To remain on this divide, however, would be akin to leaving the significance of geography to Brazilian national culture at the basic urban/rural divide. It would also overlook the complex ways in which the fictional and the political intersect in the Brazilian television mini-series. Furthermore, to leave fiction and politics in a polar relationship would prevent us from identifying the role of gender in a politics of practice of creating the Brazilian mini-series.

In the creation of the mini-series of this study, women have been the principal directors, writers and producers of well over half of the productions. Additionally, two women – a screenwriter and a director – have created far more mini-series than any other informant

who I interviewed. This indicates a significant contribution by women to the creation of the Brazilian mini-series as a national-cultural form. According to one of these creators, she started her career outside television, in theatre and cinema. She also began working under men in these fields. Therefore, both factors informed her professional history, but more specifically, they informed her approach to creating the mini-series:

From the beginning of the mini-series ... I was present. I began my career as a director ... at the right place, the right time. It was then, in 1985, that I began working with the great directors of theatre and cinema who were asked to [create] mini-series ... Nelson Rodrigues ... Paulo José ... This work was fundamental to my life. Primarily through these two artistic geniuses in Brazil, I began to gather my own sensibilities ... As a director, I have brought years' of experience to producing mini-series. These years have prepared me for ... a strict relationship between the view of a director and the necessities of creating this product.

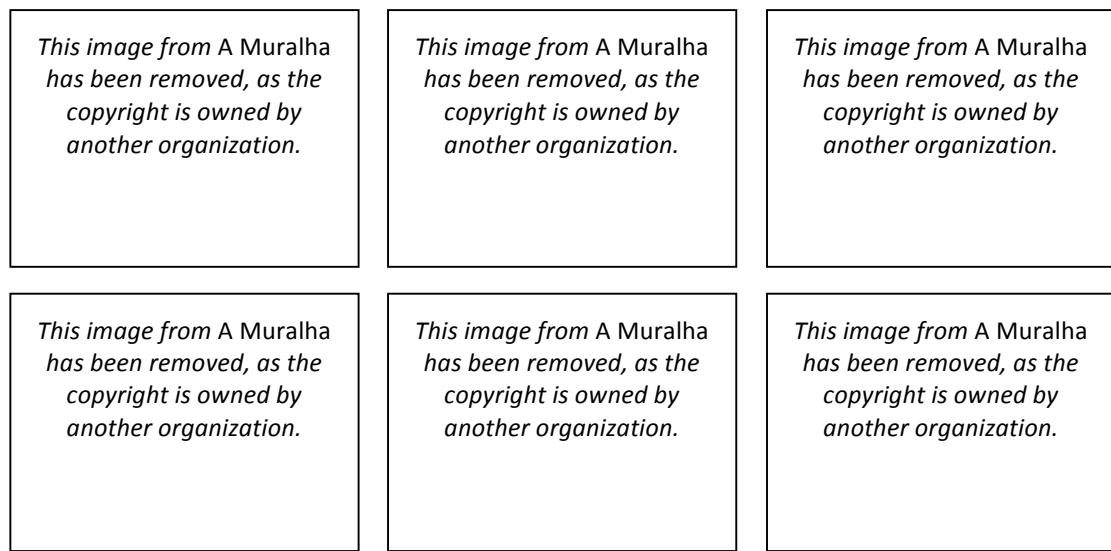
The director's background suggests how gender acted as a historical, and given the era, an unusual entry-point into developing the mini-series genre. Additionally, the mixture of subjective and institutional experience developing the mini-series enabled this director to place her 'trademark' on the genre, which she explains: "Each time I specialized in 'big productions' ... I was able to develop my trademark: by always looking at the program as something new, at its themes, at where it can be emotional and build on the life of the public." It is the life of the public, however, in which this director sees her trademark as resonating in particular. Otherwise, she asks: "How can we talk about 'the heart' to the heart of the public?" And to which she responds, "as a director, I look for and find what is never to be repeated" (interviewed August 20, 2008). From the director's testimony, we can begin to understand the significance of a trademark approach to creating the mini-series genre. A trademark on the genre not only means avoiding creating the same kinds of stories, thus the significance of the 'new' or the unrepeatable text, but a trademark also means *emotionally* engaging the public in the style of mini-series this director has created.

In contrast to a publicly and emotionally identifiable trademark, a prolific screenwriter relays a very different practice. For her, 'mastering' history is not only key to her work on the mini-series, but also to conveying historical *knowledge* to the public through the mini-series. She also provides a professional background that underscores this practice-based difference: "I began working in the publishing industry ... on historical publications, on encyclopedias ... I made a habit of research and took pleasure in research. Obviously, when I work I have other people [helping me], but the main research is done by me ... I *cannot* work if I don't profoundly dominate that theme and historic period, its characters, its people. I *cannot* work" (interviewed August 8, 2008).

In the mini-series themselves, two distinct generic threads illustrate these practice-based approaches. The trademark approach is evidenced by the mini-series *O Tempo e O Vento*, *Engraçadinha* and *Memorial de Maria Moura*, in which emphasis is placed less on the facts or details of their historical settings, and more on emotional qualities that enable making connections with the present. The mastery approach focuses on historical figures, events and details. This abundance of 'veracity' allows seeing the implications of the past for the present, if not making direct connections between aspects of historical and contemporary Brazil. The mini-series *Os Maias*, *JK* and *Um Só Coração* are particularly illustrative of the mastery approach. However, distinctions between the trademark and mastery approach are not always so fixed. There is often overlap between them, which in turn reflects the ways the mini-series draws on other genres and forms. Furthermore, the often indistinct boundaries between trademark and mastery approaches most likely indicate the ways in which the mini-series no longer reflects the same gendered discourse of practice to which these prominent creators' histories speak. Nevertheless, there are continued discourses of gender as an emotional and a historical aspect of representing Brazilian national culture. Next, I examine some of the mini-series I just mentioned, as well as others, to understand the emotional and historical implications of gender for Brazilian national culture.

Trademark and mastery approaches overlap in *A Muralha*, which is indicative of the fact that these prolific creators worked together on this mini-series. The screenwriter recounts how emotion intervened in her aim to recount history, changing the nature of the mini-series: "When I began writing [*A Muralha*] ... the director ... took the very courageous decision to make the mini-series completely without the glamour of history. Of depicting São Paulo as São Paulo really should have been. The muddy streets, people practically without clothes ... [She] opted to make something really poor, really in the way it *should have been*, and it was an extraordinary success" (interviewed August 8, 2008). Indeed, the mini-series imparts the historical and emotional senses of scarcity and vulnerability. The *bandeirantes* are forsaken by the Crown to fight the Indians; the Indians are alternately scared and enraged by the *bandeirantes*. The mini-series opens with *bandeirantes* attacking an Indian village. One of the explorers aims his gun, fires and kills a man. Stunned into submission, the survivors are rounded up and taken away. Another attacker is a woman, Isabel, who makes a striking statement about gender in relation to colonial history. She refutes the docile role associated with women settlers by becoming an antagonist instead (see Fig. 5.5). Isabel complicates this transgression, however, by renouncing to Apingorá, a 'cooperative' Indian, her gender and appealing to the 'savagery' of his 'race': "I didn't want to be a woman. I hate being a woman, Apingorá ... I am not a woman ... I am an

animal." As if confirming the remorse she feels for the barbarousness of her 'race', Isabel adopts a 'native' appearance, moves to the jungle and befriends its animals (see Fig. 5.5).



**Fig. 5.5:** Isabel rejects her gender and 'race'.

*A Muralha* is exceptional for combining trademark and mastery approaches to depict the early colonial history of Brazil. Through Isabel in particular, the mini-series also depicts the ambivalent ways in which gender and 'race' have contributed to the emotional and historical dimensions of Brazil's cultural geographies. Different but similarly ambivalent intersections of 'race' and gender appear in other mini-series' representations of Brazilian history. In *Amazônia*, the *mestiça* Delzuíte believes she has crossed into elite, white society after coupling with Tavinho, the son of Manaus's wealthiest man. Discovering Delzuíte is pregnant, Tavinho rejects her, sending her back to the untamed jungle. Hermelinda, the house slave to Sinhá, the plantation mistress in *Escrava Anastácia*, attempts to ingratiate herself by spying on the other slaves, only to be viciously rebuked and reminded of her 'race'. In *Lampião e Maria Bonita*, the native *sertão* driver for the English geologist Steve Chandler is shot dead by Lampião, the legendary 'social bandit' of the 1920s and 30s in Brazil's northeast, for his "raça de traidor", or 'race of traitor'.

Perhaps because of these ambivalent intersections of gender and 'race', the way the press responded to *A Muralha* is commensurately mixed. In fact, the press is ambivalent about the mini-series' precise mixture of emotion and history in retelling Brazil's early colonial history. According to a critic: "In the end, the very history of Brazil is more romance than testimony." However, he also finds that *A Muralha*, while favoring the romantic, conveys distinct gendered aspects of early Brazilian history, adding: "from the beginning we have the theme of arrival. There is the contrast between expectations upon arrival to the land

and acceptance of an inhospitable reality, expressed by ... Leandra Leal, Cláudia Ohana and Letícia Sabatela. Through them, the biggest theme becomes clear: women who fight to be accepted by those who have learned to always be on the alert" (Costa: 2000). While Isabel (and Maria Moura, who I discuss below) represents a woman who transgresses the racial and gendered boundaries of 'acceptance', this critic expresses the idea that Brazil's cultural foundations were constructed on boundaries of 'race' and gender, and therefore that such boundaries extend well beyond the historical foundations of Brazil.

As evidence, the representation of women's 'fight to be accepted' appears in nineteenth-century Brazil as well. *Marquesa de Santos* and *O Quinto dos Infernos* both tell the story of Brazil's transition from colony to Republic and particularly the role of Domitila de Castro do Canto e Melo, or the Marchioness of Santos, during this period. As Emperor Pedro I's favored mistress, Domitila not only held significant personal but also political influence over Pedro, which is consistently portrayed in both mini-series. However, in *Marquesa de Santos* Domitila alternately invokes cunningness and naïveté to enchant the Emperor and establish her influence, whereas Domitila in *O Quinto dos Infernos* is a volatile, unsound figure, berating or beating Pedro to get her way (see Fig. 5.6). Thus a 'fighting' Domitila, while present in both mini-series, nevertheless reveals different narrative approaches to the way in which she was 'accepted', personally and politically, into royal circles.

Pedro also differs between the mini-series considerably. In both, and apparently 'true' to history, Pedro is characterized by a reckless masculinity, which signifies both his heroism and his sexual prowess. In *Marquesa de Santos*, however, Pedro's impetuousness is a foil for Domitila's wiliness, whereas in *O Quinto dos Infernos*, his prowess is a counterpart to Domitila's madness. In the same way that Domitila smashes objects and hurls abuses, Pedro's half-naked body replaces any real actions or words (see Fig. 5.6). Additionally, Pedro's constant carousing, which includes slave women (see Fig. 5.6), is more an appeal to Brazil's myth of racial harmony than it is a substantiation of the Emperor's infidelity. Pedro of *Marquesa dos Santos* is more of an introspective figure, despite his dalliances. His introspection is revealed through harrowing flashbacks of Queen Carlota, his deranged, abusive mother (see Fig 5.6). Thus, Pedro's insecurity in *Marquesa dos Santos* becomes a metaphor for Brazil's backward self-perception in terms of European social and political ideals, as we saw in Chapter 1. Finally, not only is Pedro the victim of Carlota, a symbol of Portugal, but he is also rejected by several potential partners in Europe before Princess Amélia agrees to marry him. In this sense, Pedro symbolizes Brazil's attempt to supersede the stigma of its backwardness.

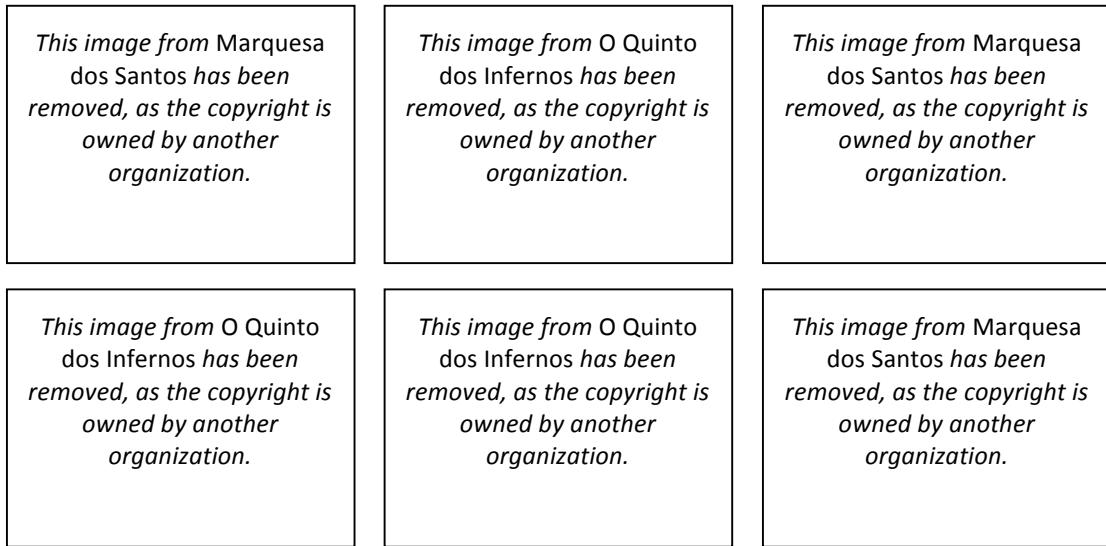


Fig. 5.6: Domitila and Dom Pedro: the difference of gender in practice.

Despite narrative differences, there is consistency to the ways Pedro and Domitila codify gender in retelling Brazilian history. There is consistency to the gendered ambivalence of fictional characters like Isabel as well, as while the mini-series in which they are depicted might emphasize the mastery over the trademark approach to the genre (or vice versa), they ultimately offer an *emotional* entry-point to understanding and interpreting Brazilian history. Therefore, it is the way in which gender overlaps in the capacity of both cultural myth and historical fact that facilitates such interpretation and understanding. However, *Memorial de Maria Moura* also combines the mythical and historical dimensions of gender to create a complex representation of Brazilian culture. The mini-series, adapted from the 1992 novel by Rachel de Queiróz, is fictional, but it brings into question many historical assumptions about the way *sertão* culture has been represented. A screenwriter relays the ability of Maria, like Isabel, to retell and reinterpret the history of Brazil's frontier culture:

The character Maria Moura ... is a huge character because she's identified as a woman who constitutes this country. But then there's the idea that this country was colonized, that it grew thanks to really hard, really difficult work ... always by men ... So Maria Moura is a very serious young woman who is obliged to fight in a male universe and in really drastic situations, and this is the thing that really attracted me ... maintaining this representation of the Brazilian woman in the midst of assuming masculine roles, because she has to assume them.

The significance of Maria's presence in the rugged, masculine culture of the *sertão* is even more important for this screenwriter, as "Maria's story takes place a long way away from the capitals, far away from urban culture." Thus, stories like Maria's "in the nineteenth or even the eighteenth century, these are really important things to be told ... How people who went inland fought huge difficulties, and because they fought the difficulties this country has, perhaps this country is a little better for it now" (interviewed July 31, 2008). I will discuss the mythical and historical implications of this mini-series in the following

section. In contrast, however, I will briefly illustrate the limits of representing Brazilian culture when gender becomes a matter of dramatizing history and therefore neglects the important balance of mythical and emotional appeal.

*Um Só Coração* focuses on Brazil's Modernist movement, which I discussed in Chapters 1 and 2. To give veracity to the movement's story, Oswald de Andrade, Mário de Andrade, Tarsila do Amaral, Anita Malfatti and Menotti del Picchia, among other intellectuals and artists, are some of the mini-series' central characters. Capturing the internal dynamics of the Modernists as well, the mini-series depicts a long and eventually aggrieved relation between Tarsila and Oswald. However, when Oswald is first drawn to Tarsila he reveals his interest in her to Anita. Yet Oswald must compete for the attractive and increasingly successful Tarsila's affections alongside Mário, Menotti and poet Guilherme de Almeida, which vexes Anita. Tarsila becomes aware of Anita's resentment, telling Mário that Anita has long been obsessed with proving which woman is the better painter. Confirming this at an opening, Anita rudely dismisses Tarsila's work as "tropical cubism". Recalling the way critics saw the mini-series' geo-cultural allusions as artificial, didactic or imitative, criticism of the mini-series' historic treatment of gender relations is commensurate. One critic views this as "a negative aspect of the mini-series ... [in which] certain stereotypes are reinforced. Tarsila receives a lot of attention for being rich and beautiful, while Anita feels depreciation and rancor" (Cypriano: 2004). We can therefore conclude that if gender is called upon to represent Brazilian cultural history, then like geography there should be greater complexity to its divides and not simply the reinforcement of them.

### 5.3.2 Representing Gender as History

From a different perspective, however, *Um Só Coração* brings important Brazilian cultural figures to life, even if they are reduced to gendered stereotypes, which is a rare endeavor for Brazilian television drama. Perhaps it is the very necessities of television drama that require a certain gendered essentialization of characters – historical and fictional – which a prolific director views as part of her job: "I search to create characters as archetypes. And all of them evince strong female characters I look at as myths: archetypes you would speak of as Brazilian ... blacks, Indians, mothers, daughters, lovers. I search to give them the archetypal character of our Brazilian soul" (interviewed August 20, 2008). Given the inflection of gendered archetypes on Brazilian national culture, a question still persists of what differentiates gender as myth from gender as history, or if a differentiation should be made when the fictional and the political cross to the extent they do in the mini-series.

Nevertheless, I next examine the ways in which gender is invoked in the Brazilian mini-series to define and complicate the boundaries of myth and history.

Above, I mentioned that the emotional extremes which mini-series' female protagonists experience recall antiquated gendered/generic divides between the 'sentimental' and the 'rational'. Among the extremes of emotion, suffering is prevalent. Although we should consider suffering both a consistent feature of drama and a cultural feature of a nation in which Catholicism predominates, in the mini-series suffering is tightly interwoven with depicting the 'facts' of Brazilian history. Again, *A Muralha* is a key text in terms of both the mythical and historical contexts it gives to the suffering of its female characters. In doing so, however, *A Muralha* invokes other mini-series, which suggests that suffering is an intertextual part of gendered constructs of national culture. Muatira, Ana and Isabel represent different histories of suffering. Muatira is an Indian princess enslaved by the *bandeirantes* and subjected to colony leader Gerônimo's perversions (see Fig. 5.7). Ana, a Portuguese Jew, is forced to convert to Christianity and marry Gerônimo, as he is having her father tortured in the Inquisition (see Fig. 5.7). Isabel, as we have seen, tries to reject the European world. However, she is spurned by the Indians for betraying them, has a baby by Tiago, unknowingly her brother, and in desperation, nearly drowns herself and her baby (see Fig. 5.7). If we place *A Muralha*'s characters alongside those of *O Tempo e O Vento*, *Escrava Anastácia*, *Tereza Batista*, *Memorial de Maria Moura*, *Engraçadinha*, *Presença de Anita*, *Antônia* and other mini-series, this creates a meta-narrative of suffering, not only of women, but of the Brazilian nation. Beneath the characters, this narrative suggests that Brazil is victim to abuse in historic formation, from colonization to post-democratization. We might ask, however, why this meta-narrative of suffering is represented by women, while men tame uncharted lands, confront hostile natives and fight corrupt regimes?



Fig. 5.7: The intertextual faces of suffering (*A Muralha*).

Television critics are aware of this pattern. A critic writes about Ana: "She comes across as the victim of a pattern inflicted by her characters. No one can take her face of suffering any longer, already seen in other stories." He contradicts himself, however, by criticizing the actor who plays Isabel as "subdued in the direction of the first episode ... without the

dramatic force the moment demanded. If she's as calm in the rest of the series, she'll kill off the image of Engraçadinha" whose own narrative is "embedded in the unconscious of the television viewer" (Barros Pinto: 2000). Suffering, then, is embodied by the characters and the actors. Thus, the way in which suffering is not only synchronically represented in individual mini-series but also diachronically present across the genre suggests a relation between the subjective experience of Brazilian women and the structural forces that have shaped Brazilian history. Given critics' awareness of this relation, as well as the role the press appears to consciously take in mediating these relations, the satirical tone another critic adopts regarding Isabel's rejection of gender and 'race' comes as no surprise: "She does not want to be a woman in this savage country. She paints her face and says she is not a woman. She is a wildcat. Soon, she will be praised for being the best and bravest soldier in the vicinity" (Martino: 2000). However, more than satirizing Isabel's suffering in this scene, the critic is challenging the 'credibility' of the way suffering is historically contextualized in the mini-series. Despite the derisive tone, this is an incisive critique of the credible conjunction of gender and myth in representing Brazilian cultural history.

If this discourse does not exactly correspond with, then it certainly compares to, the ways in which the *malandro* represents the conjunction of gender and myth in Brazilian cultural history. Recalling the continuous presence of the *malandro* in Brazilian culture, from early literary characters to the lyrics of samba music to the realistic *telenovelas* of the 1960s, we can consistently situate him at the intersections of 'race', geography and popular culture in Brazil. Similar to the iconic sufferer, then, the *malandro* reappears in different guises and throughout a cultural chronology of Brazil. As the Brazilian mini-series constructs its own chronology, we find *malandro*-like figures anywhere from the foundational myths of Brazil to the history of its liberation to the peripheries of contemporary Rio or São Paulo. In all of these situations, whether real or fictional, the *malandro* represents the avoidance of social norms and the pursuit of immediate pleasure and reward. However, despite the consistency of the *malandro* in Brazilian popular culture and in the mini-series, it is worth looking at the ways his translatability brings into question the conjunction of gender and myth in representing Brazilian cultural history.

The *malandro* largely populates the novels of Jorge Amado, which are set in and around Salvador, Bahia, invoking the strong Afro-Brazilian culture of the region, and which have been adapted to mini-series more than those of any other Brazilian writer. Of the sample of this study, *Capitães da Areia*, *Tereza Batista*, *Dona Flor e Seus Dois Maridos* and *Pastores da Noite* are all Amado adaptations, but *Dona Flor* best captures the *malandro*'s iconicity. In *Dona Flor*, Flor's husband Vadinho is the quintessential *malandro*. He does nothing but

steal Flor's wages to drink *cachaça*, dance samba, sleep with other women and gamble. It is no surprise, then, when Vadinho drops dead during *carnaval*. Although he was a lousy husband, Flor misses Vadinho deeply. What she misses most, despite his licentiousness, is Vadinho's sexual prowess. Thus, when the ghost of Vadinho returns to Flor after she has married Teodoro, her dull but attentive second husband, Flor cannot help but relent to sexual indulgence. Aggravating this, Vadinho continues to return to Flor nude. Torn between Teodoro's ordered predictability and Vadinho's disordered seductiveness, Flor finds a moral-sensual balance between them. In a symbolic ending, Flor strolls down the street, arm-in-arm with the impeccable Teodoro and irresistible Vadinho (see Fig. 5.8).

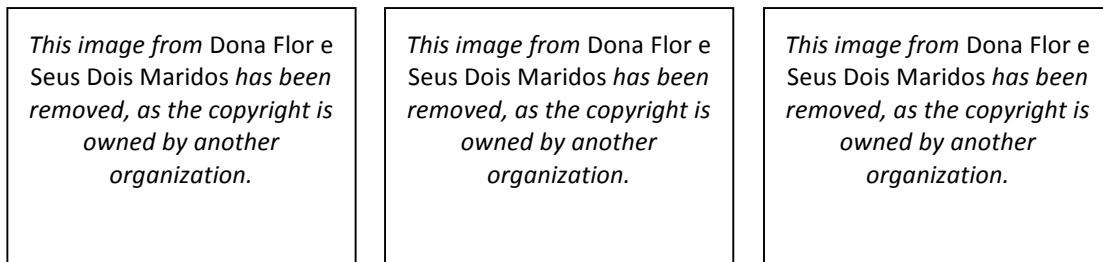


Fig. 5.8: Flor's dilemma: order or *malandragem*.

Vadinho's selfishness and trickery, but also his allure and congeniality, are the very traits that embody *malandragem*. However, if we remove the *malandro* from his literary, ethnic and geographical origins, we find him throughout Brazilian history. Seemingly closer to the rogue of English literature, such as Wickham in *Pride and Prejudice*, the intellect and connections to European artistic circles of Oswald de Andrade place him at length from the streets, bars and gambling houses of Salvador, where Vadinho perpetually circulated. But in *Um Só Coração*, Oswald leaves behind a series of broken hearts and illegitimate children, abandoning Tarsila for the journalist Patrícia Galvão, for instance. As a joke, he also publicly ridicules Mário de Andrade for his 'femininity', which results in a rift left unresolved between the two writers until Mário's death. Despite the complete change in environment, Oswald's willingness to sacrifice others for his benefit is no different from the quintessential *malandro*, Vadinho.

A screenwriter of *Um Só Coração* was aware of these kinds of connections when shaping the character of Oswald. Although their paths do not cross in the mini-series, she felt that Oswald would sharply contrast the arts patron Yolanda Penteado, "an extremely jovial, extremely kind, extremely democratic person [who] had something very Brazilian about her." And although their paths do obviously cross, she felt that Oswald would contrast the kindly "Mário de Andrade [who] was very Brazilian as well." However, Oswald, too,

embodies “something very Brazilian”. In fact, according to this screenwriter, “Oswald de Andrade is also very Brazilian”, which in particular

includes his disloyalties, his sacrifice of a friendship because of a good joke ... There is an expression in English or something similar that people say, ‘a friendship is worth far more than a joke’ ... In Brazil we say, ‘Oswald lost a friend, but not the joke’. Oswald de Andrade, he could lose a friend, but he couldn’t lose the joke, or rather he sacrificed a friend because of a joke.<sup>14</sup>

In further defining the characteristics of *malandragem*, the screenwriter adds: “Oswald de Andrade was a very important Modernist writer [but] he had a bit of this curse. He was very Brazilian in this respect. He was ... extremely affable. But at the same time, he was frivolous ... I adore Oswald, but he had ... this kind of Brazilian humanity. We’ll put it like that” (interviewed August 8, 2008).

Given the gendered archetypes of sufferer and *malandro* in Brazilian culture and the ways in which the mini-series substantiates their presence across time and space, it is revealing to see how these archetypes converge mythically and historically in Maria of *Memorial de Maria Moura*. Maria’s childhood is idyllic. But her father is brutally murdered and the culprit is never caught. Her mother then marries Liberato, a man who Maria instinctively distrusts. Maria implores her mother to leave Liberato, but it comes too late: Maria finds her mother’s body hanging, an apparent suicide, but Maria knows the truth. Now bereft of both parents, Maria is defenseless against Liberato’s repeated sexual abuse. However, Maria’s compounded suffering ignites in her a quest for vengeance, which she begins by killing Liberato. With nothing left of her home but sorrow, Maria departs to find Serra do Padre, her family’s land, and the reason Maria now knows for her parents’ deaths. But Maria’s quest for vengeance does not stop with Liberato; it will continue by dispatching anyone who crosses her. Furthermore, no one will stop Maria’s rightful claim to her land.

In *Memorial*, Maria, Firma and Eufrásia are the most prominent, among very few, female characters. Maria initially represents virtue (see Fig. 5.9), especially given the violent and unjust events that later score her life. Firma and Eufrásia, on the other hand, consistently signify pure malice (see Fig 5.8), conspiring to take Serra do Padre away from Maria. In tandem, Maria, Firma and Eufrásia represent self-sacrifice and self-reward, qualities that underscore the deprivation associated with the desolate, hostile *sertão*, but challenge the ways in which this terrain has been mythically constructed by the presence of men. It is particularly symbolic, then, when Firma and Eufrásia clash with Maria in an unexpected agreement of motives and goals. Maria casts aside her old, self-sacrificing being as she,

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<sup>14</sup> Most likely, the expression the screenwriter was looking for is a “friendship ... Is worth far more than gold” by the American writer Helen Steiner Rice.

too, unequivocally pursues revenge and reward. Thus, Maria leaves behind the sufferer, transforming herself into the self-serving vigilante willing to do anything to protect her land, and willing to do anything to those who get in her way. A screenwriter sees this as one of the most important aspects of the mini-series, Maria's transformation in the face of the gendered and geographical codes that defined her:

There is no way you could adapt 'Maria Moura' without keeping the ... basis of the entire plot. I had to be faithful to that essence of the story: a young woman who all of a sudden is alone in a male world and ... is obliged to turn herself into a man ... That you obviously can't change because in changing it you would obviously have nothing (interviewed July 31, 2008).

In addition to the way it challenges the gendered myths of the *sertão*, *Memorial* is also an important mini-series for translating Brazilian popular culture into successful television. For some critics, then, the combination of challenging Brazil's cultural archetypes and its standards of television was the biggest draw of the mini-series (Martinho: 1994). Another critic enthusiastically describes Maria as a "macho-woman", "Brazilian anti-heroine" and "woman warrior", contrasting her with the male heroes of other mini-series. Moreover, he poses *Memorial* against imported television series, enlivening the original/imitative and foreign/national tensions, in which the original and the national prevail: "the smell of gunpowder and blood surround the 10:30 slot on TV Globo. And believe it, this is not coming from American series, but from 'Memorial de Maria Moura' ... The plot reveals an authentic backwoods Western [in which] Glória Pires embodies ... a woman warrior confronting the machismo of patriarchal society during Brazil's imperial period." But he does not leave these comparisons at the institutional level, invoking as well foreign and Brazilian historical figures that inspired Maria's character:

Maria Moura ... is inspired by the life of two women. One of them, Elizabeth I, ruled over England from 1558 to 1603. The other is the *pernambucana* Maria de Oliveira, the first female bandit of the seventeenth-century Brazilian northeast ... [Maria] loses her parents, is raped by her stepfather, persecuted by her cousins and organizes a band of outlaws ... But she is a macho-woman only in political relations with men. She never ceases to be feminine in essence, including able to fall in love (de Souza: 1994).<sup>15</sup>

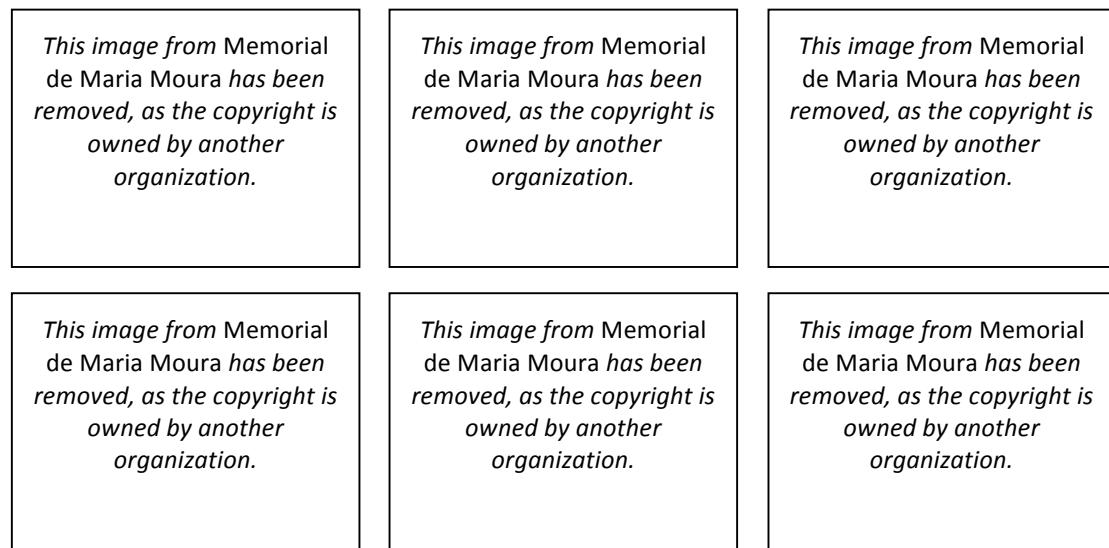
However, this critic also points to a discourse suggesting that Maria, in her gendered and moral transgressiveness, strays far enough from the ascribed boundaries of culture that it is necessary to invoke her 'feminine essence', including 'able to fall in love', to reestablish the boundaries of that cultural space. Similarly, in a scene representing Maria's physical, not just moral, transgression, there were also boundaries guiding the extent to which this

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<sup>15</sup> A *pernambucana* is woman from Pernambuco, a state in Brazil's northeast. Although I could not find any information on a 'seventeenth-century' bandit named Maria de Oliveira, the journalist undoubtedly also refers to Maria Gomes de Oliveira, or Maria Bonita, partner of the legendary social bandit Lampião of the early twentieth century in Brazil's *sertão*.

could be depicted. This has implications for whether Maria conveys a counter-narrative of the gendered and geographical limits of Brazilian cultural history or reconfirms them.

En route to Serra do Padre, Maria and a group of ragged men she has recruited along the way stop to rest around a campfire. Maria produces a carved replica of their destination, a gift from her father before he was killed (see Fig. 5.9). However, Maria does not fully trust her companions, asking each for his allegiance to her. Finding unanimous support, Maria assures them that they too will have a new home. She warns them, however: "You have to obey me with eyes shut. You have to forget I'm a woman. Those who do not obey me will pay dearly." Maria removes the cloth covering the replica and wraps it around her head, physically transforming herself from woman into man. Rising from the ground and with the campfire flaring up before her, Maria proclaims: "Gone is that little woman! Before you is Maria Moura, ruler of all here!" (See Fig. 5.8).



**Fig. 5.9:** From suffering to self-serving.

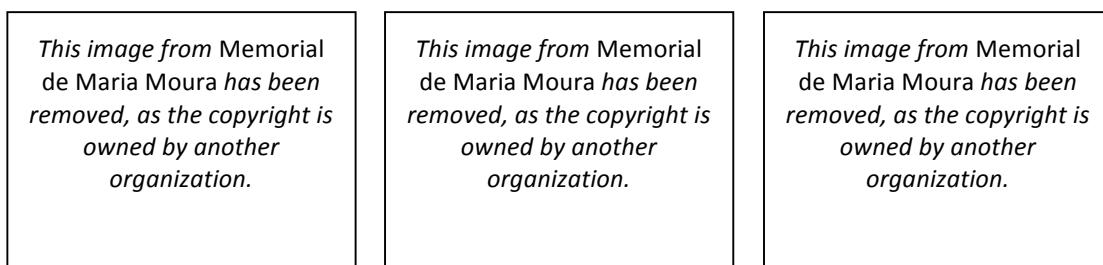
According to a screenwriter, in the novel Maria does not conceal her hair but physically cuts it off. In the mini-series, however, both Globo and actor Glória Pires refused this, so the covering was improvised. While these details seem trivial, their significance is larger. They mitigate the source of Maria's transformation: the violence at the hands of men to which she was subjected as a young woman, mirrored in the violence of cutting her hair. Moreover, they dilute the act of rewriting vengeance as a masculine pursuit into Maria's personal quest. The screenwriter recognizes this, recounting what was intended instead:

This was a fundamental scene in the book ... a scene we thought fundamental to the mini-series too, because it was a moment of complete masculinization of the character, where she decided to assume that desire for vengeance of hers, until the very end. It

was a ritualistic scene as well: [Maria] with her men, under a tree, cutting off her hair (interviewed August 4, 2008).

Another television critic appears to agree with the screenwriter, noting that “contrary to what usually happens in adaptations for TV”, there is no need to become “lost in density or ambiguity.” It is not enough that “Maria Moura doesn’t appear as an absolute victim in a world of men”, and therefore that she is “automatically assimilated by the viewer as an incontestable heroine.” Rather, it is the gravity of Maria’s violent background and her crusade for retribution that speak for themselves, without the need for dilution. For this critic, then, the potency of “the scenes in which Maria must submit to … her stepfather” is because they “are accompanied by a silence”. Thus, not only the characters but also the audience “can interpret this as ‘those who say nothing consent’.” Finally, the potency of Maria’s suffering “is what cannot take away the legitimacy of hate that the character will dedicate” to her life-long quest for vengeance (Scalzo: 1994).

Ultimately, it seems that critics are divided over whether Maria’s transformation and her own subsequent acts of violence symbolize a mode of addressing or instead perpetuating Brazil’s culture of violence. This is further problematized by Maria’s masculinized being, in which she is subjected to male dominance just as she was before her transformation. Having found Serra do Padre and built Bom Jesus das Almas, her impenetrable fortress, Maria has a haven from which she can finally eliminate her rivals. However, Maria must confront a final, undying hurdle: sexual desire, which unexpectedly presents itself in the character Cirino. Cirino not only saves Maria during battle, undermining her power, but he also becomes Maria’s lover, depleting her vengeful determination. After making love with Cirino<sup>16</sup>, Maria leaves the bed and goes to the mirror, where she removes her male-guise, allowing her hair to tumble down. Returning to Cirino, she folds herself into his embrace. Maria is not only woman again; she is a woman in love (see Fig. 5.10).



**Fig. 5.10:** Maria: woman again, and woman in love.

<sup>16</sup> In the novel, Maria and Cirino first have anal sex, further blurring their gendered-sexual boundaries. According to the screenwriter, the actor and network vetoed even passing reference to this.

Maria's reversion to woman and her subsequent cessation of power is precisely what irks some critics. Their reactions reflect dissatisfaction not only with a change in the narrative but also with the uniqueness of the genre: "It is this climate of clay pots, campfires, crude burials, bazaars in public squares and sleeping in hammocks that compose the picture of brutality and violence that characterize Maria Moura's world: sin, incest, rape, torture, murder, theft, death." However, "'Memorial de Maria Moura' loses force when romance is introduced, emphasizing the melodramatic nexus that ... characterizes the second half of this epic about the *sertão* of imperial Brazil" (Hamburger: 1994). For another critic, "the saga of Maria Moura does not manage to captivate", despite the "exemplary characters". Given the preceding tone and events of the mini-series, it becomes "difficult to watch a love scene almost filled with the protagonist undressing", which "ends up compromising the closeness to the [original] work" (Barros Pinto: 1994). Perhaps the most salient point on the closure of Maria's appropriated power, and thus on the closure of transgressing the geographical/gendered boundaries of Brazilian cultural history which Maria represents, comes from the mini-series' screenwriter, who reflects on *Memorial's* ending:

The heroine dies in the end, but our heroine was ambiguous. She wasn't like a good girl, in that good sense. She was ... a vengeful character. In her entire trajectory ... she wanted vengeance for what had happened to her in childhood ... for everything that permeated her history ... So at the same time, her death is a species of condemnation. Just like that (interviewed August 4, 2008).

Transgressing the boundaries of gender and geography, representing not a suffering but a self-serving mode of being, therefore dies along with Maria. But while Maria's fate may indeed serve as a 'species of condemnation' of such transgressions, it does not necessarily curtail the rewriting of Brazilian national culture by hybridizing history and myth, which both the narratives and the form of the Brazilian television mini-series can represent.

