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## **Integration of Brazilian immigrants in Portuguese Society: Problems and Possibilities**

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**(Draft)**

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### **Abstract**

This paper touches upon different aspects related to the integration of Brazilians into Portuguese society, including work discrimination, access to services, access to housing, etc. Do Brazilians feel integrated? How important is legalization as a condition for integration? What are the main problems Brazilians have faced upon arrival to Portugal? In addition this presentation considers the image and stereotypes of Brazilian immigrants which vary depending on their gender, class and race, as well as their consequences.

### **Introduction: facts about Brazilians in Portugal**

Brazilians are not a new group of immigrants in Portugal, however due to some of their characteristics, new waves of Brazilians could be considered one of the new immigrant groups in Portugal. The first Brazilians to come, were political refugees during the dictatorships, then some Portuguese descendants with their families came as well as the highly trained professionals who, according to some scholars (Baganha e Gois 1999, Peixoto 2002) assisted Portugal in its entrance and transition into the European Union. Most of the highly trained immigrants, who were obviously upper and upper middle cases, were experts in the area of telecommunication, computers and advertisement. Within this wave of professionals, the dentist could also be included. Dentists first had to struggle for a place and recognition, but later were able to organize and integrate into Portuguese society (Machado 2003).

According to Bela Feldman-Bianco (2001), the problem with Brazilian immigration in Portugal arose around the early 1990 when the flux of those coming had two joint characteristics: the large number (as they were many) and the fact that they were from less privilege backgrounds (although perceived as poor in the host society). Looking at immigration data, we see that during the 1990s, Brazilians became a more significant immigrant group in Portugal. From 1991 to 1998, they represented around 11% of the total immigrant population with the status of resident, according to SEF (Foreigners and Frontiers Services). From 1999 on, their percent has maintained stable around 10%, however if considering the introduction of other legal alternative status, such as authorizations to stay (and work) in the country, their presence became more salient. Authorizations to stay were introduced by legislation in 2001, as a new instrument for legalization. Looking at data from SEF for authorizations to stay, we see that Brazilians were a very important group benefiting from the permits. Brazilians are the second largest group when accounting for these types of authorizations in 2001, 2002 and 2003

with a total of 37.920, after Ukrainians who altogether have 64.695. These numbers represent the total numbers of Authorizations to Stay for the three consecutive years and no accounting for renewals. Table 1 summarizes the data on foreign population in Portugal. Looking at yearly numbers on authorizations to stay, we observe that as time pass by, less authorizations have been granted under the same legislation. For example in 2003, Brazilians became the largest group benefiting with authorizations to stay, again followed by Ukrainians (2.648 versus 2.546).

**Table 1 – Total Foreigners in Portugal 1999-2003**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Residents</b>	<b>Author. To Stay</b>	<b>Total (residents, renewal and new author. to stay)</b>
1999	191143		191143
2000	207607		207607
2001	223976	126901	350503
2002	238944	47657	413304
2003	250697	9097	<b>434548</b>

*SEF: own elaboration*

The year of 2003 was a key year for undocumented Brazilian immigrants in Portugal, as they were granted a special process for legalization. This possibility was made available only to Brazilian immigrants when President Lula da Silva visited Portugal, and an agreement was signed between the two governments. After a pre-registration period, over 30.000 Brazilians enrolled to be called for legalization. The implementation of the legalization process is still on-going although, the visa granting has been very slow; according to numbers from the House of Brazil in Lisbon (an immigrant association) less than 6.000 immigrants have been able to get visas. There are different factors influencing the speed and slow concretization of the legalization process. On the one side, we have governmental factors slowing the process, such as the overall bureaucracy (red tape) that the whole process involves (paperwork from different governmental agencies, a contract with specific characteristics which needs governmental approval, traveling to Spain, etc.). Along with the governmental bureaucratic factor arises the financial problem, that is, immigrants are expected to pay a fee which may go up to 700 € plus other fees for the renewals of due permits, thus the total amount of money to be paid may go up to almost 1.000 €, plus the pocket money needed for the trip to Spain. Finally, another factor that relates directly to immigrants seems to be the lack of response to the citation cards for the initial interview. Possible explanations for that include lack of information contained in the addresses, or incorrect data, or missing data, so probably many cards never reached the interested persons. In other cases, many people for some reason never showed up for the initial interview: they got the letter late or even if the card reached the address, some people never got the letter as their housing situation is so precarious and temporary that some never hold an address for too long. Many probably desisted of going through the legalization process, as did not have the amount of money necessary to start the process. Initially when the process was opened with the pre-registration period, many thought that the Portuguese government would allow some fee waivers for those who were financially unable, or would be offered the possibility of paying a reduced fee, or that the fee could be paid in installment payment. However, those hypothetical situations were unrealistic,

