

White Hegemony in the Land of Carnival

**The (Apparent) Paradox of
Racism and Hybridity in Brazil**

Benito Cao

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for Adela

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Abstract

This dissertation argues that racism in Brazil is largely a product of the Eurocentrism that presides over the formation and formulation of Brazil(ianness). The ideological construction of the nation on notions of identity and difference rooted in a Eurocentric definition of modernity has translated into an epistemological division between modern subjects (the Colonial Self: the Portuguese) and subjects of modernity (the Colonised Others: the Indian and the African). That is, between subjects and objects. The objectification of the Others can be found within the realm of the social (the Other as social object: the Slave), the cultural (the Other as cultural object: the Exotic), and the biological (the Other as sexual object: the Erotic). This epistemological division enabled the hierarchisation of differences between the Civilised Self and the Savage Other(s) and the racist (re)invention of Brazil in the 19th century.

This dissertation re-examines racism in Brazil by means of the analysis of the three historical events that have come to define the nation (Discovery, Independence and Abolition) as well as the so-called essence of the nation (Hybridity). The analysis reveals that the reinvention of Brazil as a hybrid nation has not eliminated the hierarchy of differences. On the contrary, the celebration of hybridity has served to obscure the largely exploitative character of the processes of cultural hybridity [*mestiçagem* or transculturation] and biological hybridity [*miscegenação* or miscegenation] and to mask secular prejudices and discrimination against the Indian and African Others. In Brazil, hybridity still operates within the Eurocentric discourse of Brazilianness that incorporated the Indian and African Others as objects or, at best, dependent subjects in the formation and formulation of Brazil(ianness). The corollary of this is that without unthinking and undoing the Eurocentrism that informs the national imagination there is little that hybridity can do to undermine racism and white hegemony in Brazil.

Declaration

This thesis contains no material that has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university or other tertiary institution and, to the best of my knowledge and belief, contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference has been made in the text of the thesis.

I give consent to this copy of my thesis, when deposited in the University Library, being made available for photocopying and loan.

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Notes on Language and Bibliography

I have opted not to use italics in some instances where their use is conventional or common practice, in particular, when mentioning historical events, ideological movements, or cultural manifestations specific to Brazil, and thus better referred to in Portuguese (i.e. Guerra dos Tamoios, Guerra dos Mascates, Inconfidência Mineira and Inconfidência Bahiana; Quilombismo, Sanitarismo and Trabalhismo; Candomblé, Batuque and Capoeira). Similarly, I have opted not to use italics when referring to certain figures and concepts that appear often in the text (i.e. mameluco, mascate, mazombo, caboclo, bandeirante, mulata, brecha camponesa, quilombo, batuque and ingênuo). In this case, I have opted for using italics *only* the first time these concepts and figures are mentioned in a chapter. The rationale behind this decision is to avoid cluttering the text with conventional italics which would detract from the visual impact of the *intentional* use of italics used to highlight a specific point.

I have also opted to use capital letters in some instances where their use is *not* conventional to differentiate between the common use of certain expressions (in which case they appear in lower case) and their use as concepts or institutions, that is, as words with a very specific meaning and tied to a particular place and time—as in the difference between president and the President (of Brazil). This applies to terms such as discovery/Discovery, independence/Independence, abolition/Abolition, modernity/Modernity, others/Others, and a few others.

Finally, I must note here that all translations from the Portuguese (and the Spanish) are mine, unless otherwise stated; although I owe a great deal of gratitude to Adela for her assistance in this matter. I have often relied on existing English translations of the quotes included here, but I have always made a point of consulting the original Portuguese (and Spanish) texts and almost invariably produced slightly alternate translations that, in my view, convey a more faithful (even if not always a more literal) representation of the meaning of the original text. Even then, I wish to extend my gratitude to all those authors whose translations have helped me come up with my own.

I have decided to list all sources in one single alphabetical list to facilitate their identification, although there is a wide variety of sources consulted for this dissertation. These include: primary sources (i.e. original texts, some documents, and plenty of newspaper and magazine articles, of which only those referenced in the text are listed in the bibliography), secondary sources, and notes and observations from visits to several museums and exhibitions. The latter are not listed in the bibliography, but indicated with footnotes.

Introduction

Any study of racism in Brazil must begin by reflecting on the very fact that racism is a taboo subject in Brazil. Brazilians imagine themselves as inhabiting an anti-racist nation, a 'racial democracy'. This is one of the sources of their pride and, at the same time, conclusive proof of their status as a civilised nation.

Antonio Sérgio Alfredo Guimarães (1995b: 208)

Brazil(ianness)

'There are no blacks or whites in Brazil; only Brazilians'. This popular saying encapsulates the dominant view on race and nation in contemporary Brazil. The implication is clear: there is no racism in Brazil. Implicit in this saying is the notion that Brazil is a racial democracy, product of the miscegenation and transculturation that has defined the history of Brazil since the arrival of the Portuguese in 1500. The definition of Brazil as a hybrid nation is central to the denial of racism: hybridity is constructed as the antidote to racism in Brazil. The denial of racism rests on the vehement denial of racial differences sustained by the social construction of a supra-racial national identity that defines Brazilians of all colours as *only* Brazilians. Brazilianness [*Brasilidade*] would prevent the formation of racial identities and with it the very possibility of racism in Brazil. Yet studies on poverty, social mobility, access to health, housing, education and employment indicate the pervasive nature of racial inequality and racial prejudice in Brazil. The following pages introduce the theoretical assumptions that inform this dissertation, and the conceptual tools deployed here to analyse the apparent paradox that is the coexistence of racism and hybridity in Brazil.

The Myth of (Brazilian) Racial Democracy

Hybridity is not unique to Brazil. What makes Brazil particularly interesting is the fact that since the early 20th century hybridity is celebrated as the *essence* of Brazilianness. Definitions of Brazil as a hybrid nation can be traced back to the 19th century. José Bonifácio de Andrada e Silva, the so-called Patriarch of Brazilian Independence, identified hybridity as the defining feature of Brazil as early as the 1820s. The need to establish a national identity different from Portugal following the independence of Brazil in 1822 led to the view that the interaction between Europeans, Indians and Africans was the defining feature of Brazil. The first to elaborate this idea in a systematic fashion was the German naturalist Karl Von Martius, in an article entitled 'How the History of Brazil Should be Written' (1844). Von Martius suggested that Brazilian history had to incorporate the three constitutive groups behind the formation of the nation: Portuguese, Indians, and Africans. The so-called *fable of the three races* (DaMatta 1983: 58) has been present ever since in formulations of Brazilianness, but the most influential is still the work of Gilberto Freyre, in particular his book *Casa-Grande & Senzala* (1933).

In this study of life in the colonial plantations of the Northeast, Freyre concluded that the racial and cultural mixture that resulted from the intimate relations between masters and slaves was the defining feature of Brazil. He attributed this to the tolerant character of the Portuguese colonists, and more specifically to their ability to adapt and their willingness to mix with Others. The predisposition of the Portuguese men to embrace Other cultures and especially Other women had made Brazilian slavery a relatively mild and humane institution, and had prevented the emergence of a racist society in Brazil. The product of these relations was a hybrid nation—a nation defined by cultural syncretism and miscegenation between Europeans, Indians and Africans. In essence, a relatively benign slavery had bequeathed a *racial democracy* to Brazil.

Freyre's work built on a vision of the country as a *racial paradise* dating back to the 19th century, when travellers, scientists, journalists, and politicians from Europe and the United States reported their surprise at the peaceful coexistence of

whites, blacks and natives in Brazil (Azevedo 1996). His work gained many advocates, including politicians, public officials and diplomats, and originated a school of thought that theorised racial harmony as the defining feature of racial relations in Brazil. This perspective was embraced in particular by North American scholars, such as Donald Pierson (1942), Frank Tannenbaum (1946) and Stanley Elkins (1959).

The notion of racial democracy caught the imagination of the international community and, in 1950, the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) funded a group of social scientists to conduct research on race relations in Brazil. The expectation was that Brazil could offer the world a unique lesson on racial harmony and become an instrument in the struggle against racism in the period following the Holocaust (Maio 2001). The studies produced, amongst others, by Charles Wagley (1952), Luiz Costa Pinto (1953), Roger Bastide & Florestan Fernandes (1955), revealed a strong correlation between colour and social status. The statistics on poverty, social mobility, access to health, housing, education and employment suggested that racial inequality was pervasive in Brazil. They revealed the tension between the myth of racial democracy and the reality of racial inequality, a tension that had already been enunciated by black and white intellectuals and activists in Brazil (Maio 2001).

The idyllic view of slavery and race relations in Brazil came under further scrutiny by a generation of sociologists and historians from the University of São Paulo —amongst them Florestan Fernandes, Octavio Ianni and Fernando Henrique Cardoso. Their studies documented widespread patterns of racial inequality and painted a picture of Brazilian slavery far less benign than that provided by Freyre. However, for the so-called São Paulo School, as had been the case with the studies funded by UNESCO, the concept of *class* rather than the concept of race captured the mechanisms and dynamics of inequality in Brazil (Cardoso 1962; Ianni 1966; Fernandes 1972). This state of affairs was considered to be the result of the legacy of slavery and the difficulties experienced by blacks in adapting to the free labour market and to industrial capitalism. Fernandes even referred to racism as an anachronism with no place in post-abolition Brazil, and

linked the disappearance of racism to the advent of socialism, when racial inequality would disappear along with class inequalities (1965). The interpretation of racism as a remnant of slavery and an epiphenomenon of classism dominated the studies of social inequality in the 1950s and 1960s, and continues to be the most popular explanation of social inequality amongst Brazilians.

Since the 1970s, this interpretation has been challenged by a series of quantitative studies on social mobility in Brazil. The pioneer work of Carlos Hasenbalg based on census data showed different rates of social mobility for whites and nonwhites, and concluded that such inequality could not be attributed to the legacy of slavery but only to persistent prejudice and discrimination against nonwhites (1979). Nelson do Valle Silva quantified this in monetary terms in his study on 'the cost of not being white' (1985). He also noted that the extent of discrimination against browns [*pardos*] and blacks [*negros*] was similar, suggesting the basic operating dichotomy was that of whites versus nonwhites. This finding is reflected in the popular saying *passou de branco, preto é* [if you're not white, you're black] —a saying that reveals that 'underlying the color spectrum is a clear understanding of a white vs. nonwhite binary system that determines social privileges based on race' (Vargas 2004: 449). Edward Telles and Nelson Lim have confirmed the primacy of the bipolar racial cleavage, albeit showing that blacks tend to be more discriminated against than browns (1998). The most recent studies, no matter the variations in the methodological approach, indicate that race still explains up to a third of the variation in labour income. These studies demonstrate that race is an additional factor which interacts with social origins to produce a cycle of cumulative disadvantages (Hasenbalg 2005; Osório 2008).

The most comprehensive body of work on the significance of skin colour in Brazil is that of Edward Telles. His work shows that skin colour is a powerful force determining one's life chances —an argument made with clarity and strength in his book *Racismo à Brasileira* (2003), reworked and published in English as *Race in Another America* (2004). The United Nations continues to fund studies on the state of racial inequality around the world, including Brazil. The study conducted by Rafael Guerreiro Osório for the United Nations Development Programme

concludes that racial discrimination remains a major source of inequalities among racial groups in Brazil, and that whilst there are individual cases of social mobility, as a group, nonwhites have experienced virtually no social mobility over the course of the last three decades (2008). In addition, José Pastore and Nelson Valle da Silva have found that racial differences regarding social mobility are even greater for women, suggesting that class, race and gender reinforce each other in the reproduction of social inequality (2000). The combined effect of all these studies has been to demonstrate that race operates as a *relatively autonomous* principle of social exclusion and discrimination in Brazil.

The increasing realisation that race matters can also be attributed to the efforts of the black movements of Brazil. The emphasis of black activists on the politics of (black) identity and their relentless denunciation of the myth of racial democracy have been instrumental in shaping the discussion on racism and racial inequality since the 1970s (Nascimento 1978). The culmination of their efforts was the creation of the Movimento Negro Unificado [MNU: Unified Black Movement] in 1978. The movement gained prominence in the 1980s, especially around the commemoration of the 100 years of the abolition of slavery in Brazil. Their protests and demands were instrumental, amongst other things, for the codification of racism as a crime subject to imprisonment in the 1988 Constitution (Article 5: Para 42). However, the criminalisation of racism has not produced the positive anti-racist effects black organisations had envisioned (Guimarães 1998).

The barrage of studies showing the poor living standards of nonwhites compared to whites should have put the myth of racial democracy to rest. Yet, despite all the data, the myth is still shared by many Brazilians. Indeed, the myth has survived partly because many, including large sectors of the public, continue to interpret social inequality in terms of class rather than race. The popular saying that 'money whitens' encapsulates the widespread belief that poverty rather than colour explains social discrimination in Brazil. This presents an interesting paradox: the same studies that measured the extent of social inequality between whites and nonwhites, by explaining racial inequality *primarily* in terms of class, strengthened the myth of racial democracy. Freyre himself blamed class for the

social inequalities that could be found in Brazil. In this context, it is not surprising that 'the existence of racism is routinely denied, heavily qualified, and/or noticeably unmentioned in everyday talk in Brazil' (Sheriff 2001: 27).

The recent studies have been more effective at demonstrating the role of race in the reproduction of social inequality in Brazil. However, the myth of racial democracy has survived into the 21st century. Its resilience cannot be attributed to people's ignorance or to the fact that academic studies rarely reach the general public. Brazilians are (and have always been) aware of the social imbalance between whites and nonwhites in Brazil. These studies have contributed to quantify that imbalance, but only to confirm a fact that was already known by most Brazilians, especially by Afro-Brazilians. Thus, the question remains: 'If the sociological machinery so effectively reveals the operation of racism in Brazil's social configuration, why has this 'truth' yet to become self-evident to the majority of Brazilians?' (Ferreira da Silva 2004: 728).

* * * * *

These studies have not put to rest the myth of racial democracy because their socio-economic approach fails to engage with the crucial dimension: the *imagination*. The popularity of the myth—as is the case with all myths—does not rest on its factual value (on material grounds) but on its ideological force (on cultural grounds). Here, the opposition between the factual and the ideological is not meant to suggest that the myth is a fiction that hides the facts of life (and history) of Brazil. The point is that myths operate at another level and, as such, statistics are not enough to undermine their validity. Instead, what is required is the textual analysis of the myth itself. In this dissertation, this translates into the analysis of the historical narrative, the narration of the nation that underpins the hegemonic definition of Brazil(ianness).

The myth of racial democracy rests on two main elements: *hybridity* (defined as the essence of the nation) and *cordiality* (defined as the enabler of hybridity). Hybridity would be the result of the intimate relations between the

three constitutive peoples of Brazil. The centrality of hybridity in the national imagination is evident during the annual celebration of the national popular ritual that is Carnival, whose main symbol is the hybrid figure of the Mulata. Cordiality would be the attribute of the Portuguese which drove them to mingle with and embrace the Others. Cordiality was defined as the main attribute of Brazilians by Sérgio Buarque de Holanda in *Raízes do Brasil* (1936), and evoked by Gilberto Freyre in *Sobrados e Mucambos* (1936) to praise the character of the Mulatto. However, under the influence of Freyre's work, Buarque de Holanda's amoral concept of cordiality—one which referred to the primacy of the emotional (i.e. the intimate, the familiar, the private, the world of passions) amongst Brazilians—was transformed into a moral concept, synonymous with tolerance and benevolence, the same virtues Freyre attributed to the Portuguese colonists in their relations with the colonised Others. Thus, a concept created to define the *result* of hybridity (the cordiality of the Brazilians) was transformed into a concept that explains the *origins* of hybridity (the cordiality of the Portuguese).

This narration of the nation is common to both conservative scholars such as Gilberto Freyre, and progressive historians such as Manoel Bomfim, author of two major works that made him a pioneer in the construction of the contemporary national ideology: *O Brasil na América* (1929) and *O Brasil Nação* (1931). Like Freyre, Bomfim wrote of a 'peaceful colonial society cordially united', led by the 'tolerant tenacity' of the Portuguese, who practised a 'politics of friendship towards the Indian' and the 'innocent slavery' of the Africans ([1929]1997: 364, 349, 103 and 204). In *O Brasil Nação*, he reiterates that the 'frank and cordial assimilation of the Indian' and the 'essentially anti-slavocrat soul of the nation' reveal 'a traditional absence of prejudices' amongst the Portuguese ([1931]1996: 346, 382 and 486). To conclude this idyllic picture of Brazilian history, it is worth returning to Freyre, who in a curious passage on his formulation of the new-world-in-the-tropics, and in what can be construed as a racial reading of history, identified the absence of violence with whiteness. 'Revolutions—he wrote—either for independence from Portugal or for the Republic in 1889, have tended to be

white rather than bloody, and even the abolition of slavery was carried out through without violence' [*italics mine*] (Freyre 1959: 15-16).

The notion of colonial tolerance has long been refuted, amongst others, by Charles Boxer's studies on race relations in the Portuguese Empire. He concluded that: 'The Portuguese were neither angels nor devils; they were human beings and they acted as such' (1963: 122). Boxer also dispelled the notion of a tolerant policy in racial matters and the lack of a colour bar in the Portuguese colonies. A recent study of slavery in 15th and 16th century Portugal extends this conclusion to the metropolis, and reveals that the patterns of black slavery and racial prejudice in Portugal prefigured the conditions of black slavery and the attitude towards blacks in Brazil (Saunders 1982). If anything, the physical and legal treatment of slaves in Brazil seems to have been far more mistrustful and harsh than in Portugal—a logical reaction given the larger numbers of slaves and the emphasis on production and profits in Portuguese America. The work of Robert Conrad, especially the collection of documents on the history of black slavery contained in *Children of God's Fire* (1983), is enough to dispel any remaining notion of a benign or mild nature of slavery in Brazil. Similarly, John Hemming's *Red Gold* (1978) leaves no doubt about the violence employed by the Portuguese colonists against the indigenous peoples of Brazil.

The celebration of hybridity as the antidote to racism has come under increased scrutiny in recent times. There is a significant number of studies which suggest that hybridity serves to mask racism in Brazil. One line of argument, dating back to the 1970s, suggests that hybridity is a form of genocide intended to eliminate everything black or Afro-Brazilian (Nascimento 1978). This argument is reproduced, albeit in a more sophisticated fashion, in Kabengele Munanga's *Rediscutindo a mestiçagem no Brasil* (1999). The suggestion here is that hybridity amounts to a strategy of containment, that is, a surrogate (white) hegemony—to paraphrase the work of Ariel Trigo (2000: 86). Similarly, Hermano Vianna's *O Mistério do Samba* (1995) reveals and critiques hybridity as the new orthodoxy—one which presents indefiniteness as the new standard of definition and the only authentic form of Brazilianness. But hybridity has also been vindicated, most

significantly by Ricardo Benzaquen de Araújo in his post-modern analysis of *Casa-Grande & Senzala*, entitled *Guerra e Paz* (1994). His work not only presents hybridity as a concept that can prevent the essentialism associated with discourses of difference, but it also vindicates the usefulness of Freyre to (re)think Brazil(ianness) in the 21st century. This dissertation can be read as a critical analysis of the potential and limitations of hybridity to challenge racism and white hegemony in Brazil.

* * * * *

The popularity of the idealised concept of cordiality can be seen in the continuous currency of the expression *racismo cordial* [cordial racism], coined to refer to a form of racism that tries to avoid confrontation, a somewhat tolerant or polite racism. The nature of the cordial racist was illustrated in a survey carried out by the Núcleo de Pesquisa e Informação da Universidade Federal Fluminense (Data UFF) in Rio de Janeiro, in 1998. The survey, commissioned by the Centro de Articulação de Populações Marginalizadas (CEAP) and financed by the Ford Foundation, showed that 77% of those interviewed identified racial conflicts, especially at work. This seems to contradict the typical definition of Brazil as a racially harmonious place. However, the key lies in the explanations offered for those conflicts: 32% attribute conflicts to the fact that ‘whites do not like blacks’ but, more significantly, 46% attribute them to the fact that ‘blacks want the same conditions as whites’ (Frias 2000). This last figure shows that for a large sector of the population ‘blacks are inferior to whites and should not have the same rights as whites’ (Ivanir dos Santos, president of CEAP, quoted in Frias 2000). This attitude blames blacks for any racial conflicts, thus keeping intact the notion of the cordial racist. After all, cordiality cannot be the cause of conflicts. The message is clear: if blacks *knew their place* in society, there would be racial harmony in Brazil.

The expression *racismo cordial* gave title to the book based on a nation-wide survey on racial prejudice conducted in 1995 by the Institute of Research Datafolha, associated with the newspaper *A Folha de São Paulo*. The survey

confirmed the paradoxical thoughts Brazilians hold in relation to the existence of racial prejudice in Brazil. Thus, while 89% of Brazilians acknowledged there is racism in Brazil, only 10% admitted to holding racial prejudices themselves (Turra & Venturi 1995: 13). Interestingly, 87% of nonwhites showed some sort of prejudice by agreeing with racist statements or admitting having displayed discriminatory behaviour in the past (Turra & Venturi 1995: 16). Similar figures appeared in the study carried out by Data UFF. In this study, 93% of those interviewed recognised prejudice in others whereas only 12% did so in themselves (Frias 2000). These figures can be interpreted as a sign of hypocrisy or shame to admit to being racist in a society built on the myth of racial democracy. However, the figures can also explain the passive attitude towards racism typical of most Brazilians: individuals feel they have no need to change (because they do not see themselves as racist) and they do not challenge others when they are racist (because that would disrupt polite conviviality). Thus, racism is submerged beneath the surface of everyday polite exchanges. In this context, there is only one possible response to racism: silence (Twine 1998: 138). Yet, this pervasive and deafening silence betrays a hyperconsciousness of race: 'a system that is on the surface devoid of racial awareness [but] is in reality deeply immersed in racialized understandings of the social world' (Vargas 2004: 446).

The survey carried out by Datafolha also indicated that a large number of nonwhites hold prejudices against people of their own colour: 36% of blacks and browns completely agreed with the statement 'good blacks have white souls', while 20% of blacks and 17% of browns agreed partially (Turra & Venturi 1995: 129). The survey also showed that 85% of those interviewed believed that 'if blacks were well fed and had schooling then they would be as successful as whites'; whereas 78% believed that if nonwhites worked hard they would probably improve their life, despite any prejudices they might face. These numbers suggest that class-rather-than-race is still seen as the key to social inequality, and that individual behaviour (i.e. personal effort) can overcome discrimination. In essence, the study came to confirm the popularity of the

concepts of hybridity and cordiality upon which the myth of racial democracy has been built, and upon which white hegemony rests in Brazil.

The emphasis on class-over-race and the belief that money whitens which still underpin most sociological studies of, and popular beliefs about, racial inequality fail to provide a convincing explanation for the complex and subtle realities of racism and white hegemony in Brazil. The economic reductionism and determinism of this approach fail to answer some crucial questions: Why do middle-class nonwhites suffer racism and discrimination? Why is whitening a burgeoning part of the beauty and cosmetic industry? Why do people self-classify in the census as being whiter in skin tone than they really are? Why the tendency of blacks to reclassify themselves as brown and of browns to reclassify themselves as white? Why have parents long sought to whiten children's colour classification on birth registrations? Why do people seek to marry whiter partners? Why do so many nonwhites agree with statements like 'good blacks have white souls'? These questions can only be answered (if at all) from a cultural perspective, one that focuses on the *colonisation of the imagination*. This does not mean that socio-economic interpretations are useless —after all, the (re)production of racial inequality intertwines racism (race), classism (class), and sexism (gender)— but it means that they are insufficient to explain racism and white hegemony in Brazil.

The (De)Colonisation of the (Brazilian) Imagination

This dissertation takes a *postcolonial* approach to the paradox of racism and hybridity in Brazil. This approach adopts focus on culture and identity as a strategic means of engaging with issues of power inherent in colonial (and national) discourse, in this case the discourse of Brazilianness. This focus stems from the notion that culture is the privileged space of hegemonic power relations. Indeed, the postcolonial approach reveals how the cultural mediates relations of power 'as effectively, albeit in more indirect and subtle ways, as more public and visible forms of oppression' (Moore-Gilbert 1997: 8). The innovative character of

this approach does not lie in its object of study as much as in the fact that it operates *transversely*, that is, cutting across the totalising dichotomies of colonial discourse (i.e. self vs. other, subject vs. object, coloniser vs. colonised). These dichotomies are problematic because they fail to account for the heterogeneous nature of the realities they refer to, but also because they establish ideological hierarchies which invariably privilege the (civilised) Self over the (savage) Other. Having said that, it is necessary to appropriate these dichotomies ‘in order to constitute an object both for analysis and for resistance’ (Young 1995: 165).¹

The work of Edmundo O’Gorman (1961), José Rabasa (1993) and Walter Dignolo (2005) on the invention of America, Edward Said (1978) on the invention of the Orient, and Valentin Mudimbe (1988 and 1994) on the invention of Africa, have been influential in this dissertation, which is, to a large extent, a study on the *invention* of Brazil. These studies reveal how Europe came to terms with its colonies and justified their colonisation by producing narratives of Otherness where the Others are depicted as different and inferior to the canonical (modern and western) Self. These narratives established epistemological hierarchies that privileged a Eurocentric view of the world and turned modernity synonymous with Western Modernity—a phenomenon known as Eurocentrism but recently (re)conceptualised as Occidentalism (Venn 2000; Dignolo 1998). In this sense, Enrique Dussel has argued that the emergence of Modernity is coterminous with the emergence of Europe and that both are inextricably linked to the so-called discovery of America (1992). Dussel’s work—as we shall see later—is particularly useful to illustrate how colonialism enabled the transformation of Europe into the centre of the world-system and turned Western Modernity into the canonical definition of Modernity.

¹ The prefix post in postcolonial theory does not imply the end of colonialism nor does it imply a denial of the existence of colonisers and colonised. Instead, it indicates the need to rethink the relations of power between colonisers and colonised. In other words, the post in postcolonial evokes power (and, more specifically, resistance) rather than time. In this dissertation, a distinction is made between post-colonial (with a hyphen: when used in terms of time, meaning the *formal* end of colonialism) and postcolonial (without a hyphen: when used in terms of power, referring to an effort to escape colonial mentality, to resist and go beyond totalising distinctions).

The objective of postcolonial studies is to expose the Manichean allegory at the heart of colonial (and national) discourse, in this case the Eurocentrism that underpins the discourse of Brazilianness. This allegory begins with the definition of the world in *totalising* cultural distinctions: self vs. other; civilised vs. savage; modern vs. traditional; the West vs. the East or the West vs. the Rest. The allegory often continues with the reformulation of cultural differences into racial differences (white vs. black or white vs. nonwhite) and their transformation into moral and even metaphysical differences (JanMohamed 1985). What takes place here is a process of *reification*: 'the apprehension of the products of human activity *as if* they were something other than human products —such as facts of nature, results of cosmic laws, or manifestations of divine will' (Berger & Luckmann 1966: 106). The subsequent articulation of difference in hierarchical terms presented the colonial condition —the domination of so-called superior peoples over so-called inferior peoples— as a regime of truth, as something natural and even desirable. The normalisation of a particular social order transforms domination into hegemony, a more subtle form of power that combines coercion and consent —as theorised by Antonio Gramsci in his *Letters from Prison* (1946).

In colonial regimes, consent is achieved by the interpellation of the colonised subject by colonial discourse, so that the coloniser's values, attitudes and beliefs are accepted as a matter of course as the most natural and valuable. The inevitable consequence of such interpretation is that the colonised subject understands itself as peripheral to those values, while at the same time accepting their centrality. The process of (colonial) subjection is carried out by institutions such as schools, museums, churches, hospitals and the police. These and other state institutions interpellate subjects, and provide the conditions by which, and the context in which, they obtain subjectivity. In postcolonial studies, the process by which (colonial) discourse produce (colonial) subjects is known as the colonisation of the mind (Thiong'o 1986) or the colonisation of the imagination (Pieterse & Parekh 1995).

The ultimate goal of postcolonial studies is the *decolonisation of the imagination*. This task requires, first and foremost, the realisation that reality is not natural, but a social construct—as theorised by Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann in their classic work *The Social Construction of Reality* (1966). The task also requires the realisation that ideologies and discourses—the world of ideas (and values) and their articulation in the form of systems of statements—play a crucial role in the construction of social reality. Here, the work of Michel Foucault on discursive formations is particularly useful, especially *The Order of Things* (1970) and *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (1972). His articulation of the relation between knowledge and power has been highly instrumental in many postcolonial studies, most notably in Edward Said's *Orientalism* (1978). Foucault theorised that those who have power control knowledge (i.e. they control what is known and the way that is known) and the control of knowledge in turn enables them to maintain and reinforce their power.

The concept used by Foucault to bring knowledge and power together is that of discourse—a language with a specific set of rules (i.e. with its own grammar and vocabulary, with principles of inclusion and exclusion) that determine what can and cannot be said, that is, that determine the kind of statements that can be made. In other words, discourses are strongly bounded areas of social knowledge, that is, systems of statements within which the world can be known. Throughout this dissertation, several discourses will be identified as underpinning the ideological formulation of Brazil(ianness): colonial discourse, religious discourse, economic discourse, national(ist) discourse, and history (the discipline), amongst others. The articulation of power and knowledge in the form of discourses is particularly useful for the analysis of the relations between colonisers and colonised, the colonist Self and the colonised Other.

The concept of discourse is part of Foucault's theory of representation—defined here as an exercise of power by which the represented (the Other) becomes a material possession (an object) in the imagination of the producer (the Self). Thus, for example, the discourse of Orientalism—a way of knowing the Orient—is a way of maintaining power over the Orient. Similarly, the discourse of

Brazilianness—a way of knowing Brazil—is a way of maintaining power in Brazil. The corollary of all this is that resistance and emancipation need to be concerned not just with changing social reality but also the representations that reproduce and legitimise domination—in this case representations that reproduce and legitimise white hegemony in Brazil. In other words, the fight against racism needs to be concerned with the decolonisation of the imagination—in this case the decolonisation of Brazilianness.

The work that best theorises the centrality of the imagination in the social construction of reality is arguably that of Cornelius Castoriadis, in particular *The Imaginary Institution of Society* (1975). In this work, Castoriadis identifies two dimensions in each culture: the imaginary (ideas and concepts) and the functional (the materialisation of the imaginary on everyday life). In other words, culture is conceived both as a totality of signifiers (images and symbols) which give sense to human life, and as a way of life (customs and traditions). The two dimensions are necessary to our existence as human beings, and they interact permanently, modifying each other in the process. However, Castoriadis argues the primacy of the *imaginary* dimension in the history of humanity. Firstly, the imaginary defines the identity of people(s), that is, how they perceive and interpret themselves and the world that surrounds them. Secondly, only the very existence of the imaginary allows us to give valid explanations to many aspects of our reality that escape rational consideration (i.e. religiosity and nationalism). Moreover, the imaginary is prior to the real (something available to perception and empirical scrutiny) and the rational (something deducible via the rules of thought of a culture).

Castoriadis identifies a specific set of ideas and concepts within the realm of the imaginary (or symbolic universe) that are particularly important: *social imaginaries*. These are ideas that give sense and coherence to the symbolic universe. They are collective representations that govern the systems of identification and social integration (and exclusion). They shape collective identities and are also the ultimate providers of social orientation. Social imaginaries result from acts of cultural creation that become fundamental to any subsequent system of cultural (re)presentation. However, in order to gain access

to their knowledge, one has to analyse the *symbolic*, for 'the imaginary has to use the symbolic not only to "express" itself (this is self-evident), but to exist, to pass from the virtual to anything more than this' ([1975]1987: 127). The analysis of the symbolic —the mediator between the imaginary and the real— allows us to identify those social imaginaries that transform a particular social order into something natural for the population. Therefore, the deconstruction of social imaginaries and of the discourses in which they are located is essential for the decolonisation of the imagination and the reconstruction of social reality. Here, this means the deconstruction of Brazil(ianness).

The focus on the cultural —and, more specifically, on the imaginary, the ideological and the discursive— is not a simple theoretical preference, but a reaction to the relative neglect of this dimension in studies of racism in Brazil. Howard Winant, amongst others, has identified the neglect of 'the discursive and cultural dimensions of racism' as one of the 'debilitating problems' of the social science literature on race and racism in Brazil (1992: 192). Since then several important contributions on the cultural and discursive dimensions of racism have been published, amongst them Frances Twine's *Racism in a Racial Democracy* (1998) and Robin Sheriff's *Dreaming Equality* (2001). Twine's work contains a chapter on discourses of racial democracy articulated by the people of Vassalia, a small town located in the state of Rio de Janeiro (1998: 65-86), whereas Sheriff's work contains a chapter on discourses on colour and race articulated by the inhabitants of Morro do Sangue Bom, a shanty-town [*favela*] of Rio de Janeiro (2001: 29-58), a chapter on middle-class discourses on whiteness articulated by middle-class inhabitants of the neighbourhood of Santa Teresa, in Rio de Janeiro (2001: 150-184), and another on discourses on blackness articulated by militant black activists of Rio de Janeiro (2001: 185-217). Beyond the specific chapters, these studies reveal the importance of the semiotic and the discursive for understanding the complexity of racism in contemporary Brazil.

The works of Twine and Sheriff reflect a partial analytical shift towards the cultural and the discursive in studies of racism and inequality in Brazil. This shift can be clearly illustrated by comparing the two most important edited books on

race and racism in Brazil published in English in recent times: *Race, Class, and Power in Brazil* (1985), edited by Pierre-Michel Fontaine; and *Racial Politics in Contemporary Brazil* (1999), edited by Michael Hanchard. Whereas the former has a clear emphasis on class and the economic dimension of racism, the latter gives considerable attention to identity and the cultural dimension of racism. *Racial Politics in Contemporary Brazil* also pays attention to the gender dimension of racism, something that was completely absent from *Race, Class, and Power in Brazil*. Finally, the volume edited by Hanchard provides space for black activists and politicians, rather than just academics. All this illustrates a more complex and inclusive approach to analysing racial inequality that can only enhance our understanding of racism and white hegemony in Brazil.

* * * * *

This dissertation is, first and foremost, a critical analysis of symbols and discourses that legitimise white hegemony in Brazil. Therefore, it is important to acknowledge here the work of those authors who over the years have studied the representations of race in Brazil. The representation of black(nes)s in textbooks has been analysed, amongst others, by Ana Célia da Silva (1995). Her work reveals that blacks are depicted in a grotesque style and caricatured as animals, given names less often than whites, depicted as social inferiors of whites, as well as excluded from references in history or social science texts. This portrait of blacks leads to 'the introjection and assumption of Eurocentric ideological values' (Silva 1995: 16). This pejorative representation of black(nes)s informs and reinforces patterns of social discrimination and often produces self-fulfilling prophecies (Telles 2004: 158).

The structural absence or general invisibility of nonwhites, and their negative stereotypes and subordinate roles when they are visible, are also the main finding of the studies on the representation of black(nes)s in Brazilian cinema (Rodrigues 1988) and Brazilian culture (Stam 1997). Television commercials, news programs and advertisements are more evocative of Europe

than of a hybrid country. In this sense, Robert Stam notes that 'whereas African Americans, a demographic minority, are highly visible in U.S. media, Afro Brazilians, a demographic majority, are virtually invisible in Brazil' (1997: 342). Thus, for example, a study of blacks in advertising found that of the two hundred and three ads from television and weekly magazines, blacks appeared in only nine of them (Hasenbalg & Silva 1988: 185-188). Similar conclusions are reached by Jaques d'Adesky in his chapter on the treatment of blacks in Brazilian media (2001: 87-118). He concludes that the fact that the written press 'ignores the cultural diversity and the ethnic pluralism of the country, reveals in truth an ethnocentrism which privileges news relative to segments of the population with frames of reference native to Europe and the United States' (2001: 96).

The representation of black(nes)s and white(nes)s on television has been analysed in depth by Denise Ferreira da Silva (1991) and Joel Zito Araújo (2000) in their respective studies on soap operas [*telenovelas*], as well as by Amelia Simpson (1993), in her work on the most famous television presenter and mediatic figure of Brazil, Xuxa. These studies have important resonances with this dissertation, insofar as they reveal how television has defined Brazilians as Europeans, ignoring many Other (non-European) aspects of Brazilian popular culture, such as Afro-Brazilian religions (Araújo 2000), and how it has reinforced white hegemony through the identification of whiteness with Modernity (Ferreira da Silva 1991). Simpson's work confirms this identification of whiteness with Modernity and shows the centrality of gender (and patterns of female beauty) in the reproduction of white hegemony in contemporary Brazil.

The scarce representation of the African Other in the national media can also be noticed in the news coverage of Africa, something which I observed in my six month survey of the popular magazine *Veja* carried out in 2001. Not only was the level of coverage inferior, but this consisted mostly of stories of violence, death and corruption, reproducing the classical colonial discourse of the Dark Continent. The news coverage and reports revealed a rejection of Africa (the Third World) and the embrace of Europe and the United States (the First World). In the case of the Brazilian Indians, their depiction in the national media emphasises

their exoticism and their closeness to Nature. Thus, stories often showed the native lost in the urban jungle, in the world of Civilisation.

In short, textbooks and the media tend to reproduce, naturalise and legitimise the inferiority of nonwhites, through their erasure or through their representation as natural (or culturally inferior) beings. In the case of the Brazilian Indians (the Indian Other) this is mostly through their association with the idyllic side of Nature, evoking images of a pristine Amazon; whereas in the case of Afro-Brazilians (the African Other) this is mostly through their association with the dark side of Nature (evoking images of Africa as the Dark Continent). Modernity, and thus modern Brazil, belongs to the Luso-Brazilians, the Portuguese of Brazil (the European Self). In essence, the analysis reveals a racist culture and the Eurocentrism that defines contemporary Brazil(ianness). This dissertation contributes to this line of argument through the analysis of the major symbols that have come to define the historical formation and the ideological formulation of Brazil(ianness): Discovery, Independence, Abolition and Hybridity.

* * * * *

The emphasis on the cultural and the discursive runs the risk of losing sight of the material dimension of social oppression in (post-) colonial societies like Brazil. This has been the main concern raised by critics of postcolonial theory, such as Aijad Ahmad (1992), Arif Dirlik (1997), and Benita Parry (2004). Yet, whilst it is important to recognise the need to establish adequate referents to everyday sociality in all theoretical activities, one must resist the temptation to dismiss the importance of the cultural and the discursive in the study of society. There is no form of oppression that can operate institutionally without an ideological and legitimising discourse. Moreover, attention to the cultural is essential not only to understand the manufacturing of consent but it is also essential to understand anti-colonial resistance. The limited access of the colonised to economic resources and political representation means that anti-colonial resistance is often articulated in cultural terms, through a *politics of culture* (Gilroy 1993). Moreover, one must

remember that a *politics of identity* can produce politically viable categories that rearticulate small differences into rubrics capable of generating anti-discriminatory policies—as theorised by Stuart Hall. The recent work of Kia Lilly Caldwell entitled *Negras in Brazil* (2007) confirms the relevance of identity politics for members of racially marginalised communities, in this case for the black women of Brazil.

(Eurocentric) History or the Writing of (White) Hegemony

The postcolonial approach to racism that informs this dissertation demands a critique of history (the discipline) and the discourse of Modernity. Indeed, postcolonialism can best be thought of as a critique of history, as noted by Robert Young in *White Mythologies* (1990). This critique shows that the writing of history entails issues of representation, involving epistemologies, ideologies and aesthetics, all of which make the writing of history a political matter. More specifically, postcolonialism offers a critique of history as the discourse through which the West has asserted its hegemony over the World. Here, this critique will be deployed to argue that Brazilian History is the Eurocentric discourse through which Luso-Brazilians have asserted their hegemony over the rest of Brazilians, that is, the discourse which has cemented white hegemony in Brazil.

However, before moving into the analysis of the national, it is important to contextualise the critique of history into the broader critique of Modernity, the discourse that sustains white hegemony globally, not only in Brazil. This translates into the examination of the place of the so-called discovery of America and the place of slavery in the articulation of Modernity. The relation between modernity, discovery and slavery is particularly relevant in the context of the present dissertation given that these three signifiers have come to represent the specific position of each of the three groups that form the master-narrative of Brazilianness: Europeans (the agents of Modernity), Indians (the objects of Discovery) and Africans (the objects of Slavery).

The discovery of America has been (and still is) widely considered to signal the beginning of history in the Americas. The implication is that the peoples who inhabited this part of the world had no history (or were living out of history) until the arrival of Columbus. The distinction between peoples with and without history is a Eurocentric, teleological, and developmental conception of world history based on Hegel's contention that history (here synonymous with civilisation) travels west. Hegel argued that Asia (the East) was the origin of civilisation, but only in Europe (the West) had civilisation reached its culmination. In other words, Western civilisation marked 'the End of History'. In terms of this logic, colonialism is 'the story of making the world historical, or, we might argue, a way of "worlding" the world as Europe' (Gandhi 1998: 171). The most recent and popular reformulation of this Eurocentric notion of world history is arguably Francis Fukuyama's *The End of History and the Last Man* (1992).

This vision of world history and modernity has been the object of intense scrutiny in recent times. One of the earliest critiques was Eric Wolf's *Europe and the People Without History* (1982). Wolf refutes the notion that the peoples brought into the world-system through the advance of colonialism and capitalism were peoples without history, or leaving until that moment outside of history. More recently, from a postcolonial perspective, Dipesh Chakrabarty's *Provincializing Europe* (2000) has sought—as the title of the book indicates—to decentre Europe in the construction of Modernity. Significantly, there is also an important body of substantial criticism coming from Latin America.² Indeed, the most comprehensive and systematic critique of the Eurocentric vision of history and modernity is arguably the work of the Argentine philosopher Enrique Dussel.

² For a range of Latin American perspectives on Eurocentrism, (post)Modernity and (post) Colonialism see, for example, Dorando Juan Michelini, José San Martín and Fernando Lagrave (eds.), *Modernidad y Posmodernidad en America Latina* (1991); John Beverly, José Oviedo and Michael Aronna (eds.), *The Postmodernism Debate in Latin America* (1995); Edgardo Lander (comp.), *La Colonialidad del Saber: Eurocentrismo y Ciencias Sociales* (2000); and Rita de Grandis and Zilá Bernd (eds.), *Unforseeable Americas* (2000). For an excellent critical overview of Latin American studies (and theories) of Modernity, see Santiago Castro-Gómez, *Crítica de la Razón Latinoamericana* (1996).

Dussel brings together the historical and ontological dimensions of Eurocentric Modernity in a way that reveals the intimate relation between colonial power [Colonialism] and the modern subject [Modernity]. He argues that the concept of the *ego cogito* (I think) as an all-powerful-being able to constitute the world of things results from the *ego conquiro* (I conquer), that is, from the process of conquest and colonisation of the Americas. It is as if the *ego conquiro* of Columbus that led to the conquest of America and the birth of Modern History was part-and-parcel of the *ego cogito* of Descartes that led to the philosophical formulation of (Western) Modernity and the birth of the Modern Self. Importantly, the *ego cogito* retained the essence of the *ego conquiro* and thus remained an expression of will to power: 'I think' became 'I want' became 'I conquer' (1992: 50-61).

Dussel rejects the notion that Modernity is an exclusively European phenomenon—one that originates with the Italian Renaissance, develops with the German Reformation and the French Enlightenment, and culminates with the French Revolution, and subsequently spreads itself throughout the entire world on the back of the British Industrial Revolution. Dussel's main critique relates to the failure of these narratives to realise (let alone recognise) the crucial contribution of the non-European Other(s) in the formation of Modernity. He takes to task the work of Hegel and Jürgen Habermas' *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity* (1987)—at the time, in his view, the most prominent contemporary illustration of this Eurocentric narrative of Modernity. In particular, Dussel critiques Habermas' dismissal of the impact of the discovery and conquest of America in his account of the origins and development of Modernity (Dussel 1992: 19-30).³

Dussel argues that the discovery of America signals the birth of Modernity—synonymous here with the modern world-system theorised by Immanuel Wallerstein (1974). Modernity began with the simultaneous constitution of Europe (and more specifically, Spain) as *centre* and America (Spanish America) as its

³ The concept of discovery—crucial for a postcolonial analysis of modernity—is surprisingly absent from the otherwise excellent introductory dictionary to postcolonial studies published by Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin, entitled *Key Concepts in Post-Colonial Studies* (1998).

periphery —a distinction that eventually incorporated the totality of the world and gave birth to popular formulas such as ‘the West and the Rest’. This *planetary paradigm* of modernity does not deny the notion of European (or Western) Modernity. However, European Modernity is no longer conceived as ‘an *independent, autopoietic, self-referential system, but instead [as] part of a world-system: in fact, its center*’ (Dussel 1998: 4). Modernity is no longer a phenomenon of Europe as an independent system, but a phenomenon proper to the system *centre-periphery* where Europe functions as centre —a centrality that came as a result of the discovery and colonisation of America. The access to the enormous riches and vast lands of the Americas gave Europe the *comparative advantage* over the Muslim, Indian and Chinese worlds that enabled the transformation of Europe from the periphery of the ‘interregional system’ (comprising Asia, Africa and Europe, and with centre in the Middle-East) into the centre of the first ‘world system’ (Dussel 1992: 125-129; and 1998: 5-12).

The colonisation of the Americas that enabled Europe to emerge as the centre of the world-system also allowed Europe ‘to transform itself in something like the “reflexive consciousness” (modern philosophy) of world history’ (Dussel 1998: 5). This transformation began with the interpretation of the arrival of Columbus to the other side of the Atlantic as a *discovery*, and the definition of the continent he reached as the New World (America) in opposition to the Old World (Europe). The formulation of America as the New World has come to be known as the *invention* of America. This notion first appeared in a book by Mexican philosophical historian Edmundo O’Gorman with precisely that title: *La invención de América* (1958).

O’Gorman argues that the appearance of America in the historical scene took place not as a result of a purely physical discovery but was the result of ‘an inspired invention of Western thought’ ([1958]1961: 4). In other words, the notion that America was discovered was the result of a process of interpretation of an event, not a statement of fact. O’Gorman argues that the being of things and events (not their existence) ‘depends on the meaning given to them within the framework of the image of reality valid at a particular moment’ ([1958]1961: 51).

Thus, the invention of America is the process of attributing meaning (within the cultural horizon of the time) to an event (the arrival of Columbus) and to a thing (the 'lump of cosmic matter' where Columbus arrived).

The first definition of the land reached by Columbus was produced by Columbus himself: Asia [India]. This was quickly replaced by the notion of a New World —tentatively by Columbus, and definitely by Amerigo Vespucci. The New World was viewed initially as a different ontological region —not so much as a separate continent but as a separate world. It was a vision based on a discourse of difference between the new and the old, mediated by narratives of exoticism and eroticism. The result was a portrait of the New World (not yet America) as a higher region of the world in the vicinity of (and often synonymous with) the Terrestrial Paradise.⁴ This is the notion in Vespucci's letters, especially in *Mundus Novus* (1503). This vision of paradise was the first moment in the invention of America. The second came with the reduction of the ontological notion of the New World into a geographic concept denoting and naming a new continent: America (Rabasa 1993: 16). This is the notion in Matthias Ringmann and Martin Waldseemüller's *Cosmographiae Introductio* (1507). This work contains the first textual and graphic reference to the New World as a 'fourth continent', which they called America in honour of Amerigo Vespucci. The third moment of the invention of America came with 'the accumulation of data under the rubric of New World' that produced an encyclopaedic compendium by the mid-16th century (Rabasa 1993: 16).

The master narrative of the New World is *Mundus Novus*, the letter by Amerigo Vespucci to Pedro Lorenzo de Medicis, written in Lisbon and dated from 1503. The letter —a chronicle of Vespucci's first expedition under the auspices of the Portuguese Crown— offers a description of the land (the coast of what later came to be known as Brazil) and the people they encountered (the Tupinambá). The dominant trope in the letter is that of Nature: the land as

⁴ The texts of Columbus and Vespucci are perfect examples of the *discourse of the marvellous* identified by Stephen Greenblatt in his analysis of the travel narratives of discovery and exploration of the 16th and 17th centuries, entitled *Marvelous Possessions* (1991). See also Peter Hulme's *Colonial Encounters* (1986), and Guillermo Giucci's *Viajantes do Maravilhoso* (1992).

Terrestrial Paradise, and the natives as natural beings (i.e. savages) living in complete social and moral freedom (i.e. with no rules, rulers, idols, temples or beliefs), that is, as people living in the State of Nature.

The invention of America as the New World served to redefine Europe and to legitimise the egocentric and Eurocentric project (and process) of the colonisation of America. The portrait of the Tupinambá in *Mundus Novus* became the cornerstone of the theoretical construction of 'natural goodness' initiated by 16th century humanism that culminated with 18th century revolutionary individualism, and in doing so made its author (Amerigo Vespucci) and its inspiration (the Tupinambá) central to the origins of (Western) Modernity. Afonso Arinos de Mello Franco's *O Índio Brasileiro e a Revolução Francesa* (1937) documents the presence of the figure of the Tupinambá in the work of 15th century travellers (Vespucci, Jean de Léry, and André Thevet), 16th century humanists (Erasmus, Thomas More, and Michel de Montaigne), 17th century jurists (Grotious and Pufendorf), and 18th century philosophers (Montesquieu, Voltaire, and Rousseau). In other words, the portrait of the Tupinambá in 15th century chronicles inspired a series of utopian narratives that culminated in the revolutionary ideals of the Enlightenment.

The place of the Tupinambá in the narratives that originated the modern (civilised) Self was that of the natural (savage) Other. Their depiction as natural beings positioned them outside the margins of civilisation, in other words, out of History. The ontology of America contained in *Mundus Novus* came to define the invention of America —and with it the birth of (Eurocentric) Modernity. In this sense, *Mundus Novus* constitutes the first modern text, and Vespucci the first modern (Eurocentric) subject —the first to define the European Self (himself) in opposition to the Amerindian Other (the Tupinambá).

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If Amerigo Vespucci can be defined as the first modern subject, the first agent of modernity is arguably Christopher Columbus, the figure that best synthesises the

spirit of adventure (the desire of the exotic) and commerce (the desire of profit) that defined 15th century Europe. His ambitious expedition opened a new commercial route that would fill Europe with tons of gold, silver, sugar and coffee, and America with millions of African slaves. Columbus himself was the first to profit from the new route, trading gold (from the colonies) and slaves (in both directions). Indeed, Columbus introduced —alongside the discovery of America— the other crucial aspect that marked (Eurocentric) Modernity: trans-Atlantic Slavery.

Slavery played a central role in shaping the world-system and the entry and exit from modernity of most colonies, empires, and nations, until the late 19th century. The comparative advantage enjoyed by Europe after the discovery of America was only definitive after the opening of the African slave trade across the Atlantic. The slaves from Africa were the human engine responsible for the extraction of mineral riches and the exploitation of plantations in the Americas. Slavery fuelled the development of the Atlantic world —a world based on a complementary economy between Africa (reproduction of labour force), America (production of sugar, tobacco, cotton and coffee) and Europe (accumulation of capital and production of manufactured goods). In essence, the human destruction of Africa and the material exploitation of America fuelled the economic development of Europe (Rodney 1972) and enabled its constitution as the centre of the Atlantic System (Solow 1991), and indeed of the World System.

The relation between slavery and modernity has been an important object of discussion ever since Eric Williams published *Capitalism and Slavery* (1944). The central debate is over the role of slavery (and the slave trade) versus innovation (both technological and managerial) as the key factor that explains the origins of the capital that financed the process of industrialisation, in particular the British Industrial Revolution. The continuation of this debate has not impeded the emergence of a broadening consensus on the decisive role of slavery in the creation of the economic system developed across the Atlantic (Solow 1991). Slavery was central in the incorporation of Africa and America into the Atlantic System. Moreover, the fortunes created by the colonial trade (a trade on slaves

and slave produce) gave the French bourgeoisie the power, the pride, and the ambition to assert their right to liberty and promote the ideas of the Enlightenment (James [1938]1963: 47-50).

The intimate relation between slavery and modernity was mediated from the very beginning by the ideology of racism. The word race had been originally used to refer to a group of people of common descent defined by cultural identity and historical continuity. In other words, race began its life as synonymous with traditional definitions of ethnic groups, such as tribe and nation (as used prior to the 18th century). The transformation of race into racism, that is, the systematic categorisation of peoples in hierarchical structures, began with the colonisation of Africa and the Americas. The first contentions about the natural inferiority of racially defined peoples came with the need to define the appropriate relations between Europeans and Indians—the most famous being the debates between Las Casas and Sepúlveda at Valladolid in 1550. The need to legitimise the political domination and economic exploitation of peoples with different physical traits would make racism the perfect ideology in the age of imperial expansion. However, the meaning of race and the articulation of racism—including notions such as ‘purity of blood’—retained a dominant *cultural* (often religious) dimension until well into the 18th century.

The term race came to mean a distinct category of human beings with physical characteristics transmitted by descent only in the late 18th century. The transformation of race into a *biological* concept culminated in the 19th century with the ascendancy of ‘scientific racism’—a doctrine that divided humanity into a series of natural types recognisable by hereditary physical features interpreted as markers of psychological characteristics and intellectual abilities. The result was a typology of racial groups that run alongside a hierarchical gradation of skin colour: from white (caucasian), to yellow (mongoloid), to black (negroid), with all the so-called mixed-bloods somewhere in between. The latter fuelled fear and hatred amongst defenders of racial purity and the emergence of a racial industry dedicated to calculate racial percentages (half-caste, quarter-caste, and so on).

