



## ELIZA MARIA FERREIRA VERAS DA SILVA – ENGLISH VERSION

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**Abstract:** Eliza Maria was a pioneer in Mathematics in Brazil, being the first female professor at the Institute of Mathematics and Statistics at the Federal University of Bahia (UFBA) to have a doctorate. She was also the black woman in Brazil with the oldest doctoral degree in mathematics.

**Keywords:** biography; mathematics; black pioneer.

### ELIZA MARIA FERREIRA VERAS DA SILVA

**Resumo:** Eliza Maria foi uma pioneira na matemática no Brasil, sendo a primeira mulher professora no Instituto de Matemática e Estatística da Universidade Federal da Bahia (UFBA) a ter doutorado. Também foi a mulher negra do Brasil com o título mais antigo de doutorado na área de Matemática.

**Palavras-Chave:** biografia; matemática; pioneira negra.

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**Resumen:** Eliza Maria fue pionera en las matemáticas de Brasil, siendo la primera profesora del Instituto de Matemáticas y Estadística de la Universidad Federal de Bahía (UFBA) en obtener un doctorado. También fue la mujer negra en Brasil con el título más antiguo de doctorado en el área de las matemáticas.

**Palabras-clave:** Biografía; Matemáticas; Pionera negra;

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**Résumé:** Eliza Maria était la pionnière dans la mathématique au Brésil, la première femme professeur dans l'Institut de Mathématique et Statistique à l'Université Fédéral de

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Bahia (UFBA) à avoir un doctorat. Elle a été aussi la femme noire du Brésil à avoir le plus ancien titre de doctorat dans le domaine de la Mathématique.

**Mots-clés:** Biographie, Mathématique, Pionnière Noire

## INTRODUCTION

Eliza Maria was born in Ituberá, countryside of Bahia, in 1944, and is the result of an interracial marriage, one of five children (three men and two women). She lived with her father until she was four years old, when, due to major reasons, he had to leave and he was absent until she was 14 years old, leaving her in the hands of a warrior: her mother. She started her primary education in Gandu / BA, finishing her scholarship in Jequié, where she completed her elementary school and the pedagogical studies. She concluded the last year of the pedagogical studies with an average of 10 points in all subjects.

Due to her prominence, Eliza was awarded the Phillips Scholarship from Holland, and from there she started her brilliant successful career. She achieved the second place in the Mathematics entrance exam at the Federal University of Bahia (UFBA) and graduated as a Bachelor and Licentiate in Mathematics in 1967. It is important to take into account that Eliza completed her entire degree working as a primary teacher in Salvador. In addition, in 1968, she passed the 100-hour exam and became a professor at Colégio Central, the same year she was appointed as an Algebra Professor at the Institute of Mathematics and Statistics - IME (Instituto Militar de Engenharia) and, shortly after her master's degree, she was approved in a public tender as an assistant professor at UFBA.

It should be remarked that the professor did a Master's and Doctorate degree in France, at the University of Montpellier - the master's was funded with a scholarship by UNESCO and her doctorate with a scholarship from the French Government. Later, she returned to Salvador, but she also had the support of her advisor, who came to Brazil a few times. She defended her doctorate thesis in 1977, researching non-associative algebras. She also worked as a professor in the Graduate Program in Mathematics in the early 1980s, directing research in a context highly dominated by foreign white men. She

was a member of the graduate school and was Vice-Director of the Institute from 1984 to 1988.

Inspirational Eliza was the first female professor at the Institute of Mathematics and Statistics at UFBA to have a doctorate and is the black woman in Brazil with the oldest doctoral degree in the area of Mathematics. Today, Professor Dra. Eliza, retired from UFBA since 1994, is busy doing sewing and handicrafts – she also took care of her mother until her death in 1999. Whenever possible, she travels to the São Paulo hill, in Bahia, a place she met at the age of four and that was always a source of her esteem.

Adupé!

**Figure 1:** Professor Eliza.



*Source:* Institute of Mathematics and Statistics of UFBA. Available in: <http://ime.ufba.br/index.php/2020/01/30/primeira-doutora-negra-em-matematica-do-brasil-e-professora-aposentada-do-ime-ufba/> Accessed in: 03/07/2020

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