and the Portuguese government requires the cancellation of the debt before initiating the process, thus it could be assumed that those who have to appear at SEF when do not have the money in advance, do not show up. In addition it should be considered that as most of those enrolled in the pre-registry, according to non-official data (Padilla 2004), were employed in low skills jobs, therefore many of them probably lack the financial resources to cover the debt. Here, I reproduce a table from another work which summarizes information regarding the occupation of the recent Brazilians immigrants who are undergoing the process of legalization (Table 2).

**Table 2 – Occupation given by Brazilians at registering for legalization**

<i>Occupation</i>	<i>Number of People</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Domestic/Cleaning	2511	17.25
Construction	3249	22.33
Food and Hotel Industry	2338	16.07
Customer services/seller	1067	7.34
Sells technicians	367	2.53
Beauty Related Activities	296	2.03
Carpenters	167	1.15
Secretary/Adm. Assistance	199	1.37
Lock/key specialist	150	1.03
Health including dental	68	0.47
Distributor	82	0.57
Education/helpers	25	0.17
Computer and Telecomm.	50	0.34
Culture related activities	36	0.24
Tailoring/fashion	70	0.48
Top management	53	0.36
Various Professions	37	0.25
Others	3786	26.02
<b>Total of those classified</b>	<b>14551</b>	<b>100%</b>

*Unofficial data from the House of Brazil in Lisbon, own elaboration*

This presentation is based on an on-going project about recent waves of Brazilian immigration to Portugal started in 2003. It is based on 40 in-depth interviews conducted with Brazilian male and female immigrants, who were questioned about their migration decision, their network of friends and co-nationals, the problems and barriers they faced upon arrival, thing they like and dislike about Portugal and the Portuguese, their identity, their feelings of integration, belonging and adaptation to Portugal. In addition, this paper includes information obtained through observations and interviews with key informants.

### **Do Brazilians in Portugal fit the traditional Southern European Immigration model?**

A quick answer is yes and no. Many of the key general characteristics suggest that the Brazilian immigration flow to Portugal follows the main characteristics of the Southern European Model (King and Zontini 2000). Brazilians are one of the main immigrant

groups that contribute to its heterogeneity. Brazilians are important participants of the informal economy and work mainly in the tertiary sector. Additionally, the labor market in Portugal is segmented, and in relation to its ethnic segmentation, Brazilians occupy in this segmented labor market a specific position (medium or lower-medium). I argue that even if discrimination occurs, Brazilians occupy a middleman or intermediary position, between nationals (Portuguese) and other immigrant groups such as Africans (Cape Verdeans, Angolans, among others) and Eastern Europeans (Padilla 2004). Finally, in relation to the gender segmentation of the market, many Brazilian women are employed in the informal domestic service niche, the sex trade, and in catering and hotel, meeting the Southern European Model. However, they also work in customer services and in retail which does not necessarily fit the Southern European model.

The Southern European characteristics that Brazilians do not meet are more related to the Mediterranean as the Rio Grande (geographical barrier), as the Rio Grande that Brazilians need to cross is the Atlantic Ocean, thus there are no *pateras/balseros* coming from Brazil to Portugal. In this sense, Brazilian immigration is quite different, they need to buy air tickets, and they do not need visas to enter Portugal or Europe. Thus from this perspective, they are also at an intermediate position, better off than Africans and Eastern Europeans who occupied the bottom place and worse off than citizens of the European Union who in Southern Europe are well positioned in the labor market, inclusively many are better off than nationals.