The formulation of difference in biological (and hierarchical) terms not only reinforced the institution of slavery but it also meant that the abolition of slavery would not bring the end of racism and white hegemony. White supremacy was now predicated on the basis of fixed biological traits inherited through the blood and visible through the skin. The assumption that race (skin colour) was somehow connected with ways of life (i.e. polygamy) and social status (i.e. slavery) allowed cultural prejudices to easily slid off towards racial prejudice—a process that was made easier by the popular association of white and black with light and dark, and the translation of these physical realities into moral polarities (good versus evil) and aesthetic values (beauty versus ugliness). Thus, for example, as we shall see later, the reformulation of social relations (master versus slave) in racial terms (white versus black) ensured that the abolition of slavery would not challenge white supremacy in Brazil.

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The fact that scientists have discredited and rejected the validity of any scientific notion of race rooted in biology suggests we might be witnessing the ‘crisis of raciology’ (Gilroy 2000: 11-53). However, we should be wary of premature celebrations of the end of race, let alone ‘the end of racism’—to borrow the title of Dinesh D'Souza's frontal attack on ‘the pathology of race’ (1995). For a start, the scientific refutation of the concept of race cannot eliminate the biological markers—the most obvious being skin colour—that have made the idea of race so effective as an organising principle through which people recognise and articulate difference in their everyday lives. This does not mean that there is any validity behind any form of race thinking but it does mean that to eradicate raci(al)ism from society is a far more difficult task than the scientific refutation of the idea of race. Moreover, the popularity of race thinking (also known as racialism or raciology) has coincided historically with the importance attributed to biology in determining human behaviour. The current popularity of biological explanations for human behaviour, linked to the revolution in genetics, rather than discredit

the notion of race altogether, might in fact lend an air of legitimacy to race thinking. Similarly, the current celebration of the body as a powerful marker of identity can reinforce ideas of biological identity and reinvigorate race thinking.

The scientific discredit of the idea of race can lead to the end of scientific racism (racism based on science: evidence) but will barely affect cultural racism (racism based on culture: imagination). The idea of race has become a constituent element of everyday common sense and therefore its excision from scientific discourse will not necessarily undermine its popularity. The cultural formulation of racism enables new forms of racial discourse, often about the role and position of ethnic minorities in society. The trend towards the articulation of forms of cultural racism has been noted by scholars in a number of societies in recent times: France, Germany, Great Britain, and the United States. Yet, cultural racism has been the norm in colonial (and post-colonial) settings like Brazil, where racism has been often articulated in terms of Eurocentrism.

The end of raci(al)ism requires first and foremost the realisation that race is an ideological construction (product of historical processes and cultural values) rather than a biological phenomenon (product of genetically determined physical differences). The neglect of the cultural dimension of racism has severely limited our ability to challenge racism and white hegemony, both globally and in Brazil. In order to overcome this limitation we must focus on the colonial and national imagination, both of which are closely related to the discourse of race and the ideology of racism. In the context of this dissertation, this translates, first and foremost, into the analysis of the narrative construction of Brazil(ianness), that is, into the analysis of the ideological formulation of Brazil(ianness).

The (Re)Invention of the (Brazilian) Nation

The specific object of this study is the idea of nation, that is, the idea of Brazil. The focus on the nation rests on two main considerations. The first, of a theoretical nature, relates to the significance of the imaginary in (re)producing reality,

coupled with the fact that the nation is arguably the foremost modern social imaginary. Indeed, the centrality of the nation in modern societies is compelling evidence that, although we live in a world where reason (the rational) is pushed to its limits, 'the life of the modern world is just as dependent on the imaginary as any archaic or historical culture' (Castoriadis [1975]1987: 156). The second consideration is of a practical nature, and relates to the suggestion of previous scholars regarding the need to explore the construction of national identity to better understand racism in Brazil.

The analysis of the link between race and national identity in Brazil was pioneered by Thomas Skidmore in *White on Black* (1974), a study of the discourse of race and nation produced by the 19th century Brazilian elite. More recently, Lilia Moritz Schwarcz has analysed the discourses of race and nation produced by a range of Brazilian institutions, in *O Espetáculo das Raças* (1993). The confluence of race and nation has gained prominence in recent times, with several important studies focused on Latin America, such as: Winthrop Wright's *Café con Leche* (1990); Nancy Stepan's "*The Hour of Eugenics*" (1991); Peter Wade's *Blackness and Race Mixture* (1993); Aline Helg's *Our Rightful Share* (1995); and Robin Moore's *Nationalizing Blackness* (1997). The need to continue this line of work in order to deepen our understanding of racism in Brazil has been expressed, amongst others, by Alfredo Sérgio Guimarães, in *Racismo e anti-racismo no Brasil* (1999). Thus, the purpose of this dissertation is to contribute to a better understanding of racism by exploring the relation between racism and nation(alism), that is, between racism and the formation and formulation of Brazil(ianness).

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The nation is conceived here as an *imagined community*, that is, as a product of the imagination (Anderson 1983). This does not mean that nations lack material reality (i.e. geographical dimensions), temporal structures (i.e. historical narratives) and sociological markers (i.e. language or religion). It means that those markers, structures and realities are shaped by the ideology that invents and

narrates the nation, that is, by the ideology of nationalism. In other words, nations are *inventions* of nationalism, a political doctrine formulated by the national(ist) elites to create a culturally homogenous population that would be subordinate and subservient to the State (Gellner 1983). To put it differently, the nation is not a material reality but an ideological construct that legitimises a specific social order. Moreover, the nation is a symbolic device that produces social subjects. Thus, for example, Brazil is a symbolic device that produces Brazilians.

The definition of the nation as invention should not be taken to mean that nations are false or fictitious entities. Nations are real entities to the extent that they operate as signifiers in the real world. Instead, the notion of nation as invention is meant to indicate that nations are narratives, composed of particular memories and traditions, of specific combinations of historical experiences. The narrators of the nation *carefully* select those events that best reflect their values and interests, excluding those which challenge their idea of what the nation is and ought to be. In other words, national(ist) narratives are always partial, selective and incomplete. They privilege a particular set of values and voices while excluding or marginalising others, those of the external and internal Others.

This makes the narration of the nation a project and a process that is doubly ideological, that is, ideological in two different albeit compatible ways. On the one hand, the narration of the nation is ideological insofar as it is an activity that takes place and relates to the world of ideas. In other words, the narration of the nation is the narrative articulation of an idea, in this case the idea of Brazil. On the other hand, the narration of the nation is ideological insofar as it is an activity that produces a partial and particular portrait of the nation that reflects a specific set of beliefs, attitudes and values held by a particular group. This second use of the term ideological combines elements of both major (and traditionally opposed) definitions of ideology: the negative definition (i.e. ideology as a distorted view of reality —referred here as partial and particular) and the neutral definition (i.e. ideology as a set of beliefs, attitudes and values held by an individual or community that shapes their understanding of the world and their relation with others). Note that, in this second use of the term ideological, the constitutive

elements of the neutral definition (i.e. beliefs, attitudes and values) are what produce the distorted (i.e. partial and particular) view of reality that constitutes the negative definition. In short, the term ideological—as used in this dissertation—refers always to the world of ideas and to a partial and particular view of the world, of reality.

It is worth noting here that all knowledge of the world is ideological, that is, articulated in partial and particular views of the world (ideologies) using specific languages, with their own vocabularies and grammars which produce specific systems of statements (discourses). This does not mean that all knowledge is totally false—or that the knowledge produced by ideologies is totally false. The knowledge that ideologies permit is only partially false. It is false in the sense that it does not permit access to the whole truth, to the totality of reality. However, the knowledge that ideologies permit is also partially real, and it is so in a double sense. Firstly, it is real in that it exists as part of reality. Indeed, ideological knowledge, being the only possible knowledge, is in fact the only real knowledge. Secondly, and more importantly, is it real in the sense that it has profound effects on reality. Ideologies do not reflect a (partial and particular) view of reality inasmuch as they construct a (partial and particular) view of reality, and in doing so contribute to shape and construct reality in the image of their own partial and particular view of the world.

The intimate relation between knowledge and power means that the most powerful social groups tend to be the ones who shape reality and the knowledge of reality, and they do so in ways that reflect their partial and particular values, attitudes and beliefs, and often also their material interests. Yet, the power and the ability of the national(ist) elites to shape the construction of the nation and ‘control the imaginary’ (Lima 1988) does not mean nations can be reduced to the economic interests of the state elites, as has been argued by Ernest Gellner. Nor does it mean that nations can be reduced to the stories championed by those elites—as suggested, for example, by Benedict Anderson (1983). There is no doubt that the idea of nation is invariably used by the national(ist) elites to legitimate their power or their ambitions of power. But that is not all there is to the nation. For a

start, that use remains open to contention and contestation, as does the narration of the nation, and even the very concept of nation. Moreover, invented histories and traditions are not so arbitrary that '[a]ny old shred and patch would have served as well', as contended by Gellner (1983: 56). The narration of the nation is not only constrained by the *available* past, but historical inventions need to *resonate* with the population to have the kind of impact necessary to generate the deep felt attachment that nations produce in their members. This often means having to incorporate events and figures that do not reflect the values and interests of those in power, and that often interfere with the flow of the official narration of the nation. These *recalcitrant* elements require important, sometimes radical (re)invention in order to fit within the official narrative—but their fit is necessarily imperfect and the stitches can always come undone.

The postcolonial analysis of (national) histories seeks to stretch the fabric and undo the stitches that keep the (official) narration of the nation together. This project begins with the recognition that the narration of the nation is first and foremost the production of the past, that is, the production of history—a narrative technique to create a sense of community, rooted in time. In other words, the production of history is synonymous with the (re)production of collective memories. This process is as much about voice(s) as much as it is about silence(s); making history a form of collective memory as much as a form of collective amnesia. This means that the meaningful understanding of a nation requires the identification of the historical silences that are produced alongside the historical memories. Here, this demands an examination of colonial Brazil. The purpose is not to date the origins of the nation back to the colonial period (which would be a form of anachronism) or to argue its historical inevitability (which would be a form of determinism). Instead, the purpose is to identify and retrieve the recalcitrant elements and identify the subordinate groups neglected or excluded from the official narration of Brazil(ianness).

This retrieval of the colonial past takes the form of *re-calling* and *re-membering*—as theorised by Homi Bhabha in *The Location of Culture* (1994). This technique is deployed here to overcome the trauma of colonial domination, the

wilful amnesia provoked by a desire to erase the painful collective memories of subordination which despite their forceful denial continue to haunt contemporary Brazil. This is a precondition for a postcolonial (re)definition of the nation: one based not on exclusion, compulsory assimilation or subordinate integration, but on recognition of and respect for cultural differences, that is, recognition of and respect for the Others. Only this can prevent the re-inscription of previously constructed hierarchies into the notion of a hybrid Brazil(ianness).

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The deconstruction of the nation requires that we identify and analyse its symbols, those elements that allow the nation (as social imaginary) to express itself, to pass from the virtual to the real —as theorised by Castoriadis. This necessitates a re-examination of the past as narrated in national(ist) narratives as well as in contemporary national(ist) commemorations. In the present study, this translates into the analysis of *symbolic figures*, some of a generic nature (i.e. the Indian, the Bandeirante, the Mulata) and some of an individual nature (i.e. Caramuru, Tiradentes, Zumbi), and *symbolic events* (i.e. Discovery, Independence, Abolition) that have come to define the idea of Brazil(ianness). The centrality of these events and figures will be examined both in the light of their historical context as well as of their resonance in contemporary Brazil.

Commemorations of historical events are one of the best indicators of the state of the national imagination. People only commemorate events that hold a strong symbolic value. Therefore, the very act of commemoration says much about what a people views as central to its symbolic existence. Commemorations serve as a bridge between past and present: they evoke, invoke and deploy the past, but always to tell us something about the present. They do so by enabling the (re)examination of historical events that took place in a more or less distant past from the vantage point of the present. This exercise can have both positive and dangerous connotations. On the one hand, the examination of the past with the accumulated knowledge and insights gained through time often serves to

better understand that past, which then should serve to better understand the present. On the other hand, the examination of the past from the present runs the risk of anachronism, that is, the attribution to those who lived in the past of knowledge about their future. The danger here is to transform history (a narrative of time) into prophecy (a narrative of destiny).

The strong association between past and present that often results from the commemoration of historical events carries another risk: *blaming the past*. The rhetoric of blame can affect both victims and beneficiaries: those who are victims of present injustices with roots in the past and feel unable to change the present, and those who are beneficiaries of present injustices with roots in the past and are unwilling to change the present, often blame the past. The rhetoric of blaming the past leads irremediably to a sense of *impotence* by the victims (what can I do!) and *innocence* by the beneficiaries (it's not my fault!), attitudes that breed complacency and passivity. Commemorations, however, can also serve to mobilise the population and force everyone to reconsider their present situation, opening the space for a critical look at the state of the nation.

This critical (re)examination of past and present of the nation can serve to revisit ideals, formulate proposals, and define projects for the future. The revision of the past offered in this dissertation aims not so much to produce a more accurate or inclusive historical portrait of the nation —although this would be a welcomed outcome in itself— but to decipher the ideological principles that inform the process of selection and the terms of inclusion. This usually leads to a more complex understanding of the past, which often opens more questions than it answers, but this effort of deconstruction, re-examination and re-evaluation is essential if any changes to the structures and narratives that perpetuate ideological and social hierarchies are to take place.

It is this critical spirit that informs the analysis of the three historical events examined here: the discovery of Brazil, the independence from Portugal, and the abolition of slavery. The so-called discovery and the abolition of slavery, whose respective centenaries have been recently commemorated, are especially significant here, insofar as they represent the symbolic incorporation of the Indian

and African Other in the formulation of Brazil. The discovery of Brazil became not only the founding moment of the nation but the moment of the incorporation into the nation of the indigenous population of Brazil (as Indians). The abolition of slavery was the moment that signalled the incorporation of the Afro-Brazilians (as ex-Slaves). The independence from Portugal was the moment that signalled the symbolic coming of age of Brazil, as well as the definitive take-over of the state (and, to a large degree, of the nation) by the Luso-Brazilians. The fourth and final event examined here is the proclamation of Hybridity as the essence of the nation, which can be dated on 1933, the year of the publication of *Casa-Grande & Senzala* by Gilberto Freyre, and whose symbol is the figure of the Mulata.

Similarly, heroes and national figures are essential components of national imaginaries: they personify the spirit and ideals of a nation. The gallery of national heroes is indicative of a people's view of its past, present and future. The commemoration of heroes is, if anything, more indicative of the deep state of a nation than the commemoration of events. This is due to the fact that, unlike events, heroes and national figures enable personal identification. Their rise and fall reveal much about the state of the ideal they have come to represent, as well as about the (re)alignment of political and ideological forces. The nationalisation of individuals (as heroes) and human figures is a political process that only takes place when those who identify themselves with them and with the ideal they represent are in a position to demand or grant them the status of national heroes. The composition of the national gallery of heroes in terms of gender, race and class is essential to determine the state of sexism, racism, and classism in the national imagination. This approach informs the analysis of national heroes such as Caramuru (and Paraguaçu), Tiradentes and Zumbi, as well as national figures such as the Indian, the Bandeirante and the Mulata. This selection reflects the importance of these heroes and figures in the formation of Brazil, but more so their centrality in the discursive formulation of Brazil(ianness).

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The analysis carried out in this dissertation combines three different processes: firstly, a critique of traditional historiography, operating largely on the basis of its contrast with critical historiography; secondly, a textual analysis of some of the texts that have been central to the invention of Brazil(ianness); and, thirdly, a textual analysis of a series of cultural events that illustrate the current state of the Brazilian imaginary. The critique of traditional historiography —the dominant approach in the thesis— is set up in a way that enables critical historiography to illuminate the *ideological structure* of traditional accounts of the history of Brazil. In particular, critical accounts are used here to illuminate the erasure, reification and subordination of *subaltern agency* in traditional historiography, revealing in the process the Eurocentric character of the traditional narration of Brazil(ianness). The analysis reveals how the official (and still hegemonic) narration of the nation has denied historical agency to Brazilian Indians and Afro-Brazilians, and formulated national subjectivity in a way that objectifies these groups and subjects them to the symbolic authority of the Luso-Brazilians.

The more inclusive histories produced by critical historians are also ideological, in the sense that they are also (and necessarily so) partial and particular narratives. The critical narratives are also political, insofar as they are part of what one might call the 'history wars' that have shaped the writing of history since the since the 1980s. These histories have been produced in close connection with the black movement's critique of the racial democracy thesis and the indigenous peoples' struggle against their erasure from Brazilian history. This struggle has been replicated outside academia, most notably during the events organised to commemorate the 100 years of Abolition in 1988, and the 500 years of the Discovery in 2000. In this sense, the thesis reveals how the narration of the nation —the production of concepts and ideas that constitute the national imaginary— constitutes a site of political (symbolic or ideological) struggle.

The chapters in this dissertation testify to the politics of historical representation, insofar as they speak to the silences and screams, absences and presences, inclusions and exclusions, that is, to the production of historical and political subjects. The critique of traditional historical narratives extends beyond

the conventional critique of colonial narratives and constructions to include the critique of national(ist) narratives and contemporary popular expressions of Brazilianness. The political character of the construction of (historical) *agency* and (national) *subjectivity* is further illuminated through the textual analysis of iconic texts, as well as of popular events that display the current state of the Brazilian imaginary. The combined effect generates a portrait of Brazil as a nation that displays *significant continuities* between colonial and national discourse, but also one defined by the *permanent struggle* over the politics of representation between different narratives and ideals of Brazilianness.

The postcolonial approach that informs this dissertation offers a critique of colonial (and national) discourse without negating the notions of human agency and subjectivity. This approach takes the view that humans have the potential to reconstitute themselves and imagine *alternative worlds* —to borrow from Couze Veen's *The Postcolonial Challenge* (2006). To be sure, the question of agency has been a troublesome one in postcolonial studies, especially for authors who concur with much of the post-structuralist theories of subjectivity, which argue that human subjectivity is constructed by ideology (Althusser), language (Lacan) or discourse (Foucault). This is the case, for example, of Homi Bhabha and Gayatri Spivak. However, others, such as Edward Said, have argued that although it may be difficult for subjects to escape the effects of those forces, it is not impossible, and the very fact that the forces that construct the subject can be identified and deconstructed suggests that they may also be counteracted. In other words, the project of deconstruction in this dissertation is imbued with the spirit of postcolonial humanism espoused by Said —clearly visible in his final book, *Humanism and Democratic Criticism* (2004).

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To the extent that this dissertation is a critique of traditional accounts of Brazil(ianness), it must be situated in relation to the literature that has previously engaged in similar projects. To this purpose, it is possible to differentiate between

two types of historiographical studies: those which focus on periods and themes, and those which focus on authors. Of course, all studies combine both elements. The work of José Honório Rodrigues *História da História do Brasil* (1979) is a typical example of the first type of study. This encyclopaedic review of Brazilian historiography is an invaluable source of information. The work is largely descriptive but provides plenty of insightful remarks on the many authors and works contained under each period and theme. Two recent works that focus on authors are Arno Wehling's *Estado, História, Memória* (1999) and João José Reis' *As Identidades do Brasil* (2000). The first explores the role of Varnhagen in the construction of Brazilian national identity. The second is a study of historical formulations of Brazil, beginning with Varnhagen (1850s) and concluding with Fernando Henrique Cardoso (1970s).

These and other historiographical sources have been essential to inform the analysis and formulate the argument in this dissertation. However, this dissertation, rather than focusing on periods or authors, focuses on ideas, that is, approaches the historical narratives through the four constructs that sustain the hegemonic formulation of Brazil(ianness): Discovery, Independence, Abolition and Hybridity. This approach does not permit —for reasons of space— a systematic investigation of all the historical narratives that address these four elements of Brazilianness. Instead, the analysis has to settle for a more modest engagement that, while sufficient to provide us with the essential elements for discussion, leaves room for the analysis a series of cultural events that can attest to the current state of Brazilianness.

There are a number of sources which have been particularly instrumental in the task of illuminating the Eurocentric character of the traditional historiographical accounts of Brazilianness. The most significant for each of the four chapters will be identified here, to further situate the present dissertation within the broader body of knowledge related to the narration of Brazil(ianness). This will be done in conjunction with a general outline of the four substantive chapters: Discovery, Independence, Abolition and Hybridity.

Chapter 1: Discovery. This chapter offers a critique of the traditional (and still popular) portrait of the discovery as a cordial (and loving) encounter between the Indians and the Portuguese. The argument is articulated in the form of a textual analysis, with particular attention to the so-called birth certificate of Brazil, Pero Vaz de Caminha's *Carta a el-rei D. Manuel* (1500), and the foundational narrative of Brazil, the story of Caramuru and Paraguaçu. The analysis of this story centres on the television mini-series *A Invenção do Brasil*, produced by the television network Rede Globo as part of the commemoration of the 500 years of the Discovery.

The main source from where this chapter takes conceptual historiographical stock is Guillermo Giucci's *Sem Fé, Lei ou Rei* (1993). This text provides a critical historical account of the so-called period of accidental colonisation that began with the arrival of the Portuguese and lasted until the start of the formal project of colonisation in the 1530s. This work serves as the starting point for the subsequent analysis of the current state of the Discovery in the Brazilian imaginary.

The chapter illustrates the political nature of the struggle over the national imaginary, over the historical memory, over the content of Brazilianness. The chapter reveals the presence of counter-narratives of Brazilianness, but concludes that the dominant view of the Discovery is still dominated by themes of cordiality and hybridity, located in a discourse of Modernity that is unequivocally Eurocentric, narrating the Discovery as a cordial encounter made possible by the historical agency of the Portuguese and culminating with their cordial miscegenation with the Indians. In essence, the Discovery is shown to constitute the first and foremost symbolic pillar of white (and male) hegemony in Brazil.

Chapter 2: Independence. This chapter offers a critique of the traditional (and still hegemonic) portrait of Brazilian Independence as the culmination of a peaceful (a proxy for cordiality) and teleological process that was destined to give birth to modern (read: post-colonial) Brazil. The argument is constructed through the analysis of a series of events that have come to define Brazilian Independence in the national imagination. The argument is reinforced through the textual analysis

of several texts that have been central to the invention of Brazil(ianness), as well as with an analysis of the current meanings of independence, drawn mainly from the analysis of Independence Day. This latter analysis reveals a shift from the political to the economic as the main discourse of Brazilian Independence.

The analysis draws on a significant number of critical historical accounts: some of a general nature, that is, broad historiographical studies of the formation of Brazil (first as colony and then as nation); and some of a more specific nature, that is, studies of specific events that are significant (or taken to be significant) in the historical formation of Brazil. The two influential sources of a general nature are: Rogério Forastieri da Silva's *Colônia e Nativismo* (1997), which offers a brief but insightful account of the use of history as 'biography of the nation' in traditional accounts of Brazilianness; and Manuel Correia de Andrade's *As Raízes do Separatismo no Brasil* (1999), a brief but insightful account of the many regional and separatist movements that plague the history of Brazil. These two studies illustrate the constructed and precarious character of the unification of Brazil, and expose the fallacy of the teleological narratives of traditional accounts of Brazilianness. The one source of a specific nature that deserves a special mention is Luís Balkar Sá Peixoto Pinheiro's *Visões da Cabanagem* (2001). This brief but systematic analysis of the historical accounts of the regional conflict known as the Cabanagem is an excellent illustration of the same story being told in many different ways, based on different ideological premises, with the most powerful at each time becoming the official history.

Again, the chapter illustrates the political nature of the struggle over the national imaginary, over the historical memory, over the content of Brazilianness. The contrast between critical and traditional accounts of the events studied here illustrates the political dimension of the writing of history, insofar as it shows how different histories construct different political and historical subjects. That contrast reveals how traditional historiography privileges the trope of cordiality and the historical agency of Luso-Brazilians in relation to Brazilian Independence. In essence, Independence is shown to constitute the second symbolic pillar of white (and male) hegemony in Brazil. The chapter concludes with a reminder that the

best time to observe the political struggle over the meaning of independence will be 2022, the year that will mark the 200 years of Brazilian Independence.

Chapter 3: Abolition. This chapter offers a critique of the traditional (albeit seriously challenged) portrait of abolition as the culmination of relatively cordial social relations between masters (Luso-Brazilians) and slaves (Brazilian Indians and Afro-Brazilians). The argument is constructed through the analysis of a series of processes and events that have come to define Abolition in the Brazilian imaginary. The argument is reinforced through the textual analysis of several of the most important texts that have framed the discourse on slavery and abolition in Brazil, as well as the analysis of the current meanings of abolition, drawn mainly from the analysis of its 100 anniversary in the year 1988. This latter analysis reveals a serious challenge to the traditional discourse of Abolition.

The analysis draws on critical historiographical sources, deployed here to illuminate the agency of the slaves, generally subsumed in traditional narratives of slavery and abolition in Brazil. The two monographs that proved to be most influential in that respect are: John Manuel Monteiro's *Negros da Terra* (1994), essential to illustrate the significant role of the indigenous slavery in the historical formation of Brazil, as well as of indigenous agency in the abolition of indigenous slavery; and Celia Maria Marinho de Azevedo's *Onda Negra, Medo Branco* (1987), essential to illustrate the role of black agency (and white fear) in the abolition of black slavery.

The conceptual framework deployed here to analyse the ideological dimension of slavery and abolition is drawn mainly from Ronaldo Vainfas' *Ideologia e Escravidão* (1986). This study reveals the transition from a religious discourse to an economic discourse in the colonial thinking about slavery —a transition that would later inform the process of abolition. The other text that deserves a mention here is Clovis Moura's *As Injustiças de Clio* (1990), a study of the historiography produced by the organic intellectuals of the slave system that reveals the dichotomy between civilisation (whiteness) and barbarism (blackness) that underpins their accounts of the history of Brazil.

Once again, the chapter reveals the political nature of the struggle over the national imaginary, over the historical memory, over the content of Brazilianness. The analysis reveals the political struggle over the national imaginary in relation to the agency responsible for the liberation of the slaves: the rebellious slaves (identified with the figure of Zumbi, celebrated on the 20th of November) versus the benevolent masters (identified in the figure of Isabel I, celebrated on the 13th of May). Abolition emerges as the most contested of the three historical pillars that sustain the imaginary edifice that is Brazil. Still, the chapter concludes that until the legacy of deference and dependence left behind by slavery and abolition are things of the past, Abolition will continue to be another pillar that sustains white hegemony in Brazil.

Chapter 4: Hybridity. This chapter offers a critique of the traditional (and still hegemonic) portrait of Brazil as a hybrid nation product of cordial miscegenation and transculturation. The argument is constructed through the analysis of the processes of miscegenation and transculturation that define Brazilian Hybridity. The argument is reinforced through the textual analysis of several of the most important texts that have framed the issue of sexual and cultural relations (i.e. the issue of hybridity) between Indians, Europeans and Africans, as well as the analysis of the current meanings of hybridity, drawn mainly from the analysis of the Mulata, the foremost icon of Brazil(ianness). The analysis reveals that miscegenation and transculturation took place despite the presence of racial prejudice, not because of its absence. It also reveals the intimate relation between gender and race in the construction of white hegemony in Brazil.

The conceptual framework deployed here is drawn mainly from postcolonial theory —as set out in this Introduction. The critical historiographical sources are deployed here to provide a critical review of miscegenation and transculturation in colonial (and post-colonial) Brazil. Some of the texts that proved to be of significant for this purpose were: Maria Beatriz Nizza da Silva's *Sistema de Casamento no Brasil colonial* (1984) [on marriage in colonial Brazil]; Ronaldo Vainfas' *A Heresia dos Indios* (1995) [on religious transculturation in

colonial Brazil]; José Ramos Tinhorão's *História da Música Popular Brasileira* (1998) [on musical transculturation in the history of Brazil]; and Lilia Moritz Schwarcz's *O Espetáculo das Raças* (1993) [on the formulation of scientific racism in Brazil].

The chapter reveals the power dynamics that have shaped the processes of miscegenation and transculturation in colonial and national Brazil. On the one hand, the sexual integration of the (female) Other is presented, first and foremost, as a process doubly oppressive, both sexually and racially. On the other hand, the integration of cultural difference (of Otherness) in the national imaginary is shown to have taken place within a conceptual framework that still privileges Whiteness and Western Modernity, that is, within Eurocentrism. The centrality of the Mulata in the Brazilian imaginary is presented here as the ultimate and most definitive illustration that Hybridity is the mortar that binds together the Eurocentric pillars that sustain white hegemony in Brazil.

* * * * *

These four chapters reveal how critical historiography produces a counter-narrative of the nation that allows us to see how traditional historiography has written cordiality and hybridity as signifiers of Brazilianness. This suggests that a wider and systematic comparative analysis of traditional and critical historiography—in the context of the history wars—would contribute to further illuminate the political nature of Brazilianness. Here, this analysis is only partial, focused on a specific set of ideas, the four elements that sustain the current configuration of the imaginary edifice that is Brazil: Discovery, Independence, Abolition and Hybridity. However, the conclusions reached here indicate that there is a need to incorporate critical histories—and even more so a critical approach to history—as part of the education system—and indeed beyond the classroom—in order to challenge the Eurocentrism that is at the heart of Brazilianness and that underpins racism in Brazil. The critical historiography, insofar as it provides accounts which are more inclusive and respectful of the

historical agency of subaltern groups, constitutes a more appropriate narrative upon which to build a postcolonial (i.e. post-racial and multicultural) Brazil.

Supplements to the Central Axis of Race and Nation

The central axis of this dissertation is that of race and nation. However, this work incorporates several additional ingredients that are often absent or excluded from studies of racism and nation(alism) in Brazil. Their incorporation takes the form of supplements, that is, pluses that compensate for a minus or absence in the original (here: traditional) analyses —to paraphrase Rodolphe Gasché (Cited in Bhabha 1994: 155). The supplement functions not just as an addition that simply adds up to the existing result but one that *adds to* it and in doing so can disturb the initial calculation. In fact, some of these additional ingredients can at times provide a powerful account of the structures and dynamics of racism in Brazil. In particular, the role of gender —one of the three supplements— emerges throughout the text as a salient aspect in the (re)production of white hegemony in Brazil. In essence, the incorporation of these supplements contributes to explain the coexistence of hybridity and racism in Brazil.

The Indian (Other): Scholars of race and racism in Brazil invariably focus *either* on Afro-Brazilians or Brazilian Indians —with the vast majority of them focusing exclusively on the racism suffered by Afro-Brazilians, ignoring or excluding from the analysis the Brazilian Indians. For instance, Howard Winant's analysis of the Brazilian racial terrain completely overlooks Indianness (1992). Similarly, none of the chapters in Michael Hanchard's edited volume on racial politics in contemporary Brazil mentions Brazilian Indians or Indianness (1999). These and many other examples corroborate the observation that: 'the primacy of indigenous currents in Brazilian culture and history as well as the links between Indians in Brazil and elsewhere are not deemed relevant to the racial politics of contemporary Brazil' (Warren 2001: 235).

The selective approach is largely explained (and can be partially excused) by the specialisation of researchers and by the fact that racism affects in much larger numbers the Afro-Brazilian population, if only because they vastly outnumber the indigenous population of Brazil. This approach is also explained by the sociological character of most studies of racism, which correctly state the fact that the experiences of racism of the Brazilian Indians are different from those of Afro-Brazilians (Telles 2004: 23). However, this approach fails to recognise the importance of including in some shape or form the Brazilian Indians in the studies of racism in Brazil. The prominent role of the Indian —the formulation of the indigenous peoples in the discourse of Brazilianness— in the nation's imagination coupled with its centrality in the fable of the three races that underpins the myth of racial democracy, suggest that excluding the Indian(s) from the analysis limits our ability to grasp the nature and complexity of racism in Brazil.

The Female (Other): This study incorporates *gender* as an important dimension in the (re)production of racism and white hegemony in Brazil. Indeed, this work reveals that one of the most (if not the most) perverse and enduring mechanisms for the (re)production of racism in Brazil is its structural alliance with sexism —in particular with the sexualisation of the female Other. This complicity is mostly related to the structural similarities of the concepts and experiences of race and gender. Both race and gender are socially and culturally constructed, that is, they are inventions. However, as lived individual experiences, they are not only real but physical. People experience race and gender physically, in their own bodies and the bodies of others, because society tells them that race and gender are physical (Zack 1997: 146). The fact that both gender and race can be linked with physical realities (sexual organs and skin colour) facilitates that process, and makes the struggle against gender and racial prejudices much harder. That difficulty is compounded by the historical alliance between racism and sexism in the construction of Modernity, or more precisely, in the coloniality that is at the heart of Western Modernity.

The confluence of racism and sexism in colonial discourse has been well documented, amongst others, by Ronald Hyam (1990), Robert Young (1995) and Ann Laura Stoler (1995). The work of these authors reveals how racism is intimately bound up with sex(uality). In a nutshell: 'Sex is at the very heart of racism' (Hyam 1990: 203). Stoler has shown how the discursive management of sexual practices was fundamental to the colonial order of things in general, and to the racial order of things in particular (1995). The intimate link between empire, sexuality and racism reveals colonialism as a *desiring machine* fuelled by the desire of the male colonist Self for the colonised female Other (Young 1995). Indeed, the theories of race developed in the 19th century 'did not just consist of essentialising differentiations between self and other: they were also about a fascination with people having sex –interminable, adulterating, aleatory, illicit, inter-racial sex' (1995: 181).

The fascination with inter-racial sex, that is, the fascination with miscegenation, was characterised by an 'ambivalent movement of attraction and repulsion' towards and from the (female) Other (Young 1995: 90). The need to deal with the anxieties generated by this *ambivalence* led the infamous Count of Gobineau to categorise races in terms of sex (male and female) and gender (masculine and feminine). Gobineau defined the white race as 'pre-eminently male' and masculine, and the black and yellow races as 'female or feminized' (Young 1995: 109). This rationalisation of the sexual attraction of (male) whites for their inferior (female) racial others (i.e. nonwhites) failed to cure those anxieties but entrenched the relation between racism and sexism in formulations of Western Modernity.

In Brazil, this ambivalence has its peculiar dynamics, mainly reflected in the distrust towards the mulatto and the rejection of cultural practices associated with Africa, on the one hand; and the celebration and sexual objectification of the *mulata* [mulatto woman] on the other. Moreover, the absence of white females, coupled with the need to populate the land and fulfil sexual desires, made the colonisation of Brazil a truly desiring machine, where the (colonised female) Indian and African Other became the object of desire and population policy of the

(colonist male) Portuguese Self. The *sexualisation of race* —to borrow from Naomi Zack— is thus crucial to understand the complexity of racism in Brazil, not least because Freyre's formulation of the nation relies heavily on the trope of sexual desire, between the white male colonist Self and the nonwhite female colonised Other, as the constructive force of Brazil(ianness).

The Popular (Culture): This dissertation incorporates *popular culture* into the analysis of the formation and formulation of Brazil. This is a conscious attempt to escape the reductionism that tends to plague modernist studies of nation(alism) which tend to view national culture as synonymous with high culture, the culture of the ruling national(ist) elite. Thus, for example, Gellner writes that nationalism is essentially 'the general imposition of a high culture on society' (1983: 57). Here, national culture results from the triumphant imposition of an official culture defined by the tastes and preferences of the state elites on the general population. There is no doubt that the invention of national cultures entails the imposition of new cultural norms from the top down and the appropriation of local cultures by state elites (Dirlik 2002: 436). However, the national(ist) elites cannot exhaust the popular meaning(s) of national(ist) cultures, let alone control the meanings and uses of popular culture.

Instead, cultural dynamics take place through processes of *transculturation* —a concept developed by Fernando Ortiz in *Contrapunto Cubano del Tabaco y el Azúcar* (1940). This concept has been recently deployed by Mary Louise Pratt alongside the concept of *contact zone* —the space in which previously separated peoples come into contact and establish ongoing relations, 'usually involving conditions of coercion, radical inequality, and intractable conflict' (1992: 6). The concept of transculturation is used in this dissertation as synonymous with cultural hybridisation —the process of cultural exchange and transmutation that occurs when disparate peoples come into contact. It must be noted here that the mutuality associated with the process of transculturation does not negate the impact of the hierarchical structures and asymmetrical relations that often shape the contact between disparate peoples and cultures in colonial settings.

The postcolonial work of Homi Bhabha illustrates how the colonised appropriates the cultural practices of the colonist through a process of mimicry that is never very far from mockery and which produces a sly civility, a subject that is 'almost the same but not quite [...] at once resemblance and menace' (1994: 86). In other words, the analysis of the dialectic between the official and the popular reveals the constant disruption of colonial domination through processes of cultural appropriation and transculturation that (re)produce cultural hybridity. Once again, this is not to deny the power structures within which such cultural processes take place, but it is to recognise that they occur in a permanent tension between dominance and resistance, imposition and appropriation. Indeed, the dominant, resistant or reciprocal character each cultural contact would be determined by the specific context and circumstances under which it takes place. It is in this sense that the cultural history of Brazil is defined here as a permanent and intense process of transculturation, one whose marks are clearly visible in the formation and formulations of Brazil(ianness).

The attention to the popular (culture) means also going beyond the culture of the written word privileged by modernist theories of nationalism, as is the case, for example, with the centrality of printed capitalism in Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities* (1983). This formulation of the nation excludes many expressions of popular culture—in particular oral and musical expressions—which can be essential to the articulation of national identities, as is the case with samba and carnival in the case of Brazil(ianness). Having said that, one must be cautious not to replace a *narrow* view of culture (i.e. culture as high culture) for a *naïve* one (i.e. popular culture as counter-hegemonic). Popular culture is as ideological and often as full of prejudices as high culture. Take for example string literature [*literatura de cordel*], one of the most genuine forms of Brazilian popular culture—insofar as it is produced by and for the people of Brazil. Not only does it often reproduce racial prejudices (Slater 1982: 16-17), but one of its social functions is 'to relieve tension created by social inequality, but without fundamentally challenging established relationship and institutions' (Rowe & Shelling 1991: 92). The many popular sayings and popular beliefs which stereotype nonwhites are

also a clear illustration of the limits of popular culture to combat racism: 'the mulata is the real woman', 'a good black is the black with a white soul', 'sooner or later, the black will screw things up', and so on. These sayings and the many racist jokes and epithets used by Brazilians naturalise negative stereotypes and can potentially impair black self-esteem (Guimarães 2000), thus contributing to the reproduction of white hegemony in Brazil.

One of the most (in)famous illustrations that brings together negative stereotypes and popular culture was the polemic song composed by Tiririca, a popular clown and children's entertainer, entitled 'Look at Her Hair' (1996). The song contained the following verses: 'That black woman stinks. Can't stand the way she stinks. Smelly animal. Smells worse than a skunk'. The song reflects the innocence with which black people are derided to the point that explicit racism can be so openly broadcast to children. The lesson from this episode is clear: one must always keep a critical eye on *all* cultural manifestations. It is their content that will determine whether they are conservative or progressive, exploitative or emancipatory, hegemonic or counter-hegemonic. In any case, the popular (culture) is central to this dissertation insofar as it brings into the discussion Carnival, the symbolic ritual of the Brazilianness.

(De)Constructing Brazil(ianness)

In sum, this dissertation is a postcolonial study of the historical formation and ideological formulation of Brazil(ianness). The text explores the impact of social, cultural and sexual attitudes and practices on the formation of Brazil and their treatment (i.e. their exclusion or the terms of their inclusion) in the formulation of Brazilianness. This approach tries to strike a balance between the analysis of social reality and the analysis of the national imaginary. This analytical distinction is deployed here to play out the relations between realities and representations, practices and meanings, institutions and ideologies, and in doing so gain a better understanding of the complexity of racism in Brazil. The objective is to produce an

interpretation of racism that looks beyond the narrow world of social structures (without ideology) or ideology (without social structures). However, the focus is patently on the imaginary dimension of Brazilianness.

The focus on the imaginary —the realm of ideas and concepts— reflects the fact that this aspect has been neglected in studies of racism in Brazil. The idea analysed here is that of Brazil —the imaginary edifice sustained by three pillars (Discovery-Independence-Abolition) held together by the mortar of Hybridity. The overriding motif that transverses this work and that emerges as the key to explain the apparent paradox of the title is that of Western Modernity (or Eurocentrism), the *inertia* that fuels and drives the (re)production of Brazilianness. The analysis of the imaginary reveals history (the discipline) as a site of political struggle, one in which we can see the roles of knowledge in the production of political subjects, in this case the production of Brazilian Indians and Afro-Brazilians as dependent subjects, subordinate to the historical agency of Luso-Brazilians. In other words, the study reveals the epistemological violence that is at the heart of the colonial (and national) narration of Brazilianness, violence that (re)produces the racial subjection of Brazilian Indians and Afro-Brazilians. Thus, dismantling the Eurocentrism that presides over the national imagination is essential in the struggle against racism and white hegemony in Brazil.

Chapter 1

The discovery, as foundational myth of the nation, contains a profound contradiction. If it is the foundational myth in the memory of the discoverers, the Portuguese, given that it is the initial act that would take the discovered lands to the condition of future independent nations, it is also so for the 'discovered' and for those who are still 'covered'.

José Jobson de Andrade Arruda (1999: 46)

Discovery

On the 22nd of April 1500, a Portuguese fleet commanded by Pedro Álvares Cabral reached the shores of the land that has come to be known as Brazil. The arrival of Cabral's expedition would later receive the title of the *discovery* of Brazil, and would come to be regarded as the *founding moment* of the Brazilian nation. The event was documented by the scribe Pero Vaz de Caminha in a long and detailed letter to the king of Portugal, Dom Manuel I. The *Carta a el-rei D. Manuel* has come to be regarded as the *birth certificate* of Brazil. The letter has traditionally been interpreted as evidence of a peaceful and loving encounter between the Portuguese and the Indians. The transformation of this *colonial document* into *national monument* has served to idealise the so-called *birth* of Brazil. The idyllic view of the origins of Brazil is also based on the story of the Portuguese Diogo Álvares, known as Caramuru, and his marriage to the Indian Paraguaçu. Initially, their marriage was taken as symbol of the loving unity between Portugal and Brazil, and later used to assert the hybrid essence of Brazil(ianness).

This chapter questions this idyllic portrait of the origins of Brazil. The chapter begins with a study of Pero Vaz de Caminha's *Carta a el-rei D. Manuel* (1500).⁵ The letter is read as an *historical document* (a text that provides access to the

⁵ The edition used here is the critical transcription included in *A Carta de Pero Vaz de Caminha: O Descobrimento do Brasil*, with introduction, actualisation and notes by Silvio Castro (1985: 39-59).

past) and as an *ideological construction* (a text that offers a particular interpretation of the past, and thus provides access to the imagination of its time, but also to the imagination of the present, insofar as the text is still central to the formulation of Brazil). This approach enables the reader (as critic) to unravel the tension between the social and the ideological, realities and fantasies, encounters and expectations in the formation and formulation of Brazil. The chapter then examines the discursive formulation of the story of Caramuru (and Paraguaçu). The story is placed in the context of so-called *pre-colonial* Brazil (1500-1530), the three decades of Brazilian history that have come to symbolise the innocent infancy of Brazil. Finally, the chapter examines the current representation of the origins of Brazil(ianness), in the light of the recent commemoration of the 500 years of the discovery of Brazil.

Vision and Power in the Birth Certificate of Brazil

The *Carta a el-rei D. Manuel* is a prime illustration of the *edenic discourse* —a discourse that reflects the longing for the lost paradise typical of late medieval Europe. The letter is the portrait of a fertile land, replete with exotic animals and lush vegetation, and inhabited by beautiful and innocent people living in the pure and primitive state of humanity: the State of Nature. This *vision of paradise* is the trademark of Brazilian Nativism: a literary tradition that praises Brazil for its benign climate (neither cold nor hot), the fertility of its soil (where everything grows), and the innocence of its people (noble savages). The vision of paradise, a common theme in colonial writings and travelling narratives, became the most powerful imaginary in the invention of the nation (Holanda [1959]1977), and continues to inform utopian visions of Brazil.

Translations into English are mine, although I have relied greatly on the translation contained in William Greenlee, *The Voyage of Pedro Alvares Cabral to Brazil and India from Contemporary Documents and Narratives* (1995: 5-33).

Here, the term vision indicates reliance on the *eye-sight* (a visual approach to reality) as well as reliance on the *imagination* (an ideological approach to reality). In other words, vision remits both to the world of experience (objective and sensorial) and the realm of interpretation (subjective and ideological). At the same time, as many scholars have pointed out, vision is a privileged metaphor for knowledge (and the access to truth) in Western Modernity (Rorty 1979; Fabian 1983). The interplay between ‘knowledge as a product of the eye’ and power as ‘the right to look’ will be observed in the following analysis of Pero Vaz de Caminha's letter to King Dom Manuel.

* * * * *

The *Carta a el-rei D. Manuel* has served to idealise the initial contacts between the Indians and the Portuguese. Silvio Castro, for example, in a short essay on the cultural evolution of Brazil included in his critical edition of Caminha's letter, interprets the letter as evidence that Brazil was born out of a *peaceful and loving* encounter, without the original sin of hostility and violence associated with colonialism. Sadly, he argues, this loving phase [*fase amorosa*] soon gave way to a long dark period that began with the formal colonisation of Brazil in 1530. The activation of the colonial project altered the weight and the nature of the Portuguese presence, and marked the beginning of the end of the spirit of *cordiality* contained in the words of Pero Vaz de Caminha. The ‘taking of power’ that came with colonisation put an end to the ‘serene loving relationship’ between natives and visitors (now transformed into colonists) —a relationship that, from that moment, would be shaped by the colonising impulse and the imperialist vocation of the Kingdom of Portugal (Castro 1985: 107).

This popular portrait of the discovery as a loving or cordial encounter is the product of a superficial reading of Caminha's letter. The *Carta a el-rei D. Manuel* contains sufficient indications to refute, or at least qualify this idealised portrait of the discovery. The letter shows the reserve and mistrust that defined the initial contacts between natives and visitors. Caminha tells how the envoy sent

to mingle with the natives and learn their customs and habits, a convict by the name of Afonso Ribeiro, is sent back because the natives 'did not want him to stay there with them' (45). The reiterated attempts of the visitors to gain access to the indigenous quarters are refused time after time, especially at night, despite the increasing insistency of every attempt. These were the first signs that the visitors were beginning to behave and be treated as intruders. The Portuguese were not completely at ease among the natives either. Caminha notes that the natives 'were already more docile and at ease among us than we were among them' (54). He also notes that the natives danced with the visitors 'as if they were much more our friends than we were theirs' (55). In short, the behaviour of natives and visitors reveals *reserve and mistrust* on both sides, and prefigures the dialectics of domination and resistance that would define the relations between the Portuguese colonists and the indigenous peoples of Brazil.

Significantly, the scribe suggests a different motive for the attitude and the actions of natives and visitors. Caminha interprets the mistrust of the latter as a *rational* action (caution) and the reserve of the former as a *natural* reaction (fear). The Portuguese act with a purpose, always in control of their actions. They act in a thoughtful and organised fashion. In essence, their behaviour is guided by reason. The Indians do not act as much as react, and their (re)actions are unpredictable, constantly shifting from fraternisation to withdrawal. In essence, their behaviour is guided by instinct. The elusiveness of the natives—the scribe never refers to their behaviour in terms that would suggest intelligence or rationality—is attributed to the fact that 'they are bestial people and of little knowledge' (50). They are 'like birds or wild animals' that retreat into the forest when they feel threatened (50). The *naturalisation* of the indigenous population that began during the discovery would shape their ambivalent incorporation in the colonial imagination: at best, they would appear as mythical figures (when nature implies purity); at worst, they would appear as tropical animals (when nature implies bestiality). In any case, they would be placed *out of history*: in the first case, they would be placed in the realm of mythology (the world of ideas); in the second case, they would be

placed in the realm of biology (the world of nature). This portrait of the Portuguese as rational beings (subjects) and the Indians as natural and/or mythical beings (objects) would inform the formation and formulation of Brazil.

From the moment of its first sighting, this paradise is subjected to a new authority: the King of Portugal. The *Carta a el-Rei D. Manuel* leaves no doubt about the claim of possession for the Portuguese Crown. Caminha tells of its immediate (re) naming: the first land sighted, a high round mount, is named by Cabral as Monte Pascoal (Easter Mount), and the land as a whole receives the name of Terra de Vera Cruz (Land of the True Cross). Naming is not a simple intellectual act destined to identify something or someone, but part of the act of creating and taking possession (Hoyos 2004). To name someone or something is the expression of an assumed right: I name it/him/her because it/he/she is mine. Thus, masters used to give names to their slaves, lords to their vassals and, in some cultures, men to their wives, as a form of taking possession of them. Similarly, astronomers are given the right to name the celestial bodies they happen to discover. Here, the act of naming the land signals its symbolic appropriation by the expedition of Cabral. The letter itself becomes an instrument of colonisation, of the symbolic creation and appropriation of Brazil. The purpose of the letter, stated in its first sentence, is to give Dom Manuel 'news of the finding of this your new land found now in the course of this navigation' (39). The letter concludes with references to 'your land' (58) and 'your island' (59). The repetitive use of the pronoun *your* establishes a direct and unequivocal relation between the sighting of the land and its appropriation for the Portuguese Crown.

The actions of the visitors reiterate their will to power or will to dominate—the *animus dominandi* theorised by Thomas Hobbes. The letter documents the many rituals symbolising the establishment of a new political authority on the land. Thus, for example, the visitors made repeated and ostentatious display of the royal banner. But more significantly, the first formal encounter between the natives and the visitors takes place aboard the captain's ship [*nau capitania*]. This encounter is charged with symbolic meaning, not least because of the *inversion* of the typical reception: the visitors receive the natives, and not the other way

around. Cabral received the two young native men from a position of authority: 'seated on a chair, finely dressed, with a very large gold necklace around his neck, and at his feet a carpet for a dais' (42). Caminha tells how the visitors welcomed the two men 'with great pleasure and party' (41). This description masks the fact that the two young men had been taken by force —as noted in the version of events narrated by an anonymous navigator in *A relação do Piloto Anônimo* (1500). Yet, in his 'actualised transcription' of the letter, Castro goes a step further and refers to the two young men as 'our first guests' —an expression not present in the original text written by Caminha. This reading of the encounter obviates the account of the anonymous navigator and sidelines the fact that the two men were retained on board until the following morning when, once free, they began to run so fast that 'one did not wait for the other' and they did not stop running until they reached the place where their people were (43-44). This transition from coercion to ceremony that allows the captives to become guests shows how the meaning of violence can be redefined to legitimise the project of colonisation (Giucci 1993: 37).

The visitors also considered sending a couple of natives to Portugal. Cabral consulted the crew on the convenience of 'taking here *by force* a couple of these men, to send to Your Highness, and leave here in their place another two of these convicts' (47) [*italics mine*]. The objective of the exchange was to get first hand information about the land and its riches. In the end, the decision was made to leave two convicts behind, but not to take the natives. The argument was that people taken by force always told their captors what they wanted to hear, and therefore their information was of little if any value. However, the right to use force to appropriate and subjugate the natives was taken for granted by the so-called discoverers of Brazil. Indeed, as early as 1511, the ship *Bretoa*, returning to Portugal from Brazil, listed thirty-five native captives along with the cargo of parrots, jaguar skins and brazil-wood (Thomas 1997: 105).

The letter shows also the arrival of a new religious authority in the land. Caminha describes the construction of a very finely prepared altar, the celebration of the first mass, the erection of a large cross, and the celebration of a second mass.

The cross was ingrained 'with the arms and insignia of your highness' —symbol of the harmony between political and religious power: the Portuguese Crown and the Catholic Church— and placed in the ideal location 'to best be seen' (56). The visibility of the cross served a double purpose: ideological (as a symbol of religious authority) and practical (as a geographical point of reference). Furthermore, the letter contains frequent exhortations to the king to spread the Catholic faith amongst the natives. The success of the mission was said to be certain. Caminha's optimism was based on the belief that the natives 'neither have, nor understand any creed' (55). They were people of such innocence and 'beautiful simplicity' that it would be easy to imprint upon them 'whatever belief one wished to' (55). Caminha insisted that 'if we could understand them, and they us, they would soon be Christians' (55). The scribe reports the admiration of the natives during the construction of the cross, and their attention during the celebration of the mass, as if they were ready to embrace Christianity.

Caminha's conceptual myopia led him to misinterpret the sense of wonder displayed by the natives. He failed to see that they did not wonder at the *symbol* (since they could not grasp the meaning of the cross) but at the *object* (for they could relate to the cutting of trees and the shaping of wood). Similarly, the natives did not marvel at the actions of the priest (the mass: the religious ceremony) but at those of the carpenter (the cross: the manufactured wood). The central object for the natives was not the cross but the axe; their interest was not in the religiosity of the visitors but in their technology (Giucci 1993: 70-72). A similar misconception occurs during the celebration of the second mass. Caminha writes how an old man 'pointed his finger to the altar and then lifted the finger towards the sky *as though* he was telling them [other natives] something good *and we took it so'* (56-57) [italics mine]. The lack of a common language becomes here the perfect excuse for wishful thinking—in this case the wish to convert the native Other to Christianity.

Caminha concludes the letter asking the king to spread the seed of 'our holy faith' because 'the best fruit that can be extracted from it [the land] will be to save these people' (58), and expresses his firm belief that 'if Your Highness sends here someone who will wander amongst them patiently, they will all be turned to

the desire of Your Highness' (57). Thus, the scribe lays down the conceptual framework that will inform the politics of evangelisation and cultural imperialism that would accompany the political and economic colonisation of Brazil. This vision found echo in the Portuguese art of the time: Vasco Fernandes, in his famous *Adoração dos Magos* (c. 1501-1506), substituted the traditional black wise-man (Baltazar) for an Indian in Europeanised clothes, revealing the hope of a rapid Christianisation of the indigenous peoples of Brazil. Their portrait as innocent beings alongside visions of them as fertile ground for conversion to Christianity illustrates the *ambivalence* of the Portuguese towards the indigenous population of Brazil.

