

BRAZILIAN IMMIGRATION:  
A NEW VIEW OF LATIZATION

by

PATRICIA BUZATO  
B.A. University of Central Florida, 2004

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## **ABSTRACT**

### **Brazilian Immigration: A New view of Latinization**

Immigration and ethnic issues are currently present in political discussions in the U.S. It is important to understand how immigration as a whole helps historians understand U.S. history. An issue that involves immigration debates in the South is the idea of Latinization introduced by Raymond Mohl in his article “Globalization, Latinization, and the Nuevo New South”. He defines Latinization as a low-wage and low-skill labor market emphasizing Spanish speaking Latin American workers in manufacturing, construction and agriculture. He focuses primarily on Mexican-born immigrants and their influence on the labor force of Alabama’s rural and urban economy.

By extending this idea, scholars should also look at the role of non-Spanish speaking Latin Americans within Latinization. For instance, the Brazilian immigrants could also fit into Latinization in geographic terms. Brazilians are Portuguese speakers from a Latin American country with multi-ethnic backgrounds that could be included into Latinization. It is crucial that a brief historiography of ethnic history in the U.S. is introduced first in this research for a complete understanding for an analysis of Brazilian immigration in Florida within the context of Latinization.

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## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

More Brazilian immigrants are migrating to the United States than ever before. According to the U.S. Census Bureau the total number of Brazilians within the United States was 181,076 in 2000.<sup>1</sup> However, other sources estimate that this number is actually much larger. Okky de Souza states in an article in *Veja*, a Brazilian magazine, that approximately 600,000 Brazilians were living in the U.S. in 1996.<sup>2</sup> In addition, another *Veja* article states that there were 200,000 Brazilians in Florida in 1996.<sup>3</sup>

These contradictions raise interesting questions regarding ethnic and immigration studies in the United States. For example, how can historians better understand Brazilian immigration and its role in American history? Maxine Margolis introduces the idea of an invisible minority when she discusses Brazilian immigration in New York City, but does the concept of an invisible minority apply to Brazilian immigrants in Florida, as well? What about their role within the labor force in Orlando? For instance, Raymond Mohl studies Mexican-born immigrants and their influence on the labor force, and he argues that a Latinization is happening in many states in the South. Could Brazilians in Orlando also be part of this Latinization? What kind of jobs do the Orlando Brazilians have and what is their role within the labor force? This research offers an analysis of the Brazilian population in Orlando, Florida, and investigates if Brazilians fit into the term Latinization as defined by Raymond Mohl. In order to answer these questions, it is crucial that a brief historiography of United States' ethnic history be introduced early in this research.

Since the 1950's, the topic of ethnic group assimilation in the American culture has been a source of discussion and debate. The first paradigm reflected the uprooted

approach of Oscar Handlin. This approach suggests that diverse ethnic groups combine into one culture known by post-Handlin scholars as the melting pot.<sup>4</sup> The process by which the cultural practices of a group or individual assimilate into a single cultural group is defined as Americanization. In addition, scholars of the post-Handlin generation present the Transplanted approach, popularized by John Bodner.<sup>5</sup> In this approach, ethnic groups replicate and cultivate their culture in the United States, thereby minimizing the shock of assimilating into a new culture. By maintaining their own culture, Bodnar suggests they reject being Americanized, or becoming part of the melting pot.

More recently, historians apply Werner Sollors' *Beyond Ethnicity*, whose notion presents a fictional account of the immigrants' identity when they come to the U.S.<sup>6</sup> Their identity is not based on actual heritage or cultural experience from their homelands, but is constructed according to the location to which they migrate. Furthermore, possible interactions with other immigrants and other factors contribute to the adjustment of this identity over time.

Cultural experiences also influence immigrants' developing identities, which change and evolve over many generations. Finally, the Conzen's Group article, "The Invention of Ethnicity: A Perspective from the U.S.A.," presents the idea that ethnic identities are constructed by actual experience, while it rejects the idea of the use of fictional or constructed identity with regard to immigrants and ethnic groups establishing their identities in a foreign land.<sup>7</sup> Handlin and Bodnar view ethnic groups from a monolithic approach, which they describe as analyzing entire ethnic groups assuming

they share the same outlook. Sollors and Conzen instead analyze ethnic groups by looking at a diversity of ethnic identities.

Immigrants or ethnic groups do not share the same experience or identify themselves in the same way. Along with these theories, this research also intends to contribute to the literature of Florida ethnic and immigration history focusing on Brazilian immigration in Orlando. For this reason, the following section offers a concise overview of historiography of Florida post-1960s immigration.

The majority of books and articles on immigration and ethnic groups in Florida focus on Latin American and Caribbean ethnic groups. For instance, Haitian immigration in South Florida is one of the popular subjects in articles on Florida immigration. Thomas D. Boswell, in “The Haitian Diaspora: Florida’s Most Recent Residents,” focuses on the upper and middle class Haitians who moved to South Florida.<sup>8</sup> Boswell’s analysis is clearly from an American point of view and differs from that of other residents from the same area who witnessed these Haitians. Boswell does not take the view point of those who actually experienced these cultural changes.

While Boswell’s analysis focuses on Haitians, Kelly Greenhill focuses only on Cuban immigrants. “Engineered Migration and the use of Refugees as Political Weapons: A Case Study of the 1994 Cuban ‘Balseros’ Crisis,” is an interesting article that shows a different view of the immigration of Cubans to Florida.<sup>9</sup> It introduces a new perspective on the political rivalry between Cuba and the United States, as well as the use of the Cuban Balseros Crisis as a political strategy to manipulate its North American neighbor. Greenhill’s statements are written as if the government’s decisions had the greatest influence on the society, the citizens, and its history. The author points

specifically to the leaders who were responsible for this political crisis between the United States and Cuba. As a result, this analysis was more about international politics than the experiences of the Cuban people. Therefore, Boswell's article fails to clearly demonstrate the Cuban people's view of their migration to Florida.

Few sources are available regarding ethnic groups apart from Cuban and Caribbean immigrants. One of them by Eric Jarvis is called "Florida's Forgotten Ethnic Culture: Patterns of Canadian Immigration, Tourism, and Investment since the 1920's." Jarvis discusses three groups of Canadians who have influenced the economy of Southern Florida since the 1920's.<sup>10</sup> This author maintains that Canadians are a source of tourist revenue and investment and argues Canadians often consider Florida almost a second home. However, this work represents an outsider's view of the migration of Canadians, for he fails to illustrate the Canadian view of their migration and influence on Florida. He only looks at the economic factors Canadians had on Florida, leaving out their unique perspective. In essence, Jarvis takes the same approach as Oscar Handlin by assuming Canadians "melted" into American culture without actually researching the topic in order to substantiate the immigrants' perspective.

Mohl takes a similar path in writing about different ethnic groups in Florida. For instance, in "Asian Immigration to Florida," Raymond A. Mohl discusses Chinese laborers in Florida mostly in the 20th century.<sup>11</sup> The author discusses Chinese immigrants' development of entrepreneurial niches in laundries, truck farming, small grocery stores and restaurants, in addition to their entry level work on plantations and in railroad construction. Mohl also presents an American perspective of the economic Chinese influences in Florida, stating, "...Chinese immigrants in Florida found economic

opportunity in the urban economy through small family-run laundries.” Mohl does not analyze the perspective of the Chinese and their influence on Florida’s economy; he discusses it from the Americans perspective and how Americans believe the Chinese influenced Florida’s immigration experience. Mohl and Jarvis take similar approaches when analyzing both the Asians and the Canadians. Neither author provides an analysis of the cultural shock from the immigrants’ standpoint, nor do they analyze how they identify themselves with relation to other immigrants and Americans.

Furthermore, the book *Land of Sunshine, State of Dreams* by Gary R. Mormino mentions additional nationalities of immigrants who moved to Florida in the past few decades. He focuses on Latin Americans, Asians, Indians, Arabs, Africans, Europeans, and others. Mormino holds an “outsider’s” view of these new ethnic groups who transform their own identity. For example, he explains that the Arab population is emerging in areas of the state outside of South Florida. Moreover, the author includes an entire paragraph on ethnic groups in Orange County, Florida. He states that since the 1990’s, about forty-five thousand Asians are living in Central Florida, particularly Vietnamese.<sup>12</sup> An interesting point about this work is that the author separates ethnic groups into those from Miami and South Florida, and those elsewhere in Florida. Thus, Mormino documents a more diverse ethnic history in other parts of Florida.

Other scholars seem to take a different approach when analyzing ethnic groups. For instance, Barry Levine on, “Sources of Ethnic Identity for Latin Florida,” presents ideas of Werner Sollors and Conzen Group. He discusses how each different ethnic group identifies itself and presents the notion that Florida is known as a multi-ethnic state due to its ethnic diversity.<sup>13</sup> However, Levine does not include Haitians in his analysis because



Haitians are not considered Latin Americans. His idea is the opposite of Handlin's uprooted theory, where the ethnic groups become indistinguishable because they all melt into one single culture. Levine also states that there was never any pressure for Haitian immigrants to Americanize, and there is none now. South Florida's attractiveness for a variety of different ethnic businesses and communities encourages immigrants to cultivate their own culture and not become Americanized. Yet, he seems to analyze Americanization from the ethnic groups' perspective, and his arguments show a possible influence by Sollors and Conzen's Group. These authors consider how ethnic groups identify themselves by analyzing the differences between Haitians and Cubans.

Alan Burn's *Mayan In Exile* and Maria Cristina Garcia's *Havana USA: Cuban Exiles and Cuban Americans in South Florida, 1959-1994* are books that also reveal influence by Werner Sollors. Garcia clearly shows Sollors' and Conzen's influence because she believes that the Cuban-Americans identify themselves differently than the first generation of Cubans, who actually want to return to Cuba. She argues that within a certain Cuban group there was a hatred for Castro. For them, in order to be Cuban in Miami, one must hate Castro. This idea may be false, since not every Cuban may hate Castro, but they are still Cuban. Along the same lines, *Maya in Exile: Guatemalans in Florida* by Allan F. Burns describes the Mayans by a common term, "real workers", using the same term Mayans utilize to differentiate themselves from other workers.<sup>14</sup> Conzen's influence is represented here, as well. "Real workers" is an identity created to show how they use their personal and cultural histories to shape their work. In addition, Burns believed the Mayan identity is renewed by common experiences in the United States and by recollections and conversations about Guatemala. Burns' argument could

be called a combination of Sollors and Conzen, since Mayans are renewing their identity based on Guatemalan memories and customs.<sup>15</sup> It also added to the compendium of ethnic studies in Florida because some scholars do not consider Mayans as Latin Americans because they are non-Spanish speakers, also considered “native people” or “indigenous”, but Burns proves the opposite point of view.

Meanwhile, ethnic historians in Florida continue to apply these ideas of Handlin, Bodnar, Sollors and Conzen in their writings. It appears that Boswell, Mormino, Greenhill, Jarvis and Mohl were heavily influenced by Handlin’s and Bodnar’s ideas because they view ethnic groups in broad terms. They also label immigrants’ identities, instead of analyzing the immigrants’ perspective. In contrast, Levine, Burns and Garcia seem to reveal influence by Sollors and Conzen’s Group because they describe the ethnic groups’ perspective. They also study the diversity within immigration group according to social class, region, and time period. With this view, it is clear that a smaller number of Florida scholars adopt Sollors’ *Beyond Ethnicity* view and Conzen’s Group view on writing ethnic history in Florida. As a result, it appears that Florida ethnic history is going through a transitional period of ideas as scholars analyze ethnic groups from a number of different perspectives. At no point do these authors include the Brazilians in their interpretation or analysis. This suggests that studies about other Latin Americans such as the Brazilians would answer questions that could help scholars better understand multi-ethnic Florida.

This research yields substantial information regarding the historiography of various immigrant groups in Florida and the United States immigration theories; however, it proves that there is an obvious lack of information regarding Brazilian

migrant groups in the United States, especially those immigrant groups in Florida. As such, one might want to explore the historiography of the Brazilian migration in the United States in order to understand its importance and how it can be placed within Florida ethnic and immigration studies.

One of the very first authors of Brazilian immigration studies in the United States is Maxine Margolis, who wrote *Invisible Minority: Brazilians in New York City* (1998). This book presents an excellent overview of Brazilian immigration in New York City. Margolis argues that undocumented Brazilian immigrants can be a new ingredient in the melting pot.<sup>16</sup> Even though she uses Handlin's term throughout her research, she suggests that Brazilians cultivate their specific culture in New York and do not become Americanized. In fact, they demonstrate little interest in being part of the United States Census or part of the melting pot. Margolis utilizes Bodnar's idea when she claims that Brazilians move to New York, yet keep their customs, traditions, and culture. In addition, Margolis gives details about the "Brazilian Exodus,"<sup>17</sup> a term used to explain the sudden migration of Brazilians since the 1980's, especially from a specific part of Brazil called Governador Valadares.

Although Margolis bases some of her writing on Handlin's terminology and Bodnar's ideas, she presents an argument that Brazilian immigrants are a growing invisible minority. As a result of their invisible status, they are under represented by the United States Census. She argues that one of the reasons Brazilians are considered invisible is because there is no official category in the United States Census questionnaires or data for either Brazilians or Latin Americans. Furthermore, she argues that Brazilians are not particularly interested in participating in the United States Census

because they view their stay as temporary, which leads to an inaccurate count of the Brazilian population.<sup>18</sup> Since she recognizes the problem of the classification of Brazilians as an ethnic group, Margolis does not present a standard concept of Brazilian identity; however, she proves that the Brazilians do not consider themselves Hispanic. Considering this perspective, Margolis attempts to illustrate a fragmented view of Brazilian identity which indicates that she may have been influenced by Werner Sollors and Conzen's Group ideas.