### **Are Brazilians subject to racism and discrimination?**

For a long time, racism was associated to discriminatory practices and beliefs based on physical differences that attributed superiority to a certain “race” and assume the inferiority of other races. Today race has been replaced by ethnicity, and definitions of racism are based on ethnic differences (ethnic could be religion, culture, language, etc.) thus contemporarily, “the category of immigration substitutes that of race” (Solé and Parella 2003: 123), especially when immigrant flows are associated to flows coming from the developing world. In consequence, the new racism is associated with ethnic prejudice that evolves into discrimination.

In the first wave of Brazilian immigration to Portugal, they enjoyed a privilege status within Portuguese society. As other scholars have highlighted (Peixoto 2002, Baganha and Gois 1999), the first Brazilians to come were highly qualified, so, their position was more similar to the position of other Europeans living in Portugal (excluding the situation of the dentists, as they deserved a different consideration). Later, as time past by and fluxes became more numerous and proletarianized, Brazilians evolved to become Third world immigrants, that is, perceived as poor and uninstructed, even if data indicates a different profile.

A recent published opinion study conducted in Portugal (Casa do Brasil/ACIME 2004) describes the actual profile of the recent or newly arrived Brazilian immigrant (less than 5 years) as follow: the large majority is young, as 75% of them are between 20 and 35 years-old; the majority is male, 64% male versus 36% female; their educational

attainment indicates that at least 60% completed high school and eventually 14% of them started college. Pertaining their way to make a living, the more relevant occupations are in retail and sales, catering and construction. From an analytical point, some of these characteristics could be biased due to the adoption of quota sampling which was based on official labor statistics. Those biases include the fact that some profession, especially female professions, tend to be hidden and undeclared (domestic service as well as entertainment). Unofficial data gathered by the House of Brazil in Lisbon and based on people filling out the pre-registration process, indicates that the main occupations are the same, although the distribution is different. In a decreasing order, the most relevant occupations are: construction with 22%, domestic services with 17% and Catering and Hotels (together) 16%. This divergence could illustrate a slight shift among the main occupations, at least for those registering for legalization, and the fact that the still undocumented immigrants hold worse jobs.

It should be noted that based on the demographic characteristics and other social features of Brazilian immigrants describe in another work (Padilla 2004), most Brazilians are from the middle class, mainly low-middle class who were able to gather individual and/or family resources to afford the first part of the immigration experience (trip, housing, first living expenses, etc.). Another interesting characteristic to pinpoint, which comes across both in the Casa do Brasil/ACIME Opinion Study and in my interviews, has to do with the place of origin of Brazilian immigrants. They come from everywhere, from a diversity of states, cities and regions, from the interior and from the coast. This characteristic is important as it shows a difference with previous migration flows which used to come from General Valadares, Minas Gerais, in the case of the United States, and the main cities in the case of other emigration points (Martes 2000, Sales 1999, Goza 2003, Assis 2002).

Solé and Parella (2003) stated that for the case of Spain, there are two types of racial discrimination that have been study. The first one encompasses, discrimination among national or autochthonous and immigrant workers in relation to access to jobs. The second one refers to different situations in terms of employment conditions, including wages, types of contract, hours, availability, working conditions, etc. Ethnographic material from the interviews allows drawing preliminary conclusions in reference to this second type of discrimination for Brazilians in Portugal. In addition, data gathered in the interviews with Brazilian immigrants covered the issue of discrimination from a larger perspective, so I will refer first to overall discrimination and then to work discrimination.

The majority of Brazilians, 75%, believe that Brazilians are discriminated against in Portugal either for being Brazilians or for being immigrants. Only 20% felt that Brazilians were not discriminated. The comments could be divided into those who believed that Brazilians are discriminated because they are immigrants and those that justify the discrimination of Brazilians by Portuguese because they are believed to do something wrong or incorrect. For some of the interviewees, the image or behavior of co-national Brazilians is what causes the discriminatory practice in Portugal. A preliminary analysis indicates that these adopt a blame-the-victim position, which is not uncommon to find in cases of discrimination when those discriminated assume the position of the

discriminator. One interesting comment about discrimination refers to the relevance of race as a cause for discrimination more than nationality. This issue even if not dominant in the interviews due to the racial profile of the interviewees, indicates a increasing relevance of race and the process of racialization of immigration (Calavita 2004).