The assertion of political and religious authority was supported by the notion—first present in Caminha's letter—that the natives had no chiefs, laws and religious beliefs. In the minds of the Portuguese, the notion that the natives lived in a natural state would be confirmed by the realisation that the Tupinambá language, the most common among the tribes living along the coast, did not contain the sounds *f*, *l*, and *r*. This linguistic feature was taken as evidence that the Brazilian Indians had no faith (*fé*), no law (*lei*), and no king (*rei*). This curious discovery and its bizarre interpretation were first reported by Pero de Magalhães Gandavo and would be repeated over and over again in the chronicles of colonial Brazil (Giucci 1993: 206-214). In fact, of course, the Brazilian Indians did not have a written law, an Iberian monarchy, or a Christian faith, but they did have their own laws, authorities, and beliefs (Couto 1995: 39-117). The Indians had 'a complex society, with elaborate rules of conduct and kinship, a rich mythology and ceremonial calendar, constant fears of enemy attacks and spirit magic, and artistic expression in pottery, ornaments and architecture' (Hemming 1978: 68). However, the interpretation of the linguistic discovery in terms of deficit rather than difference turned the natives into empty vessels or blank slates awaiting passively, when not eagerly, the imprint of the laws and beliefs of the Portuguese. The native Other was more a lack, the inverted mirror of the Same, than a Difference. Thus, like the land, the natives needed to be cultivated. The formula *sem Fé, nem Lei, nem Rei* defined the Indian Other as *tabula rasa* and the land as

terra nullius, legitimising the conversion of the natives to Catholicism and their subjugation to, and the appropriation of their land by, the Portuguese Crown.

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In essence, the *Carta a el-rei D. Manuel* blends curiosity and ideology, vision and power. The relatively peaceful and transitory character of the first encounters masks the incipient reduction of the natives to objects of labour, information, and conversion. The essential symbols of the appropriation of the land and the subjection of the people are all present in Caminha's letter: the naming of the land, the ceremonial reception, the display of banners, the celebration of the mass, and the erection of the cross. The symbolic nature of this process does not seem to interfere with the relations between natives and visitors —if only because the former could not be aware of the power (meanings and intentions) behind the actions of the Portuguese. The lack of a common language almost certainly contributed to the relatively peaceful relations between natives and visitors during the week of discovery. However, these relations can not be thought in terms of *love* but rather in terms of *power*. The *Carta a el-rei D. Manuel* reveals the presence of imperialism —even of only in a symbolic fashion: as *will to power*—from the moment the land was sighted by the expedition of Cabral.

Objects and Subjects in the Birth Certificate of Brazil

The *Carta a el-rei D. Manuel* initiates the *objectification* of the land and people of Brazil. The letter documents 'a colonial encounter in which objects, not subjects, are at the center of the enterprise' (Greene 1999: 95). The centrality of objects can be traced to the scribe's frequent reference and detailed description of the adornments that decorate the bodies of the natives. The extreme precision with which Caminha describes the adornments, the decorating techniques and the making of the red tincture, often gives the impression that those objects and

techniques exist independently from the natives. The frequent references to the colour red in the letter (and future colonial narratives) suggest 'not that the *terra roxa* [red land] is such because it contains people and things of that color, but instead that the people and things are of that color because Brazil is the *terra roxa*' (Greene 1999: 98). In other words, the colour red obtains the subjectivity repeatedly denied to the indigenous population of Brazil.

The centrality of objects goes beyond the corporal decoration (aesthetics) to enter the world of social relations (ethics). The exchange of objects is the practice through which most contacts between natives and visitors are initiated or concluded—a practice well documented in Caminha's letter. Thus, for example, the first contact took place through the exchange of 'a red cap and a cap of linen [...] and a black hat' and 'a hat of long bird feathers with a little tuft of red and grey feathers like those of a parrot and [...] a large string of very small white beads that look like seed pearls' (40). The exchange of objects would become an essential aspect of the Portuguese colonisation of Brazil. Hats, mirrors, tools and trinkets were the currency used by the Portuguese in their subsequent dealings with the Brazilian Indians.

The exchange of objects (objects as mediators) was the perfect complement to the Portuguese desire for gold and other riches (objects as objectives). The visitors displayed a clear desire for the mineral riches of the land. Caminha tells of Cabral's failed attempt to find out from an old man 'if there was [gold] in the land' (49). Later, the scribe sums up the result of their enquiries with these words: 'until now we could not know if there is gold or silver or anything of metal or of iron' (58). Clearly, the Portuguese were thinking from the moment of arrival of the solid profits to be made, and never lost the hope of finding vast supplies of gold and silver similar to those found in Spanish America (Holanda [1959]1977: 65-103). In some narratives, this hope becomes a promise. Thus, for example, Gandavo refers in *História da Província de Santa Cruz* (1576) to the discovery of 'large mines which the very land promises' and concludes this history with a chapter 'on the great riches that are expected from the land of the interior' ([1576]1980: 118 and 144-146). The discovery of mineral deposits, largely

accidental, would not take place until the end of the 17th century. However, the desire for wealth was present from the moment of discovery and would be crucial to define the Portuguese colonisation of Brazil.

The first profitable object from the land was a red dye-wood, known as brazil-wood, from which this part of the world would eventually take its name. The replacement of the religious name (Land of the True Cross) for the commercial name (Land of Brazil) signalled the culmination of the objectification of Brazil (Greene 1999: 107). The significance of the replacement was not lost in colonial Brazil. Fray Vicente do Salvador lamented in his *História do Brasil* (1627) that the original reference to a saintly wood had been replaced by the reference to a profane, commercial wood (Laraia 1993: 41-42). The allegorical love of Christ through the love of the holy-wood (Holy Cross) had been replaced by the literal love of wood: the love of Pau-Brasil. The new denomination raised fears that 'perhaps for the first time an entire country's identity, name and all, might be consecrated to commerce' (Greene 1999: 110).

The centrality of objects was not only a matter of commercial relations (objects with material value) but also a matter of cultural relations (objects with symbolic value). The most emblematic episode of the colonial encounter mediated or, to be more precise, driven by a symbol-object, was the celebration of the second mass. The objects here become the protagonists, the central subjects of the event. Nearly every remark about the mass in Caminha's letter concerns one object or another: the cross (the chief object), the flag, the altar, and the crucifixes. The references to these and other objects carry more semantic and emotional import than the references to the natives. The scribe grants more reality, for example, to the crucifixes distributed after the conclusion of the mass than to the native people around whose necks they are placed. In short, the letter shows that the standpoint of the author 'is calibrated to observe objects instead of people, and people through objects, and so to the extent that people are noticed, they are objectified' (Greene 1999: 101).

The centrality of objects in the week of discovery was largely the product of the predominance of the visual (sight) over the verbal (word). The initial

encounters between natives and visitors took place in the absence of a shared verbal code of communication. The information provided by Caminha comes mainly from the organisation and interpretation of elements captured by the eyesight: gestures, signals, and movements (Giucci 1993: 28). The appeal to the visual here also illustrates the deep roots in the identification of seeing and knowing in the European imagination—a tradition that culminated with the Enlightenment. In that sense, the letter is a prime example of the ocularcentrism that came to define Western Modernity, where the eye (I see) gives immediate authority to the text (I know). This reliance on observation (rather than conversation) has a significant impact on the representation of others: it presents others as objects (under observation) rather than subjects (engaged in conversation).

The *Carta a el-rei D. Manuel* is a prime example of the objectification of the natives, in particular through its treatment of, and fixation with *the-other-as-body*. The two aspects that called the attention of the scribe during the first contact with the natives (a small group of men) were their skin colour and their nakedness: they were ‘dark, entirely naked, with nothing to cover their *vergonhas* [genitalia]’ (40). Caminha describes their naked bodies in great detail and plays repeatedly with the word *vergonha*—meaning shame, but also a popular euphemism to refer to the genitalia (i.e. the shameful parts of the body). The natives, he writes, show no *vergonha* [shame] in exposing their *vergonhas* [genitalia]. Caminha also describes the piercings on their lower lips, the colour and shape of the bones inserted in them, the quality and shape of their hair, and the feathers that adorned their haircut. He also notes that their genitals ‘were not circumcised and their hair was well shaved and neat’ (43).

The emphasis on the colour of the natives conveyed upon them the nature of an object. The letter portrays the natives as beautiful red naked bodies tainted with a red tincture that intensified their colour. Caminha describes a native man who ‘was painted with red tincture on the chest and shoulder blades, and on the hips, thighs, and legs all the way down. And the *vazios* [unpainted spaces: literally, empty places] such as the belly and the stomach were of his own colour’ (46-47). This passage is striking in its objectification of the Brazilian Indians. The

unpainted spaces on their bodies 'are evoked as though surfaces were all that mattered, as though an empty stomach were defined by lack of color (which is about objectification) rather than by lack of food (which speaks to a shared subjectivity)' (Greene 1999: 98).

The objective distance adopted by Caminha to portray the male body is suspended when it comes the time to describe the female body. The scribe reports the first contact with native women in terms that can barely conceal his own excitement: 'there were among them three or four maidens, very young and very pretty, with very dark and long hair down their backs, and with their *vergonhas* [genitalia] so high and tight and so free of hair that we felt no *vergonha* [shame] in looking at them very closely' (44). The innocence of the native women regarding their nakedness makes them legitimate objects of voyeuristic contemplation, exempting the visitors from 'the moral condemnation of a distant Catholic Church' (Treece 2000: 25). The insistence on the innocent demeanour of the natives transforms their nakedness into nudity —nakedness being a form of subjectivity and nudity 'a form of dress' produced by the act of seeing the naked body as an object on display (Berger 1972: 54). Their nakedness appears not simply as a custom or habit but as 'the definitive sign of their alterity as distinct moral beings' (Treece 2000: 24). The constant and deliberate exploitation of the ambiguities of the term *vergonha* allows the scribe 'to neutralise the disturbing power of this display of sexuality, and to render them [the native women] into the aesthetic objects of his attention' (Treece 2000: 25). The intense male gaze over the naked women reduces their being to their body, and prefigures the objectifying character of the future (sexual) relations between male settlers and native women. The transformation of the autonomous nakedness of the natives into objectified nudity available to the visitors' gaze initiated the appropriation and incorporation of *the-other-as-object* into the moral and political economy of the Portuguese colonisation of Brazil.

The same nakedness that fascinated the visitors also offended their sense of morality. The visitors tried to induce the natives to wear clothing, giving them shirts at every opportunity. The body of the natives soon became the object of

cultural colonisation. The natives were compelled to adopt the notion that nakedness was shameful, and that the body, and particularly the genitalia, was the place of sin, lust and temptation (Azevedo 1999: 133). In the future, Brazilian Indians would be forced to wear clothes and to get rid of their 'deforming' adornments (Ribeiro 1983: 46). To paraphrase Enrique Dussel's theory of the discovery of America as a process of covering, the discovery of Brazil became synonymous with the *covering* of the Indian Other. The symbolic culmination of this process came in the 19th century, when Vítor Meirelles covered the genitalia of the natives in his painting of the first mass, *Primeira Missa do Brasil* (1861).

The objectification of the Brazilian Indians would also translate into the material or physical dimension. Their objectification would take place in the ambits of trade (natives as bodies), production (natives as slaves), reproduction (natives as concubines), and consumption (natives as exhibits). In Europe, they would become objects of domestic and conspicuous consumption: used as domestic servants and displayed as curiosities for the entertainment of the puzzled population. In the 15th century, many Brazilian Indians were paraded across Europe. The most famous episode, referred to in Montaigne's classic essay 'Des Cannibales' (1580), was the parade of Tupinambá organised in Rouen, on occasion of the royal visit of Henry III and Catherine de Médici, in the year 1550 (Franco [1937]2000: 86-89). In Brazil, the emphasis on the body meant that the native males were useful to work in the plantations and to participate in expeditions of colonial expansion, while the native females became useful as instruments for the population of the land; but none of them were imagined to have the ability to think (Lopes 2000: 20).

In sum, the *Carta a el-rei D. Manuel* reflects the view of *the-other-as-object* that will come to define the incorporation of the Indians into the formation and formulation of Brazil. The Brazilian Indians entered the field of vision and were incorporated into the colonial imagination as exotic and erotic bodies, as objects of the colonial (male) gaze that informed the Portuguese colonisation of Brazil. The physical exploitation of the natives —their treatment as objects— came to

complement their symbolic objectification, a process that began with Caminha's letter to the King of Portugal.

Marriage as Metaphor of the Origins of Brazil(ianness)

The vision of paradise associated with the discovery of Brazil usually extends to the first three decades of the Portuguese presence in the New World. This period appears as an idyllic interval in the history of Brazil: the years of peaceful and loving encounters that led to the physical birth of Brazil. The act that has come to symbolise the birth of Brazil as a product of love is the marriage of Caramuru and Paraguaçu. The couple is popularly known as the Adam and Eve of Brazil—a clear reference to the Terrestrial Paradise. Initially, their marriage became the symbol of unity between Portugal and Brazil but was subsequently transformed in the founding myth of Brazil as a hybrid nation. The prominence of the story of Caramuru (and Paraguaçu)⁶ in the Brazilian imaginary demands a critical look at what is arguably the *foundational narrative* of Brazil(ianness).

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Caramuru is one of the most notorious historical figures of the early Portuguese colonisation of Brazil. His original name was Diogo Alvares Correia. The motive for his presence in Brazil is unknown. History says that he was the victim of a shipwreck. Diogo managed to swim ashore, where he was found by members of a local tribe (the Tupinambá). The tribe, reportedly frightened and astonished by the power of his gun, welcomed him into their community, and gave him a new name: Caramuru. He gained a reputation as a great warrior and the chief of the tribe gave him one of his daughters in marriage: Paraguaçu. In a voyage to France,

⁶ The placement of Paraguaçu between brackets when placed after the name of Caramuru is intentional and intended to convey the fact that the historical and fictional narratives of their relation, as well as of their place in the formation of Brazil(ianness), privilege the figure of Caramuru. He is the historical agent who enables Paraguaçu to become the mother of Brazil.

Diogo married Paraguaçu —after she was baptised as Catarina. The marriage would produce many offspring and turned the couple, and by extension the Portuguese and the Indian, into the founding matrix of Brazil (Castro 1985: 32).

The story of Caramuru (and Paraguaçu) is one of the most recurrent themes in Brazilian historiography, literature and the popular imaginary. The first text to report on the figure of Caramuru was the *Tratado Descritivo do Brasil* (1587), by Gabriel Soares de Souza. This chronicle registers the presence of Caramuru in the land and his role as interpreter and helper in the early Portuguese colonisation of Brazil. The figure of Caramuru was also mentioned by Frei Vicente do Salvador in his *História do Brasil* (1627). However, it would not be until the late 17th century that Caramuru would become a prominent figure in the imagination of colonial Brazil. The first text to incorporate the story of Caramuru (and Paraguaçu) in detail was the *Chronica da Companhia de Jesu no Estado do Brasil* (1663), by Simão de Vasconcelos. This chronicle contains all the elements that would be present in the subsequent versions of the ‘notable history of the celebrated Diogo Alvares’: the departure from Viana (Portugal), the ship-wreck in the coast of Bahia, the shot that frightened the natives, the name of Caramuru, the respect of the natives for him, the love of Paraguaçu, the trip to France with Paraguaçu, her baptism as Catarina and her marriage with Diogo, their return to Brazil, the religious visions of Paraguaçu, their assistance at the ship-wreck of a Spanish vessel, their offspring and their assistance to the Portuguese colonisation of Brazil ([1663]1865: 25-28).

Subsequent narratives would add little substance to this chronicle but, significantly, they would gloss over a couple of aspects: the many women and the slaves of Caramuru. The fact that Caramuru had ‘many women’ with whom he had ‘lots of sons and daughters’ (Vasconcelos [1663]1865: 26) has been part of his story, although often disguised in the attempt to defend monogamy. José de Santa Rita Durão, for example, was a fervent defender of Caramuru's monogamy: from the beginning Caramuru has only one wife, Paraguaçu. The other women are passionately in love with him, amongst them ‘the unfortunate Moema’ who died drowned by throwing herself into the sea after Diogo, when he departs to France with Paraguaçu. But his only love is Paraguaçu. However, the notion that he

might have been 'master of many slaves' (Vasconcelos [1663]1865: 27) has been absent from subsequent narratives. This silence constitutes a clear attempt to idealise the figure of Caramuru, and cleanse the origins of Brazil.

The story of Caramuru was ingrained in the history of Brazil with the publication of Sebastião da Rocha Pita's *História da América Portuguesa* (1730). Interestingly, the author gave centre stage to Paraguaçu —albeit emphasising her baptism as Catarina, her marriage to Caramuru, and her contribution to the Portuguese colonisation of Brazil. In essence, the centrality of Paraguaçu in the narrative of Rocha Pita served to legitimise the Portuguese colonisation of Brazil. The *História da América Portuguesa* initiated the tradition of thinking the origins of Brazil as product of the marriage between Portugal (Diogo: Caramuru) and America (Paraguaçu: Catarina): hence Portuguese America.

The figure of Caramuru gained further status and popularity in the late 18th century thanks to the publication of Santa Rita Durão's epic poem *Caramuru* (1781). This author portrayed Caramuru as the ideal nobleman (i.e. prudent, just, pious, brave, patriotic, gentle, patient, tolerant, loving, and handsome) albeit one who resorts to violence in order to bring civilisation to this part of the Americas. The use of force is justified by the barbarism of the Indians —portrayed repeatedly as cruel and brutal, necromantic people of vile and unrestrained appetites. The dominant trope of their depiction was cannibalism —one that transformed primitivism into barbarism and served to justify the colonisation of the Brazilian Indians. At the same time, Santa Rita Durão cleansed the image of Caramuru, suppressing some problematic traits such as accepting sexual favours from the young women offered to him, and passing on to the Portuguese Crown large plots of land he acquired through his marriage to Paraguaçu.

The history of Caramuru (and Paraguaçu) was created by the Portuguese and for the Portuguese as a narrative of imperial consolidation —a metaphor for the Portuguese control over Brazil. Santa Rita Durão, although born in Mariana (Pernambuco), left for Portugal when he was nine never to return to Brazil. His poem was intended to reinforce the Portuguese Empire by extolling the relation between Brazil and Portugal. However, the 'love for the motherland' that inspired

the poem would turn this text into one of the cornerstones of Brazilian Nativism—even though his reference to the motherland was a reference to the region of Pernambuco, not Brazil. In this sense, Antonio Candido has argued that the poem can be both interpreted as a celebration of the Portuguese colonisation of Brazil as much as an expression of nativism, that is, an exaltation of the local excellences and peculiarities of the Americans ([1965]1975: 183-184).

Santa Rita Durão's has become a powerful precedent of the metaphor of Brazil as a hybrid nation, insofar as it vividly illustrates the fusion of Portugal and America. In the words of Alcida Ramos, the poem is 'the story of a European who went native and an Indian woman who went European' (1998: 65). But crucially: 'The characters are allowed to cross the cultural boundaries only because the Indian is portrayed as holding those qualities treasured by Europeans' (Ramos 1998: 65). In other words, the fusion of the two worlds is possible only because the Europeans project their ideal virtues onto the Indians.

The fusion of the two worlds is also symbolised by the constant alternation of the names of the two protagonists. Candido theorised this in terms of ambiguity stating that 'when we look for Diogo, we find Caramuru; when we look for Caramuru, we find Diogo' ([1965]1975: 180). Yet, the author tends to use the names of Caramuru and Paraguaçu when they act as Americans (Brazilians), and Diogo and Catarina when they act as Europeans (Portuguese). The alternation of names symbolises a transformation of identities, a process of cultural transmutation that takes place in a context of continuity and intimacy between Portugal and Brazil (Amado 2000: 12-16). On the one hand, the relationship with Paraguaçu transforms Diogo into Caramuru—the hybrid hero whose presence as colonist is redeemed by the cultural and sexual intercourse with Paraguaçu. On the other hand, the relationship with Diogo transforms Paraguaçu into Catarina—the hybrid heroine whose assimilation of European culture and marriage to Diogo symbolise the possibility of the integration of the indigenous population into the civilising project of the Portuguese. In the final analysis, this poem represents 'the quintessence of the Edenic discourse at the

service of exalting the feats of the colonizers to the benefit and appreciation of the colonized Indians' (Ramos 1998: 66).

The legend of Caramuru was brought into the light of modern history in Francisco Adolfo de Varnhagen's 'O Caramuru perante a História' (1848). This essay questioned the veracity of several important aspects of the history of Caramuru, but failed to destroy the legend or bring to an end its constant (re)invention. Since then, Caramuru has become the subject of many historical romances (Amado 2000: 16-22), one of the most recent being Assis Brasil's *Paraguaçu e Caramuru* (1995). The most striking aspect of this romance is the idealisation of Paraguaçu —albeit one imbued with sexism and Eurocentrism. In the text, the 'princess of the jungle' is extremely beautiful (the references to her beauty are incessant) and intelligent (able to grasp at once the language and religion of the colonists). She is vain —a trait that, according to the author, all women share— but discreet and, unlike the rest of her tribe, she does not engage in cannibalism —thus freeing the origins of the nation from the spectre of Barbarism. This romance illustrates the patriarchalism and Eurocentrism that still informs the place of the Indian Female Other in the formulation of Brazil(ianness).

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The symbolic power of the marriage between Caramuru and Paraguaçu has served to redeem the Portuguese colonisation of Brazil, in particular the period of *accidental colonisation* —a period of relatively fortuitous and informal colonisation— that goes from the arrival of Cabral in 1500 to the arrival of Martim Afonso de Sousa in 1530 (Giucci 1993: 162-205). Their marriage has transformed the presence of these early settlers, or accidental colonists, into lovers of the native women and fathers of the nation, promoting an idyllic vision of the birth of Brazil as the product of the loving encounter between the (male) Portuguese and the (female) Indian. This image is the product of an exegesis that ignores the historical developments that took place during this early period of colonisation, but that announces the fundamental aspects of the formal colonisation (Giucci 1993: 23).

The principal agents of this process of accidental colonisation were shipwreck victims, deserters, and convicts left behind by the early expeditions—the protagonists of Eduardo Bueno's *Náufragos, Traficantes e Degredados* (1998). The enrolment of convicts in the maritime expeditions was a utilitarian tradition of the Portuguese Crown (Castro 1985: 25, note 6). This fanatical, filthy, and ferocious mob—in the words of the great Portuguese novelist Eça de Queiroz—became the pioneers of the Portuguese colonisation of Brazil in all aspects imaginable: they were the first reporters, the first anthropologists, the first linguists, even the first missionaries (Giucci 1993). The *Carta a el-rei D. Manuel* offers detailed accounts of the several tasks entrusted to one of the convicts of the expedition: Afonso Ribeiro. He is sent to mingle with the natives, with the objective of learning their uses and customs, and obtaining information about the riches of the land. He is also one of the two convicts left behind by the expedition to learn the language of the natives and begin to spread the ‘knowledge of our faith’ (57).⁷ The expedition also left behind two deserters: ‘two seamen who tonight left this ship, fleeing to shore in a skiff’ (58). The different circumstances in which these four men came to settle in the land show the double side of colonisation, the intentional and accidental aspects of the colonisation of Brazil.

The accidental colonists were the first Brazilians in the literal sense of the word: traders of brazil-wood. The name given to these traders would eventually extend to all people born in Brazil. The activities of these early traders are described in detail in a fourteen-page document entitled *Livro da Viagem e Regimento da Nau Bretoa* (1511), by the scribe Duarte Fernandes. In essence, this manuscript reveals that ‘the vessel was a kind of floating barracks, whose unique mission overseas was to obtain the maximum profit in the least possible time’ (Bueno 1998b: 83). The principal source of income of these early commercial expeditions was brazil-wood, but their cargo included also exotic animals, colourful parrots, jaguar skins and Indians (Franco [1937]2000: 65-105). Indeed,

⁷ Afonso Ribeiro and his companion were picked up and taken back to Portugal the following year by the expedition of Gonçalo Coelho. This expedition counted amongst its members with the presence of Americo Vespucci. Vespucci is thought to have obtained from the two convicts a detailed description of the life and customs of the natives that would form, alongside his personal experience, the basis for his famous letters on the New World (Bueno 1998b: 47).

Darcy Ribeiro notes that after brazil-wood, Indians were 'the main merchandise of exportation to the metropolis' (1995: 42).

Yet the mark of slavery has not tainted the idyllic portrait of the origins of Brazil, partly because Cabral —unlike Columbus— did not take slaves back in his return from the New World. This, of course, ignores the fact that Cabral did not sail back to Portugal but, instead, kept sailing towards his original destination, India. However, the vessel sent back to Lisbon with the news of the 'new land' did carry on board the first Brazilian Indian shipped to Portugal. Simão de Vasconcelos tells how the Tupinikin 'was received in Portugal with the joy of King and Kingdom. Great and small never tired of seeing and hearing the talk, gesture, and movements of that new individual of the human genre. Some took him for a Half-goat, others for a Faun, or for some of those ancient monsters celebrated among the poets' ([1663]1865: xxxiii). His arrival not only caused curiosity amongst the Portuguese but also signalled the beginning of the trade of Brazilian Indians across the Atlantic. The *Livro da Viagem* reveals that the expedition of 1511 took a number of slaves 'equal to the original crew of the vessel [Bretoa]' (Bueno 1998b: 85). In addition, the fact that the number of young women was almost three times that of men suggests that these slaves were mainly destined to be used as sexual objects (Franco [1937]2000: 80).

The idyllic view of the origins of Brazil is also based on the fact that the use of slave labour in Portuguese America was not a widespread practice prior to the 1530s. The first reference to native labour tells of their voluntary collaboration with the visitors: 'they carried —writes Caminha— as much of that timber [brazil-wood] as they could *very willingly* and took it to the boats' (54) [italics mine]. The commercial relations between natives and traders in pre-colonial Brazil were structured mainly around barter: the natives traded labour and food for tools and trinkets. This situation of relative equality would be radically transformed by the rapid transition from barter to slavery that began in the 1530s (Marchant 1942). However, this transition was facilitated by the ongoing enslavement of the indigenous population in pre-colonial Brazil (Franco [1937]2000: 70-82), a period which knew at least one major slave master and trader, known as the Bacharel of

Cananéia, who settled in the region of São Paulo circa 1502 (Bueno 1998b: 157-160; Vainfas 2000: 62-63).

The idyllic portrait of the origins of Brazil is also based on an idealised vision of sexual miscegenation in 'pre-colonial' Brazil —one that has extended over the whole of history of Brazil. The so-called biological fathers of the nation are, not surprisingly, the two most notorious accidental colonists: Diogo Alvares (Caramuru) and João Ramalho. The history of the two men is similar in several important ways: they were accepted by indigenous communities; they adopted the customs of the natives; they won a reputation as great fighters; they married indigenous women; they left behind a numerous offspring; and, last but not least, they became notorious cultural mediators and powerful collaborators in the early Portuguese colonisation of Brazil (Giucci 1993: 194-203).

Diogo Alvares played a crucial role in the settlement and development of Bahia. The good relations he kept with the natives of the region was one of the reasons that led Tomé de Sousa, the first governor-general of Brazil, to establish the first capital of Portuguese America in Salvador (Bahia), in 1549. In his old age, Diogo went about the villages acting as a guide, ambassador, and interpreter for the missionaries of the Society of Jesus (Bueno 1998b: 170-173; Vainfas 2000: 93-97). João Ramalho helped the Portuguese to settle the plateau of São Paulo and the coast of São Vicente. He married several women and had very many offspring (Monteiro 1994: 29-36). He became the patriarch of the *mamelucos* —the men of mixed descent that years later would form the main body of the expeditions [*bandeiras*] that extended the territorial limits of Portuguese America, killing and enslaving thousands of Brazilian Indians in the process (Bueno 1998b: 177-181; Vainfas 2000: 332-334). These men came to be defined as the 'Brazilian protocell' —a new human type, neither American nor European— and considered the main agent in the formation of Brazil (Ribeiro [1969]1972: 189-204).

In short, the accidental colonists facilitated the swift transformation of colonisation from a provisional and informal presence into a permanent and formal enterprise. They played a crucial role in the settlement of the land, the establishment of the colonial authority, and the subjugation and enslavement of

the indigenous peoples. Their knowledge of the native language and customs would help missionaries to communicate with, and penetrate the cultures of, the Brazilian Indians. They acted as intermediaries and interpreters, and formed alliances with the Portuguese against those Europeans and Indians who fought against the Portuguese. The accidental colonists almost invariably remained loyal to the land of their parents, even when they took to living amongst the Brazilian Indians. The political alliances mediated by these early settlers favoured consistently the interests of the Portuguese Crown, paving the way for the Portuguese colonisation of Brazil.

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The history of Caramuru (and Paraguaçu) occupies a central place in the ideological construction of Brazil. Their marriage served initially to symbolise the historical (and loving) link between Portugal and Brazil. The symbolic power of their marriage served (and still serves) to redeem the Portuguese colonisation of Brazil —especially the initial period that goes from 1500 to 1530. However, this idyllic interpretation of the origins of the Brazilian nation does not withstand the critical analysis of the narratives of Caramuru (and Paraguaçu) —let alone the historical examination of pre-colonial Brazil. Instead, that analysis reveals the patriarchalism and Eurocentrism that informs the mythical birth of Brazil, a myth that serves to mask the process of colonisation that was already underway in so-called pre-colonial Brazil.

(Re)Discovering Brazil: (Re)Visions of the Nation

The commemoration of the 500 years of the discovery of Brazil in the year 2000 brought to light the conflicting views on the origins (and history) of Brazil. These views were positioned largely around two national platforms: *Brasil +500* and

Brasil: Outros 500. The former, the official platform, saw the discovery as the culmination of a great *voyage* that led to the cordial *encounter* between Portuguese and Amerindians. The latter, a popular platform, saw the discovery as the beginning of the Portuguese *invasion* of Brazil. The official platform was the responsibility of the Comissão Nacional para as Comemorações do V Centenário do Descobrimento do Brasil [CNCCDB: National Commission for the Commemoration of the 5th Centenary of the Discovery of Brazil: hereafter the Brazilian Commission]. The popular platform included groups such as the Movimento dos Trabalhadores Rurais Sem Terra [MST: Landless Workers' Movement] and the Conselho Indigenista Missionário [CIMI: Indigenist Missionary Council]. *Brasil +500* celebrated five centuries of social and cultural integration and called for more of the same (+500). *Brasil: Outros 500* condemned five centuries of violence and destruction and called for a different future (Outros 500). The analysis of the positions taken and the events organised by these two platforms, and other groups and individuals, will help decipher the current state of the discovery in the Brazilian imagination.

Voyage: Modernity. The commemoration of the 500 years of Brazil reveals, first and foremost, the continuity of the Eurocentric vision of the origins of Brazil. The clearest expression of this vision has been the continuous effort to emphasise the Portuguese roots of Brazil. The best illustration of this effort is probably Angela Dutra de Menezes' *O português que nos pariu* (2000). The title of the book translates literally as 'the Portuguese that gave birth to us [Brazilians]'. In declarations to the daily *O Globo*, the author stated unambiguously that: 'I think we can only understand Brazil knowing the past of Brazil. And the Brazilian past is the Portuguese past' (Cited in *O Globo* 2000a). The report ended with a similar remark: 'In the month when 500 years of the discovery are completed, there is nothing more opportune than to revisit our roots and, in doing so, all roads lead to Portugal' (Cited in *O Globo* 2000a). The daily *O Estado de S. Paulo* went further and situated the origins of Brazil in Cabral's place of birth: 'The History of Brazil begins in the little city of Belmonte' (Viana 2000). The same line of argument

appears in the first biography of Cabral: Walter Galvani's *Nau Capitania - Pero Alvares Cabral - Como e com Quem Começamos* (1999). The title presents the *Nau Capitania* (the caravel that took Cabral to the Americas) and Cabral as the 'how' and 'who' of the origins of Brazil.

The emphasis on the Portuguese heritage of Brazil was also evident in the actions of the then Brazilian President, Fernando Henrique Cardoso. The President initiated the commemoration of the 500 years of Brazil with a visit to Portugal, and gave place of honour in the official acts to European authorities, in particular the Portuguese. Moreover, in his discourse on the 500th anniversary, the President privileged the actions of the Portuguese and their descendants in the historical formation of Brazil. This effort to reassert the importance of Portugal in the formation of Brazil was also evident in the exhibition *Brasil 500 anos: Descobrimento e Colonização*, held at the Museum of Art of São Paulo in the year 2000. The objective of the exhibition was, in the words of historian and curator José Luiz Marques, to show 'how we became a project of Europe'. The identification between Brazil and Portugal (and Europe) in these narratives privileges the historical agency of the Portuguese (as Europeans) in detriment of Indians (who appear as passive witnesses of the origins of Brazil) and Africans (who are excluded from the origins of Brazil).

The effort to present the Portuguese as the historical agents responsible for the birth of Brazil is complemented by the desire to affirm the modern essence of Brazil(ianness). This desire can be observed in the emphasis given to the technological development of Portugal in the 15th century. Indeed, the official commemoration of the 500 years of Brazil was, first and foremost, the celebration of a great scientific achievement: the arrival of Cabral's fleet to the shores of Brazil. The central figure in this notion of the discovery is Pedro Alvares Cabral. The discovery of Brazil is seen here as the culmination of a great *voyage* that began in Lisbon (the port of departure in Portugal) and finished in what is today the town of Porto Seguro (the port of arrival in Brazil).

The success of the voyage was attributed to the advanced technological development of 15th century Portugal, in particular to the so-called *Escola de*

Sagres [School of Sagres]. This institution, whose existence as such has been questioned by many historians, was often referred to in the written press as the Silicon Valley or the NASA of the 16th century (Coelho 2000). The historical significance of its activities is compared to the Apollo Program (responsible for the first trip to the Moon) and the Manhattan Project (responsible for the production of the Atomic Bomb) (Nogueira 1999: 80). The physicist Celso Melo stated that: 'From the technological point of view, the Renaissance began in Portugal' (Cited in Nogueira 1999: 80). The spirit of adventure and enterprise of the sailors that ventured into the oceans was compared to that of those who venture nowadays into the world of the Internet (Pugliesi 2000). Not surprisingly, the central figure of the 500th anniversary of Brazil was going to be the caravel that brought Cabral to Brazil —symbol of the cutting-edge technology of 15th century Portugal. The replica of the Nau Capitania commissioned for the occasion was going to be the physical and metaphorical platform for the celebration of 500 years of *modernity* in Brazil. The fate of the project, revealed later in this section, would turn out to be one of the many ironies that plague the history of Brazil.

This image of Brazil as a modern nation was made particularly explicit in the exhibition *500 Anos de Invenção no Brasil* [500 Years of Invention in Brazil], organised by the Brazilian Association of Intellectual Property. The first three sections of the exhibition were dedicated to the inventions of the three constitutive peoples of Brazil: Portuguese, Indians, and Africans. The two panels of the first section were dedicated to the inventions of 'The Discoverers' (i.e. quadrant, compass, astrolabe). The two panels of the following section were dedicated to the inventions of the 'First Inventors: the Indians' (i.e. comb, bow and arrow, basket, maraca). Finally, the single panel of the third section was dedicated to the inventions (a term used here in a very loose fashion) of 'Black Slaves' (i.e. food recipes and ritual objects). The other three sections presented a series of Brazilian inventions in an historical sequence: 'The Early Times'; 'The Turn of the Century';

and '20th Century: The Century of Modernity'. The chief invention of the exhibition was the aeroplane, attributed to the Brazilian Santos Dumont.⁸

The exhibition projected several crucial ideas of Brazil. Firstly, by placing the inventions of the 'discoverers' before those of the 'first inventors', the exhibition privileged the Portuguese over the Brazilian Indians in the origins of Brazil. This reversed order (i.e. the first as second) resembles the inversed reception that took place during the week of discovery, when the natives were officially received by the visitors aboard the *Nau Capitania*. Secondly, by placing side by side the *modern* inventions of the Portuguese and the *traditional* inventions of Indians and Africans, the exhibition produces a sense of the Indians and Africans as simple and backward peoples. In contrast, the Portuguese appear as a complex and advanced people; creators of modern inventions, that is, of inventions that are scientific, technologically sophisticated, and that can be patented. This idea is reinforced by the scientific nature of the inventions contained in the last section (with nine panels), dedicated to the inventions of the 20th century. Moreover, the emphasis on the need to protect inventions with patents effectively invalidated the inventions of the Indian and African Other, or to be more precise, it placed them outside of Modernity. In essence, the exhibition produces a distinction between tradition and modernity that privileges the Portuguese. The general effect of the exhibition was to assert the *modernity* of Brazil as direct (and exclusive) heritage from the Portuguese.

The modern origins of Brazil have also been affirmed through the renewed effort to demonstrate the *intentional* character of the discovery of Brazil. The debate over the nature of the discovery remains central to the invention of Brazil (and Portugal). The traditional interpretation of the discovery pointed to its accidental character. The two most important histories written in colonial Brazil, Frei Vicente do Salvador's *História do Brasil* (1627) and Sebastião da Rocha Pita's *História da América Portuguesa* (1730), told how the expedition had been blown westward across the Atlantic by a providential wind while on its way to India. This notion of the discovery was not empty of rationality —albeit this was a

⁸ Exhibition visited at the Espaço Cultural 177 do Colegio Pedro II (Rio de Janeiro), in April 2001.

religious rather than secular rationality: one based on providence (religious reason) not science (secular reason). Here, the accidental discovery was synonymous with the *providential* discovery of Brazil.

The theory of the providential discovery began to lose ideological value with the increasing secularisation of politics that began in the second half of the 18th century under the administration of the Marquis of Pombal. The idea that the founding moment of Brazil was an historical accident became an even bigger problem after the independence of Brazil in 1822. The desire to bring Brazil into the realm of (Western) Modernity led to an enormous effort to demonstrate the intentionality of the discovery of Brazil. The first theory of the intentional discovery came, not surprisingly, from the institution in charge of (re)writing the history of Brazil: the Instituto Histórico e Geográfico Brasileiro [IHGB: Brazilian Historical and Geographical Institute]. The theory, introduced by Joaquim Norberto de Sousa e Silva in 'Memória sobre o Descobrimento do Brasil' (1854), was subsequently developed by historians from both sides of the Atlantic (Wehling 1999b).

The most eminent historian to formulate and propagate the theory of the intentional discovery of Brazil was arguably the Portuguese Jaime Cortesão. His work has played a pivotal role in the reinvention of Portugal as a modern nation. Importantly, Cortesão retains the notion that the 'zenith of national history' is the era of discoveries that led to the formation of the Portuguese Empire (1492 and 1541). However, he replaces providence for science, and in doing so he situates Portugal at the heart of Western Modernity. The centrality of this narrative can be seen in the scientific language used by the Comissão Nacional para as Comemorações dos Descobrimentos Portugueses [CNCDP: National Commission for the Commemoration of the Portuguese Discoveries: hereafter the Portuguese Commission] (Arruda 1999: 29-30). The triumph of the notion of the intentional discovery in Portugal is not surprising: the idea that the discovery of Brazil (the jewel of the Portuguese Empire) could be accidental [an accident: *um acaso*] rather than intentional [a success: *um sucesso*] would detract from the modernity and historical agency of the Portuguese.

In Brazil, the thesis of the intentional discovery gained currency in the 20th century and became the norm in textbooks, although it continues to be a topic of debate in the academic world. The reason why the debate over the accidental or intentional character of the discovery has not been resolved in Brazil is largely due to the emphasis placed on the encounter, rather than the voyage. However, the last few years have seen a renewed interest in the voyage of discovery and its *intentional* character, and its consolidation in history textbooks (Franzen & Baldissera 1999: 161). Luís Felipe de Alencastro suggests that the return to the notion of intentionality could be explained 'because the hypothesis that the country was discovered by accident appears as a retrospective negation of Brazilianness' (2000b: 3). Although Alencastro fails to explain the actual relation between the character of the discovery and the current definition of Brazil, his text betrays that the element that provides that relation is the notion of Modernity. To put it explicitly, the return to the notion of intentionality can be explained because the hypothesis that the country was discovered by accident appears as a retrospective negation of Brazilianness *as* Modernity. This negation of national modernity can only but generate anxiety in a nation that desires to belong at all cost to the so-called modern (and developed) world of the (old and new) Europeans (also known as the First World) rather than be associated with the so-called traditional (and primitive) world of the Indians or the traditional (and backward) world of the Africans (also known as the Third World).

The object that best symbolised the desire to portray Brazil as a modern nation was the count-down clock designed for the occasion by Hans Donner. The clocks, whose mechanism was reported to be a marvel of technological sophistication, were installed in twenty-seven state capital cities around Brazil. The sphere was a world-map with Brazil, or to be precise, Porto Seguro, at its centre. The clock projected Brazil not just as a modern nation (i.e. technologically sophisticated) but also as the very centre of modernity (i.e. the first centre of the world-system: the original moment of globalisation). The same notion was present in the preface to the edition of Caminha's letter prepared for the *Mostra do Redescobrimento* [Exhibition of the Rediscovery]. The preface, signed by Lázaro de

Mello e Brandão, president of the Bradesco Bank, was entitled 'Between Discovery and Globalisation'. The author defined the letter as 'undoubtedly the first moment of globalisation' and regarded the celebration of the discovery as the opportunity to 'widen the horizons of progress and development' in Brazil (Brandão n/d).

The countdown was to finish on the 21st of April 2000. That day Brazil would be able to proudly celebrate not just 500 years of history, but 500 years of Modernity. However, this vision of a modern Brazil was made to look ridiculous by the central act of the official celebration, which was to be the re-enactment of the arrival of the *Nau Capitania*, followed by the disembarking by boat of three officers of the Brazilian Navy, dressed in period costumes, representing three (white male) historical figures: Pero Alvares Cabral (the captain), Fray Henrique de Coimbra (the chaplain), and Pero Vaz de Caminha (the scribe). The re-enactment was going to culminate with the celebration of a mass in the place of the first mass of Brazil. However, in an ironic twist, the replica of the *Nau Capitania* sank shortly before the event and could not be repaired in time. This turn of events can be taken as the perfect metaphor for a country whose leaders want to showcase to the world a 'first world' nation but are constantly reminded of the 'third world' living conditions endured by many Brazilians.

Encounter: Cordiality. The other major event organised to commemorate the 500 years of Brazil was the *Mostra do Redescobrimento* —a colossal art exhibition that brought together over fifteen thousand works from around the world, all with some connection to Brazil. The main attraction of the exhibition was the original letter written by Caminha to the King of Portugal in 1500. The letter was mass-produced and distributed amongst the visitors to the exhibition, with the subtitle: 'The Birth Certificate of Brazil'. The preface to the letter, signed by the president of the Bradesco Bank, sponsor of the exhibition of the original letter and of its edition for public distribution, presented the text as a faithful portrait of the national virtues. The celebration of the letter was regarded as a chance to consolidate the global and multicultural character of the Brazilian nation. Caminha's letter was portrayed as the birth certificate of a nation born from the cordial *encounter*

between the Portuguese and the Indians. The central figure of the discovery was Pero Vaz de Caminha, but once again the real protagonist was the object itself: the *Carta a el-Rei D. Manuel*, exhibited only for the second time in Brazil.

The exhibition and other mega-events became the vehicle for the celebration and diffusion of this idyllic and utopian vision of Brazil. The exhibition served to showcase the country's natural beauty and cultural diversity, nationally and internationally. Sections of the exhibition were sent around the world, as well as to sixteen capital cities in Brazil. This effort to offer a positive image of the country through mega-events limited the role of the population to that of extras or spectators. The official events accorded more presence and subjectivity to the objects on display than the population of Brazil, especially the Brazilian Indians. The latter were ignored from the initial committees set up to organise the commemorative events, only to be invited to participate when the irony of their absence became visible and criticised. Even then, the main presence of Brazilian Indians was as objects in advertisements.

The most powerful symbolic advertisement in tune with the official version of the discovery was that of the national airline TAM. Their double-page colourful advertisement had two Brazilian Indians with written placards, like those used in airports to receive unknown arrivals, with the names of 'Mr Cabral' and 'Mr Vaz de Caminha'. The print read: 'Homage of TAM to the first landing in Brazil'. The advertisement combined two key concepts of the official celebration: *cordiality* and *modernity*. The third concept, *hybridity*, was taken up by another leading company: the most popular television network in Brazil, Rede Globo.

Rede Globo opted for the story Caramuru (and Paraguaçu) to celebrate the 500 years of Brazil. The result was a three-part romantic comedy entitled *A invenção do Brasil* [The Invention of Brazil]. Jorge Furtado, co-director of the mini-series, explained the decision to film 'the history of Caramuru' based on the notion that it is the symbol of the origins and essence of Brazil. On the one hand, Caramuru was 'the first character to choose Brazil: he came by force, married an Indian, had the chance to return to Portugal, but decided to stay' (Cited in Croitor 2000). On the other hand, the relation between Caramuru and Paraguaçu 'is a

metaphor of Adam and Eve taking place here. They symbolise the mixture of races that realised the existence of Brazil' (Cited in A Folha de São Paulo 2000a). The mini-series was subsequently turned into a film with the title of *Caramuru: A invenção do Brasil* (2001). The production included also a book adorned with photos from the mini-series, which contained a prologue, the script, and a brief bibliography (Furtado & Arraes 2000).

The production combines eroticism and exoticism to recreate a vision of paradise where Caramuru and Paraguaçu appear as the Adam and Eve of Brazil. The story reiterates the notion of *terrestrial paradise* based on the beauty and fertility of the land and the innocence of the natives —innocence reflected above all in their lack of shame and their 'sexual freedom' (Furtado & Arraes 2000: 80). The series defines Caramuru by his relation to Brazil: he is the cordial Portuguese who becomes 'king of Brazil' (Furtado & Arraes 2000: 15). Paraguaçu, however, is defined by her relation to Caramuru: she is the attractive and loving 'princess of the jungle' who becomes 'Caramuru's Indian' (Furtado & Arraes 2000: inside cover). The other characters serve to flesh out the story, increasing the sexual tension in the case of the women (Moema and Isabella), and the political tension in the case of the men (Itaparica and Vasco).

The sexual tension is the driving force of the story —marketed as 'the first love-triangle in the history of Brazil'. The script emphasises the portrait of the native women 'melting' and 'catching fire' at the mere presence of the Europeans. Sexism is rampant: Moema (Paraguaçu's sister) is the libidinous native; Isabella (a French courtesan) is the femme fatale. The sexist innuendo can be observed also in the comparison of the discovery of the 'new land' to the discovery of a 'naked woman' (Furtado & Arraes 2000: 33-34). It is important to note the different visions of female sexuality attributed to the two women: Moema's sexuality is instinctive and impulsive; whereas Isabella's is controlled and calculated. Moema projects a *natural* sexuality: she is controlled by her desires. Isabella projects a *civilised* sexuality: she is in control of her desires, using them rationally. The contrast provides a good illustration of the naturalisation of the indigenous population in the Brazilian imaginary. Finally, it is interesting to note that the title

of the film refers exclusively to Caramuru —another illustration of the patriarchalism that informs the formulation of the origins of Brazil(ianness).

The images reproduced in the book of the series reiterate these same ideas. The top-half of the book's cover is a version of an anonymous French painting from the 16th century which depicts the torsos of two young naked ladies, with one of them grabbing one of the other's nipples. Their bodies are adorned with red tincture and colourful plumage, against a background suggestive of the Amazon. The bottom-half is a composition of three images: in the foreground, standing up, Caramuru, in a pose that projects power, authority, and determination; behind him, kneeling down on the beach, Paraguaçu, in a pose that projects beauty and suggests submission and contact with nature; and, in the background, several caravels coming towards Brazil. In the preface to the book the composition is broken down into three full-page photographs: firstly, the beach (nature); secondly, Paraguaçu (the native); and finally, Caramuru (the colonist). The book cover is the perfect synthesis of the exoticism and eroticism that informs visions of the New World, and reflects some of the hierarchies that drove the Portuguese colonisation of Brazil: the dominance of the Portuguese (Male) over the Indian (Female).

The (re)production of the story of Caramuru (and Paraguaçu) brings together the two great myths that have emerged largely unscathed from the commemoration of the 500 years of Brazil: the Garden of Eden and the Racial Democracy (Oliveira 2000: 197). The first presents Brazil as a land beautiful by nature. The second as the product of the harmonious fusion of three peoples: Portuguese, Indians, and Africans. Having said that, one must bear in mind that the Discovery leaves no place for the African in the mythical origins of Brazil. The advertisements produced by the Government of the State of Bahia illustrate this point clearly. Their advertisements stated that 'Brazil was born in Bahia' from the fusion of two peoples, the Tupi and the Portuguese. To this they add: 'And then came the blacks —with their laughs, rituals and rhythms'. Leaving aside the idyllic vision of the integration of Africans in Bahia, the reference to the African arrivals

as 'the blacks' illustrates the subordinate and racialised position accorded to Afro-Brazilians in the discursive formulation of the origins of Brazil(ianness).

Other (Re)Visions: 1. The official commemoration of the 500 years of Brazil did not pass without challenge. The main reaction to the celebratory mood of the Brazilian authorities came from the popular platform *Brasil: Outros 500*. This platform organised numerous acts of protest, with special emphasis on the plight of the Brazilian Indians, but also of the landless peasants and the Afro-Brazilians. The history of Brazil was portrayed here as a continuous process of destruction of the land and exploitation of the majority of the population. Their slogan was clear: 'There is nothing to celebrate'. This sentiment found expression in rallies, performances, and publications. There were many articles in newspapers and magazines critical of the official commemoration, as well as constant reports on anti-celebration activities. The most frequent and specific criticism was the contrast between the large budget allocated for the official commemoration and the scarce funds allocated for the improvement of the living conditions of the indigenous population of Brazil (Franca 2000c).

The government was criticised for organising a party as a public relations exercise [*para inglês ver*] while ignoring the reality of the people. This situation led a group of artists from São Paulo to put together a 'show-performance-party-protest' entitled *Cagamos pros 500* [We Shit on the 500] (A Folha de São Paulo 2000b). Similarly, Carlos Heitor Cony condemned the celebration as an act of national barbarism in the face of the atrocities committed during the 500 years of Brazil: 'we exterminated our Indians, poisoned our rivers and lakes, cleared our forests and polluted our beaches' (2000: 2). This view was echoed outside Brazil. On the day of the 500th anniversary of Brazil, the Spanish daily *El Mundo* published a scathing editorial entitled 'Brazil, the frustrated paradise'. The editorial portrayed a land blessed by nature but cursed by the crude realities of poverty and misery, a country that has become 'the caricature of the unjust distribution of wealth'. The editorial quoted a disparaging declaration by the

foremost contemporary Brazilian icon, the football player Pelé: 'I am ashamed of my country' (El Mundo 2000).

The critiques of the official commemoration were often synonymous with the condemnation of the treatment of Brazilian Indians. However, some of those critiques were far from unproblematic. Take, for example, the strong words of condemnation used by Carlos Heitor Cony in the above quote. The author lumps together indigenous peoples and natural features (rivers, lakes, forests, and beaches) as if they all belong to the same category: Nature. Moreover, this is not any nature, but *our* nature: Brazilian Nature. The naturalisation of the indigenous peoples and the reiterated use of the possessive pronoun in this article are reminiscent of the *Carta a el-rei D. Manuel* —with the difference that Caminha claimed possession of the land and its native inhabitants for the Portuguese Crown, whereas Cony does so for the Brazilian Nation. In any case, the fact that an article that is meant to be fiercely critical of the commemoration of the discovery and the general history of Brazil can reproduce with such innocence the classic stereotype of the Brazilian Indians as natural beings is symptomatic of the deep seated naturalisation and objectification of the Indian Other in the Brazilian imagination.

The indigenous population did not remain silent spectators during the celebration of the 500 years of Brazil. On the contrary, they criticised the official celebration, staged protests, organised rallies, and voiced their concerns to everyone willing to listen, both at home and abroad. The most notorious event they organised was the *Marcha Indígena 2000* —a march of indigenous peoples from all corners of Brazil which saw two thousand representatives of two hundred tribes march to the town of Porto Seguro. The objective of the march was to draw attention to the fact that the indigenous peoples 'continue to be exploited and excluded' (Declaration by Maninha Xukuru, in Franca 2000a), and to contest the triumphalism of the 500 years of Brazil. The organisers of the march produced a manifesto detailing a series of specific demands to the Brazilian Government, the principal of which were: the demarcation of indigenous land, the expulsion of invaders from indigenous land, compensation for environmental damages to their

lands and the passing of the Statute of Indigenous Societies, paralysed in Congress since 1991 (Franca 2000b).