Ana Cristina Braga Martes on *Brasileiros nos Estados Unidos: Um Estudo Sobre Imigrantes em Massachusetts* presents a perspective of Brazilian migration in Massachusetts. Martes provides similar ideas to those Margolis presents in her book. Much of Martes' research renders the same results as Margolis'. Martes and Margolis focus on the middle class as the dominant group among Brazilian immigrants in Massachusetts and obtain sources that support the same motivations for their migration to the United States. Martes also found that immigrants from Governador Valadares represent the majority of Brazilian population in Massachusetts.

However, Martes analyzes the identity of the Brazilians differently than Margolis. She does not believe that Brazilians in Massachusetts harbor the desire to build or express a national identity. In addition, she uses a term *Identidade Renunciada*<sup>19</sup> (renounced identity), a term used by Adriana Capuano de Oliveira.<sup>20</sup> Meanwhile, Margolis argue that the Brazilians are an invisible minority present in New York City. They are more likely to put themselves into a Pass By<sup>21</sup> status because they view their stay as temporary in the United States. When Brazilians interact with other immigrant groups such as Hispanics, they learn styles of adaptation to the United States, but most

Brazilians never adopt the need to develop a national identity like other Latin American counterparts.

In addition, Martes' ideas demonstrate Handlin's influence since she did not consider how the immigrants identify themselves. Martes labels Brazilians with a standard Brazilian immigrant outlook in much the same way Handlin assumes that all immigrants melt into American culture. In addition, she conducts and analyzes random surveys, which left out the opinion of Brazilians about being an immigrant, thereby eliminating their perspective of identity.

*Brasil Fora De Si: Experiências De Brasileiros Em Nova York* by José Carlos Sebe Bom Meihy focuses on the Brazilian immigrant life in New York. He disagrees with Margolis because he believes that scholars confuse invisibility with undocumented occult strategy. He argues that the Brazilians, purposefully, want to be invisible or silent to accept a movement of a clandestine Brazilian immigration in the United States.<sup>22</sup> Since his work was written in Portuguese, and for the Brazilian audience, his arguments seem to present a unique perspective which does not encourage migration to the United States. Meihy overemphasizes the myth of invisibility of the Brazilians which other scholars discuss, such as Margolis. He suggests that these scholars misunderstand the real meaning of this Brazilian silence. Furthermore, he appears to overemphasize the negative aspects of migration on Brazilian immigrants when he refers to those immigrants with university degrees that have lower working status with low wages and low skill jobs than non-Brazilian colleagues.

In addition, Meihy does not analyze the Brazilian identity from the perspective of the immigrants themselves. Therefore, the same way Handlin assumed all immigrants

“melted” into one culture, Meihy believes that a lot of Brazilians express an official silence regarding their identity. In this way, his writings reveal influence by Handlin because Meihy’s Brazilian identity is based on a selected group of Brazilians, which does not include the opinions of the Brazilian that would like to express their identity.

*Passando a America a Limpo: O Trabalho de Housecleaners Brasileiras em Boston, Massachussets* by Soraya Resende Fleischer is an investigation of Brazilian immigrants who become domestic workers in the United States. Fleischer studies Brazilian women and their national identity as they toil as housecleaners in Massachusetts. Fleischer argues that through transnationalism, Brazilians maintain their culture in the United States.

Furthermore, Fleischer explains how this affects the way Brazilians complete their cleaning jobs, and she actually refers to them as transmigrants. Fleischer discovers from her interviews that the American women who employ Brazilian housecleaners are concerned about the lack of other foreign housecleaners. This idea is significant for Fleischer because she associates the importance of a clean house in Brazilian culture with the qualities that make Brazilians good housecleaners.<sup>23</sup>

Fleischer then compares the difference in housecleaning among Brazilians and Hispanics. As a result of her interviews, she concludes that many Brazilians think they are very different than the Hispanics. In addition, she found that the Brazilians like to display a bit of superiority with their college degrees and with the quality of their domestic work. The Brazilian women argue that Hispanic housecleaners do not pay attention to detail, and they are slow learners, “minha ajudante espana nao vai aprender nunca porque ela trabalha comigo faz 4 anos e eu continuo ter que checar” (my Hispanic

assistant will never learn because she works with me for 4 years and I still have to check her work). Fleischer also reveals that Brazilian housecleaners think that Hispanic housecleaners are not completely honest with their employers, “usam muito o Windex para limpar por cima ao inves de usar produtos mais fortes como Soft Scrub, Clorox and Tilex” (they use Windex to make it appear clean instead of using better products like Soft Scrub, Clorox and Tilex).<sup>24</sup>

Fleischer’s work reveals influenced by Cozen’s Group, as well. Brazilian housekeepers consider themselves better workers, better cleaners, and more attentive to detail than Hispanic housecleaners. These attitudes and values are revealed in Brazilians’ work overseas because they know their work culture is different than other Latin American countries’ work cultures, and Brazilians strive to preserve their cultural values which they learn while living in their Brazilian homeland.

Another interesting perspective is presented in *Brasileiros Longe De Casa*, written by Teresa Sales. This author discusses Brazilians’ lower occupational status as foreigners in the United States. Sales argues that Brazilians are attracted to the personal freedoms, along with the opportunities for better paying jobs in the United States. Sales differentiates her work from Margolis, arguing that the Brazilian immigrants that are part of her research during 1995 and 1996 had “visibility” very different than the ones from Margolis.<sup>25</sup> Sales seems to be influenced by the ideas of Conzen’s Group because she believes that the social identity and visibility of Brazilians is constantly changing in step with different circumstances.

In addition, Sales argues that Brazilians are very visible, especially in the ethnic market in the center of Framingham, Massachusetts. She proposes that the concept of the

identity of the Brazilians is “fetiche da igualdade”, a term she uses when she studies social inequalities in Brazil.<sup>26</sup> In other words, Sales argues that the fetiche da igualdade illustrates Brazilians need to construct their self-image as good workers in the United States. In their home country, Brazilians are considered middle class; in the United States; however, they experience a social class-shock when they find themselves in a lower social class. This new and lower status contributes to their self-identity as hard workers.

For instance, the equality between Afro-Brazilians and whites in Brazil is based on informal relationships and social interactions between the two races. In reality, people of color are not treated the same and do not have the same opportunities as the white Brazilians. However, informal interaction between the races is more common in Brazil than the United States. Brazilians consider themselves at the bottom of the social pyramid, yet, equal in status with other North American immigrants. In their new environment, they identify themselves very differently than they do in Brazil. For them, it is not necessary to be a lawyer, dentist or doctor to feel successful.<sup>27</sup> That is what “fetiche de igualdade” means, being treated equally as those who have a higher paying job. For instance, Brazilians believe that in the United States they can buy anything they want in any store and receive treatment in the same way as someone in higher status, which is not the case in their homeland. Finally, Sales argues that the sense of equality for Brazilians living in the United States is different than their sense of equality in their native country.

*Identity and Adaptation of Brazilian Immigrants in Miami*, a masters thesis’ written by Bryn Elizabeth Hafemeister, is the definitive work regarding Brazilian



immigration in Florida. However, her work is based on psychological principles, and it is predominately based on interviews, surveys, and questionnaires. Hafemeister admits that her methodology may have some limitations; she says the ideal would be to interview an equal number of participants from different areas of Miami. Her sample is taken largely out of convenience on a question-answer interview basis and may present small discrepancies when compared with Brazilian immigrants in other parts of the United States.<sup>28</sup>

Hafemeister argues that Miami Brazilians do not strongly differentiate themselves from Hispanic immigrants. Furthermore, she emphasizes that New York, Boston and Los Angeles Brazilians are less likely to become fluent in Spanish than the Miami Brazilians.<sup>29</sup> Often, Brazilians associate themselves with Hispanics because of the similarities in their immigrant experiences. In addition, she suggests that many immigrants come to Miami because of its Latin American influence. Hafemeister's investigation of the Brazilian ethnic identities claims that those she interviewed readily identify themselves as "Brazilian-American" or "Brazilian" as opposed to "Latino," "South American," or "Latin American." Her investigation demonstrates that the Brazilians relate more closely to the country in which they live than to the larger ethnic identity community.<sup>30</sup> Furthermore, Hafemeister's work reveals conflicting Brazilian identities. However, as an individual identity, Brazilians prefer to be identified as Brazilians and Brazilians-Americans rather than Latin or South American. Hafemeister seems to demonstrate influence by Sollors because Brazilian identity is based on better cultural adaptation; although there are more Latin Americans in Miami, their cultural adaptation makes for a more diverse culture in their new homeland.

For most Brazilians, cultural shock seems to have less impact than other South American immigrants. Brazilians' desire to remain part of an authentic Latin American culture within their homeland is not substantiated, because when they migrate, they experience of the full scope of cultural differences among Spanish-speaking Latin Americans. However, there is also a part of the Brazilian identity that is exclusively theirs, and in some cases exclusively Brazilian-American. This demonstrates Conzen's Group influence because true Brazilian identity originates in Brazil and is transplanted to Miami. Other Brazilian immigrants, along with other Latin American immigrants, tend to influence and aid in the construction of an emerging identity of newer immigrants.

"O Caminho Sem Volta – Classe Social e Etnicidade Entre os Brasileiros na Florida" by Adriana Capuano de Oliveira is another source that discusses Brazilians in Florida. Oliveira's sources are based on interviews and surveys of Brazilian that are part of the Brazilian community in South Florida. Her statistics seemed to be specific and focus only on the Brazilians' standard characteristics in the South Florida community. Oliveira's work does not analyze the Brazilian within the context of the impact on Florida's economy; it only describes what part of Brazil the participants were from, and it calculates percentages on their age demographics. Oliveira found in her research that Brazilians in South Florida are better educated than those in Margolis' and Martes' research.<sup>31</sup>

However, Oliveira further addresses that Brazilians in South Florida have skilled and unskilled jobs similar to those in other states. While she emphasizes that in Miami, there is a large Brazilian presence in the valet parking market, she also describes poorer Brazilians in Pompano Beach with lower educational levels.<sup>32</sup> Conversations with

Brazilians in Miami led Oliveira to believe that there is a dichotomy between Brazilians in Broward County and those that live in Miami-Dade County. She argues that in South Florida there are “Brazilian communities” that often identify themselves differently from one another and their differing perspectives are reflected in her research. The community from Miami-Dade County consider themselves higher in status than the “mineirada”<sup>33</sup>, Brazilians from Minas Gerais, who are the “poorer” Brazilian immigrants from Broward County. She believes that this distinction was based on regionalism transplanted from Brazil.<sup>34</sup>

Oliveira also recognizes diverse identities among different “Brazilian communities” in South Florida that seems to have characteristics of Conzen’s Group ideology, which emphasizes the construction of identity based on social status and education level. Often, the cultural identity among Brazilians in South Florida is tied to the social class of these same communities because being considered a “Hispanic” in Miami can be favorable to Brazilians in many ways. Therefore, the ties between Brazilians and Hispanics are more visible in Miami than in other places in the United States.

“Brasileiros no Sul da Florida – Relatos de uma pesquisa em andamento” by Rosana Resende, one of the few sources available in English, is the most recent work on Brazilians in South Florida. Resende argues that the South Florida Brazilians have a very diverse identity when compared with Brazilians that live in other parts of the United States. She seems to be influenced by Sollors because she recognizes that Brazilian immigrants’ identity is constructed upon their home region in Brazil and their interactions with other immigrants. Resende argues that many Brazilian Floridians live in other parts

of the United States before moving to South Florida, and due to the atmosphere in Miami seems to promote the birth of a new Brazilian community.<sup>35</sup>

Resende also reveals in her research that Broward County does not contain the same proportion of foreigners and Hispanics as does Miami-Dade; however, the majority of the Brazilians live in Broward County. She argues that Spanish becomes a transitional language for the Brazilian immigrants because it is easier to learn than English. Recent immigrants have a different experience today than earlier immigrants because Brazilian services and markets are now more readily available in Miami. Therefore, the Brazilians today are less dependent on the Hispanics than earlier Brazilian immigrants.

Furthermore, Resende agrees with Oliveira, recognizing diverse Brazilian communities that differentiate themselves from the community of Broward County and that of Miami-Dade County. She says, “Conversas que tive com brasileiros em Miami-Dade levaram-me a acreditar que existe realmente uma divisao entre os brasileiros residents nos dois municipios. “ (A conversation I had with Brazilians in Miami-Dade led me to believe that there is really a division between Brazilians in these two cities).<sup>36</sup> She believes that the Brazilian population in Florida is more diverse because there are now more Brazilians from all parts of Brazil living in the Unites States.

This introduction yields current research on the historiography of United States immigration offering the main theories and debates such as Americanization, uprooted, transplanted, beyond ethnicity and Cozen’s Group. In addition, an overview is offered of the historiography of Florida’s ethnic history and an analysis of how these theories apply to Florida’s immigration and ethnic studies. This analysis reviews the current level of debate among scholars and suggests that Brazilians are perhaps an under represented,

under recognized, and under studied population. In addition, the information is ideal for research because it offers foundations for the concept of Mohl's model of Latinization. It also relates to Brazilian immigrants as being invisible, renounced identity, by pass, transmigrates, *fetiché the igualdade*, Brazilian-American identity, and Brazilian communities. These debates are extremely relevant to this research because it places where the Brazilian workers in Orlando fit into these debates. One of the main goals of this research is to show how the Brazilian immigrant workers impact the labor market in Orlando and represent a thread of Florida history over the last 15 years. Finally, after analyzing early and recent Latinization definitions, this research suggests that Brazilian immigrants could fit into this "Latinization," and further expand the idea of the invisible minority by Maxine Margolis applying it to Orlando, Florida.

