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Kuírlombo
Epistemologies
CRGS Special Issue
Genders and Sexualities in Brazil

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CRGS Issue 14

Kuírlombo Epistemologies

CRGS Special Issue Genders and Sexualities in Brazil

About

The title for this Special Issue was inspired by the work of poet, literary scholar and writer Tatiana Nascimento, and the poet formiga (both of whom have work featured in this Special Issue). The word *kuírlombo* is a play on the words *quilombo* and *cuir*. The word *quilombo* is the word *maroon*, *palenque* and *cumbe* in English, Spanish and Portuguese respectively. The word *cimarrón* (Spanish), *marron* (French), *quilombola* (Portuguese) refers to the people who liberated themselves from enslavement. *Quilombo* comes from the word *Kilombo*, which is from the Kimbundu language of the Ngola nation of the Congo.

In Eurocentric historical texts written about the Americas, these communities are referred to as runaway slave communities. In fact, they were societies of people, many of whom liberated themselves from enslavement, and were (what we would call today) multiracial and multi-ethnic societies given the type of democratic (for lack of a better word) societies that they created. As a result of the democratic social and religious structures that emerged in these communities, they were often implicitly/explicitly anti-capitalist. Members of these communities were living another vision of social order in the face of the oppressive societies established by various forms of European colonialism in the Americas.

Abdias do Nascimento, one of the key figures in the founding of contemporary Brazilian Black Studies, defined *Kilombismo* as a competing vision of social organization that emerged from the political and economic engagement of Africans in the Americas. It is an Afrocentric perspective that Nascimento argued is reflected in movements such as the Haitian Revolution, Garveyism and the Pan-African movement. *Kilombismo* is a form of African resistance centred on building free communities rooted in economic, political, social and cultural structures that are rooted in African cultural legacies.

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Editors

[Tanya L. Saunders](#)

Associate Professor, Center for Latin American Studies, University of Florida

[Mariana Meriqui Rodrigues](#)

Masters student in Latin American Studies, University of Florida

[Jessica Ipólito](#)

Creator and Writer, [Gorda & Sapatão](#) blog

[Simone Brandão Souza](#)

Assistant Professor, Graduate Program, Social Policy and Territories, Federal University of Recôncavo da Bahia (UFRB), Brazil

[Jess Oliveira](#)

PhD student in Literature and Culture, Federal University of Bahia, Brazil

[Bruna Barros](#)

Independent Filmmaker, Poet, Undergraduate Major in English, Federal University of Bahia (UFBA), Brazil

Translators

[Bruna Barros](#)

Independent Filmmaker, Poet, Undergraduate Major in English, Federal University of Bahia (UFBA), Brazil

[Jessica Ipólito](#)

[Tanya L. Saunders](#)

[Tito Mitjans Alayón](#)

PhD. Departamento de Economías Decoloniales del Proyecto comunitario El Cambalache

[Alanne Maria de Jesus](#)

Master's student in Literature and Culture, Federal University of Bahia (UFBA), Brazil

[Jess Oliveira](#)

[Ayala Tude](#)

Master's student in Literature and Culture, Federal University of Bahia (UFBA), Brazil

[Marina Pandeló](#)

Language Teacher, Translator, Interpreter, Event Producer

[Cintia Rodrigues](#)

Teacher and Teacher Educator

[Caroline Santos](#)

Teacher, Author and Publisher

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Institute for Gender and
Development Studies
St. Augustine Campus
Trinidad and Tobago
West Indies

<http://sta.uwi.edu/igds/>

Email: igds@sta.uwi.edu
Phone: 1-868-662-2002
Ext 83573/83577

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