The march was to culminate on the date and place of the official celebration of the arrival of Cabral: 22nd of April 2000, Porto Seguro (Bahia). The demonstrators were met outside Porto Seguro and denied access to the town by a large contingent of the Brazilian Military Police—the same who a few days earlier had destroyed a memorial erected by the Pataxó on the site of the first mass, Coroa Vermelha. The day ended with 30 people injured and 141 imprisoned. The event produced a dramatic photo of an indigenous man kneeling in the middle of the road, with his arms up in the air, in front of a heavily armed line of military policemen, which made it on the world wide media. The build up to the event in the national media, with frequent references to the possibility of conflict, almost guaranteed the violent outcome. The violence that ensued was, to a large extent, a self-fulfilling prophecy, fuelled especially by the tough rhetoric of the MST and the President Fernando Henrique Cardoso, and made inevitable by the decision to send the Military Police to prevent the protesters from entering Porto Seguro (Altieri 2000). The words of President Fernando Henrique Cardoso, who presented himself as favourable to the protest '*even of the excluded, as long as they are civilised*' [italics mine], illustrate the elitism and the continuous reproduction of the discourse of barbarism and civilisation that characterises politics in Brazil (A Folha de São Paulo 2000c). The treatment dispensed to the indigenous people present at the rally provided another ironic twist: the re-enactment of the violence of the Portuguese colonisation of Brazil was far more 'successful' than the re-enactment of the arrival of the Nau Capitania.

Other (Re)Visions: 2. The widespread criticism of the official acts celebrating the 500 years of Brazil failed to dislodge the myth of the idyllic origins of Brazil. This is largely because those criticisms focused mainly on the colonisation that followed the arrival of the Portuguese and on the contemporary reality of Brazil, but left essentially intact the idyllic vision of the Discovery. The only direct engagement of the leaders of the *Marcha Indigena 2000* with that vision was the

assertion that 'Brazil was not discovered: it existed'. This affirmation condemned the ethnocentrism inherent to the expression discovery but reiterated the anachronism of thinking Brazil as something existing in 1500. Brazil was not discovered in 1500, not because it already existed (in which case it could have been discovered), but because it did not exist *as* Brazil. In any case, this critical take on the discovery did not touch the crucial symbols and stories that continue to define the so-called birth of Brazil: Cabral (and the *Nau Capitania*), Caminha (and the *Carta a el-rei D. Manuel*), and the marriage of Caramuru and Paraguaçu.

By and large, the same limitation affected the critical views of most commentators in the leading Brazilian newspapers and magazines. The most popular claim in these publications was the notion that 'there is no nation' in Brazil, an expression coined some time ago by Celso Furtado. Fernando de Barros e Silva used the expression to argue the virtual character of the commemoration. The frequent references to Brazil as 'emerging market' signalled, according to him, the interruption of the construction of the nation (Silva 2000: 2). Luís Felipe de Alencastro posed the question in Shakespearean terms: 'To be a market or to be a nation; that is the question' (2000b: 3). For his part, Gilberto Dimenstein argued that Brazil is not a nation 'but an agglomeration of beings dispersed in their interests, threatened by public abandonment' (2000: 6).

These and many other authors and commentators work with a sociological concept of the nation (nation as social reality), ignoring the ideological dimension of the concept (nation as imaginary). The fact that 64% of Brazilians think that Brazil is 'an excellent country, and good to live in' despite the high levels of violence and unemployment and the poor levels of health and education (Datafolha, cited in Dimenstein 2000: 6) is, if anything, evidence of a strong sense of nation(hood). This optimistic view of the nation despite the poor standards of living cannot be explained by denying the existence (or the value) of the nation. Instead, the key is to examine the idyllic view the nation —beginning with the mythical origins of Brazil(ianness). The failure to conceive or visualise the nation as an imagined community, as an ideological invention, has let slip an excellent opportunity to challenge the idyllic vision of the origins of Brazil(ianness).

Other (Re)Visions: 3. Some of the most interesting critical (re)visions of the origins of Brazil came, in fact, from the events organised by the official platform: *Brasil +500*. This was the case, for example, of the double exhibition put together by the Museum of Art of Bahia as part of the Show of the Rediscovery: 'The Letter of Pero Vaz de Caminha' and 'Indigenous Arts'. The first exhibition replaced the term discovery [*descobrimento*] for the term finding [*achamento*], interpreting this as an 'encounter of cultures' and presenting the letter as the 'birth certificate' of Brazil. The exhibition contained objects from the epoch of the discoveries (some of the earliest world-maps and several instruments of navigation) that served to contextualise and enhance the central object on display: the original manuscript of the *Carta a el-rei D. Manuel*. The second exhibition, entitled *1000 Anos de História Indígena: Aldeias no Alto Xingu: X, XV, XX* [1000 Years of Indigenous History: Villages in the Alto Xingu: X, XV, XX], contained objects from several indigenous peoples of that region: masks, pottery, *plumaria* [ritual objects made of colourful feathers], and flutes. The rationale for the periodisation of this exhibition was to situate Caminha's letter as *a moment* in the history of the Brazilian Indians: their encounter with the Portuguese. The letter appeared as a written document alongside other documents of visual and aural nature produced by the Brazilian Indians. The fact that the time frame used to illustrate the 'impressive cultural continuity' placed Caminha's letter at *the centre* of that history (i.e. the 15th century being the middle between the 10th and 20th centuries) could be seen to somewhat undermine the critical purpose of the exhibition. However, the exhibition succeeded at least in refuting the notion that the arrival of Cabral marked the beginning of history in this part of the Americas.⁹

The museum had also on display a series of paintings and sculptures produced by a group of twenty-two artists (eleven Portuguese and eleven Brazilian) offering different interpretations of the discovery of Brazil. The project began under the auspices of the Portuguese Commission with the approach to eleven Portuguese artists (Rattner 1999). The project was then extended to Brazil

⁹ Exhibition visited at the Museum of Art of Bahia (Salvador), in August 2001.

by the platform *Brasil +500*. The twenty-two pieces were exhibited as part of the *Mostra do Redescobrimento*. The objective was to produce a wide range of artistic interpretations on the discovery of Brazil, paying special attention to Caminha's letter. The Museum of Art of Bahia displayed a selection of these works under the banner: 'Eleven titles in answer to the official beginning of Brazil'.¹⁰

The exhibition included Glauco Rodrigues' *Segunda Misa no Brasil* (1996), a recreation of the first mass in contemporary Brazil; Luís Zerbini's *Abraço* (2000), a torso with two backs and two skulls facing away from each other; Siron Franco's *Porto Seguro* (2000), a composition whose central piece is an edition of Caminha's letter in Braille; and José Roberto Aguilar's *Carta Atemporal* (2000): a photo-montage consisting of the superimposition of Caminha's letter over faces of all ages and colours, many looking up to the sky ... to the future? These works illustrate the possibility of critically engaging with the idyllic notion of the origins of Brazil in ways that link past and present, social reality and the imaginary, and that enable a critical reinvention of Brazil(ianness).

This critical engagement is beautifully articulated in Glauco Rodrigues' 'Second Mass in Brazil'. The dominant presence in this painting is four pieces of *caju*, a tropical fruit typical of Brazil. The fruit not only gives the scene a Brazilian feel, but it also sidelines the presence of the cross (only partially visible). The author makes explicit the marginality of Brazilian Indians and Afro-Brazilians in his vision of contemporary Brazil. The painting shows a black man poorly dressed and the torso of an indigenous woman in traditional attire. These two figures are present in the scene but do not participate in the mass. They are spectators. The irony behind Luís Zerbini's impossible *abraço* [embrace] and Siron Franco's letter for the blind can hardly escape anyone's attention. Both pieces offer a direct critique of the idyllic origins of Brazil(ianness): the first rejecting the notion of the cordial encounter; the second pointing out the cultural blindness that defined the Discovery. These critical approaches qualify, and are qualified by, José Roberto Aguilar's celebration of diversity and expression of hope of his 'Atemporal Letter'.

¹⁰ Exhibition visited at the Museum of Art of Bahia (Salvador), in August 2001.

This exhibition shows the possibility of a critical reading of the origins of Brazil(ianness). However, its impact on the popular imaginary must not be overestimated. Firstly, these works belong to a world and a language still inaccessible to the majority of the Brazilian population (the world of museums) —although it was encouraging to observe that school-groups were the main visitors of these exhibitions. Secondly, and crucially, these displays have to contend with a hegemonic view of Brazil that is pervasive, even in the same spaces where critical displays are exhibited. Thus, for example, the central pieces of the Museum of Art of Bahia are two full size figures of the *caboclo* and the *cabocla* —the male and female figures that symbolise miscegenation and transculturation between indigenous and whites, as well as the independence of Bahia. Their presence at the entrance of the museum places them as the guardians of its contents, the gatekeepers through which everyone approaches and leaves all other exhibitions. Their centrality shows and reinforces the strength of the paradigm of hybridity in Brazil —in this case the paradoxical paradigm of Indian-Portuguese hybridity in Bahia, arguably the most Afro-Brazilian state of Brazil.

Other (Re)Visions: 4. Finally, it is worth examining the different approach of the Brazilian and Portuguese commissions to the discovery of Brazil. The Portuguese Commission opted for a limited and careful use of the expression *descobrimento*, often using the term *descoberta* —a less ideologically charged term for discovery. The Commission went as far as asserting that the Portuguese were both discoverers and discovered. In other words, the Commission understood discoveries as intercultural events where the gaze of the self should not obliterate the vision that others have of ourselves or the vision that others have of themselves: ‘commemorations should be, therefore, the occasion to restore that complex play of images and reverberations provoked by the interaction of several cultures, at times radically different’ (CNCDP 1996: 23).

In contrast, the Brazilian Commission decided that a ‘mere change of terms’ would make little difference, opting instead for the ‘possibility’ of supporting projects ‘that could lead to the very overcoming of the concept of

discovery' (CNCCDB 1997: 9-10). However, this apparent and radical pluralism was nullified by the notion that there is one (and only one) correct image of Brazil. Thus, the task of the Commission was to promote: 'a) a contemporary interpretation of the principal facts; b) a correction of the distorted or inaccurate versions of these facts; and c) the diffusion of unknown historical events' (CNCCDB 1997: 14). This approach petrifies history, ignoring that historical facts are constructions, susceptible to different interpretations (Arruda 1999: 36). The positivist notion of history embraced by the Brazilian Commission effectively denied the possibility of alternative readings of Brazilian history, that is, alternative formulations of Brazil(ianness).

The Brazilian Commission portrayed Brazil as a nation defined by 'ethnic pluralism and cultural diversity' product of 'aggregation rather than segregation and conflict' (CNCCDB 1997: 9-10). The national culture was sustained by the Portuguese heritage, to which others added their own contributions. The Commission defined Brazil as a modern nation, born out of the Discovery, which grew through the peaceful and cordial mixing of peoples and cultures on the Portuguese cauldron. The result was 'an inedited experience of tropical civilisation' (CNCCDB 1997: 10). This notion of Brazil reiterates the synthesis of hybridity and cordiality that defines the hegemonic notion of Brazil(ianness). In short, the Brazilian Commission recognised the existence of tensions as well as large social and economic imbalances, but reiterated the notion that Brazil was 'destined to be the country of the future' (CNCCDB 1997: 10).

This portrait of Brazil was defended by Rafael Greca, the Minister of Sport and Tourism, as a way to 'boost the self-esteem of our people' and to 'produce a tourist and cultural product' that would continue to generate employment and income for the people after the celebrations were over (2000: 3). The minister went so far as proposing 'the self-esteem of the nation [...] as national strategy of development' (2003: 3). Implicit in this strategy is a rejection of any critical approach to the past (and present) of Brazil, and thus to leave intact the idyllic vision of the origins of Brazil. The symbolic force of this vision and the self-esteem

that was expected to generate would drive the 'country of the future' ever closer to fulfil that utopian vision of Brazil: the (Modern) Terrestrial Paradise.

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The celebration of the discovery of Brazil in the year 2000 brought to light the apparent disjunction between national imaginary (the idyllic view of the nation) and social reality (the crude state of the country). Yet the strength of the national(ist) imaginary impedes a frontal attack against some of the social malaises of Brazil, in particular the racism suffered by Afro-Brazilians and Brazilian Indians. The *vision of paradise* that still informs the mythical origins of Brazil leads many people to view current injustices and inequalities as temporary aberrations, something destined to disappear in the hopefully not too distant future rather than a direct result of the Eurocentrism (and patriarchalism) that defines Brazil(ianness). This view of the nation has been reinforced by the incorporation of a discourse of *modernity* to complement the *cordiality* and *hybridity* associated with the birth of Brazil. The notion of the discovery as a scientific achievement not only asserts the modern origins of Brazil, but it also privileges the historical agency of the Portuguese. This vision continues to portray the Portuguese as discoverers (historical agents), the Indians as discovered (historical objects: subsequently transformed into mythical objects), and the Africans as absent (out of the national origins: only to be added later as slave labour: physical objects).

Conclusion: The First Pillar of White Hegemony

The commemoration of the 500 years of the so-called *discovery* of Brazil has served to revive the founding myth of the Brazilian nation: the cordial encounter between the Portuguese and the Indians in the Terrestrial Paradise. This idyllic vision of the origins of Brazil has been reiterated by the continuous idealisation of Pero Vaz

de Caminha's *Carta a el-rei D. Manuel* (as the birth certificate of Brazil) and the marriage of Caramuru and Paraguaçu (as the Adam and Eve of Brazil). To be sure, the religious reason that informed Caminha's letter has been replaced by secular reason: Modernity has replaced Christianity. The integration of modernity into the founding myth of Brazil has taken place mainly through the centrality given to the voyage of Pero Alvares Cabral. The centrality of science and technology in the modern articulation of power turns this notion of the discovery into a modern (secular) version of the relation between vision and power that informed Pero Vaz de Caminha's *Carta a el-rei D. Manuel*. In essence, a scientific discourse of progress has replaced a religious discourse of salvation in the accounts of the discovery of Brazil.

The will to power —and the objectification of the Other— that shaped Caminha's colonial vision of the Land of the True Cross remains intact in the contemporary vision of the discovery of Brazil. However, the use of the term *invention* in expressions of popular culture suggests that there is an increasing realisation of the constructed nature of Brazil(ianness). Sadly, thus far, this term has been used mostly to reinforce rather than dismantle the Eurocentric (and patriarchal) vision of Brazil —exemplified by its use in the title to the story of Caramuru (and Paraguaçu) produced by Rede Globo. Indeed, the centrality of the story of Caramuru in the commemoration of the 500 years of the arrival of the Portuguese to the Americas illustrates the currency of the idyllic (peaceful and loving) notion of the origins of Brazil. This vision of the birth of Brazil as the product of a *love story* between Indians and Portuguese in a Terrestrial Paradise reasserts the myth of racial democracy and constitutes the first and foremost symbolic pillar of white (and male) hegemony in Brazil.

Chapter 2

It is not a reason to be proud, but it is comforting to know that we never suffered the evils of chronic conflict. As we travel through history, we find a peaceful colonial society, cordially united, merely fighting against foreigners, until the excesses of extortion and theft of the metropolis provoked the first real rebellions.

Manoel Bomfim ([1931]1997: 364)

Independence

On the 7th of September 1822, Dom Pedro de Alcantara, Prince Regent and future Emperor of Brazil, uttered the most famous cry in Brazilian history: 'Independence or Death!' The symbolic power of the royal cry, known as the *Grito de Ipiranga*, has served to idealise Brazilian independence —the (re)birth of Brazil. The *Grito de Ipiranga* has been interpreted as the culmination of a peaceful process of political integration destined to give birth to a single nation-state in Portuguese America. The peaceful character of this process has been attributed to the political wisdom of the (white and male) elite of colonial Brazil and their ability to minimise internal conflicts and avoid a direct confrontation with Portugal. This would have enabled a smooth transition from colony to nation, without the bloodbath and fragmentation that characterised the process of independence in Spanish America. The person who has come to symbolise the spirit of rationality and conciliation that defines this vision of Brazilian independence is José Bonifácio de Andrada e Silva, the so-called Patriarch of Independence.

The declaration of independence is also considered the culmination of an increasing national(ist) sentiment with roots deep into colonial Brazil. The foremost manifestation of this early Brazilianness is, according to the nationalist historiography, the Insurrection of Pernambuco against the Dutch (1645-1654). This event is central to the notion of Brazilian Nativism —a nationalist narrative

that presents the history of Portuguese America as a sequence of events destined to culminate in the independence of Brazil. The figure that brings together Independence and Brazil(ianness) is that of José Joaquim da Silva Xavier, known as Tiradentes. The execution of Tiradentes for his participation in the conspiracy against the Portuguese Crown, known as the *Inconfidência Mineira* (1789), has turned him into the 'first national martyr' and 'Precursor of Independence'.

The struggle(s) for independence and the formation of the nation-state are studied here as part of a double process: the affirmation of Independence and the construction of Brazilianness. This double process remits to external and internal referents, respectively. The external referents are Portugal and the European nations who competed with Portugal for the control of Portuguese America. The internal referents are the regions that threatened the unity of Brazil. In other words, Brazilian Independence results here from a process of national formation built against Colonialism and against Regionalism. There is, however, a third referent against which the notion of Brazilian Independence has been built that is often ignored or simply relegated to the footnotes of national history: the Indian and African Other. This chapter pays special attention to the place of the Others in the discourse of Brazilian Independence, something essential to the articulation of social relations and white hegemony in contemporary Brazil.

This chapter examines the idealised and teleological portrait of the independence of Brazil produced by national(ist) historians. The analysis extends from the first anti-colonial manifestations in the early 16th century to the consolidation of national unity in the mid-19th century. This wide historical framework will enable us to discern the criteria used to select the events and figures which came to be part of the national(ist) discourse of Independence. The patterns of inclusion and exclusion are examined in three separate sections. The first of them focuses on the so-called nativist movements —a series of colonial revolts that were invented as national (or proto-national) events after the independence of Brazil. The second examines the different ideological reception of the two most emblematic colonial revolts inspired by the principles of the

Enlightenment: the *Inconfidência Mineira* (1789) and the *Inconfidência Bahiana* (1798). The final of these sections examines the different treatment accorded to the rebellions that followed the independence of Brazil. The chapter also examines the event that is widely considered the foremost manifestation of early national(ist) sentiment in colonial Brazil: the Insurrection of Pernambuco (1645-1654). Moreover, the chapter analyses the visions of empire that informed the crucial years of the political process of independence, with special attention to the figure of José Bonifácio. The chapter concludes with a series of reflections on the current meaning(s) of Brazilian Independence.

Nativists and (the) Others in Brazilian Nativism

The studies of the independence of Brazil tend to focus on the period 1808-1822, presenting 1789-1808 and 1822-1840 as the periods of precedence and consolidation, respectively (Barman 1988). This historical framework omits from the analysis elements that are crucial to define Brazilian Independence, or more precisely to determine the relation between Independence and Brazilianness. In particular, it excludes the analysis of Nativism, a nationalist narrative that presents the history of Portuguese America as a teleological sequence of events destined to culminate in the independence of Brazil.¹¹ This section examines the so-called nativist movements—a series of regional colonial

¹¹ Nativism is a denomination applied to texts and events considered antecedents of Brazilian nationalism and Brazilian independence. The term nativism has been used in different and often confusing ways in Brazilian history. However, it is possible to identify two main expressions of nativism in colonial Brazil: nativist narratives and nativist movements. Nativist *narratives* are literary expressions of affection and exaltation of the land of Brazil. These narratives did not contribute to the formation of Brazil during the colonial period—not least because most of them were only published in the late 19th century—but were crucial for the (re)construction of colonial history as well as for the invention of the colonial-past-of-the-nation after independence. Nativist *movements* are uprisings against the colonial regime carried out by people born in Brazil. It is this second notion (nativism as movement) that is the object of analysis in this section. For a sample of the uses of the term nativism in Brazilian historiography, see Silva (1997: 96-107). On nativist narratives, see Burns (1968: 12-28); on nativist movements, see Silva (1997: 63-87); and, on nativist sentiment, see Andrade (1999: 54-58).

revolts that were invented as national (or proto-national) after independence—as well as other important conflicts from the same period which are excluded from the definition of Brazilian Nativism. The analysis will reveal the ideological principles governing the discourse of Brazilian Independence.

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Nativism remits ultimately to the question posed by Barbosa Lima Sobrinho in his book *Desde Quando Somos Nacionalistas?* [How long have we been Nationalists?] (1963). His answer is unequivocal: the first expressions of nationalism date back to the moment the *first colonists* perceived their interests as being different from those of the metropolis and decided to act upon that perception (Sobrinho [1963]1995: 9-10). Sobrinho presents the struggles of the Portuguese colonists, and their Brazilian descendants, against the Spanish (in the South), the French (in the Centre), and the Dutch (in the North) as precedents of the nationalist sentiment that would eventually pit Brazilians against Portuguese. This Eurocentric interpretation—one where all historical agents are Europeans and descendants of Europeans—is common to both conservative and progressive historians.¹²

In these narratives, Brazil emerges from the struggle of the Portuguese against the other *colonial powers*: Spain, France, Holland and Britain. The main early rival of Portugal was France. Antarctic France—the name by which the part of Brazil under French control was known—was the major European threat to Portuguese domination in the 16th century. The French did not recognise the Treaty of Tordesillas signed between Portugal and Spain in 1494. Instead, they supported the principle of *uti possidetis*: ownership through effective occupation. The French arrived in 1504 and soon established a flourishing trade with some of

¹² See, for example, Francisco Varnhagen, *História Geral do Brasil* (1854-1857); João Capistrano de Abreu, *Capítulos de História Colonial* (1907); Manuel de Oliveira Lima, *Formação Histórica da Nacionalidade Brasileira* (1911); Manoel Bomfim, *O Brasil na América* (1929) and *O Brasil-Nação* (1931).

the Indians, culminating with the foundation of Rio de Janeiro in 1555. The Portuguese managed to take control of Rio de Janeiro in 1567, but the French remained an important presence in Brazil until their expulsion from Maranhão in 1615. In the mid-16th century, the French presence was so prominent, and their relations with the Indians so intense, that it was hard to determine 'to whom Brazil belonged at the time: Portugal or France' (Quintiliano 1965: 75).

The struggle between Portugal and France for the control of Brazil is portrayed in nationalist historiography not as a conflict between colonists but as a national struggle against foreigners, invaders, and interlopers. Manoel Bomfim, for example, affirms that the forces that defeated the French in 1585 'already have a decidedly Brazilian character' and credits the expulsion of the French to 'the will of Brazil' ([1929]1997: 233). The historical narratives do not ignore the participation of the indigenous population in the early disputes over the colonisation of Brazil. In fact, the alliance between the Indians and the Portuguese is often defined as essential for the Portuguese colonisation of Brazil and the expulsion of the other European contenders. However, what is interesting here is the fact that only the alliances between the Portuguese and the Indians are defined as Brazilian. This means that the Brazilianness of this alliance can only derive from the presence of the Portuguese—otherwise their enemies would also have to be considered Brazilian, given that the French had also formed strong and lasting alliances with the Indians. The fact that only the alliance between Indians and Portuguese gets the seal of Brazilianness indicates that, in these narratives, Brazilian was essentially synonymous with Portuguese.

The other colonial conflicts incorporated as part of Brazilian Nativism are those revolts carried out by the Portuguese colonists and their descendants against the colonial authorities and the Portuguese Crown. The first of these conflicts to gain historical prominence took place in the State of Maranhão in 1684, and came to be known as the Revolta de Beckman. It is important to note here that, in Portuguese America, there were two official Brazils for more than one hundred and fifty years (c. 1618-1774): the State of Brazil and the State of Maranhão. The two states were cut off from one another and only loosely

governed from Portugal. The two states came together to form the State of Brazil, with capital in Rio de Janeiro, in 1774. Rogério Forastieri da Silva notes quite correctly that if this separation had been perpetuated there would be a great chance that not one but two nation-states would emerge from Portuguese America; one called Brazil and one called Maranhão. In that case, the Revolta de Beckman would not be a nativist movement of Brazil, but of this other country, Maranhão (1997: 85).

The Revolta de Beckman was one the several revolts carried out by the colonists in the tradition of the old-regime rebellions: food riots and tax rebellions. In Portuguese America, these included the Revolta da Cachaça in Rio de Janeiro (1660-1661), the Revolta da Maneta in Salvador (1711), the Revolta de Pitangui in Minas Gerais (1718), and the Revolta de Felipe dos Santos in Vila Rica (1720). These revolts forged a history of resistance against the fiscal pressures of the Portuguese Crown. However, there is a tendency to invoke these revolts as precedents of nationalism and Brazilianness, even though they were always related to economic issues, and were of regional character. Thus, for example, Sobrinho credits the Revolta de Beckman with having established the 'framework of nationalism' that would set up the road towards the independence of Brazil ([1963]1995: 24), even though, as Silva correctly points out, the revolt could as easily have set up the road towards the independence of Maranhão.

The attribution of nationalism and Brazilianness to the actions of the colonists is even more acute in the two conflicts that have come to best symbolise nativism: the Guerra dos Emboabas (1707-1709) and the Guerra dos Mascates (1710-1711). The Guerra dos Emboabas was a small-scale civil war between two groups of colonists over the control and exploitation of the gold mines discovered in Minas Gerais. The first group comprised pioneers from São Paulo [*Paulistas*] and their Indian auxiliaries, servants and slaves. The second group comprised newcomers from Portugal and from other parts of Portuguese America, together with their slaves, mainly of West African origin. The Paulistas resented the presence of any rivals on what they considered to be their property, viewing

them as 'foreigners' and 'outsiders' and derisively referring to them as *emboabas* [chicken-feet] (Barreiros 1984: 51-55).

The struggle of the Paulistas to retain control of the mines has typically been interpreted as an expression of Brazilian Nativism. The classic case is José Soares de Melo's *Emboabas* (1929), subtitled 'Chronicle of a Nativist Revolution'. This interpretation sidelines the fact that the claims of possession of the Paulistas were not based on a politics of identity but on the right of discovery, that is, on the fact that they had been the first to find the mines. In any case, the interpretation of the conflict as precedent of nationalism illustrates the early identification of Brazilianness with the identity of the colonists. After all, when this conflict is posed in terms of a conflict of identities, the identities in conflict are those of two groups of colonists: the Paulistas and the Portuguese.

The conflict usually considered the quintessential expression of Brazilian Nativism is the Guerra dos Mascates, a short-lived civil war between the two most important populations of Pernambuco: the Brazilian-born planter aristocracy of Olinda and the Portuguese merchants that operated from Recife. The local nobility [known as *mazombos*] resented the privileges granted to the economic activities of the foreign traders [derisively referred to as *mascates*: peddlers]. Their increasing disaffection with the colonial regime turned into open conflict with the colonial authorities after the decision of the Portuguese Crown to free Recife from the political control of Olinda. The repression that followed squashed the vague aspirations of autonomy voiced by some of the *mazombos*, but their stand against the Portuguese Crown would enter the national imagination through the epic narrative of José de Alençar, entitled *Guerra dos Mascates* (1870). It was in fact only after the publication of this book that a minor conflict previously referred to as 'sedition' or 'alteration' became known as the Guerra dos Mascates. Subsequently, the revolt was defined as a proto-nationalist affirmation: 'a nativist movement precursor of independence' (Melo 1941: 51).

The nativist character of the revolt has had its critics over the years. Vicente Araújo, for example, discredited the 'narrow nativism' of the *mazombos*, arguing that the movement had no republican or separatist intentions but was merely the

expression of commercial interests (1915: 167-168). Vianna Moog denied the mascates shared a sense of belonging to the land, accusing them of 'living with their back to the country' and calling them 'Europeans lost in Brazilian land' ([1954]1966: 122). The nativist character of the Guerra dos Mascates has also been qualified by the eminent Brazilian historian Evaldo Cabral de Mello in a recent study entitled *A Fronda dos Mazombos* (1995). Cabral de Mello attests to the nativist nature of this movement insofar as the mazombos invoked their regional and indigenous ancestry to legitimise their claims over the land and its resources above those of the Portuguese merchants. He notes, however, that the mazombos did not have a notion of Brazil, but linked their identity to the region of Pernambuco. Moreover, the resentment of the mazombos was based on the sentiment that it was them, and not the mascates, who had liberated the land from the Dutch and kept it under the rule of the Portuguese Crown. In short, the referents of the mazombos were Portugal and Pernambuco, not Brazil.¹³

The detailed accounts of the Portuguese *defensive wars* against their European rivals and of the conflicts between colonists and the Portuguese Crown stand in stark contrast to the scant attention paid to the actions of Indians and Africans. In his classic study of the colonial historiography, José Honório Rodrigues dedicates two pages to indigenous rebellions, five pages to black rebellions, and thirty pages to the rebellions of the colonists (1979: 317-356). The space allocated to each group reflects the little attention paid to the campaigns launched by the Indians against the Portuguese in the historiography of colonial Brazil. Significantly, when they appear, they are defined as *offensive wars*, thus legitimising their violent repression as well as reversing (once again) the logic of the situation, by presenting those who resisted colonisation as the offenders. Moreover, the actions of the Indians are commonly interpreted in these narratives as expressions of Barbarism and resistance to Civilisation.

¹³ It is interesting to note that Cabral de Mello prefers the term *fronda* [from the French *fronde*: aristocratic movement] as the most apt denomination for the events that took place in Pernambuco. This term enables him to better express the aristocratic character of the movement, one that prefigures at a regional level the elitism and conservatism that would characterise the independence of Brazil.

The nationalist historiography has only departed from this line of argument to incorporate into the definition of Brazilianness the courage displayed by the Brazilian Indians. This re-appraisal of indigenous anti-colonial resistance, however, has been highly selective, and retains the basic Eurocentric spirit that informed colonial historiography. This point can be illustrated by comparing the different treatment accorded to the two most important indigenous rebellions in the history of Portuguese America: the Guerra dos Tamoios (c. 1540-1570), and the Guerra dos Bárbaros (c. 1650-1720).

The Guerra dos Tamoios pitted a coalition of several Tupi tribes (in alliance with the French) against the Portuguese. The Confederation of the Tamoios was the first great coalition of indigenous peoples to rebel against the Portuguese colonisation of Brazil. The significance of this coalition can hardly be overestimated, especially given the fragmentation and inter-tribal warfare that characterised relations amongst the indigenous peoples of this part of the Americas. The formation of the coalition showed the political will to overcome traditional rivalries in their effort to resist the colonial expansion of the Portuguese. The Confederation of the Tamoios was only defeated after the arrival of reinforcements under the Governor General Mem de Sá to aid the campaign of Estácio de Sá. The superior artillery and cavalry of the Portuguese and the diseases against which the indigenous peoples had no immunological resistance sealed the fate of the Tamoios in 1567.

The Tamoios have received little attention in Brazilian historiography. However, their courageous stance against the Portuguese Crown turned them into useful symbolic material during the struggle for the independence of Brazil. Their courage was invoked, for example, in the newspaper of nativist inspiration published by José Bonifácio de Andrada e Silva: *O Tamoio*. The temporary hostility against Portugal and the need to formulate a distinctive national identity following independence led to the development of a literary movement known as Indianism. One of the main exponents of this movement was *A Confederação dos Tamoios* (1857), by Domingos Gonçalves de Magalhães. The author took the side of the Tamoios and the French against the Portuguese, but this reflected more his

cultural attraction to France (common amongst the aristocracy of the time) than political sympathy for the Tamoios (Brookshaw 1988: 35). Still, the Tamoios were portrayed as the noble savages that fought against the Portuguese. However, by the late 19th century the hostility against Portugal had receded, and with it the interest in the Brazilian Indians. In the end, the incorporation of the Tamoios in the discourse of Independence was temporary and framed by literature rather than history—they were treated as literary figures rather than as historical agents. Moreover, rather than the chief of the Tamoios, Aimberê, the celebrated historical figure of the Guerra dos Tamoios is that of Estácio de Sá, the captain of the Portuguese forces, who entered history as the founder of Rio de Janeiro.

The Eurocentric treatment accorded to indigenous anti-colonial resistance in Brazilian Nativism can be also observed in the so-called Guerra dos Bárbaros. This expression has been used to refer to two different but related conflicts: the Guerra do Recôncavo, in the hinterland of Bahia (c. 1651-1679), and the Guerra do Açu, in the region of Pernambuco (c. 1679-1720). These wars followed the expansion of the cattle industry in the Northeast, which began in earnest after the expulsion of the Dutch. The cattle expansion into the interior of the Northeast was one of the most important stages in the conquest of Brazil and the annihilation of the Brazilian Indians. The struggle between the colonists and the Confederation of the Cariri was one of the most terrible conflicts in the history of Portuguese America. The conflict showed the strong and permanent resistance of the Brazilian Indians, but resulted in the massive annihilation of the indigenous population of the Northeast (Pires 1990).

The Guerra dos Bárbaros is one of the most overlooked conflicts in the historiography of Brazil. Unlike the Guerra dos Tamoios, this revolt was not incorporated into the discourse of Independence. Instead, the Guerra dos Bárbaros has been interpreted—as its very denomination indicates—as an expression of Barbarism and resistance to Civilisation. The different treatment accorded to the two conflicts can be explained by the increasing nationalisation of the colonisation of Brazil. Thus, while the Guerra dos Tamoios was waged during the early years of colonisation, and therefore against an enemy that was born in

Portugal, the Guerra dos Bárbaros was waged against an enemy that was born in Brazil. The Guerra dos Bárbaros was another courageous expression of anti-colonial resistance, only that this time not against external colonisation but against internal colonisation. In sum, the incorporation of indigenous resistance into the national imagination is not only circumscribed to the world of literature, but also emptied of any possible connotation that might lead to question the mythical cordiality of the relations between Brazilian Indians and Luso-Brazilians.

The selective interpretation of the formation of a spirit of independence in Brazil is demonstrable also in the treatment accorded to the struggle against slavery, and more specifically to the formation of Palmares. Palmares was the most important of a large number of *quilombos* [settlements of fugitive slaves] that were formed in Brazil. The quilombo of Palmares emerged in the Brazilian Northeast in the early 17th century. Its political structure resembled that of a federal state with an elective monarchy. The ruler was a king elected for life by a council made up by the rulers of the settlements that constituted Palmares. The king ruled with the advice of the federal council and the support of officials and magistrates. The economy of Palmares was based on agricultural production, hunting and fishing, a dynamic craft sector, and trade with the surrounding populations. Palmares existed at the heart of Portuguese America as an independent political entity from the Portuguese Crown for almost a century. The inhabitants withstood frequent attacks from the Portuguese and the Dutch, until they were finally defeated in 1695 (Carneiro 1947).

The complex political structure has led historians to refer to Palmares as the Republic of Palmares (Moura 1983) or an African state in Brazil (Kent 1965). Its longevity (c. 1602-1694) has even led some historians to define Palmares as 'a nation in formation' (Moura 1988: 181-184). This interpretation is widely resisted by the official historiography, despite the fact that the colonial authorities treated Palmares as a relatively independent political entity. Thus, for example, Brito Freire, Governor of Pernambuco, after a series of failed attacks against Palmares, opted for a politics of appeasement. He proposed an agreement by which the Portuguese Crown would recognise the freedom of the inhabitants of Palmares

and of their descendants, and their possession of the land where they lived, in exchange for not accepting more fugitive slaves, and for returning those who tried to find refuge there in the future. The negotiations between the Portuguese Crown and the king of Palmares, Ganga-Zumba, provoked an internal rebellion that ended with Ganga-Zumba's death, the coming to power of Zumbi, and the resumption of hostilities between Palmares and the Crown. The conflict ended with the death of the leaders of Palmares and many of their followers, the enslavement of many others, and the distribution of the land amongst the victors (Freitas 1973). The destruction of Palmares meant the end of the most formidable threat to the slave regime, and perhaps to the unity of Portuguese America.

The conflict between Palmares and the Portuguese Crown is no more or less nativist than any of the other conflicts between the inhabitants of Brazil and the Portuguese Crown. Palmares not only became 'the most prolonged episode at self-government attempted by the black peoples of Brazil' (Carneiro [1947]1958: 41), but one could even argue that the first independent state to emerge out of Portuguese America was not Brazil, but Palmares itself. After all, this was the only political entity independent of the authority of the Portuguese Crown in colonial Brazil. The political significance of Palmares was clearly articulated by one of the early Africanists and white supremacists of Brazil, Nina Rodrigues, when he noted that the defeat of Palmares had removed 'the greatest threat to the future evolution of the Brazilian people and civilisation—a threat which this new Haiti, if victorious, would have planted (forever) in the heart of Brazil' (Cited in Kent 1965: 174). The fact that there has been no formal attempt to claim Palmares as part of the forging of the spirit of Brazilian Independence is a further illustration of the Eurocentrism that underpins Brazilian Nativism.

The above analysis of anti-colonial resistance suggests that there was little national sentiment let alone calls for the independence of Brazil. There were instead divergent interests that led to frequent conflicts between colonial powers, between indigenous and colonists, between masters and slaves, between colonists and authorities, and between the colonists themselves. The conflicts between the Portuguese and other European powers were colonial struggles for the control of

the land. The so-called nativist revolts were, first and foremost, reactions against the economic policies of the Portuguese Crown. The most radical expressions of anti-colonial resistance were the rebellions carried out by the Brazilian Indians. However, their actions were not defined in terms of Brazilianness. The Afro-Brazilian rebellions were, first and foremost, struggles for freedom, not nation-building enterprises —with the exception, perhaps, of Palmares. In other words, none of these colonial conflicts were articulated in national(ist) terms, nor were they incipient expressions of Brazilianness. If anything, they could be considered part of a spirit of resistance against colonial oppression, but in that case, the rebellions carried out by indigenous and blacks should also be included alongside those carried out by the white colonists.

Undoubtedly, the rivalry between settlers and merchants was exacerbated by issues of identity that led to the increasing differentiation between Portuguese-born and Brazilian-born colonists. However, the delineation of these identities was only part of a more complex social, political, and cultural reality. Yet Brazilian national(ist) historiography tends to over-simplify the issue of identity and define exclusively as Brazilians the Brazilian-born colonists of Portuguese descent. Thus, for example, in his analysis of the colonial origins of Brazil, Caio Prado Jr affirms without qualification that: ‘colonials had become “Brazilian” rather than “Portuguese”, whereas hitherto *all persons* in the colony, both European-born and colonial-born, had been known as “Portuguese”’ [italics mine] ([1942]1971: 345). This quote illustrates the invisibility of the Brazilian Indians and Afro-Brazilians typical of the national(ist) historical accounts of colonial Brazil. These accounts replicate the colonial understanding of Brazilians which referred to the white descendents of the Portuguese and excluded the Brazilian Indians and Afro-Brazilians, who despite being a numerical majority ‘were seen as interlopers who had to find their own way into Brazilian society’ (Butler 1998: 5).

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Nativism plays a key ideological role in the discourse of Brazilianness by creating its own repertoire of events, excluding some and including and homogenising others, in order to produce a teleological narrative in which the selected events are perfectly aligned within a national(ist) vision of Brazil. This approach to the history of Portuguese America moulds that history into a national(ist) framework that denies the historical specificity of colonial Brazil. In particular, Nativism gives coherence to a series of multiple anti-colonial conflicts by effecting a selection that excludes indigenous resistance and black rebellion from the discourse of Brazilian Independence. Brazil emerges here not only from the defeat of other European powers but also from the subjection of the Indian and African Other. Nativism celebrates the struggle against *external* colonisation while ignoring *internal* colonisation, and denying in the process the Brazilianness (and even the rationality) of the actions of Brazilian Indians and Afro-Brazilians. In other words, the notion of Independence in Brazilian Nativism results from the opposition between the Portuguese of America and the Portuguese of Europe, while the origins of Brazilianness are synonymous with the actions of the Portuguese colonists and their Brazilian descendants, the Luso-Brazilians. This vision of anti-colonial resistance betrays the Lusocentric character of national(ist) historiography –one that has placed Eurocentrism at the very roots of Brazilian Independence.

White Hegemony in the First National(ist) Pantheon

According to national(ist) historiography, the turning point in the origins of nationalism and independence in Brazil is the Insurrection of Pernambuco against the Dutch (1645-1654). This conflict, known also as the War of Divine Liberty and as the Dutch War, has been incorporated in the Brazilian historiography as the foremost manifestation of Brazilianness in colonial Brazil. The reason for regarding this event in such terms is double: firstly, because the troops that fought against the Dutch came from all the inhabited regions of the colony (São Paulo,

Rio de Janeiro, Bahia, Pernambuco, and Maranhão); and secondly, because the conflict brought together men from all different so-called racial groups (whites, blacks, and indigenous). This section examines the notions of national and racial unity associated with the Insurrection of Pernambuco.

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The Insurrection of Pernambuco is credited with being the first instance of *national unity*. Oliveira Lima, for example, considered the rebellion ‘the first certain and irrefutable affirmation of unity. I would almost say of Brazilian nationality’ ([1911]2000: 81). Similarly, Manoel Bomfim regarded the struggle as an ‘explicit national manifestation’ ([1929]1997: 254). For Bomfim, the expulsion of the Dutch ‘illuminates the national consciousness’ and constitutes the ‘birth of a nation’ ([1929]1997: 256 and 179). More recently, Sobrinho has reiterated that the insurrection ‘already announced, several centuries in advance, the Nation that would be formed in the American continent’ ([1963]1995: 16). However, the most popular interpretation of the Insurrection of Pernambuco remains that of João Capistrano de Abreu, who famously stated that the expulsion of the Dutch signalled the triumph of nationalism (Olinda) over mercantilism (Holland) in Brazil ([1907]1997: 89).

The nationalist interpretation of the Insurrection of Pernambuco has been challenged by some of the most important historians of the Dutch presence in Brazil, in particular Charles Boxer and Evaldo Cabral de Mello. Boxer does not set out to refute the nationalist character of the Dutch War. However, his work does precisely that by convincingly presenting this conflict as part of a ‘global struggle’ between the Dutch trade companies and the kingdoms of Portugal and Spain, unified under the Spanish Crown from 1580 to 1640. This global colonial war was ‘a struggle for the spice trade of Asia, for the slave trade of West Africa, and for the sugar trade of Brazil’ (Boxer 1965: 110). In similar fashion, Luís Felipe de Alencastro has recently presented the Dutch War as part of a broader war fought

by the Dutch and the Portuguese on both sides of the South Atlantic, namely in Brazil and Angola (2000a: 210-238).

The nationalist character of the insurrection is also refuted by its regional and colonial dimension. The latter is evident from the constant references to the struggle against the Dutch as an effort to restore the land to the control of the Portuguese Crown. The references to the 'restoration' and the 'glorious re-establishment of Portuguese authority' abound even in the nationalist accounts of the Dutch War (Bomfim [1929]1997; Lima [1911]2000). This indicates that the conflict was not between mercantilism and nationalism but between two forms of colonialism: one based on trade, the other on settlement. The regional character of the insurrection is evident from the emphasis on the expression 'of the land' that dominated nativist narratives during the struggle against the Dutch. The expression was used to differentiate the identity of the Portuguese-born colonists from those born in Pernambuco. Nevertheless, the genealogy of the two groups continued to be traced mainly, when not exclusively, back to Portugal: the Portuguese of America vs. the Portuguese of Europe. In short, the insurrection could be defined as an expression of regionalism and/or as a war of colonial restoration, but never as a struggle for independence, let alone Brazilianness.

The nationalist character of the Insurrection of Pernambuco can be also refuted by studying the motivations of the rebels. Boxer suggests that the most important motive behind the uprising against the Dutch was the increasing pressure of the Dutch West Indian Company to collect outstanding debts. The end of Dutch rule would mean avoiding the payment of debts owed to the Dutch Company. In this context, it is significant that the person that announced and commanded the uprising, João Fernandes Vieira, was the second largest debtor to the Dutch in the region. Vieira was accused at the time of 'starting the rebellion solely on account of his great indebtedness to the Dutch' (Boxer 1957: 181).

Vieira had fought in the guerrilla warfare against the Dutch during the initial years when he was in a very poor financial state. However, he soon became an active collaborator with the Dutch, and it was through this collaboration that he made his fortune. According to Boxer, 'there is no reliable evidence that he

actively plotted a rebellion against the Dutch before pressure was brought to bear on the West Indian Company's debtors in 1643-4' (1957: 274). The victory served him so well that by 1668 he had become 'the greatest plantation-owner and rural landlord in Brazil' (Boxer 1957: 275). Vieira's pragmatism was not an exception but the rule. The fact that the majority of the settlers remained quiescent until the rebels managed to gain the upper hand in the conflict before committing themselves to the uprising, suggests that economic rather than patriotic considerations of any kind (i.e. nationalist or regionalist) presided over the Insurrection of Pernambuco.

The glorious victory of nationalism over mercantilism has been refuted recently by Evaldo Cabral de Mello in *O Negócio do Brasil* (1988). Cabral de Mello shows how the Portuguese Crown, after the expulsion of the Dutch from Pernambuco, paid a hefty sum to the Dutch Company to guarantee its control of the Northeast. This amounted to Portugal buying Pernambuco from the Dutch. The measure was put forward by the Jesuit Antonio Vieira in his *Papel Forte* (1648). Vieira argued that, in the face of Dutch naval superiority, the sale or cession of Pernambuco was the only way to preserve the Kingdom of Portugal and control the rest of Portuguese America. The defeat of the Dutch in 1654 led him to argue the provident nature of the 'War of Divine Liberty'. In the end, mercantilism rather than nationalism (or providence) guaranteed in this instance the territorial integrity of Portuguese America.

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The Insurrection of Pernambuco is also credited with being the first instance of *racial unity* or *racial bonding* in Brazil. The struggle —wrote Capistrano de Abreu— brought about the formation of a racial bond that, although 'superficial and imperfect' was 'the beginning of a bond among diverse ethnic [i.e. racial] elements' ([1907]1997: 89). This popular argument reflects the fact that the leaders of the insurrection represented the main racial groups of colonial Brazil: João Fernandes Vieira (mulatto), André Vidal de Negreiros (white), Henrique Dias

(black), and Felipe Camarão (indigenous). There is no doubt that the collaboration between whites, blacks, mulattos and indigenous was crucial for the defeat and expulsion of the Dutch from the Brazilian Northeast. However, there is little evidence to support the theory of a racial bond, not least because the militias that participated in the insurrection retained their original structure along colour lines.

The formation of militias along colour lines illustrates the social fear and racial prejudice that characterised colonial Brazil. On the one hand, this policy was designed to preclude the possibility of blacks and mulattos presenting a united front that could endanger the colonial regime. On the other hand, the policy reflected the refusal of white soldiers to serve alongside nonwhite soldiers. The main duty of nonwhite militias was the preservation of law and order: patrolling roads, escorting tax collectors, arresting criminals, attacking quilombos, and acting as a check on the free nonwhite population. The assignation of these tasks to the nonwhite militias was not a sign of racial integration but the reflection of the fact that there were not enough whites to carry out such tasks. Thus, despite being the object of discrimination, these militias became an integral part of colonial order and white hegemony in colonial Brazil (Russell-Wood 1982: 83-93).

The theory of a racial bond is also refuted by the fact that there is no evidence that any bond that might have been formed during the struggle went beyond the field of battle. Instead, the victors appear to have fallen out amongst themselves after their triumph. Boxer writes how the mulatto, black and indigenous levies that had borne the brunt of the fighting 'were greatly discontented with their subsequent treatment and were seemingly ripe for revolt' (1957: 248). This would suggest that the Insurrection of Pernambuco had little if any impact on racial integration or racial tolerance in colonial Brazil. Finally, it is worth noting that this limited and imperfect bond was not exclusive to those who fought for a return to Portuguese rule. The Dutch had also the support of white, mulatto, black and indigenous sectors of the population. In other words, the level of racial integration (whatever this might have been) was basically the same amongst the two sides in conflict. In this sense, the Insurrection of Pernambuco

cannot be seen as a conflict between the Brazilians and the Dutch, but between Portuguese Brazil and Dutch Brazil.

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The incorporation of the Insurrection of Pernambuco in the national(ist) historical narratives as the foremost national(ist) manifestation of colonial Brazil is highly indicative of the definition of Brazilian Independence. These narratives neglect the role of those who participated only in the war of *resistance* (the lost war), in favour of those who participated in the war of *restoration* (the victorious war). More importantly, these narratives sideline the central role of the Portuguese-born leader (João Fernandes Vieira) in favour of the Brazilian-born leaders (André Vidal de Negreiros, Felipe Camarão and Henrique Dias). The removal of Fernandes Vieira from the heroic picture not only enabled the nationalisation of what, to all intents and purposes, was a war of re-colonisation, but also turned Vidal de Negreiros (the white leader) into the central figure of 'the pantheon of the restoration' (Mello 1997: 196-200). In the final analysis, the invention of the Insurrection of Pernambuco as the first national(ist) event enabled the creation of a proto-national(ist) pantheon that illustrates the *white hegemony* that informs the national(ist) definition of Brazilian Independence.

The Colours of the Enlightenment in Colonial Brazil

The transformation of Portuguese America into a nation-state began in the second half of the 18th century, a period defined by the crisis of absolutism and mercantilism, and the emergence of nationalism in Europe and the Americas. This period saw the territorial consolidation of Portuguese America in the Treaty of Madrid and the Treaty of Santo Ildefonso, the formal abolition of Indian slavery, the creation of the *Diretório dos Índios*, the expulsion of the Jesuits, the transfer of

the colonial capital from Salvador to Rio de Janeiro, the abolition of the State of Maranhão and its integration into the State of Brazil, the consolidation of Portuguese as the official language of Brazil, and, last but not least, the arrival of the ideas of the Enlightenment.

The ideas of liberty and equality inspired a series of conspiracies in the late 18th century that came to be known as *inconfidências* —a word coined by imperial historians to indicate a break of loyalty [literally: the lack or withdrawal of trust] from the Portuguese Crown. The *inconfidências* have been incorporated by nationalist historiography alongside nativist movements as antecedents of Brazilian Independence. However, they incorporate a new dimension that sets them apart from earlier anti-colonial manifestations: their embrace of the Enlightenment. This section examines the different treatment the discourse of Brazilian Independence affords to the two most emblematic colonial revolts inspired by the ideals of the Enlightenment: the *Inconfidência Mineira* (1789) and the *Inconfidência Bahiana* (1798). Their study is crucial to understand the ideological formulation of Independence, in particular to determine the identification of reason with whiteness in the portrait of Brazilian Independence.

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The *Inconfidência Mineira* was a plot to replace the colonial regime with an independent republic in Minas Gerais. The conspiracy was a minor affair involving less than twenty people, mostly white notables and intellectuals, with the support, more or less explicit, of merchants and large contractors, many of them Portuguese (Maxwell 1973a: 115-140). The conspirators were inspired by the American Revolution and by their opposition to the fiscal demands of the Portuguese Crown. The prospect of independence was particularly enticing to the leading merchants and wealthy proprietors, who saw it as a way to evade paying their large debts to the Crown (Maxwell 1973a: 118-132). The conspirators wished to end the colonial regime without upsetting the internal social structure. They invoked the ideals of liberty and equality in the context of the relation between

Minas Gerais and Portugal, but did not extend the application of these ideals to the internal reality of Minas Gerais, let alone Brazil. The conspirators who dreamt about independence did not speak of Brazil but of America or Minas Gerais (Carvalho 2001: 76). They discussed the abolition of slavery but concluded that without slavery they would find no one to work in the mines or on the farms—paid work was obviously not a valid option. In the end, they agreed to free the local-born slaves while retaining the institution of slavery. This would provide the revolt with much needed support without causing major social readjustments (Maxwell 1973b: 127-130). Its conservative social character would later turn the *Inconfidência Mineira* into the popular choice amongst the white elite in their quest for the roots of Independence and the Republic.

The plot was betrayed to the authorities and the participants were arrested and subjected to a lengthy and humiliating trial in Rio de Janeiro. Of the eleven death sentences, only one was carried out, that of José Joaquim da Silva Xavier, a modest army officer and occasional dentist known by the nickname of Tiradentes [Tooth-Puller]. Tiradentes was the only conspirator who admitted participation in the conspiracy, and the only one who did not belong to the elite of Minas Gerais. This, and his permanent advocacy of republican ideals during the trial, made him the perfect scapegoat in the eyes of the Portuguese Crown. Tiradentes was hanged, drawn and quartered on the 21st of April 1792 in Rio de Janeiro. Parts of his body were placed on pikes along the roads where he had carried out his 'infamous practices' and his head was put on a stake in the central square of Vila Rica. The execution was to serve as a warning to those who might contemplate rising against the Crown. The episode, however, left an aftermath of republican sentiment in Minas Gerais that would eventually spread to the whole of Brazil.

Similarly, the *Inconfidência Bahiana* was a plot to replace the colonial regime with an independent and democratic republic in Bahia. The initial discussions involved a small group of men from the white elite of Bahia. But soon the majority of the conspirators were blacks and mulattos from the lower classes, mainly soldiers and artisans. The large proportion of tailors arrested led the movement to be known as *Conjuração dos Alfaiates* [Conspiracy of the Tailors].

There was also a significant number of slaves amongst the conspirators —twelve of those arrested were slaves, most of them born in Brazil. The presence of Afro-Brazilians transformed the conspiracy into a more complex movement that saw political independence from Portugal as a means to bring to an end slavery and racial discrimination in Bahia. The free blacks and mulattos were offended by the multiple barriers to their social mobility, which, for example, prohibited anyone having ‘black blood’ or married to a woman ‘of colour’ from holding public office (Azevedo 1955: 232). In sum, the participation of Afro-Brazilians in the conspiracy raised the spectre of abolition and forced the notion of *racial equality* —equality between whites, blacks and mulattos— to the forefront of politics in Bahia.