When asked about specific discrimination, Brazilians referred to discrimination at work, in schools, when dealing and trying to solve legal affairs, throughout the daily life, etc. Andrea, a 39 year-old female from Ceara who went to college, left Brazil due to unemployment and works as a retail agent in Portugal said in relation to daily discrimination: “when you walk into a store, for example a perfume store, the sales persons look at you as if you did not have the money to buy or if you were going to steal something, I do not know. They look at you with different eyes...” then she also complained about the bureaucracy around the present legalization process, in which red-tape is generalized and public employees do not help you with information. In general many interviewees mentioned discrimination based on mistreatments in stores or public agencies and red-tape involving legalization. Moreover, 63% of the interviewees mentioned to have experienced personally cases of discrimination while 37% said they had no experienced discrimination.

Applying Solé and Parella’s classification of racial discrimination (mainly ethnic discrimination), regarding the different situations in terms of employment conditions, most Brazilians complained about the existence of discrimination mainly in form of exploitation. Sixty-three percent of the interviewees said to know cases of exploitation at work. Exploitation includes to work more hours than normal, employers not paying social security which unable employees to access legalization, to work extra time without compensation, not getting vacation and holidays subsidies, getting paid very late, not getting paid at all and being fired in case of complaints, or even having to work when sick. In addition to the numerous cases of discrimination involving the conditions of employment, some Brazilians also experienced deportation threats. Even if a minority suffered from a personal threat, 20% versus 80% who never received any threat, at least 45% of the Brazilian immigrants interviewed said to know someone who had received a threat of deportation, although not necessarily from employers but from other people.

Cases of discrimination were reported in relation to access to health and services and to housing. Even if most Brazilian, 63% said that they did not have housing problems, that is, that they did not face problems to find a place to live, most of them added that they did not have to find a place as they were staying with family members or friends, thus they did not have to looked for a place (this issues reinforces the importance of immigration networks). Those who did face housing problems (37%) mentioned few common difficulties. In some cases, some mentioned the fact that landlords refused to rent places to Brazilians or immigrants, even with money. Others said that rents were really high and thus the housing conditions were very poor, as many people have to share one room and pay a lot of money for no comfort and privacy at all. Few mentioned the difficulty to find a guarantor or sponsor and in case of not satisfying the criterion, places became unavailable. Maria, a 23 year-old female from Matto Grosso, who was a teacher in Brazil and is a maid in Portugal said “it was very difficult to find a place to live. When you call



and they hear that you are Brazilian, they do not accept, only if a Portuguese calls for you. Finally I found a place through friends where there are other Brazilians”. José, a 39 year-old from Minas Gerais who used to work as a secretary in a Brazilian university and was unemployed at the time of the interview said “you always have problems to find housing due to discrimination against Brazilians, you call and they hang up on you”. Marcelo a 27 year-old male from Parana, who has been in Portugal since 2001 said that even if he had not faced problems in finding a place to live, there is a real problem in which both Brazilians and Portuguese are involved. Usually in order to find a place, Brazilians need to find a Portuguese who is willing to act as legally responsible or guarantor. Other times the problem is that once a Brazilian finds a place to rent, for him/her and family, then they let others in and when the landlord comes for a visit, he/she finds 10, 12 or 15 people, thus the landlord does not want more Brazilians in the future. Few interviewees mentioned that Brazilians some times are exploited by co-nationals who take advantages of already having a place and making money out of it. In this case, we talk about lack of ethnic solidarity, which has been pinpointed by other scholars who study Brazilian immigration in the US (Martes 2000, Goza 2003). Here, we just acknowledge the issue.

### **Process of adjustment and integration of Brazilians in Portuguese society: from difficult times to belonging ...**

Even if many Brazilians feel discriminated against, it does not mean that they feel totally outsiders or excluded. Yet the expectations of blending in and feeling at home that they upheld before initiating the immigration experience, are neither true. Regardless of origin and destiny, immigration is a shocking experience, as it implies a series of changes, even when we think that the society of origin and destiny share similar patterns. This is especially true for Brazilians who have a romantic idea of a Portugal with common cultural roots, especially before they arrive.

