

Racial democracy, Lusotropicalism and the history of Brazilian foreign policy

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The project will investigate the relationship between "racial democracy" and "Lusotropicalism" in Brazil's foreign policy in the 20th century. The concept of "racial democracy", which is usually associated with Gilberto Freyre, has been one of the most significant in the formation of the Brazilian nationality's self-image. The idea also served as a backdrop for a project developed by UNESCO in the 1950s, as part of its search for alternative forms of coexistence among races, which did not replicate what had taken place during the first half of the 20th century in Europe, in the events that culminated in the Second World War. During that period, Gilberto Freyre also kept ties with the Salazar government in Portugal, in particular through what he called "Lusotropicalism", a world view upon which the justifications for the Portuguese Empire of the time were built. "Racial democracy" and "Lusotropicalism" were important elements in the Brazilian foreign policy of the second half of the 20th century, including in its relationship with Portugal and the Portuguese colonies on the African continent.