#### 5.4 Conclusion

I return to the questions I asked at the beginning of the chapter and to the first: how does the mini-series represent Brazilian national culture, and how do its representations relate to discourses of culture around the mini-series. Two unmistakable constructs of national culture appear in the mini-series: geography and gender. As opposed to discrete modes of representation, however, geography and gender are often simultaneously invoked to represent Brazil's cultural histories. If we do consider a distinct discourse of geography in the mini-series, however, I found that it is articulated in two ways. One way invokes the temporal/spatial distance of European history and geography in order to represent issues that continue to have resonance in contemporary Brazil. The tension of centers and margins, for instance, which existed between European intellectual/literary perspectives

of Brazil and views from within Brazil as a colony or new nation, is revitalized in a few mini-series. There is a difference, however, between the way some mini-series call upon these tensions to reveal internal issues of centers and margins, such as what it means to be foreign as a Brazilian, or to exist in the *favelas* of Rio and São Paulo, and the way other mini-series invoke the myth of racial harmony by romanticizing that moment of contact between the European and the Brazilian other. Despite the differences in these modes of representations, they both suggest the notion of 'ingesting' the foreign in the process of 'becoming Brazilian', which is an idea we have seen throughout Brazil's cultural history.

Another discursive thread of geography is articulated through the dialectics of imitation and originality, which we have also seen recur throughout Brazilian cultural history. This tension is not unrelated to a discourse of becoming Brazilian by ingesting (or in the case of Brazil's urban peripheries, centralizing) the foreign, but it is more concerned with the institutional modes and mechanisms of producing the mini-series. Thus, I found that in implicit and explicit respects, there are references to the institutional modes of Europe or the US for the ways in which mini-series characters are inspired, production techniques are mirrored, or indeed, the genre itself assumes more imitative than original qualities. The geographical implications of the original/imitative therefore lie in the way it invokes historical tensions between the foreign/national and empire/colony. It is the intersection of these tensions that also prompts television critics to examine the mini-series' authentic modes of not just producing but also representing Brazil's cultural history. What all these tensions point to, both those which problematize being Brazilian and those that question the authenticity of Brazilian culture, is the continued negotiation of the role of modernity. For the idea of an inclusive, modern Brazilian culture is not only a steady theme in mini-series' narratives, but the mini-series itself has developed into a form reflecting Brazil's most sophisticated culture-producing capabilities. As we have seen, however, in its most unique and inventive modes, the mini-series reveals Brazil's most glaring disparities.

Gender is also a recognizable discourse in the mini-series' constructs of Brazilian national culture. As a practice-based discourse, gender has informed two approaches to creating and developing the mini-series genre: trademark and mastery. The trademark approach is one that relies on the idea of an unrepeatable story in tandem with emotional elements with which the viewing public can clearly identify. The mastery approach is pedagogical in nature, incorporating and conveying a deep knowledge of the key figures and events of Brazilian history. Both approaches stem from prolific women creators whose influence over the genre continues, even if constraints on women's entry into television production have diminished since the start of these creators' careers. Their approaches and influence

nevertheless inform the emotional and factual dimensions of the genre. Although 'facts' may be emphasized in some more than other productions, the mini-series that achieve a mythical/historical balance are those that seem to have the greatest narrative resonance among creators and television critics.

This led me to identify two, key gendered archetypes in the mini-series' representations of Brazilian national culture, the sufferer and the *malandro*. These figures are significant not only for their paradigmatic presence in certain mini-series, but also for syntagmatic continuity across the genre, to the extent that characters and actors are interchangeable in the case of the sufferer. What I argued that the sufferer signifies, however, is not only the individual in her specific time and place but also Brazil throughout a score of repressive histories, from colonization to re-democratization. While the *malandro* is also iconic, his ability to navigate between different milieux to achieve a 'status of ethos' differs from the consistency of the contexts in which the European rogue operates. Thus, we can relocate the *malandro* from his geo-ethnic and literary 'origins' to identifiable figures in Brazilian political and cultural history, in which his own deceptive and alluring qualities continue to resonate. I also found that it is possible to identify the point at which these gendered archetypes cross, however, particularly in the character Maria Moura. Maria suffers to an extreme extent, the consequences of which are a desire for vengeance that exceeds even the most self-serving dimensions of *malandragem*. The importance of Maria's character is not only that she overturns a culture of female vulnerability but also that her story takes place in the *sertão*, challenging the mythical and historical constructs of that terrain. The transgressive path that Maria takes morally and physically is brought to an abrupt close, however, which led me to ask to what extent the limits of geography and gender can be transcended in Brazilian national culture, even if the mini-series makes this a possibility.

In many ways, the above conclusions anticipate the second and third questions I posed initially. The second question was, how is Brazilian national culture constructed through discourses of practice and history in the mini-series, and to what extent do they overlap or compete with critical and creative perspectives. As I found, one approach to creating the mini-series is motivated by the idea of the unrepeatable text. This brings to mind the ritual, ideological and aesthetic conceptualizations of genre, as well as the orientations, expectations and conventions that circulate between creators, audiences and industries to shape a genre, both of which I discussed in Chapter 3. However, the unrepeatable text in tandem with subjective/structural exchanges that 'govern' a genre, appear incompatible. It may be this incompatibility that in fact blurs the trademark and mastery approaches to the Brazilian mini-series. For within these governing systems, even if self-imposed, there

is still a desire to capture something unique, each time, about Brazilian cultural history. It is also this incompatibility that might discern attitudes and references toward Europe in certain mini-series and in creators' discourse from a discourse, particularly coming from critics, which seeks an authentic Brazilian mini-series, both in terms of what it represents and the ways in which it is made. Finally, the mini-series *Antônia* and *Cidade dos Homens* represent a discourse of history emerging from 'the most unpromising places'. This is not divorced from a discourse of practice, however, which looks to disrupt the retrospective, epic narratives of a previous style of mini-series creation. But again, television critics ask to what extent these mini-series offer a counter-narrative of Brazilian national culture, or if they represent the tendency, as we have seen throughout Brazilian cultural history, to ingest Brazil's margins into its centers.

My last question was, how do discourses of practice and history in the mini-series reflect continuity and change in representations of Brazilian national culture, and how do they reflect issues facing contemporary Brazil. I have found continuity to engaging geography and gender in the representation of Brazilian national culture. There is also a continuous tension between centers and margins. Perhaps the way in which this discourse of centers and margins has changed, however, is that more recent mini-series look even *further* back to Brazil's foundational myths and histories in order to interpret contemporary existence. Relatedly, there is also a consistent narrative of the desire to belong to a place, and thus continuity to struggles of 'being' or 'becoming' Brazilian. If there is any visible change in this meta-narrative, it has been the mini-series' tendency to increasingly turn inwards in order to represent issues of inclusion, belonging or unity within Brazil. This tendency to look inward does not displace the mythical and historical resonance of 'discovery' and immigration narratives, however. In fact, as we will see in the following chapters, these are narratives that inform decidedly political representations of exile to and from Brazil. In terms of gender, we have seen continuity to the archetypes of sufferer and *malandro*. I have also interpreted the role of the sufferer as consistent in the way she symbolizes the historical and political sufferings of the Brazilian nation. The sufferer is not an archetype I see as having changed in the mini-series' representations of Brazilian national culture, just as the *malandro* reappears in time and space, always embodying a mix of seduction and self-interest. Perhaps, however, it is the continuity of these figures that should bring us to ask why there is *not* greater change in gendered roles in representations of Brazilian national culture, and whether a form like the mini-series compounds or offers a means to challenge what they represent.

## 6 From Politics to the Domestic: Authority, Resistance and the Representation of Brazilian National Values

### 6.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, I identified some of the ways that geography and gender form a discourse of Brazilian national culture in the Brazilian television mini-series by invoking and challenging myth and history. Similarly, in this chapter I look at the ways politics, class, family and morals form frameworks of authority and resistance in the mini-series' representation of Brazilian national values. While authority and resistance are significant modes of representing Brazilian values, in the mini-series they are depicted as broadly as changes in national politics and as intimately as domestic conflicts. Therefore, I connect this wide range of depictions in the mini-series with statements from creators and critics, which narrows the overall field of national values to specific institutional, civic, moral and aesthetic values important to Brazil. In this process, we will see the relation between authority and resistance in the programs reflected in the discourse of creators and critics of the mini-series. However, we will also see values emerge between these oppositional relations, or values expressed as relative to forms of authority and resistance in Brazil.

As before, I ask questions that will guide this chapter. I pose them based on the ways I discussed values in Chapter 1, and using important ideas from Chapters 2 and 3. Thus, these are questions underpinned by *difference* in values, whether at the sociocultural level or between texts and genres, but that ask about the ways values are expressed in relation to positions of difference. First, how are values represented in the Brazilian mini-series, and how can we understand their representation as Brazilian values? Second, how do the way values are represented in the mini-series reflect the cultural, political and historical formation of Brazilian values? Third, can we understand the mini-series' representations of values as 'basic dilemmas', or do they reflect a shifting landscape of national values? Finally, what role does the other play in the representation of national values in the mini-series, and especially, how does the *Brazilian other* manifest in relation to the way politics, class, family and morals are depicted in the mini-series? Anticipating answers to these questions, I argue that there is a continuous dialectic between authority and resistance in the political, class, family and moral frameworks of Brazil, which in turn informs the way authority and resistance define Brazilian national values. However, I will also argue that subtle change on institutional, political, historical and social levels, at least over the time period represented by my sample of mini-series, has altered values attached to politics, class, family and morals, even if a dialectic of authority and resistance persists in Brazil.

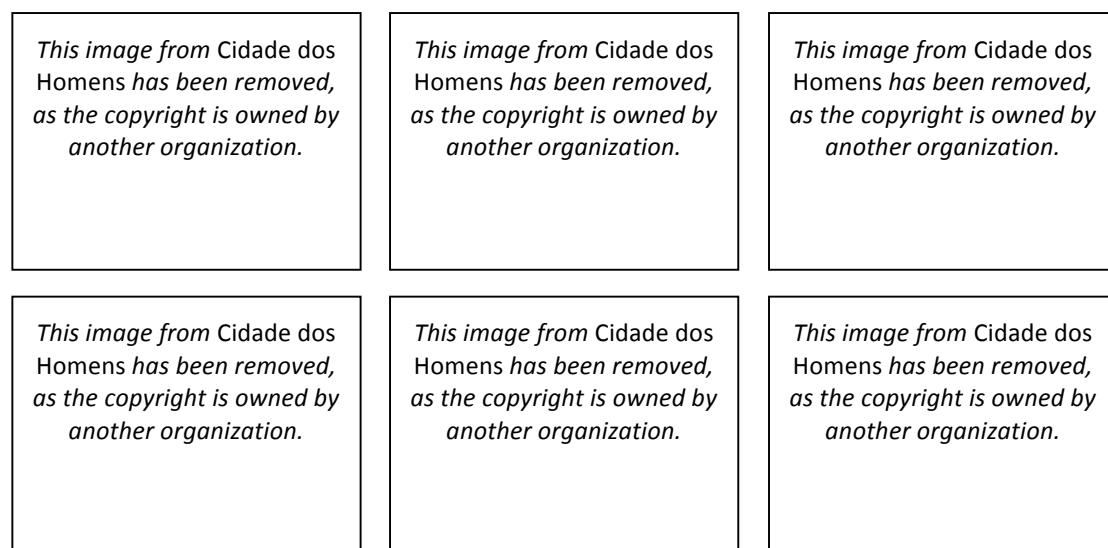
## 6.2 Authority and Resistance: Institutions, Politics and Experience

Figures and symbols of authority are central to the Brazilian mini-series' narratives. This is most likely no different from other types of television drama, where power relations drive plots and frame character exchanges. Similar to geography and gender, however, the way authority is expressed in the mini-series is often particular to Brazil, drawing on Brazilian history, myth and their points of intersection. As we also saw of geography and gender, representations of authority have implications beyond Brazil, such as Europe's regard for colonial Brazil, or more recent relations of 'dependency' between the US and Brazil. Despite the gamut of representations of authority in the mini-series, which span from historical to contemporary experience, they can be synthesized into the symbols of bullets, blessings and battles, or the continuity of civic, religious and political conflict in Brazil. While authority consistently appears in the mini-series, so do forms of resistance: the figures and symbols that circumvent, negotiate or oppose authority in both historical and everyday modes of experience. Next, I discuss some of the ways in which authority and resistance are represented in the Brazilian mini-series before I introduce creative and critical perspectives to this dialectical exchange.

### 6.2.1 Bullets, Blessings and Battles: Authority and Resistance in Everyday and Historical Representations of Brazilian Experience

An important feature of *Cidade dos Homens* is that in the style of a television series, each episode presents a conflict that ends in resolution. However, in the mode of a continuous serial, there is prolonged, if unattainable, resolution to the central conflicts that Acerola and Laranjinha face, such as corruption, violence and racism. In the mini-series episode "Correio" ("Mail"), a mail carrier arrives at Acerola and Laranjinha's *favela*, where chaos ensues: mail is missing, misaddressed or returned. The residents berate the carrier, who gives up the route (see Fig. 6.1), and decide someone who knows the *favela* needs to take up the mail delivery. Acerola and Laranjinha are elected. For pay, they collect the mail at the base of the *favela* and distribute it in their area, at the top (see Fig. 6.1). However, the local drug lord looks to capitalize on this arrangement. Forcing Acerola and Laranjinha to the ground at gunpoint, his henchmen take their money. The drug lord demands that the friends map the *favela*, post street signs and house numbers, and deliver mail only to residents who pay him (see Fig. 6.1). Adapting to these events, the residents want extra services from Acerola and Laranjinha for pay, such as naming streets after them (see Fig. 6.1). The drug lord discovers this and retaliates, assailing Acerola and Laranjinha again.

Angry residents also confront the pair, demanding money back for services not rendered. With tensions at their highest, 'official' authority intervenes: police raid the *favela*, taking Acerola and Laranjinha's map *and* the disputed money, which they pocket. The residents, weary of drug dealers and the police, confront both. They shift the street signs and house numbers around to confuse the police, who raid the *favela* again with a now-erroneous map (see Fig. 6.1). They also corner the drug dealer who, intimidated by their numbers, gives in to the police. Yet despite this resolution, new drug dealers quickly take his place. Thus, although order is restored, we know that the abuses of authority we have just seen will continue. But we know resistance to them will also persist.



**Fig. 6.1:** Figures and modes of authority and resistance in the *favela*.

Official and unofficial modes of authority are not limited to depictions of contemporary Brazil, nor are mobilizations of popular resistance to authority. Returning to the world of Jorge Amado, we find similar representations in the adaptation of *Pastores da Noite*. In the mini-series episode "O Cumpadre de Ogum" ("Ogum's Co-fatherhood"), Massu is at the local bar with friends. He is surprised by the appearance of a woman from the orphanage who has an infant with her she claims is Massu's son. More surprising for Massu, who is black, is that the baby is white (see Fig. 6.2). Yet Massu's attempt to deny his parentage is drowned out by his friends, who immediately compete to be the baby's godfather. Massu goes to the Catholic parish to register the baby for baptism. But when asked by the priest, Massu cannot name the mother, giving his preferred *cachaça*, 'Benedita de Jesus', instead. The child is registered 'Felício de Jesus' for baptism, Madame Tibéria, Massu and friends' brothel-running 'aunt', is named the godmother, and her profession of 'pension owner' is provided. Finally, despite the unnamed godfather, Massu convinces the gullible priest to proceed with the baptism (see Fig. 6.2).

At home, Massu prays to Saint Anthony for a solution to the child's sponsorship (see Fig. 6.2). Suddenly, a powerful shaft of light and a crash of thunder assail Massu, and African chanting is heard. Ogum, the Yoruba deity of war, appears before him. Massu attempts to explain to Ogum his dilemma, but Ogum interrupts: *he* will decide who the godfather will be! As suddenly as he appeared, Ogum vanishes (see Fig. 6.2). Massu tells his friends what occurred, so the group visits a *pai-de-santos*.<sup>17</sup> The *pai-de-santos* reads Massu's shells, but a force takes hold of him. Jumping up, he convulses and begins speaking in tongues (see Fig. 6.2): Ogum, channeled through the priest, proclaims *himself* to be the godfather! At the baptism, the delirious *pai-de-santos* approaches the altar, where a superior Catholic priest asks if he is the godfather. The *pai-de-santos* breaks into tongues again, startling the Catholic and exciting the *candomblé* congregants. Amidst the pandemonium, Massu runs to Saint Anthony's statue, begging him for help. There is another explosion of light, this time coming from Saint Anthony, and Ogum reappears. Bands of light erupt from the priest-superior, now also possessed by Ogum, who addresses the congregation: *he* is the godfather! Vindicated, the *pai-de-santos* approaches Ogum, but Ogum knocks him away, bellowing: "Not one more!" and he collapses. Soon, the priest-superior and *pai-de-santos* regain consciousness. The young priest reminds his superior that the child's godfather must still be named. To this, his superior declares that the baby will be baptized with the name "Antônio de Ogum". In this episode, we assume that the Catholic Church is the authoritative force and that Afro-Brazilian religion is a form of resistance to it. However, because Massu must circumvent both practices to see his son legitimized, we realize the amount of authority invested in even the most unofficial forms of religion.

*This image from Pastores da Noite has been removed, as the copyright is owned by another organization.*

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**Fig. 6.2:** Circumvention of religious authority and resistance.

<sup>17</sup> A male priest in Afro-Brazilian religions such as *candomblé*.

In *Escrava Anastácia*, we find the theme of religious authority and resistance in rural, pre-abolition Brazil. Anastácia, true to the role of sufferer, symbolizes the history of slavery and the suppression of African culture in Brazil. Contrasting the roles in *Pastores da Noite*, however, and challenging the consistent theme of suffering, *Escrava Anastácia* highlights the religious resistance of black women in colonial Brazil. One such figure is Oxum, the counterpart of Ogum in Yoruba religion. In an African jungle, Oxum appears before Oju Orun, the princess who is enslaved and becomes Anastácia in Brazil. Oxum tells Oju that she will cross the sea to another land “to bring force and *axé* to your people.”<sup>18</sup> Oju Orun does not want to go away, but Oxum says that it is her destiny, and to have courage (see Fig. 6.3). Now a slave in Brazil, Oju is on the verge of being baptised with her Christian name. With her head forced into the font, Oju looks to the chapel door, from which light suddenly emanates (see Fig. 6.3). Oxum appears and nods to Oju, who knows what has happened: she has been given the power of *axé*, which is still unexercised, but that will later come to powerful fruition.

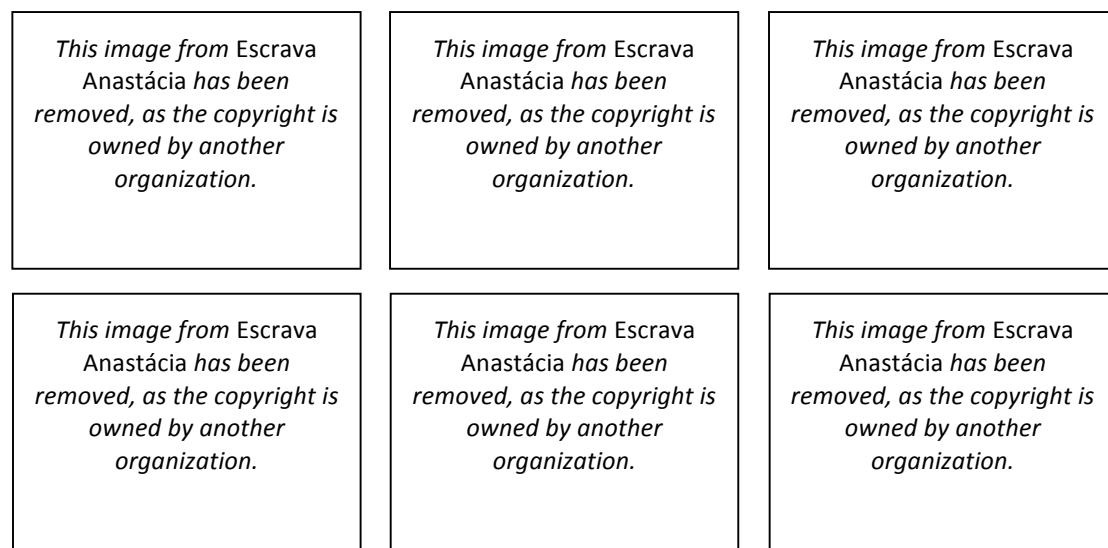
Bolaji, the plantation cook, is another symbolic figure, particularly in her capacity to turn innocence and ignorance into power and knowledge. In the kitchen, the children of the master approach Bolaji and ask her what she is doing. “Preparing a gift for Exú,” she tells them. Hermelinda, who spies on the slaves in order to ingratiate herself to her mistress, Sinhá, accuses Bolaji of corrupting the children: “Exú is the devil!” Bolaji responds, “Exú is no devil. The devil is you!” Incensed, Hermelinda leaves to report Bolaji’s behavior to Sinhá. Unruffled, Bolaji brings the children outside, where she places her offerings at the foot of a wall. She prays in Yoruba to Exú as the children watch curiously. Suddenly, the foreground fills with light and deep laughter is heard. Exú appears atop the wall in tribal attire and brandishing weapons. The children recoil in fear. In Yoruba, Bolaji explains: “I’ve brought my little white friends to meet Exú”, placing her arms around the children (see Fig. 6.3). Exú laughs: “Friends of Bolaji are friends of mine”, inviting them forward. They stand at his feet as Exú blesses them. Bolaji looks on, pleased about the unequivocal acceptance between the children and Exú, despite the divides that separate them.

Anastácia, however, is the most powerful force of resistance. Accused of fomenting slave rebellion and having rejected slave master Antônio’s advances, Anastácia is muzzled (see Fig. 6.3). Refusing sustenance, she is also near death, but so is Antônio and Sinhá’s son. At his son’s deathbed, Antônio shouts: “It was her! It was that slave who put a curse on my son!” Unexpectedly, Sinhá lashes out at Antônio: “No, it’s castigation! Castigation for

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<sup>18</sup> Soul, spirit or light.

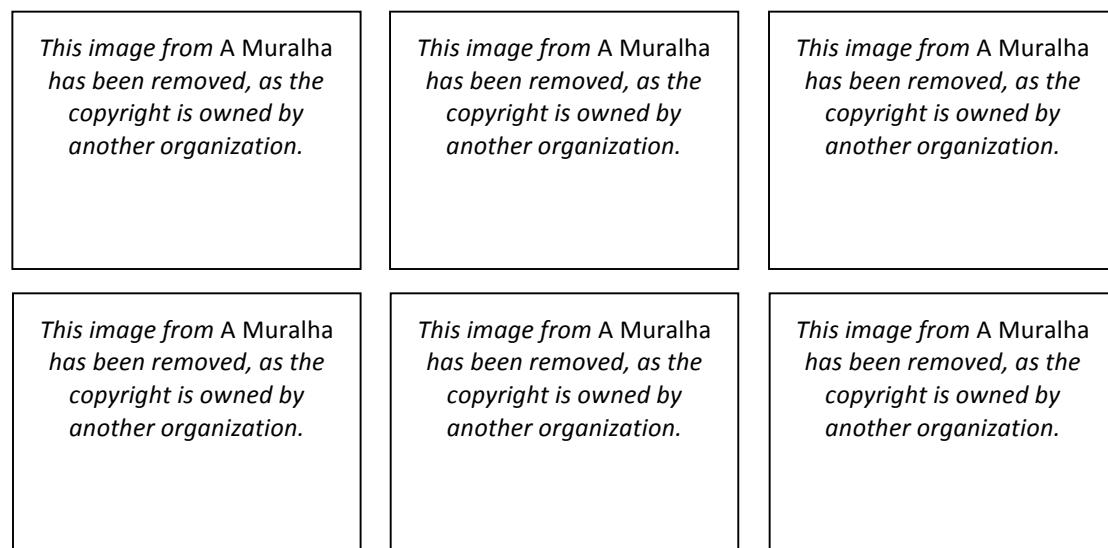
everything that you did to her, that you did to the slaves!" Sinhá lifts her son and runs to the *senzala*, where Anastácia is dying. Begging forgiveness, Sinhá kneels before Anastácia and implores her to save the child's life (see Fig. 6.3). Anastácia's piercing blue eyes rest on the little boy, who suddenly opens his eyes. Sinhá grasps him in a sobbing embrace as Anastácia dies. Sinhá's supplication to Anastácia represents an act of surrendering all the forms of authority she has so easily embodied: her 'race', religion and the sanctity of her family. Yet Anastácia's biblical powers in conjunction with sacrificing herself for the boy represent the very symbols of Christianity that were forced upon her. Anastácia's shift from abject subjugation to an embodiment of racial, gendered and religious authority can therefore only happen upon her martyrdom. But when her spirit is released to the sky, so too is Anastácia's *axé*, which for the other slaves anticipates their freedom (see Fig 6.3).



**Fig. 6.3:** *Anastácia's figures of authority in resistance.*

Unexpected intersections of authority and resistance occur in *A Muralha* as well. As we know, the mini-series is about the *bandeirantes'* brutal exploration of Brazil. In parallel to Indian resistance to the *bandeirantes*, however, *A Muralha* depicts *bandeirantes'* resistance to an oppressive, negligent Portuguese Crown, along with other, unexpected expressions of authority, resistance, alliance and defense. Early Jewish settlers are represented by the characters Ana and David. As opposed to the cruel behavior of the other white colonists, however, Ana and David demonstrate compassion towards the Indians. Ana, forced into Christianity and obliged to marry Gerônimo, aligns with Muatira, who is also enslaved. Jesuit missionary Padre Miguel berates his Indian pupils for praying to Tupã instead of to God. But David, who is observing the lesson, tells Padre Miguel: "They have their God and we have ours ... Who can guarantee that they are not the same?" (see Fig. 6.4).

Unexpected intersections of authority and resistance also occur through sudden reversals to oppressive relationships. Gerônimo drags Muatira to his bedroom, where we assume he will beat her again. Instead, he produces a whip and demands she flog him. Confused and repulsed at first, Muatira soon enjoys whipping Gerônimo in return for what he has done to her. But at the same time, she sees that this perversity parallels Gerônimo's own (see Fig. 6.4). When Indians capture Afonso, they subject him to the same humiliation and pain inflicted upon them. Half-conscious, Afonso stumbles toward an Indian woman mockingly offered to him earlier, thinking that yielding to her will aid in his release (see Fig. 6.4). Tiring of Afonso's inept pantomimes, she pours a caldron of boiling water over him. Afonso screams in pain and loses consciousness again. Suddenly, all activity stops. The *pajé*<sup>19</sup> enters the circle: all eyes are upon him, but his own exude rage (see Fig. 6.4). He berates his tribespeople for what they have done, ordering them to care for Afonso as if one of them. Horribly injured, Afonso recovers through the ministrations of the tribe, soon becoming a part of it (see Fig. 6.4). However, Afonso is unsure whether he would still be considered a *bandeirante* if he returned, or if he even wants to rejoin that tribe.



**Fig. 6.4:** Unexpected forms of alliance and defense.

Crucial to these mini-series is not only the presence of authority in everyday and historic modes of existence but also a continuous resistance to authority. Moreover, whether this dialogue between authority and resistance occurs in contemporary or historic Brazil, it is consistently invoked to symbolize civic, religious and political oppression and dissent. In terms of dissent, however, it is significant that this is expressed at a popular or grassroots level, as this often involves mobilizing gender or 'race' as its own form of resistance, even towards forces we might already consider resistant. It is therefore one kind of discursive

<sup>19</sup> A shaman and often the leader of an Indian tribe.

statement that *Cidade dos Homens* take place in a *favela*. It is another statement, however, that drug dealers and the police represent opposing, yet equal forms of authority intent on suppressing the residents, who respond *en masse* with their own, clandestine mode of authority in order to regain control of their community, if only temporarily. Likewise, an ambiguous line of authority is drawn between Catholicism and syncretic religions, such that the power historically ascribed to the former is mirrored by the fervency of popular belief in the latter. Thus, Massu has no choice but to circumvent the irrepressible force of religion in general to fulfill his spiritual goal. Finally, the unexpected affiliations of 'race' and gender in *A Muralha* exceed early colonial Brazilian history to invoke contemporary political alignments between socially marginalized peoples. At the same time, we should think about the ways these mini-series evoke 'unity in diversity' and thus how they may continue to contribute to this value-based ideology in Brazilian history.

### 6.2.2 Institutions and Intuition: Authority and Resistance in Practice

Switching from discourses of authority and resistance in history to a discourse of practice reveals a few connections between them. One, which we have previously seen, is that it becomes difficult to separate authority and resistance in practice from their *representation* in a discourse of history. In other words, creators' testimonies of resistance to authority echo a dialectic we find in the mini-series. Relatedly, then, strategies invoked in practice reveal the ways in which subjective interests are aimed at challenging institutional values embedded in the Brazilian broadcast space. We can begin by looking at divides between creative roles. As a producer sees her role in relation to a director's: "Creation is direction ... production is a tool" (interviewed November 17, 2006). Another producer concedes: "I'm not made aware of the creation process ... If there is a dialogue between the authors and the network, then it's not something I'm included in" (interviewed November 16, 2006). Expanding on this imbalance, another producer compares Brazil to the US in terms of the power he would have in the latter context. In the US, "the producer is the owner of the story, many times, the owner of the money", which he translates into the authority to represent the social demographics of the US on television: "You ... have to put Hispanics, Chinese, Indians, blacks in there. This way, you're done with the story, because you have those markets and ... that audience to reach." Although speculative, this account recalls a practice of 'ingesting' foreign production modes. It also reflects Brazil's need to promote global awareness of its cultural practices, since "it's important to Globo that ... the market knows that we have ... this 'know-how'" (interviewed December 5, 2006).<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> Recalling Gullar's position on Brazil's dialectic of imitation/originality in a global perspective, this producer also stated 'know-how' in English.

While these statements reveal power relations in Brazilian television production, as well as regard for Brazilian *versus* American television institutions, they also inform a mode of authority adopted in creating the Brazilian mini-series specifically. This is a mode that recalls the discourse of authenticity not only in but also behind telling the Brazilian story. Specific to the mini-series' tendency toward adapting literature and dramatizing history, this translates into a *literary/historic authenticity*. A costumer for various mini-series of the literary/historic variety explains how actors often object to the costumes they must wear. She responds by telling them, "you don't look in the mirror and say 'I don't like this' ... There is no 'like'! It's historical! You have to accept it! You don't have much of a choice!" Thus, in *Os Maias* and *O Primo Basílio*, "all the men wore ... a shirt, a vest, trousers, boots, shoes, socks ... a cane, a top hat ... all of them! There wasn't any variation" (interviewed March 24, 2006). However, this testimony reveals not as much the resistance to (perhaps because of the discomfort in) re-creating nineteenth-century Europe in the warm climate of Brazil; rather, it reveals a practice-based authority governing attitudes and references to re-creating the authenticity of that literary/historic experience. Far from limited to re-creating Europe, there are also rules involved in creating the authenticity of the Brazilian experience. I next examine rules governing creation of an authentic Brazilian literary or historic experience in two important mini-series. At the same time, such rules reveal how creators can circumvent, negotiate or resist the authority of literary/historical re-creation to evince a different sense of authenticity.

We recall that *Agosto* is about a principled Rio de Janeiro police inspector who becomes involved in a web of corruption and scandal, which ultimately leads to the suicide-death of Getúlio Vargas. By employing a mix of fact and fiction, *Agosto* turned a popular novel into the popular mini-series. In this adaptation process, however, *Agosto*'s creators reveal how the authority of Brazilian television and its rules of literary/historic authenticity can meet with resistance. Rubem Fonesca, the novelist of *Agosto*, demanded complete control over the adaptation process from TV Globo. The mini-series' screenwriter recalls, "I don't know of a single other case where Globo ... has done a contract like this." Unlike other adaptations, Fonesca and Globo wrangled over the script "blow-by-blow", which meant that "Fonseca had the power to veto the mini-series ... even impede it from going on air, even after it was written." Although these conditions were unusual, for this screenwriter they underscore the authority exacted by the television industry, especially in contrast to filmmaking: "The principal thing was time ... Film scripts are more elastic, so we're able to create a few more versions than we think necessary. But in television, no. In television, we had to comply with time because ... it's another kind of relationship."

In negotiating such control, this screenwriter invoked a mechanism important not only to him but also to other creators, and that we will see in other contexts: *intuition*. Intuition, as the screenwriter refers to it, represents a way of calling on one's subjective interests in order to negotiate structural conditions. Thus, "every version they wrote [and] they sent me, I had a hunch, even not working as a television writer. Even if I'm in the middle of making another film, [and I feel like] I can't be doing TV right now ... I like the idea that I can return to work as a mini-series writer." Furthermore, the intuition this screenwriter called on to mediate Fonesca and Globo's struggle over *Agosto* is a form of resistance he saw as facilitating an improved exchange between the genre, medium and audience:

Every action, every dialogue, every scene shouldn't simply be literature transposed to the audiovisual, to television ... It should be rewritten *thinking* of the vehicle, thinking of a new relationship that's being established with the television viewer. And this new relationship, as it forms part of another vehicle, has other demands that we need to meet in the adaptation. And to do this ... we have to be *unfaithful*. We can't respect ... every intention of the author or Globo (interviewed August 14, 2008).

What also emerges from a practice-based discourse of negotiating institutional authority is not only that the mini-series stands up to foreign production modes and programming, as we saw in the previous chapter, but also that it challenges the standards of Brazilian television production and programming. A few creators recalled abandoned mini-series projects, and added that this never happens with *telenovelas*. This lends the mini-series a quality of *rarity* in Brazilian television production, reinforced by the number of *telenovelas* produced comparatively. The idea that the rarity of the mini-series is a form of resistance itself to the battery of *telenovela* productions has implications for the way creators see the *telenovela* used as a measure of public taste. According to a writer of several mini-series:

I don't think I'd like to work as a writer of *novelas* ... There, you have the very rules of television. And you're very tied to writing in accord with IBOPE saying what works, what doesn't work. With mini-series, you don't do this. You write the whole script and afterwards the script is produced ... To write, as they say, to the 'public's taste', that's what those who make *novelas* have to do (interviewed July 31, 2008).<sup>21</sup>

Of course, the mini-series must also meet the demands of the networks and public taste: "We know that going on air at a certain time always means the pressure of audience. You can't write a mini-series for Globo wanting less than 30 [ratings] points ... If not, it will be bad for Globo and bad for you as a writer." Between these demands, however, there is a space in which an authority specific to the Brazilian mini-series allows negotiating with larger institutional or public forces. Thus for this same creator, "I cannot create an overly

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<sup>21</sup> IBOPE, or the Brazilian Institute of Public Opinion and Statistics, carries out research for Brazilian media companies. Globo and other television networks measure audience ratings with IBOPE services. The acronym in lower case (*ibope*) is the equivalent of 'audience ratings' in Brazil.

complicated plot. And I'm not going to deal with themes determined 'inadequate' for a time-slot or for the 'Globo public', which is immense!" As a force of resistance, intuition resurfaces in this context. Instead of the way it was invoked above to negotiate demands for control between an author and network, here intuition reaches a more symbolic level:

It's my hunch, my intuition, that mini-series are closer to representing Brazil ... While *telenovelas* almost always have those same issues of melodrama, those basic issues of serialization that are more important than anything else, in mini-series we're able to get closer to social representation itself. Now all the same, this is a hunch (interviewed July 31, 2008).

At this juncture, introducing press commentary adds to a discourse of both the literary/historical authenticity of the Brazilian mini-series and the ability of the form to convey this with symbolic authority. A critic finds that *Agosto* serves as a "kind of catalyst for the sentiment of citizens who walked half-germinating in disoriented form during the post-dictatorship generation." In particular, this is conveyed by "revisiting the memory of the country through the history of a common man" (Santos Reis: 1993). Another critic agrees, in that *Agosto* invites the "popular imagination" to face the enigmas of Brazilian political history, a history in which

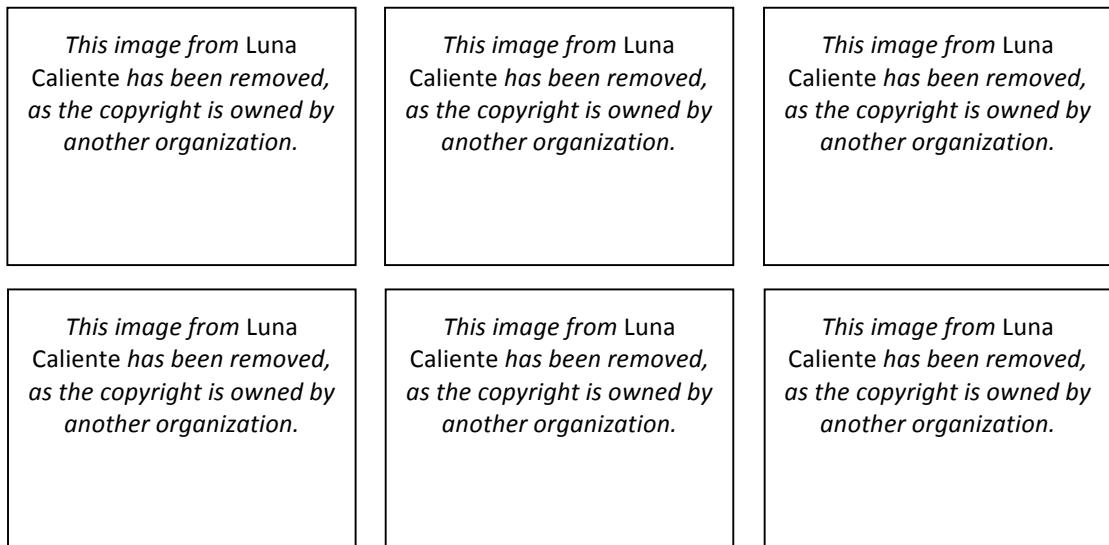
Getúlio Vargas remains a legend. But in spite of those who dispute his controversial legacy as dictator, modernizer and father of the poor, his figure is spoken of little. After the unexpected impact of the mini-series *Anos Rebeldes*, Globo is investing heavily in one more serial that explores a period and a figure almost taboo in our history (Hamburger: 1993a).

A third critic writes about the compelling way in which *Agosto* poses Inspector Mattos's fictional search for the truth against a wall of real political duplicity. However, she also sees this as an attempt to manipulate public opinion about Brazil's political history. The bluntness of her opinion nonetheless reveals *Agosto*'s potency. "Such superpositioning of history and fiction isn't done innocently. Who could judge innocent the parallel between Detective Mattos's good-boyishness and ... officials in 1954?" Furthermore, she questions "the equilibrium between common crime and political crime, as if both should be in the same historical register and history should be a case for the police", concluding that "the mini-series makes evident ... incomprehension of the figure Getúlio and of his suicide ... as if capable of changing public opinion overnight" (Martins: 1993). Given this critique, it seems that *Agosto* conveyed a sense of historical authenticity and symbolic authority. If we consider that the mini-series 'got closer to social representation itself' by generating a heated debate about the Vargas regime forty years after its ignoble ending, then it seems that a mix of myth and history in practice continues to bear upon the politics of the ways in which Brazilian national values are perceived in reality.

*Luna Caliente* also depicts a dark period in Brazilian political history, and it stirred debate about the practices involved in its creation. More specifically, *Luna Caliente* conveys the sense that its protagonist could be any of the thousands of Brazilians who were arrested, exiled and murdered by the military government during the 1964 – 1985 regime. At the same time, its historical authenticity lies in symbolic cues that express the oppressiveness of the era, more so than the meticulous details *Agosto* used to re-create the Vargas years. Similar to *Agosto*, however, *Luna Caliente* sparked debate between adherents and skeptics of its symbolic persuasiveness, which in turn raises questions about the values attached to political remembrance.

