

WHITENING, MIXING, DARKENING, AND DEVELOPING Everything but Indigenous

Juliana Luna Freire
Framingham State University

Abstract: This article analyzes the image of Brazilian Indigenous minority groups as a figurehead in media discourse, which is based on racializing logics that celebrate historical performances of Indigeneity but minimize attention to the political activity and grassroots movements of the existing population. Using cultural studies as a starting point, this study draws on Diana Taylor's understanding of identity and on postcolonial thinker Homi Bhabha's theorizing on nation to conduct a reading of discourses and performances of Indigeneity as part of cultural memory. I propose an analysis of the limited scenarios allowed in this construction of a nation in Brazilian media outlets, which often claim there is political motivation for identity and are incapable of dealing with contemporary Indigenous groups. Overall, this analysis highlights the need to rethink the way we discuss ethnic identity so as to foster a larger dialogue about identity, heritage, and minority cultures in such a way that we avoid falling into a paradigm of modernization and acculturation when discussing ethnicity, and to promote better understanding of the different ongoing political and cultural movements in contemporary Brazil.

On the five-hundred-year anniversary of the arrival of the first Portuguese in what is today Brazil, the Brazilian sociologist Marilena Chauí (2000, 89) published a book examining the incongruity of the nationalist discourse surrounding the festivities, pointing out that the conquest engendered a deeply unequal society in which many people do not have full access to citizenship and asymmetry of power is considered normal. Simultaneously, it was reported that Indigenous Pataxós who were planning a peaceful protest against the official celebrations were not only barred from celebrations in Porto Seguro but also were attacked by the military (*Comciencia* 2001).¹ The only Indigenous people allowed to participate in the celebrations were those who agreed to wear grass skirts and headdresses and

1. The Pataxós live in southern Bahia and in Minas Gerais. I capitalize *Indigenous*, a practice that is increasingly common in critical texts, in deference to these people's preference about how they are represented in English (see, e.g., Ginsburg 2008; Wilson and Stewart 2008; Francisco Salazar and Córdova 2008), but a number of anthropologists doing fieldwork in Brazil prefer to use *Indian*, which is a literal translation from Portuguese. As Ramos (1998) has documented, the Indigenous movement in the 1970s and 1980s has reappropriated the Portuguese *índio* (6) (see also French 2009; Warren 2001; Garfield 2001). Porto Seguro is a municipality in the state of Bahia. The first three Portuguese ships, under the command of Pedro Álvares Cabral, landed here on April 22, 1500. Today, the Memorial da Epopeia do Descobrimento (Memorial of the Epic of the Discovery) museum employs some Indigenous people as tour guides to show replicas of the Portuguese ships and of an Indigenous hut. Note the implications of the terms *epic* and *discovery*, which portray the sailors as heroic adventurers from the viewpoint of the Portuguese colonizers.

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to perform the official history of the Indians welcoming the Portuguese as a backdrop to a sumptuous party for politicians and businesspeople from Brazil and abroad. Leaders of the Conferência dos Povos Indígenas (Conference of Indigenous Peoples), which was being held nearby, joined members of *Brasil: Outros 500* (Brazil: Another 500) in a protest in which they directly confronted military police guarding the official celebration.² Various nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) posted photographs of protesters being beaten by police, and on blogs around the country the incident became known as the “Vexame dos 500 anos” (Shame of the 500 years).

This study analyzes the image of the Indigenous minority groups as a figurehead in media discourse, which is based on racializing logics that celebrate historical performances of Indigeneity but minimize attention to the political activity and grassroots movements of the existing population. The description of the conflict with the Pataxós is particularly significant because it illustrates this contradiction, showcasing the spectacle of coloniality but militarily oppressing the political protests of contemporary Indigenous groups. I consult two public performances representing Indigenous cultures in the formation of Brazilian identity, staged in 2000 and 2009. I contrast these two performances with the “screening” of Indigenous people in the Brazilian media, focusing on the rhetoric surrounding land recognition in news articles published from 2004 to 2009 in mainstream Brazilian online newspapers and magazines, namely *Jornal da Tarde*, *Veja*, *Época*, and *Estadão*.³ Using cultural studies as a starting point, this article draws on Diana Taylor’s (2003) understanding of identity as well as on postcolonial thinker Homi Bhabha’s (2007, 201) theorizing of the “cultural construction of nationness” to conduct a reading of discourses and performances of Indigeneity as part of a cultural memory. First, I propose an analysis of the limited scenarios allowed in this construction of a nation, also visible in legislative and academic elimination of ethnic difference, as well as the use of such elimination in media outlets to jeopardize political fight, media that often claims political motivation for identity and is incapable of dealing with contemporary Indigenous groups. Last, I briefly address the counterdiscourse created when other performances come from unpredictable places, causing those limited scenarios of coloniality to be questioned by erased groups themselves. Overall, these particular examples analyzed highlight the need to rethink the way we discuss ethnic identity, so as to foster a larger dialogue about identity, heritage, and minority cultures, in such a way that we avoid falling into a paradigm of modernization and acculturation when discussing ethnicity, and to promote better understanding of the different ongoing political and cultural movements in contemporary Brazil.

Mainstream views about the Indigenous populations of Brazil exert substantial political influence on the legislation, regulations, and jurisdictions established

2. The protest has also been called “Os outros 500 anos” (The Other 500 Years) and is a political movement (see Oro and Bittencourt 2000 for an analysis). It challenged not only the one-sided quinquenary celebration for ignoring the history of Indigenous communities before the “discovery” of Brazil, but also the erasure of other communities from the narrative construction of official history (see White 1978).

