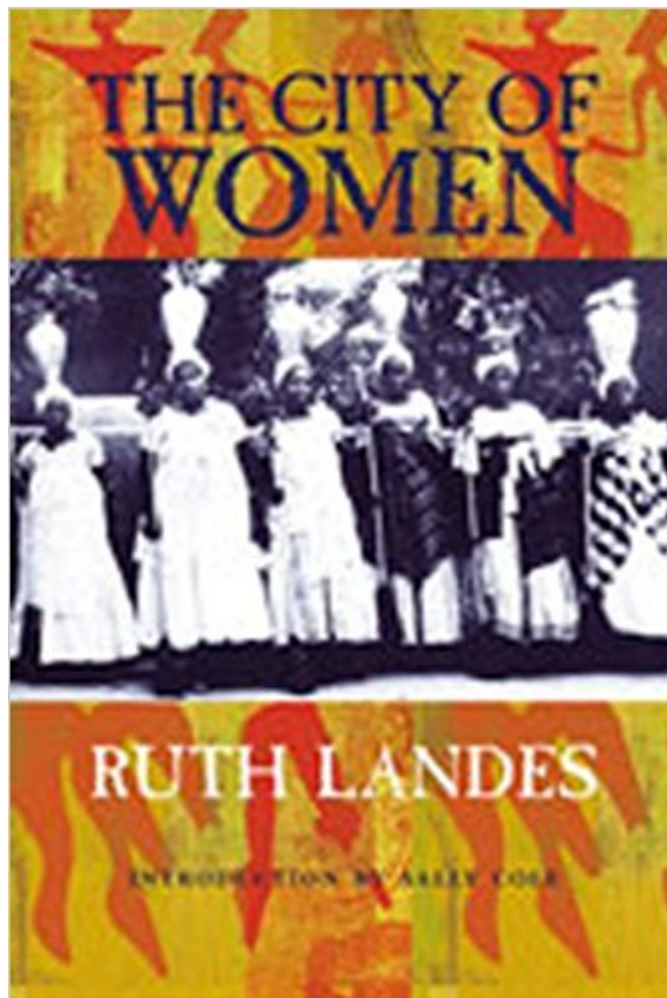


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# The City Of Women



## Synopsis

First published in 1947, the second edition of *The City of Women* was published in 1994 with a new Introduction by anthropologist Sally Cole. That second edition is now available again after being out of print for several years. "[The City of Women] works on many levels: it is a study of candomblé, the Afro-Brazilian religion of Bahia, of the role of women in candomblé, and of race relations in Brazil. . . . The City of Women has much to offer anyone interested in Brazilian history, comparative race and gender relations, the history of anthropology, and the relationships between researcher and subject in anthropology and oral history. . . ."Because of the importance of women in traditional candomblé, this Afro-Brazilian religion was incompatible with patriarchy. Possession by the gods, the central component of the religious practice, was the domain of women: men supported the candomblé temples financially, but did not run them. . . ."The City of Women ought to be on the 'must read' list of anyone preparing to do field research, especially in ethnography or oral history, in a culture different from his or her own."--H-Net, Mary Ann Mahony, Associate Professor of History at Central Connecticut State University.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This 1947 title studies the religious sect known as the candomble-a spirit possession religion developed by West African female slaves brought to Brazil. In researching the volume, Landes interviewed those who practice the religion and observed its ceremonies. For anthropology, religion, and women's collections. Copyright 1994 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

This book is the landmark study of candomblé, the Afro-Brazilian religion of Bahia, Brazil.

Simply the best, most profound and honest anthropological study I've ever read. Recommend reading slowly and with a great deal of thought.

It was good

According to the blurb on the back cover of *The City of Women*. . . "Marketed as an exotic travelogue and dismissed by anthropologists when it appeared in 1947, it is the truest comment that could be made about this book. When I opened *The City of Women* I looked for the Index and the table of contents because I was interested some particular information that was supposed to be in it. What I found was that there was no index and the table of contents had very little content. I first started reading *The City of Women* I was struck by the lack of purpose and even more so by the lack of structure, this book should have been called my wasted year of doing no real research in Brazil. It seemed clear to me that in her time in Brazil she learned very little about the Black Brazilians that spent time around, what is worse she was the only English speaking anthropologist/ethnologist to meet Eliseo Martiniano do Bonfim the last Brazilian boy to be sent to Lagos Nigeria to be initiated into the priesthood and trained in preparation his return to Brazil. Dr. Landes calls him "an institution in Bahia and in all of Brazil. Yet Dr. Landes only dedicates around 20 pages to him, 20 pages in a 248 page book. As both an anthropologist and a priest in the Yoruba tradition in the Cuban Diaspora I am appalled by her complete lack of academic rigor and generally cavalier attitude in general. She has an opportunity to learn from a man who was now nearly 80 year old when she met him in 1938 who left Brazil around 14 years of age and came back 11 years later speaking 2 African languages and English as well as being armed with wealth knowledge on Yoruba tradition both in Africa and in Brazil. Dr. Landes drones on page after page about the Germans, the English, the Americans she encounters and their vacuous boring lives. Dr. Landes drones on page after page about the Mothers of the Saint who were as Eliseo Martiniano do Bonfim described them, not very well versed in their tradition or at least that is the way Dr. Landes makes them seem and what is worse Dr. Landes writes about the "Temples" being places where men could come to find a mistress to patronize with money and other favors and have sexual relations with the junior women in the priesthood in the temple. If any of this is the least bit true her portrayal of the temples of Bahia and the women who are priests in them are not centers of worship but

brothels with a religious face. If these portrayals are not true then Dr. Landes spent a lot of time in Bahia Brazil gathering material with which to libel the African religious communities that she encountered there. In closing I must strongly say that The City of Women is neither a good source of information on African religion or women's issues in Bahia Brazil between 1938 and 1939.

If you are looking for an excellent book on the Candomble Orixá Worship of Brazil, then this is the classic. The book as the title states is of the power of the Brazilian Priestesses of the orixas, also known as orishas. Mãe de Santos, or Priestesses of Orixas are as powerful, and as highly respected as the Babalawos of the Ifa and Babalorichas of Lucumi. I highly recommend this to all Voodoo Mambos, Santería Santeras, and all Women of the world, who believe in the power of Woman. From a man's point of view this is a brilliant and inspiring work, and should be read by all who honor the Ancient African Gods.

This is one of the great classics of anthropology and Latin American studies. Largely ignored during the rush to make anthropology a science of culture, this is a description of Candomble and the women who led the spiritual life of Bahia in the thirties. Good to see that it is now available in this format.

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