*Luna Caliente* is about Ramiro Bernardes, a law professor who, earlier in the regime, was exiled to France for his 'subversive ideas'. Ramiro has been permitted to return to Brazil and arrives at his hometown in the south, where he meets with an old colleague, Braúlio. Invited to Braúlio's for dinner, Ramiro meets his daughter, Elisa. Elisa attracts Ramiro's attention as much as she seems to invite his (see Fig. 6.5). As he tries to leave that night, Ramiro's car will not start, so he sleeps down the hall from Elisa. Still aroused by Elisa, Ramiro sneaks down the hall and peers into her room, where she lies half-nude, waiting for him (see Fig. 6.5). He goes to Elisa, who seems to want him. But lovemaking becomes rape. Elisa tries to fight off Ramiro. Ramiro, covering up Elisa's screams, smothers her to death (see Fig. 6.5). Ramiro flees the house, his car now starting, but Braúlio appears. He is intoxicated and seems unaware of what just happened, wanting a lift instead. Unable to deter Braúlio, Ramiro agrees. However, Ramiro is convinced that Braúlio knows what just happened and is pursuing him. His paranoia takes over and he kills Braúlio, sinking his body and the car into a river. Now Ramiro must explain to his friend Gomulka what happened to his car, which he loaned to Ramiro, but the truth is impossible to reveal. The local police descend on Ramiro, now a crime suspect. So do the military police, which, it turns out, have been watching him (see Fig. 6.5).

However, Elisa is not dead. She re-materializes and to Ramiro's shock, provides him an alibi. Moreover, Elisa becomes obsessed with Ramiro as he becomes increasingly suspect. Ramiro can take it no longer and tries to flee, but Elisa manages to accompany him. Elisa is unrelenting about another encounter, so they stop at the roadside. Again, sex becomes violent. Ramiro murders Elisa (again), burying her body in a nearby field. Finally, Elisa is dead. Ramiro crosses the border into Argentina, in exile again. In his motel room, Ramiro hears police sirens nearing, knowing the past and present have caught up with him. The phone rings; someone is downstairs waiting for him. Ramiro descends, but finds no one there. Turning around, Ramiro sees that instead of the police, Elisa is there (see Fig. 6.5).



**Fig. 6.5:** Ramiro's inability to escape from intimate and political authority.

According to a screenwriter of *Agosto* and *Luna Caliente*, despite six years between their productions and their depictions of different regimes, the mini-series are related: "What has historical value is this: it's their backgrounds of dictatorship, it's the oppression that the characters lived through", even though *Luna Caliente*'s "story is much more centered on an individual ... than *Agosto*'s." What gives *Luna Caliente* specific symbolic authority, however, is Ramiro's translatability: "his is a story that originally didn't happen in Brazil. It happened in another Latin American dictatorship, in Argentina, which we adapted to Brazil without any difficulties because ... the climate of fear that's the principal setting of the mini-series was very similar to what we had in Brazil." *Luna Caliente*'s translatability, however, is also significant for real political events. *Agosto* was produced ten years after the military's waning power. Thus, its retrospective view of the Vargas regime's decline is a nod to that of the military. *Luna Caliente* was written during a period still reconciling the military regime, when corruption charges were brought against Fernando Collor. As this screenwriter reflects, *Luna Caliente* "came at a time of full democracy in the country, during a government with contestation, but ... without any full accusation, of corruption. But at the point of falling because of this." *Luna Caliente* was therefore not only about the painfulness of Brazil's political past; it was also about the tenuousness of Brazil's political present, which this screenwriter believes the mini-series should address more often:

Brazil needs to re-discuss this and I think to the extent of Brazilian audiovisual fiction. We haven't discussed this enough, these pasts of dictatorships, these moments, these black periods in this country's history. But I think this should be. There are still many stories to be told in this respect" (interviewed August 14, 2008).

Critics are aware of *Luna Caliente*'s metaphorical possibilities, but perhaps because of the lapse between the writing and broadcast of the mini-series, some are more sanguine than

others about them. With gravity, a critic writes: “the Globo mini-series transports [us] to January 1970. The scenario is the economic miracle of Brazil and the eve of its football world championship, but also its chokehold on political prisoners” (Vasconcellos: 1998). Another critic offers the analysis: “Elisa seduces intellectual Ramiro, who loses his head at the point of raping her. From there on, Ramiro suffers in the same cellars in which the opponents of the dictatorship in the 70s withered. The worst phase of the military regime serves as the backdrop for this political story” (Soares: 1999). Yet another critic sees *Luna Caliente* as depicting a tragedy of errors: “Ramiro is a rational man of Cartesian training who ... is not able to control his blind passions, loses his point of equilibrium and drowns in a sea of successive errors” (Lee: 1998). However, a fourth critic considers Ramiro to be a *malandro*-like figure, dropped into the middle of the military era. Thus, Ramiro’s exile and thwarted repatriation are not a tragedy but a *comedy* of errors. As the critic describes Ramiro by the actor who plays him:

Betti of *Luna Caliente* has neither the money nor the power to be able to disguise his madness. He has to suffer alone the consequences of his swindling. And he’s a scoundrel ... a guy who arrives from a long spell in Paris without bringing back anything that could be considered a ‘souvenir’.

Moreover, Braúlio is “the old, drunk guy, full of *cachaça* and Foucault” and Elisa is “only two or three years older than Lolita. She looks at Betti’s sideburns with gluttony.” After Ramiro sinks Braúlio’s body and Gomulka’s car into the river, the critic adds: “the owner of the Mercury and the police appear, wanting to investigate all the bungling committed the previous night. And ultra-Lolita whispers to the scoundrel, ‘I want my underpants back.’” Although the critic acknowledges, “when [characters] speak, it’s with the rancor of having survived a revolution”, it is “when they act [that] their bungling is saved only by absurdity” (Martino: 1999). Although this critic does not ignore the way *Luna Caliente* captures the military era, including the symbols of Brazil’s economic miracle – souvenirs, the Mercury – he displays an indifference to the possibility that *Luna Caliente* offers a way to look at Brazil’s political present *via* its political past. In a different but related respect, Agosto’s intent of uncovering unresolved political controversy reveals less the politics of the past and more a politics of practice in the present. These mini-series therefore reveal a discourse of the political that assumes two modes of representation: the representation of authority and resistance in Brazilian political history; and the equally political landscape of the agents and processes involved in the practice of creating such representations. As I mentioned, however, these discursive modes are not so distinct that it is possible to keep them separated. To the extent that Brazil’s political histories of authority and resistance are the bases for the mini-series’ narratives, negotiating between institutional conditions and subjective interests also informs how they make their way to the public.

## 6.3 Brazilian National Values in the Domestic Context

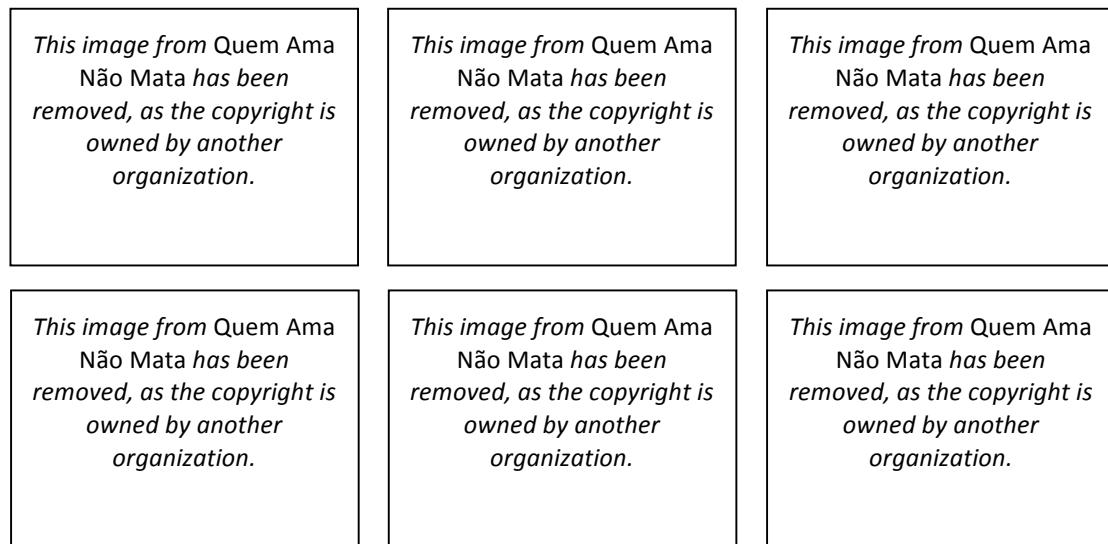
In shifting from the mini-series' representations of Brazilian political history to those of class, family and morals, I continue to be concerned with identifying the ways in which discourses of authority and resistance surface. But I am also concerned with identifying how the other appears in mini-series with domestic settings, and specifically, the ways in which the *Brazilian other* manifests in relation to domestic representations of class, family and morals. As in the previous section, I first trace the ways that class, family and morals are depicted in a few, key mini-series, paying attention as well to the role of the Brazilian other. Then I look at how class, family, morals and the Brazilian other inform discourses of practice; that is, how creators and critics interpret public values according not only to the themes and modes of production of the mini-series, but also to related forms such as film, literature and in particular, the *telenovela*.

### 6.3.1 Class, Family, Morals and the Changing Role of the Brazilian Other

In my sample of mini-series, there are many places to begin identifying how class, family and morals contribute to representing Brazilian national values. The intersection of these themes in a few, key mini-series, however, narrows the overall range of representations. *Quem Ama Não Mata* is one such mini-series. It depicts the upward mobility of Alice and Jorge in early-1980s Rio de Janeiro. Their ascent is set against the backdrop of the waning economic miracle brought about by the military regime, reflected in the parties and new, high-rise condominium that Alice and Jorge seem unprepared to accept as part of their transformed status. Having attained the illusions of prosperity, Alice and Jorge long for a child (see Fig. 6.6), but cannot conceive one. Jorge blames Alice, but soon learns that he is infertile, deflating his sense of accomplishment. Furthermore, Jorge does not tell Alice, letting his impotency fester. He begins drinking heavily and sleeping with other women (see Fig. 6.6), growing increasingly angry towards Alice and her attempts to placate him. Alienated from Jorge, Alice couples with her sister's ex-partner, Raúl (see Fig. 6.6), and soon learns she is pregnant. Jorge discovers this, knowing it could not be by him. Fueled by acrimony and alcohol, the couple viciously fights (see Fig. 6.6). A gun is produced and a shot is fired, but we are left not knowing who killed whom (see Fig. 6.6).

In *Quem Ama Não Mata*, the political, economic and moral erosion of Brazil is enveloped in the microcosm of Jorge and Alice's fantasized, decaying world. Moreover, it is not the existing pressures of class and family, but the impossible fulfillment of the ideal class and family status that destroys Jorge and Alice. Most significant, however, is the sense we get

of Jorge and Alice's desperation to not be left behind in the nation's upward-mobility: to stake their claim in the tenuous Brazilian middle class while the wealth and poverty on either side of them grow. In the same sense that Jorge and Alice prioritize the ideals over the realities of their existence, then, the regime idealized Brazil's economic miracle over the realities of national existence, indeed leaving many Brazilians behind.



**Fig. 6.6:** Jorge and Alice's descent, and Brazil's eroding fantasy.

In *Decadência* (*Decadence*), the clash of class, family and moral values parallels real social and political change in 1990s Brazil. The rich and powerful Tavares Branco family of Rio takes in the orphan Mariel. Growing up with siblings PJ, Carla, Suzana and Sônia, Mariel is treated as if one of them, even after becoming the family's chauffeur. Carla and Mariel are particularly close as children, and as adults they fall in love and have an affair. When patriarch Albano discovers this, everything changes: a servant could never be a suitor to a Tavares Branco, so Mariel is dismissed and humiliated. Though he loves Carla, Mariel vows to seek revenge. Additionally, the Collor government is *Decadência*'s backdrop (see Fig. 6.7), which provides opposing agendas for Carla and PJ: Carla becomes increasingly active in anti-corruption activity, as PJ becomes even wealthier lobbying for the president (see Fig. 6.7). Mariel discovers an evangelical sect and its promises of immediate reward. Realizing a deft ability to proselytize, Mariel fulfills this promise, becoming the rich and powerful leader of the Temple of the Divine Calling (see Fig. 6.7). However, the Tavares Branco family is torn apart by Carla's defiance and PJ's fraudulence, while Sônia slips into alcoholism (see Fig. 6.7). With Albano's sudden death, Suzana remains sole guard of the family's anachronistic morals. Furthermore, the Tavares Branco's bankruptcy can no longer deter Mariel from buying the family mansion and throwing them out: his goal of

retribution. Before this happens, however, the mansion catches fire. All escape the blaze except Suzana, a martyr for the Tavares Branco's dying values (see Fig. 6.7).

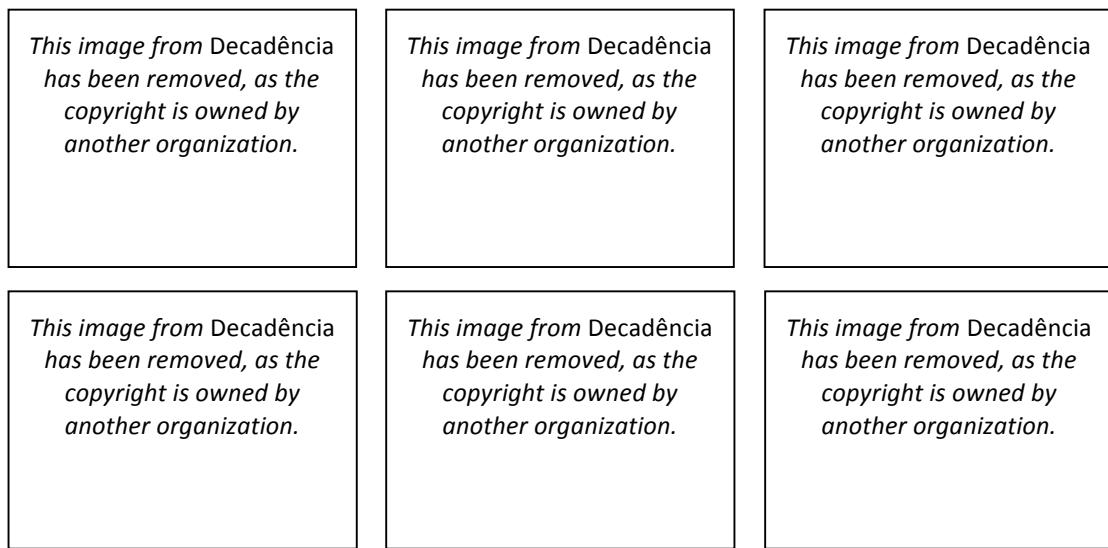


Fig. 6.7: Political decay and religious ascent parallel a family's demise.

*Decadência* makes an unmistakable statement about the ascent of new political and moral paradigms and the descent of traditional, outdated ones in Brazil. Collor, as Brazil's first democratically elected president in 29 years, reversed military statism by advocating free trade and privatization, essentially ushering in a new, neoliberal framework symbolized by PJ's mercenary opportunism. But as Collor narrowly missed impeachment charges by resigning the presidency, PJ escapes to Miami. The Tavares Branco's decline represents that of the military government and its political, economic and especially moral control over Brazil. More emblematic, however, is the unraveling of the Tavares Branco's insular, archaic moral framework in contrast with Mariel's adroit, self-propelled climb to wealth and power, which unambiguously sets the waning power of the Catholic Church against the meteoric rise of evangelical sects in Brazil. Thus, it is Mariel's Temple of the Divine Calling, its attraction to the poor with promises of redemption, fueled by Mariel's goal of reprisal, that signal a change in values from hopeful expectation to immediate reward.

*Decadência* projects the Tavares Branco's decline onto the landscape of Brazil's economic, political and social turmoil during re-democratization. *Anos Dourados* follows an opposite path, however. It not only anticipates the military regime from the buoyancy of late-50's Brazil, but it casts the increasingly tense and ominous tone of this era onto the intimate conflicts of Brazilian families. Marcos and his mother Glória are working class, encircled by a host of mostly flourishing, middle-class characters in Rio de Janeiro. Already, then, Marcos and Glória represent disenfranchisement from Brazil's 'Golden Years', signified

by the American cars and pop-music records that Marcos's friends possess (see Fig. 6.8). *Anos Dourados* opens with a scene of Marcos boxing the camera, imparting the frustration he feels at being marginalized from such abundant success, and as if we, the viewers, are complicit in aggravating this. When a murder occurs later, it is no surprise that the police suspect Marcos first, resulting in ostracism by his classmates and slander by Celeste, the sanctimonious, middle-class mother of Maria Lourdes, Marcos's girlfriend (see Fig. 6.8). For Celeste, accusation is proof of Marcos's guilt, and Marcos and Glória's working-class values are evidence. Glória also experiences ostracism. When she appears at the middle-class Dornelles family's home to return a ring Paulo Roberto bought for his daughter and accidentally left with her, Glória is barred from entering by his wife, Beatriz.

Paulo Roberto leaves the ring behind after another assignation with Glória, an affair that symbolically exacerbates class and moral conflicts in the mini-series and signals political change. Glória is not only working class, but also a divorcée and nightclub bartender. For Paulo Roberto's children, who learn of the affair while Beatriz remains oblivious, Glória is intent on seducing Paulo Roberto and taking him away from them. However, Glória keeps the affair a secret, not for her reputation but to protect Paulo Roberto's. Moreover, Glória tries to end the affair, but only shames herself further. Beatriz and a friend drive along a beach road and spot Paulo Roberto's car, abandoned. Fearing for Paulo Roberto, Beatriz asks her friend to stop. However, Paulo Roberto and Glória have just met, after which his car would not start. Beatriz's sudden appearance surprises Glória who, waiting for Paulo Roberto to return from the mechanic, must hide. When Paulo Roberto returns, to his surprise he finds Beatriz, not Glória, waiting for him. His only option is to return home with Beatriz, and so Paulo Roberto abandons Glória. Glória watches the pair leave from behind a gate, sobbing (see Fig. 6.8). She is both prisoner to preserving middle-class values and marginalized by the impetus of Brazil's precipitous modernization.

Maria Lourdes comes closest to falling victim to the façade of morality, however. Maria Lourdes is a proper, young Catholic woman, deferring Marcos's amorous advances until sure they will marry, to which she then relents (see Fig. 6.8). But Maria Lourdes becomes pregnant by Marcos and worse still, Celeste discovers. Given Marcos's 'criminal traits', Celeste believes that he raped Maria Lourdes, thus that she could never want the baby. Under the pretense of an examination, Celeste arranges an abortion for Maria Lourdes at a disreputable clinic. The procedure is botched and Maria Lourdes is near death. Celeste, with her staunch religious beliefs, rationalizes this as God's will. It is only Glória calling the police to raid the clinic that saves Maria Lourdes from dying. But truths are further revealed: Carneiro, Celeste's husband and Maria Lourdes's father, is the murderer, not

Marcos. Discovered, Carneiro jumps out a window, killing himself, which Celeste again sees as an act of divine intervention. The end of *Anos Dourados* is not nearly so somber, however. No longer oblivious, Beatriz confronts Paulo Roberto, who remorsefully admits to infidelity (see Fig. 6.8). They divorce, and Beatriz returns to university to begin a new life. Paulo Roberto and Glória are free to pursue their relationship, as are Maria Lourdes and Marcos, all of whom are now unfettered by the pressure of class and moral pretense. Despite the happy ending of *Anos Dourados*, the narrator returns in an epilogue to inform us that as a result of the 1964 military coup, Marcos and Maria Lourdes's close group of friends disbanded. While some sided with the regime, others joined the resistance. But of the latter group, little is known; only that they disappeared.

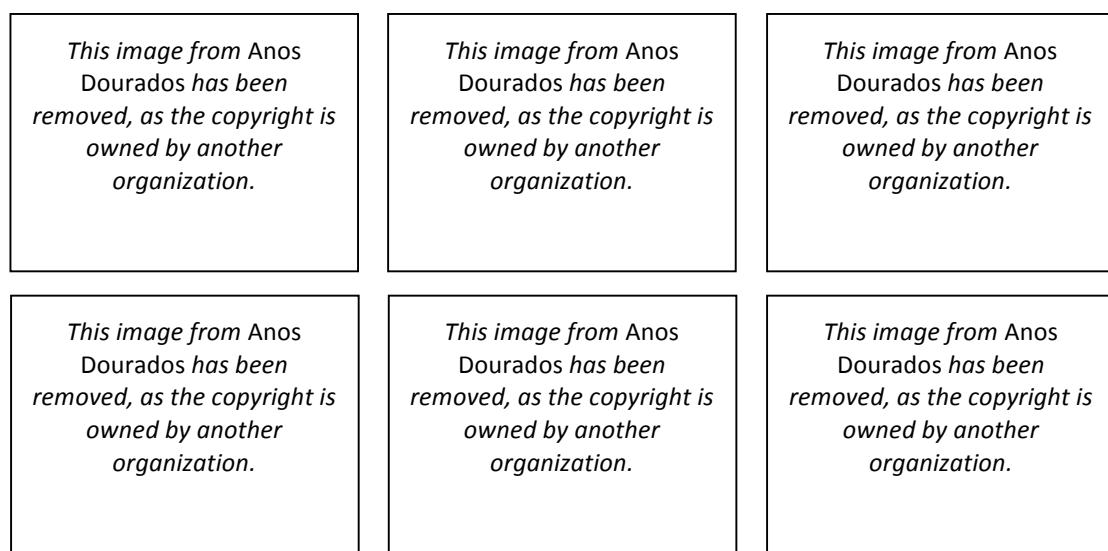


Fig. 6.8: Conversely, intimate conflicts anticipate political turmoil.

What is significant about *Anos Dourados*, *Quem Ama Não Mata* and *Decadência* is the way in which the role of the Brazilian other differs significantly from the foundational or epic narratives of *A Muralha* and *Escrava Anastácia*, and from the urban, peripheral context of *Cidade dos Homens*. Clearly missing from these mini-series set or produced during the 80s and 90s is the other with which Brazil has historically contended: blacks and Indians. In fact, the Brazilian other is conspicuously missing from these mini-series in which 'race' is supplanted with the otherness of different family, class or moral frameworks. This says a great deal about Brazilian national values and concerns for their representations during this time period, however. For in these mini-series, it seems the more modernized Brazil becomes, the more values seem to reflect those of the rest of a modern, globalized world. Perhaps it is only after the fallout of the military regime and disillusionment following a corrupt re-democratization process that Brazil once again looked at the ways in which it regards the Brazilian other as reflecting an unresolved set of issues. I examine these next.

### 6.3.2 Texts, Genres, Creators and Critics: Interpreting Brazilian Values

The difference between *Decadência*'s narrative trajectory, which projects the demise of the Tavares Brancos onto the socio-political upheaval of Brazil, and that of *Anos Dourados*, in which the shifting social and political landscape of Brazil finds its way into a small circle of families and friends, reflects a difference between the ways creators and critics view the mini-series as a means of interpreting the values of the Brazilian public. On one hand, creators think about the implications of a particular mini-series for public values. On the other hand, critics look at the generic traits of a mini-series and assess the extent to which they correspond or conflict with public values. These different approaches will recall the dialogic exchange of authority and resistance from the previous section. Here, however, creative and critical discourses compare film, literature and the *telenovela* with the mini-series to a much greater degree in interpreting Brazilian national values.

In debates about the role of television in defining Brazilian values, the *telenovela* is again important, both as a genre itself and in comparison to the mini-series. The producer who earlier described divides in Brazilian television production explains how Manoel Carlos, a well-known *telenovela* writer, "has an impact on the development of its narratives, but he's particularly in tune with the public." For instance, with *Paginas da Vida (Pages of Life)*, a *telenovela* that aired at the time of this interview, "Manoel knows the neighborhood that the *novela* is set in and makes a habit of talking to shop owners ... to get a sense of their day-to-day ... which he works into the story" (interviewed November 16, 2006). *Paginas da Vida* was set in the Rio de Janeiro neighborhood of Leblon. Recalling Chapter 1, this is the same neighborhood in which residents worried that *Mulheres Apaixonadas*' depiction of crime would damage its image: one that has among the highest human development indexes in the world, abutted by areas with some of the worst.<sup>22</sup> Thus, while the *telenovela* is generally criticized for its unrealistic depictions of 'day-to-day' life in Brazil, *Paginas da Vida* came under particular fire, especially in comparison to *Antônia*, which followed the *telenovela*. A critic comments: "*Antônia*'s home is Vila Brasilândia. Not the land of Manoel Carlos's luxury buildings, but of the struggling." Continuing, she compares the principal character of each: "physician Helena of the *novela* ... who is part of high-society in Leblon ... is named Preta [in *Antônia*] ... black, poor and the leading woman." This leads her to ask: "One day, will there be a black Helena in the plots of Manoel Carlos" (Mattos: 2006)? However, this comparison between *Paginas da Vida* and *Antônia*, in which the 'realism' of the former is challenged by a more lifelike rendition of reality in the latter, in fact points

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<sup>22</sup> United Nations Program for Development (2000): Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

to a larger debate about the intersections of television drama, class and the values of the Brazilian viewing public. For another critic:

*Novelas* are the vampires of our cultural indigence. They're made for the poor, who were never able to learn anything, for the middle class, who learned to read but not to think. And, in addition, for those who had access to a good education, but who prefer mental laziness. *Novelas* aren't at the level of people unprepared for the world that the lack of a basic education produces: they're already low, pulling people even lower (França Mendes: 1993).

The mini-series is not immune from similar critique. Perhaps this is due to the proximity of the mini-series to the *telenovela* in the nightly programming of the Brazilian broadcast space, or to the basic formal qualities that the forms share. In either case, the mini-series is criticized for the ways it attempts to appeal to, or instead, *avoids* appealing to, certain classes of Brazilian viewers. For a television critic, the mini-series is part of a "wave" of "cinematographic *novelas*": "A nickname invented for these audiovisual products that tell the same stories as in the era of [the famous *telenovela* writer] Janete Clair, only with great lighting, closed reverse angles and other whimsical shots." However, it is not only that in these unconventional techniques "everything remains mannerist" but also that "this trick of 'cinematographic *novelas*' is an attempt to legitimize *novelas*' consumption on the part of a minority more or less clearly parceled as middle class" (França Mendes: 1993).

For creators, the relationship between the mini-series and viewers' values is put in more subtle terms than class. They tend to approach this relationship more in terms of a mini-series' particular literary/historical qualities and less in terms of generic traits or viewer demographics. Nevertheless, the terms creators use to interpret text/viewer relationships *imply* a discourse of class. As a creator describes *Os Maias*, its "literariness was something that was characteristic, that Eça put in the novel." Furthermore, "because *Os Maias* was a novel closer to the atmosphere that Eça lived in, we needed to ... put that language in the scenes ... To convey everything in the scenes to the spectator." 'Literary language' thus relays a practice through which "mini-series are a lot more complicated ... more detailed in this sense ... more complicated in all senses ... It's not simply an author creating the naturalness of contemporary *telenovelas* ... The mini-series is far more sophisticated in this sense" (interviewed December 5, 2005). 'Complicated', 'detailed' and 'sophisticated' are terms by which this producer differentiates the mini-series from the *telenovela*. But they are also terms that suggest how creators conceive of an exchange between the mini-series and its viewers, not necessarily the viewers themselves of mini-series.

Another creator of *Os Maias* is more explicit about her conceptions of viewers' values in relation to her work. While she also considers these relations in terms of individual mini-

series, she suggests a broader set of values that define relationships between mini-series viewers and the Brazilian broadcast space. This creator claims: "not to think of the public when creating a mini-series", although "this also depends on the work." Thus, while "Os Maias reached a more Class 'A' public", at the same time, this creator is careful to clarify that "when I say Class 'A' [I mean] a higher *intellectual* level, generally the public of cable television. I consider myself the public of cable television." Given what the term 'a higher intellectual level' implies about her view of the quality of Brazilian television, this creator therefore sees her work as challenging that institution by taking into account "those who rarely watch terrestrial television and really need ... a very good product when they do" (interviewed August 8, 2008).

Above, we saw that for some creators, authority manifested in formats, authenticity and public taste means calling on intuition as a way of responding to their pressures. In this context of interpreting public values shaped by constructs of class, intuition resurfaces as a means of resisting the assumptions made of viewers. However, this will also recall the demands of commercial television: that the mini-series, like the *telenovela*, must appeal to all viewers, regardless of its realistic, literary or intellectual qualities. For a screenwriter, then, intuition provides a way of appealing to the general public by *refining*, not *defining*, what she considers to be the public's educational sensibilities through particular features of the mini-series: "I have a inkling, it's what I feel, I have this impression ... that [mini-series] mobilize this issue of 'education' which we have here in Brazil. Sure, people here in Brazil as a whole watch more fiction, right? But there's a part of the public that has a thing for wanting to *understand*, for wanting to be *instructed* ... I think this is really great." Similar to the creator who expressed distaste for being told what or for whom to write, this creator positions her ability to evoke the educational sensibilities of the public, and therefore the instructional features of the mini-series, against the moral tendencies of the *telenovela*. "I don't worry much about ... [the *telenovela*'s] moral point of view. Important to me is ... to highlight values through the characters they represent ... characteristics that are, and that I think make, part of being Brazilian" (interviewed August 8, 2008). The discourse of practice that emerges here, then, is not one that assumes viewers' values in relation to the form. Rather, it is about evincing values through the form. Although these values may be defined by 'intellect' or 'literariness' and the problematic implications of these qualities for class in Brazil, they appear to be more motivated by the individual mini-series and less assumed of the genre.

*Agosto* illustrates this idea that creators seek to evince values from viewers with the mini-series' qualities rather than ascribing values to the genre. *Agosto* is also illustrative, as it

presented its creators with the challenge of making its themes relevant to contemporary audiences while obliging Fonesca's demands that the mini-series retain its fidelity to his novel. Thus, according to one of the screenwriters of the mini-series, *Agosto*

had a very large fictional base which Rubem Fonesca created, but we developed. We created some characters, some extra facts ... but the entire background, let's say, those moments of the Vargas government's crisis ... led to what's called a 'new Brazil' ... a modern Brazil, with really violent class relations that never reached anything like civil war, but from that moment on clearly presented a crisis of values in class relations.

Moreover, the fictional Mattos's battle with real cover-ups and corruption, underpinned by growing class conflict, was crafted to "reflect police violence [that] has helped a cast of criminals in Rio de Janeiro to emerge ... who have come close to developing an almost parallel power in some of the poorer regions of the city. All this clearly connects to huge inequalities of income, of life even, that Brazil has ... and [Agosto] looked to retrace this" (interviewed August 14, 2008). Some critics would disagree with this creator on the way *Agosto* retraces criminality and class conflict in Rio, however. For one critic, these are far more complex issue than *Agosto* depicts: "Agosto reduces history to ... caricature, without half-tones, without ambiguities. It diminishes everything to bad guy and good guy in the same way that it is presented as a 'real' document, a portrait of Brazil in the 1950s." In addition, it appears that this critic bases her opinion of *Agosto* on its generic invocation of detective fiction, and therefore the way this genre dilutes historical accuracy, more than on what the mini-series itself tries to retrieve: "It creates the elegy of the detective as the liberal idealist, placing the narrator's viewpoint in that of an incorruptible commissioner, a surface-character without moral conflict ... It ends with a hero, a martyr in a portrait of the nation as a 'sea of mud', befitting political moralizing" (Martins: 1993). Thus, if there is a dialectic relationship between the ways creators and critics interpret values through the mini-series, then it seems that creators see the mini-series for its individual, symbolic capabilities while critics see it relaying what *Brazilian television* wants viewers to believe.

A divergence between the ways creators and critics see the mini-series representing the values of the Brazilian public is apparent in other mini-series as well. For the director of *A Muralha, Um Só Coração* and *Queridos Amigos*, the three mini-series trace a trajectory of Brazilian national values, from the colonial to the military era: "A Muralha ... begins with a land that's going to be tamed. A fantasy, like El Dorado: a land of treasure, of gold. *Um Só Coração* is this city formed. It's rich and in ascension." The first two mini-series, then, are about "Brazil's consciousness of its culture: its excess in the sense of wealth." The last, however, represents "the bankruptcy of all this. The wealth is gone and what remains are individual conflicts with one's being. It is the moment the country enters into sadness." As he synthesizes this trajectory, it moves from the "Brazilian people ... in formation, in

conflict and war" to "our deception ... We didn't arrive where we thought we would" (interviewed August 15, 2008).<sup>23</sup> This director's testimony is different from those above, in that he offers a meta-narrative of the ways Brazilian values were represented in a few mini-series, rather than imparting the symbolic intent of just one. In this sense, critics are consistent in the macro-level view by which they evaluate these mini-series, focusing on generic patterns rather than individual qualities. At the same time, however, to the extent that critics do focus on a mini-series' particular features, they are consistent about calling out its larger irregularities. In *A Muralha*, "there is little interaction between background and figures. It's as if history provided a scenario detached from the human relations that populated it. The typical dress, the tribal scenes might stimulate sedentary imaginations to know history. But the characters wear those typical clothes as if they were dressed as astronauts. The temporality and spatiality are not penetrating the drama" (Hamburger: 2000). Another critic not only sees the divorce between history and human relations in *A Muralha*, but also a lack of rationale for its historical dramatization: "Reality is this: there is not an imposing date that television would waste. Soon, it will make use of history to remind us that this country wasn't made in a day, nor in five centuries" (Martino: 2000). Likewise, a critic considers *Um Só Coração*'s depiction of São Paulo's 'ascent' simplistic and didactic: "Just like the scenario fabricates a beautiful, New Yorkified, São Paulo, the historical research inserted into the fiction like axe blows suggests a city falsely polarized by anarchists and the elegant salons of the bourgeoisie" (Abramo: 2004).

Although creators and critics disagree on interpretive approaches to the ways the mini-series represents important moments in Brazilian history, they do seem to agree that for Brazilian television, the mini-series touches on uncommon themes. Thus a debate opens, which we have seen with creators but that also exists between critics, on the educational capacities of the mini-series, and therefore on the extent to which the value of education can be placed within the remit of Brazilian television. Similar to the discourse above, this debate entails seeking the educational value of individual mini-series and by implication, their value to the educational needs and sensibilities of the Brazilian viewing public. A debate over the educational value of the mini-series also draws on the role of cinema in Brazil, whether this is due to the rarity of cinema in the lives of many Brazilians, or to the educational aspects of film, particularly the documentary, which *Cidade dos Homens* and *Antônia* invoke aesthetically, if not also thematically. Critics, as we might expect, do not hesitate to identify what they consider to be the mini-series' overuse of film's educational qualities: "While cinema has the liberty, at least in theory, to utilize technical competence

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<sup>23</sup> *Queridos Amigos* (*Dear Friends*; Globo 2008) was produced after my data-collection ended. Similar to other mini-series, it represents the uncertainties of living in post-military regime Brazil.

in a more critical form, in television the accuracy of a production, above all those devoted to reconstructing an era, has the weight of a school lesson." Therefore, while the "mini-series has as much right as any other work of fiction to offer interpretations of a historical period", it would "be prudent to abandon the scholarly tone, which lines the story with the intrusions of history" (Abramo: 2004). The advocate of the mastery approach to mini-series creation might think differently, however: "For me, this is praise. I think the mini-series should provide this function ... of educating, instructing or revealing. Obviously, they don't substitute history, books on history. It's not that. I'm not competing with any history professor. It's not that [either]" (interviewed August 8, 2008).

It is worthwhile concluding with a look at a discourse of education concerning *Cidade dos Homens* and *Antônia*, then, both because these mini-series have close relations with film (they were shot on film, and were inspired by and anticipated films) and, paradoxically, because the world they represent is not predisposed to cinema-going in Brazil. We saw earlier the ways in which *Cidade dos Homens* represents official and clandestine forms of authority and resistance in a Rio de Janeiro *favela*. In the previous chapter, we also saw that Acerola and Laranjinha embody decency and integrity in an environment pervaded by cruelty and disparity. As a critic points out, however, it is less these glaring contrasts and more the ambivalent place *between them* in which the protagonists are situated that is the most salient feature of the mini-series:

Acerola and Laranjinha represent an even greater challenge ... they are youth in none of the more or less known places: they are not middle class, they are not criminals, they are not abandoned children. They're two boys, like many others in the periphery of big cities, who touch upon the most terrible marks of social inequality ... but at the same time they insert themselves ... into that which constitutes a kind of 'normalcy' represented by school, by the world of regular work, by consumption (Abramo: 2005).

The educational value of *Cidade dos Homens*, then, is not only the unprecedented view of the *favela* that it provides Brazilian television viewers but also that *favela* residents, and in particular youth, negotiate the same obligations and pleasures as middle-class Brazilians: school, work, consumption. However, the fact that *Cidade dos Homens* relied on the film *Cidade de Deus* for its thematic, technical and aesthetic inspiration is undeniable, such that "if it were up to filmmaker Fernando Meirelles," a critic notes, "this universe would gain a lot more space on the small screen." Quoting Meirelles, the film director, the critic adds: "'For years, society has watched around nine hours a day of television drama about the middle class and this represents only thirty percent of the population'. *Cidade* tells a story about the greater side of the country" (Knoploch: 2003). Thus, it is not only the proximity of *Cidade dos Homens* to film but also the way in which it serves as a proxy for film that gives the mini-series its educational qualities, especially for Brazilians who cannot make

a habit of going to the cinema. This is the point another critic makes, writing: “*Cidade dos Homens* ... should be considered a mark in the history of Brazilian television. If preferred, in our history. Differently than the cinema, which is at the disposal only of those who are disposed to go, on the small screen reality is there, inside the home” (Gonzales: 2002).

The discourse that emerges here is therefore not only about shifting the representation of Brazil’s peripheries from film to television, but also about availing that experience to the otherwise-disposed middle class *and* those unable to attend the cinema in Brazil. This is a discourse pertaining to *Antônia* as well: “It’s clear that the first explicit speculation [about *Antônia*] is ... a divorce between two publics: that of cinema and that of TV.” Probing the motives of these two publics, the critic adds: “spectators who are interested in *Antônia*’s universe – women from the periphery – have been content with the TV series”, especially those who “would not have the habit or conditions to go to the cinema.” However, “the middle-class public that goes to the cinema would only have interest in the periphery if it promises the strong emotions of confrontation and violence.” For this reason, “more than a divorce there’s a communication abyss between the periphery and the center that turns dialogue nearly impossible.” Still, the critic concludes, these “mini-series and films in all are more positive than, we’ll say, the Racionais MCs’ rap, [as they] bet on the possibility, if not of dialogue, then at least of transit” (Abramo: 2007). Another critic would appear to agree that if a dialogue between the peripheries and centers of Brazilian communication is not taking place, then ‘transit’ between modes of representation is. However, his issue is with the methodical manner in which Brazil’s peripheries have been transitioned to the center, and thus Brazilian television’s acritical regard for this entire process:

Brazilian TV is not only averse to inequality. It is, above all, a product of inequality. It competes to perpetuate inequality. It is only ultra-modern because Brazil has needed an ultra-modern imaginary to unite the representations of its children, separated by impassable material rifts. It’s only ultra-modern because Brazil is ultra-unequal ... To portray the outcast, like the *favelado*, does not overcome the causes of exclusion, but only includes the excluded in a world of entertainment. Not in a world of citizenship. The *favelado* becomes a star, that’s all. Because of feelings of guilt or sadism, whatever, the masses enjoy seeing the *favelado* become a star. It allows them peace. The superstar *favelado* is a factor of profit. And of pacification (Bucci: 2002).<sup>24</sup>

The most significant factor in this discourse, then, is neither a film such as *Cidade de Deus* nor the ways in which it has been arguably educational to viewers in transitioning into a mini-series, but Brazilian television itself and the possibility that it could assume a more socially valuable role in Brazil. Thus for a television critic, it is indeed of social value “to create a link between the *favela* and the asphalt, to use actors to re-create the tragedies of [this environment] and to mix reality and fiction in the figures of these actors in scenes in

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<sup>24</sup> *Favelado* is widely used to refer to a *favela* resident, although the term has derogatory connotations.

which they relay stories of violence and are identified as individuals, not as characters." This might give the impression, he continues, that "TV is a public concession", whereas in reality, it is "exploited by private enterprise." Therefore, although "the commitment of a public concession *should* be to the social improvement of the Brazilian people", in Brazil "the objective of the enterprise is profit – at whatever price" (Merten: 2002).