3. I borrow Eva Woods Peiró’s (2012) term to refer to the re-creation of an ethnic group on the screen.

by governing agencies, Congress, and other groups dealing with ethnic minorities. Issues such as landownership, self-affirmation, and historical reparations to Indigenous groups still provoke contentious debate. In 2013, 115 territories were under analysis for designation as Indigenous reserves, a process that can take up to twenty years, and many others are still waiting to undergo demarcation, official approval, and legal recognition (D'Agostino 2013). As Heck, Loebens, and Carvalho (2005) have demonstrated for the Amazon region, solving the issues surrounding Indigenous territories depends on complex bureaucratic processes involving Indigenous groups, farmers, Supreme Court decisions, anthropologists, and NGOs, among others.⁴ In an era of political conflict over land, Indigenous peoples are frequent scapegoats in agrarian discourses that blame them for "wasting" their land and failing to develop the agricultural sector. For instance, following increased agrarian conflict in 2013, a coalition of the Ministries of Agriculture and Agrarian Development and Embrapa (Brazilian Enterprise for Agricultural Research) recommended that the agricultural committee in the National Senate introduce Constitutional Amendment PEC 215/00 ("Crise pode reduzir"), which would transfer the power to demarcate Indigenous lands from the National Indian Foundation (FUNAI, overseen by the Ministry of Justice) to the Congress.⁵ Ethnic erasure thus eliminates its targets from visible participation in political and social spheres, except in specific predetermined, anachronistic roles, thereby invalidating any oppositional voices or practices that do not fit into generic, preconceived notions of Indigeneity. The perpetuation of preconceived notions of Indigeneity avoids a "political view of the past," using history as an instrument of the dominating class (Benjamin 2005, 210). If insisting on a multicultural and celebratory version of historical contact, the national discourse fails to acknowledge injustice, discrimination, and unequal access to social resources in contemporary times, rendering invisible the class struggle that minority groups still confront.

As Taylor (2003, 2) argues, performances function as "vital acts of transfer, transmitting social knowledge, and a sense of identity through reiterated [behavior]." Conceptualizing ethnic identity as behavior enacted repeatedly in a physical and discursive space allows us to examine the media reports and artistic performances surrounding Brazil's quincentenary as resulting from continuous negotiation between the mainstream media and Indigenous groups. By resisting prescribed, stereotypical roles and occupying territory, public spaces, and media on their own terms, opposition groups are able to resignify monolithic readings of themselves. Alcida Ramos (1998) and Seth Garfield (2001), among others, have

4. In the five hundred years since first European contact, the Indigenous population is estimated to have decreased from somewhere between 2 million and 6 million people to about 734,000 by 2005 (IBGE 2005, 20). It was not until 1961 that the National Congress created the first reservation, which at the time was envisioned as a solution for the preservation of both wilderness and culture. In 1967, after facing strong accusations of Indigenous genocide, the Serviço de Proteção aos Índios (Service for the Protection to Indigenous People, or SPI) was transformed into the National Indian Foundation (FUNAI) (Evangelista 2004, 23), with a mandate to improve medical services and land protection.

5. The 2013 land crisis was triggered by non-Indigenous farmers' occupation of land in the process of being designated a reserve. This conflict illustrated that media attention to one side or the other often tilted the scales in that side's favor. Congress has not yet passed the proposal.

thoroughly examined Brazilian state policies and relations with diverse Indigenous groups, and other scholars have analyzed groups that only recently have become politically organized (French 2009; Warren 2001). News articles continue to exclude some unrecognized groups, even though for several decades the “ideological state apparatuses” (borrowing here Althusser’s 1971 term) have articulated Indigenist practices. The first decade of the twenty-first century differs from previous ones in the prevalence of at least a rhetorical acceptance of multiculturalism. Under “the auspices of ‘official’ diversity” (Wilson and Stewart 2008, 6), the recent articulation of multiculturalism and civil rights in Brazilian society, however, continues to render Indigenous cultures as backward, anachronistic, and doomed to disappear with time.

So conceived, the Indigenous past continues to exist but it is relegated to distant, nonthreatening contexts, such as the commemoration of the Portuguese arrival in Brazil and other nationalist narratives. The celebration in Porto Seguro enacted a scene chronicled in a letter by Pero Vaz de Caminha in which the Portuguese encountered the Tupiniquins, who allegedly traded for petty trinkets and raised their hands to accept Christianity. Such mainstream narratives continually reproduce the “scenarios of discovery” as described by Diana Taylor (2003, 13) in *The Archive and the Repertoire: Performing Cultural Memory in the Americas*: “The colonial ‘encounter’ is a theatrical scenario structured in a predictable, formulaic, hence repeatable fashion. Theatricality (like theatre) flaunts its artifice, its constructedness. No matter who restages the colonial encounter from the West’s perspective—the novelist, the playwright, the discoverer, or the government official—it stars the same white male protagonist-subject and the same brown ‘found’ object.” Continual restagings of passive acceptance of Christianity and European culture set the terms for erasure, reinforcing Indigenous disappearance into *mestiço* (mixed-race) Brazilianness. As Taylor notes, reenactments of the colonial encounter downplay the brutality of the colonial past and its current consequences for Indigenous peoples, selectively constructing a discourse of multiculturalism to exculpate the nation from responsibility for political and social reparation. In emphasizing that performances of the colonial encounter in cultural memory are constantly restaged and reinscribed in written form (by novelists, government officials, scholars, and others) predominantly from the Western perspective, Taylor critiques how such performances shape both our understanding of the past and contemporary politics.

