



A Parisian in Brazil: The Travel Account of a Frenchwoman in Nineteenth-Century Rio de Janeiro (Latin American Silhouettes)

Adèle Toussaint-Samson

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This virtually unknown, insightful account by a highly intelligent, observant and forthright Frenchwoman of her decade-long stay in Brazil during the 1850s provides a remarkable firsthand view of a slaveocrat society.

In an effort to improve their family's fortune, enterprising and highspirited young Parisian Adèle Toussaint-Samson traveled with her husband from France to Brazil in the mid 1800s. While there, she wrote of her experiences, painting a vivid and detailed portrait of the reality of slavery, gender relations, and daily life in mid-nineteenth century Brazil.

Translated into English by her daughter Emma in 1891, Toussaint's book is one of few first person accounts by a female sojourner in Latin America during this period. This 124-page eminently readable primary document provides a firsthand view of a slaveholding society, describing both men and women, slave and free, rich and poor.

The introduction to a carefully annotated re-edition of this tale not only puts the book into the context of Brazilian history, including questions of gender relations and of slavery, but also confronts such problems as who the author really was and precisely where and when many events occurred, illuminating the nature of historical research.

Well written and lively, A Parisian in Brazil is an excellent resource for courses on Latin America, women in Latin America, and Brazilian history.

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