The rebels posted hand-written proclamations on public places calling, amongst other things, for higher pay for troops, free trade, the equality of people of all colours, and the independence of Bahia (Mattoso 1969: 144-159). Their actions were clearly inspired by the rhetoric of the French Revolution (Mattoso 1969), but also by the slave uprising of Saint Domingue, later known as the Haitian Revolution (Silva 1992). The prominence of slaves, blacks and mulattos amongst the conspirators, coupled with the events of Saint Domingue, frightened the white elites of Bahia, who were not willing to risk their position of privilege for independence from Portugal. Their fear was clearly illustrated in the advice of Cipriano Barata de Almeida, a white slave-owner and early conspirator, to one of his colleagues: ‘My friend, caution with the African rabble’ (Cited in Schwartz 1985: 476). The words of Cipriano Barata reveal the ‘anxieties of influence’ suffered by the white elite of Bahia —akin to those diagnosed by Davis Brion Davis in his study of the reception of the Enlightenment in the United States of America (1975). The white elite admired the ideas of the Enlightenment but feared those ideas in the hands of blacks and mulattos, especially after the slave uprising of Saint Domingue.

The quick reaction of the authorities aborted the conspiracy. Of the forty-six individuals arrested, thirty-six were brought to trial. The trial enabled the identification of two groups of conspirators. The first included Cipriano Barata himself, a surgeon and graduate of the University of Coimbra; Francisco Muniz

Barreto d'Aragão, a teacher of rhetoric; and two military officers, lieutenants Hermogenes Francisco d'Aguilar and José Gomes de Oliveira Borges. All four were white and socially prominent in Bahia. These men —some of whom were slave-owners— showed little interest in slavery and racial inequality. Their ardour was for free trade (i.e. the freedom to make money). The members of this group escaped with minimal or no punishment. The second group, those accused by the royal authorities of being the chief plotters, was formed by the soldiers Luís Gonzaga das Virgens e Veiga and Lucas Dantas de Amorím Torres, and the tailors João de Deus Nascimento and Manoel Faustino dos Santos Lins. The four —all free and poor mulattos— were found guilty and hanged. Their bodies were beheaded and quartered, and their body parts left to rot in public places around Salvador. Their execution sent a chilling warning to nonwhites who dared to call for racial equality, and reassured the white population that, under the existing regime, Portuguese America would not become another Saint Domingue.

The Inconfidência Mineira and the Inconfidência Bahiana did not achieve their objectives, but helped shape the character of Brazilian Independence. To be sure, neither of the conspiracies were expressions of Brazilianness. The 18th century plots against the Portuguese Crown sought, without exception, regional autonomy, not the independence of Brazil. However, these regional movements revealed the obstacles and dangers that would face those willing to gain independence from Portugal. The main lesson drawn by those who would eventually conduct the formal process of independence (the white political elite) was the need to separate the social from the political. Thus, the formal independence of Brazil would follow the liberal and conservative path envisaged by the leaders of the Inconfidência Mineira. This conspiracy would later emerge as the foremost precedent for Brazilian Independence, whereas the Inconfidência Bahiana would be sidelined as a minor affair in the history of colonial Brazil.

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The Inconfidência Mineira was invoked by the national(ist) historiography after the independence of Brazil. The stance of the conspirators against the Portuguese Crown, in particular the behaviour of Tiradentes, appealed to a nation in search of a heroic past. However, the regionalist and republican character of the conspiracy were a direct affront to the monarchical nature of the Brazilian Empire and the effort of the authorities to consolidate the national unity of Brazil. The figure chosen by official historians —those associated to the Instituto Histórico e Geográfico Brasileiro— to define the character of the Brazilian Empire was that of Dom Pedro I. Nevertheless, the growing republican sentiment was leading to the rapid diffusion of the historical memory of Tiradentes and the Inconfidência Mineira throughout Brazil. The result: ‘The struggle between the memory of Pedro I, promoted by the government, and that of Tiradentes, promoted by the republicans, became increasingly emblematic of the battle between Monarchy and Republic’ (Carvalho 1990: 61).

The Republican Manifesto of 1870 precipitated the publication of the most important study of the Inconfidência Mineira written during the Empire: Joaquim Norberto de Sousa Silva's *História da Conjuração Mineira* (1873). Norberto minimised the historical significance of the conspiracy and questioned the patriotism of Tiradentes. He argued that Tiradentes had been transformed during his long time in prison by the regular visits of the Franciscan friars, to the point that his patriotic fervour had turned into religious fervour: ‘They had arrested a patriot; they had executed a friar’ (Cited in Carvalho 1990: 63). Norberto interpreted his behaviour in terms of sacrifice rather than resistance —denying in the process the political significance of the death of Tiradentes. However, the talk of mysticism and sacrifice gave Tiradentes a quasi-religious aura that enhanced his reputation as a patriotic figure, turning him into the first national martyr, the man who stood up for Brazilian Independence, against the tyranny of Portugal.

The image of Tiradentes that emerged out of this process of symbolic construction was that of the Brazilian Christ. His portraits began to resemble the figure of Christ. He was always represented with sandals, long hair, a beard, and

a robe —just as most artists have represented Jesus of Nazareth. Thus, the figure of Tiradentes enabled the union of the secular (the ideals of the Enlightenment) and the religious (the Catholicism of the Brazilians). More importantly, his figure offered hope and pride to the popular classes (insofar as he was one of them) without threatening the elites of Brazil (insofar as he symbolised liberation through sacrifice rather than through rebellion and violence). In other words, Tiradentes became a ‘civic totem’ upon which the popular classes could project their desires (the hope of liberation) and upon which the elites could rest their anxieties (the fear of revolution).

The republicans began to plan the construction of a monument to Tiradentes in Minas Gerais in the 1860s, and began to celebrate the 21st of April (the day of his execution) as a holiday in Rio de Janeiro in the 1880s. The definitive elevation of Tiradentes to the top of the national pantheon came with the proclamation of the Republic, on the 15th of November 1889. The 21st of April became a national holiday in 1890. A statue of Tiradentes was inaugurated in front of the Congress of Deputies, currently the Legislative Assembly of Rio de Janeiro, in 1926. Tiradentes was officially proclaimed ‘civic patron of the Brazilian nation’ in 1965. He had become the apostle of Brazilian Independence and of the Brazilian Republic. In sum, Tiradentes has come to represent the face of modern (independent and republican) Brazil (Tenenbaum 1965).

The elevation of Tiradentes to the top of the national pantheon through his transformation into a quasi-religious figure seems anathema to a modern conception of politics. However, this would be to ignore the intimate connection between nationalist and religious sentiment —one captured perfectly by the definition of the nation as *The God of Modernity* (1994) in Josep Llobera's study of the development of nationalism in Western Europe; and reflected also in José Murilo de Carvalho's study of the imaginary of the Brazilian Republic entitled *A formação das almas* [The Formation of the Souls] (1990). Indeed, the figure of Tiradentes symbolises the close connection between nation and faith in Brazil or, to put it differently, the faith in the nation shared by most Brazilians. The mystical aura of Tiradentes not only explains his popular appeal but has also served to

pacify (even purify) the portrait of Brazilian Independence. The result is an idealised portrait of the birth of independent Brazil, which complements the idyllic portrait of the Discovery, the birth of colonial Brazil.

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The centrality of Tiradentes and the Inconfidência Mineira in national(ist) historiography contrasts with the comparatively little interest shown in the Inconfidência Bahiana, even though the latter was a more complex and arguably more significant development in the history of Portuguese America. The Inconfidência Bahiana was a ‘unique example of penetration —imperfect as it may have been— of the Enlightenment into the masses’ in Brazil (Burns 1970: 98). Indeed, this was the only conspiracy of the 18th century to insist upon the end of slavery and to postulate racial equality as the political foundation of Bahia, even Brazil. This alone should be sufficient to draw attention to this event, if only to do justice to the complexity of the history of Brazil. The discrepancy between historical significance and historiographical treatment can be explained by the fact that the independence of Brazil followed the liberal (and hierarchical) model discussed by the (white) conspirators of Minas Gerais rather than the social (and egalitarian) model proposed by the (black) conspirators of Bahia. This explanation —leaving anachronistic and teleological implications aside— hides something deeper about the national(ist) imaginary: the *whiteness* of the Enlightenment in the official accounts of the colonial history of Brazil. The historiographical treatment of the Inconfidência Bahiana, especially when contrasted with that of the Inconfidência Mineira, suggests that reason —and the ideals of liberty and equality associated with reason— was considered the exclusive attribute of the white elites, and that in the hands of nonwhites those same ideals would turn into Barbarism.

In the narratives of Brazilian History, the Inconfidência Bahiana has been usually denigrated, silenced or marginalised —a fate similar to that of the Haitian Revolution in the narratives of World History (Trouillot 1995). The main strategy used to minimise the historical significance of the conspiracy has been to insist on

the low status and dark colour of most of its protagonists. This was, in fact, the line of argument used by the defence attorney, José Barbosa de Oliveira. During the trial, he argued that there had been no revolution or any serious attempt to begin one, simply because the accused were for the most part of humble status or slaves, had barely any weapons, had no power, respect or authority, and lacked the 'necessary enlightenment' (Cited in Tavares 1975: 73). This strategy should have contributed to the acquittal of the more humble conspirators, yet these were the ones who received harsh punishments, whereas the most socially prominent participants escaped with extremely lenient sentences. Clearly, the outstanding aspect of the conspiracy, from the point of view of the authorities, was the colour of the conspirators, that is, their Blackness. The authorities defined the conspiracy as the 'association of seditious mulattos'. Even Cipriano Barata referred to the revolt as 'a great disaster of the rebellion of slaves, mulattos and Negroes' (Cited in Ramos 1976: 84).

The early commentaries on the conspiracy focused on the *character* of the protagonists —portrayed as ignorant, immoral mulattos of no social standing— rather than on their *thoughts* and *objectives*. Their actions were explained in terms of 'ignorance, laziness and drunkenness' (Vilhena, cited in Ramos 1976: 87 n4). The only extensive account of the conspiracy produced during the 19th century was in Francisco de Varnhagen's *História Geral do Brasil* (1854-1857). The official historian of the Brazilian Empire condemned all conspiracies against the Crown, but was particularly repelled by the Inconfidência Bahiana, which conjured up violent images of radical France, and especially of revolutionary Saint Domingue. Varnhagen emphasised the low status and blackness of the conspirators: 'Not one man of talent or of standing; and almost all slaves or former slaves; they were mostly mulattos' (Cited in Ramos 1976: 87 n4). The accounts of the conspiracy evoked images of a mutinous black rabble running amok, lacking control and civilised standards of behaviour, confusing freedom with licentiousness, political change with social disorder. The implication was that people of low status in general, and nonwhites in particular, could not be *rational*, that is, able to effect

complex and civilised political change. The treatment of the Inconfidência Bahiana as the actions of a 'truly crazy people' lasted well into the 20th century.

The historiographical revision of the Inconfidência Bahiana began with the publication of its first monograph, Afonso Ruy's *A Primeira Revolução Social Brasileira* (1942), and continued with the work of Katia de Queirós Mattoso (1969) and Luís Henrique Dias Tavares (1975). These authors argued the historical significance of the conspiracy in terms of 'social revolution', 'revolutionary movement', and 'democratic movement'. Their work emphasises the influence of the Enlightenment in the Inconfidência Bahiana. In particular, Tavares notes that those who 'speak' in the conspiracy are nonwhites. They are the ones who 'conceived the idea of a republic which guarantee equality' (1975: 96). However, the work that best reflects the several inflections of the political thought of the conspirators, both whites and blacks, is Carlos Guilherme Mota's *Atitudes de Inovação no Brasil* (1989). This work refutes the notion that the four executed leaders were ignorant mulattos, with no objective other than to generate disorder. Mota reveals, for example, the 'conceptual equipment' of Manuel Faustino, the black tailor who argued for 'a government of equality [...] without distinction of colour' —one which should extend to the 'continent of Brazil' (1989: 73-74). Yet, without taking away anything from the significance of these works, the Inconfidência Bahiana continues to be excluded from the dominant narratives of Brazilian Independence.

Historical narratives continue to apply a double standard to the Inconfidência Mineira and the Inconfidência Bahiana. The general idea stands that the former failed because it was betrayed, whereas the latter failed because of the ignorance and ineptitude of their leaders. Similarly, the conspirators of Minas Gerais (and the white conspirators of Bahia) are defined by their ideas, whereas the conspirators of Bahia are mainly defined by their low status and their colour —they continue to be the 'black rabbles' of Bahia. The effect of this double portrait is to deny the ability of nonwhites to grasp and apply the ideals of the Enlightenment. Significantly, the behaviour of Tiradentes was also considered by many of his contemporaries irrational, crazy and dangerous, not least because he

was also a person of low social status (Mota 1989: 68). However, his actions were subsequently reinvented as those of a visionary, someone who was anticipating the future of Brazil. Thus, while the actions of Tiradentes have been celebrated and his political errors excused by his enthusiasm and idealism, the idealism and political errors of the Afro-Brazilian conspirators of Bahia continue to be explained in terms of naiveté and precipitation (i.e. Teixeira 1993: 101).

In short, the *Inconfidência Mineira* has come to symbolise the first stirring of the values of liberty and equality in Brazil. The *Inconfidência Bahiana*, despite having been equally inspired by those same principles, however, has passed into the national imagination as a symbol of racially based disorder and social collapse. Its memory exists just under the radar as a portent of doom. In contrast, Minas Gerais, and more specifically its capital city, Ouro Preto, is described in the narratives of national patrimony as ‘the “birthplace” of Brazilian national political and cultural values’ (Gonçalves 1990: 164).

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The different treatment of the *Inconfidência Mineira* and the *Inconfidência Bahiana* in the formulation of Brazilian Independence reveals the refusal to recognise the selective application of the ideas of the Enlightenment made by the white political elite in the history of Brazil. More importantly, it reveals their anxiety –perhaps white anxiety in general– when faced with black political agency, in this case the black appropriation of the ideals of the Enlightenment. Such an appropriation, it was believed, could only transform the highest of ideals into instruments of Barbarism. This, of course, is to deny the different meaning attached to liberty and equality by whites and nonwhites in the history of Brazil. Whereas for whites (Luso-Brazilians) liberty and equality meant their ability to make money free from the interference and privileges of the Portuguese, for nonwhites (Afro-Brazilians) liberty and equality meant the end of the slave regime and the racial discrimination upon which that ‘ability to make money’ was largely dependent and predicated. In any case, the refusal to attribute rationality

to the actions of Afro-Brazilians makes reason and political agency synonymous with the actions of the Luso-Brazilians, privileging white(nes)s in the formulation of Brazilian Independence. In this context, the elevation of the Inconfidência Mineira to the altar of national history and the invention of Tiradentes as a national icon and martyr of the Brazilian nation, illustrates the colour line (and the Eurocentrism) that dominates the discourse of Independence and, more generally, the formulation of Brazil(ianness).

Imperial Dreams of a (White) Liberal Paradise

There was no hint in the two decades before the independence of Brazil to indicate that the colony would become a single nation-state. The preoccupation and the actions of rebels and conspirators against the colonial regime were limited to the provinces where they lived. Moreover, the economy of the colony was still structured around six principal economic regions, all but one dominated by a single port-city, and relating more to the Atlantic market than to the rest of Portuguese America. The turning point was the transfer of the seat of the Portuguese Crown to Rio de Janeiro in 1808, following the invasion of Portugal by the Napoleonic troops. The transfer posed a crucial challenge to the colonial relations between Brazil and Portugal. Yet its impact on the process of independence had less to do with the separation from Portugal than with the impulse to the political and symbolic unity of Brazil. The analysis of this impulse is crucial to understand the ideology that informed the independence of Brazil and still informs the narratives of Independence.

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The thirteen year residency of the Portuguese Crown in Rio de Janeiro brought a series of reforms that promoted the unification of the colony: improvements of

transport and communication between population centres, reforms in taxation and the administration of justice, the creation of naval and military academies as well as of schools of medicine and surgery, the expansion of coffee production under royal protection, the building of textile factories, the beginning of the iron and steel industry, the establishment of the Bank of Brazil, the creation of the National Library, and the establishment of the Royal Printing Office.

The most important development of this period for the formation of a national identity was the appearance of the first newspapers, following the establishment of a permanent printing press in Rio de Janeiro (Candido [1965]1975: 101-107). The most important publication of this period, however, was *O Correio Brasiliense* —a monthly newspaper printed in London by Hipólito José da Costa, which lasted from June 1808 to December 1822. In that time, this newspaper played a major role in transforming the meaning of Brazil from a vague spatial term into a political concept with a distinctive identity (Barman 1988: 50-53). Hipólito José promoted a liberal vision of Brazil: division of powers, freedom of religion, freedom of press, and respect for individual rights. His vision was also informed by a notion of empire reminiscent of the *Quinto Império do Mundo* [Fifth Empire of the World] prophesied by the Jesuit Antônio Vieira in his *História do Futuro* [History of the Future] (1667).

The Fifth Empire was a vision of the future of Portugal that sought to promote the restoration of the Portuguese Crown when this was under the control of the Spanish Crown. Vieira combined history and prophecy to argue that the Fifth Empire would be that of the Kingdom of Portugal. His Lusocentric Millenarianism —in the expression of José van den Besselaar— placed an increasing emphasis on the importance of Brazil. Vieira envisioned an empire built across the Atlantic based on Portuguese culture (Iberian Catholicism) and the natural resources of Brazil. Crucially, Vieira recast the traditional relationship between metropolis and colony, identifying Brazil as the place where the words of the prophets would be fulfilled and arguing that ‘the only ministry that had any value was ministry in the New World’ (Cohen 1998: 8). This vision of a world-empire under God and the Portuguese Crown would become an integral part of

the reformulation of Portuguese America. Brazil was increasingly considered essential to save the Kingdom of Portugal, as well as fulfil the prophecy of the Fifth Empire (Lyra 1994: 21).

In his vision of the Brazilian Empire, Hipólito José invoked the image of the Terrestrial Paradise to support the construction of a new Portuguese Empire in Brazil. However, in tune with the new intellectual developments, he replaced the religious cloak that covered this notion with the secular and scientific garb of the Enlightenment. In his writings, the natural riches of Portuguese America were no longer a creation of God but the real conditions for the creation of a vast and powerful empire: the new Portuguese Empire (Lyra 1994: 126-127).

This vision was strengthened by the events that followed the defeat of Napoleon by Portugal and its allies, chiefly the British. The expulsion of the French from Portugal in 1811 raised the question of the return of the royal family to Lisbon. The Portuguese Courts demanded their immediate return, while the leaders of the victorious nations at the Congress of Vienna asked Dom João VI to either return to Portugal or raise the status of Brazil to that of a Kingdom. In December 1815, the King decided to issue a decree creating the United Kingdom of Portugal, Brazil and the Algarves, elevating Brazil to a status constitutionally equal with Portugal. The decree modified the institutional identity of Brazil, which had ceased (at least formally) to be a colony of Portugal. Brazil's new status provoked expressions of pride and euphoria amongst the colonial elite, even though these continued to view themselves as Portuguese rather than Brazilians. The words of Frei Perereca are a perfect illustration of these sentiments: 'The Portuguese of America are no longer inferior in status and rights to the Portuguese of Europe' (Cited in Lyra 1994: 157). The friar praised the 'enlightened and liberal politics' that had consecrated the unity of the Luso-Brazilian nation and made possible the 'stability of the Portuguese Empire in this Terrestrial Paradise' (Cited in Lyra 1994: 157).

The colonial elite saw the liberal revolt that broke out in Portugal in October 1820 as the opportunity to fulfil the dream of the Liberal Paradise invoked in the words of Frei Perereca. The most important figure behind this

imperial vision was José Bonifácio de Andrada e Silva —a brilliant diplomat, renowned mineralogist, and personal adviser of Dom Pedro. José Bonifácio argued for the establishment of a dual monarchy that would enable Brazil's union and perfect equality with Portugal (Costa 1975: 73). The arguments in favour of the monarchical union were practical and ideological. On the one hand, there was widespread consensus amongst the elite that 'Brazil e Portugal were one sole Nation' (Castro 1984: 17). On the other hand, there was a widespread conviction that Brazil and Portugal needed each other in order to survive into the future. Their separation would place Portugal at the mercy of Spain while Brazil could succumb to political fragmentation (like Spanish America) and social breakdown (like Saint Domingue). Instead, the incorporation of Brazil as integral part of the new Portuguese Empire would enable the renovation of the Portuguese Monarchy, the emancipation of Brazil, and the establishment of a powerful and prosperous empire across the Atlantic. The riches and freshness of the New World (Brazil) would regenerate the Old World (Portugal), and their union would engender a new empire: the Luso-Brazilian Empire (Lyra 1994).

The Brazilian delegates sent to the Constituent Assembly in Lisbon soon found out that the liberalism of the Portuguese Courts was for internal consumption —not to be extended to Portuguese America. The Portuguese Courts rejected the notion of a Luso-Brazilian Empire and called for the return of Brazil to its formal colonial status, prior to 1808. This amounted to the 'recolonisation of Brazil' (Castro 1984: 74). The Courts insisted on the immediate return of the royal family to Portugal. In the event, Dom João VI ceded, returning to Portugal in April 1821, leaving his son, Dom Pedro, as Prince Regent of Brazil. Before his departure, the King is reported to have advised his son to seize the leadership of the independence movement if necessary to keep Brazil for the House of Bragança (Boxer 1969: 200-201). Under pressure from the Portuguese Courts to return to Portugal himself, in January 1822, the Prince Regent made public his decision to remain in Brazil: 'Eu fico!' [I am staying!] The Portuguese garrison in Rio de Janeiro declared their loyalty to Portugal and prepared to force Dom Pedro to accept the will of the Courts. However, the garrison was soon surrounded by

thousands of armed Brazilians and forced to embark for Portugal. Dom Pedro formed a new government headed by José Bonifácio, as Minister of the Kingdom.

The refusal of the Portuguese Courts to acknowledge the changes that had occurred in Brazil since 1808 and their decision to subordinate all provinces directly to Lisbon forced prominent Brazilian leaders —amongst them Hipólito José and José Bonifácio— to change their mind regarding the union with Portugal. The only road to emancipation was separation from Portugal. On the 7th of September 1822, Dom Pedro proclaimed the independence of Brazil. He was publicly acclaimed a month later, and formally crowned as Constitutional Emperor and Perpetual Defender of Brazil on the 1st of December 1822.

The popular contention that independence was a peaceful process without any bloodshed needs to be qualified here. To begin with, no war of independence in the Americas mobilised so many troops as that of Brazil (Rodrigues 1975 [5]: 228). To be sure, both sides avoided massive set battles, but they did engage in guerrilla tactics, moves and countermoves. There were fights to drive the Portuguese out of Bahia, Maranhão and Pará, and to force those regions to replace Lisbon's rule with that of Rio de Janeiro. There is little information on casualties, but the fighting produced a female martyr in Mother Joana Angélica, killed by the Portuguese troops who invaded her convent in Bahia. The war of independence also produced a female heroine in Maria Quitéria de Jesús, a runaway farmer's girl who, passing as a man, joined the imperial army and served with distinction in several battles against the Portuguese. In the end, while it was fortunate that, when the crunch came, the Portuguese officers serving in Brazil 'chose loyalty to the House of Braganza rather than to Portugal' (Cavaliero 1993: 117), one must conclude with Jose Honório Rodrigues that: 'Independence was fruit of a war, not a concession from Portugal, or a gift from the House of Bragança' (1975 [5]: 228).

The separation from Portugal destroyed the prospect of a Luso-Brazilian Empire, but not of the vision of a liberal empire in Brazil. The man who came to be known as the Patriarch of Independence, José Bonifácio de Andrada e Silva, was also responsible for transferring the vision of a liberal paradise from the Luso-Brazilian to the Brazilian Empire. In his view, the realisation of this vision

required the integration of all sectors of the population (Andrada e Silva 1998: 142). Accordingly, he proposed the protection and integration of the indigenous, the gradual emancipation of the slaves, the promotion of immigration, and the rationalisation of the process of settlement by revocation of royal land grants in cases where the land was not been cultivated (Andrada e Silva 1998: 152-154). The reforms were designed to guarantee social peace and earn the elites the appreciation and obedience of the population. His vision was clearly paternalistic and Eurocentric but offered genuine prospects of improving the living standards of the general population. However, his proposals touched on several aspects that were far too sensitive for most of the elite and he found himself a man in exile.

Emilia Viotti da Costa argues that José Bonifácio was ‘victim of the contradiction of liberal practice in Brazil, where an ideology that was essentially bourgeois in its origins had been transformed into an instrument of slaveowners’ (1985: 39). In other words, the contact with slavery determined the limits of liberalism —the schism between theory and practice— in Brazil. This schism was later reformulated by Roberto Schwarz in a short essay entitled ‘As idéias fora do lugar’ (1973) —translated into English as ‘Misplaced Ideas’ (1992)— where he famously argued that liberalism was an ‘idea out of place’ in (colonial) Brazil. Yet, the ease with which liberal ideas were integrated into the political system through the structure of *favour*, theorised by Schwarz, suggests that, after all, liberalism was not so out of place in colonial Brazil.

Indeed, as several scholars have noted over the years, liberalism was intimately linked to (if not rooted in) slavery and colonialism. The marriage between liberalism and slavery —to borrow from Alfredo Bosi’s *Dialética da Colonização* (1992: 93)— was argued a long time ago by CLR James in his account of the Haitian Revolution: ‘The slave-trade and slavery were the economic basis of the French Revolution’ ([1938]1963: 47). The fortunes created by the slave trade in French ports and by the slave economy of the French colonies gave the bourgeoisie the power to demand liberty —a principle they did not extend to the colonies, thus leading to the slave revolution of Saint Domingue. In the same way that the economic development of Western Europe was made possible by the

slave-holding economies of the Africa and the Americas, the development of liberty was structurally linked to the enslavement of millions of Africans and Amerindians. Loss of personal freedom 'was part of Africa's and Latin America's contribution to the development of liberty in Western Europe' (Stein & Stein 1970: 44). The connivance of liberal principles with slavery was also a defining feature of the American Revolution that led to the independence of the United States. In the words of Patrick Wolfe: 'the rhetoric [of freedom] was conditional upon their slave-holding —it was because these men kept slaves that they were able to enunciate the rights of man' (2002: 57). All this suggests that the limits of liberalism in Brazil came not from its transformation at the hands of slave-owners but from other factors, namely: a) the definition of the liberal subject; and b) the permanent structural tension between liberty and (private) property.

On the one hand, whilst liberalism presupposed a universal individual (i.e. raceless and genderless), nineteenth-century liberals in both Europe and the Americas 'described the ideal qualities of the citizens and nations in implicitly racialized and gendered terms' (Appelbaum *et al* 2003: 4). Like their Latin American counterparts, the Brazilian liberal patriots, most of them members of the white (and male) colonial elite, 'associated the traits of the proper citizen—literacy, property ownership, and individual autonomy—with whiteness and masculinity' (Appelbaum *et al* 2003: 4). Those who lacked any of these traits were deemed to lack civic virtue and excluded from full citizenship.

On the other hand, whilst liberalism enshrined the principle of liberty, this remained in permanent and unresolved tension with the other sacred principle of the liberal ideology: private property. The sacralisation of property enabled slave-owners to combine the rhetoric of freedom with the continued practice of slavery. In fact, José Bonifácio was victim of his attempt to resolve the inherent tension between liberty and property in a way the majority of the white elite was not willing to accept. He argued that 'property was created for the common good' and that 'men cannot be things and therefore they cannot be property' (Silva 1998: 60). But, of course, the objectification of the slaves and the fact that they were property contradicted in practice the ideas theorised by José Bonifácio. In the end,

the rejection of his argument reveals the centrality of property in liberalism —a doctrine underpinned in its colonial origins by notions of Otherness that enabled the simultaneous defence of liberty (for the Colonist: the Self) and property (of the Colonised: the Other).

The sacralisation of property appealed equally to the merchants (the urban bourgeoisie) and the planters (the rural oligarchies) of Portuguese America. However, in the rural areas property had special connotations. The identification with the land (not necessarily through physical attachment but certainly through ownership) turned property into a source of patriotism, and liberalism into an anti-colonial ideology (Mota 1970: 101-121). The transformation came as a reaction against the taxation policies of the Portuguese Crown and the privileges conceded to Portuguese merchants. The colonial restrictions and obstacles to free trade fuelled the desire for independence across Brazil. However, the primacy of property would exclude those without property and those who were property (the slaves) from the gains derived from the separation from Portugal. Thus, the same liberalism that fuelled the cause for independence (as a reaction to external political interference on the economic activities of the colonies) also set its limits (the retention of internal social and economic structures, including slavery).

The Constitution of 1824 handed down by Dom Pedro I enshrined the principles and limits of liberalism —ignoring, for example, the issue of slavery. The text guaranteed individual freedom and stressed the equality of all citizens before the law, but the majority of the population were excluded from full citizenship. The triumph of liberalism meant that property became the basis for effective citizenship. The electoral system deprived the masses of the right to vote and choose their representatives. The enormous voting restrictions meant that in spite of several electoral reforms, the electors continued to represent less than two percent of the population until the fall of the empire in 1889 (Costa 1985: 60). The political system continued to be based on patronage, reducing political mobilisation at the popular level and restricting party politics to a contest among competing elites and their clientele (Graham 1990). The separation from Portugal barely affected the social, economic and political structures of Brazil. The country

remained dependent from an internal structure (Slavery) and an external empire (Great Britain). Moreover, independence did not mean the end of political bondage in Portuguese America. It simply meant the shift of the existing structures of domination from Lisbon to Rio de Janeiro (Morse 1975: 178).

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The emphasis on the (relatively peaceful) separation from Portugal often leads historians to neglect the analysis of the ideological construction of the Brazilian Empire that was concomitant with the independence of Brazil. This approach ignores the fundamental limits of the vision of empire that informed and shaped Brazilian Independence: the sanctity of Property and the exclusion of the Other. The separation from Portugal did not alter the Eurocentrism that was at the heart of the formation and formulation of Brazil(ianness). If anything, independence signalled ‘the climax of three centuries of changing attitudes toward Portugal—from inferiority, to equality, to superiority’ (Burns 1986: 30). Yet, as Capistrano de Abreu noted, independence did not alter ‘the feeling of inferiority in relation to Europe’ (Quoted in Rodrigues 1975 [5]: 246). Indeed, the Brazilian Empire was to be built upon Eurocentric cultural foundations, imitating the presumably white and modern nations of the North Atlantic, in particular France, at the time the foremost symbol of (Western) Modernity in Brazil (Needell 1987). Brazilian Indians and Afro-Brazilians were denied a place in the process of Brazilian Independence and the foundation of the Brazilian Empire—other than as the Other of (Western) Modernity. In the event, independence meant little, if anything to most Brazilians. Only the white men of property could dream of the Liberal Paradise, let alone make it a reality in newly independent Brazil.

The Politics of the Possible in the Age of Revolt

The independence of Brazil cannot be regarded simply in relation to Portugal, but also in relation to the process of internal unity —without which there would be no Brazil (as we know it) and thus no Brazilian Independence. The analysis of this process brings to light the conflict and violence that underpinned the formation of Brazil in the years that surrounded its independence from Portugal. This period, characterised by social unrest and political instability, can be dated from 1817, the year of the Revolution of Pernambuco, to 1850, the year of the consolidation of the nation-state in Brazil. This *age of revolt* refutes the myth of a peaceful social and political integration commonly associated with Brazilian Independence. Moreover, the historical accounts of these revolts reveal a concept of politics that denies most of the population, especially Brazilian Indians and Afro-Brazilians, *political agency* in the formation of Brazil(ianness).

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The Revolution of Pernambuco was a reaction against the centralisation of power and the increased tax burdens that followed the transfer of the Portuguese Court to Rio de Janeiro. The revolt was driven by the resentment of the regional elite for their loss of autonomy to Rio de Janeiro and the official favouritism shown to the Portuguese. The revolt found support amongst the military, public officials, land-owners, men of letters, judges, artisans, merchants, and a large number of priests. The rebels established a new regime based on liberal ideals, including the sanctity of private property. The leaders of the provisional government reassured slave-owners: 'Patriots, your property rights are sacred, no matter how repugnant this may be to the ideal of justice' (Cited in Costa 1975: 64). The liberal experiment was short-lived, lasting only seventy four days. The defeat of the rebels was followed by a brutal repression and the sending of fresh troops from Portugal to Rio de Janeiro, Salvador and Recife.

The provinces of the Northeast that had participated in the Revolution of 1817 refused to accept a constitution imposed on them by the Emperor and that concentrated power in Rio de Janeiro. In 1824, the rebels seized power and proclaimed the Confederation of the Equator. The revolt was a direct affront to the monarchical character of the Empire, not to mention to the unity of Brazil. But the rebels did not intend to change the social order. In fact, they resented the involvement of black and mulattos in the revolt because it reminded them of 'the scenes of Saint Domingue' (Barreto, cited in Moura [1987]1993: 69). Their preoccupation was with attaining autonomy over economic interests and commerce, that is, with the control of the State. In the event, the revolt suffered from the same lack of cohesion and rashness in action that had doomed the Revolution of 1817. The short-lived separation was crushed by the troops of the British Admiral Cochrane and followed by numerous executions, the most prominent being that of the liberal priest known as Frei Caneca. The defeat of the rebels consolidated the new centres and symbols of power: the emperor (Pedro I) and the capital (Rio de Janeiro).

The Revolution of Pernambuco and the Confederation of the Equator were discredited by imperial historians, only to become objects of veneration in the history of the Northeast, and patriotic landmarks in the nationalist accounts of the independence of Brazil. The revolts entered the national imaginary as the continuation of the spirit of Independence and Brazilianness that nationalist historians attribute to the Guerra dos Mascates (1710) and the Inconfidência Mineira (1789). Frei Caneca, the most prominent intellectual of Pernambuco at the time, would be referred by nationalist historians as 'martyr of Brazilian freedom' despite the fact that his vision of the nation was dominated by a strong regional(ist) feeling, and that his political formula tried to bring together the 'Portuguese of Europe' and the 'Portuguese of Brazil' but gave no consideration to Brazilian Indians and Afro-Brazilians (Lyra 1998). In short, this interpretation of the liberal revolts not only obviates their regional(ist) character but, more importantly, extracts the political essence of the nation exclusively from the actions and thoughts of the white elites of Brazil, the Portuguese of America.

The continuation of past injustices and the inability of the imperial authorities to secure national unity without violence tarnished the popularity of Dom Pedro soon after Independence. In 1831, the pressure from the Brazilian political leaders, combined with the demonstrations in the streets of Rio de Janeiro finally led him to abdicate in favour of his Brazilian-born five-year-old son Dom Pedro de Alcântara, the future Dom Pedro II. The abdication furthered the nationalisation of the throne and marked the completion of political independence from Portugal. The 17th of April was placed alongside the 7th of September as the other crucial date of Brazilian independence: the Second Independence. Manoel Bomfim defined the events of 1831 in revolutionary terms and placed them alongside the Revolution of 1817 as the true essence of Brazilian nationalism, in what constitutes further illustration of the narrow definition of Brazilianness that informs the nationalist accounts of the political history of Brazil.

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The Eurocentrism of these accounts becomes even more acute when dealing with the revolts that followed the abdication of Dom Pedro. His abdication to the throne was followed by two decades of unrest and insurrections across the whole country, including: the Cabanos War in Pernambuco (1832-1835), the Cabanagem in Pará (1835-1840), the Sabinada in Bahia (1837-1838), the Balaiada in Maranhão (1838-1841), the Farroupilha in Rio Grande do Sul (1835-1845), and the Praieira in Pernambuco (1848-1849). These revolts are generally interpreted as movements against the Portuguese, and other foreign influences, in post-independence Brazil (i.e. as expressions of nationalism) and/or as movements of opposition to the policies of the imperial government in Rio de Janeiro (i.e. as expressions of regionalism). In both cases, their interest and historical importance is determined by their impact on the formation of the Brazilian State, and even more so by the size of their threat to the political unity of Brazil. This focus on the struggle over institutional power (between nationals and foreigners, and between the capital and the provinces) has often led historians to overlook the specificity and

underestimate the complexity of the different revolts, as well as to create a hierarchy of revolts (and rebels) that privileges the actions of Luso-Brazilians and ignores or minimises those of Afro-Brazilians and Brazilian Indians.

The Eurocentrism of these accounts can be illustrated by examining, for example, the historiography of the Cabanagem —a civil war that devastated much of the Brazilian Northeast. This conflict lacks a clear beginning and a clear end, but can be roughly dated between 1831 and 1841, with its acute phase from 1835 to 1836. The revolt began as a movement towards political autonomy led by the regional elite of Pará. However, the political instability created by the disputes amongst the local elites soon gave way to a broader conflict across the Brazilian Northeast. The conflict reflected the dissatisfaction of nonwhites with a regime that kept them in poverty and slavery. In 1835, the rebels took the capital, Belém, and declared the independence of Pará. The imperial authorities sent a coalition of imperial troops and foreign mercenaries to regain control over a region thought to be ‘lost altogether to the civilised world’ (Cleary 1998: 127). The Court turned to Marechal Francisco José de Andréa, who took control of the capital on the 13th of May 1836. The conflict continued in the interior, extending outside the eastern Amazon, but would never again threaten the territorial integrity of the Brazilian Empire.

The prominence of nonwhites amongst the rebels led contemporaries to see the revolt as a *race war* which had to be put down at any cost to protect the whites of Pará as well as the unity of the Brazilian Empire. Marechal Andréa referred to the revolt as an attempt to ‘put an end to all the whites’ and asked the central authorities to exclude nonwhites from the army forces sent to the region, as well as ‘to protect by all means possible the multiplication of the white race’ (Cited in Cleary 1998: 112). The defeat of the rebels was followed by one of the most bloody and brutal campaigns of repression ever seen in the history of Brazil. Indeed, as David Cleary has noted, the terms in which the conflict was defined were sufficient to serve as an ‘ideological charter for a war of extermination’ (1998: 128). The conflict devastated the province, left a death toll of twenty thousand to thirty thousand people, approximately twenty

percent of the population of Pará, and meant the elimination of the Brazilian Indians of the Amazonia (Neto 1988).

The visions of the Cabanagem have been expertly analysed by Luís Balkar Sá Peixoto Pinheiro in *Visões da Cabanagem* (2001). Pinheiro shows how the Cabanagem was initially interpreted as a 'Spectacle of Barbarism'. The historians and ideologues of the Brazilian Empire portrayed the rebels as scum, criminals, irrational beings, even animals. The imperial accounts spoke of a cruel, primitive, and ignorant people whose actions were opportunistic and derived from basic instincts such as hatred, revenge, and violence. This derogatory portrait of the rebels ignored their motives and demands, and justified the carnage —some have even called it genocide— that followed the arrival of Marechal Andréa (Pinheiro 2001: 39-62).

The centenary of the rebellion witnessed a revision of the Cabanagem that portrayed the rebels [known as *cabanos*: people who lived in cabins] as heroes of regional and national liberation. The transformation of the revolt into a movement of political liberation took place through a process of *whitening* that attributed political agency exclusively to the white elite and emptied the movement of social criticism. Those who took part in the early stages of the revolt (the white elites) became the true, ideal *cabanos*. The rest of the participants —literally, the real *cabanos*: those who actually lived in cabins— came to occupy the place of extras. The white rebels were praised by their high ideals and leadership qualities, whereas the nonwhite rebels were 'merely attributed the courage, good will and hope of seeing their wishes realised by the just, conscious and well-intentioned persons who guided them' (Pinheiro 2001: 81). In other words, the popular rebels were portrayed as simple, ignorant people, unable to grasp social reality and to elaborate coherent alternatives to overcome their marginality.

This portrait of the revolt explains the ease with which local authorities and official historians chose the 13th of May 1936 to celebrate the centenary of the Cabanagem, culminating in the erection of a statue to Marechal Andréa, who came to be known as the Peace-Maker [*Pacificador*] of Pará. The

commemoration framed regionalism and nationalism in a liberal discourse of *law and order* which celebrated the re-establishment of institutional order and removed the popular rebels from the heroic portrait of the revolt, even though they had turned the revolt from a minor affair into a major event. This vision of the Cabanagem portrayed the revolt as a *nativist movement*, loyal to the empire, fighting against pro-Portuguese presidents nominated from Rio de Janeiro. The savages of the imperial accounts were transformed in the nativist narratives into *noble savages* brandishing the flag of Brazil(ianness) (Pinheiro 2001: 74).

The rehabilitation and glorification of the Cabanagem was part of the (re)invention of the nation that followed the consolidation of the Brazilian Empire, and that intensified with the proclamation of the Republic. The reinvention of the Cabanagem was carried out by the historians associated to the Instituto Histórico e Geográfico do Pará —one of several regional institutes associated to the Instituto Histórico e Geográfico Brasileiro [Brazilian Historical and Geographical Institute].¹⁴ The reinvention of the Cabanagem was the contribution of the Instituto Histórico e Geográfico do Pará to this effort, in the same way that the bandeirante was the contribution of the Instituto Histórico e Geográfico de São Paulo, and the Revolution of 1817 that of the Instituto Histórico e Geográfico de Pernambuco.

The liberal vision of the Cabanagem has coexisted with a socialist vision that argues the centrality of the popular masses in the revolt. This vision came to life as part of an effort to rehabilitate the place of *the people* in the history of Brazil. This process, initiated by João Capistrano de Abreu —often referred to as the ‘historian of the people’— in the early 20th century, was turned into an academic movement in the 1930s by a group of Marxist historians, the most eminent of whom was Caio Prado Jr. This new discourse, informed by historical materialism, has defined popular revolts, first and foremost, as *class struggles*. These authors rejected the visions of barbarism, insanity, and inherent cruelty

¹⁴ The IHGB was created to produce a national(ist) history of Brazil. Amongst its principal projects was the (re)invention of local events that could become integral part of regional memories, which in turn needed to be (re)invented as part of a single and unified national(ist) history of Brazil. The role of the IHGB in the formulation of Brazil(ianness) is explored in Chapter 4 [pages: 252-255].

attributed to the popular classes that participated in the Cabanagem. Instead, they explained the rebellion of the popular masses as a logical reaction against their oppression. Yet, the actions of the people appear to be *instinctive* rather than rational: at best, in need of direction; at worst, easily manipulated by those with ambitions of power (Pinheiro 2001: 89-106).

In sum, the exclusion and deprecation of the Cabanagem in imperial accounts has been replaced by a more subtle but equally disempowering discourse that has reduced the popular rebels to the role of extras (rather than actors) or a source of energy (rather than ideas). In the final analysis, the white liberal elite continue to be the only historical agent, or more precisely the only rational (modern) agent in the history of the Cabanagem. For their part, the popular (mostly nonwhite) segments continue to appear as extras (or irrational, pre-modern beings) in a movement defined by the ideas and actions of others, by the white elites inspired by the high ideals emanating from Europe.

The celebration of the 150th anniversary of the Cabanagem in 1985, one hundred and fifty years after the uprising rather than the re-occupation of Belém, signalled a move towards a more people-centred approach, and illustrated the climate of political opening [*apertura*] after decades of military rule in Brazil. The apotheosis of the celebration was the inauguration of a monument and museum of the Cabanagem designed by renowned modernist Brazilian architect Oscar Niemeyer, the designer of Brasília. The vision of the revolt that emerged from this event is the vision taught today in the schools of Pará and the Amazon, one that teaches children to 'celebrate the heroism of the Cabanos, struggling to break the chains of oppression, and the genius of Andréa, who preserved the territorial integrity of the nation' (Cleary 1998: 132). The emphasis on national unity demands forgetting the racial paranoia of Marechal Andréa, which informed the savage repression used to crush the Cabanagem. It also requires forgetting the reinforcing of racial divisions and the intensification of overt racial oppression that followed the defeat of the rebels. This *strategic forgetting* —to borrow from Laurence Kirmayer— simplifies the nature of the revolt and serves to purify the character of Brazilian Independence.

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Similar discursive trajectories to that of the Cabanagem can be observed in the historical accounts of other revolts that took place during the period of consolidation of the nation-state in Brazil. Caio Prado Jr was one of the first scholars to note that popular movements were viewed by most historians as ‘facts without more significance’ than the ‘explosion of bestial sentiments and passions of the masses’ (Prado Jr [1933]1963: 8). He rejected this interpretation but continued to define popular rebellions as acts of *instinctive violence*—natural and understandable reactions against centuries of oppression and exploitation, but not rationally articulated ones. In this view, the rebels lack ideology, ideals and plans beyond the motivation of revenge and the use of violence. Thus, their rebellion translates mainly into personal attacks rather than struggles against the system. Such an interpretation simplifies the motives, strategies and objectives of many popular revolts, and equates the arguably simple means used by the rebels with their level of rationality and ignoring the fact that more often than not the rebels were simply—but not simplistically—acting out a *politics of the possible*.

The articulation of this politics of the possible in popular revolts is clearly illustrated in João José Reis' account of the Revolução dos Malês—the uprising of the Muslim Africans of Bahia that took place in 1835—entitled in its English translation *Slave Rebellion in Bahia* (1993). This event was arguably the most important black urban rebellion in the Americas, yet it is conspicuously absent from most historical accounts of the formation of the nation-state in Brazil. The uprising was the culmination of a long cycle of Afro-Brazilian revolts that dominated life in the region since 1798, and which were partly inspired by the Haitian Revolution. These were not always mere revolts against slavery, but often revolts for (racial) equality. This was the case of the Revolução dos Malês, which was led by free blacks and mulattos. Reis' work provides a comprehensive historical account and political analysis of the uprising, illustrating the tactics, objectives and limitations of the rebels. The portrait of the uprising that emerges

from his analysis is that of a political rebellion with clear objectives and a plan of action destined to put an end to white domination in Bahia. Moreover, this work reveals how their plans were based on a complex evaluation of what the rebels thought was the correlation of forces in Bahia in 1835.

The rebellion of 1835 was followed by a series of measures that revealed the racial (and Eurocentric) politics of the Brazilian Empire. The measures taken by the authorities exceeded the mere punishment of the rebels. Once the revolt was put down, the white elite passed stringent laws in the province that 'overtly relegated freedmen and free blacks and mulattos to a legally inferior status' (Graham 1999: 39). These legal measures discriminating against the free and freed blacks and mulattos —including their cultural repression— were designed to control and harass them (Reis 1993: 223-230), but also promote their return to Africa (Bacelar 2001: 38; Cunha 1985: 74-100). In a nutshell, they were designed to exorcise 'anything African' (Reis 1993: 204). Ironically, these measures drove a large number of blacks and mulattos to Rio de Janeiro, starting a decade of white fear (i.e. fear of revolution and fear of blackness) in the capital of the Empire. Once again, the reaction of the authorities was repression and measures to exorcise —unsuccessfully— anything African (Soares & Gomes 2001). In essence, the legislation introduced after the rebellions of the 1830s showed that 'when confronted with a perceived crisis of social control, the crown responded by reinforcing the distinction between black and white' (Andrews 1984: 213).

The historical treatment and historiographical accounts of popular revolts reflect two visions of the people in the formation and formulation of Brazil: the real people and the people as idea(l). The vision of the real people is that of the populace [*plebe* or *ralé*] —opportunistic, but ignorant and irrational, and unable to grasp high ideals and abstract concepts such as liberty, equality, or independence. Their actions lack autonomy and rationality. They are natural rather than rational. Their protests are archaic, primitive, pre-political, based on needs rather than ideals. They are the *primitive rebels* theorised by Eric Hobsbawn (1959). This is the notion of people amongst conservative historians, dominant in 19th century Brazil. In turn, progressive historians view the people as an idea(l) —the

depository of national sovereignty. Yet, this portrait of the people reinforces the historical centrality of the (white) elites, which become the only real agents of history (with positive connotations in liberal narratives and negative connotations in socialist narratives).

The value of the general population is restricted in these narratives to a numerical function: they are the majority that provides legitimacy (in liberal narratives) or the masses manipulated by the minority (in socialist narratives). The idealisation of the people in liberal narratives removes them from the realm of real politics, whereas their idealisation in socialist narratives turns them into eternal victims at the mercy of the political elites. The effect of these historical accounts is to transfer (and reify) the marginality of the people, in particular of nonwhites, into the formation and formulation of Brazil(ianness). Moreover, this narrative strategy minimises the visibility of internal political domination and the concomitant resistance from those sectors of the population that continued to be exploited and discriminated against after the independence of Brazil.

The exclusion of popular movements from —or their selective and subordinate incorporation into— the political history of Brazil goes hand in hand with the widespread consideration of them as *pre-political* manifestations. Their definition in terms of evolution (pre-political vs. political) to denote difference (social vs. political) reveals the higher value attached to political revolts (usually defined in liberal terms). This distinction not only obscures the complexity of forces and interests at play in the different revolts but, more importantly, it serves to establish a *hierarchy of revolts* that privileges political revolts (viewed as complex, rational, informed by high ideals) over social revolts (viewed as simple, emotional, driven by basic needs). In other words, it privileges revolts preoccupied with institutional change and led by the white elites, in detriment of those preoccupied with broader social and political change (i.e. revolts against slavery, poverty and discrimination) and led mostly by nonwhites. Moreover, the term pre-political often suggests that nonwhite rebels cannot grasp the notion of modern politics (understood in liberal terms: institutional and representative) and thus come across as *pre-modern* subjects (i.e. inferior and/or backward).

The narrow definition of politics as liberal and formal (i.e. institutional) politics sidelines the fact that the essence of politics is *power*, not associations and institutions —these are merely mechanisms to exercise and manage power— and, therefore, overlooks the fact that social revolts, insofar as they seek to change the balance of power, are *always political*. In other words, this narrow (and normative) definition of politics excludes by definition the political nature of popular rebellions, whose so-called social nature ignores the fact that popular rebels were simply acting out the *politics of the possible*. The ultimate effect of this distinction is to minimise the presence, when not erase the *political agency* of Brazilian Indians and Afro-Brazilians from the historical memory of Brazil.

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The age of revolt that took place in the mid-19th century illustrates the widespread discontent that followed the independence of Brazil, pointing out the problems that did not end with the separation from Portugal. The constant popular rebellions and the harsh repression with which they were met reveal the limits of Brazilian independence and dispel the myth of a peaceful political (let alone social) integration in the construction of Brazil(ianness). Yet, the emphasis on the political (defined in narrow liberal terms) and the minimal consideration given to the social (or its subordination to that narrow definition of politics) reveals a tendency to emphasise the need for national unity and a desire to minimise the effects of the internal *domination (and resistance)* of those sectors of the population that did not benefit from the independence from Portugal.

In short, the narratives of this age of revolt produce a double portrait: one of political revolts (led by whites) seeking to liberate the nation from external control, eventually successful, and with little, if any, bloodshed; and one of social revolts (led by nonwhites) seeking to fulfil particular needs, driven by emotions and violence, who are responsible for immense bloodshed, but are *dissociated from* the struggle for Brazilian Independence. In this sense, the exclusive association of the (white) liberal rebellions of 1824 and 1831, as well as the pre-independence

rebellion of 1817, with the process of independence, excludes the Brazilian Indians and Afro-Brazilians from the imaginary of Brazilian Independence. Furthermore, the denial of *political rationality* to the social revolts is, in effect, a denial of modernity that portrays the-Other-rebels (Afro-Brazilians and Brazilian Indians) as pre-political, pre-modern subjects, denying the *historical agency* of nonwhites in the construction of Brazil. This portrait reinforces the white hegemony and the Eurocentrism that defines the discourse of Brazilian Independence.

Paradoxical Parades and Spectres of (Economic) Dependence

The current meanings and expressions of Brazilian Independence reflect an interesting blend of celebration of the past and preoccupation about the present and future of Brazil. The first of these meanings relates to the classic definition of independence: *political* independence. This dimension can be best observed in the official commemorations of Brazilian Independence, as well as in the constant presence of figures associated with Brazilian Independence across all forms of popular culture. The second of the expressions relates to what is arguably the everyday dominant meaning of Brazilian Independence: *economic* independence. This can be observed in the constant preoccupation of the population—echoed in the national media—with the spectre of economic dependency (blamed on the First World) and the desire to fully belong to that same First World ... the world of (Western) Modernity.

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The most recent special commemoration of Brazilian independence took place in 1972. The 150th anniversary of the independence of Brazil was celebrated with all the pomp and ceremony the state could muster—a state under a military regime presided by General Médici. The symbolism was infused with national pride,

optimism, and hope for the future. Events included parades, presidential visits to cities, and the repatriation of the remains of Dom Pedro I from Portugal to his final resting place in a mausoleum in São Paulo. A special hymn was composed for the occasion, extolling the glory of Dom Pedro I, the wonderful mixture of races, and the hope that had unified an immense continent into a festival of 'love and peace'. Singers were contracted for the recording of the music. A special coin was also minted, featuring an image of a boat connecting the years 1822 and 1972 and including the faces of the two heroes of the moment: Dom Pedro I and the General Médiçi. It was not only the state that participated in the nationalistic fervour. Companies took out whole pages of advertising filled with enthusiasm for a bright and glorious future, and publications dedicated special editions to this event. Children were trotted out to wave flags at the Emperor's monument and at the President; and a film entitled *Independência ou Morte* [Independence or Death] was financed by the government portraying the official version of Brazilian Independence (Duarte *et al* 2000).

The next major commemoration of the independence of Brazil will not occur until its 200th anniversary in 2022, and thus we have to wait a few years before we can find out the kind of activities and narratives that such a profound symbolic event will bring, and with that get a clearer picture of the meanings of Brazilian Independence in the 21st century. Having said that, Independence Day, celebrated on the 7th of September, remains the most important annual historical commemoration in Brazil. Independence Day is first and foremost a holiday, but the official celebration of Independence is above all a show of force, a display of military might and nationalism. The militaristic character of Independence Day is not unique to Brazil, but is particularly curious in a country that defines its own independence as an act of peace, not force.