To elaborate on the problematic understanding of race and ethnic heritage in both academic and official discourse in Brazil, I turn to the second performance and the issue of reenacting cultural heritage in embodied racial practices via analysis of a Carnival performance in Rio de Janeiro in 2009. Mangueira, a traditional *escola de samba* (samba school), created a parade performance that highlighted racial diversity and nationalist fraternity. Again, dancers dressed in artificial feathers represented the Indigenous population, Afro-Brazilians were dressed to represent white Portuguese, and white tourists participated as field laborers.⁶ During

6. Analyzing the performance using Mikhail Bakhtin’s (1984, 15) concept of the carnivalesque reveals that, despite the cross-dressing of Afro-Brazilians as Portuguese and of white tourists as plantation

the performance, the plantation workers perform a basic dance, one that paying tourists with little samba training could perform. In contrast, the roles of the Portuguese *mestre-sala* and *porta-bandeira* are reserved for honored dancers from the troupe, and they enact a satirical emphasis on cross-dressing as aristocracy. The use of feathered dancers to represent Indigenous groups is, however, a trope that needs to be problematized. In this case Indigenous erasure means being assimilated by African and white dancers who choose to “perform Indigeneity” when required. The *sambistas* sang the chorus:

God made me this way
 Son of this land
 The white [man] arrived here
 In paradise, and was enchanted
 When he saw so much beauty in the place
 So much wealth to explore
 Indian brave warrior
 Didn't allow himself to be enslaved, he fought
 And a unity emerged
 Even though the African was destined to his own fate
 He worked with strong arms
 In building my Brazil
 It's blood, it's sweat, it's religion
 A mix of races in a single heart

 I am people, I am race . . . miscegenation.
 (Lequinho, Bernini, and Clarão 2009, my translation)

The performance re-creates an idealized image of harmonious heterogeneity and common goals among the three major ethnic groups. The mix of the three races reimagines a common brotherhood but forces us to forget that individuals of different races and social classes enacted physical violence on each other. Phrases such as “unity” and “a single heart” are emphasized, along with bravery, strength, and natural beauty. The history of violence by white men against colored women is intentionally elided through the use of the masculine forms of black, white, and Indigenous (“o negro,” “o branco,” and “o índio”), omitting the female counterparts who were a biological requirement for the miscegenation process that Gilberto Freyre championed in his writings. The song eliminates the female, but the Carnival performance, where sexualized dancers abound, does not. Even though this contemporary cultural production challenges Freyre's benevolent reading of racial relations in the Brazilian colonial period, his ideology remains alive and powerful. If the Indigenous fought not to be enslaved and Africans were forced to work to build “my/our Brazil,” when did this conciliatory unity emerge if, as previously stated, only 43.1 percent of the population consider themselves *mestiços*? What political consequences does this imagined unity have if Afro-Brazilians and Indigenes occupy the lowest economic and social strata?

workers, the subversion of authority is still tainted precisely because of the highly structured roles assigned during the performance.

LIMITED SCENARIOS OF INDIGENEITY: IMMATURE (AND SPEECHLESS) OR FABRICATED

How do these performances and/or discursive representations exculpate social reparation by downplaying the brutality of the colonial past? Who is being found in the Brazilian encounter with our Indigenous present? Stereotypical representations of Indigeneity range from infantilizing to assimilationist, even in re-staging the contemporary population of Indigenous peoples. These two extremes can be found in a continuum, in a rhetoric that emphasizes, at one extreme, a fossilized image of pre-Columbian Indigenous and, at another extreme, an emphasis on the fabrication of cultural heritage. The current ethnic groups can be found in between, struggling to mirror the expectations of a rhetoric that insists on ethnic identity as equivalent to nonmodernization. But such fictionalizations have real consequences for these populations: by framing them as naive, the government and media can justify making political decisions on their behalf about their territory and societies. The perception of Indigeneity as “soon to be acculturated but not yet integrated” is reinforced through numerous newspaper articles focusing on the shortcomings and ignorance of the uncivilized native Brazilian, even in the twenty-first century.⁷ Brazilian legislation codified the childlike status of Indigenous peoples in article 6 of the Civil Code of 1916, Law 3071: “The savages will be subjected to protective guardianship, as established by law and special regulations, which will cease as they become adapted to the civilization of the country.”⁸ Between 1916 and 1988 the colonized were in legal terms considered as having “political immaturity,” to use Shohat and Stam’s (1994, 140) term. In fact, the Estatuto do Índio (Indigenous Statute), under Law 6001 of 1973, still guarantees tutelage and government protection to Indigenous people until they can be absorbed into mainstream society. Legislation thereby presupposed the ethnic erasure of *indígenas* into racialized *mestiços*, implying that the process of acculturation is unavoidable. The construction of a unified nation with common interests falls under Benedict Anderson’s ([1983] 1991, 5) definition of an imagined community, a concept that is refined in Homi Bhabha’s (1990) conceptualization of the national project.

One such example of written narratives that foster the disappearance of contemporary groups into this spectacle of coloniality is the anthropologist Mirtes Borgonha’s (2006) study of a small community of Ofayé, who were officially con-

7. In *Unthinking Eurocentrism: Multiculturalism and the Media*, Ella Shohat and Robert Stam (1994) identify within the history of colonial exploration and discovery the trope of infantilization associated with nonwhite individuals, who are clearly marked as inferior to the European colonizers. This trope appears particularly in the film industry and is also present in Brazilian media and legal documents (Shohat and Stam 1994, 140). For Ramos (1998, 21), “the fiction of the Indian as child” is key in much anthropological work.