## CHAPTER 2: INVISIBLE LATINIZATION IN ORLANDO

The study of ethnic groups in Orlando is a subject of interest that has not been explored in depth. Studies of Brazilian immigrants in Florida are limited to analysis based only on sociological and psychological principles, but no recent studies are from a historical perspective. Even though there is not an accurate count of the Brazilian population in Central Florida, a recent article by an American Baptist Church estimates that there between 35,000 and 40,000 Brazilians living in Greater Orlando.<sup>37</sup> However, according U.S Census Bureau in 2000 there were 6,074 people that were born in Brazil living in Central Florida.<sup>38</sup> In addition, the ex-president of the Central Florida Brazilian Association estimated 10,000 Brazilians living in Central Florida based on Brighthouse Network's customer surveys.<sup>39</sup> This research demonstrates the reasons why the number of Brazilian immigrants in Orlando tripled since 1992. In addition, it also demonstrates a dramatic shift from "small business owners" to almost all "low wage working undocumented" Brazilians after 2000.

Few estimates actually exist regarding documented Brazilians. For instance, pastors and other Brazilian residents of Orlando are interviewed in this chapter. In a recent conversation with Eltomir Lima, a local pastor of the Agape Church of God, reveals that more than half of his church members are undocumented (Agape Church of God has approximately 100 members).<sup>40</sup> Furthermore, additional evidence supports the fact that there are also many Brazilian green card holders.<sup>41</sup> Therefore, Brazilians migrants documented or undocumented, have an impact on the Orlando economy. This chapter presents the history of Brazilian immigration in the Orlando area since the 1990s and argues that the impact of the Brazilian community began in tourism related

businesses. In addition, this chapter suggests that Brazilian small business owners migrated to Central Florida, beginning in the last decade, created businesses that target Brazilian tourists.

Next, this chapter also discusses Orlando real estate boom in the early 2000s opening doors for undocumented Brazilian workers in the field of construction cleaning and other building industry related employment. To better understand the business environment of Central Florida during the early and mid 1990s, the chapter will focus on a description of the tourism market, its relationship to Brazilian immigration, as well as Brazilian business investors. Furthermore, it demonstrates that Brazilian migration in the mid 1990s is very different than the migration described by Raymond Mohl's Latinization.<sup>42</sup> Compared to Mexicans, Brazilians that migrated to Orlando in the early 1990s seem to be of a higher social class. Brazilians also made investments in tourism businesses, as opposed to the Mexicans and other Latin Americans, who migrated to other states of the South and were interested in becoming employed in agricultural sectors, meat-packing and construction.

Later, the second decade of this Orlando Brazilian immigration movement after 2000, demonstrates a similarity with Mohl's Latinization model. This similarity is clear because the second flow of Brazilians migrating to Orlando is a lower Brazilian middle class that are escaping economic crisis in Brazil. These immigrants are willing to take low skill and low wage jobs in Orlando in the area of construction and other manual labor. Therefore, the idea of Latinization can be expanded to Orlando, Florida, because Mohl's concept applies to Brazilian immigrants in Orlando in the 2000s. As a result of this application, Brazilians, once recognized as Latin Americans, can also be considered

part of this Latinization phenomenon that is happening in Florida.<sup>43</sup>

Early evidence of Brazilian immigration is found in the *Orlando Sentinel*. An article from 1994 demonstrates the idea that Brazilian investors coming to Orlando to open businesses focused on the Brazilian tourists. This article claims that the Brazilian Consulate initially opened its own satellite consulate in Orlando in 1994 to assist thousands of Brazilian tourists and business people who arrived in the city for winter visits.<sup>44</sup> At that point in time, the number of Brazilians visiting Orlando was 200,000 per year, and the demand for consulate services was so great that a full Brazilian consulate was established in Orlando, staffed by the Brazilian Vice Consul, Marie Fernandez. This article demonstrates that there is early evidence of a Brazilian tourism boom taking place in Orlando. Therefore, this evidence shows that the earliest Brazilian migration to Orlando was built upon Brazilian tourism in the mid 1990s. As a direct result of increased Brazilian tourism, more Brazilians moved to Orlando to invest in the growing tourism-driven economy and target Brazilian tourist consumers. This trend in Brazilian immigration and investment demonstrates that the migration of Brazilians to Orlando did not follow the standards of Brazilian migration in other parts of the United States.

For instance, Brazilian scholars in the United States such as Margolis, Martes and Fleischer who study Brazilians in the North, argue there are more Brazilian immigrants in the United States working in low wage jobs than Brazilian tourist business investors. In Northern states such as Massachusetts and New York, Brazilians typically open cleaning and construction business, and these business do not often target the Brazilian consumer market.

An analysis of *Brasileiras & Brasileiros*, a local Brazilian newspaper in Central



Florida, demonstrates a different view of Brazilian immigrants in Orlando. An article in this newspaper documents early evidence in 1994 of Brazilian economical influence existed in Florida. In addition to this earliest reference, a number of articles in the mid 1990s were devoted to the topic of Brazilian immigration, and these articles focused on how to open businesses in Orlando. Furthermore, the articles provide essential information for Brazilian immigrants encouraging them to open a business to become documented in the United States.<sup>45</sup> The articles are written from a Brazilian perspective as opposed to the *Orlando Sentinel* article, whose author was not Brazilian or a foreign born.

It is interesting to note that a number of Brazilian scholars such as Margolis and Jose Carlos Sebe Bom Meihy did not use very many local newspaper articles to complete their analysis and draw their conclusions on Brazilian migration. Instead, their sources centered on interviews and articles published in newspapers written in Brazil. These newspaper articles from within the local community in Brazil describe a different view of the Brazilian migration than the *Orlando Sentinel* article. Including the local Brazilian newspaper in this analysis brings a unique view that other scholars such as Martes and Margolis have not analyzed. In addition, this article also supports the concept that Mohl's Latinization model cannot be used within Brazilian migration in Orlando, at least not for the mid 1990s. This next article is evidence that Brazilian businesses were being opened on a regular basis in Orlando.

The title of the article "Como perder dinheiro na America?" (How do we lose money in America?), indicates that these business investors were not always seeing sufficient profit with these businesses.<sup>46</sup> It tends to show that these business people were

not investing properly, and they did not fully understand the differences between the United States market and the Brazilian market. This author's writing offers significant encouragement to Brazilians who intend to open businesses because it provides guidance on how to invest safely in America. Donald Sutton's article, "Como perder dinheiro na America?" was written for an audience that included Brazilians migrating and opening businesses in Orlando, as well as investors that seem to have experience with businesses in Brazil. This reporter used specific Brazilian business terms and administrative terminology familiar to Americans. He demonstrated differences between United States regulations and Brazilian regulations when opening a business, and then describes the way Brazilians open businesses in America.<sup>47</sup> It is therefore, possible to discern from this article that in the 1990s there existed an audience of Brazilian investors in Central Florida.

Three years later in the same newspaper, the article "Pacotes unem lazer e ensino em Orlando" (packages unite entertainment and learning in Orlando), demonstrates that many Brazilians were not only coming to Orlando to visit Disney, but a number of young adults were also looking for packages that allowed them take English courses.<sup>48</sup> These tourists were not only families with children, but there were also student immigrant groups living in Orlando for extended periods of time. In addition, this same article describes the growth of the Brazilian student community at the International Language Center. This school grew to enroll 96 students in January 1997, as a result of partnerships with English Schools in Brazil such as Communication Academy Languages (Piracicaba), Skill English (Ilheus Bahia, a System Maceio AL), and Geografico Turimo (Piraciaba SP).<sup>49</sup> Since Mohl did not mention any student communities in the

Latinization phenomenon involving Mexicans or other Latin Americans, this development shows a Brazilian student class coming to Orlando in the 1990s. This supports the idea that these students were also part of a higher social class of Brazilians that could afford to migrate to the United States, attend school, and visit local theme parks. This additional development is important because it contributes to a unique Brazilian identity with various social classes in the Orlando Brazilian community that includes more than just investors and workers. This view is also different from what Margolis describes in *An Invisible Minority: Brazilians in New York City*, because she focuses on undocumented workers and does not mention Brazilian immigrants coming to the United States as students. Therefore, “Pacotes unem lazer e ensino em Orlando” presents an aspect piece of the Brazilian immigrant identity that no other author has researched, but reflects an upper middle class that came to the United States beginning in 1994.

It is important to note that just like Margolis, Maida Manes, the editor of *Brasileiras & Brasileiros*, does not mention in her interview anything about Brazilian students migrating to Orlando. She focuses her articles on business owners as an audience. Manes perception of Brazilians in 1994 showed significant interest in investing in a future in Orlando as revealed in the following article. In other words, due to easier access to documentation, immigrants like Cassia Portugal moved to Orlando with the intentions of remaining permanently in Florida. To support her ideas Manes states,

“na aquela epoca o imigrante brasileiro queria construir um futuro na America. Por exemplo, a Cassia Portugal e um exemplo dos primeiros imigrantes que vieram para Orlando. Ela trabalhou de faxineira para ter dinheiro para

estudar ingles. Hoje ela e uma pediatra e tem seu proprio consultorio.” (at that time the Brazilian immigrant wanted to build a future in America. For example, Cassia Portugal migrated to Orlando and cleaned houses for a living, so she could go to English as a Second Language School. Today, she is a pediatric doctor and has her own clinic.)

Compared with more recent articles she has written for her newspaper, Manes believes that the audience of her newspaper today is the undocumented Brazilian immigrant.<sup>50</sup> She believes that recent Brazilian immigrants are more interested in working for someone else as opposed to 13 years ago, when they were more interested in opening their own businesses. This suggests that there is now a different group of Brazilians migrating to Orlando as opposed to Brazilian investors of the early 1990s. Manes believes that recent immigrants plan their finances so they will be able return to their Brazilian homeland, and this occurs because they do not have available options to become documented in the United States. In the meantime, they send monetary help to their families in Brazil. This represents a shift between the Brazilian investors’ flow to the United States in the early 1990s and the recent Brazilian immigrants who are not investors. These immigrants stay in the United States with their expired tourist visas, and they often work undocumented in low wage and low skill jobs.<sup>51</sup> These Brazilian immigrants have many things in common with the immigrants Mohl researched in his article “Globalization, Latinization and the Nuevo New South.” The Brazilians in Orlando, as well as the Mexicans in Alabama, are taking the unwanted jobs and becoming part of Latinization that is happening in the South. Therefore, the Brazilian investors slowed their migration to Orlando in the late 1990s and lower middle class Brazilians began to migrate to the city for low wage work.

There are many reasons for this transition of immigrants from the investors to the

lower middle class. Brazilians face increasing challenges in their homeland, as well in Florida. These challenges are discussed in the article “Nossa Crise em Miami” (Our Crisis in Miami) of Brazilian magazine called *Veja*. This article relates to the crises regarding Brazilian currency and its relationship to the U.S. dollar. In the past, Brazilians could easily afford to visit Florida when Brazilian currency was close to the value of the U.S. dollar. For example, when Brazilian tourists were coming in large numbers, they were able to exchange R\$1000 reais to \$1000 United States dollars. However, in 1999 Brazilians had to pay \$1.90 reais for \$1. For Brazilians to purchase \$2000 United States dollars in 1996 and 1997, they only had to spend R\$2000 reais; this explains the reason for the huge influx of Brazilian immigrants coming to Orlando as tourists and as business investors.<sup>52</sup> In other words, there was a positive economic incentive for Brazilian immigrants to visit Orlando and area attractions. These trends in Central Florida support the idea that at that time lower and upper middle class Brazilians were financially able to afford vacations at a number of the area attractions, as well as shop for electronics and souvenirs. In addition, this represents a very different idea of the Brazilian immigration when compared to the ideas of other United States Brazilian scholars. For example Martes and Margolis demonstrate in their studies, Brazilians in Northern states migrate in larger proportions to work in lower skilled jobs. Interestingly, in Orlando, this seems to have been taking place only since 2000. To support this concept, Mohl writes in his 2003 article, “Globalization, Latinization and the Nuevo New South,” that the Latinization he describes among Mexicans and other Latin Americans seems to occur later in Orlando with Brazilians immigrants.

In contrast, Mohl’s article does not support the idea that all immigrants were

investors, but it concludes there were exceptions to this idea mentioned in Manes' interview. In the article written by Manes, "Cassia Portugal: e possivel vencer na America" (Cassia Portugal it is possible to succeed in America), she discusses a woman that migrated to the United States and succeeded. She uses this article to support her claims that Brazilians who moved to the United States in the early 1990s had the desire to build a future.<sup>53</sup> While this may be true, it also demonstrates that Portugal was not a business investor. As a matter a fact, Manes states that Portugal had to work as an undocumented housekeeper to survive financially.<sup>54</sup> Manes' article demonstrates that in the 1990s Brazilian immigrants working low skill and low wage jobs, and not necessarily all immigrants were investors as Manes maintains. This important view of Brazilian immigrants in Orlando follows Mohl's Latinization analysis because it indicates that Brazilian immigrants were also employed as undocumented workers in low skilled jobs in Orlando in the 1990s. Mohl does not demonstrate in his research that Mexicans and other Latin Americans shifted careers or only worked low skilled and low wage jobs on a temporarily, but remained in their jobs indefinitely. Therefore, Portugal's case is not representative of Latinization because it is not what Mohl finds among Mexican immigrants in other southern states. Mohl's Mexicans migrate to rural cities for low skilled agricultural employment as their permanent jobs, and not just as temporary jobs.