## 6.4 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have identified several ways in which politics, class, family and morals form a discourse of national values in the Brazilian mini-series and through creators and critics' statements. We have just seen a concern of critics that Brazilian television should offer something other than entertainment and reinforce something other than the divides that already characterize Brazil. This is a concern that points to the political implications of not only the mini-series but also of the *telenovela* and film in Brazil, as the latter are the forms against which the mini-series is evaluated for its respective detriment or benefit to Brazilian viewers. What we see, then, is a discourse that engages film and the *telenovela* in evaluating the individual or generic traits of the mini-series. By extension, this discourse becomes a means of interpreting the values of the viewing public and, at the same time, a way of reinforcing or challenging the institutions of cinema and television in Brazil.

This discourse emerged towards the end of this chapter, but it connects with some of the ways that values appeared in the mini-series and emerged through creators and critics' statements earlier in the chapter as well. Of the questions I initially asked, the first was: how are values represented in the Brazilian mini-series, and how can we understand this to reflect Brazilian values? A powerful narrative theme in the mini-series is the dialectic between authority and resistance. Although a fundamental dramatic element, the tension between authority and resistance underscores the mini-series' overall narrative of Brazil, from the founding of the colony to contemporary, day-to-day experience. Moreover, this is a dialectic that often draws on popular Brazilian literature, religion and geography and as a result, invokes popular or grassroots resistance to enduring symbols of civil, political and religious authority in Brazil. Thus, while we could say that Brazilian national values in the mini-series are represented by a dialectics of authority and resistance, this may not be particular to either the mini-series or Brazil. However, the way in which this exchange becomes particular to Brazil is by interweaving its history, myths and cultural symbols, including surprising inversions of power or intersections of alliance and defense. In turn, these unexpected narrative and symbolic reconfigurations of power point to histories of resistance as much as to political ideology such as unity in diversity. This suggests the

ambivalent role of the mini-series as a narrator of important counter-histories in Brazil or as an instrument for conveying a discourse of conciliatory hegemony. In either case, this reflects values that *are* distinct to Brazil, and the continuous negotiation of them.

Creators also contribute to a discourse of authority and resistance, particularly in modes of practice that emphasize the literary or historical authenticity of the mini-series, but at the same time, seek to distance the mini-series from the conventions and perceptions that define the *telenovela*. Within the mini-series itself, however, the rules of literary/historical authenticity, such as those governing the processes of adaptation, can limit creators from introducing elements of contemporary relevance to the text, or otherwise impose norms equivalent to those defining the *telenovela*. However, mini-series creators may respond to these structural or formal demands by calling on intuition, which invokes the subjectivity involved in the process of not only creating the 'unrepeatable' text but also in facilitating a more human set of relations between the mini-series genre, the television medium and Brazilian viewers. Critics may display their own form of resistance to the mini-series and the institution of Brazilian television, however. While the mini-series portrays important and often controversial moments in Brazilian history, which critics recognize in general, they are also wary of the history of Brazilian television, and in particular Globo, in terms of fostering its own value system among Brazilian viewers.

Second, I asked how the values represented in the mini-series might reflect the political, cultural and historical formation of Brazilian values. The mini-series is a continuation of the Latin American romance genre's tradition of depicting political-historical turmoil and change through the intimacy of characters' lives and the familiarity of domestic settings. Within a continuation of this tradition, however, there is the notable difference between centrifugally and centripetally structured narratives, in which the intimacy of characters' conflicts are projected onto the national stage, or conversely, national conflict interpolates itself into the intimate, domestic space. Although consistent with a larger Latin American tradition, then, the way values are represented in the mini-series is in a mode particular to not only the political history of Brazil but also the cultural movements accompanying political eras. We saw this especially illustrated in the shift from the epic, 'foundational' depictions of Brazil as a colony or early republic, to a nation reckoning with the erosion of its economic miracle, to collective anger and disillusionment resulting from a corrupt process of re-democratization. Equally illustrative is the role of the other in the way the mini-series represents Brazil's formation of values, however, which I will return to below when I respond to my final question.

By often representing Brazil's political history in an intimate, domestic mode, there is an analogous debate between creators and critics of the mini-series on the way this practice reflects the values of the viewing public. If we think of this debate as reflecting a politics of practice surrounding the mini-series, then creators take a *textual* and *subjective* position that emphasizes the symbolic authority of the form. They see the ways in which the mini-series engages with viewers' intellectual and interpretive capabilities to look beyond the immediate story, and the ways the form challenges the boundaries of television drama in Brazil. Critics are also aware of, and therefore responsive to, the ways in which the mini-series can resist the formal and institutional norms of Brazilian television. Their position on interpreting the values of the viewing public, however, is one that tends to begin with the generic traits of the mini-series, as well as the larger political-historical structures that a mini-series might try to interrogate. Thus, critics often see the mini-series as delivering broad-brushed strokes over otherwise complex eras or events, thereby underestimating if not limiting the ability of the public itself to interpret the formation of Brazilian values. If creators and critics do agree on any way in which the mini-series can engage with public values, it is the potential the form has to challenge the institution of Brazilian television by pushing the boundaries of what it normally represents.

Third, I asked if we can understand Brazilian national values as 'basic dilemmas', or as a shifting landscape of values in terms of the way they are represented in the mini-series. I have interpreted authority as representing *historic* and *symbolic* dilemmas in terms of the ways the mini-series depicts Brazilian national values. I also indicated that while this is common to many kinds of drama, the way in which authority represents itself as a basic dilemma is to assume specific political-historical shapes, whether real or fictional, in the mini-series. This also means that while blending politics and drama is not unique to the Brazilian mini-series, using such a mixture to portray colonization or authoritarianism is a way of making the basic dilemmas of authority particular to Brazil. However, while we might see authority as representing a basic, although nationally specific, dilemma in the mini-series' representations of Brazilian values, resistance occupies an equally prominent place. Thus, it becomes possible to conceive of resistance as another, basic dilemma – of resisting the imposition of unity in diversity, for instance – and, at the same time, to see resistance as another force illustrated by combining politics and drama, and the real and the fictional, in the Brazilian mini-series. The continuous force of resistance in the mini-series might be better conceived as a narrative of *circumventing* the persistent presence of authority, rather than a dilemma unto itself. What helps to make this distinction clearer is the way the mini-series often avoids offering us decisive victories for resistance, offering instead irresolute, temporary or ambivalent actions against the forces of oppression and

injustice. More than a narrative feature particular to the mini-series, ambivalent victories reflect subtle change in the permanency of certain political, social or institutional forces of authority in Brazil. Therefore, perhaps they also represent subtle change in the ways that frameworks of dominant values have been historically opposed in Brazil.

Finally, I asked what role the other plays in the mini-series' representations of Brazilian national values and particularly, what role the *Brazilian other* takes in relation to the mini-series' representations of politics, class, family and morals. In this chapter, we saw how the role of the Brazilian other shifted from the epic, 'foundational' narratives of colonial Brazil to those situated in the urban, twenty-first century of Brazil. Accompanying this temporal/spatial move was a shift from representing the *externalities* of difference, which we saw in iconic moments of conflict (and harmony) between the Indian or African and the European, to the *internalities* of difference, in which class, family and moral values became ways of defining who was a part of, and who was left behind in, a modernized, global Brazil. At the same time we saw the symbolic process of Brazil's modernization in the mini-series, and therefore the leaving-behind of static, archaic values, we also saw the physical absence of Indian and black Brazilians from its stories. This points to a different but familiar framework of Brazilian national values, which subsumes the presence of the Brazilian other into the larger narrative of a cohesive nation, even if more intimate stories of conflict, betrayal and demise dispute this. However, I also found that after a historical and symbolic period of reckoning with not only totalitarianism but also corrupt attempts to reintroduce democracy to Brazil, the mini-series turned again to representing the place of the Brazilian other in a framework of national values. Here, critics in particular focus on a discourse of education in relation to the ways black Brazilians living in *favelas* have been depicted in film and television. Perhaps the most salient feature of this discourse is that while the Brazilian television mini-series offers an unprecedented means of closing communication gaps between the centers and peripheries of Brazil, the divides between what film and television not only symbolically but also materially represent frustrate this possibility more than they seem to be able to bring it to fruition.

## 7 Genre, Narrative and Nation: Formations of National Identity in the Brazilian Television Mini-series

### 7.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I examine the ways in which national identity is formed in the Brazilian mini-series. As my final empirical chapter, I also draw on the analyses of national culture and values in the previous two chapters in order to examine national identity in this one. Additionally, I approach analyzing formations of national identity in the mini-series on textual-generic and sociocultural levels, as I have done with national culture and values. I have therefore structured this chapter accordingly by first studying the textual features of the mini-series that will help us to understand its identity as a national genre. Second, I look at the ways Brazilian national identity is represented socioculturally in the mini-series through narrative strategies that suggest what it means to be Brazilian.

I ask questions to guide my analysis of the ways that national identity is represented in the mini-series on both textual-generic and sociocultural levels by drawing on ideas from Chapters 1, 2 and 3. First, what textual or generic features of the mini-series suggest the identity of the form, and how do these connect to larger sociocultural issues of national identity in the mini-series' narratives? Second, how is national identity represented in the mini-series by the polarities of difference, and how is it represented by intersectionalities and coalition strategies of identity? Third, how does the mini-series reflect continuity in representations of Brazilian national identity, and how does it reflect change? Finally, in what ways does the mini-series represent continuity and change in Brazilian national identity from a global perspective, bearing in mind dialectics of imitation and originality, backwardness and modernity, and the foreign and national?

As I mentioned, I have divided this chapter into two parts to approach and answer these questions. The first part focuses on genre and language. I look at the textual and generic traditions that have been used to construct the Brazilian mini-series' identity as a genre. Then I examine the ways in which language and literacy serve as elements of a reflexive process of nation building to not only supplement the identity of the mini-series, but also to situate Brazilian identity in a global landscape. In the second part of the chapter, I look at the ways the mini-series' narratives and strategies of narration construct the sense of Brazilian national identity. I first consider polarities between fact and fiction and reality and fantasy, then narrative strategies of multiplicity, ambiguity and circularity, to argue for the *immediacy* of the mini-series' narratives about what it means to be Brazilian.

## 7.2 The Mini-series Genre: Building a Language of National Identity

In Chapter 5, I examined some of the ways that geography and gender form a discourse of national culture in the Brazilian television mini-series. In Chapter 6, I examined forms of authority and resistance in the mini-series' representations of politics, class, family and morals; then, how this dialectic informs a politics of practice for creators and critics of the mini-series. Both chapters touched on issues of national identity, but I have intentionally left examining discourses of Brazilian national identity until this final chapter, in which I incorporate prior discussions of national culture and values. Nevertheless, my approach to analyzing the ways in which national identity is represented in the mini-series makes no assumptions about the form or what it conveys. Therefore, I first consider the aspects of power implicit in constructs of genre, and specifically, the power of a *national language* conveyed by the mini-series' construction as a genre. As we will see, the Brazilian mini-series incorporates an amalgam of generic traditions, some of which we might consider foreign, and others Brazilian. This will allow dialectics of the foreign/national, imitative/original and backwardness/modernity to resurface, as well as the institutional and social divides attached to film and the *telenovela*. As I have done previously, I engage the mini-series, interviews and critical commentary in analysis. In this chapter, however, I attempt to interlace these sources to an even greater extent to understand the ways in which the mini-series constructs a language of national identity.

### 7.2.1 Crime and Cowboys

Since the works of Edgar Allan Poe and Arthur Conan Doyle, the crime/detective genre has had a strong presence in American and European fiction, and has been consistently adapted to film and television. In Brazil, from the 1861 *romance-folhetim*, *Os Mistérios da Roça* (*Mysteries of the Countryside*), based on Eugène Sue's original *Mysteries of Paris*, to the contemporary novels of Rubem Fonseca, Patrícia Melo and Jô Soares, the crime/detective genre has also had a strong presence, and has made its way to film and television. Given Brazil's history of the crime/detective genre, in tandem with the mini-series' use of the nation's political history as a backdrop, it may come as no surprise for a screenwriter to posit that "a police thriller is very interesting, but in an historical context, it is even more worth investing in" (interviewed August 14, 2008). One of his mini-series, *Luna Caliente*, is heavily premised on the crime/detective genre, of which we got a sense in Chapter 6. As an inversion of one of the genre's traditions, however, Ramiro's guilt is evident to the viewer from the start. It is the police who must string together a series of clues in order to

ascertain his culpability, which we know of all along. Moreover, it is the initial crime and subsequent process of detection in *Luna Caliente* that provides a metaphor for the larger political-historical context. Ramiro's crimes – Elisa's rape and Braúlio's murder – occur in his small, southern Brazilian hometown, although we get a sense that they could happen anywhere. As evidence, the flatness of the characters and toxicity of the climate contrast a small-town feel, as if these factors permeate Brazil. When Ramiro becomes a suspect, then, the suspicion surrounding him has less to do with his crimes and more to do with a climate of surveillance and denouncement (see Fig. 7.1). Even incidental figures, such as the boy who spies Ramiro immediately after he dumps the car, or the truck driver who then gives him a lift, reappear at points in which their previous insignificance suddenly has the potential to reverse Ramiro's precarious claim of innocence (see Fig. 7.1). It is not only the crime/detective tradition but also its integration with the political climate which *Luna Caliente* depicts that gives the mini-series both atmospheric and historical weight.

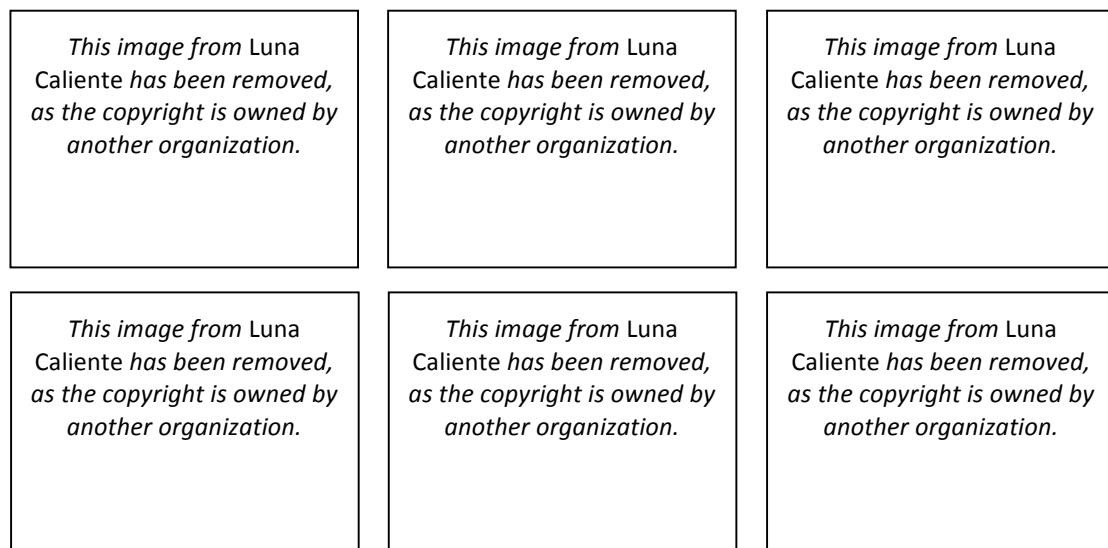
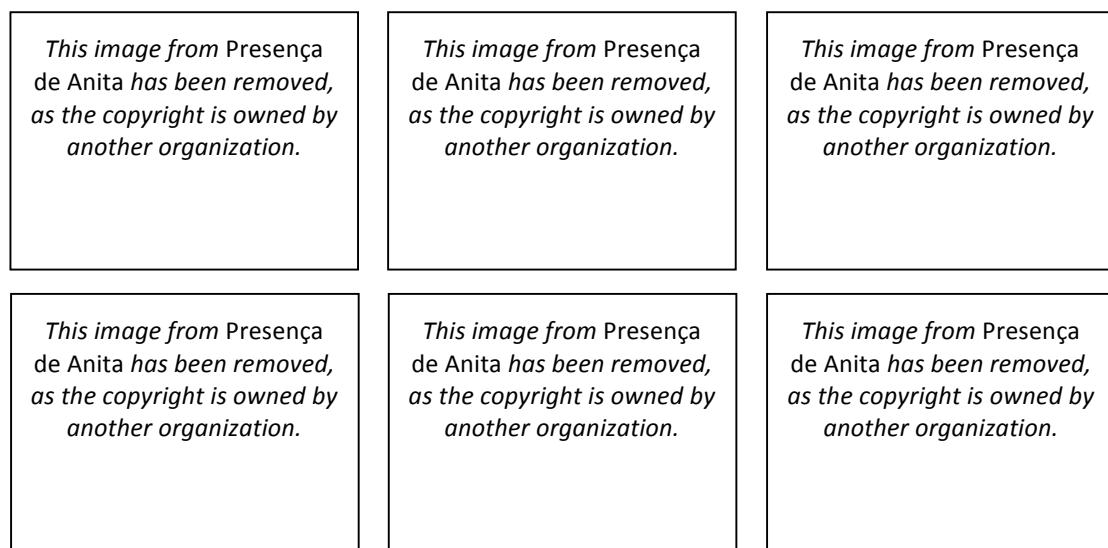


Fig. 7.1: Crime/detective elements underscore *Luna Caliente*'s political climate.

*Presença de Anita* also invokes the crime genre but with very different implications for the social climate it depicts. The mini-series begins in São Paulo with Lucía Helena and her stepdaughter Luzia shopping in the city center. They both come close to being killed in crossfire between criminals and the police, so Lucía convinces her husband Nando to escape with the family to Florença, Lucía's idyllic birthplace. After a reinvigorating stay, the family is returning to São Paulo. But they are nearly killed in an auto accident, and must return to Florença to recuperate. In Florença indefinitely, Nando begins to flirt with Anita, a woman half his age, which soon turns into a torrid, obsessive and violent affair. In the mode of a mystery, Lucía slowly puts together clues that identify Anita as Nando's lover (see Fig. 7.2). More mysteriously, Anita's doll Conchita speaks for her (see Fig. 7.2),

alluding to Anita's past with another, older man named Armando, who remains unseen. "Nothing is coincidence, everything is written" is repeated, paralleled by a clairvoyant's ominous reappearances (see Fig. 7.2), all of which suggest that these elements fit together without a clear idea of the way in which they do. They do come together, however, in a gruesome ending, which adds another narrative element to the crime tradition. Nando, obsessed with, and then enraged by Anita, murders her as the shopkeeper's son watches from across the street (see Fig. 7.2). Attempting to intervene, the boy is instead accused of the murder by the police (see Fig. 7.2). Fleeing, he is hit by a car and killed. Nando is still obsessed with Anita, however, whose presence he imagines returning to provoke him. He goes to Anita's house, which he sets fire to, killing himself in the blaze (see Fig. 7.2). It is not only mystery but also the presence of the true-crime genre that leads a producer to state: "The influence of ... the real-life crime series is having an effect on mini-series [like *Presença de Anita*]" (interviewed November 17, 2006). Indeed, we have seen references to the real-life crime tradition of Brazilian television (starting with the 1968 series *Plantão de Polícia*) in *Decadência*, *Anos Dourados* and *Quem Ama Não Mata*, which conclude not with heroic events but in jolting domestic scenes. Perhaps in addition to intrigue, then, these mini-series convey a sense that crime and violence are part of the everyday fabric of life in contemporary Brazil.



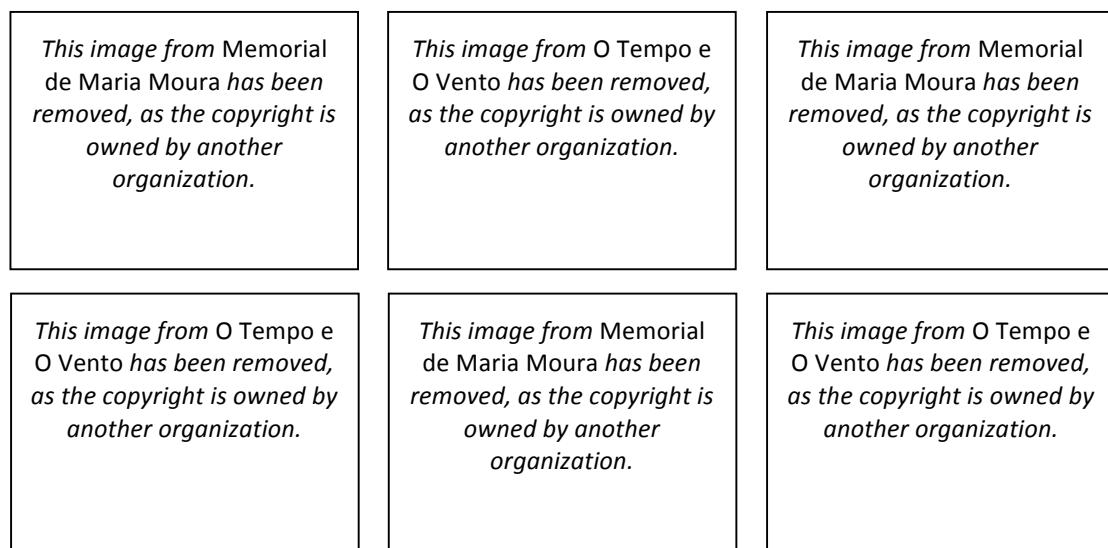
**Fig. 7.2:** Real-life crime meets the murder mystery.

These mini-series also illustrate various ways in which the crime genre has been invoked, thus the different foreign and national traditions used in a diverse subgenre of the mini-series itself. A brief comparison between *Agosto* and *Luna Caliente* also illustrates this. For a screenwriter of both mini-series, Fonesca's demand that the television version of *Agosto* reproduce the novel meant that, "for a mini-series ... it was perfect ... We practically

didn't have to invent a single character. Everything that was there, all the characters in the mini-series, were in the novel." Thus, it was only necessary to provide "structuration, dividing [chapters into] episodes to give a more audiovisual version of a story that was literary." However, despite the aspirations to film *noir* that the director of *Agosto* had, the serial format of the novel and the mini-series prevented it from achieving the standalone quality of film. Very differently, *Luna Caliente* was adapted from a novel by Argentinean writer Mempo Giardinelli; it was made into a film in Argentina in 1985 and was planned as a Brazilian film. In spite of *Luna Caliente* becoming a Brazilian mini-series instead, "we found it was a story that could not be rendered into episodes, ... so we added an entire series of events that were not in the book to create two more." Therefore, "there is a big difference between *Agosto* and *Luna Caliente* ... being adaptable to a mini-series or not" (interviewed August 14, 2008). Additionally, this begins to indicate the limits of adapting crime and other genres to television, whether the original work is foreign or national, or serialized or standalone. In contrast, *As Noivas de Copacabana* and *Sex Appeal*, successful mini-series by the well-known television writers Dias Gomes and Antônio Calmon, both have crime/detective bases. As written-for-television, however, perhaps it was easier to employ the genre's traditions and to integrate the most iconic elements of Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo, thereby conveying not only a national but also a *national televisual* sense of mystery and intrigue.

Similar to crime/detective traditions, while the Western may not be 'native' to Brazilian film, it has a distinct history in Brazil, which includes adaptations to the mini-series. We can recall from Chapter 1 that the Brazilian film industry had a tenuous start, due to the lack of state support and the hegemony of Hollywood. It was not until the 1930s and 40s that the Brazilian film companies Atlântida and Vera Cruz emerged, although interest by the *Estado Novo* involved censorship more than financial support. Nevertheless, distinctly Brazilian film genres came out of the era such as *chanchada*, comprised of popular dramas and burlesque comedies that often satirized Hollywood successes. A large-scale Brazilian film industry could not compete with Hollywood, however, regardless of the extent to which Atlântida or Vera Cruz emulated American models such as the Western, and they went bankrupt. Disillusionment with the aesthetic and commercial failures of large-scale filmmaking in Brazil led to the inception of *Cinema Novo*, which paralleled French New Wave and Italian Neorealism film in its experimental aesthetics and politicized content, focusing on the experience of the poor and excluded, often in Brazil's own wild west, the *sertão*. This entire history informs mini-series such as *Memorial de Maria Moura*, *O Tempo e O Vento* and *A Muralha*. These mini-series invoke the archetypal features of the Western, such as the vast range surrounding a dusty town; constant battles between good and evil;

allegiance, betrayal, remorse and vengeance. A director recalls basing *Memorial*, *O Tempo*, and *A Muralha* on the Western: "There was a period when my sources were the classics ... John Ford was my immersion into the cowboy genre." However, to the extent that the Western shaped this director's aesthetic and narrative vision, so too did *Cinema Novo*, to which she attests: "Although I had the history of cinematographic training much more European, *Cinema Novo* was my cradle, and I think that it's because of this that my soul searches for a Brazilian way of making our history." Thus, it is not only the Western and *Cinema Novo* but also the ways in which these traditions, both foreign and national, have been incorporated and continuously cross-referenced in Brazilian television that lead this producer to reflect: "*O Tempo e O Vento* was my reference to *Memorial de Maria Moura*, the same with the cowboy films on the shelf" (see Fig. 7.3). This intertextuality also leads her to reflect that when "we arrived ... we already had our own references. From the classics of international cinema, we already had our previous mini-series, our big *telenovelas*, we already had our look" (interviewed August 20, 2008).



**Fig. 7.3:** Mini-series, the Western and intertextuality.

A screenwriter of *Memorial* suggests another reason for invoking the Western that is an explicit feature of this mini-series, as well as many others, but that might only implicitly occur to us as a key aspect of the genre: *violence*. "Now, this aspect of violence, I know a lot of mini-series have it. I think it's a successful aspect. In the sense that we put it in a scene, it's as if ... we're going to put it in there. The war scenes, the battles ... We have episodes that are only this ... a war that was written for an entire episode" (interviewed August 4, 2008). The prevalence of violence in *Memorial* did not escape critics either. For some critics, rather than simple luridness, violence imparts a sense of faithfulness to the geography and the era, such as *Memorial*'s 'crudeness': "characters that spit and hit each

other while eating with their hands appear to have come from the most forgotten place in human history" (Scalzo: 1994). This is the case for another critic, who also suggests that *Memorial*'s brutality is not so remote: "*Memorial de Maria Moura* surprises by confronting the ugliness and the brutality of life in the Northeast. Its portrait of imperial Brazil seeks to express with cruelty the brutishness of social relations which, in the end, are not that distant." Moreover, *Memorial* differs sharply from Brazilian television's anesthetized fare: "*Maria Moura* is different because it suggests ... a less glamorous Brazil than we are used to seeing on TV ... actors and costumes follow a line of 'uglification'. Brown, black, dark, dirty, colorless patterns. Faded turbans, old leather boots without socks. Glória Pires and Marcos Palmeira with dirty fingernails. Zezi Polessa ... is mustached" (Hamburger: 1994). If we consider the violent qualities of the mini-series as retaining the integrity of a genre like the Western *and* reflecting the realities of Brazilian life, historically and in the present day, then this leads to a discourse about the legitimate role of violence in the mini-series.

### 7.2.2 Sex, Violence and the Documentary

Given its violence, perhaps it is not surprising that the Brazilian mini-series invokes the horror genre as well. Similar to what we have seen of the crime/detective and Western genres, the ways in which horror appears in the mini-series reflects the 'nativeness' of Brazilian folktales as much as the models of Hollywood film. Perhaps indicative of the hybridity of horror's referents in the mini-series is the career of Brazilian filmmaker José Mojica Marins. Marins began making Westerns and *chanchadas* but evolved into creating horror films featuring Zé do Caixão (Coffin Joe), a vampire-like character who combines *malandragem* with anti-superstitious objectivity. This hybrid characterization of the horror figure has implications for Ramiro's character in *Luna Caliente* as well: a 'Cartesian man' and a political exile, a rapist and a murderer. These internal character conflicts appear to haunt Ramiro in a particularly horrific scene of *Luna Caliente*. The scene suddenly shifts from color to black-and-white; we hear the eerie squeak of a gate closing and tense music begins to play. Ramiro, entering a police station, hands over Elisa's underwear, which he took after raping and murdering her. Abruptly, Ramiro appears seated in a chair; nodes and wires are attached to his head. He is being electrocuted for Elisa's murder: his right eye is a bloody socket; sparks and smoke emanate from his head (see Fig. 7.4). However, it is only a dream, as is Elisa's death. She not only pursues Ramiro unrelentingly, but she scripts his fate. Similar to the antiheroes of horror film, we only glimpse Elisa's fanatical inner-self: "At every moment, she appears in a different form ... ingenuous, seductive, passionate, diabolic, cynical. Her unpredictability is exactly what leads Ramiro to lose his equilibrium" (Lee: 1998).

Very differently, *Incidente em Antares* comes across as a spoof of *Night of the Living Dead*. Seven former residents of the fictitious city of Antares rise from the dead to avenge the incestuous corruption and deceit that led to their deaths. Gripping music blares as we are confronted with close-up shots of their ghastly faces (see Fig. 7.4). However, *Antares* was adapted from a 1971 novel by the Brazilian writer Érico Veríssimo. Its use of horror and the fantastic is a metaphorical statement against the kinds of restrictions enacted by the military government. Additionally, in 1994, when the mini-series aired, it served as a surreal reminder of corruption in the recently deposed Collor administration. Finally, the mini-series *Hoje É Dia de Maria* invokes the unsettling qualities of Brazilian folklore and childhood fables. Fleeing from an abusive stepmother and inebriate father, the girl Maria encounters a host of mythical figures, one of whom follows her, changing at whim from a playful satyr into a diabolical menace (see Fig. 7.4).

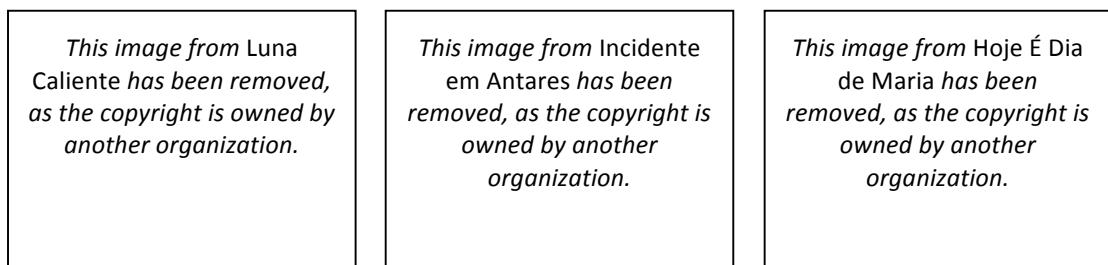


Fig. 7.4: Horror in the mini-series.

In the generic mode of violence, the Brazilian mini-series invokes the sex/thriller genre as well, which a few mini-series especially assimilate. In *Presença de Anita*, the sex scenes between Anita and Nando follow a trajectory we have seen in Hollywood standards such as *Fatal Attraction*: from lust to obsession to death (see Fig. 7.5). More in a mode of social commentary, however, we also follow Lucía's racist sister Marta's passage from loathing to longing for black hired hand André (see Fig. 7.5). In *Riacho Doce*, outsiders Carlos and Eduarda move to the isolated village Riacho Doce, where they encounter Vó Manuela. Manuela dominates the village and its men, especially her grandson Nô, whose previous female suitors committed suicide or went mad. Nô sexually entices Eduarda, and their affair prompts her to try to topple Manuela (see Fig. 7.5). In an ending reminiscent of *The Crucible*, and of the backwardness of rural, apocalyptic Brazil, Manuela rallies the village in an effort to stone the adulterous Eduarda to death. The sex/thriller assumes historical proportions in the mini-series as well. We know of the protagonists' incestuous affairs in *A Muralha* and *Os Maias*, yet these are concealed until their devastating revelations in the end. In *Anos Rebeldes*, the tempestuous affair between the rebellious Inácio and wealthy

Natália seems doomed when Fábio, Natália's regime-backing husband, discovers it and sends the military police after Inácio in an effort to kill him (see Fig. 7.5). And in JK, the fictitious affair between Juscelino Kubitschek and Marisa Soares threatens to destroy the nation (see Fig. 7.5), conjuring rumors about 2006 presidential candidates' infidelities.

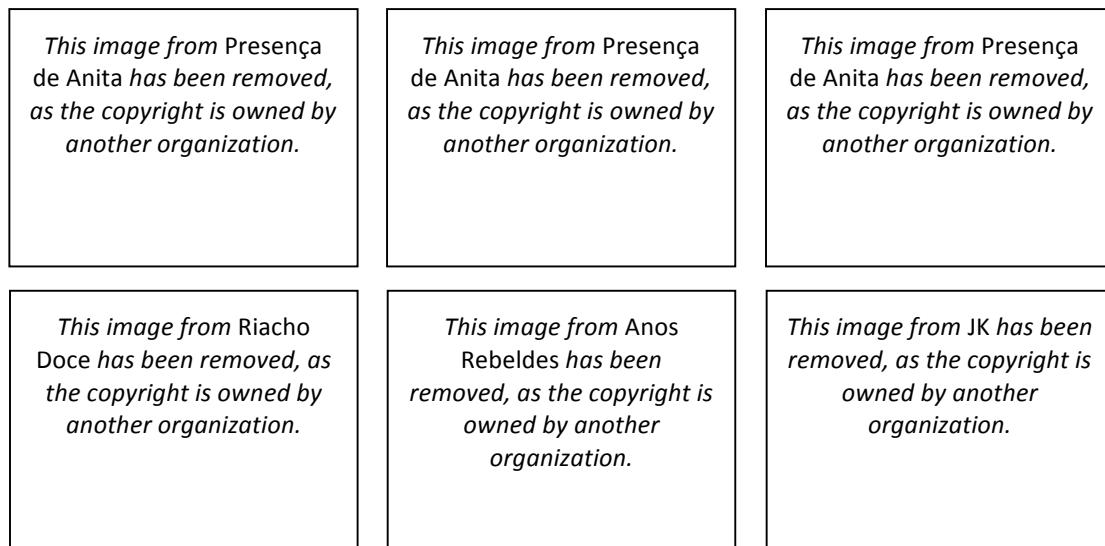


Fig. 7.5: The sex/thriller in the mini-series.

As I suggested above, although the pervasiveness of sex and violence in the mini-series is engaging, it also imparts explicit dimensions of Brazilian reality, both historically and in the present day. In contemporary Brazil, *Cidade dos Homens* depicts Brazilian reality in a particularly graphic way and also invokes different literary and film genres. The episode "Sábado" ("Saturday") opens with young people in the *favela* preparing for a *baile funk*<sup>25</sup> that night (see Fig. 7.6). At the *baile*, cocaine circulates freely while men and women flirt with each other. Rapid, hand-held camera shots alternate with still images of women the protagonists fancy, but with whom their advances fail (see Fig. 7.6). This humorous tone suddenly switches to the perspectives of the women being pursued, however. In voice-overs, they tell us about their first sexual experiences. One woman recounts sexual abuse; another remembers sex with a cousin, ending in pregnancy and an abortion (see Fig. 7.6). Voice-overs of the young men follow, relaying sexual conquest. Suddenly, a fight erupts between two women over the DJ's affections. The woman who loses is dragged behind the *baile* to *Vietnã*, or 'Vietnam', where her hair is violently cut off (see Fig. 7.6). Another fight, much larger and more vicious, erupts between men (see Fig. 7.6). This loser will not go to *Vietnã*, the protagonists inform us, but to the *microonda*, or the 'microwave', where punishment is dealt in the form of execution. The next day, Acerola boasts to his friends about last night's many sexual conquests, which they laughingly dismiss. As if typical of

<sup>25</sup> For an explanation of funk, see pages 73 – 74. A *baile* is the 'ball' at which funk artists perform.

any Saturday, the episode ends with friends reminiscing about it. Beneath this innocuous ending, however, is another story. It has been offered as part *bildungsroman*, part teenage romance, but mostly a documentary about sex and violence among young Brazilians in a *favela*. And although “Sábado” is indeed shocking, it reveals many, otherwise unknown dimensions of everyday life for millions of young Brazilians.

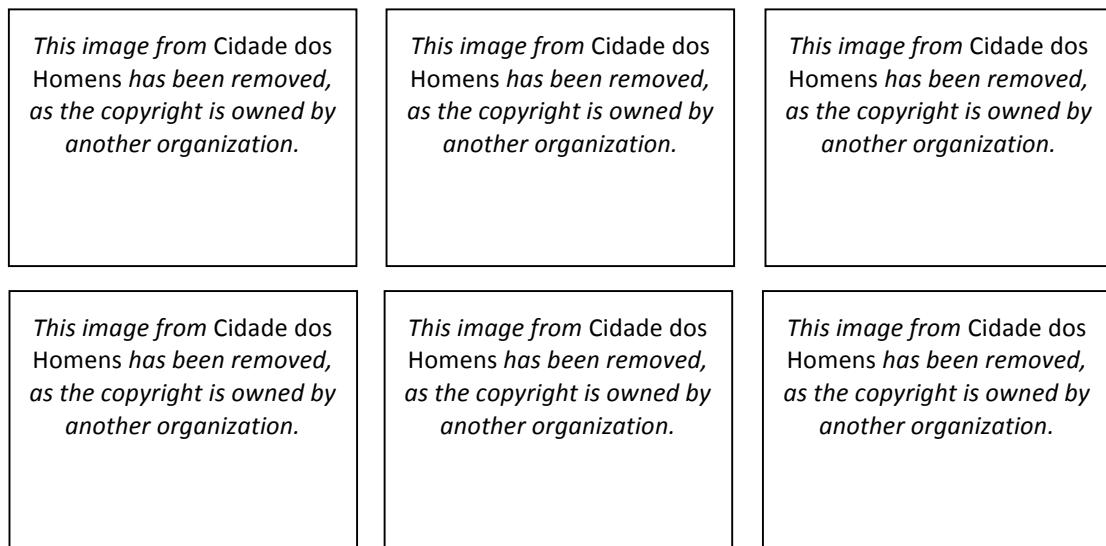


Fig. 7.6: Sex and violence represent another side of Brazilian reality.