8. “Os silvícolas ficarão sujeitos ao regime tutelar, estabelecido em leis e regulamentos especiais, o qual cessará à medida que se forem adaptando à civilização do País.” The final, revised text was enacted on August 27, 1962, as article 6 of Law 4121 (Congresso Nacional 1916, 1962, 1973). This law remained in effect until it was replaced by article 232 in the Constitution of 1988 (República Federativa do Brasil 1988). However, the language pertaining to Indians in the Civil Code and the Estatuto do Índio was never revised (Jornal do Senado 2008).

sidered extinct even while members continued to assert their identity. A self-identified Ofayé declared:

And because we were also informed, yes, that we were considered extinct, as early as 1970 and even 1960 the information that the Ofayé people didn't exist anymore was released. . . . That was concluded after an anthropological study by the famous Darcy Ribeiro. He released it in a study he had conducted about how the Ofayé people didn't exist anymore. That was officially recognized. . . . But fortunately, I think there was an error in his research, because today we exist. (Souza, quoted in Borgonha 2006, 105–106, my translation)

In this case, the scholar and the missing brown object once more play out the scenario of erasure, and hence the group is labeled “extinct” and denied any opportunity for self-definition.⁹ In light of the role of scientific discourses in creating new “truths” (Foucault 1984, 204), Ribeiro’s assertions of the disappearance of the Ofayé were propagated in academic journals.¹⁰ However, with the later reorganization of political groups, those groups were termed the *remanescentes* (those remaining) or *ressurgidos* (those reappeared), a term used for those ethnic groups recently seeking recognition as Indigenous individuals (Warren 2001; French 2009). Mainstream discourses often echo Western developmentalist agendas that perceived modernity and acculturation as correlated, thus disavowing the validity of such groups, because such discourses fail to engage with distinct historical and contemporary roles of groups outside the limits defined by colonial encounters.¹¹ Being Indigenous in contemporary times demands making past and present cultural performances compatible.

Giving visibility to impoverished populations fighting for land recognition and access to public health and education services would menace the idealized construction of unity and the superficial celebration of multiculturalism that Brazil is undergoing. It would mean recognizing that parts of the nation do not speak Portuguese, might be influenced by non-Christian religions and cultural practices, and most important, might view development and progress in different terms from the majority. Such differences would bring to light an always already erased past that the rest of the country has tried to frame as a single historicized and imagined encounter. When the contemporary reader faces the “darker side of

9. I am drawn to Gayatri Spivak’s (1988) critique in “Can the Subaltern Speak?” for a theorization of subalternity and voice in society.

10. The extinction of the Ofayé was reported in scholarly databases such as the fourteenth edition of *Ethnologue: Languages of the World* (Grimes, Pittman, and Grimes 2000). Interestingly enough, in the fifteenth edition, the Ofayé reappeared, represented by thirty-seven people who “speak mainly Portuguese or Kaiwá” (Lewis 2002). In addition to Warren’s (2001, 12) work with previously extinct or unknown Indigenous groups in northeast Brazil since the 1970s, see also José Maurício Arruti (1997), who examines this movement from a broader perspective of not only Indigenous groups but also *quilombolas* (fugitive slaves). Arruti also provides a detailed bibliography on the reappearance of those groups, including an extensive list of studies dating from the 1990s about northeastern Indigenous groups and their process of self-representation.

11. With regard to the discourse of modernization in Latin America and its imposition on minority groups, María Josefina Saldaña-Portillo (2007, 109) asserts that the “teleology of progress in colonialization and surveillance” justifies the need to *lead* the native inhabitants toward progress, technology, and modernity.

western modernity" (Mignolo 2011, 17–18), it is in the context of a discourse that ignores the deaths, struggles for survival, and elimination of minority groups from public view that are taking place in contemporary times. Assigning the victims to an extinct, predetermined memory of something that *was* obviates the need to deal with these issues in the present time and to make pressing political decisions.

The Brazilian understanding of race relations rests on the myth of an "ethnic cauldron" (Guimarães 1995, 220), a myth that Freyre furthered by inducing a misguided belief in a multicultural state produced through racial mixture and by popularizing a discourse on acculturation and *mestiçagem*.¹² The price for assimilation into the mainstream was "a willingness of people of color to repudiate their African or Indigenous ancestry" (Guimarães 1995, 220). This assimilationist trend is clear in the 2010 Brazilian census: 47.7 percent of respondents self-identified as *branco* (white), 7.6 percent as *preto* (black), 0.4 percent as Indigenous, and 1.1 percent as *amarelo* (yellow) (Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística, IBGE, 2010). The remainder of the population, 43.1 percent, chose *pardo*, a common synonym for *mestiço* that denotes mixed blood. According to these figures, Brazil had an Indigenous population of 817,000 out of 190 million inhabitants. Self-identification overestimates the white population, generalizes the second-largest group as mixed blood, and underrepresents the Indigenous presence. Throughout the history of the Brazilian census since 1872, Indigenous ethnicity has been the only category not associated with a skin color,¹³ and the IBGE continues this ambiguous practice of self-identification based on skin color and ethnicity.