Another example of a Brazilian immigrant that did not work in low skilled and low wage jobs in Orlando is discussed in the next article, "Martonio: Vim para os Estados Unidos em busca de aventura," (Martonio: I came to the United States looking for an adventure). This description also mentions that economic hardship and financial necessities were not the only reasons that Brazilians migrated to Orlando in the mid

1990s. For example, Martonio migrated to Orlando looking for new adventure in his life. The article is ultimately a story of a young man that also succeeds in the United States just like Portugal succeeds. Martonio came to the United States as a manager for a Brazilian airline called Transbrasil when he was just 18 years old.<sup>55</sup> The *Brasileiras & Brasileiros* reporter asked him a question, “What is the American dream?” and Martonio answered, “A car, a house, a family with a retirement savings to travel. That is the American dream.” He also states that though he is happy in this country because he has a house, a job, and his family, if he had the opportunity to return to Brazil he would.<sup>56</sup> He states he thinks that he will never find in the United States the closeness among friends and family that he had in Brazil. The evidence suggests that, Martonio belongs to the upper middle class in Brazil, and he falls into the upper middle class Brazilian immigrant category of the mid 1990s that was not part of Latinization. His situation was very different than what Mohl describes of the Mexicans’ conditions. It seems Brazilian immigrants do not migrate to the United States for the same reasons as the Mexicans at the same point in time. Therefore, these Brazilians would not be part of the Latinization phenomenon during this period.

“Nao quero mais saber de brasileiro” is an interesting and humorous article in *Brasileiras & Brasileiros* that indicates some of the jobs that undocumented Brazilians were working in Orlando in 1994. This article also provided additional evidence that undocumented workers were also present in Orlando. It discusses a Brazilian immigrant called Jose, who has no documentation, gets a job for a neighbor’s friend in the same store where he was working.<sup>57</sup> However, due to hosting his visiting family from Brazil, he took some days off from work claiming he was sick. Unfortunately his boss’ wife

found him at the Magic Kingdom. Obviously, he lost his job which went to the “friend” who was also from a place in Brazil called Curitiba. This humorous article alluded to the fact that often undocumented workers were employed in Brazilian businesses that were opened in the 1990s, and these Brazilian businesses that did not require large numbers of employees with documentation.

Therefore, if undocumented Brazilians, such as Jose, were specifically portrayed in newspaper articles in the 1990s, this indicates in all probability that immigrants from specific regions in Brazil were migrating from Florida at the time. From reading the article, one sees that the Brazilian character Jose uses certain words which demonstrate that he is from the Rio de Janeiro. For instance, when Jose says, “Voce quer mistura melhor que futebol, cerveja e carnaval?”(How can you have better mixture between soccer, beer and carnival?). Futebol, cerveja and carnaval are the perfect combination of Carioca (someone that is born and raised in Rio de Janeiro) having a good time in Brazil. First, in the city of Rio de Janeiro is where the largest soccer stadium in Brazil, Maracana, which is famous for having soccer matches on Sundays of local Brazilian leagues. Second, Carnaval is associated with Rio de Janeiro because of the parades that the city hosts. Lastly, beer and soccer are very famous in Rio de Janeiro in TV commercials such as mentioned on the article “Investindo na Associacao entre duas Paixoes Nacionais” by Roberto Dranger and Walter Longo. They discuss how beer and soccer are national Brazilian passions. The article discussed commercials that were going to be held in the city of Rio de Janeiro. These commercials were going to promote soccer and Kaiser beer in Rio de Janeiro due to Flamengo soccer team also be from Rio de Janeiro. In addition, Flamengo team has the largest number of fans compared to any



other Brazilian team in Brazil.<sup>58</sup> This humorous article represents regionalism that was transplanted with Brazilian immigrants from Curitiba or Rio de Janeiro, Brazil to the United States. This is important because work ethic is not determined by Brazilian “regionalism” but it is the perception of these regions’ work ethic by other Brazilians that are in Orlando. Therefore, “work ethics” based on region are not “real” according to Werner Sollors, they are based on a constructed fiction. This helps to shape the Brazilian community in Orlando where workers bring various qualities and degrees of work ethics. This article demonstrates similarities with Oliveira’s Brazilian diversity found in Miami and other Brazilian communities in Northern states of the United States where a large proportion of Brazilians migrate from a specific region of Brazil. In contrast, Brazilian immigrants in Orlando are from a variety of states in Brazil, and they are more equally divided than in states like Massachusetts. Currently, it appears the diversity of Brazilians from different parts of Brazil is similar to the range of diversity in the mid 1990s.<sup>59</sup> For instance, the article suggests two regions Brazilians immigrants migrated from; Curitiba and Rio de Janeiro. In addition, Lima revealed that a great number of Brazilian members are from Espirito Santo in his church. Wesley Porto, pastor of Brazilian Presbyterian church, believes that in his church they are an even number of members from Sao Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, Ceara, Rio Grande do Sul, Brasilia, Manaus, Minas Gerais e Fortaleza.<sup>60</sup> Porto also believes that the Brazilian immigration in Orlando is very unstable. Many of them return to Brazil or move to other states of the U.S. Also, an interview with an employee of a Brazilian money transfer company called Flash Remessas, Fabiana Campus, revealed that in the past two years the majority money transfers goes to a state in Brazil called Minas Gerais. This could be interpreted as a sample of the proportion

numbers of Brazilians of this region of Brazil. Therefore, this is in opposition to the Mexicans in Mohl's research which seem to be from the same area of Mexico in each agricultural sector. Even though Mohl did focus on regionalism among the Mexican immigrants, this factor among Brazilian immigrants adds a new feature to what becomes Latinization.

Cristiane Marques in her interview explains a transition that has occurred over the past decade within the Brazilian immigrant social classes in Orlando. She has lived in Orlando since 1996, and she recalls some of these Brazilian businesses in the mid 1990s. Among these were electronic stores, tourism transportation companies, and tourism guide services. They were focused on capitalizing on the Brazilian tourism boom of the time (1994-1997).<sup>61</sup> She also supports the idea that business owners were generally documented, but their employees were not. In addition, Marques states that the Brazilian tourism boom in the 1990s happened due to the favorable conversion rate of the Brazilian national currency compared with the United States dollar. However, that situation did not extend into the present decade, and the devaluation of Brazilian currency subsequently had a major impact on Brazilian businesses in Florida. Many closed down and only recently are new Brazilian business owners opening businesses in Orlando again. Interestingly, very few of these new businesses are actually in the tourism field.<sup>62</sup> Therefore, Marques' statements support the idea that Brazilian immigrants in Orlando were not part of Mohl's Latinization model in the mid 1990s. Brazilian immigration also provides of a difference between Orlando's Brazilian immigrants and those immigrants in other parts of the United States. For instance, Meihy, a Brazilian scholar, states that Brazilian cleaning businesses in New York were very successful. Therefore, they did not

experience the same unfavorable situation in the 1990s as Brazilian businesses in Central Florida.

Marques distinguishes between Brazilians and Hispanic Americans. She also thinks that Brazilians adapt easier to the lifestyle in America than do other Latin American immigrants, and she believes there are distinct differences between Brazilians and other Latin Americans.<sup>63</sup> Yet, as Brazilian tourism declined in the Central Florida, Brazilians grew to appreciate Orlando and Florida because they do not feel they are the only ones who are foreign or Latin American. An observation by Marques shows that Brazilians in Orlando are similar in the same ways as the Brazilians studied by scholar, Bryn Elizabeth Hafemeister.<sup>64</sup> She suggests that the Brazilians migrated to Miami because of its Latin American influence. Similarly, Brazilians seem to face less cultural shock when they come to Orlando because of the influence of other Latin Americans living in Central Florida.

One major area of Brazilian influence in Orlando is the construction arena, as well as, other construction related businesses. In other words, as the Metro Orlando area experienced considerable growth, increased opportunities in construction and real estate sectors encouraged Brazilians to again invest in Central Florida. There appears to be a shift from tourism related jobs to other non-tourist related employment such as construction, masonry, and non-tourist related opportunities. To encourage business investment in Orlando, the Central Florida Brazilian Association was formed in 1992 according to an article in *Brasileiras & Brasileiros*, “Eleicoes na ABCF.” This states that this association’s mission is to serve the Brazilian community in Central Florida.<sup>65</sup> The article discusses the role of the ABCF and its influence in the Brazilian community in an

interview with ex-president, Fernando Piancastelli. He describes one of the most important goals of this organization as accurate identification of the number of Brazilians living in Central Florida.<sup>66</sup> Fortunately, to assist in this endeavor, the Brazilian Association had access to surveys of Bright house Network, a local cable company. To monitor preferences for television programs, Brighthouse used their data to estimate the number of Brazilians in the Orlando area at 10,000.<sup>67</sup> This is important evidence because it provided much larger numbers of Brazilians than those provided by the United States Census. This supports the idea that Brazilian are undercounted as well as they are undercounted in other states, such as New York. According to Margolis the Brazilians were undercounted in New York City, and considered an invisible minority. This proves that the Brazilians were not only “invisible” in New York like Maxine Margolis suggests, but invisible in Orlando, as well. This article does not demonstrate direct connection with the Latinization model Mohl describes, but it does show that Brazilians during the 1990s represents a similar model to New York’s Margolis, with reference to an invisible minority.

Another trend in Brazilian immigration is discussed in an article, “Seu social security, por favor” (your social security please). The United States government permits Brazilians, who have tourist visas and move to Orlando, to get social security cards. The author reports that recently many Brazilians became more interested in buying houses than those Brazilians investors and tourists of the past. Because they have social security numbers more immigrants are able to buy houses. Therefore, this article provides additional evidence to support the ideas that Brazilian immigrants are an important part of the real estate market and business sectors in Orlando.<sup>68</sup> This fact demonstrates that

Brazilians impacted Orlando's economy as buyers and sellers of real estate. It seems that the model of Latinization within the Brazilian community beginning in the 1990s is very different than what was taking place in Alabama and other Southern states.

In an interview with Marcos Marques, a manager with Varig Airlines in the 1990s he state he first moved to Orlando in 1995 along with the Brazilian tourism boom in Central Florida. At that time, the demand for flights connecting Orlando and Brazil was so strong that the airlines flew directly from Orlando to major cities in Brazil. An *Orlando Sentinel* article in 1996 supports the perceptions that Marcos discussed in his interview, "Varig Brazilian Airlines, a major South American carrier, starting regular service to Orlando International Airport, is already making expansion plans."<sup>69</sup> Marcos was transferred from Miami Varig Airlines to Orlando and promoted from supervisor to manager as a part of this growth. The article also states, "Brazil is one of our largest international markets, our fourth-largest international arrivals market." However, Marques also thinks Orlando's ethnic groups are less diverse than in Miami with many Puerto Ricans and fewer immigrants from other parts of Latin America.<sup>70</sup> The changes that occurred in his life parallel the decline in Brazilian tourism experienced in the United States. Eventually, Marques was able to transition his career from airline manager to realtor just as many economic transitions were taking place in the Brazilian community in Orlando as part of Latinization.

The article "Seminario para agentes imobiliarios em Orlando," also published at *Brasileiras & Brasileiros*, demonstrates that Orlando's real estate market in 1996 was beginning to boom, and it also shows how Brazilians also impacted real estate's rapid growth in Metro Orlando. Marcos Marques was one of a growing number of Brazilians

who began to capitalize on this growing trend in real estate investment in Orlando. In addition, there was significant interest in business seminars developed by Internet Realty Association and by the Columbus Cruise and Travel in cooperation with Universidade de Sa of Rio de Janeiro.<sup>71</sup> These seminars for Brazilian realtors and investors targeted Brazilian immigrants, focusing on Brazilian immigrants who wanted to participate in a growing trend of business investment in Central Florida. In addition, in an interview with the President of Central Florida Brazilian American Chamber of Commerce, Rosana Almeida, says that the greatest concentration of the Brazilian businesses in Central Florida is in construction, cleaning and tourism.<sup>72</sup> Almeida also revealed that she has a hospitality based small business for 7 years and she is also a realtor.

One more idea that this research addresses is Jeff Faux's idea. He discusses the influence of Nafta on immigration in the U.S. Faux argues that Mexican immigration is a direct consequence of Nafta. He believes that although Nafta strengthens Mexican industry, it has an adverse effect on agricultural areas in Mexico.<sup>73</sup> For this reason, the Mexican immigrants from agricultural areas migrate to the U.S. On the other hand, the Brazilians come from urban areas of Brazil, and they migrate to urban cities in the U.S. In the same way that the Nafta influences Mexicans to migrate to the U.S., the collapse of Real drove low wage workers to Orlando starting in the late 1990s until the present.