The ways in which critics respond to the explicitness of the mini-series are telling, as they seem to depend on whether sex and violence are gratuitously or ‘legitimately’ invoked. For a critic of *Cidade dos Homens*: “It’s highly probable the television viewer has already seen ... 1) corrupt police ... 2) nude women; 3) cold-blooded murder ... 4) people smoking marijuana. More difficult is to have seen all of this in ... 52 minutes.” However, “all of this, at the same time, should not be considered an appeal to sensationalism and instead a sincere and honest attempt to reflect Brazilian reality” (Merten: 2003). *O Quinto dos Infernos*, which invoked not only the *chanchada* genre but also the *pornochanchada* films of the 1970s and early-80s in order to depict the liberal sexual practices of Emperor Pedro I, was received very differently by critics. According to one, the overt sexual content of *O Quinto dos Infernos* “is a brusque detour from original significance.” Moreover, the mini-series’ emphasis on prurience over historical interest is “in very bad taste”, such that “the entire historical scenario is so superficial, most of episodes could fit into any context or any period” (de Menezes: 2002). Different still is the way *Luna Caliente*’s graphic qualities prompted a critic to “call [our] attention ... to the nude scenes of adolescent Elisa and the powerful sequence in which she is attacked by Ramiro.” However, the explicitness of the mini-series is rationalized by the comparison: “One thing is to be nude in a graphic scene like that and another is to appear naked on the wall of a service station.” Therefore, *Luna*

*Caliente* makes it evident that: "All the scenes were broken-apart, filmed with care ... It does not compare with domestic films, where the director sets up a rolling camera and says, 'Now go until the end'" (Soares: 1999). The mini-series' use of sex and violence is thus as much a testimony to Brazilian reality as it is an irreverent revision of history or a legitimization of the frankness of film brought to television. In fact, it is the way in which the mini-series seems to provide a balance between the false realities of television and the real but remote experiences of film that opens another discourse about the proximity and distance between these forms and the mini-series.

### 7.2.3 *Telenovela and Film: The Proximity and Distance of Generic Identity*

Given the ambivalent position of the mini-series between the *telenovela* and film, creators and critics debate its relation to these forms. A screenwriter of films and mini-series sees the link between these forms as legitimate. Between the *telenovela* and film, however: "If you pick up a *novela*, you are going to see the cinematographic references are direct ... even half-awkward at times. They're so obviously shameless copies of some plot from a story obviously directly from film. Even the *novela* titles are copied ... without any shame whatsoever" (interviewed August 4, 2008). Some creators, then, like to think of the mini-series in terms of its filmic traits but not in terms of its serialized, melodramatic 'roots' in the *telenovela*. However, the most successful mini-series among audiences, *Quem Ama Não Mata* and *Anos Dourados*, employed the narrative qualities and production techniques of the *telenovela*, such as a close-knit circle of families and friends, primarily indoor sets, and the emotive effects of close-up and lingering shots. More conflicting is the way in which critics praised *Agosto* and *Os Maias* for their cinematic techniques *and* for their *telenovela*-like narrative modes. A commentator writes about *Agosto*: "Accustomed to a *novelaesque* narrative, it is feared Globo will adulterate the original work by creating cliffhangers to secure an audience for the next episode" (Franco Pinto: 1993). Another critic recommends "paying attention to the language of television in much of the framing and camerawork of *Os Maias*," however, which he finds more acceptable than "the risk of cinematographic exacerbation occurring under the direction of Luíz Fernando Carvalho" (d'Abreu: 2001).

As we know historically, the *telenovela* and mini-series do share several generic traits, as do the mini-series and the Brazilian series, in spite of a discourse of practice that seems ambivalent about this. Thus from the viewpoint of creators, who privileged a micro-level view of the mini-series' larger sociocultural value in the previous chapter, in this context they do see an underlying link between the mini-series and *telenovela*, despite their mixed opinions about working on the latter form. The same screenwriter as above, trained in

film and critical of the overtly imitative traits of the *telenovela*, describes the basic quality that they share: “there is a moment at which you have to be faithful to a certain structure. At that time, you begin to understand ... not running the risk of remaining so precisely literary, because film and television have to find the image that is action. They have to translate this into another form” (interviewed August 4, 2008). We might begin to think of the ‘image that is action’ as a trait common to not only film and the *telenovela*, but more generally to qualities we might consider *cinematic* or *televisual*. This is a quality, in other words, that takes shape through the intimate, emotive scenes of *Anos Dourados* or *Quem Ama Não Mata* as much as the cinematic style of *Os Maias* or *Agosto*. We might therefore think of the *image as action* as common to the singular character of film and the serialized nature of the *telenovela*. The way in which the mini-series employs the image as action in both capacities is evident in other critiques of *Agosto*. “With ‘Agosto’, Globo shows that its ‘standard of quality’ is elastic and could always be a little more meticulous. *Agosto* remains halfway between film and television, indicating a line that could be explored in a more radical manner”. Furthermore, as this critic argues her position, this “is not a case of making self-righteous criticism, biased and resentful in defense of national film. On the contrary, television is television and film is film. And ‘Agosto’, without a doubt, ... goes in search of film” (Hamburger: 1993b).<sup>26</sup>

As a means of confirming the way the image as action characterizes the *telenovela*, as well as the ways in which the mini-series can appropriate its *worst* traits, a critic describes the *telenovela* by its “infinity of episodes ... dependency on public opinion ... and bedroom-and-living room schemes”, which is exactly what *Os Maias* resorted to in “an adaptation decision reinforcing the flaws of the final part, wounding the universe of Eça with ‘big-bangs’ and upsetting above-average results.” Moreover, “The romanticism Eça satirized so much in the book ends up shrouding the mini-series. What a shame” (Piza: 2001). This also indicates that meeting the expectations of the public while incorporating bedroom-and-living room schemes, cinematic treatment and relevant social or cultural themes is a near-impossible task. Creators are aware of the difficulties in meeting these requirements in their work. A producer of many *telenovelas* and mini-series, including *Os Maias*, refers to dual-modes of ‘sophistication’ as a way of imparting two different but interconnected senses of image as action in the *telenovela* and the mini-series. The first

...is in the sense of the scale of production. In the sense of car accidents. In the sense of scenes difficult to film in the middle of the street. Imagine the eight-o’clock *telenovela*, *Paginas da Vida*, beginning with a car crash at the beach at Leblon ... On the other hand there are authors who are sophisticated in the manner that they write, in the delicacy

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<sup>26</sup> ‘Standard of quality’ (*padrão de qualidade*) is TV Globo’s operating principle, in use since the network’s relationship with Time-Life in the early 1960s.

of the script. They write a scene, for example, in five pages of really delicate text ... So this is also a form of sophistication. And it also influences the question of what we had to face in putting that mini-series on the air (interviewed December 5, 2006).

Other creators are also aware of attempting to reach a balance between delicacy and big-bang elements, particularly in regards to public appeal. For a screenwriter of many mini-series this means that, "Above all, I have opportunities to make a snapshot of history or literature and present it to the public in a language at the same time sophisticated and popular" (interviewed August 8, 2008). For another screenwriter, this involves arriving at a 'middle term' in which: "As a first step, you look to get the essence of the book. At the second moment, you forget the book completely ... There has to be a middle term. In the end, fidelity can end up running over the results of the audiovisual work" (interviewed August 4, 2008). However, this is neither an easy nor a consistent process, especially as some creators believe that the mini-series has changed into something less sophisticated than it used to be: "Mini-series always meant a kind of quality ... We made them with more care, with more time, [they were] more sophisticated products." A main reason for this change, he adds, is due to the fact that "the fight for audiences today is more violent ... Mini-series tend to become increasingly more popular and so I think they're becoming less sophisticated." Nevertheless, "the mini-series I think work out are those that manage to reconcile a certain artistic quality with popular appeal" (interviewed July 31, 2008).

Returning to critics' comments helps to clarify the ways in which artistic quality can be reconciled with popular appeal, and perhaps in a manner that has not resonated with the public since the enduring appeal of mini-series such as *Anos Dourados* or *Quem Ama Não Mata*. For critics, it seems that *Cidade dos Homens* and *Antônia* achieve this reconciliation, due to their sophisticated approach to representing the urban peripheries of Brazil. As a critic frames *Antônia*, "first off, the series is about protagonists who are female and black; secondary characters are men and women and children equally black; the accent is from the São Paulo periphery, punctuated with the very São Paulo [term of endearment] 'meu'; and the big city's 'skyline' is always a distant vision." Second, "none of this is usual for television ... To give visibility to the invisible is (almost always) a merit, but the risk of socio-anthropological reduction is immense. Only *Antônia*, in a non-reductive tone, offers more" (Abramo: 2006). *Cidade de Deus* is also applauded for being "a notable renovation of what we see on Globo ... with a story of 'real' *favelados* interpreted by 'real' young men about 'real' themes in a surprising and disturbing mode of narrating" (Bucci: 2002). Very different from the mini-series *Anos Dourados* and *Quem Ama Não Mata*, however, whose sophisticated narratives and themes are relayed through the familiar format and style of the *telenovela*, *Cidade dos Homens* and *Antônia* are the products of or inspirations for film,

as we saw in the previous chapter. Thus, it appears that in order to decipher the balance between popular appeal and sophistication, at least in these mini-series, we must revisit the antagonisms between film and the *telenovela*.

#### 7.2.4 The Uses of Language and Literacy in Constructing National Identity

So far, I have discussed textual and generic features of the mini-series that present a few contradictions regarding what is original or imitative about it, but that nevertheless give the mini-series a particular profile in Brazil's broadcast space. I have also discussed the ways creators and critics construct a discourse of the proximity and distance of film and the *telenovela* to the mini-series, which although equally undecided, further provides the mini-series with a language of identity. Continuing, I look at the ways in which language is used in the mini-series in a less generic and more particular sense: through vocabulary, speech, writing and other forms of literacy that contribute to Brazilian national identity.

We have seen the ways in which the mini-series combines foreign and national film and literary genres, and the distance or proximity that creators and critics ascribe to the mini-series' relations with film and the *telenovela*, both of which give it debatable but perhaps decidedly Brazilian characteristics. The ways in which language is more literally used in the mini-series is also contradictory and distinct. *A Muralha* begins with a language *mêlée* reflecting the population of the nascent colony. Portuguese, Tupi-Guarani and Hebrew languages not only divide colonizers from Indians but also colonizers from themselves. *Escrava Anastácia* conveys conflict through different languages as well. In the first part of *Anastácia*, only Yoruba is spoken. We first hear Portuguese when slavetraders invade Oju Orun's village, the language reinforcing their violent presence. In *Um Só Coração*, Arabic, Japanese, German, Italian and Spanish are all spoken to signify the 'melting pot' of São Paulo and the diverse contributors to its multicultural identity. In a particularly symbolic scene, David, the German-Jewish war survivor, reunites with the Brazilian Maria Laura after a long separation. In halting Portuguese he utters *saudade* to describe how much he missed her<sup>27</sup>, invoking the resonance of this word to represent his becoming Brazilian. In a different parlance but also symbolic, "Buraco Quente", the title of a *Cidade dos Homens* episode, signifies both 'bullet hole' and 'problem', literally and figuratively framing the protagonists' dilemma of trying to extricate a cousin from drug-trafficking. The titles of other episodes, such as "Tem Que Ser Agora" ("It Has To Be Now"), recall particular but perhaps not very well-known songs from MPB, or Brazilian popular music.

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<sup>27</sup> *Saudade* variously means longing, nostalgia or missing. Perhaps it is the very imprecision of the word that resonates with Brazilians, such that 'Dia da Saudade' is celebrated January 30 in Brazil.

As we might expect, television writers are critical about the use of language in the mini-series, but this reveals both the importance of language to cultural identity and the role that Brazilian critics play in imparting this to the public. A critic notes the unconvincing way in which an *Um Só Coração* actor supplanted his *carioca* accent with an overdone São Paulo one (Mattos: 2004a). Another jokes: "There are various screws loose in the gearbox. Érik Marmo, so Rio de Janeiro and so inexperienced, does not convince us as Martim, the romantic partner of Yolanda [Penteado]" (Monzillo: 2004). Yet another critic is concerned with the insincerity of the Portuguese used in *Os Maias'* rendition of nineteenth-century Lisbon: "the most audible symptom is the ... abominable attempt to imitate a Portuguese accent and, instead of this, the attempt to construct a foreign and old-world atmosphere by way of [Brazilian] vocabulary and syntax" (Guimarães: 2001). However, creators are not impervious to the implications of language for representing Brazilian identity, which includes the importance of regionalism to national identity. A screenwriter of *Memorial de Maria Moura* recounts how the novel's "literary cues took us to the rural northeast at the beginning of the nineteenth century." But he was also aware of potentially imparting the cultural identity of the *sertão* in an insincere way. Thus, "we didn't worry ourselves with characterizing an absolute regionalism. We opted not to stress regional accents to create a more universal environment, more the face of Brazil" (interviewed July 31, 2008).

In fact, we can take the sincere and insincere implications of the use of language for the mini-series' representations of Brazilian national identity even farther. This will recall its relationship with the *telenovela* from the previous section, as well as the values placed on the mini-series and *telenovela* from the previous chapter. In this context, it is not just the language employed in the mini-series, but also the language that the mini-series *itself* inserts into the institutional space of Brazilian television. *Memorial de Maria Moura*, for instance, "is not only a rare pleasure for the public, but principally helps to demystify the thesis that television tells us more about actors' physical attributes than dramatic talent." Thus, although "the cruelty of characters' behavior in a hostile environment reinforces compositional types", this occurs "without slipping into cliché." Moreover, this suggests a relationship between the sincerity of the form itself and the desire of actors to work in mini-series productions: "Actors praise the series format, which has a beginning, middle and end known to them from the start of filming, enabling the work of comprehending a character, different from work in *novelas* in which there are sudden changes in direction" (Penna Firma: 1994). Indeed, we could even translate some of the unattractive qualities of mini-series narratives into the unusual presence of the physical deformities of Lampião in *Lampião e Maria Bonita*, or the Salvador street children in *Capitães da Areia*, for instance.

In these mini-series, physical deformities are not simply about retaining the historical or literary authenticity of the figure or work, but also about relaying the abject conditions of the *sertão*, or public indifference to children living on the streets of Brazilian cities.

Another way in which to interpret the mini-series' literal and symbolic uses of language in the Brazilian broadcast space is through the idea of literacy. Literacy not only implies the literary adaptation, although this is a distinct feature of the Brazilian mini-series in a country in which engaging with literature often occurs through television. Literacy also signifies the power of reading, writing, deciphering and discovering: a strong narrative component of, as well as a significant discourse concerned with, several mini-series. In *A Muralha*, it is the *illiteracy* of the early colony that stands out. Equally pronounced, then, is the power of Padres Miguel and Simão in converting the Indians to Christianity, the incursions of the slave-seeking *bandeirantes* into their mission, and the eventual expulsion of the Jesuits from Brazil. *Memorial de Maria Moura* likewise stresses the illiteracy of the bleak *sertão*, in which Padre José thus serves as scribe and orator everywhere he goes. In contrast, pen, ink, paper, books and the act of writing are continuous visual cues in *Os Maias*, emphasizing the mini-series' literariness and its adaptation from the work of Eça de Queiróz. But *Os Maias* is notable for the ways in which it draws the viewer into these simulated acts of literacy. Although we are aware of their incestuous relationship, Maria Eduarda and Carlos Eduardo eventually notice that the handwriting in letters from their respective mothers is the same, intensifying and soon erupting the plot. Friends Cruges and Ega discover Carlos Eduardo and Maria Eduarda's incestuous affair before they do, but they hide other, revealing letters in a bookcase. The narrator returns, foreshadowing: "the truth, hidden amongst books, will become the words of a book itself."

The narrative modes of and symbolic references to literacy allow a discourse of education to resurface among creators and critics of the mini-series. The prolific screenwriter who advocates the mastery approach to creating mini-series is aware of this discourse, as well as of the way in which it is debated by critics: "In general, the critics say I'm didactic. But I'm didactic because I *want* to be didactic! I think it's important to be didactic since when I write, I don't write for the critics, I write for the greater public." Moreover, and perhaps as a reflection of the dual sophisticated/popular dimensions of the image as action, this screenwriter claims to "introduce the history of Brazil to a Brazil that does not know its own history", which she supports with both the overall success of *Um Só Coração* and the surge of public interest in Brazilian modern art due to the mini-series' heavy focus on it (interviewed August 8, 2008). As evidence, a critic jokingly asks, "'is this the museum of the *novela*?' In a serious tone, he continues: "Since the beginning of the mini-series *Um*

*Só Coração* ... the Museum of Contemporary Art at the University of São Paulo ... has had a significant increase in visitors in search of works by the artists" (Cypriano: 2004). Indeed, other mini-series creators make similar claims to have driven the public to bookshops and libraries due to the television success of *Memorial de Maria Moura*, *A Muralha*, *Agosto* and *Engraçadinha*, among other adaptations.

However, while critics may relate the popularity of a mini-series to an increased interest in the literature from which it was adapted, they do not agree on the implications of this for the idea of public literacy. "It cannot be denied the important social role television has played in bringing books to the living room, increasing sales of works shown during prime time and ... stimulating a taste for literature." Moreover, the mini-series provides critics the opportunity to recommend certain literature: "To those with the healthy habit of reading the book before seeing it summarized on TV ... now is the time to go to the bookshop for *Madona de Cedro* by Antônio Callado or *Memorial de Maria Moura* by Rachel de Queiróz ... We will wait for them, well informed" (Freitas: 1994). It is possible that the mini-series could even serve as a proxy for the book: "When it was published at the end of 1992, *Memorial de Maria Moura* the book became an unexpected publishing success ... Now, *Memorial de Maria Moura* the series ... has everything necessary to repeat the same success." Furthermore, "in what could be seen as a risky endeavor ... *Memorial de Maria Moura* has acquired a television version without losing its best literary qualities" (Santos Reis: 1994). In contrast, other critics see the mini-series as not only promoting bad books but also as similarly resuscitating over-inflated expectations:

A certain thrill accompanies the emergence of new technologies. More than 50 years after the invention of television, the many possible relations established between what was then a new medium and literature still offer fertile terrain for speculating about the (in)determinacies of technology for social life. *A Muralha* constitutes such a case, in which the mini-series replicates the weaknesses of the novel (Hamburger: 2000).

If we shift this debate among critics about the implications of the mini-series for literacy in Brazil to a debate among creators, we see relatively divided viewpoints. On one hand, the prolific director with the trademark approach to mini-series creation sees her work as unfettered by formal conventions. As long as it retains her trademark, it will work within a broader language with which the public can identify: "Novelas, mini-series, specials, all these forms are stimulating ... But in my work, I don't differentiate forms. Whichever of these carries my mark, it means ... being closer to the public's emotions. They might be simpler each time, but they're profoundly sophisticated in the details of character, setting and photography." For each work, then, "I want to talk about a very specific universe, ... [then] transform all of this into a little of all Brazilians ... to bring ... the synthetic details to the whole formation of those people" (interviewed August 20, 2008). Another prolific

mini-series director would agree, in that facilitating the public's ability to identify with a particular work is the "consequence of artistic action." However, "many times, audiences don't relate the value of the content to the artistry of the project, but to a general mode of epic mini-series, the mini-series where there is a grandiose view of production and of the mode in general." Thus, "I work for a better audience, because this means my success" (interviewed August 15, 2008).

On another hand, creators consider each mini-series to be as unique as the literature from which it is adapted, thus not a form that can be extrapolated to 'a little of all Brazilians', much less their 'whole formation'. Moreover, it is not the ways in which audiences might overlook the relation between the value of the content and the artistry of the project, but rather the resistance of Brazilian television to engage in regional vocabularies and other modes of local representation. A screenwriter considers the potential of the mini-series to engage in alternative modes of production:

The mini-series is an audiovisual form with very interesting possibilities for the public ... A big contribution from the audiovisual community would be to come up with a new television, one more open to independent productions ... There could be a large number of quality regional mini-series produced in the south, the north, the northeast, the west ... offering differentiated visions of this country ... more than the *telenovela* usually offers. I have the impression that the Brazilian mini-series has a face, a certain tradition, which could be explored by providing more variety to Brazilian television (interviewed August 14, 2008).

If there is a point on which creators agree, it is on returning to a mode of production that engages with Brazilian literature and the ways in which it reflects distinct dimensions of Brazilian experience. Thus, even the director who asserts that the "Brazilian mini-series doesn't have a specific definition" remembers when "it used to be dedicated to Brazilian literature, and I think we should return to this universe." The reason for this, she adds, is that "we need to relearn to look inward. We achieved our national identity, but lost the individual ... in a frightened twenty-first century. We need to talk about this: the lost Brazilian, de-characterized by global pressures. So it is important that the mini-series ... does this, since we have good stories to tell" (interviewed August 20, 2008). If this does suggest a point of convergence between creators on how to represent the issues of what it means to be Brazilian, then the question that surfaces is how to go about this. Therefore, I next look at narratives and modes of narration that provide specific shape to the way that Brazilian national identity is represented in the television mini-series.

## 7.3 Narratives, Narration and Formations of National Identity

In the previous section, I discussed some of the ways in which genre and literacy help to construct the identity of the Brazilian mini-series, as well as the discourse this generates about the relations between language and the mini-series in Brazil's broadcast space. In this section, I focus on narratives and narration strategies in the mini-series, as well as on the discourses they generate, as other modes of representing Brazilian national identity. More specifically, I identify and discuss three narrative/narration strategies deployed in the mini-series' representations of national identity. The first is the tension between fact and fiction and reality and fantasy, which in broader terms poses *factual* and *interpretative* representations of Brazilian national identity against each other. The second is the use of multiplicity, circularity and ambiguity in the mini-series' narratives, which suggests the *inconclusiveness* and *ambivalence* of a meta-narrative of Brazilian national identity, despite the finiteness of mini-series stories and the closed form itself. The third strategy, which I refer to as the *immediacy* of a national narrative, reflects not only the ways in which the mini-series narrates Brazil's stories but also serves as a mechanism of self-narration in a national and a global capacity, and in a mode that perhaps only this form can offer.

### 7.3.1 Fact and Fiction, Reality and Fantasy

As we have seen, a key feature of the mini-series is the way it narrates political and social histories through an intimate, often domestic, perspective. Moreover, we have seen that the latter is often a fictitious perspective through which we see and come to understand the significance of real people and events. Immediately, this places discourses of the real and factual in tension with constructs of the fictitious and fantastical. While this tension likely describes the television mini-series in general, the elements of the real/factual and fictitious/fantastical that the Brazilian mini-series employs, and therefore the dimensions of Brazilian identity that it brings into question, are distinct to Brazil. Both the elements involved in and the significance of this factual/fictitious discourse become clearer with a look at *A Muralha*, *Os Maias*, *Agosto* and *Um Só Coração* in comparison with *Luna Caliente*, *Pastores da Noite* and *Incidente em Antares*. While the narrative strategies of the former are driven by factuality, the latter are guided by strategies of interpreting Brazilian reality.

The entire premise of *Luna Caliente* is the difficulty in discerning between what Ramiro (and we) *imagined* happening and what *actually* happened. In a memorable scene, Braúlio pulls a pistol on Ramiro, having discovered that he raped and murdered Elisa. The car window behind Ramiro explodes as Braúlio fires. Suddenly, Ramiro, and we, 'wake' to realize that the exploding sound is the inebriated Braúlio's bottle hitting the ground after

he dropped it. In addition, the plot is frequently interrupted by incongruous, dream-like sequences, such as the electrocution I described above, or Ramiro approaching a foreign border, events which later become relevant even if still proven ‘untrue’. The incredulity of the police at Ramiro’s multiple, unshakable alibis (“You’re a phenomenon!”) is further evidence of a general ambiguity between fantasy and reality. In fact, the entire narrative is a nightmarish allusion to the military era, underscored by the gap between the years in which the novel and mini-series were first written (1983 and 1998, respectively), and the fact that the mini-series did not air until 1999, one year later. Therefore, questions of what really happened, or how memory can serve to ‘verify’ this, become even more significant.

*Incidente em Antares* is even more incredible, especially for the living residents of Antares. Thus, when the living dead are ineffective in settling their unresolved scores and must unceremoniously return to their coffins, life in Antares soon returns to normal. As with *Luna Caliente*, this leads to questions of what substantiates reality when it is distorted by fantasy, particularly the more distant, and therefore the less factual, that reality becomes. Again, although it was written at a time when the military dictatorship was very real for Brazil, the novel and especially the mini-series raise questions of remembering, or rather forgetting, the horrors of that period as they become increasingly distant. We recall from Chapter 6 how in *Pastores da Noite*, Massu is able to baptize his son by circumventing the power of Catholic Church and the fervency of *candomblé*. In the end, no one except Massu knows what happened or can attest to possessions or apparitions. We do receive Massu’s surreptitious nod and wink, however, implicating us in his circumvention, regardless of how fantastic it may have been. The theme of religious ‘fact’ and fantasy is evident in the mini-series *O Auto da Compadecida* (*The Compassionate Self*) as well. A play first written by Ariano de Suassuna in 1955, *Auto* draws on popular literature and catholic traditions in the northeast of Brazil. In the mini-series, *malandros* Chicó and João live off their wits and the gullibility of the inhabitants of a forsaken *sertão* village, until the *cangaceiro*<sup>28</sup> Severino invades, killing João. At the gates of Heaven, João encounters the Virgin Mary, Jesus and Satan. Contrary to prevailing Christian notions, Mary is in command, Jesus is black and Satan, although evil, is also rather affable (see Fig. 7.7). João matches wits with Satan and convinces Mary to give him another chance on Earth. Upon his return, however, no one will believe João’s account, although as promised, he and Chicó set off to pursue a more virtuous life. *Auto* revisits the popular imagination of the *sertão*, but it also brought this imagination to Brazil entering the twenty-first century. The theme that crosses these eras

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<sup>28</sup> *Cangaceiro* originally referred to the backward inhabitants of the *sertão*, who were poorly equipped to live on the Brazilian coast. The term became coterminous with the social bandits of the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries in northeast Brazil, such as the legendary Lampião and Maria Bonita.

is the negotiability of power due to the flexibility of its custodians. In this sense, the idea of *jeitinho* reverberates, or the mechanisms invoked by the individual in order to achieve personal objectives through the agents of authority, which is an idea often employed to characterize Brazilian identity (see p. 73). As a reflection of *jeitinho*, what echoes in these mini-series is the *interpretability* of authority and therefore the notion that circumventing the power of its gatekeepers is more than just a fantasy.

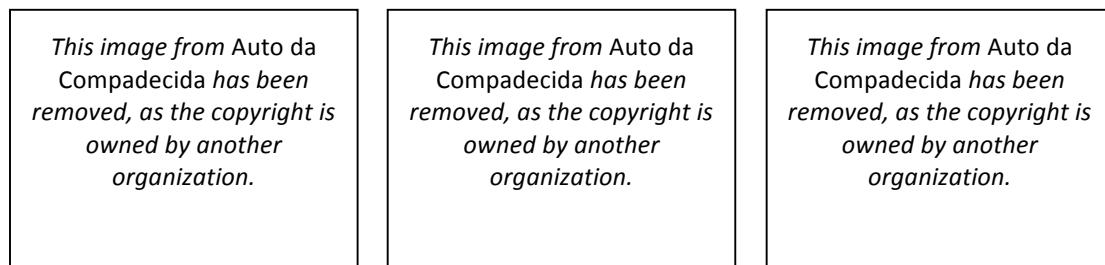


Fig. 7.7: Negotiating with the gatekeepers of destiny.

These three mini-series were particularly well received by audiences, which in the case of *Luna Caliente*, a critic saw for the “tone of fantastic realism” pervading it (Antunes: 1999a; 1999b), and that would also describe *O Auto da Comadecida* and *Incidente em Antares*. The narrative strategies of *A Muralha*, *Os Maias*, *Agosto* and *Um Só Coração* are very different, however, which is commensurate with critical response to the mini-series. If we recall the mastery approach to mini-series creation, these mini-series conform to it by conveying a sense of history through painstaking details. But for one critic at least, *A Muralha*’s focus on history obscures any human sense of surviving in the early colony: “There’s too much emphasis hovering over the scenes. Heroic characters melt in heroism … idealized ones are ideal to the point of being too sweet – they all appear to act as if aware of ‘being’ in history” (Costa: 2000). Similarly, despite the applause *Os Maias* received for bringing the literature of Queiróz to Brazilian television, critics also found that the details used to re-create that world were literal to an extreme. “In the novel by Eça de Queiróz, the fixation with details acts as a prop for verisimilitude.” In the mini-series, however, “the obsession with describing things and objects acts as an anchor for the real and a counterweight to the shameless melodrama interrupting it.” Moreover, “while the camera minutely creates the sensation that everything there is realist and even more so, *real*, the music becomes a place of exacerbated drama, carrying away the viewer already distracted by the illusion of reality” (Guimarães: 2001). The issue for these critics, then, is not as much with the real as it is with the ways in which *re-creating* the real distracts from the story.

While *A Muralha* and *Os Maias* were criticized for their 'realistic' distractions, *Agosto* and *Um Só Coração* drew criticism for the facts they represented. When *Agosto* aired, several journalists saw an opportunity to revisit the controversy surrounding Vargas's death by speaking with people who were characterized in the mini-series. One writer interviewed a former police sergeant who instructed Rubem Fonesca in 1954 "as a student on a course for police commissioners." Aware of the way this training informed Fonesca's novels, he had asked Fonesca "not to put the bearded, badly-dressed and drunk sergeant [from the novel] in the mini-series ... something he guaranteed he would never do." However, in the mini-series Sergeant Pastor is indeed shabbily dressed and always has a flask nearby. The writer also spoke with the ex-sergeant's daughter, who "rooted for [actor] Rômulo Arantes - 'tall and charming, like my father' - but was deceived to discover that it would be Nildo Parente, 'short and bald.' ("Personagens Reais..."). Here, the issue is not only with misrepresenting a real person who was apparently much more responsible than his characterization; it is also with misrepresenting the police and their institutional identity during a period of authoritarianism with which Brazil was still reckoning.

Regarding Vargas himself, another critic writes: "39 years later with the airing of *Agosto* ... those who were not alive that month will have a chance to judge why so many want to forget him and others love to remember him." She also spoke with real people who have memories of Vargas and the era, such as the television writer Dias Gomes and the singer Moreira da Silva. For Gomes, "Compared to Collor, Getúlio was a saint" and for da Silva, "in the end, Getúlio was like a betrayed husband: the last to know" (Magalhães: 1993). Moreover, these critics resuscitate an old debate between *getulistas* and *lacerdistas*<sup>29</sup> on the real circumstances surrounding August 1954, as well as between purists and interpreters of history. At the same time, they open a debate about the reasons for Globo's portrayal of the Vargas scandal in the first place. "For *getulistas* the mini-series relays a 'distorted' image of his character ... The partisans of Vargas believe that with its 'maneuvers', Globo intends to denigrate the memory of the great *gaúcho* leader and the workers' cause." Not only was Globo playing to *lacerdistas*, then, but it was also doing so by manipulating the lines between real and fictional people or events. This leads to disagreement over the role of Gregório Fortunato in the affair. If we recall Chapter 5, Fortunato is controversial in *Agosto* for allegedly organizing Lacerda's attempted assassination and for his supposed homosexuality as head of Vargas's personal guard (see Fig. 7.8). Yet according to Leonel Brizola, then governor of the state of Rio de Janeiro, the controversy is Globo's invention: "'Globo overemphasizes a character who shouldn't have been represented to that extent.

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<sup>29</sup> *Getulistas* supported Getúlio Vargas and *lacerdistas* Carlos Lacerda, the journalist and politician who opposed Vargas and whose attempted assassination in 1954 fueled conspiracy about Vargas's role in it.

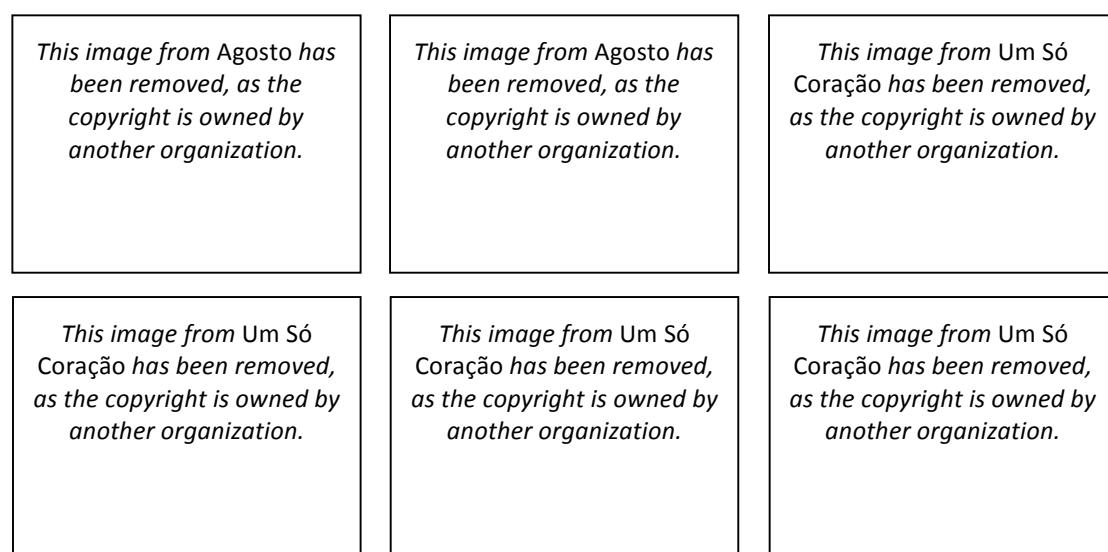
Fortunato was only a detail'." For Paulo Getúlio Vargas Martins, a great-grandnephew of Vargas, "'when Gregório is represented as if an elevated subject, who had free roam over Catete [the presidential palace], the mini-series is adhering to the thesis of the *lacerdistas*. For Globo, Fortunato is an educated figure; he speaks a highly correct Portuguese. But, according to what my family says, the 'Lieutenant' was rude and simple'." *Getulistas* and *lacerdistas* do agree on one point, however, according to Sebastião Lacerda, the son of Vargas's opponent, which is that "'if the mini-series opts to highlight him ... the reason is merely dramatic'" (Antenore: 1993b). Dramatic reasons notwithstanding, *Agosto* and the discourse it stirred demonstrate the power of (mis)representing Brazil's political history.

If the discourse surrounding *Agosto* was concerned with (mis)representing political facts, then that which surrounded *Um Só Coração* was concerned with cultural facts, especially (mis)representing the paragons of Brazilian cultural history. Perhaps due to the cultural and not the political nature of *Um Só Coração*'s narrative, however, there was a tendency among critics to see blending fact and fiction as a constructive way to introduce viewers to Brazil's cultural history: "To center culture on the discussions between real characters, like Oswald de Andrade, ... and fictional ones that frequented the salons of patron Pedro Paulo Rangel, amounts to very little. But it's entertaining to see on television the phobic behavior that transforms Santos Dumont ... into a real human being. Perhaps this is the most effective way of getting closer to the characters and relaying cultural information" (Gonzalez: 2004). For another critic, *Um Só Coração* "follows the tradition of the genre ... the viewer becomes familiar with history through its large number of characters." At the same time, the critic continues, it is easy to drown out the important figures of Brazilian cultural history with "the surrounding crowd" and to invent situations between real and fictional characters "not very much in accord with the known biographies." Thus, *Um Só Coração*, despite its intentions, is a case where "in the end, liberties are always taken with history to manipulate profiles in the name of dramatic necessity" (Zanin Orricchio: 2004).

Alberto Santos Dumont, although a secondary figure in *Um Só Coração* (see Fig. 7.8), is in fact key in terms of the *defending* tone this discourse of factuality can take. For Brazilians, Santos Dumont is the "father of aviation" (Zanin Orricchio: 2004), whereas for Americans, Orville and Wilbur Wright hold this title. Critics therefore seemed to pay extra attention to Santos Dumont's depiction. Debate about Assis Chateaubriand, 'the father of Brazilian television', and Yolanda Penteado, the 'patron of Brazilian Modernism', was similar. One critic writes: "The poetic license is half-exaggerated. Assis Chateaubriand ... is portrayed as if he had nothing better to do in his life but chase after Yolanda Penteado. And even better ... in 1933 Chatô was already married to Corita Acuña. But all of this is basic fact,

because the man also never flew a plane" (see Fig. 7.8) (Peltier: 2004).<sup>30</sup> Similar to the way that critics stirred a debate around *Agosto*, they also spoke to real people with relations to or accounts of historical figures characterized in *Um Só Coração*. Yolanda is described by a grandniece not as the "brash woman ... with an arrogant personality in the mini-series" (see Fig. 7.8), but as "rigid" and "extremely organized." And similar to Fortunato's role in *Agosto*, "in real life, Senator Freitas Valle was a forgotten character in history, until he was recently rescued" by *Um Só Coração* (del Ré and Dunder: 2004). Moreover, defending the facts becomes part of a larger discourse of education when viewers' ability to discern fact from fiction is called into question. Citing the historian Evaldo Cabral de Mello, a critic writes, he "detests when TV ... becomes involved in the so-called real or historical facts of Brazil. The result is 'revelry'. The perpetrator would be the lack of a good school education in the public, who take television drama for an account of facts." However, in spite of the way many critics saw *Um Só Coração* endlessly inserting facts into fiction or, more bluntly, distorting the facts with fiction, this critic takes the approach that we saw above, in which there is a value to interpreting reality with an element of fantasy. Thus:

We're not as apocalyptic as this. *Um Só Coração* ... gathers a handful of real characters and notable events ... in order to construct a very rose-colored fiction. Underneath the same romantic cloud is Yolanda Penteado ... and the poor, anarchist student from a destitute family, Martim ... Besides the conflict between the socialite and rural student, another noble and plebian pair is announced, Maria Luíza ... and the painter Mattei [see Fig. 7.8] ... The two are entirely fictional. But the lovers, likely or not, give back some dreams and generosity to a viewer focused on a nervous and jobless São Paulo. Or would you rather the writers spend the entire production on the wisdom of Mário and the whims of Oswald (Sá: 2004)?



**Fig. 7.8:** Fact *versus* fiction, reality *versus* fantasy.

<sup>30</sup> In *Um Só Coração*, Assis Chateaubriand often flies a plane, which he never learned to do, although he did champion building airports and training pilots across Brazil.

### 7.3.2 Multiplicity, Circularity and Ambiguity

The idea this critic conveys, that one of the mini-series' more compelling qualities is the space it opens up between fact and fantasy, leads me to discuss multiplicity, circularity and ambiguity and the ways in which these strategies also drive mini-series' narratives. Multiplicity, or multiple plots with interwoven characters, is a narrative strategy we also find in soap opera and the *telenovela*. However, the way in which the multiplicity 'seizes' both the factual and fictional dimensions of a mini-series narrative to provide a snapshot or a momentary cross-section of Brazil is specific to the form. As we will see, this device is deployed both in traditional, historical epics like *Um Só Coração* and in contemporary, experimental productions like *Cidade dos Homens*. At regular intervals in *Um Só Coração*, newspaper headlines, radio broadcasts, archival footage and still imagery are combined to convey a sense of the historical background against which the mini-series' characters carry out their lives. Yet these multimodal intervals also occur suddenly, such as when World War II is declared (see Fig. 7.9), bringing disparate lives to a sudden, unanimous halt. The same strategy is used in *JK* to capture the phenomenal construction of Brasília, in *Agosto* to express nationwide shock and confusion following Vargas's suicide, and in *Anos Rebeldes* and *Hilda Furacão* to symbolize the cataclysmic impact of the 1964 coup on individual lives. In this mode, we not only see characters bound together into a moment undifferentiated by larger social factors, but we are also able to recall the ways in which similarly powerful events entered our own intimate lives.