Negation of Indigenous origins is one factor in minimizing the statistical presence of Indigenous, and this is compounded by an option for a different minority affiliation. In 2010, during Luis Inácio Lula da Silva's presidency, a new law, the Estatuto de Igualdade Racial (Statute for Racial Equality) was enacted, redefining the *pardo* category as Afro-Brazilian. This change was first proposed in 2003 as part of the project of "igualdade de oportunidades e a inclusão social dos afro-

12. According to Freyre's *Casa grande e senzala*, the Brazilian people are historically composed of a mix of races and cultures, and his wording has strong connotations of colonization. The published English translation ([1946] 1986) of Freyre's work by Samuel Putnam palliates this perspective. In the original Portuguese, for example, Freyre ([1933] 2003, 33) wrote that interracial relations "adoçaram-se" (were sweetened) by colonial sexual relations between masters and slaves. Putnam makes a more careful choice and uses "were mitigated" to describe the complex situation involving slavery, sexuality, and power. Similarly, the Portuguese text claimed that such interracial relations "corrigiu a distância social" (corrected the social distance), which Putnam translated as "tended to *modify* the enormous social distance" (see Freyre [1933] 2003, 33; Freyre [1946] 1986, xxix–xxx, my emphasis). Did racial admixture solve the problem of racial prejudice, as Freyre implies? Twentieth- and twenty-first-century Afro-Brazilian activists have argued that what existed was a "myth of a social democracy" (Guimarães 1995, 156), and I argue that the absence of more spaces of recognition for Indigenous cultures in the country supports this view.

13. The other exception is *amarelo* (literally, "yellow"), a color category added in 1940 to account for twentieth-century Asian immigrants. The conflation of skin color in the census could offer interesting elaborations for another study. Pereira, Ventura Santos, and Azevedo (2005) have studied the Indigenous category in the national census, pointing out that 1991 was the first postdictatorship census in which respondents could self-identify as Indigenous rather than being so classified by the government.

brasileiros" (equality of opportunities and the social inclusion of Afro-Brazilians) (Paim 2003, 15).¹⁴ Despite the positive aspects of this effort to reformulate Brazilian laws to be more racially inclusive, the possibly most troubling issue here is the definition of Afro-Brazilian as "as pessoas que se classificam como tais ou como negros, pretos, pardos ou por definição análoga" (the people who self-identify as such or as black, dark, or any analogous definition) (Paim 2003, 8), without any attempt to address the status of Afro-Indigenous people and their descendants. When Senator Paulo Paim first proposed the legislation in 2003, no mention was made of Indigenous groups, except in a poem at the end of the statute:

*Quando eu por aqui passei, na época em que seus ancestrais
tentavam construir esta pátria,
Encontrei índios sendo massacrados,
Portugueses degredados e negros exportados,
Vi sangue, suor e lágrimas de três raças se destruindo,
Mas vi uma nação se construindo
...
Mas vi o sangue do negro ser derramado em vão.*

When I passed here, back in time when my ancestors
were trying to build this land,
I found Indigenous being massacred,
banished Portuguese and displaced Africans,
I saw blood, sweat and tears of three races destroying themselves,
But I saw a nation being built

...
But I saw the African blood being shed in vain.
(Banduxe Adinimodó, quoted in Paim 2003, 30)

Again, the idea of *mestiçagem* and the mutual effort to construct the nation is present, but the poetic persona ultimately focuses on the suffering of the Afro-Brazilians. Some of the poetic imagery in the later verses recalls images of *senzalas*, *quilombos*, and abolition, and the poem alludes to Indigenous groups only in the context of the first massacre: "Agora vejo os filhos de Zumbi, afilhados de Tiradentes, / De uma pátria pretendentes serem enganados" (Now I see the sons of Zumbi, godsons of Tiradentes, / pretenders of a nation being fooled). In a contemporary context "de uma pátria pretendentes" refers to the Afro-Brazilians' hopes of participating in and integrating into the nation, but they are once again fooled ("enganados"). In this case, except for the first encounter, when the Indigenous people were massacred, they remain either invisible or forgotten by the descendants of slaves, who have other pressing concerns. Thus the Afro-Indigenous, or pardo, heritage remains unacknowledged. Nonwhite is associated with the racial category of "Afro-Brazilian," whereas ethnicity (or cultural difference) is ignored. Not only is the construction of the nation idealized and unified through "blood, sweat, and tears," so are distinct African heritage groups: the "sons of Zumbi."

14. French's (2009) analysis of the impact of new racial laws in identity negotiation for Indigenous and Afro-Brazilian groups includes a brief mention of the statute, but her publication preceded approval of the final version in 2010. She also did not discuss various versions of the statute that included Indigenous groups.

Reference to the godsons of Tiradentes (an idealized national hero fighting for colonial independence) is a trope of political engagement, of revolution to achieve certain goals. Indigenous groups are once more displaced by Afro-Brazilians.

In the revised version of the statute that Paim presented to the Senate three years later, in November 2006, the words *indígena* and *afro-indígena* each occurs only once in the thirty-two-page document. *Negro* appears forty-eight times; *afro-brasileiro*, twenty-nine; and *pardo*, three. The statute never addresses the dilemma of Indigenous people having to abdicate their heritage in order to be included in the “Afro-Brazilian” or “Afro-Indigenous” category. The only role allotted to the Indigenous groups in the 2003 document, then, is that of a massacred (and extinct) population. In both cases, allotting a minimal role to the Indigenous population fortifies the *movimento negro*, but at the cost of eliminating another minority group. Instead of guaranteeing all Brazilians de facto recognition and participation in the nation, the statute solves one problem of racial elimination by creating another. As the title of this article suggests, Indigenous groups have been either whitened or darkened to avoid a need to confront ethnic difference, and any remaining cases of otherness are relegated to specific scenarios, as I discuss next.