The process of re-socialization in a new society implies adjustments and changes, some of which could be more or less traumatic and drastic. Here, we assume that integration is a long process that starts with adjustment and adaptation that may lead to integration. In this process, immigrants may face problems, barriers but also may enjoy or like new aspects of the host society.

An analysis of the interviews indicates that the majority of the newly arrived Brazilians, 76%, are accustomed to live in Portugal. Very few said that they have not accustomed and few said that they are more or less accustomed. Thus most of the immigrants have undergone successfully the first adjustment period, as they are used to live in the new society, even considering that most of the interviewees have been living in Portugal less than 5 years. As a consequence of this fast adjustment, most (88%) said that they would like to stay in Portugal, either for few more years or for an indeterminate period of time. Very few people said that they do not want to live in Portugal any longer.

However, this optimist view of the period of adjustment does not mean that when they first came, they did not face problems. On the contrary, it means that Brazilian were able

to overcome those problems, adapting to the new society. Table 3 offers a summary of the main problems faced by Brazilians, as expressed during the interviews. The question about this issue was an open question, thus the table was constructed classifying non-exclusive responses.

**Table 3- Main Problems faced by Brazilian Immigrants upon arrival**

<b>Type of Problem</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
Documentation/legal	13
Cultural/closed society	9
Limited access to services	5
Weather/geography	2
Discrimination/racism/adaptation	9
Language	3
Loneliness	2
Work/labor contract/work visa	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>

*Data from Interviews -Own elaboration*

This information illustrates that for Brazilian newcomers the legal situation is very relevant, and includes both being legal and/or having access to a work permit/visa. It should be said that when Brazilians first arrive to Portugal, they are not illegal as they enter as tourists; however, they are not authorized to work. The legal period of stay is three months with the possibility of getting an extension of other three months, that is 6 months total. One common problem arises when they find a job and then find out that they are unable to get work visas in Portugal and they would need to go back to Brazil. Even if the ongoing process of legalization makes an exception, the uncertainty about the present and the future, is perceived as a problem. As proven in many studies (Goza 2003, Padilla 2004, Hagan 1998), most immigrants gather information through social networks which are composed by friends or colleagues, family members, friends of friends, travel agencies, among others, and the information that circulates within those networks takes time to evolve (when changes are introduced in legislation, processes, etc) or in many cases the information available is incorrect. In consequence migration decisions made based on that information contain biases. One example is that many Brazilians arrived to Portugal after July 11<sup>th</sup>, 2003 thinking they could access legalization. Through informal conversations with newly arrived Brazilians who in search of information went to the House of Brazil in Lisbon upon arrival, I was made aware that many came hoping to enjoy the legalization process that had recently been signed, when in reality, those who came after the signature of the agreement were purposely excluded from legalization.

In relation to the migration cultural shock, interestingly, we can observe that Brazilians find many cultural differences with Portuguese. In general they find that Portuguese are not as open and receptive as they originally thought, even few mentioned having problems with the languages, facing regional and national differences. They perceive Portuguese culture as different from Brazilian culture, even if both societies speak Portuguese and share common historical and cultural roots. We argue that the first cultural shock may be more based on the fact that Brazilians expected Portugal to be

more like home and when it does not happen, they are shocked and feel the difference. Many purposely decided to come to Portugal due to perceived cultural and languages similarities, thus when differences are felt, they feel disappointed. This is more apparent when comparing them with Brazilian immigrants to the United States, who expect to find cultural and languages differences and then when faced with those differences, they are not surprised because their decisions were based on those perceived differences.

Without doubt there are many aspects that Brazilians like about Portugal, many of these aspects are a consequence of Portugal being in the Old World: the castles and monuments, the architecture of the cities, the history involved, the tourist points, the beaches, and the food, among other. Others have to do with novelties and the modernity of Portugal, such as shopping centers and facilities, which call the attention of those immigrants coming from the interior and small towns in Brazil, who as described above, are more common. Other important aspect that many Brazilians enjoy in Portugal is security and tranquility, in opposition to the violence they are exposed in Brazil. Violence has become a feature of globalization impacting in the countries of the South (Green 1997), and is pushing people either out of the region migrating to other less violent places, or those who do not migrate and can afford it, live in gated communities.