This research suggests that a moderate to high class of Brazilians began to migrate to Orlando in the early and mid 1990s. Many were investors and they opened businesses focused on the Brazilian tourist consumers that were taking advantage of a favorable balance of Brazilian currency and the U.S. dollar. When the dollar became stronger Brazilian visitors to Orlando decreased, and businesses that focused on Brazilian

tourists closed down. New business began to open as business investment increased when larger number of Brazilian immigrants moved to Orlando. This phenomenon of Brazilian investment markets in Orlando is not part of the Latinization Mohl discusses when he focuses on low wage workers. However, evidence shows that there were also undocumented workers living in Orlando in the mid 1990s, but their situation was not similar to the Mexicans' or Puerto Ricans because Brazilian undocumented workers seem to come from an upper middle class in Brazil. Indeed, after 2000 the number of undocumented Brazilians increased drastically due to a rising unemployment rate and increasing violence in their homeland. The collapse of Real drove low wage Brazilian workers to Orlando. These undocumented workers helped to shape part of the Latinization model that Mohl proposes for other states in the South. It is therefore possible to expand his model to Brazilians, who can also be considered an invisible minority based on often unrecognized contributions to the labor force following shifts in Orlando's economy since the 1990s.





### **CHAPTER 3: BRAZILIAN LATINIZATION**

The study of Latinization focusing on Brazilian Migration in Florida in the city of Orlando is a subject that has never been previously discussed among scholars. Most studies have examined immigrants from Spanish speaking Latin America. For instance, in the article “Puerto Ricans in Orlando and Central Florida” by Jorge Duany and Felix V. Matos-Rodriguez discussed a Latinization happening in Orlando among ethnic groups such as Puerto Ricans. Duany and Matos-Rodriguez estimated over 160,000 Puerto Ricans in Orlando in 2003.<sup>74</sup> Other source such as “The Hispanic consumer is a critical market in Orlando,” also states a powerful number Latin Americans in Central Florida. It reveals that there are over 340,000 Hispanics living in Orlando. None of these authors mention the Brazilians in their studies. However, according to “Orlando, Florida: Population Profile”, the population of Metro Orlando or the Greater Orlando area is estimated to be at least two million people, the Brazilians even though reported to be a smaller number compared to other Latin Americans, are less than 5% of the population of the Greater Orlando area.<sup>75</sup> Therefore, the study of the immigration of Brazilians encourages debates on Latin American immigration studies in Florida because they are not Spanish speakers; therefore, excluded from most Hispanic or Latin American studies. This research intends to demonstrate the reasons that Brazilians are excluded from other Latin Americans and Hispanics among scholars.

Large numbers of Hispanics and Latinos frequent the many Hispanic restaurants and businesses in Orlando. In addition, there are several thousands of Latin Americans and other immigrants moving to the city and working in low-wage jobs. They include but are not limited to Mexicans, Colombians, Haitians, Cubans, Dominicans and many

others.<sup>76</sup> Brazilians are not Hispanic; yet, they are Latin Americans that are part of Latinization that is happening in Orlando.

There are two main ideas that will be discussed in this research. The first is presented by Raymond Mohl, who defines Latinization as Latin Americans occupying low-wage and low-skill labor job; he focuses on Latin Americans that are Spanish speakers who have worked in manufacturing, construction and agriculture since the 1920s.<sup>77</sup> He also focuses his attention on Mexican-born immigrants and their influence in the labor force of Alabama's rural and urban economies. This research looks at Brazilians as part of this Latinization. The second concept discussed in this research is presented by Maxine L. Margolis, who suggests in the title of her book the idea of *An Invisible Minority: Brazilians in New York City*. Margolis argues that there is an invisible minority of Brazilian immigrants that scholars ignore. She calls the Invisible Minority because the group represented is often ignored by scholars and most Americans. She describes the reasons why they are invisible and the fact that despite their invisibility they still have a significant impact on ethnic studies in the city of New York. This research integrates both of these ideas into a broader definition of Latinization, suggesting a view beyond Spanish speaking Latin American groups. It also gives an extensive background of the term Latinization according to scholars and how this research will discuss the term Latinization.

For a complete understanding of Latinization in United States history, this research covers the historiography this term. This concise historiography of the term Latinization will demonstrate scholars' views of Brazilian immigrants in the context of immigration history. Latinization is referenced by many scholars previous to Mohl, as a

Spanish cultural heritage spreading throughout United States. It is studied in cultural terms and not as a labor movement as Mohl argues in his article “Globalization, Latinization and the Nuevo New South” with the Mexicans and other Latin American in the Southern states of the U.S.<sup>78</sup> For instance, Moises Sandoval demonstrates this idea by stating that even though the numbers of Hispanics in Brighton Beach, New York, are increasing; Hispanics are still under-represented overall in the city council, city employment, and managerial positions.<sup>79</sup> Similarly, Gregory Rodriguez supports the same view of Latinization, but in California he defines it as a political issue. Rodriguez points out that the mixture of ethnic groups in California adds tension on the Catholic view of race as opposed to the Anglo-Protestant view of race. He believes that intermarriages, involving at least one Latino parent, contribute to the growth of Latinization in California.<sup>80</sup> In addition to Rodriguez’s concept of Latinization, Laurence Stains discusses Latinization by considering a large number of Puerto Ricans migrating to smaller cities in America, fleeing larger cities like New York. Latinization according to Stains concerns Puerto Rican ethnic groups bringing Latin culture to smaller cities in America.<sup>81</sup> Therefore, he asserts a mixture of the Anglo with the Puerto Rican Culture. Finally, there is Raymond Mohl’s definition of Latinization which falls into the same category, as he focuses primarily on Mexican-born immigrants applying his description to the labor force of Alabama.

Where are the Brazilians in this discussion? Are they Latin Americans or not? Do they have a role in the immigration history of the United States? None of the previously mentioned scholars who studied Latinization even mentioned the Brazilians, with the exception of Agustin Lao-Montes and Arlene Davila in the book *Mambo Montage: The*

*Latinization of New York.* Lao-Montes and Davila discuss Latinidad in the United States the Spanish speaking Latin American audience. In this study they argue that the Brazilians are not included in this notion of Latinidad because their culture is different than the Spanish Latin American culture. They argue, “Latino identity refers to the specific positioning of peoples of Latin American and Caribbean descent living in the United States, a historical location with particular historical foundations, hemispheric linkages and global projections.”<sup>82</sup> Therefore, they exclude the Brazilians in this definition of Latinidad. The process of Latinization refers to the Latino identity. Briefly they mention that Brazilians challenge this definition of Latinidad that is defined using the criteria of language (Spanish) and history.<sup>83</sup> Therefore, as a result of this challenge scholars have begun to debate where Brazil fits into Latinization. The research takes a different direction with respect to the origin of the Latin Americans and the Brazilians and its place in the Latin American culture.

Throughout this research a distinct relationship exists between Hispanic and Latino. The term Latinization, as used by historians, reveals an absence of Brazilian focus among the research. According to the United States Census Bureau, the term Hispanic describes anyone whose roots can be traced to Spain, Mexico and other Spanish-speaking regions of Central, South America and the Caribbean. Yet, this definition excludes all Latin American countries whose languages are not Spanish. In other words, defining Latinization in Hispanic terms, historians are excluding Brazilians, Haitians, Mayans, Guyanese and other immigrants in Florida who are also part of the economic “Latinization” phenomenon described by Mohl.

In order to place these immigrants in this transformation Latinization would have to be defined in geographic terms of South and Central America. As part of the primary research, the idea of Romance Latin derived languages in America is combined to present a clearer framework for historians in the United States with the term Latinization because it includes Latin Americans who speak other languages apart from Spanish. However, it does not include Mayans and other Native Central American languages. Thus, the term does include numerous other Romance Latin American Countries in the term of Latinization, including those countries speaking Portuguese.

Nevertheless, the Latinization experience of the Brazilian immigrants seems to be a disappointment for many Brazilians when they interact with Americans and other immigrants. Bernadete Beserra, a Brazilian ethnic scholar, writes about her own experiences as a student in the United States of America:

“Descobri a minha identidade “Latina” logo apos o inicio do doutorado na Universidade da California, Riverside, em 1995: um amigo Americano (braco) perguntou-me como esta me sentindo como mulher de cor nos Estados Unidos. Surpreendi-me com a pergunta porque minha cor jamais havia sido posta em questao no Brasil... respondi-lhe com outra pergunta: ”Qual e a minha cor?”” (I discovered my Latin identity right after I started my Doctorate degree in the University of California in 1995: an American friend asked me how I felt as a woman of color. I was surprised with the question because my color was never questioned in Brazil...then I answered with the question “what is my color?”)<sup>84</sup>

Beserra states in these sources that for the first time she felt like hiding her Latinoamericanidade. Although she began her research on this subject by interviewing an immigrant, she discovers that the interviewee did not like people to speak Spanish with her because Latinos seem to be considered an inferior class by the Americans. These

observations illustrate that a debate exists regarding the meaning of being a Latino or a Hispanic versus being a Latin American. In all likelihood, questions arise when Brazilian immigrants have contact with Hispanics and other immigrants as they adapt to the social environment in the United States.

Futhermore, Beserra illustrates the conflict of Brazilians, Latinos, Hispanics, and Latin Americans in an interview with a Brazilian immigrant for a possible research topic for her dissertation at University of California. Her interview subject states,

“Apos todos esses anos aqui, acabei aprendendo a ver as pessoas como os americanos: defino rapidamente o que elas sao, as raca. Fico ate meio envergonhada de dizer isto - e ate nem acho que sou racista - mas nao gosto quando as pessoas falam comigo em espanhol porque eu nao quero que pensem que sou mexicana, ou da Guatemala, porque essas sao racas que os americanos denigrem...Os Latino sao como uma raca inferior para os Americanos.” (After so many years here, I ended up learning to see people like the Americans: I define them quickly by race. I even get a little ashamed to admit that – I do not even see that as being racist – but I do not like when people speak Spanish with me because I don’t want them to think I am Mexican or from Guatemala, because these races are diminished by the Americans. Latinos are treated as an inferior race by the Americans)<sup>85</sup>

Beserra argues that Telma, the interviewee was referring to the word Latino in terms of social status when she relates it to discrimination as opposed to being Latin American. With this view in mind, it is possible to suggest that inferior social status may be part of the reason Brazilians reject being Latinos. In all probability, this sense of discrimination is why they refuse to be identified as a Latino and why they do not interact frequently with Latinos. Beserra emphasizes Telma’s consciousness of her Latinoamericanidade, but at the same time makes the distinction about not wanting to be a Latina in the United States.

Nevertheless, Luciano do Santos, a Brazilian historian, argues that Brazilians are not really aware of their *Latinamericanidade* mainly because they are isolated from the Spanish speaking countries, so when they migrate to the U.S. there is a feeling of rejection of being Latin American within the same terms as Spanish speaking countries. He suggests that Brazilian citizens face the opposite direction of the rest of Latin America. He says, “Como tenha apontado o exemplo da historiadora Maria Ligia Prado, muito ja se repetiu que o Brasil esta de costa para a America Latina e com os olhos para Europa” (As pointed previously Maria Ligia Prado’s example that Brazil has its back turned from Latin America and has its eyes on European countries).<sup>86</sup> The next paragraph discusses a source from a Brazilian graduate student, Idalvo Castro, who criticizes the term *Latino*, saying it is indeed a controversial term. For instance, this points out that to literally analyze the word *Latino* from a racial perspective, most Mexicans would not categorize themselves as Spanish descendants.<sup>87</sup>

Santos describes *Latinoamericanidade* a term often used by scholars in Brazil to describe the Latin-European (mainly Portuguese) influence on their culture. He argues that this is uniquely different from the Spanish influence. For example, Fernando Cocchiarale, Paulo Sergio Duarte and Ivens Machado, who are Brazilian scholars, discussed the identity and the cultural integration of Latin America at a Cultural Art Conference. Cocchiarale argues that *Latinoamericanidade* does not have a common cultural thread that unifies Latin America. He also discusses historical differences between Brazil and Spanish Latin America, and he states that Brazil’s political history remains distinct compared to any other in Spanish Latin America. Cocchiarale says, “Nao acho que podemos falar em *latinoamericanidade* e, nesse sentido, nem em Brasil” (I do

not think we can discuss latinoamericanidade in the same sense, not Brazil) when he compares it with other Latin American countries.<sup>88</sup>

In addition, Luciano dos Santos argues that Brazil's first political system after it gained independence from Portugal, was a monarchy which is different from any other Latin American country.<sup>89</sup> He argues that since the Spanish and Portuguese colonial period, Brazil has not been considered part of the Latin American region, and Brazil is also unique in the way it gained its independence from Portugal. Santos also says, "No Brasil, a intelectualidade sempre se voltou mais para a identidade nacional e muito pouco, quase nunca, para a sub-continental" (In Brazil, the intellectuality was always focused on the national identity, and very little and almost never focused on sub-continental identity).<sup>90</sup>

In this quote, Santos states that Brazilian scholars were more focused on the study of the national identity of Brazil, and they never tried to develop a sub-continental identity within the countries in Latin America. Applying this view in Orlando, while Brazilian immigrants obviously may or may not have the same perspective as the historians and scholars in Brazil, these sources nonetheless help one understand a view of Latinoamericanidade in Brazil.<sup>91</sup> In other words, Brazilians are Latin American, non-Spanish speakers that do not want to be considered Hispanics. There are very specific differences between Brazilian history and Spanish American history. There is a transnational idea in the identity of the Brazilian Latinoamericanidade between what the immigrants learned in Brazil and the consciousness of being Latinos in the United States. Therefore, they identify themselves differently than the rest of Latin America and due to language difference Brazilians live culturally isolated in Latin America.



