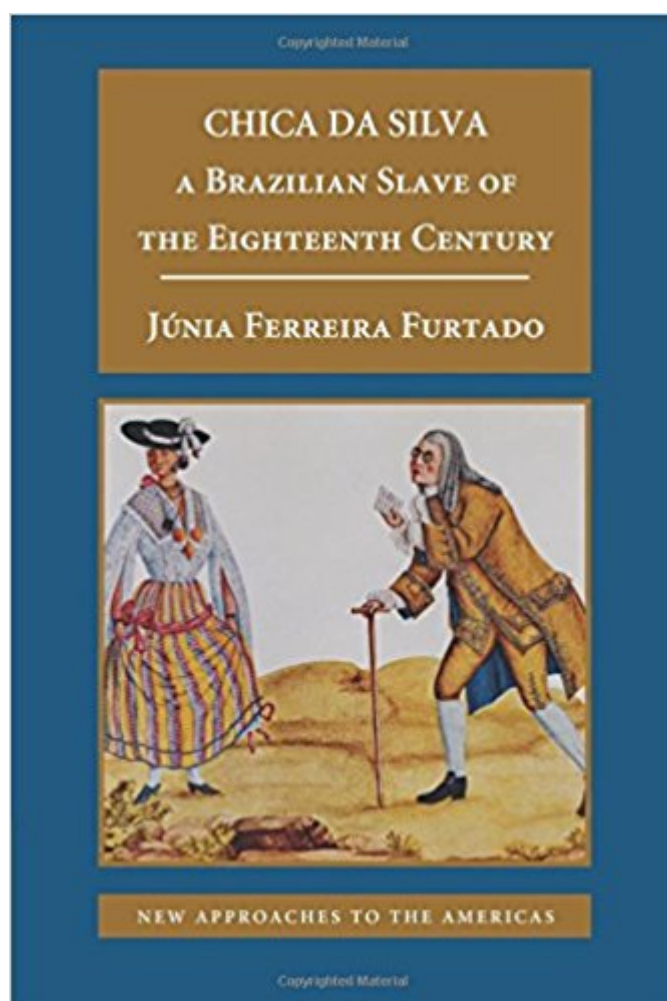


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Chica Da Silva: A Brazilian Slave Of The Eighteenth Century (New Approaches To The Americas)



Synopsis

J  nia Ferreira Furtado offers a fascinating study of the world of a freed woman of color in a small Brazilian town where itinerant merchants, former slaves, Portuguese administrators, and concubines interact across social and cultural lines. The child of an African slave from the Costa da Mina and a Brazilian military nobleman of Portuguese descent, Chica da Silva won her freedom using social and matrimonial strategies. But the story of Chica da Silva is not merely the personal history of a woman, or the social history of a colonial Brazilian town. Rather, it provides a historical perspective on a woman's agency, the cultural universe she inhabited, and the myths that were created around her in subsequent centuries, as Chica de Silva came to symbolize both an example of racial democracy and the stereotype of licentiousness and sensuality always attributed to the black or mulatta female in the Brazilian popular imagination.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"...impressive, definitive study..." -Choice
"In Chica da Silva, J  nia Ferreira Furtado offers a compelling account of the life and world of Francisca da Silva de Oliveira." -Mariana L. R. Dantas, Journal of Social History
"excellent book...moves beyond the myths to uncover the real Chica."
-Katherine Holt, Journal of World History

Furtado's study of Chica da Silva provides a historical perspective on a woman's agency, her cultural universe, and the myths that were created around her in subsequent centuries, which made

her a symbol of both racial democracy and licentiousness and sensuality often attributed to the Brazilian black or mulatta female.

This book was not what I expected. I am familiar with the story of Chica da Silva, and this book has a lot of information that is related to the time period. Some of it is very detailed, and although that has a historical significance, the book could have been structured better to keep Chica da Silva as the focus for the entire book. Instead, the book begins about her, and then for several chapters there is information about slaves, freed slaves and also extensive information about the João Fernandes' and his will once he returned to Portugal. Another problem with the book is that the translation is quite inaccurate. I did not get the impression that the translator was a native English speaker. Words were misused like "tutor" (this should be "guardian" in English), and others were either archaic, awkward or too technical, like "realm" (kingdom would have been a better choice), and "entail." The chapter about other works featuring Chica, such as the movie and the soap opera, was very superficial--a marked contrast to the overly detailed chapters on the arrangement of housing in town and the will. The author dismissed the soap opera in a few sentences. Although these works are fictionalized, they did bring Chica da Silva into the Brazilian consciousness. I didn't get the impression that the author even watch the telenovela--although it deviates significantly from Chica's real life, it is not meant to be a documentary, but entertainment. There are also many interesting and successful aspects of the program, which depict the era masterfully, in its speech, use of or lack of use of utensils, dress, and treatment of slaves. I think I would have preferred to read the Portuguese original. At least I would not have been bothered by the awkward translation.

I wish there was more on Chica, it focuses on the family and surrounding events, but I still no very little about the woman.

Great historical book about Chica da Silva, found her life story very empowering and interesting. Must read for anyone involved or interested in latin history. Great citations for reports!

Arrived on time and was good quality.

good

This book is really interesting, you get to know about slave and the way they lived. I highly recommend it. You will love it.

I got this book for one of my summer classes. It's better to buy through and it is much cheaper!

Too much detail and not enough actual real-life stories/events about Xica DaSilva. This reads like a dissertation or master's thesis. She did great research, but the book is missing a certain element. Two chapters are devoted solely to details about every single item that pardo (free slave women) accumulated or owned. She tries so hard to show that Xica, and other free slave women like her had material possessions, that she loses sight of the story. Plus, she is contradicting herself by saying they were not at the mercy of their former oppressors when in fact they still were -none of them were "legally" married to these men, and not accepted by white society. She did not demystify Xica for me, the book is really about freed slave women in Brazil in the 18th century.

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