On the opposite end, there are many aspects of Portugal that Brazilians do not like. One common complaint related to discrimination and prejudice against Brazilians and immigrants, which has been already developed. Thus feeling unwelcome or feeling discriminated is a sensation that makes them aware of their difference. Another aspect has to do with what they call the pessimism and negativity, the sadness and permanent complaining of the Portuguese people, even many mentioned the difficulty they find to relate and start any type of relation with Portuguese. This confirms the information presented in Table 1 about cultural barriers and the perception of Portuguese society as a closed one.

As a reaction to this aspect and the way Portuguese socialize, many Brazilians said they noticed a change in their own way to interact socially by becoming more introverted, shy or contained. Thus a socialization change was a response or a way to adapt to the host society introducing more controlled or contained behaviors. However this change behavior does not mean that Brazilians do not interact in friendly relationships with Portuguese. Social relations of Brazilians seem to develop in different circles, where work and social life do not always coincide. As the labor market is ethnically/racially segmented, there are some occupational niches for different immigrant groups, and Brazilians are not an exception. As mentioned above, Brazilians occupied an intermediate position in the stratified labor market, thus when working in construction, their colleagues tend to be other Brazilians and Africans, when they work in retail or catering, colleagues are mainly Brazilians and Portuguese. In the case of friendships, the situation is different. Most Brazilians have friends who are Portuguese, 38% said to have more Portuguese friends, 20% said to have only Portuguese friends and 35% have more Brazilian friends. Thus there is a high level of interaction. On the other hand, very few Brazilians are friends with African immigrants, thus there is not evidence of immigrant socialization or empathy, not to say solidarity.

Feelings of integration are more complicated than just feeling accustomed to live in a country. Thus the responses about whether or not Brazilians feel integrated are more polarized. Forty-eight percent of the respondents said that they do not feel integrated while 45% felt integrated in Portuguese society. Seven percent indicated that they feel more or less integrated. This situation illustrates that as integration is a slow process, not all Brazilians, especially the newly arrive, feel part of Portuguese society. Many indicated that with time and very slowly, they feel they are fitting in better, and those waiting for legalization hoped to feel more integrated once they are able to become legal.

Most of the interviewees, 63%, were undocumented at the time of the interview, while the rest held different kinds of visas: residency, stay, student visa. Studies (Donato 1993; Powers and Seltzer 1998; Powers, Seltzer and Shi 1998) have indicated that legalization enhances feelings of integration in the host society due to the fact that at least labor outcomes will increase. Moreover, most of the literature indicates that

“the labor force experience of undocumented immigrants, specifically their occupational status and mobility, will differ by a) gender, b) country or region of origin, selected human capital characteristics, including year of arrival, education, and English language proficiency, d) selected family characteristics, and e) legal status” (Powers, Seltzer and Shi, 1998: 1020).

Based on this data and what Brazilian immigrants said in the interviews, it could be inferred that Brazilians would feel more welcome and integrated as they have the possibility of becoming legal. Many even if do not feel integrated at least are accustomed to live in Portugal. That is a good sign in term of the integration process, thus solving the legal situation is relevant for many, however it cannot be expected that the legalization process would solve all problems of integration, because integration is a complex issue and situation.

### **Stereotypes and labels: effects on men and women**

Stereotypes are a product of society, they are negative representations of individuals and groups of individuals that suppose to combine and exaggerate some common characteristics. Societies produce and reproduced stereotypes about many things, thus there are images and stereotypes about immigrants that are part of the national imaginary. Thus the preconceived idea or stereotype that people from a society may hold about others, usually play a role on the way immigrants feel in a given society, and in many ways those stereotypes determine the way many national interact, have expectations and react with immigrants.

For centuries the Portuguese associated Brazil to an image of sensuality, tropical, hot, extroverts, and miscegenation. Since colonization and the settling of the Portuguese in Brazil, there have existed stereotypes about the “Brazilian woman”. The image of the Indians who practically walked naked (15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> Century: sensuality myth versus

religion) and the incredible paradise that the Portuguese brought back somehow still remains today, however readjusted to the new reality.