Interestingly enough, Brazilian sources in Orlando indicate they associate themselves with other Latin Americans when they wish to be a part of a larger group, but at the same time they do not fully integrate with Spanish Latinamericanidad. This idea is very important when studying the *Invisible Minority* of Brazilians in the United States because even though Brazilians are increasing in Orlando, yet they are still a minority among Spanish Latin American immigrants. At times, Brazilians are forced to integrate with the Hispanic population when they require employment or representation. Aligning with the Hispanic population is at times a good option since Hispanics are part of a much larger network of ethnic groups who speak a similar language and share a similar culture. Brazilians often have a much smaller network for employment and services than most Hispanics. In addition to language and cultural differences, Brazilians are less likely to have a network than groups such as Puerto Ricans, Cubans, or other Latin American who are often documented. However, reliable information on the Brazilian invisible minority in Orlando is available through the Brazilian Protestant churches because these churches successfully provide a network for and information on their members, both documented and undocumented workers. A person interviewed from the Brazilian Protestant church community indicated there is a local network that includes mostly Brazilian immigrants and other immigrant from Latin America that share similar needs.<sup>92</sup> Immigrants are sought in the South by employers seeking Latin American workers, such as the Brazilians, for their willingness to work for low wages and filled unskilled jobs.

To answer these questions the documented and the undocumented Brazilian immigrants must be carefully studied. There are essentially two groups of jobs available for undocumented workers in Orlando. The first one does not require them to speak

English because only the supervisors communicate in English with the bosses and managers who are Americans. Lago, responsible for social services in Brazilian Presbyterian Church, revealed in her interview that these jobs domestic, commercial, and industrial cleaners, car washers, detailers, housekeepers, maids, valets, window tinters, landscaper laborers, concreters, gardeners, domestic painters, nannies, child care workers, mechanics, hair dressers, barbers, manicurists, masseurs, and pool cleaners. The unskilled workers are dependent on Brazilians, who open a small business or hire undocumented workers, to provide the required documentation for their employment.<sup>93</sup>

The second group offers skilled employment for Brazilian workers in Orlando that requires greater proficiency in English. For these jobs, at least some English is required because in some case they supervise jobs for non-Brazilians. The jobs, which necessitate some knowledge of English, include photographers, car salesmen, waitresses, waiters, cooks, kitchen helpers, drivers, pizza and newspaper deliverers, resort, hotel and buffet services, teachers, mortgage brokers, movers, administrators, secretaries, cashiers, store attendants, salespersons, nurses, and dentists.<sup>94</sup> It appears, from this evidence, that not all of these jobs are necessarily low skilled jobs. Utilizing Mohl's idea of Latinization tends to suggest that Brazilian immigrants occupy jobs that are unfilled by Americans; however, the evidence gathered in Orlando indicates that many Brazilians obtain skilled employment with Brazilian and Latin American business owners. Additionally, a number of these skilled workers begin to work at businesses they own themselves. For instance, masseurs, therapists, house cleaners, mortgage brokers, mechanics, manicurists, pedicurists, and beauticians eventually develop their own clients and as a result they establish their own businesses.<sup>95</sup>

Brazilian Pentecostal Churches in Orlando estimated that there between 3,000 and 5,000 Brazilians Pentecostals in Orlando.<sup>96</sup> It is very difficult to determine the exact population for the Brazilian community in Orlando because many immigrants constantly migrate back to Brazil or move to other states in the United States.<sup>97</sup> Therefore, the effect Brazilians have on Latinization in Florida, more specifically in Orlando, depends on the fluctuation of the immigrant population and the length of time they remain in the city.

Fabiano Maisonnave wrote an article discussing recent trends in immigration for *Folha de Sao Paulo*. He obtained his information from border guards who not only reported that the number of Brazilians arrested for illegal immigration has drastically decreased within the last year, but that currently many Brazilians appear not to be migrating to the United States via the Mexican border.<sup>98</sup> Maisonnave also reported that the Centro do Imigrante Brasileiro in Boston confirmed this information by saying that the number of new immigrants also has decreased in the past two years. According to Fausto da Rocha, a member of the Imigrante Brasileiro organization, the automatic deportation statute and the visas required to visit Mexico since October 2006 were the main reason why the number of new Brazilians immigrants decreased. He also says that the newer alternative choice for recent immigrants may be crossing from Guatemala.<sup>99</sup> However, this information from the Centro do Imigrante Brasileiro only describes statistics on Brazilians in Boston.

A different perspective is provided in an interview with an Orlando resident, a Brazilian immigrant who crossed the Mexican border into the United States in June of 2006. Felipe Lucas Lago Martins is an undocumented Brazilian who immigrated to this country with 2000 other Brazilians. He tells of his trip to the United States that included

ten trucks with an estimated 200 immigrants in each truck. Although, he is not certain that all were Brazilians, he believes the majority were Brazilian nationals. He said,

“Eu e mais dois mil brasileiros atravessamos a fronteira do Mexico em Junho deste ano, viemos pelo deserto do Texas. Tinha dez carretas esperando pela gente depois da fronteira, esperamos por 15 dias no deserto ate a hora certa de passar pela fronteira. Depois as carretas nos levaram para um lugar onde tinha varios onibus, e cada onibus iriam para cidades diferentes dos Estado Unidos. Tinha um onibus que estava vindo pra Orlando, e eu e mais 200 brasileiros entramos neste onibus e viemos pra ca.” (Two thousand Brazilians and I crossed the Mexican border June of this year through the Texas’ desert. There were 10 small trucks waiting for us right after we crossed the border, we waited for 15 days until the right time to cross the border. The trucks took us to a place where there were some buses, and one of them was coming to Orlando. 200 Brazilians and I entered that bus and came to Orlando.)<sup>100</sup>

It is interesting to analyze two different sources that are discussing the same subject, but each have different perspectives. The Centro do Imigrante Brasileiro is a Boston organization, and it only provides information on newer immigrants in the Boston area. Boston has also a much larger Brazilian community than Orlando, and it has a number of organizations that can more accurately estimate the number of newer immigrants coming to Boston.

However as mentioned earlier, the evangelical and other Brazilians churches are the main source for population figures for this community in Central Florida. Oliveira’s interview gives a different view of the newer immigrants coming to the United States, more specifically in Orlando. He mentions that there are few other Brazilian immigrants working with him in local construction in Orlando, even though the construction company is owned by a Brazilian. Oliveira said that he makes \$100 dollars per day, which is about \$10 per hour.<sup>101</sup> He says,

“Logo que cheguei em Orlando, arrumei um emprego na construcao imediatamente. Trabalho no “Brick”, e nao estranhei porque era isso que eu fazia em Belo Horizonte. Fiquei desempregado 2 anos no Brasil, e resolvi vir pra ca pra poder mandar dinheiro pra minha mulher e pros meus dois filhos no Brasil.” (Right after I got to Orlando, I got a job in the construction immediately. I work in the brick; I did not find that job strange because that was also my job in Belo Horizonte. I was unemployed in Brazil for two years and then I decided to come here so I could send money for my wife and my two children in Brazil.)”<sup>102</sup>

Orlando is an urban city that has expanded over the past few years, and construction jobs provide many opportunities for undocumented Brazilians to obtain employment. Oliveira is an example of a Brazilian worker who sends money to his family in Brazil through a Brazilian money transfer company. He is just one of many Brazilians, according to an article written by Bruno Garcez for the British Broadcasting Company, that send billions of dollars in financial support from the United States to Brazil. This trend results in Brazilians transferring money to their homeland, and in the majority of the cases Brazilians use Brazilian companies to accomplish this.<sup>103</sup> At times, when there is no other way, Brazilians use Latin American or other money transfer businesses to accomplish their goal.

These sources demonstrate the growing impact of Brazilians on Latinization in Orlando. Although, the numbers of new Brazilian immigrants crossing the Mexican border has decreased since October, 2006, there is a vital and growing Brazilian community in Orlando that has an impact on Florida’s economy.<sup>104</sup> Latinization extends to major urban areas such as Orlando where there is tremendous growth in the fields of construction and real estate. Brazilians often favor construction jobs, and those related to real estate services, which pay higher salaries than jobs in tourism.

Another significant fact which relates to the Latinization of Central Florida is that many Brazilians residing in Orlando for some time (not recent migrants) often start their own businesses or work autonomously for other Brazilians who own businesses.<sup>105</sup> These Brazilian immigrants are well established in Orlando and often qualify for skilled employment. This trend demonstrates a different version of the Mohl's Latinization idea for the South because only parts of these immigrants work lower skill and lower wage jobs. The remainders are employed in skilled jobs that require training and knowledge. It is from this perspective that the idea of Latinization can be applied in Orlando. In other words, there is a phenomenon happening to the Brazilians in urban Orlando that is different than what Mohl described in rural Alabama. Although not all Brazilians immigrants work unskilled jobs, they are often able to establish stability by offering services that require training and some actually own businesses within the community. The other aspect of Latinization in Orlando is that this idea can be expanded not just to include Spanish speakers, but also Portuguese speakers.

There is also the idea of the Brazilian Latinoamericanidade that supports the notion that most Brazilians do not want to be Hispanic or Latino because of the sense of inferiority they believe surrounds other Latinos. This suggests a uniqueness of spirit that many Brazilian exhibit for Latinoamericanidade apart from other Latins.<sup>106</sup>

The Brazilian immigrant community in the city of Orlando represents a different view of the Latinization idea introduced by Mohl, and it also can be combined with the idea of the *Invisible Minority* by Margolis. Her idea applies to Orlando because Brazilians want to be part of the economic phenomenon of Latinization, yet, most scholars do not include Brazilians as part of Latinization because they are a minority

among other Latin Americans, and also because they do not qualify as Latin American by some definitions. This research argues that Brazilians have a sense of the Latinoamericanidade that demonstrates their identity as Latin Americans, and that it is different than the sense of Latinoamericanidade in other countries in Latin American for various reasons. Most Brazilian scholars believe that Brazil has a culture that is different than Spanish Latin America.<sup>107</sup> Other historical factors, in addition to cultural and language distinctions, such as Portuguese imperialism and influence constructed a society different from any other Latin American country. The Brazilian people themselves are isolated and insulated from other Latin American countries, and therefore there is a divergence of cultures between Spanish Latin America and Portuguese Brazil.

In other words, Brazilian immigrants fit certain aspects of Latinization of the South that Mohl discusses, and this concept can also be expanded to include immigrants from geographic areas of Latin America impacting the economy of the South. This description is more accurately applied in cultural or economic terms generalizing it to Latin Americans other than just Spanish speaking immigrants. Therefore, Brazilians in Orlando who are Latin American immigrants, speak Portuguese, and are from a multi-ethnic background, and work unskilled and skilled jobs also have an impact on the process of Latinization. In addition, the idea of an *Invisible Minority* by Maxine Margolis can be extended to apply to Brazilians in Orlando because Brazilians represent invisible Latinization in Florida, specifically in the greater Orlando area. This invisible Latinization of Brazilians impacts not only the economy of Orlando, but the cultural and social complexion of Florida and the South, as well.

## CHAPTER 4: BRAZILIAN PROTESTANTISM WITHIN LATINIZATION

Scholars that study Latin American ethnic history in Florida focus their study mainly on specific ethnic groups such as Cubans, Haitians, and Puerto Ricans. However, the number of Brazilian immigrants has been growing rapidly over the last fifteen years. An article from *Veja* estimated that there are approximately 200,000 Brazilians living in Florida.<sup>108</sup> According to Consulate General of Brazil in Miami, there are also a large number of Brazilian Protestant Churches in Florida, and approximately 20 of these churches are in the Orlando area, second largest concentration of Brazilian churches after Broward County.<sup>109</sup>

A somewhat different view was presented, several decades ago in the 1980's, in the *Harvard Encyclopedia of American Ethnic Groups* which relates the study of Brazilians within the context of American ethnic studies.<sup>110</sup> As Maxine L. Margolis suggests in her book, *An Invisible Minority: Brazilians in New York City*, it is clear that most ethnic studies exclude Brazilian immigrants and focus exclusively on the Hispanic populations. Margolis argues that there is an invisible minority of Brazilian immigrants in New York that scholars ignore. This absence of information about Brazilian immigration has a significant impact on the comprehensiveness of ethnic studies in the city of New York.<sup>111</sup>

Scholars, such as Raymond Mohl, also study ethnic groups. In contrast to Margolis, Mohl extends his focus beyond New York and addresses the idea of Latinization of the South. He defines Latinization as the low-wage and low-skill jobs that are occupied by Spanish speaking Latin Americans.<sup>112</sup> Mohl specifically includes



undocumented Mexican immigrants in Alabama and Hispanics in other Southern states in his model of Latinization.

Other scholars such as Allan Burns and Leon Fink also discuss the term Latinization of the South. These authors clearly specify that Mayans migrate to rural cities. Yet, Mayans are excluded from the Latinization of the South with claims that Latinization is mainly the result of Mexican immigration to rural areas in Georgia, Texas, Florida, Arkansas, Alabama, North Carolina, and South Carolina.<sup>113</sup>

Therefore, this research suggests that Latinization could be understood in broader terms and reconsidered in geographical terms because Brazilians do not fit into Mohl's more limited definition of Latin Americans. Many Brazilians in Orlando substantially impact the low-wage labor market, and they are a non-Spanish speaking group of protestant immigrants that are increasing in the urban areas of Florida, specifically Orlando. In other words, Brazilian immigrants could fit into Latinization of the South if this term is defined as immigrants from the geographic area of Latin America impacting the economy of the South. This broader definition would be more accurate as opposed to defining Latin Americans in cultural terms or generalizing Latin Americans as Spanish speaking and Catholics. In other words, Brazilians are Portuguese speakers from a multi-ethnic background, predominately Protestant background that can also be included in the Latinization of the South.