The commemoration of Independence is synonymous with the celebration of Tiradentes: statues of him are washed and his figure is invoked as the apostle and martyr of Brazilian Independence. In fact, Brazilians celebrate the 21st of April—a national holiday in memory of the execution of Tiradentes—as another Independence Day. There is, however, an intriguing paradox here.

Tiradentes is both the popular face of Brazilian Independence and the patron of the Military Police. Thus, those present at the parades are told how 'Tiradentes gave his life for the freedom and independence of Brazilians' and are encouraged to shout of 'Long Live Tiradentes', but in the same breath they are also encouraged to shout 'Long Live the Military Police'. The fact that the popular hero of national liberation has become the patron of the main force used to maintain (some might say impose) social order in Brazil seems incongruent. However, there are reasons that make this a less strange match-up. Firstly, Tiradentes himself was a soldier, and one greatly concerned with social order —one must remember he conceived the conspiracy as an act of restoration, not of revolution. And secondly, the widespread popularity of Tiradentes means that he has become a hero for those most likely to become members of the rank and file of the Military Police: the poor and the blacks. Thus, the figure of Tiradentes brings together in a rather ironic fashion the members and the victims of the Military Police.

The celebration of Tiradentes by the Afro-Brazilians seems, if anything, even more paradoxical. The simple explanation remits to the fact that Tiradentes has been associated since the late 19th century with the cause for the abolition of slavery. However, a more sophisticated explanation would suggest that the popularity of Tiradentes amongst blacks comes simply from the fact that he has become a symbol of human freedom, devoid of any particular traits (i.e. colour). His figure has been stripped (at least apparently) of content to become an abstraction: the symbol of Independence. The national beatification of Tiradentes is clear in the statue that presides over the entrance to the old Parliament of Rio de Janeiro: the figure of Tiradentes resembles that of Christ.

The popularity of Tiradentes could be seen as erasing the presence of nonwhites from Brazilian Independence. Indeed, during the parades one can observe that there is a clear *hierarchy of colour* that defines Independence Day. The political and military elites who preside over the parades are almost exclusively white. Their whiteness contrasts with the colourful mixture of participants (the rank and file) and attendants (the population) —especially in

cities with a large proportion of Afro-Brazilians, such as Salvador and Rio de Janeiro. Yet, the dominant colour is white: there is a white hero presiding over the past; and there are white leaders presiding over the present (and over the celebration of the past).

Tiradentes shares the national pantheon of Brazilian Independence with another two major (white and male) historical figures: Dom Pedro I and José Bonifácio de Andrada e Silva. Historical accounts have invariably attributed the achievement of Brazilian independence to the efforts and skill of these two men: imperial accounts usually emphasising the figure of Dom Pedro, and nationalist accounts that of José Bonifácio. A recent example of this is Roderick Cavaliero's *The Independence of Brazil* (1993) who credits the 'peaceful process of independence' to 'the happy combination at the right moment of a pragmatic conservative politician and a liberal-minded prince' (1993: 7). The two are celebrated with many public places named after them. Moreover, the house of José Bonifácio is preserved as a public museum, whereas—as noted above—Dom Pedro has a monument with his remains in São Paulo, and was made into the main hero of Brazilian Independence in the commemoration of 1972.

The figures of Tiradentes, José Bonifácio and Dom Pedro combine in the Brazilian imaginary to produce a complete portrait of Brazilian Independence—one that brings together emotion (the feeling for the nation, signified by the sacrifice of Tiradentes), reason (the ability and knowledge to steer the process of independence, attributed to José Bonifácio), and symbol (the Grito de Ipiranga reportedly uttered by Dom Pedro). This trinity provides a complete (white and male) picture of the process of separation from Portugal: inspired by Tiradentes, conducted by José Bonifácio, and proclaimed by Dom Pedro. With this picture in mind, it should be interesting to observe how these three figures will fare in the commemoration of Brazilian Independence in 2022. In the meantime, it continues to be fascinating to observe the ease with which the rhetoric of peace and love combines with military parades, how a white hero is embraced by many blacks as a symbol of freedom, while white hegemony parades itself every year on Independence Day.

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As noted earlier, the current understanding of Independence in the Brazilian imaginary has shifted from the political to the economic. The parades that celebrate political independence often coincide in time and space with protests that denounce the *economic dependence* of Brazil. The centrality of the economic dimension of Brazilian Independence in the national imagination dates back to the emergence of economic nationalism in the 1930s and the theory of dependency in the 1960s. Interestingly though, the discourse of economic (in)dependence tends to reinforce the white hegemony and Eurocentrism identified in this text as the defining feature of the formulation of Brazilian Independence, and of the general formation and formulation of Brazil(ianness).

The centrality of dependency theory in the national imagination can be appreciated by paying a visit to the National Historic Museum in Rio de Janeiro. Its permanent exhibition entitled ‘Colonisation and Dependency’ is a (re)invention of Brazilian History as a history of Dependency —first from Portugal, then from Great Britain, today from The United States.¹⁵ Here, the construction of the nation is interpreted as a product of economic development and economic dependency (Santos 1992). The exhibition follows the economic cycles of the colony-nation: sugar, gold and diamond mines, coffee, industrialisation, and financial capitalism. The narrative shows the current preoccupation with the economic dependency of Brazil. Indeed, the trope of dependency is so powerful in Brazil (and Latin America in general) that Fernando Henrique Cardoso and Enzo Faletto theorised the possibility of development *within* dependency (Cardoso & Faletto 1973), also known as the theory of *dependent development* (Evans 1979).

The economic dimension of independence is today more visible than the political dimension associated with the figures of Tiradentes, José Bonifácio and Dom Pedro. It is no surprise that two of the most popular historical figures

¹⁵ Exhibition visited at the National Historic Museum (Rio de Janeiro), in June 2001.

amongst Brazilians, after Tiradentes, are —according to popular surveys in national magazines— Getúlio Vargas, the man responsible for pushing the ideal of economic independence in the 1930s, 1940s and 1950s, and Juscelino Kubitschek, the man who promised ‘50 years of (Economic) Development in 5’, and whose term in office will forever be remembered for the construction of the new capital, Brasilia. The construction of Brasilia was interpreted as the step ‘from underdevelopment and semi-colonialism to development and full independence’ (Corbisier 1960: 22). Brasilia became the symbolic heartland of the national ideologies of progress, development, modernisation and whitening. It became the culmination of the *symbolic* integration of Brazil into Whiteness and (Western) Modernity.

The importance of this vision of independence comes from the fact that the economic state of the nation affects the everyday life of Brazilians in very tangible and immediate ways. One of the most telling recent cases was the series of blackouts suffered in 2001. The blackouts lasted for several months and affected almost the entire country. The situation gave way to a variety of reflections that illustrated the centrality of the notion of economic independence in the current formulation of Brazil(ianness), one linked to the dichotomy of First World vs. Third World, that is, discourses of development and Western Modernity. The main criticisms were directed against international financial institutions, such as the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, whose policies are considered by large sectors of the population the current form of colonialism, fuelling cries for economic (Brazilian) Independence.

Similarly, since 1994, the celebration of Independence Day is used to voice the *Grito dos Excluidos* [Cry of the Excluded] —a movement organised by labour unions, the MST and the Catholic Church— to call attention to poverty and inequality in Brazil. In 2002, coinciding with the 180th anniversary of Independence, nearly one hundred thousand people —according to police estimates— rallied behind the Cry of the Excluded —an expression which in this particular context can be seen to critically evoke the Grito de Ipiranga, the Cry of Independence. Gathered outside the shrine of Nossa Senhora da Conceição

Aparecida [Our Appeared Lady of the Conception], Brazil's patron saint, the crowd protested against the proposed Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA), designed to create a free trade zone from Alaska to Argentina. Amongst the banners held up by the demonstrators, there were calls to protect Brazilian (Economic) Independence, illustrating the strength of economic independence as the current dominant popular understanding of Brazilian Independence.

The political and economic visions of Brazilian Independence share a common aspect that makes them complementary: they have an external (foreign) referent. This is a natural occurrence in nationalist discourses, but one that (by accident or design) acts as a kind of screen that hides internal dynamics of power (i.e. internal exploitation and discrimination). Thus, economic dependency is often used to blame foreigners for the ills of the country and excuse national responsibilities for problems which are often related to internal structures and national imaginaries. In turn, this externalisation of national problems has an interesting ramification that ties directly with the official formulation of Brazilian Independence: the only agents capable of bringing independence are, once again, the white (and mostly male) elite of Brazil. White males are by far the dominant group that holds positions in the institutions that can negotiate the economic independence of Brazil. Thus, once again, the general population is relegated to the role of victims and/or spectators whose destiny remains in the hands of (powerful) foreign empires and the (white and male) national elites —the only group who can formally engage with the First World in pursue of Brazilian (Economic) Independence.

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In sum, the official (and popular) definition of political independence (with its emphasis on white male figures) and the current definition of independence in economic terms (with its emphasis on notions of development, modernity and first-worldism) bring together the main aspects that define the formulation of Brazil(ianness): Whiteness and (Western) Modernity. The combination of the

traditional white image of political independence with the more recent, but equally white colour of economic independence, projects Whiteness as the colour of Brazilian Independence. Whiteness emerges here as the only way into (Western) Modernity and whites (the white political elite) as the only ones who can erase the Spectre of Dependency, that is, the only ones who can complete and/or protect the Independence of Brazil.

Conclusion: The Second Pillar of White Hegemony

The idyllic portrait of Brazilian Independence formulated in the 19th century has survived virtually unscathed into the 21st century. This is the portrait of a cordial and peaceful process, led by a rational and reasonable (white and male) political elite, which culminated in the harmonious integration of the different peoples and regions of Brazil into a single and unified Nation-State. In this narrative, the Independence of Brazil is the culmination of a teleological process, more a matter of destiny than a matter of history as such—or to put it differently: more a matter of destiny than a matter of contingency. This portrait rests largely on the symbolic power of the Grito de Ipiranga. The notion that independence came about with a simple (royal) cry—without a single shot being fired—would be the definitive proof of the peaceful nature of the political history of Brazil.

Yet, as we have seen, this is an idealised (and ideological) portrait that omits and distorts essential aspects which are necessary to fully comprehend Brazilian Independence, let alone the formation of the nation-state in Brazil. Above all, this portrait glosses over the fact that Brazilian Independence was preceded, accompanied and followed by violent conflicts across all regions of the country, involving all sectors of the population. Moreover, this exorcism of political violence from the portrait of Brazilian Independence betrays a double standard in the historiographical treatment of anti-colonial resistance in Brazil. On the one hand, the anti-colonial revolts carried out by Luso-Brazilians against their External Others—initially the European rivals of Portugal for the control of Brazil,

and then Portugal itself— are defined as political, rational, and modern, and integrated into the teleological narrative of Brazilian Independence. On the other hand, the anti-colonial revolts carried out by the Internal Others of the Luso-Brazilians (i.e. Brazilian Indians and Afro-Brazilians) are defined as pre-political, irrational, and primitive, and disassociated from the narratives of Independence. Thus, almost by magic, Brazilian Independence becomes synonymous with the actions of the Luso-Brazilians, and thus synonymous with Whiteness.

This portrait of Brazilian Independence exorcises the political violence that framed the historical construction of an independent nation-state, and locks out of the main nationalist imaginary all those who did not participate in the formal process of independence, one managed by the Luso-Brazilians. This association of Brazilian Independence with (patriarchal) Whiteness is currently visible in the national trinity that represents the face of Brazilian Independence: Tiradentes, José Bonifácio, and Dom Pedro. The current definition of Brazilian Independence mainly in terms of Economic Independence, if anything, strengthens the connection between (patriarchal) Whiteness and Brazilian Independence, if only because it is the white (male) elite who has historically been the only group able to engage directly with the External Others that are central to the economic (in)dependence of Brazil. The combined effect of all these elements turns Brazilian Independence into another symbolic pillar of white hegemony in Brazil.

Chapter 3

“You know what I think is the best part of Brazilian history?” Joia said one evening as she, Daniel, and I stood drinking beer at Joãozinho's, the little hole-in-the-wall bar near their house. “When Princesa Isabel freed the slaves, that's the best part”. Joia repeated the simple story that all Brazilian school children hear: that in one abrupt, shining moment in May 1888, the slaves were liberated by a signature from the hand of Dom Pedro's generous daughter, Isabel.

Robyn Sheriff (2001: 191)

Abolition

On the 13th of May 1888, Princess Regent Isabel signed the Golden Law [*Lei Aurea*] declaring the abolition of slavery in Brazil. The Golden Law was the last of a series of legal dispositions restricting slavery in the 19th century. The symbolic power of the Golden Law has served to popularise a portrait of abolition as a peaceful process managed by prudent (white) liberal Brazilians. The culmination of this has been the portrait of Princess Isabel as the Redeemer [*Redentora*], crediting her with abolishing slavery in Brazil. This vision of abolition suggests that freedom was something given to the slaves (a gift) rather than something won by them (a triumph). This interpretation simplifies and misrepresents the complex and often violent process that eventually brought slavery to an end in Brazil, and contributes to perpetuate white hegemony in contemporary Brazil.

The objective of this chapter is to examine the process and meaning(s) of abolition and assess their impact on the formation and formulation of Brazil. Above all, it examines the evolution of Abolition(ism) in Brazil from its initial and timid manifestations in the colonial period until the abolition of slavery in 1888. The chapter begins with the analysis of two aspects of slavery that are essential to understand Abolition(ism): the objectification of the slave population and the process of manumission. It then turns to Abolition(ism)

proper to examine, in the first instance, the abolition of Indian slavery. The central part of the chapter looks at the process of abolition and the formulation of Abolitionism regarding African slavery. The chapter concludes with a brief reflection on the current views on Slavery and Abolition in the light of the commemoration of the 100th anniversary of Abolition in 1988.

Objects and Subjects in Brazilian Slavery

The deepest and most lasting effect of slavery in the Brazilian imagination has been the objectification of the Afro-Brazilian population. The volume of Africans brought as slaves to Brazil has led to identify Brazilian slavery with black (or African) slavery and to view Africans and Afro-Brazilians through the narrow lens of slavery. The objectification of blacks, however, is not connected only to their identification with slavery, but also to a particular notion of slavery, one that portrays (white) masters as agents and (black) slaves as objects. The objective of this section is to examine this notion of slavery, and more specifically, the centrality and complexity of slavery in Brazil, paying particular attention to the objects and subjects of Brazilian slavery.

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Slavery was a ubiquitous institution in Brazil for more than three hundred years. Slave labour fuelled the economic development of Brazil from the mid-16th century until the late 19th century. Slaves cultivated the plantations of sugar-cane established at different times in Bahia, Pernambuco, Alagoas, Paraíba, Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo, as well as the plantations of tobacco and cacao in Pará and Bahia, cotton in Maranhão, Pará and Pernambuco, rice in Maranhão, and coffee in Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo. They participated in large numbers in the extraction of gold and diamonds in Minas Gerais and Goiás. They contributed to the development of the cattle industry of Rio Grande do Sul, Paraná and Santa

Catarina, and to the commercialisation of herbs and spices from the Amazon. Slaves also provided most of the services required in the urban centres of Bahia, Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo.

The acquisition of slaves, especially if they were artisans or able to learn a trade, was a profitable investment. Their acquisition was a widespread practice in urban Brazil, with hundreds of families living off the earnings generated by their slaves. Pyrad de Laval, who visited Bahia in the 17th century, wrote: 'There is not a single Portuguese, however poor, man or woman, who does not possess two or three slaves, slaves who earn their masters' living by working a certain number of hours every day and generating sufficient profit to sustain their owners' (Cited in Mattoso [1979]1986: 43). The occupations of urban male slaves ranged from stevedores and porters, to carpenters, tailors, coopers, and bakers, whilst urban female slaves were mainly employed as street vendors and prostitutes.

Slavery in Brazil was not restricted to the ambit of productive economy. A significant number of slaves, mostly women, were employed as domestic servants. Their possession was often a form of conspicuous consumption amongst the noble and wealthy sectors of the population. The presence of domestic slaves, while relatively small in number, had important implications for the formation of a slave-holding mentality in Brazil. Their existence brought slavery into the private space: the home. The number of families with domestic slaves increased as the urban population grew, and while abolition put an end to slave labour, the practice of having domestic servants has remained popular in Brazil.

The possession of slaves was open to everyone: men and women, rich and poor, nationals and foreigners, whites and blacks, free and freed, and there were even cases of slaves owning other slaves (Reis 1993: 3). Some studies have even suggested that the social and economic dream of freedmen was the acquisition of slaves, that is, to complete the full transition from slave to master (Marquese 2006: 118). This democratisation of slave-ownership—for want of a better term—gave slavery a degree of flexibility and of social and ideological penetration far larger than if it had been the privilege of a single group. The ownership of slaves was also open to and common amongst public institutions, religious orders and

brotherhoods. Some religious brotherhoods owned slaves and rented them to earn funds to help with the cost of building churches and organising festivities (Scarano 1975: 34-35). But, of course, it was slavery itself that was the foremost (and arguably the only national) institution in Brazil until the consolidation of the nation-state in the mid-19th century. Official estimates from 1819 show that slaves represented at least twenty seven percent of the population of every region (Moura [1987]1993: 8). In short, slavery fuelled the Brazilian economy, structured Brazilian society and shaped Brazilian mentality. Indeed, slavery was responsible not merely for the prosperity but for the very existence of Brazil (Boxer 1961: 91).

Slavery was supported by classical philosophy (the theory of natural slavery formulated by Aristotle), religious doctrine (the curse of Ham), legislative structures (the ordinances coming from Portugal), and the notion that manual work was something low and dirty, a notion popular amongst the Portuguese. This sentiment led them to avoid manual labour, to the point of turning slavery into a moral necessity. In the words of Pero de Magalhães Gandavo, the possession of slaves enabled settlers to 'live honestly' whereas lending (and later manumitting) slaves allowed settlers to show piety and generosity ([1576]1980: 26, 42 and 44). In other words, the ownership of slaves was not just a matter of wealth but a matter of dignity. The respectable settler was the one who could support his family without having to dirty his hands. This mentality reinforced the view of slaves as inferior, indecent and immoral beings, objects rather than subjects. The stigma of slavery extended to the whole Afro-Brazilian population, partly reflecting the fact that the main source of slaves was Africa.

Slaves (Treated) as Objects. The objectification of the African slaves began during their capture and trade to Brazil. Slaves brought from Africa could spend up to a year in captivity and transit from the moment they were captured until the time they arrived in Brazil. Those who died during the lengthy and arduous voyage were thrown overboard into the waters of the Atlantic. Once in Brazil, prior to their sale, the captives were fed and rubbed down with palm oil to hide any wounds or conceal any skin disease they might have. They were then displayed,

examined, and eventually sold through private deals or at public auctions. Their price was determined by personal traits (sex, age, health, and skills) and commercial variables (demand and supply). The most valuable, prime young males were termed *peças* [items], whereas 'all other slaves of both sexes counted less than a *peça* [one item]' (Boxer 1969: 100). The fact that importing slaves from Africa was cheaper than their reproduction in Brazil further devalued the lives of Africans and Afro-Brazilians.

The objectification of the slave population was reinforced by their legal status as property. Slaves were bought, sold, loaned, donated, inherited, and used as deposits in different types of transaction. The legal consideration of slaves as living property was still evident during the debates over abolition in the 1870s (Conrad 1972: 96). The law did sometimes recognise the humanity of slaves. In particular, slaves were treated as people when accused of having committed a crime. In other words, the only human act of a slave, according to the colonial legislation, was crime. Slaves were tried and punished for criminal acts with all the rigor of the Penal Code. Slaves were also afforded some legal protection under criminal law. However, they rarely benefited from protective measures. Not only were they generally unaware of such legislation, but they could not act on their own account. The law stipulated that slaves required the support of a free person to act on their behalf when dealing with the authorities. Thus, the partial recognition of the humanity of slaves served essentially to punish rather than protect them. In any case, the important thing to remember is that the 'legislation that treated slaves as property carried much more weight than the isolated cases of laws which, indirectly, recognised their condition as human beings' (Toplin 1972: 23).

The objectification of the slaves—and blacks in general—is also manifest in literary texts and historical accounts of colonial Brazil. Their presence in colonial literature was defined mainly by their absence, or more precisely by their invisibility (Haberly 1972: 32). The invisibility of slave (and black) characters in colonial literature suggests that (white) colonists did not see them as human beings, as subjects worthy of a place in the human landscape of colonial Brazil. In

those instances where blacks were present, they appeared as exotic, strange, wild and evil —traits that justified and naturalised their place as inferior and servile beings. Moreover, the worst aspects of their behaviour were attributed to their African origins (Brookshaw 1986: 32-34). The literary invisibility of slaves (and blacks) was considerably reduced after the abolition of the slave trade, but their presence continued to be related to their *value as objects*: exotic (objects of curiosity) and, principally, economic (objects of property) (Santos 2002). Their objectification was also evident in the written press of the 19th century (Schwarcz 1987).

The incorporation of slaves as objects in the Brazilian imagination can be inferred from two texts that have been traditionally defined as the first and foremost precedents of Brazilianness: *Diálogos das Grandezas do Brasil* (1618), by Ambrósio Fernandes Brandão; and *Cultura e Opulência do Brasil* (1711), by João Antônio Andreoni, commonly known as André João Antonil. The author of the *Diálogos* commented on the large numbers of slaves —referred to as merchandise, alongside animals and other items necessary for the success of the colonial enterprise— and suggested Brazil was becoming a new Guiné ([1618]1968: 115). However, the text that best reflects the objectification of the slaves in colonial Brazil is *Cultura e Opulência do Brasil*. This boastful account of the wealth of the colony provides a meticulous description of the production of sugar that concludes with a reflection ‘on the suffering of sugar from the moment of birth in the sugar-cane until it leaves Brazil’ ([1711]1982: 143). Antonil treats sugar, not the slaves, as the suffering subject of sugar production in colonial Brazil. In this reversal of ontological positions, it is the product (the sugar) rather than its producer (the slaves) that endures a life full of suffering and torment (143-145). In turn, slaves are described as ‘the hands and feet of the master’ (89). The dehumanisation of the black slaves, their reduction to items, limbs and tools, evident in these and many other colonial narratives, mirrors their treatment as merchandise and tools of production in the history of Brazil.

The use of slaves as tools of production required their integration into the productive structure. This meant acquiring the discipline and skills necessary to perform the tasks assigned to them. Slaves were also required to learn Portuguese,

at least enough to understand simple orders and perform the basic practices of Catholicism. Socialisation into slavery relied heavily on the threat and use of violence. Punishment was frequent and often brutal. The use of violence was more frequent in the plantations, where slaves worked in teams and group discipline was essential. Here, slaves were under the supervision of an overseer [*feitor*]. The figure of the overseer was at the centre of (plantation) slavery in Brazil (Lara 1988: 165-183).

The overseers were hired to watch the slaves, enforce production and guard against rebellion. They relied extensively on the whip to drive the slaves and to punish those who failed to comply with orders or to complete their workload (McCann 1997). The figure of the overseer allowed masters to distance themselves from the physical punishment of slaves and to appear as mediators—benevolent authorities to whom slaves could resort for protection and justice in cases of abuse by the overseer. The image of a protective and benevolent master has been put to rest by the work, amongst others, of Robert Conrad (1983), Stuart Schwartz (1985), and Mary Karasch (1987). This is not to deny the existence of paternalistic attitudes and structures mediating the relations between masters and slaves. However, in the context of slavery, violence and benevolence cannot be thought of separately, but as two complementary aspects of the same domination, each drawing its meaning from the other (Graham 1990: 24). Indeed, the whip and the threat of its use was the indispensable key to the slave system in Brazil. Not for nothing was its legal use kept in place until the dying years of slavery.

Slaves (Behaving) as Subjects. The structural subordination of the slaves, however, does not mean they were totally alienated beings under the complete control of their masters. Slaves refused to be mere cogs in the workings of the slave system. Instead, slaves resisted in a variety of ways: from working slowly to running away, from sabotage (including setting cane fields alight, damaging sugar mills, and poisoning cattle and horses) to revolt, from infanticide to suicide, from abortion to murder. Moreover, they formed families and communities that allowed them to rebuild their identities. Memories, hopes and projects allowed

them to preserve and/or reinvent their moral and cultural heritage (Slenes 1999). In particular, slaves sought to improve their working and living conditions through rebellion and negotiation. In the plantations, they bargained with their masters for better working and living conditions, negotiating, for example, the concession of small plots of land to produce their own food, the so-called peasant breach [*brecha camponesa*] (Cardoso 1988). In the cities, slaves often worked on their own account [*negros de ganho*] or were hired out by their owners [*negros de alugel*]. The place of these slaves in the labour market was similar to that of free men: they negotiated contracts with their employers to hand over a certain sum at the end of the day or week, while being able to keep (at least in theory) the money exceeding the contracted sum (Algranti 1988).

Their ability to amass personal savings, to negotiate living and working conditions, and to forge their own cultural institutions allowed slaves, especially those in the urban centres, to develop their own talents and to obtain a certain degree of autonomy. This has been referred to by different authors with expressions such as 'fractions of freedom' (Hünefeldt 1994: 7) and 'a life of "freedom" in captivity' (Algranti 1988: 49). Expressions like this and, above all, the theorisation of the *brecha camponesa* as a rift in the slave system, have been condemned as a 'rehabilitation of slavery' (Gorender 1990). Yet the mapping of the diversity and complexity of slavery should not be interpreted in this fashion, and certainly not used to rehabilitate slavery. The fact that slaves (or at least some slaves) were able to carve out spaces of relative autonomy in a social environment characterised by exploitative labour, constant threat and use of violence, poor health and broken families, is testimony not of a mild institution but of slave resilience. Moreover, these negotiated spaces cannot be thought of in opposition to slavery —practices such as the *brecha camponesa* operated functionally within the slave system, relieving pressure from the slave regime and fixing the slave to the land. The resistant adaptation implicit in these negotiations acted as a powerful break to revolutionary impulses and probably strengthened the institution of slavery. However, ignoring or denying the value of such spaces and the ability of the slaves to negotiate —always within the limits of the slave

regime— not only distorts and limits our understanding of slavery but, most importantly, it reinforces the notion of slaves as *objects of slavery* rather than as *subjects in slavery*.

The Other Slaves. The identification of Brazilian slavery exclusively with African slavery has a long tradition in the studies of slavery in Brazil. Yet, the first slaves in the history of Portuguese America were the indigenous peoples of Brazil. The chronicles of the early decades of Portuguese colonisation invariably note how the colonists had lots of natives, to the point that they were considered to be ‘the principal wealth of the land’ (Gandavo [1576]1980: 26). In similar fashion, the Jesuit António Vieira would refer in the mid-17th century to the blood that ran through the veins of the captive natives as *red gold* —the expression used by John Hemming to title his seminal work on the conquest of the Brazilian Indians. Indeed, Indian slaves were crucial for the introduction of the plantation economy and were the main producers of sugar until the late 1570s (Schwartz 1978). The completion of the transition to African slavery in the sugar plantations of the Northeast in the early 17th century did not put an end to Indian slavery. Brazilian Indians continued to work as slaves in those regions and activities where their use made more economic sense than the importation of Africans. In particular, Indian slavery was responsible for the development of central Brazil in the mid-17th century, and was a constant presence in the economic activities of the Amazon (Hemming 1978: 146-160; Monteiro 1994: 99-128). In essence, the enslavement of Brazilian Indians was complementary to the enslavement of Africans.

The principal agents of indigenous enslavement were *Paulistas* —the colonists of São Paulo. The limited potential of the region to develop a sugar economy forced them to look for alternative models of colonisation. The solution they came up with was double: the production of food for internal consumption and the exploration of the *sertão* [hinterlands]. The expeditions of exploration, known as *bandeiras* [flags], roamed the interior in search of mineral riches and natives to work the fields and serve in the houses of the settlers. Their leaders were Portuguese men or men of mixed Indian-Portuguese descent [*mamelucos*].

The expeditions, however, relied heavily on the skills, knowledge, and manpower of Brazilian Indians. The history of inter-tribal warfare amongst the indigenous peoples of Brazil was helpful to the enterprise, even if their participation in the bandeiras was often carried out under conditions of enslavement (Hemming 1978: 245-282; Monteiro 1994: 57-98).

The increasing demand for slaves changed the nature of tribal warfare amongst the indigenous peoples of Brazil. Tribal wars went from being a ritual exercise destined to avenge past offences to increasingly becoming a commercial enterprise destined to capture and negotiate tribal enemies into slavery. The captives ceased to be regarded as warriors and became commodities. The enslavement of women and children (used for planting and harvesting) represented a sharp break with pre-colonial patterns of captivity where the majority of captives taken in battle were male warriors. The participation of Brazilian Indians in the bandeiras turned them into both victims and agents of their own objectification as well as victims and agents in the colonisation and formation of Brazil.

The natives brought into colonial society as slaves or under any other form of control tried to carve their own space in the colonial economy. The modest markets that developed in the colonial settlements provided opportunities for artisans, traders and producers (Monteiro 1994: 170-175). The participation of natives in these markets was always conditioned by the constraints of the slave regime and the direct regulation of the authorities. Like the Afro-Brazilians, the Brazilian Indians often escaped from their masters. However, the limited options to find life outside slavery led them to seek or end up under the control of another master, turning flight into little more than a form of redistribution of labour (Monteiro 1994: 121-124). The resistant adaptation of the Brazilian Indians to life in slavery was also combined with frequent and open rebellion. The 1650s witnessed a series of violent revolts that challenged the viability of indigenous slavery in central Brazil. The same decade marked also the beginning of the Guerra dos Bárbaros, a conflict that saw the massacre of the indigenous peoples of

the Northeast and that exemplifies the bloody picture that was the conquest of the Brazilian Indians (Hemming 1978: 345-376).

The importance of Indian slavery in colonial Brazil did not go unnoticed amongst contemporary authors. However, even then there was a tendency to identify slavery and blackness. This tendency can be seen in the reference to indigenous slaves as *negros da terra* [literally: blacks of the land] in contrast to the *negros de Guiné* [blacks from Guinea], as the slaves from Africa were often referred to in colonial Brazil. This tendency can also be seen in the indifferent use of the expression *negros de ganho* and *escravos de ganho* and *negros de aluguel* and *escravos de aluguel* to refer to self-employed slaves and slaves hired out by their masters, respectively. The identification of slavery and blackness was based on existing prejudices that considered Africans inferior beings, fit only for life in slavery or a savage existence in Africa. The inferiority and lack of civility that justified their enslavement was linked to their colour. The discourse of blackness turned colour into the pillar of slavery in Brazil (Vainfas 1986: 35).

The identification of Brazilian slavery with African slavery has profound consequences on the definition of the Brazilian nation. Firstly, it contributes to the popularity of the idyllic representation of the contacts between natives and settlers in Portuguese America. The implication of this misconception is especially significant given the heroic status of the *bandeirantes* —the driving agents of indigenous slavery— and their centrality in the formulation of Brazil(ianness). Secondly, it fails to recognise the participation of the indigenous population in the economic development and material construction of Brazil. In short, the silence over Indian slavery denies Brazilian Indians their role as subjects (both victims and agents) in the historical formation of Brazil.

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In sum, slaves were not passive victims of slavery but *active subjects* who sought the best options for living their lives as human beings. Their active participation in colonial life attests to their place as subjects and agents in the historical process

that led to the formation of Brazil. However, their treatment and representation as objects has fundamentally framed their place in the formulation of Brazil(ianness). In particular, the identification of slavery with blackness has forever contributed to the objectification of Afro-Brazilians.

Manumission: Dependence and the Learning of Deference

Slavery was not the only possible condition of nonwhites in colonial Brazil. Indeed, the colony boasted a large free population of nonwhites, especially from the 18th century onwards. The large number of free blacks and mulattos reflected the greater access to freedom accorded to slaves in Brazil, which came about through the practice of manumission: the freeing of slaves by their masters. In fact, manumission is the crucial piece that completes the picture of Brazilian slavery: if adaptation and negotiation worked *within* slavery, and rebellion meant opting *out* of slavery, manumission was located *between* slavery and freedom. The analysis of the practice and process of manumission is crucial to understand the slave-holding mentality, but also the character (i.e. the ideological and socio-economic foundations) of Brazilian Abolition, and its significant role in the (re)production of white hegemony in Brazil.

Deference and Dependence. The relative frequency of manumission in Brazil has been linked to the legal, religious and patriarchal traditions of the Iberian Peninsula, and more specifically of Portugal. The origin of this interpretation dates from the publication of Gilberto Freyre's *Casa-Grande & Senzala* (1933). Freyre argued that manumission reflected the personal and religious sentiments and the lack of racial prejudice of the Portuguese and their Brazilian descendants. These sentiments and traditions would explain the relatively mild and humane nature of slavery in Brazil. Freyre's work inspired Frank Tannenbaum to compare favourably the slave regimes of Spanish and Portuguese America with that of English America. Tannenbaum argued that access to manumission had turned

slavery into 'a matter of *financial competence* on the part of the slave, and by that fact lost a great part of the degrading imputation that attached to slavery where it was looked upon as evidence of moral or biological inferiority' ([1946]1992: 56) [italics mine]. This portrait of slavery in Latin America as a relatively benign form of human bondage would influence a whole generation of studies of slavery in the Americas.

There is good evidence to suggest that manumission was more frequent in Latin America than in English America (Davis 1966: 227-243; Degler [1971]1986: 39-47). Official estimates indicate that '[t]he proportion of free blacks and mulattos in Brazil reached 74 percent by 1872, and they accounted for 44 percent of the total population' (Graham 1990: 26). However, it is not the number of manumitted slaves but the motivations and functions of manumission that are crucial to assess its meaning and impact in Brazil. In this sense, recent studies have shown that the same evidence that points to the relative frequency of manumission in Brazil also indicates that morality and the humanity of the slaves were not important considerations when it came to freeing a slave. Instead, manumissions were almost invariably shaped by the self-interested motives of the masters—with the majority of manumissions granted in exchange for money (Kiernan 1976; Mattoso [1979]1986: 155-176). Indeed, the letter of manumission [*carta de alforria*] was usually a commercial document and rarely a record of generosity.

The notion of manumission as philanthropy—as a gift or act of generosity of the masters towards the slaves—gained ground in the 19th century. In this period, slave-owners increasingly adopted the fashion of liberating selected slaves on special occasions such as birthdays, religious festivities, national holidays, or some personal success: 'manumission became a kind of *ex voto*, an act of piety, of gratitude, of edification' (Mattoso [1979]1986: 173). However, the occasion often obscured the real motive of the manumission: getting rid of slaves that were a burden, such as aged and sick slaves, or simply slaves whose services were no longer needed (Degler [1971]1986: 43-44).

Masters rarely sold slaves who were productive unless special circumstances forced them to do just that. The number of manumissions increased

during periods of economic decline, such as the crisis of sugar in the Northeast in the 17th century, and the crisis of mining in the Centre and South in the 19th century (Degler [1971]1986: 44-45). The increase in the number of manumissions in the 1867 and 1868 came as a result of the government's willingness to buy the freedom of slaves who agreed to serve in the war against Paraguay. Many citizens called to military service opted for freeing slaves to enlist them as substitutes (Chalhoub 1989: 65). Manumission was also used to cash-in the slaves in the years leading to the abolition of slavery. In other words, manumission, more often than not, functioned as a relief mechanism for the economic and personal interests of slave-owners. The fact that slave-owners did not free their most profitable slaves (i.e. adult productive males) confirms 'the bias of the society was *not* in favour of manumission' (Karasch 1987: 361).

Indeed, the key to interpret this practice is the fact that manumission was a *prerogative of the masters*, not a right of the slaves. The mistaken belief that slaves had a legal right to freedom if they could indemnify their masters with a sum equivalent to their market-price is behind the misguided but influential analysis of slavery in Portuguese America produced by Tannenbaum. Manumission through self-purchase, at best, could be considered 'a customary right blacks had wrested from their masters' (Chalhoub 1989: 70-71), one that only became law in 1871. Prior to that date, slaves had to gain the appreciation of their masters through obedience and good service and hope that this would persuade the master to grant them freedom or to allow them the opportunity to purchase their own freedom. Moreover, the master had the right to allow or refuse the possibility of slaves to amass personal savings, and thus controlled the access of slaves to their self-purchase. Masters usually permitted slaves to keep whatever property they gathered, but no law guaranteed slaves ownership of property or savings until a few years before abolition (Degler [1971]1986: 42). Finally, masters set the terms of manumission: the amount (if any) of cash payments, the number (if any) of additional years of service, and whether manumission would be effective immediately or only after the death of the owner or other member(s) of the family (Higgins 1997).

As it happened, letters of manumission often included conditions that delayed or restricted the freedom of manumitted slaves [*escravos forros*], creating a situation of legal freedom under continued bondage. In fact, freedom was always conditional since manumission could be revoked if the manumitted slave failed to show respect and gratitude to their former masters. In fact, 'the law even provided that manumission could be revoked for such acts of ingratitude as hurling insults at the former master' (Graham 1990: 27). The permanent threat of re-enslavement prevented manumitted slaves from criticising or acting against their former masters and, more importantly, ensured that they knew their (subordinate) place in (free) society.

The precarious nature of legal freedom can also be inferred from the large number of appeals to the monarch prompted by the controversies surrounding the status of manumission and freedom in colonial Brazil (Russell-Wood 2000: 316-317). Slaves were always at a disadvantage before the law in case of disputes. Moreover, 'slaves who entered into negotiations for self-purchase often found themselves at the mercy of unscrupulous slaveowners' (Schwartz 1974: 625). In fact, the legal status of manumitted slaves remained ambiguous until the abolition of slavery in 1888 (Karasch 1987: 632-365). In essence, manumission was a 'mirage of freedom' (Mattoso [1979]1986: 177), but also a technique of social control that helped to establish and preserve white hegemony in Brazil.

The fact that masters were under no obligation to free their slaves meant that even when these had purchased their freedom there was still the perception (at least amongst masters) that freedom was a gift (something given to the slave) rather than a right (something owed to and earned by the slave). The gift required gratitude, and since freedom had (at least in theory) no price, the debt of gratitude could never be fully repaid. In sum, manumission demanded eternal gratitude and, implicitly, eternal subordination. This state of affairs was in place until 1871, when manumission became a right of the slave, and its revocation on grounds of ingratitude or disrespect was declared illegal (Degler [1971]1986: 41). The law of 1871 also recognised the right of slaves to personal savings. However, slaves could only save money derived from their work with the consent of the master.

This condition preserved the need for obedience and deference since it would be hard for most slaves to amass a sum sufficient to purchase their freedom exclusively from donations, legacies and inheritances.

The deferential behaviour of slaves towards their masters that could earn them the chance to obtain (and retain) freedom led many to believe that slaves were more content with their status in Brazil than in other parts of the Americas. This belief ignored the behavioural constraints produced by the *need for deference* but also by the *structural dependence* that tied large groups of the population, especially the poor and the propertyless, to the (white) men of property (Franco 1983). In this context, given that most slaves had no trade, no legacy or any other form of support, manumitted slaves often chose to continue to live as *dependent subjects* under the protection of their former masters (Karasch 1987: 362-367).

The price of real freedom for most slaves was isolation and little prospects of a decent life, not to mention the permanent threat of re-enslavement. In fact, the free status of all blacks and mulattos was generally tenuous while slavery remained legal in Brazil (Conrad 1974: 157). The identification of blackness with slavery meant that blacks risked (re)enslavement or imprisonment on suspicion of being fugitive slaves if they moved to a place where their status was unknown. Thus, for example, '[i]n Pernambuco vagrant blacks unable to give a good account of themselves could be legally enslaved' (Conrad 1974: 158). Moreover, moving to another place would almost certainly mean having to leave behind family and friends still in slavery. In the end, dependency in company seemed preferable to freedom in isolation and uncertainty. This complex web of relations of dependence limited the physical mobility of manumitted slaves and conspired to keep them under the gaze of their former masters and to structure their subordinate integration into Brazilian society.

Mobility and Whitening. Manumission offered opportunities for social mobility but these were limited to occupations for which slave labour was inadequate (such as overseers) and for which not enough whites were available (such as soldiers) (Harris 1964: 86-89). Moreover, opportunities for social mobility were

always confined to individuals, while restrictions extended to whole groups on the basis of colour. The legislation, for example, barred blacks and mulattos [*gente de cor*] from holding certain offices, including all positions of authority. In particular, they were excluded from positions in the government, the religious hierarchy, and the judiciary. These restrictions were more severe in the case of manumitted slaves (Mattoso [1979]1986: 151-212).

The demographic increase in the number of free and freed blacks and mulattos did not result in any significant improvement in their legal position, social status, or living conditions in Brazilian society (Russell-Wood 1982: 49). Afro-Brazilians were always seen through the narrow lens of slavery, and treated accordingly: as slaves or ex-slaves. Nevertheless, manumission allowed manumitted slaves to gain some sense of pride and purpose. Slaves were well aware that being freed [*liberto*] was not the same as being free [*livre*]—let alone the same as being equal— but they still preferred manumission to slavery, if only because their freedom, no matter how restricted, would mean that their offspring would not be born in slavery. The willingness of slaves to accumulate capital and make great sacrifices for themselves and their loved ones is a clear comment on the nature of slavery and freedom. In essence, their perception was that the burden of freedom was better than the burden of slavery (Schwartz 1974: 630-631). Moreover, the ability of slaves to amass capital shows their ability to operate in the colonial and imperial economy, and reiterates their place as agents in (not just as objects of) slavery. Still, this should not obscure the fact that both slavery and freedom were underpinned by social and ideological structures operated by the white (slave-holding) elites of Brazil.

Indeed, manumission acted as a crucial mechanism to relieve social tension and thus to reinforce the grip of the white elites on Brazilian society. The hope of freedom, no matter how remote or restricted, was an incentive to loyalty and obedience on the part of the slave population. The slaves had something to win and thus something to lose. If anything, the imperatives of humility, obedience and fidelity on the part of manumitted slaves were stronger than they had been during their time in slavery. On a more general level, manumission reduced some

of the pressure of abolition(ism) since the perception was that there was already a way out of slavery: loyalty and hard work.

The notion that manumission was a sign of racial tolerance or of a less exacting racism on the part of slave-owners is another myth. Manumission was shaped by colour (racism) as well as culture (ethnocentrism). There is substantial evidence of the preference to manumit mulattos [*pardos*] over blacks [*prêtos*] (Schwartz 1974: 612-624); something that provided them an *escape hatch* from slavery and a chance to move up the social ladder—as theorised by Carl Degler. This preference could be explained partly by the fact that these slaves were *crioulos* [Brazilian-born], and often the product of master-slave relationships (Higgins 1997: 12). However, the preference for mulattos did not signal the lack or elimination of racial prejudices. Not only was there a colour line demarcating by law the limits to the upward mobility of nonwhites, but their actual mobility followed a colour line of succession. In fact, their social mobility was determined by several physical traits: ‘light-colored people had better chances than dark; straight hair was more favorable than kinky; and aquiline nose was better than a broad flat one’ (Bastide 1978: 75). The relation between physical traits and social mobility translated into the aspiration of wealthy mulattos to marry white or whiter women. In other words, the general tendency was to combine upward social mobility with the ‘purification of the blood’ (Mattoso [1979]1986: 109).

The process of whitening was not merely biological but also cultural. The chance of manumission was greater for those who renounced their African heritage: ‘A rise on the social ladder—noted Roger Bastide— could be achieved only by espousing European values and ideals’ (1978: 74). Thus, those Afro-Brazilians who aspired to assimilate adopted a lifestyle as similar as possible to that of the Luso-Brazilians. The only course of action opened to them was purification, to erase the stain of their African origin (Mattoso [1979]1986: 199). However, their colour prevailed over their cultural efforts, and they were ‘always rejected by the white society and thrown back onto the black community’ (Mattoso [1979]1986: 92). Yet, their efforts to please or act like whites (Mattoso [1979]1986: 207), contributed to consolidate white (and Eurocentric) hegemony in

Brazil and the ideology of whitening that still defines social and cultural dynamics in contemporary Brazil.

The Other Dependence. The situation of the Brazilian Indians was similar but not identical to that of the Afro-Brazilians. Manumission was not the only form of structural dependence affecting the indigenous population of Brazil. Brazilian Indians were also subjected to a specific regime located between slavery and freedom, known as private administration [*administração particular*] (Monteiro 1994: 129-153). This regime gave colonists the right to appropriate native labour in exchange for protection and education. Private administration was based on the notion that Portuguese colonisation had brought a superior economy (Capitalism) and a superior religion (Catholicism) to this part of the Americas. The notion that Brazilian Indians lacked a rational mode of production effectively acted as a principle of *terra nullius*, justifying the appropriation and exploitation of their land. Similarly, the notion that they lacked religion and civilisation justified their acculturation and tutelage, first by the Jesuits and later by the State.

The combination of paternalism and ethnocentrism enabled the reproduction of relations of slavery and dependency between settlers and natives under a discourse of freedom and protection. Those under private administration [the so-called *administrados*] had a value placed on the services they provided but, unlike slaves, not on their person, since that would contravene legislation protecting their freedom (Nizza da Silva 1998: 183). The distinction, however, was merely nominal. The *administrados* were disposed of as private property. They were inherited, given as dowry, treated as credit, and negotiated between colonists. Jacob Gorender noted quite correctly that the regime of private administration was a form of 'incomplete slavery' that gradually acquired the attributes of 'complete slavery' (1980: 476-478). Indeed, colonists seldom referred to free Indians as *livre* (free) but *forro* (freed) —thus implying that their natural condition was servile or slavery. The existence of legislation protecting the freedom of the Brazilian Indians made little difference. In case of disputes

between natives and settlers, the right of *property* invariably prevailed over the right of freedom (Monteiro 1994: 216).

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In sum, the practice of manumission and the regime of private administration facilitated the gradual integration of Afro-Brazilians and Brazilian Indians into Brazilian society, but they did so under conditions of dependency and subordination that (re)produced white hegemony and Eurocentrism. On the one hand, private administration was based on the notion that Indians could not rise beyond the status of dependent subjects: minors or adolescents in need of tutelage. On the other hand, manumission institutionalised a regime of deference and dependence that treated manumitted slaves, and by extension all people of African descent, as ex-slaves rather than citizens. This production of the Others as dependent subjects served to project their inferiority and subordination *beyond* the Abolition: Brazilian Indians as Minors and Afro-Brazilians as (former) Slaves.

The First Abolition(ism): Freedom under Tutelage

In Brazil, abolition is synonymous with the abolition of African slavery in 1888. This ignores the first abolition, that of Indian slavery in 1758. This omission is another effect of the identification of Brazilian slavery with African slavery in the Brazilian imagination; one that ignores the colonial roots of abolitionism and its historical complicity with the colonial project in Brazil. This section examines the kind of freedom brought about by Abolition(ism) to the Brazilian Indians. In the process of doing so, it reveals the colonial roots of Brazilian Abolition(ism) and its complicity with the colonisation of the Indian Other. More specifically, it reveals its complicity in the dependent and subordinate integration of the Indian Other into Brazilian society, and its centrality in the (re)production of white hegemony in the formation and formulation of Brazil(ianness).

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The first case against slavery in Brazil was put forward by the Society of Jesus—the most powerful religious presence in Portuguese America. Their partial calls for abolition were restricted to the enslavement of Brazilian Indians. Their argument was that the evangelisation of the indigenous population was impossible unless they were protected from slavery and other abuses. Thus, the Jesuits asked that all natives taken from the interior [*descidos*] be brought into their mission-villages [*aldeamentos*]. They would then educate the natives and make them available to the settlers, albeit for a fee. The settlers complained that the Jesuits used the natives for their own benefit and demanded the destruction of the mission-villages and the distribution of the natives. They argued that only slavery could provide the kind of disciplined and stable labour force required for the economic development of the colony.

The Portuguese Crown was constantly brought into the conflict between settlers and Jesuits. The Crown could not ignore the demands of the colonists nor could they ignore the complaints of the Jesuits. While the economic development of the colony was essential for its effective occupation, the legitimacy of the Portuguese colonisation of Brazil relied heavily on papal doctrine and the expansionist vocation of the Roman Catholic Church. The tug-of-war between settlers and missionaries resulted in a tangle of ambiguous and often contradictory legislation that granted little real protection to the Brazilian Indians (Hemming 1978).

The enforcement of the legislation followed a similar pattern. On some occasions, especially when the Crown took direct action in a particular case, the law was usually interpreted in a manner favourable to the interests of the Jesuits (and occasionally even the Indians). However, the law was usually administered by the local colonial authorities, who gave priority to ‘the use and custom of the land’—a euphemism for the practice of slavery. The resolutions of the municipal councils [*camaras municipais*] invariably favoured the interests of the settlers, who

controlled them (Monteiro 1994: 136-141). In essence, the legal exceptions and the permanent violation of protective measures made a mockery of the several declarations proclaiming the complete freedom of the Brazilian Indians.

The dispute between settlers and Jesuits is usually considered to be about the *freedom* of the Brazilian Indians. The real dispute, however, was over their control and management, that is, over who should manage their incorporation into colonial society. The settlers argued the Indians should be brought into the plantations and placed under their administration. The Jesuits argued that they should be brought into the mission-villages and placed under their jurisdiction. The theory behind the mission-villages was to conciliate the general principle of native freedom with the objectives of colonisation: the pacification and evangelisation of the natives, and the settlement and development of the colony (Monteiro 1994: 44). Indeed, the establishment of mission-villages in the vicinity of the coastal settlements became essential for the Portuguese colonisation of Brazil. The mission-villages failed to provide the settlers with the abundant labour they increasingly demanded but served to occupy the land and to reinforce the vassalage of the Brazilian Indians. This paradoxical formulation of *peace as subjugation* and *freedom as (productive) confinement* would come to define the incorporation of Brazilian Indians during and beyond colonial Brazil.

The similarities did not stop there. Settlers and Jesuits saw the natives as *partial* beings: the settlers saw them as bodies; the missionaries saw them (mainly) as souls. Similarly, both saw the natives as *potential* rather than actual beings: the settlers saw them as potential labourers; the missionaries saw them (mainly) as potential Christians. Settlers and Jesuits shared the same notion of the 'good Indian': pious, docile, disciplined, and hard-working. There was no dispute either over the need for natives to participate in the colonial economy. The Jesuits were themselves land-owners and required labour to work their plantations. Thus, there was little dispute over the morality of slavery. Instead, the dispute was mostly over the legality of slavery —with the Jesuits demanding a stop to illegal raids and asking that all slaves illegally captured be freed and placed under their

jurisdiction. In essence, the preoccupation of the Jesuits was the *arbitrary* enslavement of the Indians.

Antônio Vieira, the most vocal defender of the Brazilian Indians, condemned their enslavement in eloquent words: 'What a cheap market! An Indian for a soul! That Indian will be your slave for the few days that he lives; but your soul will be enslaved for eternity, as long as God is God' (Cited in Hemming 1978: 319). Vieira noticed the abusive use that colonists made of the practice of *resgate* [literally, rescue: but meaning the purchase of captives from their tribal enemies] and the principle of just war (which allowed the capture of enemies during so-called defensive wars). Yet, he fell short of advocating abolition, asking instead that settlers free illegal slaves and stop illegal slaving. The advantage would be 'that you will have a clear conscience and will remove this curse from your homes' (Cited in Hemming 1978: 319). The emerging equation between legality and self-serving morality regarding the enslavement and liberation of the Brazilian Indians anticipates a central feature of abolitionism in Brazil.

The dispute between settlers and missionaries was largely inconsequential to the Brazilian Indians. The difference between slavery in the plantations and freedom in the mission-villages was largely nominal. The politics of confinement [*aldeamento*] defined freedom as a combination of domestication and productivity. Brazilian Indians were invariably expected to fulfil the material needs of settlers and Jesuits. In a famous sermon, Vieira argued that his proposals for the better relations between settlers and natives would in fact guarantee that *all* Brazilian Indians (i.e. captives, semi-captives, and free) would serve the Portuguese (Cited in Cidade 1985: 54). In the end, the *Lei de Administração dos Índios* [Law of the Administration of the Indians] (1694) signalled the capitulation of the missions to the interests of the settlers, with the inestimable support of Jesuits like Jorge Benci and João Antonil (Bosi 1992: 152-154). But the dispute over the management of the Brazilian Indians continued until the expulsion of the Jesuits in 1759.

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Indian slavery was finally abolished on the 17th of August 1758, with the enactment of the *Diretório dos Índios* [Directory of the Indians].¹⁶ The document was a comprehensive piece of legislation which decreed, amongst its significant aspects: a) the punishment of insults (including the reference to them as ‘negros’) and discrimination against Indians; b) the granting of honours and privileges to those who married Indian women; c) the restoration of freedom to the Brazilian Indians; and d) the stripping of the temporal power the Jesuits had over the Brazilian Indians. However, the abolition of native slavery did not entail the freedom of the Brazilian Indians. Instead, the Directory redefined them as objects and instruments for the Portuguese colonisation of Brazil. The Directory was designed to promote the creation of a stable and large labour force that would fuel the economic development of the interior of Brazil (Almeida 1997: 195), as well as to promote population growth and alliances that would secure the effective occupation of the interior of Portuguese America. In order to guarantee the provision of labour, the Directory envisaged a regime of labour designed to compel ‘idle natives’ to work for a low salary. This and other forms of forced labour or ‘incomplete slavery’ survived the declaration of abolition and reached well in the 20th century (Gorender 1985: 473-476).