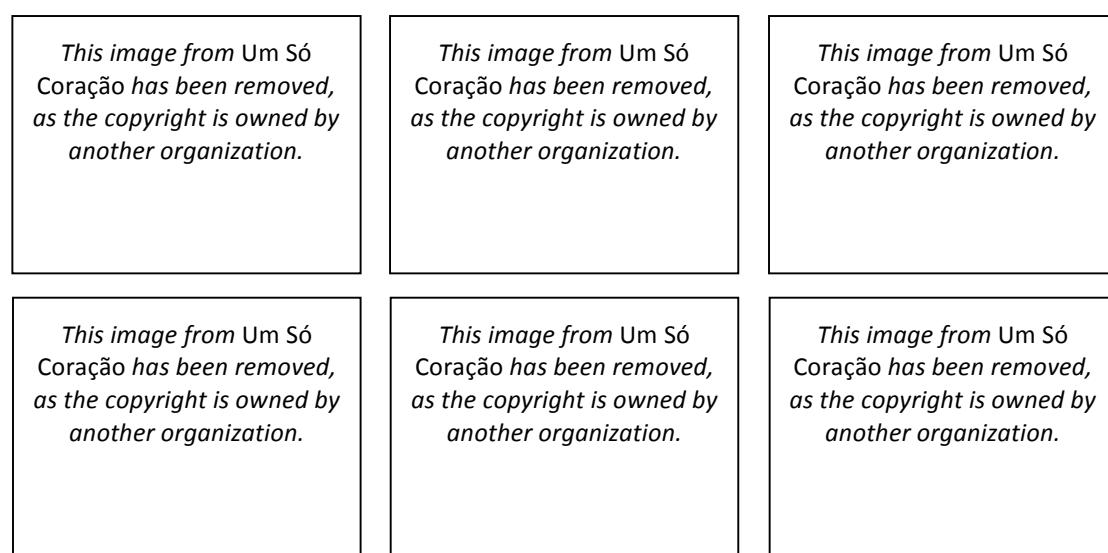


Fig. 7.9: A multimodal moment: World War II is declared.

In a very different context and mode of relay, *Cidade dos Homens* conveys the multiplicity of everyday life in urban, contemporary Brazil. The episode "Tem Que Ser Agora" is set

in mid-summer at a Rio de Janeiro beach. White, middle-class youth arrive by car while black youth arrive by bus and moto-taxi (see Fig. 7.10). We are presented with an aerial view of the white sand of the beach, which is suddenly filled with young black men and women arriving to it (see Fig. 7.10). Two white women protest at the invasion of 'their' beach as cliques form and tensions grow within Brazil's most democratic space.<sup>31</sup> Fights erupt between groups of white and black teenagers, and everyone runs from the chaos (see Fig. 7.10). Laranjinha is offered refuge by a young white woman behind the gates of her apartment building. Overhearing her on the phone, however, Laranjinha learns that she thought it would be daring to rescue a *favelado*. Laranjinha departs, but not without first telling the young woman what he thinks of her gallantry (see Fig. 7.10). Although conveyed in a completely different mode, "Tem Que Ser Agora" is able to reflect as many disparate characters and experiences as does *Um Só Coração*'s dozens of episodes.

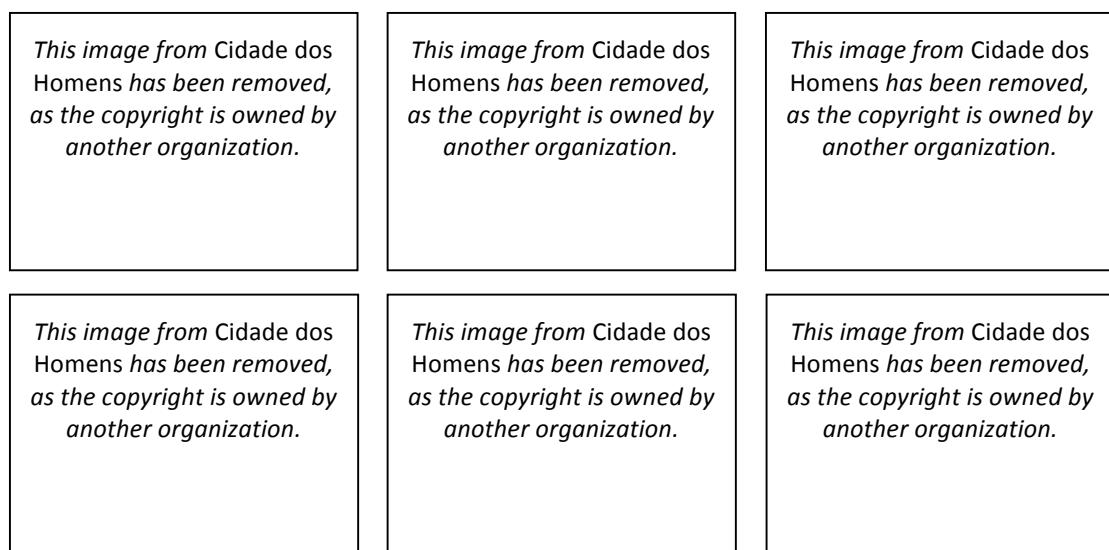


Fig. 7.10: The multiplicity, and disparities, of contemporary identities.

From the perspective of creators, we not only get a sense of their idea of multiplicity but also the importance of this strategy to their work. For a mini-series director, multiplicity means attracting as wide an audience as possible. "They're great, well-told stories and in some way offer a little for everyone on TV ... I clearly always want to speak to the largest number of viewers possible." However, although the Brazilian mini-series is broadcast to one of the largest national audiences in the world, its broad appeal should not be taken for granted since "audiences are always surprising" (interviewed August 20, 2008). In this regard, perhaps it is not surprising that the mini-series draws on the national appeal of the *telenovela*, narratively and formulaically, which its creators acknowledge in varying

<sup>31</sup> The idea that Brazil's beaches are democratized spaces is conveyed by the Portuguese idiom 'on the same beach' (*na mesma praia*). The English equivalent would be 'on the same page'.

degrees. A screenwriter of *Agosto*, trained in filmmaking, admits that, “I really liked the mini-series of Gilberto Braga, specifically the two he made before *Agosto*.” In fact, “we used them a lot as references, *Anos Dourados* and *Anos Rebeldes*, especially *Anos Rebeldes*, which I thought was an excellent mini-series.” While “it really is a *telenovela* in that sense, it’s a *telenovela* with dimensions a lot more agreeable, a lot more interesting to me.” Thus, “I found this model used in these mini-series particularly first-rate” (interviewed August 14, 2008). What separates the mini-series from the *telenovela*, however, is that the models the *telenovela* provides have been linked to the six-, seven- and eight-o’clock time slots for years, which distinguishes the historical from the humorous from the ‘realistic’ *telenovela*, respectively. Aware of this tradition, a mini-series (and occasional *telenovela*) screenwriter clarifies: “What happens is this: in the same mini-series … you have an epic. The general tone is epic. But you have really intimate scenes as well. [And] you have comic scenes … Because this all makes part of it” (interviewed August 8, 2008). In the sense of combining the *telenovela*’s subgenres into one mini-series, this suggests a form of multiplicity as well.

The narrative strategy of circularity is frequently deployed in the mini-series. Circularities, or the use of cues, motifs or sequences that connect the narrative with a previous point, is perhaps easier to deploy in the mini-series because of its closed form as well, but it is a strategy that indeed allows us to make sequential and symbolic sense of the entire story. For instance, the doves released at the beginning of *Escrava Anastácia*, during Oju Orun’s wedding, reappear at the mini-series’ end, when Anastácia’s spirit is embodied in a dove flying over the plantation, just after her death. Other cyclical cues occur throughout the mini-series as well, the significance of which is only realized later. As another key motif, Anastácia is dragged away from her family upon arriving to Brazil. Knowing she will not see them again, she wishes them courage and tells them that she will never forget them before being locked away. Later, Anastácia is accused of fomenting rebellion and is to be beaten in the plantation square. With her penetrating gaze, Anastácia looks to the slaves, raises her arms and repeats: “Courage! I won’t forget you!” Then, as upon her arrival to Brazil, Antônio grabs Anastácia and pushes her into the *senzala*, locking the doors behind her. However, as much as these cyclical cues convey Anastácia’s demise, they also impart hope and anticipation, and in the end, they symbolize the abolition of slavery in Brazil.

In addition to recurring devices, other mini-series use circularity to structure entire plots. In *Memorial de Maria Moura*, we are given repeated glimpses of young Maria performing tasks around her home. She disappears beneath a table and rises again, transformed into a woman. Thus, we understand Maria’s contented life through its repetitiveness, before it is brutally changed forever. We can therefore also contextualize her transformation from

a tranquil into a violent woman by the upheaval in this repetition. Additionally, the story is not relayed sequentially. It begins instead with Padre José approaching Bom Jesus das Almas, Maria's fortress, where her men shoot at him. Then, everything cycles backward, providing us with the history of Maria's vigilantism, only to return to this same point at which we better grasp the pervasiveness of cruelty and violence in the *sertão*. Circularity is deployed in *Os Maias* as well. The story begins where it leaves off, so that in the end we understand that it has been narrated as a memoir, hence the unseen presence of the narrator and the first-person perspective. These and other mini-series are therefore easy to distinguish from the linear storytelling mode and cumulative endings of the *telenovela*. Furthermore, these motifs and structures of circularity let us know that there will be an ending to a story which, even if unknown, is foreshadowed by their appearance. Perhaps most significant, however, is the way in which these cues and structures suggest neither an entirely unpredictable nor a predictably scripted ending to the mini-series, which is an ambiguous but seemingly more realistic way to narrate a nation's stories.

I have discussed the porous boundaries between fact and fiction and reality and fantasy, as well as the ways in which multiplicity and circularity create either complex narrative moments or equivocal endings in the Brazilian mini-series. It should come as no surprise, then, that ambiguity itself is a narrative strategy often deployed in the mini-series. As we know, it is Maria's vengeance that drives the narrative of *Memorial de Maria Moura*. Given everything that Maria has endured, from childhood to adulthood, it seems as if we can expect a victorious resolution. It is love, however, that distracts Maria from her course of action: because of Cirino, Maria nearly loses everything, namely her determination. She regains it nevertheless and dispatches the traitorous Cirino. Again, victory is certain. But Colonel Tibúrcio, Cirino's father, learns of his son's death and calls Maria to battle. Maria and her remaining comrade, Duarte, gallop wildly towards Tibúrcio's troops, the troops' rifles aimed at the pair (see Fig. 7.11). Although Maria is vastly outnumbered, this cannot mean her end. With a ferocious determination on Maria's face, the frame freezes and the story ends. Along with Maria's fate, justice is suspended (see Fig. 7.11).

*This image from Memorial de Maria Moura has been removed, as the copyright is owned by another organization.*

*This image from Memorial de Maria Moura has been removed, as the copyright is owned by another organization.*

*This image from Memorial de Maria Moura has been removed, as the copyright is owned by another organization.*

Fig. 7.11: The ambiguity of justice for Maria.

Whereas *Memorial* conveys an ambivalent sense of justice, *Luna Caliente* imparts the sense of unending return. Elisa constantly reappears, surfacing wherever Ramiro least expects her. Furthermore, Elisa's impossible demise is mirrored in doors and cabinets that never close for Ramiro, and of course, the many occasions in which Ramiro is almost, but as far as we know, never ultimately caught for his transgressions (see Fig. 7.12). These devices symbolize Ramiro's futile attempt to resolve the persistence of his liminal position. Thus, his desire to 'go back' is significant, as not only does Ramiro repeat the phrase, thereby expressing the wish to reverse his situation, but it also suggests returning to a point at which destiny itself might be otherwise scripted. It is particularly significant, then, when Ramiro's estranged wife, Dora, appears. Dora wants to reconcile with Ramiro and have him return with her to France. As the camera circles Ramiro opening the air ticket Dora has bought for him, he confesses everything to her, and ends with: "Until the day before yesterday, this would have been possible. But this Ramiro Bernardes doesn't exist any longer ... For me, there is no return" (see Fig. 7.12). He turns to Dora, but she is not there. She has not heard a word of Ramiro's confession, nor will anyone else. Ramiro's ultimate attempt to cease repetition and arrive at finality only leaves him where he began.

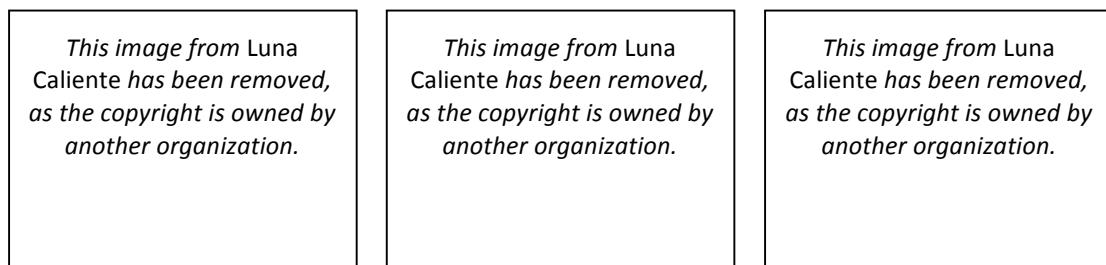


Fig. 7.12: Ramiro's unending return.

It is not only *Memorial de Maria Moura* and *Luna Caliente* that leave us with an ambiguous ending. As I discussed, *Cidade dos Homens* offers resolution to its episodes but not to the larger narrative, and *Quem Ama Não Mata* leaves us to imagine two completely different endings. The importance of ambiguity as a narrative strategy therefore does have to do with its difference from the *telenovela*, which offers many uncertainties, but only before a typically unambiguous ending. At the same time, the mini-series' narrative ambiguity is compared to the more experimental features of film, at least in a discourse that would like film to become more accessible to Brazilians. The most significant aspect of narrative ambiguity is therefore the way it expresses the lack of resolve to real and fictional stories; to Brazilian history and mythology. Perhaps, then, ambiguity expresses Brazil's narrative more than the *telenovelas* that pervade it or the films kept at a distance from much of it.

### 7.3.3 The Immediacy of the National Narrative

If the television mini-series can be defined in terms of the ambiguous quality of its stories and the unambiguous character of the institutional space around it, then the idea of the immediacy of its narratives to Brazilian national identity becomes important. Although immediacy defined by ambiguous narratives qualities and clear institutional boundaries appears contradictory, it becomes evident if we start by looking at its significance outside Brazil. A screenwriter explains how one of her mini-series was received in Cuba: "I was in Cuba in 2005 ... and on [television] then was *A Casa das Sete Mulheres*. And the public went crazy for it! When it was time for the mini-series ... you didn't see anyone on the street." However, *Casa*, like many Brazilian mini-series, narrates a very particular part of Brazilian history, The War of the Farrapos<sup>32</sup>, from the viewpoint of seven women thrown into it. Thus, Cuban viewers were unaware of important historical facts, such as "the fact that [the south] didn't want a war. Basically, the cause [of the war] was *charque*, the dried meat, and taxes, because they were extremely exploited." But Cubans "received it as if it was a *telenovela*" (interviewed August 8, 2008). From this account, we begin to get an idea that the immediacy of the mini-series narrative is not just because of its dramatic content, since this appears to have global appeal, but also because of its historical, social, political and *national* content. Therefore, we can begin to see how the Brazilian mini-series may be 'best appreciated' at the national level, corroborating the relation between the nation and its national narratives. At the same time, this testimony confirms the global resonance of the Brazilian *telenovela* and the ways in which the mini-series is easily absorbed into it.

However, for reasons that we have seen, such as the balance between reality and fantasy, education and emotion, and convention and experimentation, the idea of a link between the nation and the national narrative warrants further clarification within Brazil. For this same screenwriter, while some of her mini-series have had great appeal in countries such as Italy, Portugal, Spain, Poland, China, Russia and the US, others have not. In addition, if a mini-series lacks global appeal this does not mean it necessarily appeals to Brazilians, which she helps to clarify: "Brazilian mini-series are characterized by their treatment of themes ninety-nine percent of the time eminently national, eminently Brazilian ... I don't have the least worry when I write, because I write for Brazil." Thus, "JK only happens in Brazil ... because JK is very Brazilian ... *Um Só Coração* is very Brazilian, very São Paulo. It doesn't have universality." JK and *Um Só Coração* were also successful mini-series with Brazilian viewers. However, the way in which she describes her *less-successful* mini-series

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<sup>32</sup> The War of the Farrapos (or Ragamuffins) started in 1835 between rebels and imperial troops in the south of Brazil. The rebels intended to secede from the Empire, but finally surrendered in 1845.

is that, “*Os Maias* and *Queridos Amigos* were for more restricted publics … Everything is more intimate. Everything is between four walls.” Furthermore, in JK, *Um Só Coração* and *A Muralha*, “history is more important than the characters”, whereas in *Queridos Amigos* or *Os Maias*, “history is only justified in relation to the characters’ dramas” (interviewed August 8, 2008). Thus, if we were to accept, as I argued, that the success of the national narrative requires finding a balance between reality and fantasy, education and emotion and convention and experimentation, then it appears that mini-series like *Um Só Coração* and *A Muralha* achieved this while *Os Maias* did not. In fact, as a critic reviews *A Muralha*, “it is known that only good drama would not conquer an audience average of 44 points, the highest rating of the last five years for a production of the genre.” The success of *A Muralha* therefore also involved “refinement in reconstructing the era, the costumes, the setting, the figures and the direction, transporting the public to where it was promised in the title of the first scene … the beginning of the seventeenth century” (Andrade: 2000). In terms of the immediacy of a national narrative and the ways in which the mini-series may be able to achieve this, it seems that when history ‘is only justified in relation to the characters’ dramas’ this is not enough to galvanize national interest. In fact, it seems as if History itself should play a leading role.

By way of further defining the immediacy of a national narrative, it is worth looking at a discourse that has resurfaced in relation to several mini-series throughout these chapters, which comes from the press. It is a discourse that expresses suspicion toward the intent of a mini-series production, which in turn expresses incredulity toward the motives of Brazilian television and particularly Globo. This discourse concerns the ‘commemorative’ mini-series, many of which have been produced to celebrate the work of Brazilian writers such as Érico Veríssimo (*O Tempo e O Vento*) and Nelson Rodrigues (*Engraçadinha*). There is a difference between the way critics view a mini-series commemorating an author such as Veríssimo or Rodrigues and one they see as commemorating a less worthy occasion. *O Tempo e O Vento* was considered “a beautiful adaptation … of Érico Veríssimo premiering on Globo under the most monumental conditions of Brazilian television” (“Momento de Grandeza”). Regarding *Engraçadinha*, a critic notes: “Until now Nelson Rodrigues has not had much luck in adaptations of his work to TV. Cinema, which adapts his work often, only hits the mark sporadically” (Couto: 1995). In a very different commemorative mode, however, *Um Só Coração* was produced to celebrate São Paulo’s 450<sup>th</sup> anniversary, and to depict the city’s journey from a disorderly provincial capital to the epicenter of Brazilian multiculturalism and modernity. In regards to this kind of tribute, a critic observes: “The product is good, but has a great danger … a mini-series commissioned to pay homage to São Paulo. And, as everyone knows, commissioned works don’t normally do very well.”

Reflecting the difference between a legitimately and artificially constructed homage, she concludes: "After all, nothing substitutes spontaneity at the time of creation" (Gonzales: 2004). Another critic offers other reasons for its creation: "*Um Só Coração* appears to have been planned to ... pay homage to the city where the money lives. It's more a document than an attraction to entertain the public or demonstrate the creativity of the language of television" (Mattos: 2004b). A third critic describes the pomp surrounding the premiere of *Um Só Coração* in the city it commemorates: "For being a mini-series, or rather the fillet mignon of programming, it is already receiving VIP treatment from the network. Invited to 'represent' Globo at [São Paulo's] birthday party, the status of the mini-series has been elevated. The producers earned a privileged space at the Museum of Modern Art of São Paulo ... which also counts on the presence of Mayor Marta Suplicy and the relatives of the other 450 portrayed" (Reis: 2004). This incredulity is not limited to *Um Só Coração*. JK was criticized for promoting Globo ideology as much as honoring Juscelino Kubitschek, (Silva: 2006), and Globo is known to celebrate its own anniversaries (Giobbi: 2004). Under the banner of commemoration, then, it is difficult to discern between honoring Brazilian cultural identity and Brazilian television marketing its own capabilities.

Despite doubts regarding the nature of the commemorative mini-series, it in fact helps us to further recognize what constitutes the immediacy of its narratives to Brazilian national identity. In addition to a balance between the qualities of reality and fantasy, education and emotion, and convention and experimentation, it seems that an aspect of celebrating Brazilian identity should also be involved in the mini-series narrative. However, in terms of celebrating Brazil, it seems that there is also a balance to strike between the legitimacy of portraying Brazilian identity and the undeniable element of artificiality involved in its construction for television. Although there are several mini-series I have discussed in this and the previous two chapters that stand out in all these respects, *Cidade dos Homens* also manages to legitimately portray generally unseen dimensions of Brazilian identity within the larger constraints of the Brazilian television industry. Perhaps it is the way in which *Cidade dos Homens* evokes a sense of legitimacy about its depictions of Brazilian identity in contrast to the larger conventions of not only national but also foreign programming that leads this critic to quote Acerola in her review of the mini-series.

'Out there is one country, in here is another', thinks Acerola. In the country of 'out there', out go the big Mexican melodramas ... out goes the raw and satirical humor of *Casseta*, and in comes a story that has nothing funny about it, that is dramatic, but that is not fiction ... Yes, it is possible" (Gonzalez: 2002).<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> By Mexican melodramas, the critic is referring to the network SBT, which airs imported *telenovelas*; by *Casseta*, she is referring to *Casseta e Planeta*, a bawdy variety program produced by Globo.

For another critic, the legitimacy of *Cidade dos Homens* is in its treatment of adolescence, particularly in contrast to the prevalence of children in *telenovelas* and the many films and television programs of superstar Xuxa. "At the same time that *Cidade dos Homens* neither sugar-coats nor folklorizes the reality of exclusion and violence in *favelas*, it also manages to deal in a fair, balanced and lifelike way with young people. There are few examples in Brazilian television fiction of adolescents and young people who do not appear to have come from market research or the worst nightmares of needy countries." Moreover, it is the timelessness of children's fables combined with the timeliness of *Cidade dos Homens'* themes and setting that make the mini-series particularly convincing:

In the serial, there's a well-done attempt to allude to the conventions of infant-juvenile narratives – the idea of vicissitudes, of carrying-out a half-brilliant plan to escape from a more powerful figure, the character who is more mixed-up, the one who is more sure-footed, the girl who is more 'mature' than the boys – in an environment in which everything is hostile to the very idea of infancy and adolescence (Abramo: 2005).

The combination of fables and historical, if not realistic, themes and settings, is perhaps what provides a sense of immediacy to some of the other, key narratives I have focused on in the last three chapters: the woman renegade in a brutal, male-dominated world; an African princess who through her martyrdom hastens freedom for her people; a political exile's escape from culpability; the distant rewards of El Dorado; and, the most fabled of all, a country unimpeded by the disparities of ethnicity, geography, beliefs or indeed, its own history. In fact, it is the combination of not only the fable and history, but also the *celebratory*, that a prolific mini-series director considers the underlying component of her mini-series: "Our country is a very large, rich and culturally diverse place. Our people are in need of their history and of recognizing it as agents of that history. Mini-series ... become celebrations of this ... A characteristic of my work is to create fables ... a beautiful fable. Or [to create] distance in order to come closer to it" (interviewed August 20, 2008).

For other creators, the immediacy of the mini-series narrative is achieved by recognizing the point at which they insert themselves into it. A screenwriter replied to my questions about the viewing public of the mini-series with: "I think of the public, yes. But I think of a public whose ideal reader, we'll say, whose ideal viewer, is someone very close to me. I always use as a point, as criteria for writing a scene, ... knowing that I as a viewer would like it." Therefore, "I don't look for ... a broader public with less knowledge, with other types of knowledge, than my own. I look for a public that I make a part of ... I look to reach a public larger than the public imagines itself to be" (interviewed August 14, 2008). From another creator's standpoint, a public larger than it imagines itself to be suggests a final way in which we might understand the immediacy of the national narrative: by the discourse it creates. A creator of *Os Maias* and *A Muralha* compares her work on the mini-

series: “In *Os Maias*, I remained very true to the book … In *A Muralha*, my interest, my objective was this: the more the story was told, the more it was discussed” (interviewed August 8, 2008). We might therefore understand the immediacy of the national narrative in the mini-series by its movement between Brazilian television and the public, however differently that public may be constituted or conceived.

## 7.4 Conclusion

In this chapter, I examined the ways in which Brazilian national identity is represented in the television mini-series by first looking at the form itself, and then at the mini-series’ narrative construction and use of specific narrative devices. As opposed to assuming that Brazilian national identity is simply ‘captured’ in the mini-series’ stories, I have argued that this analysis of the mini-series’ generic identity, the implications of the ways that language is used in the form, and the significance of its narrative features and modes of narration have led to an implicit understanding of representations of Brazilian national identity. I have also argued that this approach has enabled us to see the complexities and specificities of national identity in Brazil through a form that reflects an equally complex and unique mediated space. In returning to the questions I asked at the beginning of the chapter, my approach therefore means responding to them in terms of the implications of the mini-series genre for issues of Brazilian national identity, and in terms of the modes the mini-series uses to narrate what it means to be Brazilian.

I first asked what textual or generic features suggest the identity of the mini-series, and how these features connect with the larger social and cultural issues of national identity represented in the Brazilian mini-series’ narratives. I found that the Brazilian mini-series invokes several traditions that are foreign to Brazil. These are recurring subgenres in the form, however, and have assumed distinct Brazilian characteristics. The crime/detective tradition, for instance, not only consistently appears as a mode of storytelling, but it also serves as a vehicle for portraying the atmospheric and historical dimensions of some of Brazil’s darkest political eras. Additionally, the use of horror in the mini-series conjures up Hollywood and B-movie classics, often in a satirical rather than a ‘serious’ mode of reference. At the same time, horror is intertwined with elements of the fantastic, such as Brazilian folklore and magical realism, debatably a Latin American generic ‘invention’. Similar to the ways in which the crime/detective tradition has been invoked, the use of horror and the fantastic in the Brazilian mini-series represents an amalgam of traditions, but it also acts as a symbolic reminder of frightful political histories very close to Brazil.

Besides elements of crime, horror and fantasy, we have also seen how the Western film and the sex/thriller traditions reappear in the Brazilian mini-series. The Western holds a particular place in the generic identity of the mini-series. Not only does the mini-series invoke Hollywood classics, but it also incorporates the Brazilian film tradition of *Cinema Novo*, thereby conveying overlapping but distinct geographical and historical renditions of the 'Wild West'. Moreover, we have seen the ways in which these foreign and national influences have formed a self-referencing system within the mini-series, suggesting the intertextuality of the genre itself. However, while the Western is invoked in a mode that imparts the mythical qualities of a hostile, untamed frontier, the sex/thriller is situated in specific historical contexts, or in stories with contemporary relevance. What I argued in the case of both the Western and the sex/thriller is that these traditions impart a sense of the rawness of Brazilian experience, even when they are invoked in a mythical, satirical or otherwise less 'realistic' mode of narration. This also allows us to see how the issue of the imitative resurfaces, and thus the idea that by imitating the foreign, including foreign modes of storytelling, the originality of Brazilian experience emerges. Perhaps, then, it is not only the ways in which different foreign but also different Brazilian traditions, from *chanchada* to *Cinema Novo*, are imitated in the mini-series that constitutes its originality.

Despite the overlap of different film and literary genres in the mini-series, in this chapter we also saw the distance that creators and critics establish between popular and cultured genres in Brazil. The difference between *chanchada* and *Cinema Novo* in fact illustrates this well, but Brazilian creators and critics are more generally concerned with the incongruity of film and the *telenovela* in Brazil. At the same time, however, creators' discourse helped us to see that the idea of the 'image as action' is one which serves to bridge both popular and 'sophisticated' modes of production and thus, cinematic and televisual vocabularies. As a form of language that bridges production modes and visual vocabularies, then, the image as action represents a way of making connections between some of the other real and symbolic divides that surfaced in this chapter. Many critics took issue with the use of the Portuguese language in the mini-series, for instance, such as when they found that it was imprecisely or insincerely employed. However, this also reflects both the importance of language to Brazilian national identity and the role that critics play in imparting this to the public. Additionally, we saw the debates that arose in the press about the mini-series' misrepresentation of the facts of Brazilian history, namely when they involved important (or overinflated) historical events and figures. But critics also recognized a space between fact and fiction that the mini-series allows to open up, and therefore the value not only of fantasizing, but also of interpreting Brazilian national identity.

Perhaps the most significant generic features and narrative modes of the mini-series that surfaced in this chapter connected with the idea of literacy, which in turn contributed to a discourse of education in the larger sociocultural space of Brazilian national identity. It was not just the misrepresentation of facts in the mini-series' narratives but also a tone of defending the facts in critical commentary on the mini-series that suggested some of the ways in which this discourse takes shape. However, if we pursue the idea that the mini-series facilitates an interpretation of the events and figures comprising Brazilian national identity, then a different form of literacy and an alternate discourse of education begin to take shape. Multiplicity, circularity and ambiguity, I argued, are strategies found in the mini-series that suggest a lack of finality to its narratives of Brazilian national identity. At the same time, I suggested that the openness of these devices offers a more realistic way of interpreting Brazil's stories, whether real or fictional, particularly in comparison to the predictability of the *telenovela* and the inaccessibility of film. Nevertheless, we saw the important role that Brazilian history must play in the mini-series' narratives, a role that can take second place to intimate dramas, but that then ceases to provide that important interpretive balance. Thus, perhaps the most effective means by which a balance between fact and fantasy and drama and history is achieved is for creators to recognize the point at which they insert themselves between these spaces as narrators of the Brazilian story.

Secondly, I asked how national identity is represented in the mini-series by the polarities of difference, and how is it represented by the intersectionalities or coalition strategies of identity. One way to view both the polarities and the intersectionalities of identity in the Brazilian mini-series is through the generic hybridity of the form itself. We have seen that the mini-series engages a number of foreign and national genres to represent dimensions of Brazilian existence often absent from Brazilian television, such as the desolation of the *sertão* or the violence of the *favela*. In this sense, we are confronted with representations of poverty and exclusion that reinforce the social, economic and geographical disparities of Brazil, and at the same time, cut across generic traditions and production modes to do so. *Cidade dos Homens*, for example, combines the coming-of-age story with the documentary to depict both the ordinariness and the untold sides of teenage romance in Brazil's urban peripheries. In turn, we saw the discourse that these intersecting modes of representation are capable of generating. On one level, the uncommon or even explicit modes in which the mini-series depicts different sides of Brazilian experience become a way of bringing the remoteness of film to the familiar space of Brazilian television. On another level, the language of beauty emphasized in Brazilian television is occasionally challenged by the mini-series' depictions of the unattractive sides of historical or contemporary experience.

Another way to view the polarities and intersectionalities of identity in the mini-series is through the narrative strategies frequently employed in the form. In particular, we saw the ways in which multiplicity brings characters otherwise separated by difference into a unified moment of historical or contemporary significance to Brazilian experience. At the same time, the mini-series often brings into one story the narrative modes that for years have characterized the different time slots and audience profiles of the *telenovela*. Perhaps the most significant polarities that describe the mini-series' narratives are those between reality and fantasy, education and emotion, and convention and experimentation, which have surfaced in this and the preceding chapters. However, in this chapter I found that if there is one element that unites these divergent narrative qualities, it is that of celebrating Brazilian identity. Yet to celebrate *brasilidade* requires imparting a legitimate portrayal of Brazilian national identity, rather than promoting Brazilian television, the latter of which has come to be expected from an institution such as Globo. Through creators' testimony, we also saw that it is possible to conceive of the celebration of Brazilian national identity in the mini-series as the intersection of fable and history. We might therefore think of the hybridization of myth, history and the celebratory as one part of what provides the mini-series with narrative immediacy in the space of Brazilian television. Besides the narrative and institutional contexts of Brazil, however, in this chapter it also became clear that the idea of narrative immediacy is reflected in the discourse that the mini-series can generate in the Brazilian public sphere.

Third, I asked how the mini-series reflects continuity and change in its representations of Brazilian national identity. In many respects, this question has been partially answered in some of my concluding comments above. We might return to some of those observations, however, to look more specifically at aspects of continuity and change. One continuous discourse has been about the distance between popular and artistic modes of production in Brazil, typified by the *telenovela* and film, respectively. Another continuous discursive thread has therefore been about locating exactly where to place the mini-series between the 'big-bang' and 'sophisticated' qualities of these forms. If we are able to identify any change in this discourse, it does not seem to concern the 'middle term' that creators must find between their references to sophisticated or popular modes of production; rather, it seems to concern revisiting the persistent antagonism between film and the *telenovela* in a different way, perhaps best illustrated by the successful translation of the acclaimed film *Cidade de Deus* into the popular mini-series *Cidade dos Homens*. This also raises questions about change in what is 'popular' subject matter for Brazilian television drama, however, which has changed significantly from mini-series such as *Quem Ama Não Mata* to *Cidade dos Homens*. These changes in representations of Brazilian national identity in fact recall

my discussion in Chapter 5 about Brazil's cultural centers absorbing its peripheries.

Another consistent discourse in this chapter has been about the implications of language for representations of Brazilian national identity. I have examined the use of language in the mini-series in literal and symbolic ways to find that both modes reflect the continued importance of regionalism to Brazilian national identity. On a literal level, regionalism is reflected in commentary critical of the disingenuous use of Portuguese in mini-series that attempt to recreate a certain temporal/spatial authenticity. Symbolically, we can consider creators' efforts to capture the universality of a Brazilian language a form of regionalism, as it reflects the desire to speak to 'a little of all Brazilians'. The implications of language also extend to Brazilian literature and its adaptation to the mini-series, which results in a debate among critics about whether this increases public literacy, brings bad literature to television, or simply replaces the act of reading with a mini-series. Among creators, some feel that viewers do not make a connection between the subject matter of the mini-series and the artistic language used in its production, while others feel that the universalizing language of Brazilian television prevents exploring more regional modes of expression. If creators and, for that matter, critics do agree on a point, it is that the mini-series has the potential to engage with language and Brazilian literature in a meaningful way. In terms of a discourse of change, then, creators and critics might also agree that there should be change in the institution of Brazilian television in order to better accommodate the ways in which language and literature are used to express Brazilian national identity.

Finally, I asked how the mini-series reflects continuity and change in representations of Brazilian national identity from a global perspective, especially in terms of the dialectics of imitation and originality, backwardness and modernity, and the foreign and national. In the previous two chapters, we have seen these dialectical relations surface repeatedly, both in the narratives of the mini-series and in the discourse of creators and critics. To a large extent, I have interpreted these recurring dialectical relations as both the historical representation and contemporary articulation of taking external modes, ideals and forces and transforming them into aspects of what it means to 'be Brazilian'. In this chapter, my concern has been with ascertaining the generic identity of the mini-series in the Brazilian broadcast space, which similarly has allowed us to see how film and literary traditions, many of which are not 'Brazilian', have become a part of the form. From a national and from a global perspective, however, I would argue that this analysis has been especially valuable in terms of the mini-series' relations with film and the *telenovela*. Not only is the *telenovela* globally familiar but its recognition is also characterized by the ways in which the form differs on a national level, such as the melodramatic and realistic versions of the

genre in Mexico and Brazil, respectively. Conversely, the tenuous history of the Brazilian film industry and the uneven access to film among Brazilians mean that while Brazilian film is recognized globally, it comes nowhere near the familiarity and recognition of the *telenovela* nationally. In these respects, while we might think of the dialectics of imitation and originality and the foreign and the national as continuing to characterize the generic identity of the mini-series, we might also consider the ways in which the form serves as a symbolic force of modernity in a country which continues to grapple with backwardness in terms of very real social disparities.

In a related respect, we might think of the mini-series as fitting into a larger, continuous process of hybridizing foreign and national conventions in order to create new narrative and generic traditions. In a global landscape, this is not a process we could consider to be distinctly Brazilian, although if we put the mini-series in the broader context of Brazilian cultural production we can see similarities with *chanchada*, for instance, which mimicked and satirized Hollywood successes, or *Cinema Novo*, which drew inspiration from French and Italian avant-garde film movements. Perhaps the most revealing aspect of a broader discourse of hybridizing the foreign and national and imitative and original, however, is the way in which the mini-series continues a tradition of symbolizing Brazil's modernity through the cultural and institutional capabilities of Brazilian television. Not only did we see this in the self-referencing mechanisms of the mini-series, which in effect place the genre on the same level as the literary or cinematic traditions that inspire it, but we also saw how the mini-series can appeal to foreign as much as national audiences. In this final respect, however, the global appeal of the mini-series is mediated by the immediacy of its narrative relationship to Brazil. Perhaps, then, it is a global perspective that provides the best vantage point from which to see the textual-generic and sociocultural dimensions of hybridity in the mini-series. For although the mini-series is characterized by an amalgam of different traditions, and although it might capture the attention of foreign and national audiences alike, the most significant feature of the Brazilian television mini-series is the way the form represents many different dimensions of Brazilian national identity, and at the same time, reflects an awareness of Brazil's changing role on a global stage.

## 8 Conclusions

### 8.1 Back to Brazil

I have returned to Brazil since my brief career as an English language teacher. More than one visit was to conduct fieldwork for this thesis, and I have also returned to see friends and those that have become family. Brazil has changed since I first went there with very little knowledge of the country. Rio de Janeiro will host the 2014 World Cup and 2016 Olympic games, which will elevate Brazil's global profile even further. But this has also resulted in huge increases in the cost of living and campaigns to 'clean up' large swaths of Rio's poorest areas. At the same time, in 2002 and 2006 Brazilians elected Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, and in 2010 they elected Dilma Rousseff, to the office of President. Lula, a former factory worker and a labor union leader, was the first Brazilian president not to come from elite political or social circles. Rousseff, arrested and tortured by the military in the 1970s for her political activities, is testimony to the way that Brazil has overcome a dark period in history. Not just symbolically but also realistically, both presidents have helped to expand the Brazilian economy, decrease Brazil's social disparities and increase the role that Brazil plays globally. My former home, Rio de Janeiro, has changed as well. No longer the Marvelous City in myth only, Rio has reduced crime and violence in many parts of the city and in general, worked to reduce its own disparities.