The concept of Latinization could also be expanded beyond rural labor, to include the urban low-wage and low skill labor market.<sup>114</sup> For instance, Mohl clearly says, "Globalization has brought a transnational, low-wage Hispanic labor force to the land of Dixie--a pattern of human migration that has produced substantial cultural and

demographic change in a region where change has always been slow and received with skepticism, if not hostility.”<sup>115</sup> By specifically saying, “Hispanics”, he excludes Brazilians, Mayans, and Haitians in Latinization. This research intends to analyze migration of Brazilians to Central Florida as part of Latinization of the South, suggesting a broader view of the term of Latinization extending the term to include different languages, cultures, and religious groups in urban regions of the South. It is also a way to expand the idea of an *Invisible Minority* by Margolis and apply it to Central Florida, demonstrating the impact of Brazil’s Protestant immigrants on the idea of the Latinization of the South.

As Maxine Margolis studies Brazilians in urban areas such as New York City, Ana Cristina Braga Martes studies the Brazilians in Somerville, New Jersey, while Teresa Sales describes immigrants in Boston, Massachusetts. Margolis argues that the majority of the Brazilian population in the U.S. is concentrated in metropolitan areas. According to Margolis, New York has the largest number of Brazilians in the U.S. She estimates 230,000 Brazilians living New York, 150,000 living in Boston, and 130,000 living in Miami in 1996.<sup>116</sup> A 2000 *Veja* article states that the Brazilian Consulate estimates that there are 300,000 Brazilians in New York, Pennsylvania, New Jersey and Connecticut.<sup>117</sup> These urban populations represent the majority of Brazilian immigrants in the United States. Many similarities exist in Orlando when one considers the role Brazilian immigration in Central Florida.

An important perspective from which to view Brazilian immigrants is through the local Protestant Churches. There are about 20 Brazilian protestant churches versus 2 Catholic Churches in Central Florida.<sup>118</sup> These Brazilian protestant churches are growing

with the dynamic populations, with new members consisting primarily of relatives and friends from churches in Brazil.<sup>119</sup> In other words, close connection to their former churches in Brazil encourages and supports migration of Brazilian Protestants to Central Florida. New Brazilian immigrants face a number of challenges and local churches not only welcome these new immigrants, but frequently open their homes to them and help them find jobs.

Brazilian Protestant Churches in Central Florida were instrumental in helping many undocumented Brazilians transition to a new life in United States. This assistance was crucial when established immigrants, that were documented, assisted and informed new immigrants. The Brazilian Churches were proficient at helping new undocumented immigrants network to find employment because only certain employers would hire them. In addition to the challenges finding employment, the language barrier is a real obstacle, and these new immigrants depend on church members or friends to translate the necessary forms for employment from English to Portuguese.<sup>120</sup> Brazilian Churches are an integral part of the fabric of the life of new immigrants. Therefore, the role of Brazilian immigration will be analyzed in depth, as a part of this research, along with the role of the Brazilian Protestant Church in the context of Latinization of the South.

Many immigrants to the United States first learn to communicate in Spanish. Even though Portuguese speakers can understand some Spanish and are also able to communicate with Spanish speakers, Hispanics have a much larger network of ethnic groups, Puerto Ricans, Cubans, or other Latin Americans, who speak their language and share a similar culture. Brazilians differ from Hispanics in that they access a much narrower ethnic network than the larger Hispanic network Hispanics that Mohl references

in his article. For the most part, the Brazilian network includes other Brazilian immigrants and other immigrants who share the Portuguese language and culture. For instance, there is a soccer called Luso Soccer Team of Orlando that was established in 2005. This soccer team is formed with players of diverse backgrounds, but all of them that are Portuguese descendents. There are players from Brasil, Africa, Argentina, U.S. and Jamaica. They play in a league called Liga de Futebol da Florida Central. This league attracts small teams from New Jersey, Connecticut, Massachusetts and Virginia.<sup>121</sup>

A Brazilian Protestant newspaper of Florida called *Imigrante Cristao* discusses some of the difficulties of these immigrants when they migrate to Florida. The article states that once Brazilian immigrants learn English, they only speak Spanish to Hispanics or South Americans who can not speak English or when needed, and most do not have time to go to school and learn English. These groups of immigrants were in Florida to make as much money as they can and return to Brazil as soon as possible.<sup>122</sup>

In addition to the immigrants who are in the United States on a more temporary basis, there is also a larger segment of Brazilian immigrants that already have established their residency. Since 1996, according to Dias, these immigrants have attempted to learn and identify themselves with the English language, and therefore they adapt more easily to American customs and culture.<sup>123</sup> Dias also discussed that while it is common for most Brazilian immigrants to experience some culture shock when they first move to the United States, in addition to the need to learn a new language, they also need to find a place to live and work, need to buy a car, and then have to take a multiple choice test in another language to get a driver's license. Before adequately mastering English, many Brazilians take their driver's test in Spanish because they understand some of the words.

Often, church members guide newer immigrants about what to study and how to answer their questions on the exam. Sometimes another church member even takes the newer immigrant to the Division of Motor Vehicles or loans his or her car for the driving test. With support and assistance, most immigrants are able to obtain a driver's license, and they are then able to drive to gainful employment.

Another way Brazilian Churches show their support for immigrants is through use of their church bulletins which includes a section on job openings. These Brazilian bulletins that are analyzed in this research are from the years of 1997 to 2007. Most jobs are for undocumented immigrants, usually involving cleaning, driving, construction, painting, roofing, landscaping, or nannies, babysitters, or church secretaries. Usually these jobs do not require much knowledge of English, and therefore, they are very popular with undocumented Brazilians. Even though most immigrants find employment, a minority eventually plan to go back to Brazil, once they save enough money to live comfortably there. According to Martes's research, 15% of Brazilians in the United States, do not intend to return to their home country. The majority intend to stay either because they feel satisfied with their lifestyle, or are conscious of the difficulties they may confront to reestablish their lives in Brazil. While some are able to buy a house, make a home in Central Florida, not all immigrants delay their return to Brazil.

According to Ana Cristina Braga, Getulio Vargas University Professor, there is no specific model describing what it is to be a Brazilian immigrant as there is a diversity of characteristics of Brazilians according to what influenced them to move to the United States. There is a group here for a long time that has already established a family, and there are those who came to study, work, or those who followed their relatives or

family.<sup>124</sup> Yet, there are others who are more transient and do not plan to remain in the United States indefinitely. Immigrant diversity is also derived from the part of Brazil they are from, their education level, marital status, and their individual motivations for moving to the United States. This same diversity exists in Central Florida, and the extent to which these immigrants accept American culture depends on their proficiency with English. For instance, in order to get a better-paying job, Brazilians need to speak almost fluent English and acquire contacts to refer them for a better job.<sup>125</sup> Those who speak better English become waiters, sales representatives, dance instructors (sometimes capoeira and jiu-jitsu), and some open their own businesses often under the name of someone that is documented.<sup>126</sup> In Central Florida, where most of these undocumented employees are part of the “big picture” of Latinization in the South, a growing number of Brazilian immigrants often long hours work for low salaries and for an indefinite period of time.

The growth of the Brazilian Protestant population was one of the subjects Marcos Marques, an Orlando businessman, discussed in an interview. He mentioned that this growth also occurred in Brazil, and since the Brazilian people immigrate on a regular basis not just to Orlando, but to other parts of the world, this process also occurred in Orlando and elsewhere. In addition, he thinks that the financial support provided by Orlando’s Brazilian Protestant Churches is much stronger than other Brazilian denominations, and that is the principal reason that these churches are increasing in number and size.<sup>127</sup> In other words, as the Brazilian immigrant population increased in Central Florida, so did their membership in the local Protestant Churches. As a result of this growth, Brazilian Protestant Church membership has a significant influence on

Brazilian identity in Orlando which is quite different from the identity of Spanish Catholics that will be demonstrated in the next paragraph. Therefore, Brazilian Protestants shape Brazilian identity in Orlando, and this is an important aspect for scholars to consider as they seek to understand Latinization in Orlando.

The Protestant Brazilian Churches hold services and observe traditions very similar to those observed in Brazil. Consequently, they reject a style of church services used in most Protestant American Churches, which can be compared to the *Transplanted* idea as it relates to religious culture. For example, R. Andrew Chesnut discards theories of traditional millenarianism and the oppression of poverty as being part of the main four Pentecostal denominations in the northern Brazilian state of Para.<sup>128</sup> Instead, he argues that the on-going Pentecostal boom in Brazil is a collective spiritual battle against “pathogens of poverty” such as alcoholism, domestic violence and criminality. These ideals that are helping the Pentecostal boom in Brazil are transplanted with these immigrants when they come to the U.S. In an interview with Orlando Brazilian pastor, Eltomir Lima, he stated that in his church the traditional millenarimism is not emphasized. He also stated that the first coming of Jesus Christ is much more important than the second coming. Later he mentioned that his preaching focus on salvation and freedom of oppression discipleship.<sup>129</sup> Lima also revealed that for many immigrants, moving to the United States is not only a way to escape economic hardship in Brazil, but it is also a way to grow spiritually and strengthen their faith. Furthermore, he discussed factors such as adapting to a new culture, having to take low-wages jobs, and loneliness contribute to the immigrant’s need for support and encourage a more intense practice of

Protestantism.<sup>130</sup> As a result of these needs, Brazilian Protestant Churches often provide the transitional structure for immigrants as they move from Brazil to the United States.

Most Brazilian Protestant pastors migrate from Brazil, using tourist or commercial visas, due to economic hardship in their home land which is a similarity they share with many other immigrants. Before long, many pastors become eligible to apply for their “green card” or apply for a religious working visa. Baptist Churches are particularly supportive of new Brazilian pastors as they seek to obtain documentation, while many other American churches are not always as supportive. For these undocumented pastors a “green card” is perhaps their only chance to minister to a Brazilian congregation and remain in the United States.<sup>131</sup> In many ways, the assistance and support Brazilians immigrants receive through friends and church members provides support for their migration to the urban city of Orlando.

Brazilian Protestant Churches of different denominations all provide a sense of unity within the Brazilian community. These churches work together for the best interests of Brazilian immigrants. For example, if a preacher needs to travel to a distant church, the churches share costs and organize services for all interested congregations. This sense of unity and cooperation indicates that denominations are of lesser importance than in American churches, which is due to Brazilians’ need to socialize with those of similar culture and language. One example of just such cooperation is that Brazilian pastors organize meetings for all pastors in Central Florida, two, three, or more times a year. These meetings, called “Ordem do Pastores,” allow pastors to share information about the Brazilian Church in Florida and also discuss immigrants and problems they experience. Exploring solutions to these problems offers a sense of communion and



cooperation for these pastors and their families.<sup>132</sup> Since Lima began his church in 1997, he was sure when the Ordem of Pastores first started in Orlando. In an interview with Wesley Porto, Pastor who has lived in Orlando since 1995, stated that according to a Ordem dos Pastores bulletin the first meeting was in the first semester of 1997.<sup>133</sup>

Many Brazilian Churches rent a church for the morning or the evening to host services for their members. Some Brazilians feel comfortable sharing a temple with Hispanic churches; others prefer American churches, and still others rent other kinds of buildings. If Brazilians manage their own churches and services, most of the time they do not interact with directly with the Hispanic churches or share the same approach to worship or membership. These are factors differentiate them from the Hispanic culture.

Another way in which Brazilian Protestant Churches differ from Hispanic Churches is that they are very strict with their members.<sup>134</sup> Although Brazilians indicate that everyone is welcome to be part of their church, in many churches, other nationalities are not represented in any significant number. Most Brazilian Protestant Churches hold their services in Portuguese including prayer, worship, and the sermon. Therefore, the services are designed for those who speak Portuguese, namely Brazilians.

Lima's teachings in his Brazilian Churches are based on the formation of the Christian character and a life lived in communion with God.<sup>135</sup> For Lima, this personal relationship which God, which is encouraged in Protestant Churches, is a major departure from the priest to parishioner relationship followed in Hispanic and Brazilian Catholic Churches. Lima's statement are clear as how he wants to demonstrate the differences between Protestant and Catholic church. It is very interesting how he compares it with the Hispanic Catholic churches as opposed to the Brazilian Catholic church. This represents

that Brazilian Catholic church is small in Orlando, other wise he would mention the Brazilian churches. Instead, he compares with the Hispanics Catholic churches because they are more numerous.

In an interview with a female pastor of Ministerio do Seara (Havest Ministries of Orlando), Sylvia Pinto, she discussed some Brazilian protestant Churches. She explained differences between the Brazilian Pentecostal denominations that are in Orlando. Pinto mentions that the Neo-Pentecostal, also mentioned by Chetsnut, offer services, depart even further and are open to direction by the Holy Spirit; they follow no guide or agenda. For example, one day the service may start with worship, which may be interrupted by someone wanting to testify to the church, then worship may resume, and then there may be prayer.<sup>136</sup> The next service could be completely different. Most of the time the pastor preaches last, but there are no rule about how to conduct the service. Often these church services finish later than the scheduled time, often lasting two to three and a half hours, and do not adhere to the strict schedules for mass in the Catholic Church. Chestnut discusses the same idea of the generations of Pentecostal churches in Brazil, from traditional, modern, and post-modern. These churches evolved from conservative services to more modern and post-modern services.<sup>137</sup> The post-modern churches are the ones that hold services, as Pinto mentioned, as more “holy spirit driven services”. These services have no exact rules of how the services will be presented. This represents that these denominations in Brazil are transplanted with these immigrants when move to the U.S.