Another problematic feature found in both national and international newspaper reports is the cynical explanation for the current visibility of Indigenous populations. In 2000, Mac Margolis, then a Brazilian correspondent for *Newsweek*, used the term *neo-Indians* derogatively to describe individuals who use ethnic identity to exploit nature for economic gain. The journalist argued that, after the 1988 determination that Indigenous peoples had rights to landownership, “suddenly there was a reason to be Indian again, and with the aid of smart lawyers and militant advocates, Indians and ‘neo-Indians,’ began to petition for redress” (Margolis 2000, 12). By *neo-Indians*, Margolis intends to imply the loss of a harmonious relationship with nature, and that the claim to be Indigenous is financially motivated and exploitative. By implication, these Indigenous people need to be controlled by the government, and their claims to Indigenous identities need to be reevaluated.¹⁵ Since 2011 Margolis has written a weekly column about politics and international issues on *Estadão.com*, and he has published articles about the Amazon rain forest. Margolis’s prominence in the Brazilian internal media created a dialogue between foreign and internal media, as well as contact between variable “loci of enunciation,” or sites of knowledge production (Mignolo 2012). Specifically, the term *neo-Indian* was later picked up in national op-eds. In May

15. Unless they become involved with certain NGOs or make connections with specific journalists, Indigenous groups usually lack access to mainstream news and online sources. This situation prevents a more balanced vision that could lead to constructive dialogue. According to statistics gathered over three months in 2003, 46.5 percent of the news dealing with Indigenous people in major Brazilian newspapers was reported exclusively from the perspective of a non-Indigenous person (Bittencourt 2006, 12). Most of the remaining articles consulted Indigenous individuals or experts in Indigenous matters but were not actually written by them. This figure points to the trend of excluding Indigenous people from participation in public spaces (Bittencourt, quoted in Breda 2004). The root of the problem, then, is that urban journalists never fully understand the unknown, unacknowledged other about which they are reporting. Hence, problematically, they often side with farmers and non-Indigenous interests, perpetuating stereotypes and continually restaging the original encounter between the Portuguese and the natives from an outside perspective.

2004 media tycoon Fernão Lara Mesquita wrote in *O Estado de São Paulo* of “novos índios com barrigão, camionetas e . . . garimpos de diamantes, ‘expropriados’ a tiros e porretadas” (new Indigenous people with big bellies, pickup trucks and . . . diamond mines, “expropriated” with bullets and sticks). Four years after Margolis’s *Newsweek* article, Mesquita’s description emphasized the violence accompanying Indigenous entry into the capitalist world of the mining industry along with their cultural transformation—the big belly signifying opulence not found before in Indigenous communities.

A similar attitude is apparent in a second article also written in May 2004 by former secretary of culture Ipojuca Pontes, titled “Negócio de Índios e ONGs” (Indigenous Businesses and NGOs). Published on his blog and in the newspaper *Jornal da Tarde*, the article emphasized physical signs of commodity culture and adherence to capitalism among Indigenous groups, openly contrasting these manifestations with the expected performances of the colonial encounter and feathered nakedness. Even feathers—previously permitted to Indians in the quincentenary anniversary celebration and the samba parade—are here linked to capitalism. In Pontes’s (2004) vision the “new Indian” wears “camisa Lacoste e óculos importados, mantendo firmes investimentos em vários ramos de negócios, entre eles, exportação de madeiras nobres, fazendas de gado e lojas de artesanato especializadas em plumagens e miçangas indígenas” (a Lacoste shirt and imported sunglasses, while maintaining firm investments in several businesses, among them exports of premium hardwood, cattle farms, and handicraft stores specializing in feathers and Indigenous glass beads). This reading of Indigenous individuals who profit from capitalism as fakes (the stereotype of the “race huckster,” to use Warren’s term)¹⁶ is also apparent in a growing right-wing, anti-environmentalist online movement: an online search for the term *novo índio* (new Indian) brings up a recent series of angry rants fueled by conservative ideologies aligned with agribusiness interests.

Another form of erasure designed to discount Indigenous political projects is character attacks on Indigenous leaders, who are generalized again as shrewd manipulators of the law. In “O lampião Tupinambá,” published on *Época.com* on November 27, 2009, Mariana Sanches writes about Tupinambá Chief Babau and his group terrorizing the Ilhéus region in the south of Bahia. She claims that previously unaffiliated individuals are “coming out of the closet” (“saindo do armário”) and joining the group of individuals who recently declared their ethnic identity. The news article subsequently claims that the appearance of this group has threatened to drive off people who have lived on the land for generations. Focusing on the chicken feathers and traditions taught by schoolteachers, the journalist describes that the new Indigenous identity is creating violence in the region:

The valorization of Tupinambá heritage was boosted by the possibility of land reservation. Ten years ago, it was very rare to find anyone wearing a headdress walking around Ilhéus.

16. Warren (2001, 32) uses “race huckster,” borrowed from the US cultural context, to repudiate arguments that emergent ethnic groups are engaging in ethnic performance to advance their own self-interest. He focuses instead on other reasons for the demographic increase of minority populations.

Nowadays, the Indigenous we talked to for the interview rush to “put on the culture.” They come back adorned in straw skirts and headdresses made with chicken feathers raised in backyards or from parrots kept in zoos. (Sanches 2009, my translation)¹⁷

How did Freyre’s zone of fraternization collapse? How is it that performances of the original encounter continue reinforcing the ideology of colonizer and colonized, while the descriptions by Margolis, Mesquita, Pontes, and Sanches simultaneously demonize the colonized? Whereas performances of the carnivalesque cross-dressing of the Mangureira samba troupe are positively perceived as a celebration of diversity, a landless individual with a painted face is mocked as fake even when using the same chicken feathers as a performance of heritage.