One consequence of this old stereotype is that the image of the Brazilian woman is associated with prostitution. Even if it is true that some women work in night bars, most of Brazilian women have other occupations, as indicated in the above sections. This fact has already been highlighted by Margolis (1994), who claimed that there are more Brazilian women working as maids than go-go girls in New York, but somehow the fame of Brazilian girls become exacerbated both among Brazilians themselves and non-Brazilians. Similarly, Brazilian women in Italy also have the 'mark of prostitution' according to Bassanesi and Bógus (1999). Portugal is not an exception, and the media shows or writes stories about Brazilians prostitutes with some regularity, thus people tend to make generalizations.

On the other hand, it should be mentioned that not all the stereotypes and images are constructed in Portugal and by the Portuguese media. Other scholars have pinpointed that the cult of the body in Brazil helps in the creation of the myth of sensuality. Moreover, the influence of the Brazilian soap-operas production creates an imaginary on the Brazilian woman that reproduce / reinforce the stereotypes (Machado 1999). Both the Brazilian soap operas and the Portuguese press propitiate the propagation of these stereotypes of the Brazilian woman. As Feldman-Bianco wrote 'the national product of exportation through soap operas is the mulatto image' (2001: 156), always linked to prostitution.

In consequence, the current idea of prostitution in Portugal is linked to Brazilians women, and there is an assumption that there are more and more Brazilian prostitutes in Portugal, who are in greater demand for being considered hotter, more affectionate, more sensual, and more attractive than Portuguese women, or even prostitutes of other nationalities (Eastern Europeans). In consequence, striptease and other types of bars that offer more Brazilian girls tend to have larger clientele (Machado 2003). This situation creates prejudices against the Brazilian woman who immediately is associated with prostitution, as it was mentioned in several of the interviews, not only by females but by Brazilian men. Machado (2003) said, "today there is a relation between the Brazilian woman and sensuality which is omnipresent in Portuguese society", this idea is felt and perceived by most Brazilians. Almost all interviewees said that there are stereotypes about Brazilian women and sometimes about Brazilian men, but stereotypes are different for women and men. Females stereotypes are all related to prostitution, sensuality and easiness, while male stereotypes are more related to being a lazy, liar, party animal or malandro (crook). Obviously and by definition, all stereotypes are bad; however, these tend to bring more negative consequences to women. Anyhow, both men and women agree that women suffer more from discrimination, because these stereotypes have a greater impact on them that interfere with their life when looking for jobs, taking a taxi or even asking for directions.

Another stereotype that seems to affect both men and women is that Brazilians in general come to Portugal to find a spouse and with that, a path to legalization. In this sense men

complained more than women, as they mentioned that Portuguese women do not want to talk or become friend with Brazilian men. However, many Brazilian men also have the idea that Brazilian women want to married “rich” Portuguese men, although nobody questioned the omnipresent culture of machismo in Brazil or its predominance among Brazilian immigrants, who tend to judge their female co-nationals.

The prostitute stereotype generates certain hostility between the supposed Brazilian prostitutes with her compatriots. Some comments could help illustrate the feelings that Brazilians have in relation to the stereotype and their feelings toward other Brazilians. The situation, according to Susana is critical as, “it demoralizes honest people, because prostitution harms other people.” Rosane said “because of half a dozen people, we pay very expensive. We also are discriminated because of them.” These two examples illustrate how the actions of the prostitutes have harmed others, and many women mentioned that once they moved to Portugal, they need to change some behaviors and personal aspects in order to avoid being taken as prostitutes. In this sense, many mentioned becoming more introverted and less affectionate, which can be productive in some aspects but has also an emotional cost. The information obtained in the interviews about Brazilians reaction and opinion about the issue of Brazilian prostitutes is very rich, and even if it is interesting to analyze, there is a time limitation to do it. These excerpts were provided just to give a contextualization.

One interesting connection that I would like to make between the image of prostitute and easiness of the Brazilian woman in Portugal (and maybe other regions of the world such as the United States and Italy) is that a similar stereotype exist about Bahianas (mulatta or Afro-Brazilian females) within Brazil (Padilla 2001). Thus while the exotization of Black or mulattas is due to the racialization of sexuality in Brazil, in the case of Portugal, the stereotype is reproduce for all Brazilian women regardless of color, thus racialization turns into ethnization.