These characteristics of the Brazilian Protestant Churches, which are very different from the Catholic religion which is steeped in tradition and liturgy, contribute to

the concept that they do not share the same culture as Hispanics; yet, Brazilians are very much part of the Latin American culture. For example, The First Brazilian Baptist Church of Orlando has begun Latinizing contemporary Christian hymns, which the members include in their services but sing in Portuguese. Brazilian Protestants use a mixture of different rhythms in worship songs which better expresses the joy of their Christian beliefs. The Portuguese language contains vocabulary with additional words to express passion during the act of worship, and Brazilians state that singing in Portuguese reminds of when they first converted to Christianity in Brazil.<sup>138</sup> The rhythms used in most church music are related to the Brazilian sense of pride and racial identity. The Samba, for example, is a rhythm closely related to rhythms of the Afro-Brazilian that Protestant Brazilians adapt to their worship services.<sup>139</sup> Although Afro-Brazilians are often in the minority in Protestant Churches in Orlando, these characteristically Brazilian rhythms are unique forms of worships through which Brazilians are able to better express their Christian beliefs. This form of Brazilian worship contributes to distinguishing Brazilian culture from the culture of Hispanic or American churches. This represents that Portuguese language is also part of Latinization of the church services.

While some Hispanic or Latin American Churches have different rhythms for their worships as well, they are different than most Brazilian rhythms. Brazilians do not reject the classical musical worship style of most American Protestant Churches and incorporate these styles in their services, as well. However, most Brazilians incorporate their own unique musical style which set them apart from the prescribed order of worship and responsive readings by Mexicans and other Catholic Latin Americans. According to Jay P. Dolan and Gilberto M. Hinojosa, who study Mexican immigrants and the Catholic

Church, the spirituality of the Mexican immigrants are very different than what they were used in Mexico. Dolan and Hinojosa discuss the Mexicans developed popular devotions that were performed without a priest.<sup>140</sup> These devotions did not have any kind of Mexican musical style of worship like it is found among the Brazilian Protestants in Orlando.

According to the *Orlando Sentinel* article the worship team of Baptist Church of Orlando believes that the musical style and freedom during worship are not only the differences one finds in Brazilian Protestant Churches. They also believe that the sermons are often related to revival of the church, confronting difficulties with the right attitude, understanding God's purpose for every situation, and the importance of the family in Christian homes. Brazilian pastors focus passionately on the, "fire of God in the Christian life," how to be joyful despite adversity, and the recognition that no matter what, God is in control.<sup>141</sup> Furthermore, Lima also state that some Brazilian Churches also provide Bible studies, and many beliefs are the same as in most American Protestant Churches. However, the emphasis of the messages varies according to the needs of the Brazilian community.<sup>142</sup> As a result, there is often uniqueness in Brazilian Churches, not only pertaining to the music but to the messages, and order of worship, as well.

Protestant Brazilian women have a strong presence in many churches in Orlando. Many Brazilian women, most of them pastor's wives, also have the title of pastors or "Pastoras." They are involved in different activities which include church leadership, participatory roles in Bible studies, women's studies, advisement, singing, children's ministries, and worship. Protestant Brazilian women are often a majority in these churches, and the male and female pastors usually do not preach sermons directly to the

men or women in the body of Christ.<sup>143</sup> The significance of women in Brazilian Churches and Brazilian Society is an important ingredient to be considered as part of the role of Brazilian immigrants in Central Florida and in terms of Latinization.

Neither Mohl nor Fink mentions the influence of the American Churches on the structure of Brazilian Churches, which represents a unique feature of Brazilian culture when it is compared with Spanish speaking ethnic groups. Fink does look at the impact of American Catholic and protestant Churches on Mayan and Spanish Speaking immigrant communities, but still there are no Brazilian immigrants included in his analysis. An integral part of and major influence of Orlando Brazilian churches is the establishment of an administrative structure patterned after American Churches' model. In an interview with the newspaper *Imigrante Cristao*, the pastor of Conway New Hope Presbyterian Church of Orlando, Wesley Porto, mentioned that his church learned how to administer finances, project a budget, and reduce costs with help from another local American church.<sup>144</sup> He went on to say that he worked together with the American Presbyterian Church to begin preparations to build his own Brazilian Church, and that this administrative support was crucial from a financial standpoint.

Although, most Protestant Churches share many commonalities, such as administrative structure and oversight, Brazilian Churches and their members in the United States are also different than those in Brazil. Local members of Brazilian Protestant Churches claim that, in Brazil, the congregation was more involved with ministries and with the church in general. A number of factors may have contributed to this difference, but for many new immigrants their financial situation played a primary role. Brazilians were often forced to take whatever job they can in order to survive,

particularly those immigrants who had just arrived in the United States. Many times these “new Christians” only attended church to meet people and network for jobs, while there are others who truly sought spiritual growth and recognized both their spiritual and material needs.<sup>145</sup> The majority of the members of each church were already faithful Christians in Brazil, and when they moved to the United States many Brazilians complained that they did not have the time to dedicate to the church community as they did in Brazil. Also, transportation for some is a primary factor which limited their involvement. Many new immigrants depended on other members for transportation, and those Brazilians from Sao Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, and other major cities in Brazil are used to having easy access to public transportation, so lack of public transportation in Orlando can be quite an adjustment for some.

Brazilians, for a number of factors do not identify themselves as Hispanics. Brazilians prefer to identify themselves as South Americans or Latin Americans when they want to include themselves in a larger group. Most specifically they identify themselves as Brazilians.<sup>146</sup> In fact, many Brazilians write “Caucasian” or “white” when indicating ethnicity on a job application or registration form. Even in Brazil, most people consider themselves Caucasian or white if their descendants are Europeans. Those who have a mixture of African or Indian ancestry consider themselves to be “multi-ethnic”. Even people of darker skin like to consider themselves Caucasian because their parents or grandparents were from Italy, Portugal, or Spain.<sup>147</sup> At the same time, there is pride in the racial diversity of Brazil. Brazilians are proud of the fact that a Brazilian can be black, white, blonde, brunette, Asian, Indian, or a mixture of all these elements. There is not a race model of a Brazilian, and most are proud of their origins.<sup>148</sup> From a multi-

cultural perspective, Brazilians like to see themselves as a nation, but individually they tend to be proud of their heritage.

In addition to pride in their ethnic origins, most Brazilian immigrants, men and women, have the perception of being hard workers. The fact is that many immigrants begin as low wage, low skilled workers when they come to this country, and they often accept jobs that Americans reject. In spite of these challenges, they sent back to their families in Brazil two times more money than the total amount of Brazil's coffee exports in 1994. Even though most immigrants work low wage jobs, they work so many hours their income is sufficient for them to send money to their families in Brazil. This example of hard work represents the diligence and the earning power of Brazilian immigrants in the United States.<sup>149</sup> It is the goal of many immigrants that, through their hard work, they will achieve a higher economic standard in the United States than they could achieve in their home country. Brazilians not only have a reputation for working harder than other Latin immigrants, but they are often recognized as law abiding residents.<sup>150</sup>

Questions such as, "Do you speak Spanish in Brazil?" or, "Do you speak Brazilian?" are commonly asked by Americans. According to Margolis, Brazilians dislike hearing comments or questions like these because they demonstrate ignorance on the part of some American regarding the cultural heritage of Brazilians.<sup>151</sup> In addition, Brazilians are upset by remarks such as these because they reflect a stereotyping of Brazilians as Hispanics, simply because they are both Latin American. Brazilians do not like to be referred to or stereotyped as Hispanics.

Brazilians in the United States and in Brazil believe they provide a higher work standard and stronger work ethic than Mexicans and most Hispanics, which in all

likelihood, originated from the fact that Brazilian immigrants are part of a middle class in Brazil. The majority of Brazilians immigrants living in Orlando are well educated, and for this reason they seem to want to be recognized as educated immigrant class in the United States. Therefore, they traditionally consider themselves to be a higher social and economic level than Mexicans and most Hispanics.

Latinization is a term used by historians and scholars to describe the low wage labor provided by new Latino immigrants who fill jobs in the United States that others reject. Yet, Latinization also suggests a view of Latin Americans that extends beyond the definition of Spanish speaking ethnic groups, Catholics, and a low wage low-skill labor market only in rural areas. Brazilians are among a growing immigrant population that has not been included or recognized as part of the “Latinization of the South.”<sup>152</sup> An urban phenomenon of Latinization exists in addition to the rural phenomenon as suggested by Mohl, Fink, and Burns.

Mohl’s model of the Latinization of the South with the emphasis on the Mexicans could be applied to a Brazilian micro view of Orlando’s work force because Brazilian Protestant Portuguese speakers are an integral part of Florida’s low wage labor market. The same way Mohl’s experiment applies to rural areas of the South, his experiment can also be used with the Brazilian immigrants and the Protestant Churches that have embraced and assisted these immigrants. Brazilians have played a significant role in the Latinization of the South, specifically in Central Florida, as a part of the ethnic labor market and cultural changes which impact urban areas of the South. While Mohl and Fink do not study Latin American immigrants in urban areas, according to historians such as Margolis and Beserra, experts in Brazilian migration, Brazilians are attracted to urban



areas such as Orlando.<sup>153</sup> Therefore from this perspective, Latinization can also be an urban, Protestant and Brazilian phenomenon, not just a rural, Catholic, Hispanics occurrence. This research suggests that the idea of Latinization of the South could be expanded to include the broader concept for Latin American inclusions based on geography and economic impact.

Evidence also indicates that there exists uniqueness in the Brazilian culture that is very different from the Hispanic culture. The rhythm of the Portuguese language, Brazilian's Protestant worship, and its difference from Protestant practices of Hispanics suggests that Protestant Brazilians in Central Florida may represent an *Invisible Minority*. In other words, Brazilian Protestants may represent the urban side of invisible migration in the South, and yet, these immigrants have been excluded from Latinization by most historians and ethnic scholars. Brazilian immigrants are a significant ethnic group in Central Florida, and they are growing in number and influence as they change the fabric of Latinization of the South. This growing phenomenon merits a serious reconsideration of the model Mohl describes as a way to better understand of the history of the United States.

## CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

As mentioned earlier, this research yields current debates on the historiography of United States immigration. It discusses debates on Americanization, uprooted, transplanted, beyond ethnicity and Cozen's Group theories. The main goal of this research is to suggest that Brazilian immigrants also fit into "Latinization," described by Mohl. It also presents the idea of the invisible minority by Maxine Margolis applying it to Orlando. It suggests that Brazilians are also invisible in Orlando and that they are part of a Invisible Latinization.

This research demonstrates in chapter 1 the shift of a moderate to higher class of Brazilians began to move to Orlando in the mid 1990s. The majority of them were small business owners that targeted Brazilian tourist consumers that were coming in large number to Orlando. These investors were taking advantage of a favorable balance of Brazilian currency and the U.S. dollar. However, with the Real collapse lower wage workers began to migrate to Orlando. Indeed, after 2000 the number of undocumented Brazilians increased considerably due to a rising unemployment rate. These undocumented workers helped to shape part of the Latinization model that Mohl proposes for other states in the South. Therefore, Brazilians are also part of the Latinization phenomenon that is taking place in the South.

Chapter 2 argues that the Brazilian immigrant community in the city of Orlando represents a new view of the Latinization idea introduced by Mohl, and it also can be combined with the idea of the *Invisible Minority* by Margolis. Brazilians must be seen as Portuguese speaking Latin Americans, culturally different than the Hispanics, but also Latin Americans. Margolis' idea also applies to Brazilians in Orlando because they are

part of Latinization, yet, most scholars do not include Brazilians as part of Latinization because they do not qualify them as Latin Americans. Brazilians have a sense of the Latinoamericanidade that demonstrates their identity as Latin Americans, and that it is different than the sense of Latinoamericanidad described by scholars who study Hispanic ethnic groups. Most Brazilian scholars believe that Brazil has a culture that is different than Spanish Latin America. In addition, Brazilians present cultural and language distinctions from Hispanics, such as Portuguese imperialism in their country history and for having a diverse background for the society, which is different from any other Latin American country. The Brazilian people themselves are isolated from other Latin American countries, and therefore cultures between Spanish Latin America and Portuguese Brazil are so distinguishable.

In other words, Brazilian immigrants fit into Latinization of the South that Mohl discusses, and this concept can also be expanded to include immigrants from geographic areas of Latin America impacting the economy of the South. Therefore, Brazilians in Orlando who are Latin American immigrants, speak Portuguese, and are from a multi-ethnic background, and work unskilled and skilled jobs also have an impact on the process of Latinization. In addition, the idea of an *Invisible Minority* by Maxine Margolis can be extended to apply to Brazilians in Orlando because Brazilians represent invisible Latinization in Florida, specifically in the greater Orlando area. This invisible Latinization of Brazilians impacts not only the economy of Orlando, but the cultural and social complexion of Florida and the South, as well.

Finally, chapter 3 discusses how Mohl's experiment applies to rural areas of the South, his experiment can also be used with the Brazilian immigrants and the Protestant

Churches that have embraced and assisted these immigrants. Brazilians have played a significant role in the Latinization of the South, specifically in Central Florida, as a part of the ethnic labor market and cultural changes which impact urban areas of the South. Brazilians Protestants are more likely to create religious base communities. While Mohl and Fink do not study Latin American immigrants in urban areas, according to historians such as Margolis and Beserra, experts in Brazilian migration, Brazilians are attracted to urban areas such as Orlando. Therefore from this perspective, Latinization can also be an urban, Protestant and Brazilian phenomenon, not just a rural, Catholic, Hispanics occurrence. This research suggests that the idea of Latinization of the South could be expanded to include the broader concept for Latin American inclusions based on geography and economic impact.

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