Besides accusing Indigenous populations of deceptive environmentalist goals, some articles also portray the whole process of land reservation as a fabrication. A 2010 article cynically titled “A indústria da demarcação de terras: A farra da antropologia oportunista” (The industry of land demarcation: The spree of opportunist anthropology) reinforces the general thesis that “loose criteria” for demarcating reservations serve the financial interests of NGOs and withdraw from accessibility land that otherwise would be valuable for agricultural production. Aside from the authors’ disparagement of the work done by social scientists and NGOs, the magazine was later accused of fabricating testimony from an anthropologist to support its position (Coutinho, Paulin, and Medeiros 2010). We can see a parallel with Margolis’s *Newsweek* article. “A indústria” takes a similar position on the financial motivations of the demarcation process: the rhetoric about greedy Indigenous groups resignifies multiple Indigenous communities, generalizing that they have crossed the line between the “other” who lives entirely outside Western society to become the “other” within capitalist society, albeit still marginalized and criticized. The ultimate irony is that once Indigenous people adopt the values of modernization that white society sought to impose on them, they are faulted for no longer being “authentic.”

Despite Taylor’s (2003, 6) cautioning against interpreting a similar positional-ity as “sameness,” be it a matter of ethnicity, gender, or class identity, a generalized identity seems to haunt these groups: the leader is presumed to represent the whole community as economically motivated and is often used to nullify the entire movement. Even when the attempt comes from sectors sympathetic to the Indigenous causes, this generalization is also haunting: scholars such as Ramos (1998, 267) have defended the need to identify the “hyperreal Indian,” or the simulacra NGOs create to homogenize the interests and needs of what are in fact highly diverse groups.¹⁸ In fact, many have argued for the need to go beyond such

17. “A valorização da ascendência tupinambá foi inflamada pela possibilidade de demarcação das terras. Há dez anos, era raro encontrar alguém de cocar circulando por Ilhéus. Hoje, índios abordados para entrevista se apressam em ‘vestir a cultura’. Voltam paramentados com saíotes de palhas e cocares, feitos com penas de galinhas criadas em fundos de quintal ou de araras mantidas em zoológicos.”

18. Conklin’s (2002) work reviews the difficulty NGOs have in harmonizing their own environmental agendas with the more pressing concerns for Indigenous groups. As she demonstrates, “Indigenous individuals and communities cannot possibly live up to the ideals of purity, harmony, and ecological balance that some of their most sympathetic supporters project onto them, but these expectations remain strong” (171).

generalizations and stereotypical constructions of the Indigenous groups. To understand the diversity of existing groups, it would be necessary to question the discourse of the “zones of fraternization” and original “encounters,” and to give more emphasis to both the historical past and current lives of these populations. Carnavalesque performances are superficially celebratory, bringing forward only “the immature” Indigenous who silently participate in the celebration of the conquest, and contemporary groups are discarded as fabricated.

PROTESTING BACK: PRODUCING OTHER SCENARIOS

The silencing of voices is never complete, and it is important to question the rhetoric of acculturated Indigenous groups being forced into modernity. If Indigenous groups are invisible in the statute for racial equality, eliminated in academic research, or framed as fake by media outlets, then this raises the larger question of the oversimplification of their presence. These groups’ counterdiscourses hint at the need to deconstruct the metanarratives of colonial encounters and to question the fictionalizations that are so pervasive in cultural memory. The celebration of the five hundred years of the nation was followed by some deep critiques of the performance, as noted by “Os outros 500,” but those, unfortunately, have slowly been silenced over time in mainstream media.

In “The Discourse of Cultural Imperialism,” Frederick Buell (1994, 3) points out that Herbert Schiller’s prediction of cultural homogenization across the globe fails to account for the capacity of autochthonous cultures to resist assimilation. Buell insists that instead of assuming that subordinate cultures are submissive, we should acknowledge voices of protest. Also, to avoid a determinist perspective of media ideology as hegemonic, this third section aims to recognize the growing movement of Indigenous people who are participating in public discourse and resisting processes of erasure through different performances that appropriate the public space, which is my focus elsewhere (Luna Freire 2012).¹⁹ Distinct groups in what Warren (2001) calls the “Indian Resurgence” have made radical progress in self-representation and articulation, primarily in smaller and independent media outlets (see French 2009), further highlighting the one-sided coverage of Indigenous issues in mainstream publications examined here such as *Veja* and *Estadão*.

Through an examination of recent protests by Brazilian Indigenous groups, we can identify a completely different perspective on the “development” of Indigenous peoples. For instance, in the Free Land Encampment, which takes place annually, Indigenous peoples occupy the Esplanada dos Ministérios in Brasília, where the Congress and Senate buildings are located. The agenda for the encampment of 2015 was PEC 215, which would transfer larger powers to Congress to demarcate Indigenous territory, and yearly the event calls attention to ongoing political projects. The annual Free Land Encampment in April has continued for

19. Also see Wilson and Stewart (2008) for an extensive overview of Indigenous media across the globe, a long-overdue and enlightening discussion.

