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# Castro, Tito Livio de

(1864–1890), nineteenth-century Afro-Brazilian physician and sociologist

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who made seminal contributions to Brazilian national thought primarily through posthumous publications, was born in 1864 in the Brazilian capital of Rio de Janeiro, and was abandoned by his mother shortly after birth. Castro's best-known writings addressed issues of race, gender, and education during the transition from monarchy to republic in the 1880s.

Castro's mother was likely a slave, and she may have sought to attain her son's freedom by abandoning him. Leaving behind young children was a rare practice among slaves in Brazil prior to the Law of the Free Womb, passed in 1871. The foundling Castro was taken in and raised by Manoel da Costa Paes, a Portuguese businessman and Rio resident. Paes arranged for Castro's formal education, which included a scholarship for poor students at Rio's elite secondary school Colégio Pedro II. After the completion of his secondary studies, Castro enrolled at the Faculdade de Medicina do Rio de Janeiro (Faculty of Medicine of Rio de Janeiro) between 1884 and 1889. While studying medicine, he wrote about social conditions in Brazil, penning journalistic articles in publications like *A província de São Paulo* (The Province of São Paulo). Castro completed his medical studies in 1889; his thesis "Das alucinações e ilusões" (Of Hallucinations and Illusions) reflected his extensive interest in psychiatry. Before his death in 1890, he taught psychiatry for two months at the medical school from which he had just graduated. In addition to *A mulher e a sociogenia* (Women and Sociogenesis), other writings Castro left behind were published as *Questões e problemas* (Questions and Problems) in 1913.

Castro was a disciple of the Brazilian intellectual Silvio Romero (1851–1914), a figure who helped disseminate Castro's writings in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Castro's work developed from his early contact with Romero, who was his secondary school teacher. He was also a keen reader of social theory and craniology, including works by the Darwinist Ernst Haeckel, the sociologist Auguste Comte, and Brazilian intellectuals like Romero. He was a key member of the Fluminense (of greater Rio de Janeiro) branch of the Escola do Recife (Recife School) of social thought that gained influence in the 1870s. Castro's writings became noteworthy for their emphasis on positivist approaches to modern Brazilian problems. His most well-known work was *A mulher e a sociogenia*, a study addressing the importance of education for the betterment of all women. Castro emphatically believed that women were inferior to men, but that they could be uplifted by education and societal emphasis on overcoming the differences between males and females.

Castro's ideas about race and society in Brazil predated some of the formulations about Brazil as a racial democracy developed by the Brazilian sociologist Gilberto Freyre (1900–1987) that would reach a far wider audience several decades later. In an essay titled "Ódio entre racas" (Hatred among Races), originally published in 1889 and reprinted in *Questões e problemas*, Castro emphasized the democratic character of Brazil's race relations even during slavery and was a keen supporter of the

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transition to the Brazilian Republic. In a comparative framework similar to that of Freyre's, he wrote that Brazilian slavery differed from the more vertical racial hierarchies that existed in North America. These ideas reflected Castro's engagement with the important issues of race and gender in Brazil that existed during the final years of slavery and monarchy in the 1880s. Castro died at the young age of 26.

[ See also Freyre, Gilberto (de Mello) .]

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### See also

Freyre, Gilberto <<https://oxfordaasc.com/view/10.1093/acref/9780195301731.001.0001/acref-9780195301731-e-73977>>