The Directory marked the continuation of the colonial project in relation to Brazilian Indians. The first part (paragraphs 1-16) defined the natives as minors, unable to deal autonomously with the civilisation brought by the settlers, and placed them under the tutelage [*tutela*] of civil authorities: *diretores* [directors]. The directors were to mediate in any commercial transaction between whites and natives in order to prevent abuse —given the ‘ambition and knowledge’ of the settlers and the ‘lack of interest and ignorance’ of the natives (paragraph 39). Natives were not to be paid in cash. Instead, directors should use the money earned by the natives to buy for them those utensils and things they most needed (paragraph 58). The assumption was that directors knew better than the natives what their real needs were, and that the natives were unable to make intelligent

¹⁶ The edition of the *Diretório dos Índios* used here is the facsimile of the original text published in Lisbon 1785 and included in Rita Heloísa de Almeida's study *O Diretório dos Índios* (1997).

use of money. In short, the new regime defined the relations between (white) settlers and natives in secular (and chiefly economic) terms without altering their essence: the *dependence* and *subordination* of the Brazilian Indians to the security and prosperity of colonial Brazil.

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The concept of tutelage survived the demise of the Directory in 1798. The subordination of the Brazilian Indians to the State continued during the 19th century. In the 20th century, a new institution was created specifically to 'protect' the Brazilian Indians, the *Serviço de Proteção aos Índios* [SPI: Indian Protection Service]. The SPI was inspired by the secular ethics of Positivism, and regulated the relations between settlers and natives between 1910 and 1967. Its main principle of action was the so-called *pacification* of the Brazilian Indians. This entailed the establishment of a more conciliatory contact with the Indians, and their gentle incorporation, as national workers, into Brazilian society. This process was part of the overall ideology of *trabalhismo* [work ethic] that informed the socio-economic policy of the *Estado Novo* [New State] from the 1930s, and that sought to 'interest the indigenous in the cultivation of the soil, so that they become useful to the country and can collaborate with the civilised populations dedicated to the agricultural activities' (Decree from November 1939, cited in Lima 1995: 286). The same emphasis on the (dependent) economic integration of the Indian into the national economy has continued under the institution that replaced the SPI in 1967, the *Fundação Nacional do Índio* [FUNAI: National Indian Foundation]. In the expert assessment of Alcida Ramos: 'what FUNAI has done to perfection, following in the footsteps to the late SPI, is to bring indigenous peoples into *total dependence* on either the state or religious missions' (1998: 157) [italics mine].

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In sum, there is a clear continuity in the project of integration of the Brazilian Indians into Brazilian society that begins early in the colonial period and extends into 21st century Brazil. The common element to this project of colonisation—subsequently redefined as nationalisation—of the Indian Other has been the concept of *tutelage*, and its operation as an instrument of dependence, constructing the Indian as a dependent subject, when not a mere Object. This formulation dates back to the early 16th century, when the Jesuits defined freedom as productive confinement, demanding the internment of the natives into their mission-villages, where they would be integrated into the productive economy of the colony and brought into the world of Christianity. The secular regimes of tutelage—articulated in terms of freedom and protection—have given continuity to the colonial project and have consolidated the subordinate position of the Brazilian Indians in the formation and formulation of Brazil(ianness).

From Prophets to Profits: The Secularisation of Abolition(ism)

The Jesuit defence of the Indians—with all its caveats and limitations—was not paralleled by any equivalent sympathy for the Africans. Indeed, the Jesuit narratives were a source of legitimisation of African slavery in colonial Brazil. Settlers and missionaries, legislators and theologians, all agreed on the legitimacy of enslaving Africans. Yet the fact that the Jesuits condemned the poor treatment of black slaves is often taken as an early expression or precedent of Brazilian Abolitionism. This section examines the Jesuit narratives on black slavery to establish in what way they prefigured Brazilian Abolition(ism).

The enslavement of Africans was considered essential for the development of Portuguese America and the evangelisation of the Brazilian Indians. Manoel da Nóbrega, the chief religious figure in 16th century Brazil, wrote to the head of the Society of Jesus, father Diego Laynes, that ‘the Society should have and justly purchase, by the means allowed by the Constitution, as many slaves as possible

for our Schools and Houses for Children' (1955: 391-392 [1561]). The possession of slaves, he argued, was essential if the fathers were to have enough time and resources to carry out their mission amongst the Brazilian Indians. The answer from Rome was to approve the possession of slaves under the condition that they were legally acquired and possessed (Laynes, cited in Nóbrega 1955: 514 [1562]).

Not all Jesuits in Brazil agreed with the official position of the Society. Luís da Gra, for example, argued for a mission based on poverty and sacrifice, opposing not only the ownership of slaves but of material possessions in general. Miguel Garcia and Gonçalo Leite argued publicly against the possession of slaves by the Jesuits. However, in the end, Nóbrega prevailed and those who dared to criticise the possession of slaves were marginalised and sent back to Portugal. It was only in the 17th century that the Jesuits began to openly criticise the enslavement of Africans. Their views would come to be regarded as precedents of Abolitionism in Brazil.

The first notorious critic of black slavery in Portuguese America was the Jesuit Antônio Vieira —the chief religious figure in 17th century Brazil. Vieira approached the topic of slavery with the vehemence of a radical abolitionist, telling slave-owners: 'All of you are in mortal sin; all of you live in a state of condemnation; and all of you are going directly to Hell! (Cited in Hemming 1978: 319). In similar and typically emphatic fashion, he condemned the immorality of the slave trade: 'Oh inhuman traffic in which men are the merchandise! Oh diabolical traffic in which profits are extracted from alien souls at the risk of our own' (Cited in Cidade 1985: 141). In another of his many famous sermons, Vieira denounced the abuses and brutality inflicted upon black slaves in the 'sweet hell' of the sugar plantations and urged masters to treat their slaves with humanity (Cited in Cidade 1985: 23).

Vieira's sermons have been used to proclaim him the 'first modern abolitionist' (Graieb 2001: 126). His criticism of slavery, however, did not make him an abolitionist. To begin with, his sermons were more concerned with the enslavement of Indians than Africans. In fact, he considered slavery instrumental in the salvation of Africans. The notion that their enslavement was a pious act that

enabled the salvation of their souls was already present in the classic account of the Portuguese expansion down the Atlantic coast of Africa, the *Crónica de Guiné* (c.1453) by Eanes de Zurara. In similar fashion, Vieira theorised the slave trade as a 'great miracle' that enabled the 'transmigration' of millions of pagans across the Atlantic and their salvation through their incorporation to Catholic Brazil (Cited in Alencastro 2000a: 63). He went as far as preaching to the slaves that the agent responsible for this 'great miracle' was Our Lady of the Rosary —the saint patron of the black brotherhoods in Portuguese America. Vieira encouraged the slaves to obey and serve their masters 'not as one who serves men but as one who serves God' (Cited in Mattoso [1979]1986: 100). This attitude would turn them from captives into free men, from slaves into sons of God. Their bodies would remain captive but their souls would be free. Vieira told the slaves they should endure their sufferings —their Calvary of fatigue, hunger and wounds— with patience, following the example of Christ. Their imitation of Christ would bring them the reward of martyrdom: eternal freedom (Conrad 1983: 163-174).

Vieira's sermons are the most eloquent expression of the doctrine of the Roman Catholic Church on black slavery —one that advocated obedience, hard work and asceticism for the slaves, and asked moderation and compassion from the masters. The importance of his sermons, however, lies not so much on the insight they offer into the Catholic view of African slavery, but on the repercussions they had in the theorisation of black slavery in Brazil. On the one hand, his sermons provided the most cohesive and forceful discourse on the legitimisation of slavery and the slave trade by presenting these as essential to the evangelisation of the Other, an aspect central to the Portuguese expansion for Africa, Asia and America. On the other hand, his open and fierce condemnation of the treatment of black slaves inspired, or at least prefigured, the formulation of a series of projects seeking to improve the conditions of black slavery in Brazil.

The first systematic formulation for the reform of slavery was Jorge Benci's *Economia Cristá dos Senhores no Governo dos Escravos* (1705). Benci defined slavery in terms of a Christian family, where both masters and slaves should be, and behave like, good Christians (Vainfas 1986: 114). This meant that good masters

were to act as father figures —as well as employers, judges and ministers. Their responsibilities toward their slaves were similar to those of a father towards a son: the provision of food, shelter, and clothes, alongside a work ethic and discipline. As Christian fathers, they also had to provide slaves with a basic understanding of Catholicism. Last but not least, good Christian masters should always act as reasonable beings, that is, with moderation. The idea of slavery in this work is still largely defined by morality and the concept of sin. However, the strong presence of economics, illustrated in the title, announces the *ideological inflection* in the discourse of black slavery in colonial Brazil, theorised by Ronaldo Vainfas in *Ideologia e Escravidão* (1986).

The paradigm shift in the colonial discourse on slavery came with the work of the Jesuit André João Antonil, *Cultura e Opulência do Brasil* (1711). The treatment of slavery in this work is similar to that of Jorge Benci. Antonil elaborates a manual of good governance following the popular formula that masters should provide bread, clothing, and the rod [*pau, pan e pano*]. He also referred to the need to provide the slaves with basic religious instruction. However, Antonil showed little interest in the salvation of masters (unlike Benci) or slaves (unlike Vieira). Instead, his chief concern was purely secular, and more precisely, economic: the economy replaced morality, productivity replaced salvation. The centrality of productivity in his discourse on slavery led Alfredo Bosi to proclaim Antonil the ‘first economist’ of Brazil (1992: 157). Indeed, the norms he set for masters were directed toward the best *management* of the slaves, as well as of other possessions and people under their authority. Thus, for example, whereas Benci considers the death of a slave due to excessive workload or excessive punishment a *sin of the master*, Antonil sees that same death as *prejudicial for the master*. He views the moderate treatment of the slaves as a form of investment that can lead to the reproduction of slaves and the subsequent saving on the purchase of new slaves (Antonil [1711]1982: 92).

This turn from morality to utility is also evident in Manuel Ribeiro Rocha's *Ethiope resgatado, empenhado, sustentado, corregido, instruido e libertado* (1758) [The Rescued, Indentured, Sustained, Reformed, Educated and Emancipated

Ethiopian]. Rocha condemned the excessive punishment of slaves, proposed the prohibition of the most barbarous punishments, and advocated the liberation of African slaves in Brazil. The talk of liberation has led historians to consider this work the first abolitionist text to come out of Brazil, and to refer to Rocha as the patriarch of Brazilian abolitionism. However, the emphasis on the *final* condition of the slave (*libertado*: freed) disregards the fact that the crucial concept in this work is the *initial* condition of the slave (*resgatado*: rescued). The author, far from advocating the abolition of slavery, justifies the (albeit temporary) enslavement of Africans as a double rescue: from death at the hands of their captors and from the barbarism of life in Africa.

Rocha's chief concern was the legality of slavery. His basic premise was that most African captives were held illegally and unjustly. Africa was a place of barbarism and savagery, and anything originating there was inherently viced by injustice and illegality. This reasoning enabled him to interpret the purchase of African captives by the Brazilian colonists in terms of rescue and salvation. Their purchase saved their bodies (from certain death) and their souls (from eternal damnation). This entitled the buyers (as rescuers) to some form of compensation. He proposed that those rescued work as slaves for a period of time between five and twenty years, depending on the circumstances, and then be freed. He also put forward the notion of the free womb [*ventre libre*]: that the sons of slaves be born free [*ingênuos*]. However, they would have to serve their mothers' owners until they reached twenty-five, in recognition of the benefit granted to them.

The emancipation of slaves in these terms fitted perfectly with the concept of manumission and its corollaries of deference and dependency. Slaves liberated under this scheme would be like manumitted slaves, owing respect and gratitude to their former masters. Indeed, Rocha expressed the hope that liberation would entice ex-slaves to stay with their masters and serve them better than they had done as slaves ([1758]1992: 145). This would also be helped by the masters fulfilling their basic obligations towards the slaves: sustenance, discipline, and instruction. In essence, the scheme advocated by Rocha sought not to prejudice but to improve the slave economy of colonial Brazil.

In essence, the Jesuit position on slavery was compromised by their support for the Portuguese colonisation of Brazil and by their desire to evangelise the Brazilian Indians. These two objectives, they argued, were best served by the continuous importation and enslavement of Africans. The Society of Jesus accepted their enslavement as part and parcel of their insertion into the colonial project. The work of Vieira, Benci, Antonil, and Rocha shows the general concern of the Jesuits with the *conditions* of black slavery in colonial Brazil. Their protests over the cruel treatment of black slaves found some echo in the colonial legislation. The Crown made some efforts to prohibit extreme forms of corporal punishment, passing edicts in 1688, 1698 and 1714. The treatment of black slaves, however, did not improve appreciably during the 18th century. The great majority of the population considered 'an article of faith that the black man was born to serve the white, and that the latter could do what he liked with his own' (Boxer 1963: 110-111). On the whole, only the provisions coinciding with the popular attitudes toward slavery and with the interests of powerful social groups had any chance to be implemented.

The Jesuits' pleas for a better treatment of black slaves were part of a program of social reform that saw the violent treatment of slaves as a danger to the economy—in terms of morality (in Benci), prosperity (in Antonil), or legality (in Rocha). The solution was not abolition but the amelioration of the conditions of slavery. The work of these Jesuits tried to make slavery more tolerable for the slaves and more profitable for the masters. Their work signalled a gradual shift from religion to economics, from humanism to mercantilism, from morality to utility, in the approach to black slavery—a shift that would inform Abolition(ism) in Brazil. In particular, their work prefigured the legalism and economic rationalism that shaped, to a large extent, Abolition(ism) in 19th century Brazil.

(White) Reason(s) or the Fears of the Enlightened Elite

The institution of slavery began to suffer direct attacks from the slaves in the second half of the 18th century. The spread of the ideas of liberty and equality amongst the slaves and the free blacks and mulattos threatened the social (and racial) order of Portuguese America. The notion of social equality in a society where whites constituted only a third of the population but controlled most of the power and wealth would inevitably be interpreted in racial terms. The continuation of black slavery in Brazil became particularly problematic after the Haitian Revolution of 1792. The spectre of *Haitianismo* (the fear of a Haitian-style revolution in Brazil) triggered a series of proposals on the abolition of slavery in Portuguese America, all of them informed by the authors of the Enlightenment (Rocha 2000). Their analysis reveals the (white) reasons behind the formulation of Abolition(ism) in colonial Brazil.

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The first of such proposals came from Luís dos Santos Vilhena, an enlightened colonist concerned with the negative effects of slavery in colonial society and worried by the prospect of slave revolution in Bahia. His thoughts were included in a series of letters published under the title of *Notícias Soteropolitanas e Brasileiras* (1802). Vilhena viewed the slaves as *enemies within*: a threat to the security and prosperity of Brazil. He advocated the gradual emancipation of the slaves under a regime of tutelage that would prevent the breakdown of social order and would teach the slaves how to live in freedom. He proposed the distribution of small plots of land amongst those without property, including the freed slaves. These measures were designed to diffuse the increasing tension between whites and blacks and compel freed slaves to work and identify with the land. The gradual abolition of slavery and the tutelage of freed slaves would transform black slaves from internal enemies into productive and grateful citizens.

The preoccupation with security and prosperity were not the only concerns of the colonial elite regarding black slavery in Brazil. José da Silva Lisboa expressed a point of view that was becoming increasingly popular: the fear of Brazil becoming a 'Negroland' (Cited in Maxwell 1973a: 228). This led him to propose the abolition of the slave trade and to advocate the arrival of migrants from Europe. Lisboa argued that the most advanced areas of America and Brazil, which he identified as the United States of America and São Paulo, respectively, owed their advancement to the preponderance of whites amongst their population. Therefore, the development and modernisation of Brazil required the whitening of the population through the arrival of Europeans.

The positions of Vilhena and Lisboa anticipate the debate between integration and immigration that would define Brazilian Abolition(ism) in the second half of the 19th century. Those in favour of black integration viewed black slavery as a *social* problem: the problem was *slavery*. They argued for the emancipation (gradual or immediate) of the slaves and their incorporation as free labour in Brazilian society. Those in favour of white immigration saw black slavery as a *racial* problem: the problem was *blackness*. They argued for the immigration of vast contingents of white migrants to gradually replace black slaves in their functions, and whiten the population of Brazil. The two positions constructed the black slave as the problem: the *enemy within*. The presence of black slaves threatened the safety and identity of Brazil. In essence, Brazilian Abolition(ism) would be shaped by a *double fear*: the Fear of Revolution and the Fear of Blackness.

The person that best translated and synthesised this double fear into a coherent and ambitious project of social reform was the Patriarch of Independence: José Bonifácio de Andrada e Silva. His proposal for the abolition of slavery was part and parcel of his grand vision for Brazil —a modern and liberal nation built on the ideals of the Enlightenment. José Bonifácio formulated a comprehensive national project that called for profound but carefully planned social, economic, political and cultural reforms. The objective was to guarantee social peace and political stability and promote the economic development of

Brazil. The key to his project was national unity and, more specifically, the *integration* of those sectors of society that had been traditionally excluded, especially black slaves and indigenous peoples.

José Bonifácio's proposal for the abolition of slavery took the form of a representation that was to be tabled at the Constituent Assembly in 1823.¹⁷ The text is divided in two sections: a condemnation of slavery and a series of proposals for its gradual abolition. The condemnation of slavery is total and unequivocal: slavery was against reason, justice, and religion. He described slavery as a sin against humanity (60-61), a source of immorality (53), a concrete and immediate threat to the nation (63) and a useless, irrational and anti-economic institution that was hindering the economic progress of the country (54-60). He argued that the costs of buying and maintaining slaves made free labour more productive than slave labour. He also refuted the argument that abolition was contrary to the right of property. Property, he argued, was an instrument created for the common good, while individual freedom was an absolute principle. Besides, slaves were people, not things, and therefore they could not be property. Consequently, to defend slavery was not to defend the right of property but to defend the right of violence (60). Finally, slavery corrupted the morality of the slave-owners. In this sense, the emancipation of the slaves was synonymous with the emancipation of (white) masters from the evils of (black) slavery. For him, as for all Brazilian abolitionists of the first half of the 19th century, slavery was evil, 'but evil, in the self-interested tradition of anti-slavery propaganda before 1850, simply meant harmful to white Brazilians' (Haberly 1972: 33).

José Bonifácio portrayed slavery as the root cause of all national problems. He referred to the slave trade as the 'cancer that gnaws at the entrails of Brazil' (62). Slavery impeded the formation of a modern and liberal nation-state. Firstly, slavery was incompatible with individual freedom. Secondly, the presence of 'an immense multitude of brutal and enemy slaves' (48) prevented national unity.

¹⁷ The edition of the José Bonifácio de Andrada e Silva's *Representação à Assembléa Geral Constituinte e Legislativa do Império do Brasil sobre a Escravatura* used here is the one contained in his *Projetos para o Brasil* (1985: 45-82), a collection of his works organised by Miriam Dolhnikoff. José Bonifácio's text was the most significant of several works critical of slavery and in favour of the abolition of the slave trade published in the 1820s.

And thirdly, the impossibility of recruiting slaves impeded the formation of a powerful national army and navy. Moreover, slavery had become an obstacle for international recognition: Great Britain had posed the abolition of the slave trade as a condition to recognise the independence of Brazil. However, the main concern for national formation was the danger of slave revolution. The exclusion of slaves from civil society had created 'domestic enemies [...] with nothing to lose, but to wait for a revolution like that of Saint Domingue' (81) or 'the formation of a new black Palmares!' (88).

José Bonifácio was conscious of the powerful opposition of those with economic interests linked to slavery and the slave trade, and thus he argued for a gradual approach to abolition. The first measure he proposed was the abolition of the slave trade over a period of four or five years. This was to be followed by legislation destined to improve the living conditions of the existing slaves, including the prohibition on using manumission to abandon old or sick slaves to their fate, the prohibition of separating slave families by sale, the protection of slaves from physical abuse, with special protection for childhood and pregnancy, and the creation of agencies to supervise the implementation of the legislation. Finally, he proposed measures for the gradual emancipation of the existing slave population, such as the introduction of incentives for masters who emancipated their slaves, and the use of government funds to pay for the manumission of slaves. Importantly, José Bonifácio advocated the social integration of the freed slaves. The most important and controversial proposal in this regard —although not included in his representation— was the concession of land grants to the freed slaves (152-154). The objective was to prevent vagrancy and instil a work ethic amongst the former slaves. To this end, he also called for the active enforcement of anti-vagrancy legislation and proposed the creation of savings institutions [*caixas de economia*] for freed slaves.

Yet despite his critique of slavery and his proposals in favour of the social integration of the slaves, José Bonifácio painted a very disturbing portrait of those he sought to liberate from slavery, referring to them as immoral brutes (62). Slaves were the carriers of most vices and the source and agents of immorality in Brazil.

The barbarism or 'primitive state' of black slaves meant that their freedom would disrupt civilisation and public order and therefore they would have to be educated to live in freedom. In a fragment on how to regulate slavery, José Bonifácio proposed the creation of a 'small catechism' to teach slaves 'with all clarity and efficacy love of work and obedience to masters' (84). He advocated the education and evangelisation of the slaves, and proposed provisions compelling masters to encourage marriage amongst their slaves and to teach them religion and morality. The education of black slaves would free them (and the nation at large) from the vices and immorality associated with Slavery and Blackness.

José Bonifácio hoped slave-owners would support his proposals, arguing that the gradual abolition of slavery would be beneficial not only to the nation but to them as well. In the short term, the abolition of the slave trade would enrich the masters because it would increase the value of the slaves they owned. In the long term, the civilisation, emancipation and integration of the slaves would diffuse the risk of slave revolution and would transform 'evil slaves' and 'immoral brutes' into useful, 'free and active men' (62-63). The gradual emancipation of the slaves would bring about social stability, but also a sense of gratitude from the former slaves that would benefit the former masters and the white elites. The prospect of freedom would encourage slaves to love and respect, to enrich and to treat their (former) masters as a 'guardian God' (64). José Bonifácio also defended the integration of blacks and natives through their intermarriage with whites —a process he thought would whiten Brazil. In short, his proposals sought to transform the slaves into productive workers and subordinate citizens (i.e. educated, civilised and grateful, that is, domesticated) and thus guarantee white hegemony in Brazil.

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José Bonifácio never had the chance to table his representation due to the sudden dissolution of the Constituent Assembly. However, his proposals brought him into direct conflict with the elites of the time and he was sent into exile. The short-

term interests of the elites were larger than their vision of the future, and even though they could appreciate the dangers of slavery, they could not be drawn to cede an inch of their power, status and wealth. Neither his cautious approach nor the fact he employed free labour on his farm of Santos (São Paulo) were enough to convince his opponents of the feasibility of his proposals. The abolition of slavery and the integration of blacks damaged the short-term interests and challenged the values and status of those he sought as allies, the white elite. The anti-slavery memoir of José Bonifácio was published in London in 1826, but remained largely unknown in Brazil until 1880. However, his views on slavery as a national problem and black slaves as internal enemies, and his principles of gradualism and subordination, prefigured the process of abolition in the late 19th century, and were echoed in the work of Joaquim Nabuco, the main abolitionist figure in Brazil. This combination of utility, morality and identity —underpinned by the double fear of revolution and blackness— came to define Abolition(ism) in Brazil.

The Other Resistance: White Opposition to Abolition

The official portrait of Abolition situates the white political elite at the centre of the process, as the historical agents who brought about the end of slavery of Brazil in a peaceful and harmonious fashion. In recent years though, there has been an increasing recognition of the conflictive aspects of the process, as well as of the active engagement of the black slaves in the struggle for their own emancipation. This usually leads historians to pose the issue of slavery in terms of white domination and black resistance. Yet, there is another interesting and less visible form of resistance that deserves some attention: the *white resistance* to the process of abolition. This other form of white agency was clearly at play during the hostile reception of the (relatively conservative) proposals put forward by José Bonifácio. However, white opposition to abolition was particularly visible during the two

events that would have the deepest impact on the undermining of slavery in the 19th century: the abolition of the slave trade and the war against Paraguay.

The Abolition of the Slave Trade. The abolition of the slave trade to Brazil is directly related to the diplomatic and military pressure exerted by the British in the first half of the 19th century. The British pressure began during the negotiations that followed the arrival of the Portuguese Crown in Rio de Janeiro. The treaty of alliance and friendship between Britain and Portugal signed in 1810 contained an article in which the Portuguese Crown agreed to bring about the gradual abolition of the slave trade throughout its dominions (Article 10). The British used this article to compel the Portuguese to sign a treaty in 1817 prohibiting the slave trade north of the equator, and promising to introduce measures to gradually abolish the rest of the slave trade to Brazil. However, the treaty had very little impact on the slave trade, not least because most of the slaves brought to Brazil by then came from subequatorial Africa. Besides, the Brazilian government never took the required measures to enforce the prohibition, and thus the slave trade remained virtually undisturbed, continuing to expand in response to the growing demand for slave labour in the regions of Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo (Conrad 1986: 56-76).

The British pressure intensified after the independence of Brazil. The influence of the British allowed them to exact an anti-slave-trade treaty from the Brazilian government in exchange for the recognition of Brazilian independence. The treaty was ratified in 1827 and supported by the law of the 7th of November 1831. Yet the slave trade continued as if nothing had happened. In fact, the prospect of its end led to an increase in the importation of slaves from Africa. The authorities lacked the means and the will to stop the slave trade. Besides, they were more preoccupied with the internal revolts that threatened the political unity and social stability of the country. Thus, the government simply resorted to a policy of *não ver e não ouvir* [see no evil, hear no evil] —blind to the illegal trade of slaves and deaf to protests of the British (Bethell 1970). The law of November 1831 came to be known as *uma lei para inglês ver* [a law to hoodwink the English].

Subsequent British attempts to legislate against slave traders incensed the Brazilian government, which refused the offer to sign an anti-slavery treaty acceptable to the British. Abolitionists were more offended by foreign intervention than by the continuation of slavery. Their nationalist sentiment prevailed over their abolitionist rhetoric (Bethell 1970: 151-295). The reluctance of the Brazilian government to enforce anti-slave-trade legislation led the British to authorise naval operations inside Brazilian waters. Only then, unable to afford an open confrontation with Great Britain, did the government signed the total and effective abolition of the slave trade to Brazil, in September 1850.

This decision was viewed at the time as the capitulation of Brazil to the naval power of the British. The anger generated by the sense of defeat was compounded by the fact that most people believed the measure would bring economic depression to Brazil. The failure of economic problems to materialise led to a change of heart in the coming years, and Brazilians began to celebrate the decision as a reflection of their humanitarian character and as an example of good economic policy. Eusebio de Queiroz, who had steered the legislation through Parliament, pointed out that the law had exempted planters from the large debts they had accrued with foreign slave traders, thus freeing large sums of capital for other forms of investment (Carneiro 1964: 91-96).

Despite the abolition of the slave trade to Brazil, the internal slave trade did not stop and became an integral part of the Brazilian economy, moving thousands of slaves each year from areas in economic decline to the expanding coffee states of São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro (Conrad 1972: 47-69; Conrad 1986: 179-191). The British consul in Pernambuco spoke of the slave trade at Recife as no different from the former African trade: 'the same forced transportation [...], the same disruption of natural ties of parent, child, brother or sister, the same eternal separation from these and from friends' (Cited in Conrad 1974: 165). In the words of Robert Conrad, the internal traffic was not merely a substitute for the transatlantic slave trade but was 'in spirit and purpose, [...] its continuation' (1986: 189).

In short, the dominant sentiment in favour of slavery is evident from the strong opposition to the abolition of the slave trade —the first necessary and indispensable step towards the abolition of slavery in Brazil. The white political elite justified their position in terms of survival (abolition would spell ruin for the national economy) and pride (abolition would be synonymous with capitulation to foreign pressure). Even those who rejected slavery seemed more offended by foreign intervention than by the continuation of the slave trade and slavery. The strength of white resistance to the abolition of slavery can also be deduced from the reception given by the parliament to a series of proposals by a deputy from Ceará in 1850. The same year the slave trade was finally declared illegal, Pedro Pereira de Silva Guimarães proposed a bill to free the new-born, prohibit the separation of married slaves, and give the slaves the right of self-purchase. His proposals were judged unsuitable for discussion (Conrad 1974: 154).

After the abolition of the slave trade, the belief that, without the constant import of slaves, slavery was condemned to extinction led to a largely wilful complacency regarding black slavery in Brazil. The 1850s and 1860s were the period of maximum development of the slave economy. The social and political order imposed through fire and iron by the imperial forces, and certified by the conciliation between conservatives and liberals, enabled the expansion of the slave economy to previously uncultivated areas: the interior of São Paulo, the valley of Paraná, and Rio Grande do Sul. However, this expansion coincided with the increasing discrediting of slavery in the West —the model of society the white elites wished to replicate in Brazil. The abolition of slavery in the United States in 1865 undermined the reputation of slavery in Brazil. But the event that brought slavery and abolition back to the forefront of national politics and public debate was the war against Paraguay.

The War against Paraguay. The war against Paraguay offered Brazil the opportunity to assert itself as a modern and liberal nation. The official accounts of the war interpreted the victory of the Triple Alliance (Brazil, Argentina and Uruguay) as a triumph of liberalism over despotism (represented by the figure of

the Paraguayan President Solano López) and of civilisation over barbarism (associated with the large Paraguayan indigenous population: the Guarani) (Sousa 1996: 20-23). The war served initially to consolidate the Brazilian Empire. The victory secured the national borders and enabled the territorial expansion of Brazil to the South, and the economic development of Southern Brazil.

The war also brought to the forefront the issue of slavery. The traditional forces used by the imperial authorities to crush social and political revolts were insufficient to wage war against Paraguay. The need to create a national army forced the government to recruit soldiers from all sectors of the population, including those traditionally excluded from the army: the slaves. Their recruitment took several forms: cession (slaves manumitted by their masters as an act of patriotism), substitution (slaves sent to replace the sons of the elite), and voluntary participation (used by the slaves to obtain freedom, given that slaves had to be granted freedom before they could enrol in the army) (Salles 1990: 63-77; Sousa 1996: 35-54; 68-72 and 78-82). Importantly, the fact that the state compensated manumitted slaves to fight in the war preserved the primacy of property over all other principles, even the defence of the nation. The dimension of the participation of slaves in the war has been (and still is) a matter of much discussion. In general, the figures seem to suggest that while the majority of soldiers were nonwhites, only a minority were slaves (Salles 1990; Sousa, 1996). However, the number of slaves is of secondary importance to the effects that their participation in the war had on the national imagination.

The impact of the war on slavery was first and foremost ideological and came through the figure of the *Voluntário da Pátria* [Volunteer for the Fatherland]. This legal figure was created to promote a patriotic sentiment and foster enlistment for the war. The organisation of a national campaign of mobilisation on the grounds of volunteering attributed a moral and social value to everyone who participated in the war. The participation of former (black) slaves alongside the (white) sons of the elite had powerful ideological implications, especially amongst those who returned alive and victorious. The image of blacks, let alone former

slaves, as national heroes discredited the notion of black inferiority and thus the legitimacy of black slavery in Brazil (Salles 1990; Sousa 1996).

The creation of a modern army in the context of a society based on slavery produced both external and internal contradictions —between army and society, and within the army itself. The participation of ex-slaves alongside the sons of the elite posed a challenge to the formation of the national army. The Marquis of Caxias, commander in chief of the Brazilian army and hero of the Paraguay War, was conscious of the potential effects of the incorporation into the national army of sectors of the population denied political and economic rights. Caxias tried to minimise the risk of social disruption by reproducing the social and racial hierarchies within the army, by restricting the position of officials to members of the white elite. Moreover, he advocated the denial of medals for bravery to soldiers, the only position in the army allowed to nonwhites and those from the lower classes. This measure was conceived to prevent the effects that the attribution of bravery and honour to sectors of the population considered inferior might have on attitudes towards their place in society after the war. In short, the national army reproduced the patterns of discrimination that characterised Brazilian society. However, the presence in the national army of (black) ex-slaves alongside the (white) sons of the elite instilled thoughts of social and racial equality that would escape the control of the Brazilian authorities (Salles 1990).

The war against Paraguay has been portrayed in official narratives as the culmination of a national sentiment originated two centuries earlier in the war against the Dutch. The war effort, the argument goes, brought together all sectors of the population into a spirit of unity and fraternity under one single national institution: the Brazilian Army. However, the study carried out by Peter Beattie on this institution from 1864 to 1945 concludes that ‘the practice of racial inclusion did not live up to the rhetoric of racial democracy’ (2001: 261). Undoubtedly, the creation of a national army had a crucial impact on the abolition of slavery in Brazil. But that impact came *despite* the prejudices and obstacles regarding equality within the Brazilian Army. Similarly, the impact of the war on the

process of abolition would come *despite* the resistance of many slave-owners to recognise the freedom of their former slaves upon their return from Paraguay.

The desire of slave-owners to return ex-slave veterans to the plantations manifested the discrepancy opened by the policy of inclusion (forced by the war) and the desire of domination (amongst the white elite). The tension between masters and slaves extended to the armed forces when soldiers refused to capture those fugitives who had recently been fighting alongside them in Paraguay (Ianni 1962: 217). The soldiers' refusal to capture fugitive slaves was later extended to the whole fugitive slave population, helping to dissipate the fear of repression amongst the slaves. In the end, the war shook the social structure by affecting the social imaginary and began to undo what it set out to consolidate, the Brazilian Empire, by undermining its two main pillars: Slavery and the Monarchy.

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The white resistance against the abolition of the slave trade and the attempts of many slave-owners to re-enslave those ex-slaves who returned from the war against Paraguay casts a completely different light over the role of *white agency* in Brazilian Abolition(ism). On the one hand, this reveals the fallacy of a process facilitated by the wise and noble actions and decisions of the white elite. Insofar as they conducted the process of abolition, the white elite blocked more than it advanced the definitive and total emancipation of blacks in Brazil. On the other hand, the fact that both the abolition of the slave trade to Brazil and the creation of the national army were compelled by the actions of *external forces* —the direct action of the British Navy and the fierce resistance of the Paraguayans— reveals a temporary loss of control over the place of slavery and the slaves in Brazil. Indeed, these two events reveal that the abolition of slavery would come despite the stern white resistance against the abolition of the slave trade, and partly due to the opening up of a Pandora's Box in the Brazilian imaginary provoked by the presence of (black) ex-slaves in the war against Paraguay. However, the end of both conflicts would enable the white elite to regain the initiative over the process of abolition through a powerful weapon still under their control: the Law.

The Fears behind Abolition(ism): Revolution and Blackness

The effects of the abolition of the slave trade and the formation of the national army on Brazilian slavery were compounded by the abolition of slavery in the United States in 1865 and by the general condemnation of slavery in the West. However, it was the climate of fear created by the actions of the slaves and the ideology of progress disseminated by abolitionist groups that became the crucial factors to precipitate the end of slavery in Brazil. The interaction of these forces reveals plenty about the complex nature of the process of abolition—one which refutes and transcends the cordial and rational portrait popularly associated with the abolition of slavery in Brazil.

The Fear of (Slave) Revolution: Security. The pressure of the British and the climate of fear created by the constant and increasingly intense slave rebellions were behind the proposal to free the offspring of slave mothers put forward by Dom Pedro II in 1864, and turned into legislation by the Baron of Rio Branco in 1871. The Rio Branco Law of 1871, also known as *Lei do Ventre Livre* [Law of the Free Womb], was celebrated at the time (and is still widely regarded) as the death sentence of slavery in Brazil. What its supporters failed to realise at the time and is often ignored today is that the law could and was quickly 'turned into an obstacle to emancipation rather than a stimulus to abolition' (Toplin 1972: 38). In fact, the law was a moderate compromise that privileged the economic interests of the masters over the well being of the slaves. Nowhere was this more evident than in the emancipation of the children of slave mothers the law was destined to liberate.

The Rio Branco Law declared that all children born of slave mothers would be born free [*ingênuos*]. The children were to remain with their mothers until the age of eight. The master (not the child or the mother) had then two options: redeem the children for money (to be paid by the state) or retain them until the age of twenty-one, when they would be freed without compensation. Both options offered *ingênuos* little prospect of freedom or well-being. In the first case, the children had to be turned over to the government, thus tearing them away

from their family, and placed under the tutelage of a charitable organisation until the age of twenty-one. In the second, *ingênuos* were kept as *de facto* slaves: they were not paid for their labour, they were rented for the provision of services, and they had little protection against abuse and cruelty.

The figure of the *ingênuo* continued the tradition of dependence and subordination that defined abolition in Brazil. The legislators hoped that life under tutelage and subjection would accustom *ingênuos* to serve and respect their former masters and remain as rural workers in the future (Conrad 1972: 100-105). The hope was that the offspring of slaves would remain *slaves by disposition* once they could not be slaves by law. As it happened, the abolition of slavery preceded the maturity date of the first *ingênuos* by over four years, and since most masters had chosen to retain them as free labour force, the great majority of *ingênuos* remained in a state of *de facto* slavery until they were freed along with the remaining slaves in May 1888 (Conrad 1972: 90-117).

The discontent with the loopholes and inadequacies of the Rio Branco Law and the obstacles posed by masters to implement the legislation led to calls for further reforms (from moderate abolitionists) and for immediate and unconditional abolition (from radical abolitionists). The defenders of slavery argued that further interference of the government was unnecessary (slavery was already condemned to extinction), unconstitutional (forced abolition violated the sanctity of private property), and dangerous (abolition would provoke labour anarchy and economic disaster). They rejected even the most moderate proposals, which recommended gradual emancipation and adequate compensation, arguing that the hope of freedom would only create anxiety, frustration, and foment slave rebellion. The government should leave slavery alone and focus on providing solutions to the current economic problems caused by the crisis of labour that Brazil was suffering since 1850 (Conrad 1972: 30-46). Abolitionists replied that the presence of slavery was the main cause behind the crisis of labour by impeding the immigration of Europeans, the only viable solution to the labour shortage of Brazil. Moreover, they argued, slavery was an impediment to building a modern (i.e. industrial and liberal) nation.

During the 1870s a group of prominent figures began to steer the struggle against slavery towards its final abolition. The most renowned names were: Joaquim Nabuco, Rui Barbosa, José do Patrocínio, André Rebouças, Luiz Gama, Ferreira de Menezes, João Clapp, Raul Pompea, Carlos de Lacerda, and Antônio Bento. The formulas they proposed ranged from legislation (Nabuco), to litigation (Gama), to revolution (Bento). Their efforts translated into the creation of abolitionist societies, the defence of slaves before the courts, the advocacy of slave rebellion, the encouragement and assistance of escapes, and the publication of newspapers, pamphlets and manifestos dedicated to spread the message of abolition. The movement began in the cities but eventually abolitionist clubs and societies appeared even in the smallest towns, and near the end of the struggle the movement had extended into the countryside and the plantations.

The figure that came to symbolise Brazilian Abolitionism is that of Joaquim Nabuco. His ideas echoed those espoused by José Bonifácio in the 1820s. Like him, Nabuco considered slavery the main obstacle to building a modern and liberal Brazil. The abolition of slavery, he argued, was a necessary step to complete the emancipation of the nation that had begun with its political independence in 1822. Like José Bonifácio, he wished to maintain the monarchy and the aristocracy at the centre of government. Thus, he argued that abolition should be achieved by actions in parliament, not on the plantations, the quilombos, or the streets (Nabuco [1883]1988: 26). Nabuco tried to prevent the participation of slaves in the campaign for abolition, fearing that their presence would imbue the struggle with a revolutionary spirit that might lead to the downfall of the regime and the removal of the aristocracy from power. Finally, like José Bonifácio, he considered slaves, and blacks generally, as constitutive parts of the nation, but he also viewed them as elements of disorder and turmoil. Nabuco accepted the racist arguments about black inferiority, and saw the arrival of immigrants from Europe as the only way to cleanse the 'vices of the African blood' from the Brazilian nation ([1883]1988: 137).

The slow legislative progress and the dominance of moderate abolitionism contrasted with the increasing ability of the slaves to take advantage of the

deterioration of the slave system and of the Brazilian Empire. The 1870s witnessed the emergence of a 'revolutionary mentality' amongst the slaves that reflected the increasing number of native-born slaves who began to see themselves as Brazilian and assimilated a rhetoric of equality and citizenship (Dean 1976: 128). Slave resistance gained presence and strength inside the work-places (fields and homes) and fear of slave rebellion was on the increase. These structural changes and the increasing discrediting of slavery made it ever more difficult to keep discipline and control over the slaves in the coffee plantations. The situation was also aided by the abolition of the death penalty, after which imprisonment became 'an open invitation to commit crimes' and even 'a true life option' for some slaves (Azevedo 1987: 194 and 196).

The authorities tried to retain control of the process of abolition through another legislative initiative: the liberation of slaves of sixty or more years of age. The bill was introduced by Senator Manoel Dantas in June 1884 and passed in September 1885 as the Saraiva-Cotegipe Law. The months of debate and revision turned the final version of the law into a text more satisfactory to the slave-holders than to the abolitionists. The Saraiva-Cotegipe Law, also known as the *Lei dos Sexagenários* [Sexagenarian Law], gave no consideration to the well-being of the slaves it was meant to liberate —granting them abandonment rather than citizenship— while establishing fines for anyone found guilty of luring away or sheltering slaves (Conrad 1972: 210-219).

The frustration and disillusionment with the legal process led many abolitionists to take a more direct approach: incite slaves to abandon the plantations and assist their escape and refuge. Slaves began to leave the plantations with the practical support of underground movements like those led by Carlos de Lacerda in Rio de Janeiro and, most notably, by Antônio Bento in São Paulo. The actions of the slaves were also facilitated by the prohibition of whipping decreed in 1886. This measure cut right to the heart of slavery: corporal punishment. Slavery could not be effectively maintained without the resort to physical violence. The prohibition of whipping had taken away (at least in theory)

the most potent instrument of slave control: 'the indispensable key of the slave system: the whip' (Conrad 1974: 160).

The conversion of many planters to abolitionism was not —as it came to be portrayed and is still widely interpreted— a change of heart or an act of generosity. The decision to free the slaves was a last desperate attempt to protect their personal safety and their economic interests. Initially, most slave-owners tried to stem the exodus of slaves by granting them freedom in exchange for work contracts or pledges for continuing service that would guarantee them cheap labour for a stated length of time (Conrad 1972: 239-260; Toplin 1972: 203-224). It was only the refusal of most slaves to accept less than immediate freedom and the increasing intensity of escapes that forced masters to reconsider their position, leading to the large unconditional emancipation of slaves in the months prior to May 1888 (Conrad 1972: 239-262; Toplin 1972: 194-224).

On the 13th of May 1888, with almost unanimous political support, the Brazilian parliament approved the total and immediate abolition of slavery. In the absence of Dom Pedro II, the *Lei Aurea* [Golden Law] was signed by Princess Isabel, who thereby came to be known as the *Redentora* [Redeemer] of the slaves, and indeed of Brazil itself. The generation of blacks freed by the Golden Law or in the preceding years formed a sympathetic image of Princess Isabel. The gesture of José do Patrocínio, a leading black abolitionist who —as the story goes— kneeled down in front of the Princess and kissed her hand in the Imperial Palace, began her consecration as the Redeemer. This image has been consolidated in official festivities and school textbooks, and still persists amongst large sections (perhaps even the majority) of the Afro-Brazilian population. The powerful symbolism of this gesture has made it very hard to assert black agency in the process of abolition; yet it is precisely the significance of black agency and the fear of slave revolution that one encounters behind the supposedly cordial and rational discourse of Brazilian Abolition(ism).

In short, the final decades of slavery refute the cordiality commonly associated with the process of abolition. On the one hand, a critical examination of this period reveals that slave-owners used the law to manage slavery and

abolition in exclusive pursuit of their own interests, which often meant trying to delay the definitive abolition of slavery. On the other hand, that same examination reveals the real reason why slavery came to its end when it did: the fear of revolution. In the end, it was the actions of the slaves themselves, with the support of abolitionist sympathisers which forced the hand of the recalcitrant masters. In the words of a slave owner: planters had liberated their slaves 'by the law of necessity, and not by the law of humanity' (Cited in Toplin 1972: 229). For all the rhetoric of reason and modernity, the reason that led to the collapse of slavery was *the fear of slave revolution*, the spectre of Haitianismo.

The Fear of Blackness: Identity. The abolition of slavery was followed by expressions of triumphalism. Ironically, the last country to abolish slavery became 'the first to proclaim itself a racial democracy: a society which offered genuine equality of opportunity to all its citizens, and had delivered itself from racial tension, discrimination, and conflict' (Andrews 1991: 132). According to Nabuco, this was possible because 'slavery never turned bitter the soul of the slave against the master [...] the contact between them [the two races] was always exempt from bitterness outside of slavery, and the man of colour found all avenues open to him' ([1883]1988: 22). His words anticipate the discourse of cordiality that several decades later would enable Gilberto Freyre to explain the hybrid character of the nation and to declare Brazil a racial democracy. Yet, a critical analysis of Brazilian Abolition(ism) reveals a far from cordial social and ideological integration of Afro-Brazilians in Brazil(ianness).

Undoubtedly, the abolition of slavery opened the way for all Afro-Brazilians to redefine their social position, but only formally. All Afro-Brazilians were now legally free, but their freedom did not rid them of their colour, still the main trait to determine their social status. The lack of a clear-cut colour line continued to facilitate some upward mobility to the mulattos —the *escape hatch* theorised by Carl Degler (1971). However, social mobility was exceptional and limited: only under very specific conditions, only in the short term, and only available to exceptional individuals. Similarly, abolition hardly modified the

privileged position of the social elites, especially the land-owners. The issue of land reform, raised by a few reformers and abolitionists was ignored and the inaccessibility to the land market kept many newly freed blacks as dependants of their ex-masters or some local notable (Andrews 1991).

For many Afro-Brazilians, their legal freedom meant 'a life of wandering and misery' (Mattoso [1979]1986: 211) —the transition *from slavery to vagrancy* that gives title to Martha Huggins' study of crime and social control in Brazil (1985). At best, the legacy of slavery and abolition was employment at the bottom ranks of the labour market. The existing social structures of hierarchy and dependence remained virtually intact. The wide range of favours and mutual obligations that secured traditional ties between patrons (i.e. the white men of property) and clients or dependants (i.e. the poor and the slaves, amongst others) did not evaporate after abolition (Andrews 1991). This culture of dependence kept the newly freed people in bondage, at least 'in terms of the way in which they perceived their freedom and with regard to how society perceived their autonomy' (Naro 1994: 193). Social survival beyond the confines of the patron-client dynamics that defined social relations, especially in rural areas, continued to be the main constraint on physical mobility in Brazil. Some emancipated slaves managed to adapt successfully to the new conditions, despite the constraints placed upon them, by becoming small farmers. For the majority, however, the only alternative left was migration to urban centres, where dependence was often replaced by indigence. Either way, the newly freed blacks were treated with the same overt condescension as previously manumitted slaves, and were referred to as freedmen [*libertos*], thus perpetuating their identity as (former) slaves and their position of social inferiority.

The abolition of slavery also opened the way for the redefinition of the ideological place of Afro-Brazilians in the formulation of modern Brazil(ianness). Once again, the potential transformation was marred by deeply-entrenched structures and mechanisms, this time ideological ones. The symbolic integration of the Afro-Brazilians in the post-abolition definition of Brazil(ianness) was largely determined by the desire of the white, liberal and aspirational modern

elite of Brazil. The first symbolic expression of this desire was the destruction of the official government records on slavery.

The burning of the state records was an act of national exorcism destined to free the nation from the ghost of slavery that haunted the dreams of (Western) Modernity in Brazil. The fire was meant to remove the stain of slavery by burning the documentary evidence, and thus any physical memory that could allow a direct access to that aspect of the Brazilian past. This act of wilful forgetting of the historical memory of slavery was also—and still is—embraced by many Afro-Brazilians who prefer to repress personal, familial, or painful historical memories than confront that part of their personal or collective past. Yet, at the same time, this negative articulation of history, this erasure of historical memory that began with the burning of the records has also produced anxieties provoked by the loss of historical and genealogical identity amongst certain sectors of the Afro-Brazilian population. In any case, this act of national exorcism began to inscribe the myth of racial democracy in Brazil.

The complete erasure of the historical memory of slavery, however, was incongruent with the presence of Afro-Brazilians. Their blackness reminded white Brazilians of that now shameful part of their still recent national past. The only solution to erase the spectre of slavery from Brazil(ianness) was to erase the presence of blacks from Brazil. This translated first and foremost in the gradual and structural replacement of Afro-Brazilian labour with white European immigrant labour. This process had in fact begun decades before abolition, after the labour shortage that followed the end of the slave trade to Brazil.

The first groups of European migrants arrived in Brazil between the 1850s and the 1870s. However, the attempts to settle them in the plantations largely failed. Refusing to accept the restrictive labour contracts and hard working conditions of the plantations, the migrants organised public protests and strikes, and complained to their governments of origin. This opened a debate over the possibility of bringing Chinese immigrants. However, strong racist opinions soon transformed the 'Chinese Solution' into the 'Yellow Peril' (Azevedo 1987: 147-153). The Chinese were portrayed as a degenerate race, inferior to Europeans, and

a danger to the racial composition of Brazil. Nabuco described them as 'decadent' and 'effeminate' and warned of the dangers of mixing with Orientals (Cited in Toplin 1972: 159). He believed the Brazilian race was already corrupted by the influence of black blood —with their backward mental development, barbarous instincts and superstitions— and argued that only European immigration would bring a current of 'lively, energetic, and healthy' white blood that Brazil could 'absorb without danger' —unlike 'that Chinese wave' which would 'further pervert and corrupt our race' (Nabuco [1883]1988: 252). His abolitionist interventions emphasised the positive consequences for the nation in Eurocentric terms. The end of slavery, he argued, would 'open our country to European immigration: it will be the advent of a virile transformation' of Brazil (Nabuco [1883]1988: 233). Clearly, his preoccupation —as was that of most of his colleagues— was the future of Brazil(ianness), not of the Afro-Brazilians.

The transition from slave labour to white migrant free labour began in earnest in the 1880s, with the arrival of waves of migrants from Italy, Portugal, Spain, Germany and Poland, the majority destined to the coffee plantations of São Paulo. In the period from 1888 to 1928, São Paulo received over two million European immigrants, almost half of whom had their passage paid for by the state government (Andrews 1991: 54). The saturation of the labour market with European migrants kept the cost of labour low and forced workers to look for work, rather than proprietors to look for workers. This state-sponsored white migration policy effectively marginalised the Afro-Brazilian population from the economic development of Brazil.

The dominant view amongst the white ruling elite (and the white population in general) was that blacks were lazy and errant by nature. Newspapers exacerbated the negative stereotypes of blacks, sometimes paradoxically, praising individuals as 'blacks with white souls' and 'loyal friends of whites' when they 'behaved as whites', but also warning that blacks were 'instinctively violent' and possessed 'latent degeneracy' (Schwarcz 1987: 255). It was asserted that, blacks would not work effectively and efficiently unless they were forced to do so, and now that slavery had been abolished forcing them to

work had become very difficult. This portrait of blacks as incapable of conforming to a modern work ethic (one based on will rather than force) denied them a place in post-abolition society, and made their presence a hindrance to the modernisation of Brazil(ianness).

Abolitionists like Nabuco supported programs to promote the arrival of European migrants, arguing that only this would help to modernise (i.e. whiten) Brazil. The subsidisation of white labour was not just a matter of economic policy but also of national identity. The first decree on immigration passed by the government of the newly proclaimed Republic banned the entry of Asians and Africans (Célia da Silva 1995: 69). The new policy was not sufficient to solve the 'racial problem'. The question remained of what to do with the blacks living in Brazil. The government financed the return of thousands of Afro-Brazilians to Africa. However, the most popular answer was to breed them out of existence, to dilute the presence of 'black blood' with 'white blood' from Europe. Indeed, most intellectuals—including many who had argued for the abolition of slavery, like Nabuco— aligned themselves with the project of whitening the nation by encouraging European immigration and leaving the Brazilian Indian and Afro-Brazilian stock to be absorbed or diluted through the contact with the European.

Yet, at the same time, the irruption into (free) society of a vast number of blacks and mulattos was changing the complexion of many places: 'Rio now loomed as a "black city" with a raucous culture that did not fit the ideas of the Europeanizing elite' (Skidmore 1999: 79). The articulation of the black presence in terms of 'danger' to national (i.e. white) culture reinforced existing racial prejudices, so that despite the absence of strict legal barriers, unwritten colour bars were observed (Skidmore 1999: 79). The views of white superiority and black inferiority were articulated in the medical discourse by authors like Raimundo Nina Rodrigues. The medicalisation of race in the public health policy of the First Republic (1889-1930) became part and parcel of the ideology of whitening that followed the abolition of slavery in Brazil.

North American doctrines of scientific racism that justified the claim of 'white superiority' and advocated 'white supremacy' had become popular among

the Brazilian elite in the 1870s. These men placed their hopes for a white Brazil on miscegenation, and the high (natural) mortality rate of the Afro-Brazilian population. Miscegenation —anathema in the United States— became public policy in Brazil. The purpose of this policy was revealed by João Batista de Lacerda, director of the National Museum, in a paper presented at the First Universal Races Congress, held in London in 1911, when he predicted that in the course of another century the mixed bloods and the black race would disappear from Brazil (Skidmore [1974]1993: 65-66). This mentality guided the immigration policies in Brazil in the years prior and subsequent to the abolition of slavery. The physical whitening of the nation was seen as a desirable, positive development, and assumed as official policy by the Brazilian Republic.

The politics of whitening continued well into the 20th century. The connection between migration, race and identity was still being clearly articulated in the 1950s, especially through the *Revista de Imigração e Colonização* published by the Council of Migration and Colonisation. The articles published in this journal reveal the utilitarian concept of the Migrant, who was ‘treated as an object —but always driven by the desire to whiten the race’ (Peres 1997: 56). But they also illustrate the paradoxical coexistence of the denial of racial prejudice with the continuous desire of whitening, articulated through the process of miscegenation oriented by migration policies privileging the arrival of Europeans.