In other respects, Rio de Janeiro and Brazil have remained the same. In spite of Brazil's economic emergence on a global stage, Rio is still a violent city with glaring inequalities. Corruption and misconduct continue to plague local and regional politics, the country's natural resources are being depleted in spite of efforts to preserve them, and migration is swelling Brazil's cities beyond capacity, inflaming its social, economic and environmental problems. In historical and contemporary narratives, we have followed how the Brazilian television mini-series reflects these and other issues of continuity and change in Brazil. In my concluding chapter, then, I will first summarize my key findings on the mini-series' representations of continuity and change in the national culture, values and identity of Brazil. Then I will consider the theoretical and methodological implications of this study, and finally, I will consider the areas that this study has opened to additional research.

### 8.2 Key Empirical Findings

Perhaps one of the most significant findings of this study concerns not just the Brazilian mini-series but also the cultural, institutional and historical roles of Brazilian television. Brazilian television today is a reflection of Brazil's political history, especially the 'know

how' that is the result of the military regime's belief in the technological and ideological ability of television to unite Brazil. We can therefore situate the Brazilian television mini-series in a larger picture of intellectual, political and cultural efforts to achieve the long-desired ideal of unity in diversity in Brazil. Historically, I would also argue that it is not coincidence that the mini-series both appeared and multiplied in terms of the number of productions during the decline and dissipation of the military regime. Therefore, we can think of the mini-series as telling the Brazilian story when as a nation Brazil needed a *new story* to be told and, importantly, when the means of telling Brazil's story were no longer restricted. What this study has thus revealed is the *political* nature of the mini-series, even in its most intimate, fantastic or dramatic modes of narration, as well as the *consciousness* of a country simultaneously looking back on and moving away from a turbulent history.

### **8.2.1 On Representing National Culture**

As I demonstrated in Chapter 5, geography and gender are two, key discourses through which Brazilian national culture is represented in the mini-series. Geography is as much a symbolic as it is a physical discourse in the mini-series' stories. We have seen symbols of the foreign reappear in the mini-series to represent what it means to be simultaneously inside and outside Brazil. We have also seen references to foreign modes of production and their physical absorption into creating the Brazilian mini-series. These dimensions of geography fit into a broader discourse of 'becoming Brazilian' by overcoming temporal/spatial distance (and difference), or by ingesting the foreign, to invoke the Modernists, in order to articulate that which is 'authentically' Brazilian. The change that I observed in this discourse of ingesting the symbolically and physically foreign is reflected in a turn away from epic narratives of discovery or encounters with the Brazilian other. We began to see instead less romanticized depictions of the way in which space is defined by 'race' in Brazil, as well as modes of production that engage Brazilian film, children's stories or folklore to represent the urban peripheries. However, in these newer depictions there is continuity to the idea of ingesting the other into the fabric of Brazilian culture; or rather, the Modernist credo has become part of the unifying tendencies of Brazilian television.

On a level of practice, a discourse of gender is articulated through modes of creating the Brazilian mini-series. We saw how the trademark and mastery approaches to creation are linked to the ways in which two prolific women creators entered the world of Brazilian television production once dominated by men. A trademark on the mini-series genre has come to represent the emotional dimensions of the mini-series, the unrepeatability of the narrative experience and the conjunction of these factors in viewers' identification of, and

with, a text. Mastery reflects a deep knowledge of Brazilian history conveyed through the mini-series, and while it is not devoid of emotional appeal, mastery implicates discourses of instruction and education more than the trademark approach. In fact, we saw that the combination of emotional appeal and a mastery of knowledge provide an ideal balance of myth and history in the most successful mini-series. On a narrative level, I also found that there are two, continuous gendered constructs in the mini-series' representations of Brazilian national culture. One is the sufferer, who is a martyr not only in her individual narrative setting, but also for Brazil by virtue of her reappearance across time and space. The other is the *malandro*, who we can trace to a particular ethnic, geographic and literary archetype, but who also navigates different historical and contemporary guises to affirm the continued dialectics of order and disorder in Brazilian culture. Similar to the ways in which the trademark and mastery approaches overlap in creating the mini-series, these gendered constructs are not mutually exclusive in the mini-series' narratives. However, to the extent that self-sacrifice and self-interest do unite in an exceptional character such as Maria Moura, we also saw that her transgressiveness is brought to an abrupt although ambivalent end. This raises questions about the boundaries of gendered constructs both in the mini-series and in the most enduring symbols of Brazilian cultural history.

### **8.2.2 On Representing National Values**

In Chapter 6, my key finding was that while authority has a constant role in representing Brazilian national values, so too does resistance to authority. Moreover, I found the most consistent constructs through which authority and resistance are represented in the mini-series are political, class, family and moral values. In turn, this allowed us to see the ways in which national values are expressed at both intimate and political levels in the mini-series. Because combining the intimate-domestic with the political-historical is a quality of the mini-series in general, I also demonstrated that projecting intimate values onto a particular historical backdrop, or conversely, interjecting political turmoil into a specific domestic space facilitates the representation of *Brazilian* national values in the television mini-series. Additionally, by interrogating the notion of basic dilemmas, such as that of power inequality, we saw that this is not an untenable idea, given consistent depictions of the abuse of authority in the mini-series. However, what the mini-series makes clear is that the basic dilemma of authority requires contextualization in Brazil, illustrated by its histories of colonization and totalitarianism, for instance, in order to substantiate the idea of Brazilian national values. At the same time, the consistency of resistance to authority in the mini-series suggests the idea of a parallel dilemma, such as persistent opposition to the ideology of unity in diversity. Rather than a dilemma unto itself, however, resistance

is represented in the mini-series by historical and contemporary modes of circumventing authority. In turn, this suggests that authority and resistance are in dialectical relation to each other: that while one force temporarily cancels the other out, new forms of authority and resistance will appear. In the narratives, what often illustrated this relation was the lack of resolute victories for forces of either authority or resistance. What we saw instead were ambivalent conclusions, which better represent the values of a nation dealing with deep-rooted forms of authority and shifting modes of resistance. Finally, I illustrated the changing role the Brazilian other plays in the mini-series' depictions of national values. With a narrative shift from depicting the 'discovery' and 'taming' of a wild, hostile land to portraying the values accompanying a modernized Brazil, we saw the Brazilian other disappear. However, an unsteady path to re-democratization and the unrealized goals of Brazil's economic miracle allowed us to see a turn towards depicting the proximity of the values of black Brazilians living in the *favela* to those of 'the rest' of Brazil. But again, a *symbolic* acceptance of the contemporary other leaves questions open about the continued *material* distance between the centers and peripheries of Brazil.

In Chapter 6, I also identified a discourse of authority and resistance among creators and critics of the mini-series. This is a discourse informed by the role of the *telenovela* and film in the larger space of Brazilian media. Because of the singular nature of film, and because many creators are trained in filmmaking or produce other kinds of 'standalone' culture, the value they place on the mini-series comes from a subjective and artistic position. In turn, this means that creating a mini-series can provide similarly rewarding experiences, artistically and subjectively. Within the institution of Brazilian television, this also means invoking intuition as a way of resisting the conventions and expectations of the industry, typified by the *telenovela*. Intuition also enables challenging the rules governing relations between the mini-series genre, the television medium and the experience of viewers. At the same time, I found that the idea of the literary or historical authenticity of the mini-series, especially adaptations, fosters another set of rules meant to evince the experience of film or literature, but that instead comes close to replicating the formulaic rigidity of the *telenovela*. In contrast, critics evaluate the mini-series by its generic traits and by the larger social structures of Brazil the mini-series attempts to thematically penetrate. From a macro-level view, critics are thus more likely to find that the mini-series simplifies the issues that define Brazilian national values, if not also that the form underestimates the ability of the public to form its opinion of what constitutes Brazilian values. What critics and creators do seem to agree on is that the mini-series can portray issues of importance to Brazilians, at least more than the *telenovela* and in a mode far more accessible than film.

Therefore, the remaining problem is how to change the institutional values of television so that Brazilians encounter more issues of importance to them on the small screen.

### 8.2.3 On Representing National Identity

I began Chapter 7 by examining the textual-generic traditions used in the Brazilian mini-series that suggest its identity as a national genre. I then analyzed the modes of narration and narrative devices in the mini-series that help to convey a sense of what it means to be Brazilian. The way in which language is deployed in the mini-series is a crucial element in representing Brazilian national identity. Some mini-series sought to replicate regional languages, while others attempted to convey the mythical force of a national language, a contrast that became especially apparent in the testimony of creators and commentary of television critics. This contrast also revealed discourses of authenticity and insincerity in the way the mini-series appeals to language to represent Brazilian national identity. In a figurative sense, however, I found that it is possible to differentiate a language of beauty in the aesthetic and technological features of the *telenovela* from the mini-series' stories of the 'ugliness' of historical or contemporary reality in Brazil. By virtue of the closed form as well, the mini-series uses the symbolic power of literacy to construct complex plots for audiences to decipher, coupled with its intertextual references to other forms of Brazilian popular culture. Both these literal and symbolic uses of language and literacy in the mini-series had implications, again, for a discourse of instruction and education, although this is a discourse on which creators and critics of the mini-series do not agree. While creators and some critics see the mini-series as a symbolic catalyst of national literacy, in general critics are wary of the idea that Brazilian television is capable of, or even *interested* in, this possibility, given its history of consensus building in Brazil.

We also saw how the institutional history of Brazilian television informs the way critics regard the mini-series' mix of fact and fiction to depict important moments in a narrative of Brazilian national identity. Specifically, critics are not only concerned with the political motives of Globo in reconstructing these moments, but also with the implications of the network's ongoing role in building hegemony through its versions of history. However, I also found when the mini-series does engage in fantasy to represent aspects of Brazilian identity, this discourse of factuality shifts noticeably. Fantasy opens up a space between fact and fiction in which it becomes possible to *interpret* reality, both in mini-series that invoke the Latin American tradition of magical realism and in mini-series that otherwise emphasize the pedagogical sides of Brazilian national identity. The narrative strategies of multiplicity, circularity and ambiguity contribute to an interpretive mode of representing

Brazilian identity in the mini-series as well, particularly in the way the contradiction of openness within a closed form reflects a tension between pattern and unpredictability in the lives of many of the mini-series' most significant characters. These strategies contrast the unpredictable but ultimately final narrative trajectory of the *telenovela*, and they bring the intimacy of engaging with film and literature to the television screen. However, we saw that Brazilian history plays an important role in the mini-series' narratives, as does the idea of *celebrating* what Brazilian history and culture mean to national identity. Thus, I argued that the mix of reality and fantasy, education and emotion, and convention and experimentation distinguishes the way the mini-series represents national identity. I also argued that the hybridization of myth, history and the celebratory is what provides the mini-series with a sense of immediacy in narrating what it means to be Brazilian.

Finally, one of my key findings in Chapter 7 was the notion of the image as action, which emerged in the discourse of creators to describe a quality common to both sophisticated and popular modes of narrative construction. As these modes are epitomized by film and the *telenovela* respectively, the image as action becomes a way of understanding the space between artistry and 'big-bang' effects in which creators and critics struggle to place the Brazilian mini-series. However, we also saw that the mini-series is a mixture of not only sophisticated and popular narrative modes, but also foreign and national traditions, from *Cinema Novo* and *chanchada* to film *noir* and spaghetti Westerns. Apart from the ways in which the Brazilian mini-series reflects hybridity on a textual-generic level, it also reveals the dialectics of imitation and originality, backwardness and modernity, and the foreign and the national, which on a sociocultural level reflect the tensions Brazil has negotiated in its story of 'becoming' a nation. These tensions therefore provide a way of connecting the textual-generic and sociocultural dimensions of hybridity. They will also guide my return to the theoretical and methodological frameworks of this study, which I believe my findings will be able to broaden. I discuss these contributions next.

### 8.3 Contribution of Empirical Findings to Theory

#### 8.3.1 Revisiting Elite and Popular Culture

Revisiting the debates I traced in Chapter 1, the first concerned defining the boundaries of elite and popular culture. I began with Eagleton, who noted how the tension between made and remade culture is reinforced by the Enlightenment tendency to abstract culture and the late-modern impulse to reinvent it. From the perspective of the Enlightenment, Arnold's conception of culture should not be dismissed, even if it seems antiquated. We saw efforts to reawaken what Arnold would call 'rare, striking and admirable' culture in

the Brazilian mini-series. Often, this meant drawing on nineteenth-century literature, or invoking European and North American modes of film production. What we saw in the mini-series as well was the integration of what some creators and critics might consider rare or striking modes of production with elements of Brazilian popular culture. Thus, if we revisit the tension between made and remade culture through the Brazilian television mini-series, not only does it become difficult to define what constitutes made culture – the nineteenth-century novel, the epic romance, or the Brazilian folktale – but defining made culture is also obscured by the ways in which it has been remade, or reinvented, within the form.

Nor should Leavis's conception of culture be dismissed. Although Leavis advocated that culture should resist the point at which 'the arts and literatures of different countries and periods have flowed together', he also engaged with popular culture in order to critique it, which in many ways reflects the discourse of literacy surrounding the mini-series. We saw that literacy is not just about deploying, and therefore unraveling, complex narrative strategies in the mini-series. It is also about bringing 'the arts and literatures' of Brazil to the viewing public. Creators and critics seem to disagree on the extent to which this idea of literacy is successfully channeled through the mini-series, but it can be interpreted to reflect Leavis's objective of discerning 'serious creative work' from the profusion of mass culture. Furthermore, that language serves as the 'index' of 'the historical embodiment of community assumptions and aspirations', to cite Leavis, was evident in discourse about the authentic or disingenuous uses of language in the mini-series. Despite these overlaps, there is a difference between Leavis's conceptions of culture and the ways in which we have seen culture represented in the narratives and the form of the mini-series, especially with respect to *national* culture. Leavis would see language, literacy and criticism as the tools a society can use to identify the unity of its national culture from between opposing forces. What we saw through the mini-series is not only that oppositions characterize the 'unity' of Brazilian national culture but also that language, literacy and criticism are often the tools used in order to discern the nature of these oppositions. If we return to the idea of culture from the perspective of Cold War-era theorists, we also see that their concern with the 'threat' to national by foreign culture is a theme that reappears in the Brazilian mini-series. However, we might recall that at the height of Vargas-era nationalism and its similar concern with foreign culture, it was in fact the foreigner who was called upon to defend the integrity of Brazilian national culture. If I relate these differences to the idea of the *dialectics* of culture then there is a conceptual difference to make between isolating the contradictory forces of culture and recognizing that such contradictions form part of the fabric of a national culture.

Moreover, we saw the importance of distinguishing different kinds of culture from each other in the mini-series and in the discourse of critics and creators, which relates to some of the thinking I traced in Chapter 1. The value of working-class culture for Hoggart, we might recall, was its authenticity in relation to the corrupting force of mass culture. The authenticity of the mini-series, similarly, was often evaluated in terms of disingenuous or indeed, corrupting factors, such as the formulaic quality of the *telenovela*. Many creators and critics would likely see the *telenovela* as promoting 'conservatism and conformity', as Hoggart saw the popular press. Williams, we recall, looked for the way different kinds of culture interrelate and contribute to a theory of a system of culture. Williams's ideal form of culture expresses 'absolute or universal values', which in many respects is reflected in the aim of mini-series creators to convey a universal televisual language. We could also consider Williams's documentary form of culture, which sees 'a particular way of life the main end in view', as the approach taken in introducing Brazil's urban peripheries to the television mini-series. We might even think of Williams's idea of social forms of culture and the 'particular meanings and values' they convey as describing the mini-series genre and the lens it casts on the political, historical or social climate from a particular point of view. However, we should take Williams's approach to identifying the different ways in which culture is expressed further, as what we have seen of Brazilian culture through the mini-series often reflects an exchange, if not contradictions, between these points of view.

For Hall and Whannel, identifying the popular arts also meant discerning a certain kind of culture from a profusion of mass culture, and their approach is illustrated by some of this study's findings as well. The idea that we should be able to see the artist *in* the work, and not the artist *behind* the work 'sold to the audience', suggests a connection with the trademark mode of mini-series creation. In fact, the mastery approach and its emphasis on relaying historical knowledge in many ways reflects the idea of connecting artist and audience, both of whom share in the 'experience and moral attitudes' of the era depicted. In contrast, many creators and critics would see the *telenovela* as a 'corruption of popular art', which is to say that the form has traded its roots in popular culture for ratings and commercial success. But we have also seen commentary critical of mini-series that 'sell' the capabilities of Brazilian television over a good story. What emerged that perhaps best evidences the idea we can still identify the popular arts from within mass culture was the creator who seeks a public in which he forms a part, or similarly, the creator who 'writes for Brazil'. Nevertheless, in revisiting the idea of the popular arts in relation to the mini-series certain questions persist. These questions have to do with the changing definition of popular culture in Brazil, given the force with which popular culture is continuously

mediated by television in Brazil, and with the role that television continues to play as a symbolic mediator of modernity in Brazil.

Although the conceptualizations of Brazilian culture I discussed in Chapter 1 had less to do with mass culture and more to do with the relations between modernity and culture, they help to address these types of questions. Bosi argued that the root of the very word 'culture' implies a dialectical exchange between a space and its people and the processes by which they are cultivated, or rather *acculturated*, in the context of colonization. Thus, culture implies the simultaneous act of imposing and resisting boundaries on the part of 'conquering lettered cultures and conquered non-lettered cultures' in colonial contexts. This is also an act Bosi sees as having extended to contemporary culture in Brazil. In this study, we have seen dialectical relations between dominant and resistant forces revealed on many different levels in the act of articulating Brazilian national culture. This has been a continuous narrative theme in the television mini-series, from the foundational stories of the discovery and taming of Brazil, to the political *coups* and their repercussions of the last century, to the elements that constitute ordinary life in the *favela*. Additionally, while it might be hard to conceive of resistance from within the highly mechanized institution of Brazilian television, we have seen how creators can resist working in certain modes of production, or resist ideas that dictate what Brazilian viewers are like. Television critics, who also work within a media institution, interrogate the role that television presumes to play in voicing the consciousness of the Brazilian nation. Additionally, they convey this in a way that at times reveals the subjective sides of what it means to be Brazilian more than the narratives of television drama themselves. What this suggests is that a dialectics of authority and resistance plays as strong a role in constructs of Brazilian culture as in Brazilian values. It also suggests that like many of the political or intellectual agents that have conceived of and attempted to orchestrate the realization of modernity in Brazil, so too has Brazilian television. But as many of these intellectual or political forces have met with resistance to their ideas of modernity, so has, and so will, Brazilian television.

The idea of not only a value system but also a culture of authority and resistance fits with Cândido's concept of 'a dialectic of order and disorder' in Brazil. Again, while television is one of the most ordered institutions in Brazil, if not in the world, the mini-series helps us to see both that there are narratives which countervail Brazil's myths of harmony and unity (and that there are plenty of narratives in support of such myths) and that at times, at least, the mini-series can disrupt the conventions and expectations of television drama in Brazil and for that matter, transcend the divides that keep Brazilian television and film viewers separate. What was key to Cândido's notion of a dialectic of order and disorder

as well is that it reflects a consciousness of tensions between the *appearance* of an ordered society and the *reality* of something quite different. Perhaps this tension helps to explain the manner in which the mini-series plays with the boundaries between fact and fiction and reality and fantasy in so many narratives. This tension might also explain why in the space of Brazilian television production and critical debate, there is as much praise for the mini-series as there is skepticism towards the notion that it provides creators, critics, viewers and television itself with a different kind of narrative. In these respects, the mini-series and the representational and institutional space it occupies help us to see a relation between tensions of order/disorder and appearance/reality and the underlying dialectic of backwardness and modernity that has characterized Brazil's own national narrative. For although the mini-series does presents us with real and symbolic change in many of the forces that have circumscribed Brazilian experience, it is situated in an institution that has both facilitated and hindered such transformations.

Finally, if we revisit Bellei's notion of mediating culture in the frontier through the mini-series, we also get a sense of the contradictory relation between television and modernity in Brazil. Bellei argued that frontier culture is mediated by the strategies of displacement, which attempts to deny 'the force of the original', and absorption, which 'takes as one's own only what is valuable in the first place'. We have seen both strategies illustrated in the narratives of the mini-series: for instance, that emblematic point at which *Estado Novo* Brazil is 'reborn' as a nation, ending its legacy of dependencies, although Vargas simply supplanted this with centralized authority; or, of course, the Modernist doctrine that the act of 'cannibalizing' the foreign would reveal the authentically Brazilian. We could also consider the ways in which the mini-series form itself has absorbed foreign and national generic traditions and displaced these with its own intertextual references as a reflection of both Bellei's strategies. At the same time, we might recall that in these strategies Bellei recognized the construction of 'a fiction in which contradictory meanings may exist in harmony', which serves as a panacea for Brazil's 'cultural problems'. Perhaps more than any other quality of the mini-series it is the *celebratory* that reflects the idea of harmonious existence between contradictory meanings. For the celebratory establishes a contradiction between celebrating *brasiliade* and celebrating the institutional and symbolic efficacy of Brazilian television, as we have seen. Beneath this contradiction, however, exists a deeper one between the realities of Brazilian experience and the Brazil that television would like not only Brazilians but also the world to see.

### 8.3.2 Revisiting Cohesion and Division in National Values

In Chapter 1, one of the points I stressed in relation to values is that while a nation might try to define itself by the cohesiveness of its values, there will be dissent from this aim. Thus, a dialectics of cohesion and divisiveness in values perhaps better captures the idea of 'national values'. Given some of the findings of this study, however, there is room still to expand on this idea. The ways in which different dimensions of Brazilian experience are represented in the mini-series and the views expressed by creators and critics help to confirm Frow's argument that 'there is no escape from the discourse of value', and thus Connor's notion of the 'imperative to value' as well. Moreover, the debates we saw about the depiction of Vargas's suicide in *Agosto*, for instance, or about the extent to which the urban peripheries are being absorbed into the cultural centers in *Cidade dos Homens* and *Antônia*, suggest that values are voiced in a 'fully relational, fully interconnected' mode at the national level. Additionally, we must not overlook creators' imperative to establish value, such as the *emotional* value connected with the trademark approach to mini-series creation, or the *educational* value that underpins the mastery approach. In fact, I would argue that my discussion of Brazilian national values in Chapter 6 was exceeded both by the continuous representation of values in the mini-series and the insertion of values into creative and critical discourse. Thus, we can see the ways in which a discourse of values is fully interconnected with discourses of Brazilian national culture and national identity as well. At the same time, it is notable that not just television but television drama draws a number of values into a state of interconnectedness, which attests to the power of the medium and of the genre in Brazil. But Brazilian television drama also puts values into a conflicting state of interconnectedness, which attests to the notion that we must 'defer the arrival of ultimate value', especially at the national level.

If we also revisit Wittgenstein's perspectives on values through the Brazilian mini-series, particularly the observation that his 'thinking about values is far more disillusioned than would have been possible for someone 100 years ago', we can see that political-historical upheaval does shape national values. Moreover, Wittgenstein affirms the idea that while temporal distance from upheaval may lessen its relevance to contemporary experience, this does not diminish the *value of interpreting* it in new ways for contemporary existence. We have seen this in mini-series that return to Brazil's histories of colonization, slavery and totalitarianism not simply to depict but rather to decipher the implications of these moments for the present day. Additionally, the value of the mini-series' interpretive lens is less its focus on the 'decisive moments' of Brazilian history – the proclamations, *coups*, battles and victories – and more the view it provides through the individual in relation to

those moments of history. In a similar respect, I argued above that Hofstede's idea of the 'basic dilemmas' which nations share in defining their national values is not an untenable one, but that if we were to retain this concept it requires contextualization in Brazil, if not also the *personification* the mini-series provides in order to shift Brazil's 'dilemmas' from an abstract to an identifiable level. I would also argue that if we view Hofstede's basic dilemmas of human inequality, human togetherness, gender roles, and dealing with the unknown through the narratives of the Brazilian mini-series, as well as through the ways narratives are constructed in the form, we have seen the *intersections* of these dilemmas more than we have seen them represented on their own.

In contrast to Hofstede's basic dilemmas, Margalit argued that 'there are no supervalues' with which to construct 'the collections of values that are embodied in a society'. This is a key point to maintain in relation to the mini-series' representations of Brazilian national values. For in addition to a dialectics of authority and resistance, or in fact, the surprising inversion of the relationship between symbols of domination and oppression in the mini-series, we also saw the tendency to invoke racial harmony and unity in diversity as ways of rearticulating the mythical 'supervalues' of Brazilian society. Still, we must not ignore the persistence of these supervalues, as they point to the basic dilemma of the continuous role myth plays in representing Brazilian society. Margalit also argued that 'more often than we choose a way of life, we are born into one'. At the same time, he argued that *national belonging* represents the 'outstanding example' of a space we define between the values associated with social choice and those equated with social structure. Again, these are key ideas to retain. On one hand, this is because we have seen the theme of national belonging represented in the mini-series in many different ways. On the other hand, we can connect the idea that national belonging is expressed in relation to social choice and social structure with the idea that values are articulated through a dialectics of authority and resistance. Thus, the tension between choice and structure can help us to understand the continuity of the way in which values are represented in the mini-series: as a conflict between authority and resistance that crosses class, family, moral and political divides. However, the mini-series' depictions of conflicting values are not so universal that they prevented us from seeing, as Scheffler wrote, that 'a practice or assumption that does not offend against a given value in some circumstances may do it considerable violence in others.' At the same time, the different circumstances in which values are represented in the mini-series allowed us to see continuity and change. For as much as national values, and their representatives, changed between Brazil in the 1950s, the 1980s and the present day, for instance, we should ask to what extent the dialectics of authority and resistance has changed between colonial and contemporary Brazil.

A continuous dialectics of authority and resistance in the mini-series' representations of Brazilian values therefore makes it even more difficult to accept McElroy's argument that American values should not be 'negative', nor should they 'oppose anything'. However, it seems crucial to me to note the difference between Brazil and the US not only in terms of 'counterculture values' but also in terms of the presence of counterculture itself, given the authoritarianism that marked most of the twentieth century in Brazil. Jacoby, we will recall, argued very differently that American values 'will require fundamental changes in deeply entrenched attitudes'. In the context of Brazil, we could make a similar argument, although this would require fundamental change not only to deeply entrenched attitudes but also to the social structures in Brazil that reflect the continuity of such attitudes. As in Chapter 1, this means returning to the role of the other in relation to Brazilian national values. More specifically, I return to the contraction that Silverstone observed and that I hope to have illustrated, between representing the Brazilian other 'as removed from the lives and worlds of other people' and as 'being just like us'.

Perhaps one of the biggest difficulties in returning to this contradiction between the other 'as removed' and an other 'just like us' in the mini-series is that Brazilian television itself often accentuates a gap 'between appearance and essence, between being and not being', which Ortiz observed 'is intrinsic to Brazilian society'. On one hand, as Ortiz also noted, we can trace this gap between appearance and essence to the introduction of television to Brazil and the ways in which it crystallized disparities between the symbols and realities of modernity. On the other hand, it is a gap between Brazilian television's *representations* and the *reality* of the Brazilian other that we can think of as a difference of 'being and not being'. From a literary perspective, we could consider celebrating the Brazilian other in the historical mini-series *A Muralha* or in the contemporary mini-series *Cidade dos Homens* as a continuation of the Romanticists' celebration of the Brazilian Indian, who 'became a symbol of Brazilian national aspirations', as Skidmore noted, but who 'offered no threat to the comfort of his readers'. If we look at representations of the Brazilian other through the lens of Brazilian Modernism, which itself is celebrated in *Um Só Coração*, we can see a continuation of the idea that 'only what was admirable in the Other was consumed', as Resende wrote, as it is the diligence, loyalty and ultimately the patriotism of not only the black but also the foreigner that transform them into true Brazilians. Much more than the aesthetic and intellectual traits of Romanticism and Modernism, however, I would argue that Freyre's influence appears through the mini-series' representation of the other, and at national and global levels of significance. On the national level, we have seen Freyre's influence in the continuous presence of *patriarchy* in Brazil. Patriarchy both underscored

Freyre's idea of the cordial master/slave relations of colonial Brazil, and it reflected 'an entire social, economic, and political system characteristic of the patriarchy of Brazil', as Passos and Costa e Silva wrote. But patriarchy underscores the role television plays in Brazil as well: both in the ways it symbolically perpetuates an ideology such as unity in diversity, and in the way it acts as a parallel social, economic and political system. On a global level, then, I would argue that Freyre's influence on the way the Brazilian other is represented has extended beyond Brazil. Freyre elevated Brazil's 'profound ethnic and cultural miscegenation' to mythical *and* global proportions. Thus, Brazil became far more than a 'transposition of European civilization to the tropics', as Passos and Costa e Silva also wrote. We might therefore consider the global presence of Brazilian television and its ability to mythologize the Brazilian other as a continuation of Freyre's vision.

Finally, I see the findings of this study as having implications not only for the relations between the representation of the other and television in Brazil but also for the relations between television and modernity in Brazil. Indeed, the symbolic, social, economic and political roles television plays in Brazil mean that as an institution, it has long surpassed its precariousness and its dependency on foreign content, formats or investment. In this sense, television represents a 'Brazilian solution to Brazilian problems', which Skidmore noted of Tôrres's approach to interpreting Brazil's nascent identity. But in the context of contemporary Brazil, this would better describe the way television has *symbolically* dealt with the 'problems' of modernity. I would also argue that Brazilian television signifies having ultimately expelled the 'innate parasitic character' of the colonizer, recalling the way Bomfim viewed the Portuguese. Furthermore, in an ironic inversion of this relation, it is now Portugal who avidly consumes the products of Brazilian television, as creators and critics indicated in the previous chapters. At the same time, it is difficult not to see a connection between Brazilian television's relationship with modernity and the depiction of the other on Brazilian television. As we come to view the other on television in terms of his or her 'best' qualities, which in turn become part of the larger fabric of *valuing* the other, Brazilian television takes 'those aspects of modernity that are of interest to it', as Oliven wrote, and transforms them 'into something suited to its own needs'. Perhaps the way to conceive of national values through Brazilian television, then, is not simply as a dialectics of cohesion and division, but instead as a dialectics of symbolic cohesion and material divisions.

### 8.3.3 Revisiting Difference and Intersectionality in National Identity

In Chapter 1, I argued that difference underpins many of the ways in which identity has been conceived, particularly in terms of 'race', gender and national identity. I contrasted this with thinking that seeks the intersections of constructs of identity, and therefore the possibility of coalition strategies of identity. With this general framework in mind, here I look for the ways the findings of this study might add to it. Immediately, we can affirm Hall's definition of difference 'as the Other of a dominant discourse' of identity, as well as the difference of 'becoming' in contrast to the 'already accomplished facts' of identity. What complicates conceiving of identity in terms of otherness and becoming, however, is that these very 'qualities' of identity can form part of a dominant discourse of *absorbing difference* into Brazilian national identity. Similarly, we have seen the ways the mini-series reflects Cabral's argument that the 'definition of an identity, individual or collective, is at the same time the affirmation and denial of a certain number of characteristics'. But as I argued above, it is the contradictory force of Brazilian television to include and exclude which makes 'the possibility of a movement group keeping (or losing) its identity' less a facet of 'the face of foreign domination', as Cabral also wrote, and more an aspect of the cohesive/divisive dialectics of Brazilian television. Thus, if we revisit Gilroy's argument that there has been 'a historic turn away from the simpler efficacy of blackness', we do indeed see 'more complex and highly-differentiated ways of fixing and instrumentalising culture' in depictions of black experience. At the same time, we need to ask, as critics did, about the motives of Brazilian television in 'instrumentalising' black experience.

Perhaps as much as 'race', in the Brazilian mini-series we saw representations of women 'defined and differentiated with reference to man', as de Beauvoir wrote. Many of these depictions also constructed woman as myth, recalling Wittig's argument, particularly in the archetypal sufferer, whose 'subjective, individual, private problems' indeed came to represent the 'social problems' of oppression, inequality and violence in Brazil. However, if we recall characters such as Isabel, Domitila and especially Maria Moura, we saw that these mythical Brazilian women sometimes cross the geographical, political or historical boundaries of gender in the mini-series as well. On one level, these transgressions affirm Crenshaw's argument that 'categories we consider natural or merely representational are actually socially constructed in a linguistic economy of difference', although it is not only linguistic but also symbolic economies of difference that must be constructed in the mini-series in order for us to see their boundaries occasionally crossed. However, on another level it is precisely the symbolic value of such transgressions that contradicts their *actual* possibility in society. While transgression may be a feature of popular fiction in general, I

argued in Chapter 5 that the way in which Maria Moura's transgressions are brought to a close following her particularly violent history raises questions about the possibility of transgressing the boundaries of gender identity in Brazilian society. We did also see the intersectionality of identities in the mini-series, and therefore 'honouring the diversity' of gender as a category, as Butler wrote, through its 'definitional nonclosure'. More than the sufferer, or perhaps even women characters in general, it was the *malandro* who left his ethnic, geographical and literary origins to cross into new political, artistic and historical terrains. At the same time, perhaps it is the nonclosure of the many different settings and guises in which we find the *malandro* that propels his undeniably continuous role in the construct of gendered identities in Brazilian society.

In revisiting concepts of national identity with this study's findings on the mini-series, we can see how Brazil defined its identity in terms of 'tension or antagonism', if not also 'outright exclusion', as Jameson wrote, in relation to Europe. Indeed, we have seen many stories illustrating the tensions and antagonisms between Brazil and Europe, including after Brazil's independence from Portugal. But we have probably seen more stories about the tensions, antagonisms and exclusions of being Brazilian within Brazil. Thus, some of Featherstone's approaches to conceiving of national identity are of continued importance to these external and internal aspects of Brazilian national identity. *Emotional identification* indeed describes the way certain creators seek to convey a 'desire for immersion in the directness, warmth and spontaneity of the local community' through their work. We can also think of the contrasting side of emotional identification, the 'revulsion, disgust and the desire for distance' from the local, as describing the way the mini-series conveys the 'ugliness' of Brazilian experience. A dialectics not only *between* but also *within* elements of the local and distant therefore continues to provide a useful means of conceptualizing national identity. However, thinking about the emotional dimensions of depicting these relations has been particularly key to this study, since they reflect 'the need to mobilize a particular representation of national identity', as Featherstone also wrote. Perhaps it is the mobilization of an emotional dialectics between elements of the local and the distant in the mini-series that most effectively represents the idea of Brazilian national identity.

Finally, I revisit some of the ideas of Brazilian scholars about Brazilian national identity in a global landscape. This will allow us to return to the tensions between the foreign and national, imitation and originality, and backwardness and modernity that have informed both political and intellectual conceptions of Brazilian national identity. However, I hope to also identify *continuity* and *change* in these tensions by revisiting them through the lens of the mini-series and its representations of Brazilian national identity. In Chapter 1, de

Souza Martin described present-day Brazil as 'a complicated combination of modernity and extremes of poverty'. To a degree, we could consider this as a reflection of the very extremes entailed in the dialectics that have underscored Brazil's negotiation of national identity. As Meira Monteiro suggested, however, the complexity of what are otherwise quite visible economic, social and cultural disparities in contemporary Brazil lies in the 'idealization of Brazil as a country' that has 'achieved the mysterious and long-desired ideal of racial a democracy'. What we have seen through the mini-series is an amalgam of these perspectives. We get a sense that Brazil's negotiations with modernity involve recognizing the extremes of socioeconomic disparity, but at the same time it is often such disparity that becomes a narrative testimony to, if not sometimes a *celebration* of, Brazil's ethnic, geographic and cultural diversity. In this sense, it seems that there is continuity to the idea that extremes form part of the fabric of Brazilian national identity, especially as they are continuously invoked as part of the symbolic efficacy of Brazilian television.

On another level, we can see the continued importance of regionalism to representing Brazilian national identity, which will recall Freyre's belief that 'the only way of being national is first to be regional', and by extension, that 'the only way to be universal is first to be national'. However, I would argue that the continuous symbolic importance of regionalism to representing Brazilian national identity creates a contradiction. As many mini-series depicted and as several creators attested, regionalism indeed offers a way to articulate Brazilian national identity, which in turn helps to project Brazilian identity globally. At the same time, the strength of regionalism helps to maintain the tension of backwardness/modernity that has underscored negotiating Brazilian national identity. We can easily contrast the emblematic role of the *sertão*, for instance, with that of Rio de Janeiro or São Paulo in several mini-series. Yet these 'broader particularities', as Gullar wrote about these same internal divisions, translate into the 'restricted internationalities' that help separate the 'underdeveloped' and 'developed' worlds, which in turn impede the possibility that the former will 'have more power to change international globality'. Where I would argue that there has been identifiable change in Gullar's perspective on Brazil's identity in a global perspective, and where I would also point out the particular contradictions in the importance of regionalism to Brazil, however, is that 'the industry and know-how' previously equated with the developed world have become entrenched in Brazilian television. Moreover, we can see this know-how reflected in the ability of Brazilian television to maintain the symbolic, if not actual, divisions of Brazil's regions.

While we can see continuity in the role that regionalism plays in representing Brazilian national identity, which includes the conflicting ability of Brazilian television to portray

the backwardness associated with some of Brazil's regions through highly sophisticated means, the Brazilian television mini-series also allows us to see change in the dialectics of imitation and originality. Schwarz wrote that to a degree, we could see Brazil's 'solutions [as] reproduced from the advanced world in response to cultural, economic and political needs'. We have seen Schwarz's observation reflected in mini-series narratives, such as the explosion of consumerism in *Anos Dourados* and *JK*, or the economic miracle created by the military regime in *Quem Ama Não Mata*. We have also seen this in the discourse of creators and critics, who looked to Hollywood and the BBC as aesthetic or institutional models. However, creators and critics stirred a debate about the point at which foreign narrative modes or production techniques cease to be imitative and become a means of not simply telling but *inventing* an original story. Moreover, the 'original' has often been articulated through the idea of the 'authentic', and in debates among creators and critics about the notion of *authenticity*. While these debates did not result in a clear definition of what constitutes the narrative or textual authenticity of the mini-series, they revealed what Schwarz argued as well: that examining 'the share of the foreign in the nationally specific, of the imitative in the original and of the original in the imitative' mobilizes a *dialectical criticism* of the role of television in Brazil and the ways in which it attempts to represent Brazilian national identity. Thus, dialectical criticism also allows us to see how evaluating Brazilian national culture has moved away from the stigmas associated with copying and towards recognizing the porous borders between imitation and originality.

### 8.3.4 Revisiting Hybridity

The findings of this study also have implications for the conceptualizations of hybridity that I traced in Chapters 2 and 3. Foremost, this study has revealed the sociocultural and textual-generic dimensions of hybridity, but it has also revealed that we must look for overlaps between these dimensions in terms of the way power is engaged to articulate, negotiate and resist discourses of national culture, values and identity. In revisiting the concept of hybridity, I will follow my discussion of the scholarship with which I engaged in Chapters 2 and 3. But I will also seek to solidify the overlaps between the social and textual dimensions of hybridity. One continuously useful way to think of the social and textual dimensions of hybridity is in terms of the made and remade, which we saw in the thinking of several scholars. Hall differentiated between 'what we really are' and 'what we have become' in terms of identity, which I see as another useful way to look at the made/remade dimension of hybridity. Furthermore, if we think of hybridity as a space between the made/remade, being/becoming dimensions of national culture, values and identity, this suggests making a link with negotiating a space between what it means to

'be Brazilian' and the agents and institutions involved in *representing* the experiences of 'becoming Brazilian'. I would also argue that a hybrid space between the made/remade and being/becoming reflects the space between fact and fiction and reality and fantasy that characterizes the Brazilian television mini-series.

