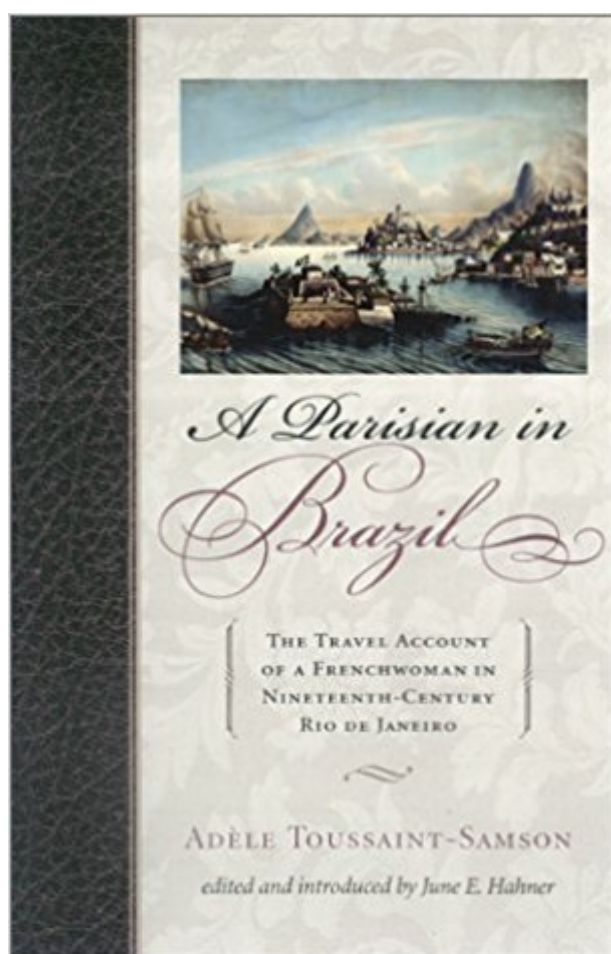


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# A Parisian In Brazil: The Travel Account Of A Frenchwoman In Nineteenth-Century Rio De Janeiro (Latin American Silhouettes)



## Synopsis

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.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Despite its rather uninspiring title, this work offers a fascinating and unique insight into 1850s Brazil. Originally published in France in the 19th century, it was later translated into English by the author's

daughter. Toussaint-Samson, a well-educated Frenchwoman hungry to seek out new experiences, lived in Brazil for more than ten years. This account one of the few by a female sojourner in Latin America includes intelligent commentaries on the prejudices of the time, offering painful details on what the slaves endured, what it meant to be a woman, and what it was like to be rich and to be poor in 19th-century Brazil. Toussaint-Samson was also one of the few European women to learn Portuguese. Regrettably, the account offers little about the author's personal life, but the excellent introduction by June E. Hahner does include some interesting detective work. This little-known account is a worthwhile and enjoyable read despite the rather mediocre translation; a rare addition to all travel collections. Kathleen Shanahan, Kensington, MD Copyright 2001 Reed Business Information, Inc.

Nineteenth-century Brazil and 'the imperial gaze' are both restored to life in this provoking, occasionally troubling, but always engaging memoir. A Parisian in Brazil is a vivid reminder that the past is indeed another country; and the Brazilian past, so powerfully shaped by the violence and oppression of slavery, perhaps more than most. Recommended (George Reid Andrews) A Parisian in Brazil is a delightful analysis of life in mid-nineteenth-century Rio de Janeiro through the eyes of Adèle Toussaint-Samson, a young Parisian with a sharp eye for detail and the insightfulness of a seasoned anthropologist. Highly recommended for class use in courses in Brazilian and Latin American Studies as well as those on race relations. (Robert M. Levine) June Hahner has done an important service in bringing the work of Toussaint-Samson to light. We can now all enjoy the writings of a Frenchwoman resident in mid-nineteenth-century Rio, and all her wonder, fear, biases, and appreciation of the lives of Brazilian men and women, both slave and free. (Susan M. Socolow) A fascinating and unique insight into 1850s Brazil. (Library Journal) Nineteenth-century Brazil and 'the imperial gaze' are both restored to life in this provoking, occasionally troubling, but always engaging memoir. A Parisian in Brazil is a vivid reminder that the past is indeed another country; and the Brazilian past, so powerfully shaped by the violence and oppression of slavery, perhaps more than most. Recommended (George Reid Andrews)

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