In relation to the analysis of the media, it could be said that the overall framework the analysis of media news in relation to immigrants transcend the issue of prostitution, but it contains it. Most news that cover issues tied to immigrants and minorities are associated to crime, and within the crime framework, there are the Mafias, the situations of exploitation, prostitution, terrorism and violence. According to a recent study, those news constitute 45% of the news, thus the negative image of the public opinion regarding immigrant are not a surprise. According to a study, in general, the media attribute immigrants negative group characteristics, creating hierarchies among them in function of determined values. (Observatorio 2004b: 97). Another study sponsored by the Observatory (2003) about attitudes and values regarding immigration, revealed that 56,8% of the Portuguese associated Brazilians immigrants to prostitution .

The best example of stereotypes reinforced and reproduced by the international media, transcending the Portuguese media, was the Bragança Case. The magazine *Time Europe* published a very controversial article about the issue of prostitution as a practice against local family values. In the article a group of Portuguese women, so called the ‘Bragança Mothers’ or mães de Bragança, a small city in the north of Portugal and close to the

border with Spain, blamed Brazilian women, the prostitutes, for stealing their husbands. As a reaction to the article, Portuguese media aired many interviews touching on the issue. In response to the high exposure of the topic, some detentions were made and some bars were closed, but rarely the topic of prostitution was associated to human trafficking and exploitation. Later on, different Portuguese and Spanish agencies working together dismantled a gang of traffickers who made women, many of them Brazilian, worked as prostitutes.

These stereotypes obviously make the life of Brazilians more complicated. Stereotypes foster prejudice and discrimination, and the immigrants pay for that. Stereotypes, in the case of Brazilian women and also men, create difficulties when trying to access job mobility, or in finding a new job. Additionally, stereotypes make social life harder in general because they feel discriminated and they are stigmatized in any kind of social interactions.

### **Conclusion**

From the information presented and discussed above, it is possible to conclude that Brazilians are slowly integrating into Portuguese society, although several barriers have been identified. The worse problem seems to be discrimination, in some cases understood as racism, which has shown to be pervasive both at work and daily social interactions. The asymmetry of social relations between the host society and the newcomers has also been illustrated in the fact that many Brazilians have been subject to deportation threats. Those threats of deportation that are used to instill fear in immigrants who are undocumented indicate some resentment from the host society, however, employers do not seem to be the actual intimidators. Employers usufruct from the precarious situation and status of undocumented immigrants in a different way, as mentioned previously, by exploitation in the work condition by not providing privileges or rights that are standards for nationals (vacation, sick days, limits of working hours, etc.), although it should be said that in Portugal nationals and legal residents do not always enjoy too many benefits, because the informal economy penetrates all levels of society.

Testimonies of Brazilian immigrants also indicate that little by little they feel to be fitting-in, starting to feel part of Portuguese society overall. The adjustment period has been successful for most Brazilians, including those who are undocumented. Thus, even if legalization would certainly improve the sentiments of integration into society, by informal incorporation, a de-facto accommodation and adaptation seems to be the case for most Brazilians.

One interesting fact to mention with regards to integration is that Portuguese friends seem to play an important role of mediators and facilitators. Even if discrimination uneasy the process of integration of Brazilians into society, the situation is different when it comes to specific and deeper social interactions and friendships. Brazilians reported to have many Portuguese friends, and even if the level of interaction with nationals varies according to their position in the stratified labor market, close ties with nationals contribute to make discrimination less relevant. Thus, once relationships have been established and people get to know each other, discrimination fades away and Brazilians

and Portuguese are able to develop strong ties. For example the interviews indicated that some Portuguese when friends with Brazilians play an important role in the integration of immigrants as they facilitate the access of immigrants to some services or housing which are denied or restricted otherwise. In consequence personal and friendship relations might be an important element contributing in the integration process, and that make up somehow for the negative aspects of discrimination and racism they encounter in other situations.

The integration of Brazilians would be smoother if prevailing stereotypes, reinforced by the media, would be weakened. Obviously stereotypes are part of the national imaginary, however positive images of the immigrants, both men and women, would contribute in this direction. In addition, as proven in the case of discrimination, non-prejudice social interaction could foster less biased relations between the host society and newcomers. In this sense openness both of the host society and of the newcomers could be a tool of integration.



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