Bhabha's Third Space and the 'interstitiality' it represents provide alternate ways to think about a space between the made/remade and being/becoming. Furthermore, the idea of a split between the pedagogical construct of the nation and the performative presence of the nation's people is a useful way to interpret not only the dialectics of fact/fiction and reality/fantasy in the mini-series, but also the ways that creators, critics and ultimately viewers engage with and negotiate the space between these dialectics. However, I would argue that the idea of 'in between consciousness', which Bhabha uses to conceive of the *awareness* of existing between these spaces, offers little more than an image of hovering in a space between being and becoming, or of existing in a liminal space between made and remade experience. 'In betweenness', in other words, does not offer a way to envision a 'form of the future' if this means circulating between the past and the present. Thus, we should think of these approaches to a Third Space less in terms of the in-betweenness they emphasize and look more closely at how they might help us interpret the ways in which Brazil and other postcolonial spaces are moving away from the burden of their histories.

Gilroy's concepts of double consciousness and the black Atlantic have also been useful in this study. We have seen the temporal, spatial and spiritual distances that the concepts represent in historical and contemporary depictions of the disjuncture of being black and Brazilian. Additionally, we have seen the incongruity of the absence of black Brazil from most mini-series narratives and its absorption into the centers of Brazilian culture more recently. I would argue, however, that this is not due to the lack of 'more desperate and more politically charged' portrayals of black Brazilians, but rather that portraying black Brazilians has largely become the preserve of film and, paradoxically, *non-black* Brazilian viewers who are socio-economically positioned to engage with film in Brazil. However, in stressing a liminal space in which black culture exists, double consciousness and the black Atlantic also imply that realizing the cohesion of black culture is impossible, due to geographical, temporal and spiritual distances. I would argue that in part, this is because Brazil never experienced the movements for racial equality of the US, for instance. From slavery to authoritarianism to neoliberalism, racial difference in Brazil has been absorbed into intellectual and political ideologies that have romanticized, ignored or suppressed what 'race' means to Brazil. On another level, then, this means that double consciousness and the black Atlantic become even more relevant to Brazil. But the concepts should be

expanded to include thinking about *other* diasporic peoples, cultures and identities and their relationships with constructs of nation, both in and beyond Brazil. Finally, double consciousness and the black Atlantic require further thinking in terms of a national *mass mediated* space. In the broadcast space of Brazil, we could begin by further examining not only the conflict between made and remade experience, but also by further interrogating the agents and institutions responsible for translating the made into the remade. Thus, the idea of the black Atlantic offers many interrogative possibilities. But it should be used to reach deeper into Brazil and other contexts in which the disparity between being and becoming not only lies across a metaphorical space but also within a nation's borders.

Martín-Barbero's concept of continuous discontinuity underpins many of the approaches to conceptualizing hybridity. Continuous discontinuity also underpins the ways in which I have interpreted the social and textual dimensions of the mini-series' representations of Brazilian national culture, values and identity. We can think of continuous discontinuity as a way to describe not only revisiting unresolved political and social histories through the Brazilian television mini-series, but also the critical and creative discourse this stirs in further *making sense* of those histories. Additionally, Martín-Barbero extricated the idea of *mestizaje* from its geo-ethnic origin and reconceived of it as a way to view Latin American cultural history as an 'explanation of our existence' through a 'web of time and places'. As a concept, *mestizaje* thus helps us to make sense of both the intersecting narratives and the hybrid generic traditions that characterize the Brazilian television mini-series. Both these narrative and generic intersections and discourses of authority and resistance have also revealed the ways in which a 'modernity which is not contemporary' is articulated through the Brazilian mini-series. This is a 'version' of modernity, as I argued above, that engages sophisticated modes of television production to depict the extremes of historical and contemporary Brazilian experience: a modernity, in other words, which requires the counterpart of backwardness for its symbolic efficacy. However, in the concepts of both continuous discontinuity and *mestizaje*, I would argue, there is the danger of reinforcing the same quality of suspension to describe Latin American culture as those above which attempt to reflect a space between being and becoming in diaspora culture and the post-colonial context. In this regard, we should be careful to look for *change* in the notion of 'hybrid' cultures, values or identities, in Brazil, Latin America and elsewhere.

If we revisit the concept of hybridity through García Canclini's approach to analyzing Latin American culture, then the risk of remaining in a suspended state of discontinuity is lessened. García Canclini's tools of decollection, deterritorialization and impure genres have offered a way to observe continuity and change in the textual-generic characteristics

of the mini-series. We have been able to see that the foreign, the popular and indeed, the authentic, have open boundaries of definition, and that over time the narrative definition of the mini-series has changed considerably. García Canclini and Anzaldúa also situate broader processes of de- and reterritorialization specifically within Latin America, which through the Brazilian mini-series has enabled us to see that diaspora identities in Latin America reflect *intra-national* migration, and not the transnational migration central to theorizing diaspora identity in a larger postcolonial space. Additionally, García Canclini stresses the importance of examining the relations between Latin American culture and the institutional and economic force of its cultural industries, which I have attempted to do in this study. However, I would argue that García Canclini and Martín-Barbero tend to generalize relations between culture, politics and economics in Latin America, rather than considering differences between regions or countries. By returning to Brazil, I hope to show how we can better contextualize the concept of hybridity in this space.

One of the most significant aspects of conceiving of hybridity in Brazil is that the concept has been continuously invoked in the political and intellectual articulations of Brazilian national identity. This is a crucial distinction to make, especially in relation to critiques of hybridity concerned with the *utility* of the concept. If we were to conceive of the utility of hybridity in Brazil, then I would argue that we have seen very particular ways in which the concept has been utilized in political and intellectual discourses of building Brazilian nationhood. For instance, the utility of hybridity relied on the fact that it characterized the physical attributes of Brazil's 'mixed' lands and peoples, or Brazil's *mestiçagem*, which is evident in the discourse of early attempts to define Brazilian nationhood. Perhaps most indicative of the thinking of this period is that Brazil '*might* have been civilized into a strong, racially unified nation', as Borges wrote, had it not been for the backwardness of the 'hybrid mestizo'. However, it was not just the physical but also the *mental* attributes of the *mestiço* that symbolized backwardness; thus, *mestiçagem* embodied a resistance to Brazil's realization of modernity. As I outlined in Chapter 1, Tôrres, Bomfim and Freyre helped to change thinking about *mestiçagem*. They argued instead that the physical and cultural diversity of Brazil provides a basis for recognizing its uniqueness. Yet the ideas of these scholars also reflect a resistance to modernity, particularly in terms of the way it was envisioned and articulated as a homogenizing force by the ruling Brazilian political and intellectual figures. Given the continuous narratives of resistance in the mini-series, and the modes of resistance we have observed in creative and critical discourse, I would argue that resistance to modernity is a continuous, active mode of thinking in relation to representing Brazilian culture, values and identity. This continuous force of resistance, I would add, is not directed towards abstract ideas of modernity, but to the specific ways

in which it has been articulated as a conciliatory and homogenizing ideal. In the context of Brazil, we might think of hybridity as a mode of resisting the intellectual, political and other institutional forces that have attempted to articulate the boundaries of the nation's physical and symbolic diversity. Thus, the present challenge to this continuous mode of resistance is to see it articulated within the homogenizing force of Brazilian television.

At the same time, I would argue that popular culture helps to contextualize the concept of hybridity in Brazil, and that Brazilian popular culture provides a lens through which to see continuity and change in the ways that hybridity has been conceived in Brazil. If we return to Bomfim's thinking again, popular culture not only revealed the 'divergent qualities' of Brazilians but it also mobilized 'a fight for tendencies' among Brazilians. In Tôrres's view, the 'problems of adaptation and culture that [were] not resolved' in early twentieth-century Brazil were fundamentally linked to larger constraints on educating black and *mestiço* Brazilians. Freyre and Buarque de Holanda changed perceptions of Brazilian popular culture profoundly, although as Ortiz noted, perhaps only to reinforce the gap between the appearances and essences of modernity in Brazil. In contemporary Brazil, there is still a gap between the appearances and essences of modernity, which a form such as the television mini-series helps us to see, if it does not also consolidate. For instance, if we revisit Trece's study of funk culture in Brazil – that it reflects 'a refusal to participate in the dominant consensual culture with its mythology of cordial race and social relations' – then this becomes evident both in the discordant narratives and in the unconventional production techniques of *Cidade dos Homens*. At the same time, the way in which black urban experience was precipitously absorbed into Brazil's broadcast space attests to the cordial legacy of hybridity in Brazil. In these regards, we should think about hybridity not only in Brazil but also, and *especially*, in Brazilian television as a continuous negotiation between the confrontational and the conciliatory.

The narrative qualities of the mini-series and the institutional qualities it reflects provide a transition to revisiting some of the ideas about popular texts, genres and their relations with reader and viewers that I discussed in Chapter 3. From this study, it seems clear not only that we can substantiate the idea of a 'broadcast space' but also that this space is comprised of a 'language intended to be recognized' and the 'conditions of reception', as Scannell argued. However, I would interrogate the *national* boundaries that seem to be assumed in Scannell's concept, both because of the global appeal of the Brazilian mini-series and because of the global conventions that it incorporates. Additionally, we should think about Scannell's 'language intended to be recognized' in terms of trademark and mastery approaches to television creation, for instance, and what they suggest about the

emotional and educational dimensions of attempting to narrate the nation's stories to its diverse viewers. We should also consider the presence of intuition in the broadcast space and the way in which it reflects the subjective dimensions of authorship and attempts, at least, to interrogate uniform constructs of genre and audience. The idea of the broadcast space, then, continues to be a useful tool for conceiving of a mediated terrain in which institutional conditions and subjective interests meet. To a greater extent, however, we should use the concept to explore not only the points at which the institutional and the subjective meet, but also clash and disagree, in the mediated spaces of a nation.

Neale's concept of genre as 'systems of orientations, expectations and conventions' also helps to envision the different agents and institutions involved in generic constructs. We might expand on Neale's concept with the 'historical and cultural change' that influences genre, as Sobchak wrote, but that may also condense or displace the same historical and cultural issues of a society in terms of the way a genre is constructed. Thus, it has been possible to trace shifts between epic and more intimate narratives in the mini-series, for instance. At the same time, we have seen how the Brazilian other reappears in different temporal and spatial guises. Said's concept of the structure of attitudes and reference that operate within a text to reflect society's explicit or implicit values has therefore also been a valuable tool for tracing the shifting guises of otherness in the Brazilian mini-series. But we might rethink structures of attitude and reference in relation to the agents operating within a given institutional structure, such as that of the press or television in Brazil. For creative and critical voices have allowed us to see that there is resistance to television's 'consolidated vision' of the way Brazil represents itself through the mini-series.

However, this study has also revealed that there are structures of attitude and reference toward kinds of genres in Brazil, perhaps even toward 'feminine' and 'masculine' genres, as Burgess, Poovey and O'Cinneide traced in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century British literature. It has been argued that the *telenovela* is not a gendered genre, as I pointed out in Chapter 3, but in this study we have seen a tendency to distinguish the *telenovela* from the mini-series in terms of the melodramatic *versus* the political-historical nature of each form. While I maintain that there is at least an implicit structure of attitude and reference to gendered distinctions between the genres, the Brazilian mini-series does 'mobilize the old romance plot', as Ferris wrote about the colonial Irish travel tale, to engage history and politics in representing the 'disorientation of personal and national being'. We have seen this both in terms of *personal* disorientation projected onto the national stage, and in terms of *national* disorientation entering the sphere of personal being. We could think of the mini-series as reflecting 'a peculiar mixture of the combative and the conciliatory', as

Ferris also wrote, in the way that its narratives revisit some of Brazil's darkest political-historical moments and at the same time, celebrate what it means to be Brazilian. In this same respect, we saw debates about the mini-series' revisionary approach to depicting Brazil's darker political moments, which invokes 'the supplement or the correction for a history of non-productive events' characteristic of the Latin American romance tradition that Sommer pointed out in Chapter 3. While it may be difficult to conceive of the mini-series as a continuation of literary movements of resistance in colonial and postcolonial history, especially within the highly codified space of Brazilian television, the form does at times reflect the negotiation of some of Brazil's 'non-productive' moments in history.

This study has also revealed continuous debates among critics about 'the purely escapist nature of mass art', or about the way 'mass art legitimates the status quo', that Modleski pointed out. In Brazil, this is a debate that seems to have implications for class more than gender, especially in relation to the class stratification associated with *telenovela* and film viewers. Therefore, even for the critics who see the educational value of the mini-series, or applaud its literary or historical authenticity, there is still the danger of reaffirming the 'traditional values, behavior and attitudes' of Brazilian television, rather than challenging them. But we have also seen, as Modleski concluded, that this is not a simple debate. In part, this is because the Brazilian mini-series engages with language and literacy in ways that are unique for Brazilian television, which I have interpreted as an exploration of the 'conception of the word and what can be done with it', as Radway learned of her readers of popular fiction. I would argue as well that both the presumptions and the explorations of the power of language in the mini-series substantiate that there are 'as many different forms of literate behavior as there are interpretive communities' among viewers, which serves to further complicate critical debate. Nevertheless, critical debate does provide an important distinction between institutionally and socially constructed values, which was similar to the distinction Geraghty made between the ghetto and the space soap opera constructs for women. However, critical debate also revealed that the issue of passivity among television viewers persists. Not only is there the tendency to correlate class and levels of passivity, which Butsch noted of American television viewers, but in the context of Brazil this is also a discourse supported by the divisions between film and *telenovela* viewers. Thus, as Shiach observed of Britain, the 'worry about passivity' is one in which Brazilian critics also feel themselves seriously implicated.

Before I return to the ideas about popular texts, genres and readers and viewers in Brazil, which I discussed in Chapter 3, I would like to briefly revisit Bakhtin's life of the text in relation to the Brazilian television mini-series. If we move beyond thinking of the life of

the text as involving 'two consciousnesses, two subjects' to include 'voices heard before the author comes upon' a subject, then this necessitates looking beyond the dichotomous relationship between addresser and addressee to include the role of the superaddressee. I suggested that the superaddressee reflects the way the mini-series inserts the personal-intimate into history as an agent of understanding, and not simply explaining, history. In the context of Brazil, I invoked Bellei to also suggest that the superaddressee signifies a mode of mediating between the imitative and the original to articulate a specific national reality. Perhaps, then, we could think of the role of the superaddressee in the Brazilian television mini-series as reflecting the dimensions of both understanding and mediating Brazilian experience. Thus, if we were to think of the life of the text of the mini-series as reflecting a dialectics of understanding/mediating Brazilian experience, then we should also think about the ways in which this dialectic intersects with tensions of the made/remade and being/becoming that underpin the social-textual dimensions of hybridity.

Finally, in this study I have examined the formal and narrative qualities of the Brazilian television mini-series, the ways in which these qualities are used to depict historical and contemporary Brazilian experience, and the contribution of creative and critical debates to a larger picture of the mini-series' representations of Brazilian national culture, values and identity. However, without the role the *telenovela* has played and continues to play in Brazil, my analysis of these dimensions of the mini-series would have been very difficult to carry out in the first place. As I argued in Chapter 3, the *telenovela* reflects the physical and symbolic significations of space in Brazil. On one hand, the *telenovela* is a form that transcends the social, cultural and economic divides of Brazil to assume a narrative role with which Brazilians and perhaps even the world can identify. On the other hand, as Vassallo de Lopes, Tufte and others noted, the extent to which the *telenovela* attempts to provide a social mirror for Brazil only reinforces the existing divides within the nation. In a different mode of reflecting the significance of space in Brazil, the mini-series emerged at a point when Brazil's political and historical identity was in upheaval and the capacity of the *telenovela* to push the boundaries of serving as Brazil's social mirror had perhaps been exhausted by military reprisals and censorship. At the same time, the mini-series is no different from the *telenovela* or other forms of popular fiction in terms of exploring the boundaries between reality and fantasy, the personal-intimate and the social-public, and convention and transgression. That is, the mini-series required the *telenovela*, the series and other national and foreign forms of television drama in order to assume the role of narrating Brazil's story anew. In this sense, both Simões Borelli's concept of territories of fictionality and Freire Lobo's notion of the palimpsest perhaps have more political than formal weight in terms of the role the mini-series assumed in narrating Brazil's story.

We cannot forget the mini-series' place in a formal, institutional and political history that begins with the *romance-folhetim* and extends to the film and the *telenovela*. This is also a history that reflects the ways in which modernity in Brazil has been articulated through the forms and narratives of popular culture. If we recall Meyer's analysis of the *romance-folhetim*, it brought into question the existence of 'frontiers, or the absence of them' in the literary genres of nineteenth-century Brazil. Similarly, as Ortiz noted, it was not just the success of the *romance-folhetim* but it was also the only means of expression available to literary Brazilians that allowed the form to flourish in Brazil. And, as Lopez wrote, the *telenovela* represents Latin American modernization, but it also supplanted the unrealized project of film in Latin America. Thus, we can think of the mini-series as a continuation of the tradition of mediating between the symbols and the realities of modernity in Latin America. Yet the mini-series also represents contrasting assertions of a modern national television industry: while it is a product of the military regime's technological impetus, it reflects Brazil having ultimately left that era behind in its forward-facing movement. The closed form of the Brazilian mini-series is therefore more significant than we think, for it represents not only a narrative but also a historical capacity to look back on a completed story in order to make sense of it. And in this process of looking back on history, both the symbols and the realities of modernity are also read anew.

#### **8.4 Reflections on Research Design and Methodology**

Methodologically, I realize that this study has been overly ambitious when I look back on it. My mini-series sample reached from Brazil's re-democratization to its contemporary depictions of the urban peripheries. While my sample reflects political, historical, social and cultural change in Brazil, it is both lacking and representative in two respects. First, I have acknowledged the lack of mini-series by television networks other than Globo. But second, Globo has and continues to dominate Brazilian television production, including television drama, which makes this study representative of the Brazilian broadcast space. Nevertheless, if I had focused on subgenres of the mini-series such as the epic, literary adaptation, or political/historical reenactment, I would have reduced the historical and thematic sample of texts. What I believe this study has illustrated is that the Brazilian mini-series exceeds generic categorization in many respects. Additionally, I believe that a smaller sample would have underscored the likeness of mini-series productions instead of great differences within the form itself.

In terms of interviews, my informant pool could have been larger. I pursued interviews based on the idea that a small amount of prolific creators would add more substantially to my findings than a larger amount of less-experienced creators. In some respects, this has proven true. It was only through prolific informants, for instance, that the trademark and mastery approaches to mini-series creation became clear. However, prolific creators also tended to refer to their work in specific aesthetic terms, which then became apparent and reinforced when I was viewing and reviewing mini-series. With mid-level creators, I found that there was less emphasis on aesthetics and therefore fewer suggestions of an aesthetic ideology that might inform producing within the genre. Mid-level creators were particularly informative because they avoided a discourse of style or 'signature' while their experience was quite varied. Low-level creators, contrary to my expectations, were not the least informative of my interviewees. Because they must routinely move between productions, they provided a great deal of comparative information. Low-level creators also addressed the issue of power in Brazilian television production, most likely because they are highly subject to the power exerted by those above them.

In revisiting the questions I asked, I realize I could have posed some of them differently in terms of the information I was seeking. While I believe I have addressed discourses of 'race' and gender in terms of their representation in the Brazilian television mini-series, for instance, I did not ask pointed questions about the way in which 'race' or gender constructs were conceived by creators in their work. On one hand, I could look at avoiding pointed discussion of racial or gendered identity constructs as participating in their suppression, perhaps in the same way that they are suppressed by being celebrated in the television mini-series. On the other hand, it seemed important that I did not ask specific questions about 'race', gender, geography or many of the other discourse that were significant in this study. This approach enabled me to maintain the methodological premise of the *emergence* of discourse from the use of language that naturally frames it. I believe that any other approach would not have revealed the discrepancies between the made and remade dimensions of Brazilian experience reflected in the mini-series.

The press was perhaps my most valuable source for a number of reasons. First, because press material was abundant and accessible, which allowed me to see important debates and common themes. Secondly, critical commentary allowed me to perceive a number of issues that were otherwise hidden by the simple appeal of the mini-series, or obscured by creators' detailed accounts of the production process. Third, the most revealing critiques often came from the same critics. Bia Abramo, Esther Hamburger and Telmo Martino, among other writers, provided both a critical but also a *historical* perspective on the mini-

series in Brazil that compared to that of the most prolific creators. However, as Modleski might agree, the macro-level view that critics take towards the mini-series and towards Brazilian television in general means that the pleasures of the text can become lost in the desire to reveal the machinations of the industry. Finally, in many ways the press served as a proxy-audience for my study. We have seen that critics act and speak as viewers, but that they also act and speak *for* viewers, especially in respect to discourses of education, literacy and, by implication, viewer passivity.

## 8.5 Areas for Future Research

In this study, I have undertaken different kinds of research: understanding a television form as a textual-generic and sociocultural means of representing a nation; examining a politics of representation that reflects a nation's ability to both portray and negotiate its history; and the sources and kinds of discourses involved in the politics of representing a nation. But there are many directions that I have left unexplored, which this study invites to explore. One area is that of *audiences*. I have left the idea of audiences to that of the implied audience, as Livingstone and others have theorized. Moreover, the audiences of this study have been me, the analyst, and by implication, creative and critical discourse. I would argue that there is a great terrain to explore in terms of the mini-series audience in Brazil. This would be a particularly revealing avenue of study in terms of the relations between the mini-series, the *telenovela* and film in Brazil, given the socioeconomic divides that this study has uncovered between the implied audiences of these forms.

Another valuable area of research would be to investigate the formal, institutional and representational dimensions of the mini-series in a *transnational* analysis. There are a few qualities that define the mini-series as a transnational genre: the way the form mixes fact and fiction; the personal and intimate perspective that makes sense of political-historical events; and the way the mini-series straddles sophisticated and popular narrative modes and production techniques. While I have thoroughly examined these dimensions of the Brazilian television mini-series, they deserve exploration in other contexts in which the mini-series is also widely produced, such as the US, Europe and Australia. An even more important area of research would be to look at the narrative, production and institutional dimensions of the mini-series in other postcolonial contexts, such as South Korea, South Africa, Ireland and India, to name a few. In this avenue of inquiry, it would be possible to expand on the theoretical, methodological and analytical implications of sociocultural and textual-generic hybridity even more than I have been able to offer in this study.

Finally, despite my findings on the Brazilian broadcast space, there is a great deal of area to explore in terms of Brazil's *online* space. As I discovered during research for this study, the dialogues occurring between authors, viewers, critics and the institutions of Brazilian television are increasingly conducted through web sites and message boards. In fact, it is becoming common that one can watch, and engage in dialogue about, the latest *telenovela* or mini-series episode *via* Globo.com, not to mention 'unofficial' vehicles like YouTube. If we return to the idea of the life of the text in this regard, the roles of addresser, addressee and superaddressee change in a radical way, as a dialectics between understanding and mediating Brazil's story in an online space expands the institutions and agents involved in explanation and comprehension. Perhaps as much as television, then, it is the online space and the ways in which it can narrate Brazil's story that offer areas for exploring the boundaries between the made and remade and being and becoming in mediating what it continues to mean to be Brazilian.

## Appendices

### Appendix 1: Brazilian Mini-series Productions, 1981- 2007

| Production                       | Year | Network      | Production                              | Year | Network  |
|----------------------------------|------|--------------|---|------|----------|
| <i>Floradas na Serra</i>         | 1981 | Cultura      | <i>O Canto das Sereias</i>              | 1990 | Manchete |
| <i>O Fiel e a Pedra</i>          | 1981 | Cultura      | <i>Riacho Doce</i>                      | 1990 | Globo    |
| <i>O Resto É Silêncio</i>        | 1981 | Cultura      | <i>Rosa dos Rumos</i>                   | 1990 | Manchete |
| <i>Partidas Dobradas</i>         | 1981 | Cultura      | <i>Filhos do Sol</i>                    | 1991 | Manchete |
| <i>Vento do Mar Aberto</i>       | 1981 | Cultura      | <i>Floradas na Serra</i>                | 1991 | Manchete |
| <i>As Cinco Panelas de Ouro</i>  | 1982 | Cultura      | <i>Ilha das Bruxas</i>                  | 1991 | Manchete |
| <i>Avenida Paulista</i>          | 1982 | Globo        | <i>Meu Marido</i>                       | 1991 | Globo    |
| <i>Casa de Pensão</i>            | 1982 | Cultura      | <i>Na Rede das Intrigas</i>             | 1991 | Manchete |
| <i>Iaiá Garcia</i>               | 1982 | Cultura      | <i>O Fantasma da Ópera</i>              | 1991 | Manchete |
| <i>Lampião e Maria Bonita</i>    | 1982 | Globo        | <i>O Farol</i>                          | 1991 | Manchete |
| <i>Maria Stuart</i>              | 1982 | Cultura      | <i>O Guarani</i>                        | 1991 | Manchete |
| <i>Música ao Longe</i>           | 1982 | Cultura      | <i>O Portador</i>                       | 1991 | Globo    |
| <i>Nem Rebeldes, Nem Fiéis</i>   | 1982 | Cultura      | <i>O Sorriso do Lagarto</i>             | 1991 | Globo    |
| <i>O Coronel e o Lobisomem</i>   | 1982 | Cultura      | <i>Anos Rebeldes</i>                    | 1992 | Globo    |
| <i>O Pátio das Donzelas</i>      | 1982 | Cultura      | <i>As Noivas de Copacabana</i>          | 1992 | Globo    |
| <i>O Tronco do Ipê</i>           | 1982 | Cultura      | <i>Tereza Batista</i>                   | 1992 | Globo    |
| <i>Paiol Velho</i>               | 1982 | Cultura      | <i>Agosto</i>                           | 1993 | Globo    |
| <i>Pic Nic Classe C</i>          | 1982 | Cultura      | <i>Contos de Verão</i>                  | 1993 | Globo    |
| <i>Quem Ama Não Mata</i>         | 1982 | Globo        | <i>Retratos de Mulher</i>               | 1993 | Globo    |
| <i>Seu Quequé</i>                | 1982 | Cultura      | <i>Sex Appeal</i>                       | 1993 | Globo    |
| <i>Bandidos da Falange</i>       | 1983 | Globo        | <i>A Madona de Cedro</i>                | 1994 | Globo    |
| <i>Fernando da Gata</i>          | 1983 | Globo        | <i>Incidente em Antares</i>             | 1994 | Globo    |
| <i>Moinhos de Vento</i>          | 1983 | Globo        | <i>Memorial de Maria Moura</i>          | 1994 | Globo    |
| <i>Parabéns a Você</i>           | 1983 | Globo        | <i>Decadência</i>                       | 1995 | Globo    |
| <i>A Máfia no Brasil</i>         | 1984 | Globo        | <i>Engraçadinha...</i>                  | 1995 | Globo    |
| <i>Anarquistas Graças a Deus</i> | 1984 | Globo        | <i>Sombras de Julho</i>                 | 1995 | Cultura  |
| <i>Marquesa de Santos</i>        | 1984 | Manchete     | <i>A Filha do Demônio</i>               | 1997 | Record   |
| <i>Meu Destino é Pecar</i>       | 1984 | Globo        | <i>Direito de Vencer</i>                | 1997 | Record   |
| <i>Padre Cícero</i>              | 1984 | Globo        | <i>O Desafio de Elias</i>               | 1997 | Record   |
| <i>Rabo-de-Saia</i>              | 1984 | Globo        | <i>Olho da Terra</i>                    | 1997 | Record   |
| <i>Santa Marta Fabril</i>        | 1984 | Manchete     | <i>Por Amor e Ódio</i>                  | 1997 | Record   |
| <i>Viver a Vida</i>              | 1984 | Manchete     | <i>Alma de Pedra</i>                    | 1998 | Record   |
| <i>Grande Sertão: Veredas</i>    | 1985 | Globo        | <i>Dona Flor e Seus Dois Maridos</i>    | 1998 | Globo    |
| <i>O Tempo e o Vento</i>         | 1985 | Globo        | <i>Guerra de Canudos</i>                | 1998 | Globo    |
| <i>Tenda dos Milagres</i>        | 1985 | Globo        | <i>Hilda Furacão</i>                    | 1998 | Globo    |
| <i>Anos Dourados</i>             | 1986 | Globo        | <i>Labirinto</i>                        | 1998 | Globo    |
| <i>Memórias de um Gigolô</i>     | 1986 | Globo        | <i>Chiquinha Gonzaga</i>                | 1999 | Globo    |
| <i>A Rainha da Vida</i>          | 1987 | Manchete     | <i>Luna Caliente</i>                    | 1999 | Globo    |
| <i>Abolição</i>                  | 1988 | Globo        | <i>O Auto da Comadecida</i>             | 1999 | Globo    |
| <i>Chapadão do Bugre</i>         | 1988 | Bandeirantes | <i>A Invenção do Brasil</i>             | 2000 | Globo    |
| <i>O Pagador de Promessas</i>    | 1988 | Globo        | <i>A Muralha</i>                        | 2000 | Globo    |
| <i>O Primo Basílio</i>           | 1988 | Globo        | <i>Aquarela do Brasil</i>               | 2000 | Globo    |
| <i>Sampa</i>                     | 1988 | Globo        | <i>Os Maias</i>                         | 2001 | Globo    |
| <i>Capitães da Areia</i>         | 1989 | Bandeirantes | <i>Presença de Anita</i>                | 2001 | Globo    |
| <i>Colônia Cecília</i>           | 1989 | Bandeirantes | <i>Cidade dos Homens</i>                | 2002 | Globo    |
| <i>O Cometa</i>                  | 1989 | Bandeirantes | <i>O Quinto dos Infernos</i>            | 2002 | Globo    |
| <i>República</i>                 | 1989 | Globo        | <i>Pastores da Noite</i>                | 2002 | Globo    |
| <i>A, E, I, O ... Urca</i>       | 1990 | Globo        | <i>A Casa das Sete Mulheres</i>         | 2003 | Globo    |
| <i>Boca do Lixo</i>              | 1990 | Globo        | <i>Um Só Coração</i>                    | 2004 | Globo    |
| <i>Desejo</i>                    | 1990 | Globo        | <i>Hoje é Dia de Maria: Primeira...</i> | 2005 | Globo    |
| <i>Escrava Anastácia</i>         | 1990 | Manchete     | <i>Hoje é Dia de Maria: Segunda...</i>  | 2005 | Globo    |
| <i>La Mamma</i>                  | 1990 | Globo        | <i>Mad Maria</i>                        | 2005 | Globo    |
| <i>Mãe de Santo</i>              | 1990 | Manchete     | <i>JK</i>                               | 2006 | Globo    |
|                                  |      |              | <i>Amazônia...</i>                      | 2007 | Globo    |

Appendix 2: Mini-series Sample, listed chronologically

| Productions                    | 1982 | 1983 | 1984 | 1985 | 1986 | 1987 | 1988 | 1989 | 1990 | 1991 | 1992 | 1993 | 1994 | 1995 | 1996 | 1997 | 1998 | 1999 | 2000 | 2001 | 2002 | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 | Network  |
|--------------------------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|----------|
| <i>Lampião e Maria Bonita</i>  | •    |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      | Globo    |
| <i>Quem Ama Não Mata</i>       | •    |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      | Globo    |
| <i>Bandidos da Falange</i>     |      | •    |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      | Globo    |
| <i>Marquesa de Santos</i>      |      |      | •    |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      | Manchete |
| <i>O Tempo e O Vento</i>       |      |      |      | •    |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      | Globo    |
| <i>Anos Dourados</i>           |      |      |      |      | •    |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      | Globo    |
| <i>O Pagador de Promessas</i>  |      |      |      |      |      | •    |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      | Globo    |
| <i>O Primo Basílio</i>         |      |      |      |      |      |      | •    |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      | Globo    |
| <i>Capitães da Areia</i>       |      |      |      |      |      |      |      | •    |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      | Band     |
| <i>Escrava Anastácia</i>       |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      | •    |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      | Manchete |
| <i>Riacho Doce</i>             |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      | •    |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      | Globo    |
| <i>Anos Rebeldes</i>           |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      | •    |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      | Globo    |
| <i>As Noivas de Copacabana</i> |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      | •    |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      | Globo    |
| <i>Tereza Batista</i>          |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      | •    |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      | Globo    |
| <i>Agosto</i>                  |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      | •    |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      | Globo    |
| <i>Sex Appeal</i>              |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      | •    |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      | Globo    |
| <i>Incidente em Antares</i>    |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      | •    |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      | Globo    |
| <i>Memorial de Maria Moura</i> |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      | •    |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      | Globo    |
| <i>Decadência</i>              |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      | •    |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      | Globo    |
| <i>Engraçadinha...</i>         |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      | •    |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      | Globo    |
| <i>Dona Flor...</i>            |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      | •    |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      | Globo    |
| <i>Hilda Furacão</i>           |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      | •    |      |      |      |      |      |      |      | Globo    |
| <i>O Auto da Compadecida</i>   |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      | •    |      |      |      |      |      |      | Globo    |
| <i>Chiquinha Gonzaga</i>       |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      | •    |      |      |      |      |      | Globo    |

Appendix 2: Mini-series Sample, listed chronologically (continued)

| Productions                        | 1982 | 1983 | 1984 | 1985 | 1986 | 1987 | 1988 | 1989 | 1990 | 1991 | 1992 | 1993 | 1994 | 1995 | 1996 | 1997 | 1998 | 1999 | 2000 | 2001 | 2002 | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 | 2006 | 2007  | Network |
|------------------------------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|-------|---------|
| <i>Luna Caliente</i>               |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      | •    |      |      |      |      |      |      |      | Globo |         |
| <i>A Invenção do Brasil</i>        |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      | •    |      |      |      |      |      |      |      | Globo |         |
| <i>A Muralha</i>                   |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      | •    |      |      |      |      |      |      | Globo |         |
| <i>Os Maias</i>                    |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      | •    |      |      |      |      |      |      | Globo |         |
| <i>Presença de Anita</i>           |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      | •    |      |      |      |      |      |      | Globo |         |
| <i>Cidade dos Homens (2002)</i>    |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      | •    |      |      |      |      |      |      | Globo |         |
| <i>Pastores da Noite</i>           |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      | •    |      |      |      |      |      |      | Globo |         |
| <i>O Quinto dos Infernos</i>       |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      | •    |      |      |      |      |      |      | Globo |         |
| <i>Cidade dos Homens (2003)</i>    |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      | •    |      |      |      |      |      |      | Globo |         |
| <i>Cidade dos Homens (2004)</i>    |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      | •    |      |      |      |      |      |      | Globo |         |
| <i>Um Só Coração</i>               |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      | •    |      |      |      |      |      |      | Globo |         |
| <i>Cidade dos Homens (2005)</i>    |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      | •    |      |      |      |      |      |      | Globo |         |
| <i>Hoje É Dia Maria (Primeira)</i> |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      | •    |      |      |      |      |      |      | Globo |         |
| <i>Hoje É Dia Maria (Segunda)</i>  |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      | •    |      |      |      |      |      |      | Globo |         |
| <i>Antônia</i>                     |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      | •    |      |      |      |      |      | Globo |         |
| <i>JK</i>                          |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      | •    |      |      |      |      |      | Globo |         |
| <i>Amazônia...</i>                 |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      | •    |      |      |      |      | Globo |         |

### Appendix 3: Interview Profile

| Position             | Production  | Affiliation  | Status     | Interview Date    |
|----------------------|---|--------------|------------|-------------------|
| Costumer             | (Diverse productions)   | Bandeirantes | Mid-level  | March 24, 2006    |
| Director             | A Muralha; Um Só Coração; Dona Flor e Seus Dos Maridos  | Globo        | High-level | August 15, 2008   |
| Director             | Agosto; A Muralha; O Tempo e O Vento;<br>Engraçadinha: Seus Amores e Seus Pecados;<br>Memorial de Maria Moura | Globo        | High-level | August 20, 2008   |
| Engineering Producer | (Diverse productions)   | Globo        | High-level | November 27, 2006 |
| Producer             | Antônia; Cidade dos Homens  | Globo        | Mid-level  | November 16, 2006 |
| Producer             | (Diverse productions)   | Globo        | Low-level  | November 17, 2006 |
| Production Assistant | Antônia; Cidade dos Homens  | Globo        | Low-level  | November 15, 2006 |
| Production Assistant | (Diverse productions)   | Globo        | Low-level  | November 16, 2006 |
| Production Manager   | O Primo Basílio; Os Maias; Dona Flor e Seus Dos Maridos   | Globo        | Mid-level  | December 5, 2006  |
| Screenwriter         | Memorial de Maria Moura;<br>Engraçadinha: Seus Amores e Seus Pecados; Luna Caliente                           | Independent  | High-level | July 31, 2008     |
| Screenwriter         | Memorial de Maria Moura   | Independent  | High-level | August 4, 2008    |
| Screenwriter         | Os Maias; Um Só Coração; JK; A Muralha;<br>A Casa das Sete Mulheres   | Globo        | High-level | August 8, 2008    |
| Screenwriter         | Agosto; Luna Caliente   | Independent  | High-level | August 14, 2008   |

## **Appendix 4: Interview Guide**

*(Translated from Portuguese into English)*

### ***Theme 1: Professional History***

- How did you begin your career as (...)?
- How did you come to work on the mini-series (...)?
- How did you decide to work on (...) mini-series in relation to your work on (...)?
- Would you like to work on mini-series in the future?
- If so, what kinds of themes would they have?

### ***Theme 2: National Cultures, Values and Identity***

- What themes of Brazilian culture do you think are important or highlighted in your work on (...)?
- What values, such as personal, social or political, are important or highlighted in your work on (...) mini-series?
- Why these values in relation to (...) mini-series in particular?
- Which characters in your (...) mini-series reflect the idea of Brazilian identity?
- Why (...) character in relation to (...) mini-series in particular?

### ***Theme 3: Texts and Genre***

- What sources or works influenced your role as (...) of the mini-series (...)?
- Why did you find these sources/works influential?
- In your experience, are there kinds of sources or works that typically influence creation of a mini-series?
- In your work as (...), or on (...), how important is, or was, it to remain true to the original work?
- How important is it to interpret or diverge from the original work?

### ***Theme 4: Continuity and Change***

- How has your work stayed the same from (...) mini-series to (...) mini-series?
- How do you think your work has changed from (...) mini-series to (...) mini-series?
- In your opinion, how have mini-series changed over the years?
- How have they stayed the same?
- Which mini-series do you find particularly special or outstanding?
- How was your capacity of (...) on the mini-series (...) affected by the network (...)?
- On the other hand, do you think your capacity of (...) on mini-series (...) had any effect on network (...)?
- Do you think your work on mini-series has had an effect on the genre?

### ***Theme 5: Audiences***

- Do you think your work on (...) made it specific to a certain audience?
- What aspects of your work on (...) made it accessible to all audiences?
- Did you think of your audience when working on (...) mini-series?
- If so, how did that relate to your work on (...) mini-series?

### ***Final Question***

- In your opinion, what is the definition of the Brazilian television mini-series?

Thank you very much for your availability, for your valuable information and for your support of my research!

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