more than a decade,²⁰ and between May 4 and 8, 2009, Indigenous people from all over the country converged on the Esplanada to protest and discuss new perspectives on how to consolidate their rights through the Estatuto dos Povos Indígenas (Statute of the Indigenous Peoples), which would concretize the rights guaranteed to them in the Constitution. The event brought together more than one thousand individuals from more than 130 different Indigenous groups. Instead of asking for development in terms of acculturation or assimilation, they demanded better conditions in their communities through land, natural resources, health, and education. During the protest, an Indigenous man performed a crucifixion scene: the man was dressed in a headdress and skirt, even though newspaper accounts did not identify his tribal identity. Comparing this performance to the quincenary, the former can be viewed as representing how the Indigenous peoples were betrayed as well as their symbolic death due to lack of opportunities, which maximizes the emphasis on the violence and death rather than the celebration of the arrival of the Portuguese.²¹ The cross can also be seen as a reference to the one the Portuguese explorers planted on their landing in Bahia to symbolize their possession of what had previously been Indigenous land, as a rewriting of some of the traditional scenarios described by Taylor, or even as portraying the Brazilian government as a God who has forsaken his own children.²² Some of these elements were present in the first celebration: both events are theatrical, but the Free Land Encampment protest gives a different reading of the “brown object,” depicting the past of the Indigenous group in a completely different light. Thus, through mimicry, this protest questioned our understanding of the cross and of the domination suffered by the Indigenous population while bringing the image of the crucifixion to a public place charged with political significance. Thus the quincenary celebration, in which the Indigenous passively accepted the Portuguese, is transformed into a shocking performance of martyrdom on the cross, the most important religious symbol of the country’s dominant Catholic majority. They are implicitly accused of crucifying their brothers, the one-third of the miscegenation triad that the other discourses have eulogized.

Who is *indio*? A unified performance of identity and culture cannot be imposed as a prerequisite for recognition of an actual shared identity, because our understandings of those performances are usually based on stereotypical constructions of what Indigeneity is. Those performances of historical Indigeneity, both at the

20. At the eleventh protest, held in 2013 almost entirely in Brasília, Indigenous groups demanded a voice in decisions regarding land appropriation and in multiple *Projetos de Emenda Constitucional* (PECs), constitutional amendments that override protections and decisions made in land reservation and demarcation processes. The PECs were mentioned previously when discussing mainstream media and its political influence.

21. A Guaraní-Kaiowá spokesperson, Lopes, explained their political agenda, including protesting the violence and lack of assistance from the government and FUNAI (quoted in Amaral 2009). The photo was briefly posted nationally at *Folha Online*, only to be removed the next day.

22. “These are the daily acts of violence, and we are left restricted. We can’t find a way to support ourselves, FUNAI does not support us, and the state government does not support us. The state government itself is against the demarcation of Indigenous land and we are in a very difficult situation of not seeing a good solution for ourselves” (Amaral 2009, my translation).

quintcentenary and during the Carnival parade, insist on a formulaic construction of the encounter that draws our attention but is apolitical. The legislation whitens and mixes Indigenous ethnicity into a modernized mestiço that is no longer recognized in some media outlets. For Indigenous people, modernization is meant to denote integration into the class system as working poor who contribute to the industrialization and progress of the country, but not a transition into political actors who have a voice in the direction of their own future.

This article has analyzed the racializing logics that render many contemporary Indigenous groups as not fitting that heritage label, darkening, mixing, and whitening Indigenous visibility into a mestiço present. Through public performances that idealize a historical past and rhetoric from newspapers that dismisses Indigenous political concerns, we are faced with the political invisibility of Indigenous populations and the misrepresentation of Indigenous issues. Indigenous groups have been deprived of a statistical presence in Brazil because of academic discourses on the mixed heritage of the Brazilian people, which were codified in public law, among other reasons. Moreover, the media seems unable to adapt to the current historical context, instead perpetuating a one-sided discourse that feeds on a shallow debate over authenticity versus acculturation. It continues to perpetuate old stereotypes dating back to the colonial period, such as ideas of infantilization and unchanged Indigenous, whereas it dismisses groups of *ressurgidos* and *remanescentes* that recently fought for recognition as such. The proliferation of Indigenous activism has been accompanied by an increase in the Indigenous population: even though scholars expected Indigenous peoples to gradually dwindle and disappear by the 1970s (Brum 2006), the number of self-identified Indigenous individuals has belied their predictions. From 1991 to 2000 the Indigenous population doubled, even though it still represents a small percentage of the overall population. Heloísa Pagliaro, Marta Azevedo, and Ricardo Santos (2005, quoted in IBGE 2005, 20) acknowledge the rapid growth of the Indigenous population but argued for further analysis of the reasons.

A series of events demonstrates that distinct ethnic groups are attempting to break through the silence surrounding nearly forgotten causes. For instance, in 2009 several protests involving Indigenous groups occurred in Brazil, including the crucifixion, as well as other protests such as the occupation of the FUNASA office (National Health Foundation) in São Paulo by Indigenous peoples from several ethnicities (May 5–8), and at debates in the Supreme Court over the presence on non-Indigenous individuals at the Raposa Serra do Sol Reservation (Agência Brasil 2009; BBC Brasil 2008). More recently, in November 2012, the Guarani-Kaiowá successfully organized a large online protest followed by street demonstrations around the country to prevent their eviction from an encampment in the state of Minas Gerais while they awaited a legal decision on the demarcation of Indigenous territory (Brum 2012).

More research is needed on the use of alternative media by Indigenous groups, with support from NGOs, human rights groups, and ecologists, to help fight the “canonization of particular notions about indigenous peoples” (Ramos 1998, 13). Photos of the Free Land Encampment, as well as other political protests by In-

indigenous groups and social activists, are posted on the website of the Conselho Indigenista Missionário (Missionary Indigenous Council). The Internet (and its democratizing power) has been extensively used by individual groups (Badô 2003): associations such as APOINME (Articulação dos Povos e Organizações Indígenas do Nordeste, Minas Gerais e Espírito Santo) have been using platforms such as Ustream to live broadcast their protests and meetings (apoinme.blogspot.com). These examples indicate that politically active groups have been fighting to be called *indígenas*, to reclaim their overdue rights, and to break their silence, not through mainstream newspapers or television outlets but via the Internet, street protests, and international networks of support.

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