The episode that probably best reflects the ironies and (white) fears at work was the denial of entry to a contingent of workers from the United States after the government found out that they were African-Americans (Domingues 2002: 590). The workers had sought to migrate to Brazil because they had heard it was a land free from racial prejudice —only to be rejected by the white-only immigration policy of the time (Meade & Pirio 1988). Afranio Peixoto delivered a speech in Parliament accusing the United States of treating Brazil as another Liberia, of using Brazil as a dumping ground for the scum that was their black population (Cited in Ramos 1996: 68). Significantly, part of the reason why the black workers were prevented from entering the country was *the fear of black agency*, that is, the fear that the black activism often associated with African-Americans could enter

Brazil and inspire Afro-Brazilians into political action. In any, Still, the episode reveals the depths of *the fear of blackness* that defined official policy in post-abolition Brazil.

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In short, the abolition of slavery was the official recognition of the impossibility of continuing to hold slaves in the face of increasing escapes and direct attacks against the slave regime. At the same time, abolition became a way to free whites and the nation from the burden of slavery, leaving former slaves to their fate or subject to structures of dependence and subordination, but with the impression that their freedom was a gift from the (white) Monarchy. Yet, the process of abolition not only betrays itself as a conflictive one in terms of social relations (i.e. shaped by the fear of revolution) but it also does so in terms of national identity (i.e. shaped by the fear of blackness). The politics of whitening that accompanied the process of abolition reveal its fundamentally racist character. That this is not obvious to everyone, given the amount of historical evidence available on the politics of migration, is testament to the power of myths (i.e. the myth of racial democracy) to create their own reality. Indeed, Abolition—both as a process and a narrative—reinforced the subordination of Afro-Brazilians in the formation and formulation of Brazil(ianness), and contributed to the perpetuation of racism and white hegemony in post-abolition Brazil.

Isabel vs. Zumbi: The Fear of Black Agency

1988 was to be a year of celebration for the people of Brazil. Instead, the centenary of the abolition of slavery became a contest over two dates and two historical figures: the 13th of May vs. the 20th of November; Princess Isabel vs. Zumbi dos Palmares. Princess Isabel, identified by official history and accepted by most of the population, including a large number of Afro-Brazilians, as the symbol of

Abolition, was the focus of the cheers and protests around the 13th of May. Zumbi, ignored by official history and adopted by an increasing number of Afro-Brazilians as the symbol of resistance against slavery and black liberation, was the centre of the cheers and critiques around the 20th of November. The positioning of politicians, academics, commentators, and citizens in general, in relation to these events reveals much about the current meaning of Slavery and Abolition and about the place assigned to Afro-Brazilians in the formation and formulation of Brazil(ianness).

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The many events which commemorated the 100-year anniversary of the abolition of slavery in Brazil offer a rich portrait of its 'multiple meanings' in contemporary Brazil (Schwarcz 1990). Yet the most salient aspect was the large number of events rejecting *abolition as a farce* (i.e. a false liberation) and denouncing the continuation of racial discrimination in Brazil. Thus, in Rio de Janeiro, there was a 'March against the farce of Abolition' which was going to pass in front of the pantheon of the Duke of Caxias, but had to alter its original route after this was blocked by the Military Police (Hanchard 1991). In Salvador, the only public act was a demonstration on the 12th of May under the banner '100 Years without Abolition'. The highlight of the protest was the burning of the effigy of Princess Isabel. A doll symbolising the Princess was also burned in São Paulo on the 13th of May in the square that bears her name (Hasenbalg 1991). In Brasília, the congressional session called to commemorate the 13th of May was interrupted by members of the Movimento Negro Unificado [Unified Black Movement] shouting: 'We want work. We want jobs. The 13th of May is not the day of Blacks'.

The questioning of the meaning of Brazilian Abolition was a central theme in the Carnival of Rio de Janeiro in 1988. Thus, for example, the Mangueira Samba School put on a show entitled: 'One Hundred Years of Freedom: Reality or Illusion?' Ironically, the winner, the Vila Isabel Samba School –named after the district where the school is located, itself named after Princess Isabel– performed

a samba entitled 'Kizomba, Party of the Race'. This samba did not want anything to do with Princess Isabel or the Golden Law, hailing instead the figure of Zumbi: 'Valeu Zumbi! O Grito Forte dos Palmares' (Hasenbalg 1991).

The debate over the meaning of the 13th of May was also present in the written press. The two leading newspapers of São Paulo offered contrasting views of the commemoration. The conservative *O Estado de São Paulo* celebrated the date with a special supplement entitled 'Abolition: 100 Years of Freedom'. The articles focused on the history of slavery and the struggle for abolition. The liberal *A Folha de São Paulo* published a supplement entitled '100 Years of Abolition'. However, in the weeks leading to the 13th of May, the *Folha* published articles on the present situation of blacks in Brazil (i.e. the black movement, racial inequality in the labour market, racial images in advertising, interviews with middle class black families) and articles on race relations in South Africa and the United States.

The official events reiterated the classic view of Abolition as a process driven by whites and culminated by Princess Isabel. In his speech to the nation, President Sarney praised the actions of abolitionists, citing in particular Princess Isabel and the Duke of Caxias. This commendation of the military leader who crushed slave uprisings in Maranhão and Rio de Janeiro was striking, to say the least. The President also announced an initiative to promote the cultural survival of descendants of Afro-Brazilians: the Fundação Cultural Palmares. The combined effect of his speech was to present the white man coming once again to the aid of the Afro-Brazilians. This apparent interest in the future of the Afro-Brazilians led to the announcement of a commission to organise a program of activities to commemorate the 100th anniversary of Abolition which did not have a single black member, and was headed by the grandson of Princess Isabel. The protests from black organisations led to the dissolution of the commission and its reconstitution under the direction of the black lawyer Carlos Moura. This blunder prefigured the conflictive and farcical character of the centenary of Abolition and revealed, once again, the continuous subordinate integration of Afro-Brazilians in the formation and formulation of Brazil.

The critics of the official celebration not only rejected the myth of racial democracy but also questioned the centrality of white agency in the extinction of slavery, in turn asserting black agency, constructed mainly around the figure of Zumbi. The assertion of black agency dates back to the 1970s, when Afro-Brazilians began to reject the 13th of May, a date they viewed as portraying blacks as passive recipients of white benevolence. Instead, they delved into the past to rediscover slave resistance and the figure of Zumbi, and proclaimed the 20th of November (the day of his death) the Day of Black Consciousness in Brazil.

Zumbi came to replace the figure of the *Mae Prêta* [the black mammy] as the key black figure in the celebrations of Abolition. The Mae Prêta had been incorporated into the celebrations in the 1940s and 1950s. This figure symbolised courage and adaptability, but was ultimately seen as part of the slave regime. The replacement of the impersonal and dependent figure of the Mae Prêta for the personal and independent figure of Zumbi signalled a radical shift in the politics of Afro-Brazilian identity. The commemoration of the figure of Zumbi has also produced 'multiple meanings' —an extensive selection of which can be found, for example, in the 1991 special issue of *Carta': Falas, Reflexões, Memórias*, a report of restricted distribution, published by the Office of Senator Darcy Ribeiro, in anticipation of the commemoration of the 300 years of Zumbi (1695-1995). The subsequent celebration of the figure of Zumbi in November 1995, and his official proclamation as a national hero by the then President Fernando Henrique Cardoso, reveals the (partially successful) desire of Afro-Brazilians to construct for themselves an image beyond that of victims and objects of history, and to inject black agency and subjectivity into Brazilian history.

The vindication of slave and black resistance has often gone beyond the simple denial of the official version of the history of Abolition to offer an alternative model of society for Brazil. Zumbi (vs. Isabel) and Quilombismo (vs. Parliamentarism) have become an alternative vision of and for racial democracy in Brazil. The work of Abdias do Nascimento has transformed quilombos from a product of resistance against slavery into the only example of racial democracy in the Americas (1994). Quilombismo has been constructed over the idealisation of

Palmares, the largest and most renowned quilombo in the history of Brazil. The little historical documentation on Palmares has not impeded the presentation of Palmares as 'a land without evil' (Diegues & Rocha 1991: 21), a place where everyone —including blacks, natives, and whites— lived together in peace, freedom and harmony; a model for the future of Brazil. This portrait of Palmares as a multicultural and pluriracial utopia has been adopted both nationally and internationally, by renowned people such as Helio Santos (1995), Benedita da Silva (1995) and Jean Michael Turner (1995).

The vision of Palmares as the first true racial democracy and model for the future of Brazil has the potential to strengthen the notion of racial democracy as an ideal worth pursuing. However, it has also the potential to encounter similar problems to those that led to questioning its original articulation, in particular the lack of correspondence with reality. The insufficient historical evidence to provide a full picture of life in Palmares, coupled with the reported existence of slavery and gender inequality inside the quilombo, can undermine the value of Palmares as a myth of origins for racial democracy in Brazil. In fact, the memory of Palmares can be useful less in terms of racial democracy and more in terms of the assertion of black agency in Brazil. Indeed, it is the representation of black agency that emerged as a powerful theme in the acts of 1988 and 1995, and it is probably in this context where the real potential for the symbolic use of Palmares lies.

The commemoration of the 300 years of Zumbi linked past and present assertions of black agency, with the identification of Zumbi (the most popular historical black figure) and Pelé (the most popular contemporary black figure). The claim of Pelé as the new Zumbi and the calls of Pelé for President gave way to a series of interesting exchanges on the issue of racial democracy and black agency. In general terms, these invocations reveal the desire for black leaders and public figures that represent resistance and success amongst the Afro-Brazilians. However, beyond that superficial level, the identification of Pelé and Zumbi contains a series of nuances that can serve to elucidate the issue of racial democracy and black agency in contemporary Brazil.

The two men are central figures to two different discourses: black resistance and racial democracy. In fact, there is a curious role reversal between the two figures: the classic face of black resistance (Zumbi) is becoming (at least in the context of Quilombismo) the symbol of racial democracy, whereas the classic face of racial democracy (Pelé) was transformed (at least for a while) into the face of radical blackness. His condemnation of the widespread political corruption in the country and his call for blacks to vote for blacks as the only way to defend Afro-Brazilians drew accusations of reverse racism and comparisons with the polemic figure of Farrakan (Souza 1995). The words of Pelé were interpreted as a radical discourse that threatened to undo the harmonious racial relations that underpin national unity. Black agency becomes here a threat to Brazil(ianness).

The curious aspect here is that Pelé had been until then the paradigm of racial democracy—a black man who through talent had risen out of poverty and into success, and who married the most popular white-blond Brazilian woman, Xuxa. In essence, Pelé was the paradigm of racial democracy as the whitening of Brazil. However, his calls for black political action suddenly changed that acceptability. Clearly, whites prefer a polite (whitened) Pelé to a feisty (black) Pelé. They prefer the Pelé that reflects the success of racial democracy than the Pelé that denounces the myth of racial democracy and calls for a more assertive involvement of Afro-Brazilians in Brazilian politics *as* Afro-Brazilians. His appeal to black agency—effectively neutralised by the myth of racial democracy—brought to the surface old fears: the fear of revolution and the fear of blackness.

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The events of 1988 and 1995 in general, and the elevation of Zumbi as a national hero in particular, have reopened the debate over the place of Blackness (and Africanness) in Brazil(ianness). However, this debate is often marred by the painful anxieties over personal loss of identity—related to the impossibility of tracing specific (i.e. tribal, national, geographical) cultural origins—and the wilful forgetting of their collective past engaged in by generations of Afro-Brazilians. In

recent times, the Afro-Brazilian population has been seeking through paths fraught with difficulty (and pain) the roots and routes of their collective past(s), both African and Brazilian. Thus, while for some the wilful forgetting of slavery still is a useful strategy to bury painful memories, others are beginning to demand their exhumation, in pursuit of specific histories and identities that can go beyond general references to Africanness. The attempt to recognise multiple African and Afro-Brazilian ethnicities should contribute to injecting black subjectivity (or subjectivities) into the notion of Brazil(ianness). Yet, in a sense —not dissimilar to the findings of Michael Hanchard in *Orpheus and Power* (1994)— this approach might be more palatable and less threatening to whites (and perhaps to white hegemony) than the more direct and confrontational political agency invoked by discourses of Blackness.

To conclude, it is important to note that the reflection over Slavery and Abolition in the recent past has left two important aspects out of the analysis: the enslavement of the Brazilian Indians and the promotion of White Immigration. The lack of debate over the enslavement of the indigenous peoples continues to facilitate the idyllic view of the relations between them and the Portuguese. However, it is the silence over white immigration that is harder to explain —and perhaps more significant. The abolition of slavery, both historically and ideologically, cannot be considered without reference to the immigration policies. The end of slavery would have come at some point, irrespective of the arrival of migrant labour, yet it was the state-sponsored program of immigration that shaped abolition as a process of whitening and facilitated the process of keeping the Afro-Brazilian population dependent and subordinate in post-abolition Brazil.

Conclusion: The Third Pillar of White Hegemony

The legalistic and idyllic interpretation of Brazilian Abolition that places a small group of (mostly white) enlightened abolitionists as its main agents and portrays Princess Isabel as the Redeemer of the slaves, and indeed the nation, is still

popular in 21st century Brazil. In this narrative, abolition represents the definitive cleansing of the nation, the instance that removed the stain of slavery from the fabric of Brazilian society and allowed Brazil to become a modern nation in the image of the liberal West. Rui Barbosa put it succinctly: abolition was 'national rebirth' (quoted in Toplin 1972: 128). It was, in this sense, the third birth of Brazil; after the birth of colonial and then independent Brazil, this was the birth of modern Brazil. In essence, this third act in the play of Brazilian history came to signify the redemption of Brazil and its definitive entry into Western Modernity.

This typical portrait omits the long history of Brazilian Abolition(ism). One that can be traced as far back as the 16th century, and certainly one that predates the Enlightenment. This is a history that evolved within and alongside slavery. In other words, Abolition(ism) was not an idea or a discourse external to Slavery: the product of the enlightened reason, adopted by the liberal elite of Brazil. Instead, the formulation of Abolition(ism) is closely related to the social and ideological structures (i.e. objectification, manumission, tutelage, immigration) that, over the centuries, contributed to the colonisation of the Indian and African Others. Moreover, the emphasis on reason conceals the violence used by masters to prevent the end of slavery (and white resistance to abolition in general) as well as the white fears that underpinned Brazilian Abolition(ism).

The increasing assertions of black agency and black identity have the potential to eliminate one of the central elements of the ideology of Abolitionism (and of black subordination): the need for Deference. Yet, insofar as Abolition continues to be widely viewed as a gift, the deference this implies will continue to shape the subordinate place of Afro-Brazilians in the formation and formulation of Brazil(ianness). The ideological change required here though, needs to have some correlation with a general improvement in the social and economic integration of Afro-Brazilians. Only when both deference and dependence are things of the past can we say that the effects of Slavery and Abolition on the lives of Afro-Brazilians (and Brazilian Indians) are over. Until then, Abolition will continue to be another pillar that sustains white hegemony in Brazil.

Chapter 4

'There is no racism in Brazil!' Manuel declared with a dismissive wave of his glass. 'Here we're all equal! How could there be racism when people of all colors intermarry and have children?' We were leaning against the counter in a small bar in a working-class town on the outskirts of Rio de Janeiro. Pointing to his brown skin and short, frizzy hair, he said, 'I have the blood of all races in me —white, black, Indian. How could we be racists?'

John Burdick (1992b: 40)

Hybridity

The publication of Gilberto Freyre's *Casa-Grande & Senzala* in 1933 is the most recent defining event in the formation and formulation of Brazil. One could argue that if the discovery symbolises the birth of Brazil, and independence and abolition its external and internal emancipation, the publication of *Casa-Grande & Senzala* signals the end of the racial inferiority complex that had kept the nation in a state of anxiety and self-doubt. This book gave Brazilians a sense of confidence and self-belief that made them proud of being Brazilians. It did so by turning the view on hybridity upside down, from a sign of weakness, degeneration, and inferiority, into one of strength, civilisation, and superiority. Freyre defined Brazil as the product of cultural syncretism and sexual miscegenation and argued that Brazilians should take pride in their culturally and racially mixed heritage, not least because hybridity had prevented the emergence of a racist society. Instead, Brazil was a racial democracy, made possible by the cordial and tolerant character of the Portuguese.

The definition of hybridity as essence of the nation and antidote to racism demands a close look at the reality and the ideology of hybridity in Brazil. The

first two sections of this chapter analyse miscegenation and transculturation, tracing their fundamental dynamics to colonial Brazil. This will enable us to refute the widely held notion that sexual and cultural hybridity resulted from the absence of racial prejudice in Portuguese America. The third section provides a critical overview of the formulation of hybridity in narratives of Brazilianness. This will help us determine the role of hybridity in shaping national identity and the character of racial hegemony (and racism) in Brazil. This approach does not mean that the ideology of hybridity is taken here as a false-reality, a mere illusion that fails to reflect the reality of hybridity. In Brazil, hybridity is both a reality *and* an ideology —the ideology of hybridity being the hegemonic meaning attributed to the reality of hybridity that often defines sexual and cultural relations in Brazil. The chapter concludes with a brief analysis of the ritual and the figure that have come to best symbolise the celebration of hybridity: Carnival and the Mulata.

Miscegenation: The Sexualisation of the Female Others

Miscegenation is a central process in the formation and formulation of Brazil. Indeed, the social history of Portuguese America is, to a large extent, a history of the sexual relations between Indians, Africans and Portuguese. This is often interpreted as evidence that there was no colour prejudice in colonial Brazil, and more specifically as a sign of the racial tolerance of the Portuguese. Thus, for example, Manoel Bomfim wrote in *O Brasil na América* (1929) that: 'From the beginning, the settler was willing to be intimate with Indian women, as later he was with black women; *becoming equals* in the homes they established' ([1929]1997: 117) [italics mine]. This interpretation gained widespread acceptance after the publication of *Casa-Grande & Senzala*. Freyre argued that Portugal's location at the southern extremity of Europe and its early experience of domination by the Moors had made the Portuguese tolerant of and willing to mix with Others. The lack of inhibition that Portuguese men displayed towards sexual relations with Moorish women would subsequently define their relations with Indian and African

women, engendering a racial democracy in Brazil. This interpretation of the nation as a *colour-blind erotic democracy* is at the heart of racial hegemony in Brazil (Goldstein 1999). The analysis of miscegenation is therefore essential to understand the intricate workings of racism and white hegemony in Brazil.

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The notion that miscegenation resulted from the racial tolerance of the Portuguese ignores the nature of race relations in Portugal at the time of its imperial expansion. The historical accounts of this period reveal that sexual relations across colour lines took place in the context of informal unions and casual contacts, whereas formal relations and sanctioned unions showed a clear preference towards endogamy (Saunders 1982: 103). The notion that the Portuguese were predisposed to mix with Others is also refuted by the fact that Portuguese settlers in Africa rarely cohabited with Africans (Alencastro 1985: 59). All this suggests that the extent and character of miscegenation in Brazil needs to be explained by factors other than the racial tolerance of the Portuguese.

Miscegenation was part and parcel of the male-driven enterprise that was the Portuguese colonisation in Africa, Asia and America. The Crown was aware of the shortage of white women overseas but made only sporadic and understated efforts to address the situation, favouring instead inter-marriage with the native women as a form of imperial consolidation (Russell-Wood 1992: 188). The only exception were the so-called orphans-of-the-king [*orfãos-del-rei*] —young orphan girls of (sometimes barely) marriageable age sent out in batches from orphanages to the colonies at the expense of the Crown, often intended as spouses for public officials (Russell-Wood 1992: 109-110). In Brazil, marriage with indigenous women facilitated the creation of political alliances and helped further the process of colonisation, especially given that most early colonists remained loyal to the Portuguese Crown (Monteiro 1994: 34).

The arrival of the first male settlers set in motion the process of miscegenation that has defined sexual relations throughout the history of Brazil.

The shortage of white women made indigenous women 'the splendid womb that would gestate the population on this side of the ocean' (Arruda 2000: 53). This first wave of miscegenation was fostered by the forced abstinence of weeks at sea, by the erotic image the early arrivals held of the new world and, last but not least, by the sexual practices and family structures of the Brazilian Indians. Their sexual hospitality (the custom of offering single girls as sexual companions to their guests) and the institution of *cunhadismo* (the integration of strangers into the tribal groups through marriage) facilitated the process of miscegenation, as well as the Portuguese settlement and colonisation of Brazil. These cultural practices have often been interpreted as evidence of the natural *promiscuity* of the natives and/or expressions of their *love* for the Portuguese. Such interpretations reflect the prejudices and expectations of the visitors and narrators rather than the rationale behind those practices amongst the indigenous peoples of Brazil (Hemming 1978: 121). The institution of *cunhadismo*, for example, far from an expression of love or promiscuity, was part of a complex family structure designed to incorporate potential enemies into the tribal structure (Ribeiro 1995: 81-86).

The sexual relations between natives and settlers were a major issue in the Jesuit accounts of life in colonial Brazil. The Jesuits attributed the widespread level of miscegenation to the *lax morals* of the settlers and the *lack of morals* of the natives, as well as to the complicity of the clergy who, according to Nóbrega, were telling the settlers that 'it is lawful for them to live in sin with their coloured women since these are their slaves' (Cited in Hemming 1978: 41). However, the main reason they mentioned to explain miscegenation was the shortage of white women—a shortage accentuated by the strict seclusion of young white women (Algranti 1993), and by the common practice of sending them to convents in Portugal (Russell-Wood 1992: 111). Their seclusion reflected the stern patriarchal nature of Portuguese society and the desire of over-zealous parents to safeguard the purity and standing of their daughters, which was considered at risk in the social environment of colonial Brazil. This was particularly the case if the women became involved with someone of African descent (Russell-Wood 1982: 30).

The lament about the shortage of white women and the request to send contingents of them from the metropolis were constant issues in the letters and reports written by colonial officials and missionaries. The Jesuits were so appalled by the consequences of such a shortage that they even called for prostitutes to be sent from Portugal. Nóbrega wrote to the king on several occasions asking him to send orphans, prostitutes and women unable to marry, for all would find suitable partners in the colony and would turn the settlers into honest men (1955: 30 [1549] and 79 [1550]). The Crown made sporadic efforts to address the situation, sending orphans and reformed prostitutes, but never in numbers sufficient to have a significant impact on the patterns of sexual behaviour and family structure in colonial Brazil.

The lack of white women meant that Jesuits had little option but to welcome mixed marriages. Their attempts to marry settlers to free native women [*índias forras*] was not easy, given that the former considered marriage with indigenous women 'a great infamy' (Nóbrega, cited in Morner 1967: 49). The reluctance of the settlers to marry was less intense if the women were of mixed-blood [*mamelucas*]. The reason was clearly racist: 'The white blood which pulsed in their veins certainly reduced the infamy of an interracial marriage' (Nizza da Silva 1998: 16). The efforts to promote mixed marriages met with little sympathy in colonial Brazil. Instead, the native population was absorbed through concubinage with the settlers (Boxer 1963: 98). The tendency in formal unions was towards endogamy (Schwartz 1985: 62). The 17th century proverb 'if you wish to marry well, marry your equal' clearly posits equality (social and racial) as the underlying principle that governed marriage. Those colonists who wished to have children sought to marry white women in order to provide their offspring with a good lineage. In colonial Brazil, a white wife was symbol of prestige—a trait that still endures in contemporary Brazil. The offspring of mixed marriages were, in the expression of the Jesuit Francisco Pires, 'imperfect fruit' (in Peixoto 1931: 197). In a sense, these men and women were the first victims of the ideology of whitening: as half-Europeans, they often despised their Indian ancestors; as half-Indians, they were despised by most Europeans (Stam 1997: 5).

The stigma attached to mixed marriages and their offspring prompted the Marquis of Pombal to instigate a royal edict on April 1755 encouraging intermarriage between settlers and natives. The edict stated that those settlers who married natives would 'remain without infamy by this act' (Cited in Morner 1967: 49). In fact, these settlers and their offspring would become worthy of royal attention and enjoy preference for posts and honours. The edict even prohibited the use of derogatory terms such as *caboclo* to refer to the offspring of these marriages. In essence, the edict tried to 'invert the scale of values, turning what was considered an infamy into a situation of privilege' (Almeida 1997: 222). However, this was not an expression of racial tolerance, but part and parcel of the consolidation of the Portuguese control over Brazil. The encouragement of mixed marriages —which did not extend to marriages with blacks or mulattos— was designed to increase the population of the interior and secure the vast new frontiers gained in the Treaty of Madrid (1750). Ironically, the edict enhanced the symbolic value of Nativism in colonial Brazil, widening the identity gap between Brazilians and Portuguese (Mello 1997: 187).

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The importation of Africans from the mid-16th century signalled the start of a second wave of miscegenation, mainly between white men and black women. The extension of slavery and the continuous shortage of white women provided ideal conditions for informal sexual relations, widespread promiscuity and miscegenation. Not surprisingly, concubinage became the most common and popular form of gender and sexual relations in Portuguese America. In the words of Yvonne Corcoran-Nantes, concubinage became the *mode of reproduction* in colonial Brazil. Concubinage was also the main form that miscegenation took, to the point that the two were essentially synonymous. Therefore, in order to fully understand miscegenation, one must examine concubinage.

The conditions created by the slave system meant that concubinage was often a relation of sexual exploitation between people of unequal condition: settler

and native, master and slave, rich and poor. Concubinage was often synonymous with promiscuity, adultery and polygamy. In this sense, Charles Boxer noted that the settlers often 'preferred to live in concubinage with as many coloured women as they could afford to maintain —or who could afford to maintain them' (1961: 59). Concubinage and marriage were not exclusive. Thus, for example, concubinage with native women 'was common practice not only among white single men, but also among married men who had left their wives in Portugal' (Nizza da Silva 1998: 15). Importantly, when colonists combined concubinage and marriage the pattern was invariably the same: white wife and nonwhite concubine (Nazzari 1996). The preferred concubine was the *mulata* [mulatto woman]. The sexual preference for the mulata was expressed in popular sayings such as: 'the white woman is for marrying; the mulata for fornicating with; the black woman for working'; and 'the mulata is the real woman'. The sayings portray the mulata as the utmost sexual object, restricting her humanity to, and defining her womanhood by, her supposedly lascivious and promiscuous sexuality. Of course, this saying also illustrates the centrality of colour to define the female 'division of labour' in colonial Brazil.

Miscegenation through concubinage was an ambivalent practice: both a force of integration (informal and intimate) and domination (hierarchical and exploitative). On the one hand, it served to bring together people of different colour and ethnicity. On the other hand, it reinforced the power of dominant social groups over subaltern ones (men over women, masters over slaves, white over nonwhite, rich over poor). Concubinage enabled whites and nonwhites to circumvent, through sexual relations, some of the barriers created by social structures (i.e. slavery) and cultural institutions (i.e. the Church). However, in a society structured by slavery and patriarchy, these relations, especially those between masters and slaves, were not synonymous with the absence of prejudice, reflecting instead the power, status and sexual desire of white males. The kind of integration enabled by miscegenation through concubinage, if anything, served to consolidate gender, racial and social inequality in Brazil.

The strength of racial prejudice in colonial Brazil can be discerned from the stern white opposition to mixed marriages. Thus, for example, the Jesuits tried to convince settlers to marry the slaves they cohabited with, to little or no avail. Admittedly, the settlers feared the slaves could become free if they were to marry them (Nóbrega 1955: 94 [1551]) But even when there was a will to marry, the social prejudice against blackness was far too strong: 'The attempts of marriage between whites and women of colour almost always were frustrated by the families, which opposed such marriages and resorted to all means at their disposal to prevent them' (Nizza da Silva 1998: 197). One of those means was colonial legislation allowing parents to 'obstruct their children's marriages in case of "inequality" between bride and groom' (Caulfield 2003: 180). Marriages between people of different class and especially of different colour 'were poorly regarded and the parents did not hesitate to resort to the authority of the governors to impede such unions' (Nizza da Silva 1994: 144). Crucially, whereas sexual relations between white men and nonwhite women were socially acceptable aside from marriage, 'neither illicit union nor marriage was permissible between a white woman and a man of color' (Karasch 1987: 291). In the context of a patriarchal society, this means that miscegenation was part and parcel of the establishment of white male hegemony in Brazil. The conventional patterns of concubinage between black (or darker) women and white (or whiter) men, and the sexual exploitation of the former by the latter continued in the 19th century (Borges 1992: 121).

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The legislation protecting mixed marriages between settlers and natives did not extend to unions with blacks and mulattos. Thus, for example, in 1771, the Viceroy of Brazil dismissed an Indian from his post as captain-major for having 'displayed sentiments so low as to marry a black woman, staining his blood with this union and thus making himself unworthy of such office' (Holanda [1936]1995: 56). The implication of this and other legal dispositions regarding 'blood' was

unequivocal: black blood was beyond redemption. Thus, in 1773, the Marquis of Pombal derogated the statutes of purity of blood [*limpeza de sangue*] that limited access to certain jobs, titles of nobility and membership of prestigious brotherhoods to those of pure blood, declaring the full equality of all Portuguese citizens, except for blacks and mulattos (Andrews 1984: 206).

The Jesuits also insisted that slaves marry. This would be a way to civilise them and curtail their immoral influence on the colonists.¹⁸ However, marriages between slaves were fiercely opposed by slave-owners. In order to overcome their opposition, the law stated that 'married slaves would not be freed from their yoke, as they would be free to marry, but not to gain freedom' (Nizza da Silva 1994: 147). These and other safeguards failed to persuade the slave-owners, and the right of a slave to marry and form a family was still being demanded by Brazilian reformers in the 19th century. Moreover, the government did not prohibit the separate sale of married slaves until 1869. The opposition of the masters and the emotional cost of marriage to the slaves made concubinage, passing unions and casual affairs the most common alternatives of sexual relations amongst slaves (Corcoran-Nantes 1997: 159). These conditions translated into low rates of formal marriages, low rates of reproduction and high numbers of children born out of wedlock (Mattoso [1979]1986: 109-114).

The general opposition to the marriage of slaves had a telling exception. The settlers promoted, and even forced, the marriage of black male slaves, and native men living in mission-villages, with native women under their administration [*administradas*] (Monteiro 1994: 170). They used these marriages to acquire new black slaves, to transfer natives living in mission-villages to their private service, and to further their control over the women under their

¹⁸ The idea that black slaves, and more precisely black slave women were to blame for the corruption of colonial sexuality was common in colonial Brazil, and was reiterated by Gilberto Freyre in *Casa-Grande & Senzala*, where he attributed the corruption of sexual mores in colonial society to the precociously sexual initiation of white young men by black slave women ([1933] 1956: 323). In his attempt to distance himself from racial thinking, Freyre blamed slavery rather than blackness for the corrupted system of sexual relations in Portuguese America. However, his tendency to conflate racial and sexual relations has become part of a subtle narrative still in circulation that assigns sexual blame to a woman for her race and for her enslavement (Browning 1995: 22), and indeed for being a woman in the first place.

administration (Nizza da Silva 1998: 182-183). In 1696, the increasing use of this practice, adopted even by the Jesuits in their plantations, prompted the Crown to pass a royal decree expressly prohibiting these marriages (1998: 184). The practice had little impact on the level of miscegenation but reveals the use of marriage and miscegenation as instruments of domination and exploitation of the Others, in particular the female Others, in colonial and post-colonial Brazil.

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The studies of the colonial period reveal that gender relations were dominated by patriarchy, slavery, racial prejudice, concubinage and promiscuity. The analysis of gender relations, and their interplay with colour (or race) and slavery (or class), reveals that miscegenation, far from reflecting the notion that people of different colour mixed freely and without prejudice, was an instrument of the Portuguese colonisation of Brazil, and more precisely of the Portuguese colonisation of the Others. The extent of miscegenation does not reflect racial tolerance, but the peculiar conditions of the colonisation of Portuguese America. The absence of white women made miscegenation an essential instrument for the colonisation of Brazil, while slavery placed miscegenation in a context of sexual exploitation of the female Others until the late 19th century. In other words, miscegenation took place in a context of female subordination and sexual exploitation, especially (albeit not exclusively) of the Other Women. These gender and sexual dynamics clearly negate the notion of a sexual democracy enabled by the racial tolerance of the Portuguese.

The volatile mixture of sexual intimacy and sexual exploitation formed in the context of slavery continues to shape relationships between whites and blacks in contemporary Brazil. Indeed, for all the changes—such as what one might call, for want of a better term, the democratisation of miscegenation, that is, the opening of inter-racial sexual relations to men and women of all colours—the basic patterns remain fundamentally the same. The domain of miscegenation continues to be that of sexual relations, whereas in relation to marriage and family

what tends to prevail is 'the hypervaluation of whiteness' (Sheriff 2001: 142). In other words, the *colour of love* is still *white* —and failing that *moreno* [tanned] (Burdick 1998: 26-42); whereas black(ness) is still circumscribed to the realm of sex. The current image of the mulata —as we shall see later— continues to reproduce this sexualisation and objectification of the female Other, with important implications for the perpetuation of white hegemony in Brazil.

Transculturation: The Cultural Resilience of the Others

The definition of Brazil as a hybrid nation is largely based on the extensive and intensive transculturation that has characterised the history of Brazil. This cultural hybridity has also been attributed to the Portuguese tolerance towards the Others, which supposedly facilitated the harmonious amalgamation of cultures in colonial and post-colonial Brazil. The main text responsible for the popularity of this interpretation of the cultural history of Brazil is, once again, Freyre's *Casa-Grande & Senzala*, where he wrote: 'Perhaps nowhere else is the meeting, intercommunication, and harmonious fusion of diverse or, even, antagonistic cultural traditions occurring in so liberal a way as it is in Brazil' ([1933]1956: 78). In order to assess the merit of this portrait of the formation of Brazilian culture, one must examine the cultural dynamics between Indians, Africans and Portuguese, and their Brazilian descendants. In colonial Brazil, this means first and foremost analysing the interaction between Catholicism and the religious traditions of Indians and Africans. In post-colonial Brazil, this means analysing the nationalisation of the cultural beliefs and traditions of Indians and Africans.

Catholicisation: The Religious Colonisation of the Indian Other. The colonisation of Brazil not only contemplated the settlement and development of the land but also the conversion of its indigenous inhabitants to Catholicism. The confluence of the material and the spiritual in the colonial enterprise, prefigured

by Caminha in his *Carta a el-rei D. Manuel* (1500), was codified in the Royal Instructions [*Regimento*] given by João III to the first Governor-General of Brazil, Tomé de Sousa, in 1549. In them, the king stated that: 'The principal thing that moved me to order the settlement of those lands of Brazil was that its people should be converted to our Holy Catholic faith' (Cited in Hemming 1978: 79). The conversion of the natives and the education and morality of the colony were entrusted to the Society of Jesus. Their presence in settlements and plantations, their virtual monopoly over religion and education (churches and schools), and their control of the mission-villages [*aldeamentos*], made the Jesuits the most active and conspicuous cultural agents in colonial Brazil (Azevedo 1950: 339-355).

The evangelisation of Brazil began with the arrival of a small contingent of Jesuits, led by Father Manuel da Nóbrega, in 1549. The Jesuits wrote of the benign climate, the beauty of the landscape, the variety and quality of its products, invoking images of the Garden of Eden and the Terrestrial Paradise. Their admiration was extended to the natives, who were considered in many things 'superior to the Christians' (Nóbrega 1955: 32 [1549]). The early texts reiterated the idea that the natives had no idols or gods, temples or priests, and echoed the optimism regarding their conversion first present in Caminha's letter to Dom Manuel. The Jesuits used colourful expressions, such as ripe fruit, soft wax, empty slate, and blank page, to signal the ease with which the natives were being converted; and established a mission system that extended from Pernambuco in the North to São Vicente in the South.

Their ability to communicate religious doctrine received an important boost with the codification of Tupi-Guarani, the most common language among the Brazilian Indians. The first draft of its grammar was written by the Jesuit father José de Anchieta in 1555, and published in Coimbra forty years later under the title *Arte da Gramática da língua mais usada na costa do Brasil* (1595). Anchieta showed deep admiration for the language, comparing its complex grammar (i.e. nouns, verbs, declinations, conjugations) to classical Greek. The codification resulted in a simplified and somewhat hybrid language—a mixture of Tupi-Guarani vocabulary and Latin grammar—that came to be known as *Língua Geral*

[General Language]. Used initially in the mission-villages, *Língua Geral* soon became the language of commercial and social relations between Indians and Europeans, and was the mother tongue of most inhabitants of São Paulo until the late 18th century. *Língua Geral* was the solution to the linguistic Babel that was Portuguese America, where several Indian, European and African languages coexisted. In a sense, this was the first Brazilian language, and for two centuries it seemed that it would become the language of Brazil. Yet the codification of Tupi-Guarani was simply another instrument of the Portuguese colonisation of Brazil. Serafim Leite, one of the most eminent scholars on the Jesuits of Brazil, made this clear when he wrote that the conquest of souls was 'the reason why the Jesuits in Brazil so urged the study of Tupi' (Cited in Cohen 1998: 31, note 50). In other words, the promotion of *Língua Geral* as *lingua franca* of colonial Brazil, far from reflecting the cultural tolerance of the Jesuits, was 'one more step in the reduction of Indian culture to a common base that could be controlled and manipulated by the Fathers' (Schwartz 1985: 40).

With the help of early settlers, the Jesuits began to translate prayers and sermons into *Língua Geral*, as well as to establish analogies and symbolic correspondences between Christian and indigenous beliefs (Vainfas 2000: 347). The Jesuits also studied indigenous customs and traditions, and adopted those practices they thought could further their mission: they preached in the mornings and evenings, when it was common for the tribes to listen to their elders; they replicated some of the movements (stamping the feet or clapping the hands) and tempo (pauses and histrionics) used by natives shamans; and they made extensive use of music and song in their celebrations.¹⁹ The study of native language and mythology, the adoption of native rituals and practices, the frequent use of allegories, the education of children, and the effort to train a native clergy, were all means to one end: the spiritual colonisation of the Brazilian Indians.

¹⁹ The letters and reports of the Jesuits are filled with references and details about the habits and practices of the indigenous peoples of Brazil. See, for example, Manuel da Nóbrega's letters, especially 'Informação das Terras do Brasil' (1550) and 'Apontamentos de cousas do Brasil' (1558), which can be found in *Cartas do Brasil* (1955), 57-67 and 277-292, respectively; José de Anchieta, *Cartas, Informações, Fragmentos Históricos e Sermões* (1554-1594); Fernão Cardim, *Tratados da Terra e Gente do Brasil* [1583-1601]; and Afrânio Peixoto (ed.), *Cartas Jesuíticas II: Cartas Avulsas* (1550-1568).

The interest of the Jesuits in the culture of the natives was driven by the need to penetrate their imaginaries and their desire to bring what they considered to be backward and barbaric peoples into the civilised world of Christianity. Thus, the Jesuits sought to eliminate those features of native culture that confronted Catholic doctrine (i.e. polygamy, nudity, incest, idolatry, cannibalism) as well as other practices that did not fit within their concept of rational life (i.e. frequent mobility, inter-tribal warfare, drinking and dancing) (Nóbrega 1955: 282-283 [1558]). Nóbrega inscribed their cultural stage into a historical temporality based on Christian time: an idyllic past (primitive paradise: state of innocence), the present decline (barbarism: state of sin and need of penitence) and the future salvation (evangelisation: restoration of the golden age). In essence, Brazilian Indians were incorporated into an evolutionary scheme that sought the obliteration of their culture and their eventual transformation into Catholics and Europeans (Raminelli 1996).

The refusal of the Indians to embrace the new religion wholeheartedly—theorised by the missionaries as the *inconsistency* of the savage soul—provoked an angry and forceful reaction from the Jesuits. Nóbrega replaced admiration with contempt. The Indians were no longer innocent beings but ‘of a condition more akin to wild beasts than of rational people’ (1955: 257 [1557]). The portrait of the natives as ‘squalid savages, ferocious and most base, resembling wild animals in everything save human shape’ became typical in colonial Brazil (Boxer 1963: 96). Nóbrega, who had noticed the power of fear from the moment of his arrival and had hinted at the possibility that the natives might be converted faster by fear than by love, now argued that natives would have to be brought, by force if they resisted, into obedience of the Jesuits and acceptance of Christianity.

The case for subjugation was elaborated by Manuel da Nóbrega in his *Diálogo sobre a Conversão do Gentio* [Dialogue on the Conversion of Heathen] (1556), an imaginary conversation between two missionaries, representing the debate between the two sides of the Jesuit mission: idealism (Gonçalo Alvares) and realism (Mateus Nogueira). This text signals the discursive transition from a politics of persuasion based on an Edenic rhetoric that represents the natives as

noble savages, to a politics of subjugation based on a Civilising rhetoric that represents the natives as bestial people (Ramos 1994). In short, Primitivism was replaced by Barbarism. The Indians no longer were a blank slate where one could print at will, but cold iron that could only be moulded when placed in God's forge (Nóbrega 1955: 233 and 249 [1556]).

The politics of subjugation was strengthened by the establishment of mission-villages, a measure already contemplated in the *Regimento* of 1549. Their objective was to put an end to the mobility of the natives, which was considered the main impediment to their evangelisation and to the definitive conquest of the land. The Jesuits began to organise expeditions into the interior, compelling natives to move into the mission-villages. Their most effective weapon to convince the natives appeared to be the fear inspired on them by Mem de Sá. Nóbrega noted: 'they all tremble with fear of the Governor [...]. This fear makes them more capable of being able to hear the word of God' (Cited in Hemming 1978: 100-101). The notion that the efficacy of temporal power relied on the capacity of the authorities to inspire fear was also posited by Antônio Vieira, the leading Jesuit in 17th century Brazil (Cohen 1998: 160). The politics of confinement had its final legal expression in the Royal Instructions for the Missions [*Regimento das Missões*] (1686) —the first legal codification of tutelage [*tutela*], granting the Jesuits the temporal administration of the Brazilian Indians.

The mission-villages were conceived as a civilised space where the natives would live as rational and moral creatures, in constant exposure to Christian doctrine. They were a form of *total institution* —not dissimilar to those studied and theorised by Erwin Goffman (1961) and Michel Foucault (1975). Having to settle in a permanent location was only the first assault against the way of life of the Brazilian Indians. On top of that, they had to endure a regime that structured every hour of the day and every aspect of their lives, altering the whole rhythm of their social life (Hemming 1978: 109-110). The distribution of space and people within the mission-villages disrupted their social and religious structures. The physical plan of the mission-villages —with a square, a church, a school, and a series of living quarters and warehouses flanking the open space— was radically

different from the communal concept of space in the indigenous villages (Schwartz 1985: 41). The division and specialisation of their living quarters contrasted with the egalitarian and indivisible character of the *maloca* —a communal house where people of all ages slept, ate, worked and played (Hemming 1978: 114-115). The breaking down of tribes into nuclear families further undermined their communal way of life; while the mixing of people from different tribes, with their own customs and languages, eroded cultural specificities. The cumulative effect of this ‘vast total pedagogical project’ (Neves 1978: 162) was transforming specific Indians with specific traditions into generic Indians —the process of *ethnic transfiguration* theorised by Darcy Ribeiro in *Os Índios e a Civilização* (1970).

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The politics of detribalisation and acculturation that led to the cultural disorientation and destruction of many indigenous peoples and cultures also left behind a legacy of cultural hybridity and cultural coexistence. The mission-villages were spaces of control but also *contact zones* where appropriation of cultural symbols took place and from where resistance to colonisation emerged (Pratt 1992). The presence of the Jesuits and the process of evangelisation were used by the natives for their own purposes, albeit within the constraints of the colonial regime. Their interest in Christianity was related to its immediate advantages: protection against slavery, music and ceremonies, presents given by the missionaries, and ‘the magic of the white man's cult’ (Hemming 1978: 101). The cultural contacts enabled a process of transculturation that, in its religious dimension, at times took the form of the Tupinisation of Catholicism and at times the Catholicisation of Tupi spirituality (Pompa 2003).

One of the illustrations of transculturation in colonial Brazil was a socio-religious movement known as *santidade* that combined elements of Catholicism with elements of Tupi spirituality. The santidades were rooted in a Tupi ritual in which a prophet [*caraíba*] called for the tribe to wage war against their enemies

and search for the earthly paradise [*terra-sem-mal*: the land without evil]. The ritual was transformed with the Portuguese colonisation of Brazil. The most studied and best known is the Santidade of Jaguaripe (c. 1580-1585). Led by fugitive Indians who escaped from the mission-villages, this santidade transformed the traditional ritual into a movement of resistance against the Portuguese (Vainfas 1995). This religion of the oppressed—for want of a better term—challenged colonialism, slavery, and the missionary work of the Jesuits (Vainfas 1995: 228). However, the contact with the missionaries led to the incorporation of a series of rites, symbolic objects and figures from Roman Catholicism. Thus, for example, their rituals mixed dance and frenzy with the use of rosaries and crosses; they performed ceremonies in front of ‘altars’; and they carried out ‘confessions’. Leaders proclaimed themselves ‘pope’, named ‘bishops’, and dispatched ‘missionaries’ to proselytise and advocate resistance to the Portuguese (Schwartz 1985: 47-48). The santidades were condemned by the Jesuits as idolatry, and violently repressed by the colonial authorities (Schwartz 1985: 49).

The santidades illustrate the dynamics of domination and resistance that characterised the cultural interactions between settlers and natives in colonial Brazil. More specifically, they illustrate the ‘negotiated construction’ and ‘cultural translation’ of Catholicism into Tupi (Pompa 2001). The santidades retained their indigenous character but the reaction to the new social conditions transformed the search for an earthly paradise into a struggle against the Portuguese. This contact with a new reality resulted in syncretic cults that combined indigenous beliefs and myths with the figures and symbols of Roman Catholicism. But if santidades reveal that ‘acculturation was often shallow or incomplete and that sentiments of resistance often lay close to the surface of life’ (Schwartz 1985: 64), they also show the violent reaction with which that resistance was met. In this sense, the condemnation and destruction of santidades illustrates the rejection of (resistant) cultural hybridity in colonial Brazil.

Yet, not all the products of cultural contact between natives and settlers were destroyed. The living legacy of transculturation can be seen in the religiosity of the Amazon, which shows a fascinating interplay of indigenous beliefs with

popular Catholicism. The inhabitants of the region, commonly known as *caboclos*, venerate Saint Benedito and Saint Antônio, while at the same time they fear and revere the many spirits that inhabit the land and the waters of the Amazon. However, this cosmology is not a simple amalgamation of two traditions, Iberian and Indian. The religiosity of the *caboclos* has taken the form of a religious system where different traditions coexist and complement each other rather than neatly coalesce or fuse into a single religion. Saints [*santos*] and spirits [*visagens*] share the same universe but their cults differ and serve different needs and situations (Galvão [1955]1976: 5). Still, this dual religiosity combines religious principles, beliefs, and traditions in a way that is singular to Brazil and, in this sense, it can be called Brazilian.

The living legacy of transculturation can also be seen in the Portuguese spoken in Brazil, where the Tupinisation of Portuguese softened the harsh sounds of the Portuguese spoken in Portugal (Freyre [1933]1956: 166-167); in the many indigenous figures and fables that have entered popular culture, including children's games; in the fear and fascination with the *bicho* (a mythical animal) that, amongst other things, explains the popularity of the game of chance known by that name (Freyre [1933]1956: 138-142 and 147); and in the many foods, plants and drugs, household remedies and kitchen utensils used by Brazilians (Ribeiro 1983: 92-109). However, the adoption of indigenous cultural forms has not eliminated the general prejudice towards indigenous culture, which continues to be conceived in terms of Nature (rather than Culture) or Primitivism (backward Culture). In any case, the survival of these cultural expressions resulted from the dynamics of domination and resistance between natives and settlers, not from the cultural tolerance of the Portuguese. In fact, the colonising impulse continues today through the so-called *enculturation* —a policy of cultural contact whose ultimate goal is still to ‘transform the Indians into Christians’ (Ramos 1998: 28).

Brazilianness: The Secular Colonisation of the Indian Other. The expulsion of the Society of Jesus from Brazil in 1759 opened the way for the secular colonisation of the Brazilian Indians. The secular tutelage established by the

Marquis of Pombal, known as the *Directório dos Índios* [Directory of the Indians], transformed the mission-villages into secular villages, transferring the control of their inhabitants to the State. The directors took up the civilising mission that had always underpinned the Portuguese relations with the Indians. This implied the spread of values and practices associated with Western Civilisation: work (vs. leisure), commerce (vs. subsistence), agriculture (vs. hunting and gathering), money and taxes (vs. barter), sedentarism (vs. nomadism), clothing (vs. nudity), social hierarchy (vs. equality). The directors were also responsible for making sure the natives learn Portuguese, decreed to be the only official language of Portuguese America. The only significant difference was that Western Civilisation was now understood first and foremost as a secular project, where Catholicism was not the essence, but a refinement of Western Civilisation.

The Directory was based on the idea that the Brazilian Indians had to first be converted to Modernity before they could be converted to Christianity. Thus, the religious society of the mission-villages gave way to the secular society of the villages, and Catholicism was increasingly sidelined by Capitalism. The repeal of the Directory in 1798 did not alter in any significant fashion the relations between Brazilian Indians and Luso-Brazilians, with the process of modernisation (i.e. acculturation into Western Modernity) continuing unabated during the 19th century (Ribeiro 1983: 82-84).

In the 20th century, the project of acculturation took another turn with the creation of the *Serviço de Proteção aos Índios* [SPI: Indian Protection Service] in 1910. The SPI followed the Positivist values and principles set by its founder, Candido Rondón. Drawing from Comte's writings on Africa, and invoking the principles on the integration of the Brazilian Indians compiled by José Bonifácio in 1822, Candido Rondón, and other Brazilian Positivists, formulated a policy that called for: a) the establishment of peaceful relations with the Indians; and b) a waiting period for their social evolution (through contact) into the final stage of Humanity: Positivism. Brazilian Positivists argued that the Brazilian Indians were not racially inferior but merely living in a primitive stage of humanity. Their integration required a civilising process that would elevate them from their

fetishistic phase to the highest form of civilisation, that is, to Western Modernity, and more specifically to Positivism (Diacon 2004: 104).

The process was meant to be peaceful, consensual and gradual; encouraged through contact, example and demonstration. However, the reality failed to live up to the ideals. The residential posts [*núcleos indígenas*] created under this regime operated in a similar fashion to the colonial mission-villages—with the State holding their tutelage, while extracting labour from the people and wealth from the land; and the Indians, once again, placed in times and spaces different from their own (Lima 1995: 191). The so-called pacification was in reality a form of sublimated conquest that built a ‘great enclosure of peace’ to contain and control the indigenous peoples of Brazil (Lima 1995). While the SPI presented itself as mediator between the State and the Indians, in reality it acted as an arm of the State, whose primordial objective was to expand the power of the State rather than protect or assist the Brazilian Indians (Lima 1995). The fact that the SPI was situated within the structures of the Ministry of Agriculture, Industry and Commerce meant also that its projects were ‘perfectly integrated into the capitalist system’ (Gagliardi 1989: 289).

The SPI and the institution that came to replace it, the *Fundação Nacional do Índio* [FUNAI: National Indian Foundation], were part of a national(ist) project aimed at the complete integration of the Brazilian Indians into Brazil(ianness). In the expert words of Alcida Ramos, Rondon's project consisted on ‘gently levelling out ethnic differences by patiently waiting for the Indians to come of age as full Brazilians’ (1998: 156); whereas the role of the FUNAI was to ‘train Indians to become Brazilians’ (Ramos 1998: 96). The impact of this institutional change in the management of the national integration of the indigenous peoples was neatly summed up by Jonathan Warren as ‘a change that never was’ (2001: 103-113). The overall impact of the policies of these and similar ‘protective’ institutions has been the continuous alienation, detribalisation and acculturation of the Brazilian Indians, not least because their integration into Brazil(ianness) has always been subordinate to the integration of Brazil into Western Modernity, and this requires

the effective disappearance of Indianness, that is, the disappearance of the Brazilian Indians as Indians (Diacon 2004: 121).

This new civilising discourse defined the Indians as the *nation's* (vs. god's) children allowing the State, through the regime of tutelage, to decide their future: 'Indians belong to the Brazilian nation, and therefore those in power can do to Indians as they see fit, regardless of what Indians may want for themselves. [...] Brazilians—that is, adults—know best for the infantile Indians, and for Indians to reach adulthood they must relinquish their Indianness' (Ramos 1998: 82-83). This position denies maturity and value to indigenous culture, and with that it also denies the value (even the possibility) of cultural hybridity with the Indian Other. The only cultural direction left open for the Indians is their integration into Brazil(ianness), defined in terms of Western Modernity. Admittedly, following the 1988 Constitution, the Indians can continue to live as Indians. But there is a catch: those who take this option remain under the tutelage of the State. This decision to condition the full integration of the Brazilian Indians into the nation (as equal citizens) to the abandonment of their cultural identity and the embrace of Western Modernity illustrates a Eurocentric definition of Brazilianness, and its current use as a tool of white hegemony in Brazil.

Catholicisation: The Religious Colonisation of the African Other. The cultural integration of Africans and their descendants in colonial Brazil was also driven by a similar discourse of barbarism and civilisation that demanded their evangelisation—although the clergy appeared more preoccupied with imbuing in them the acceptance of *slavery* than the embrace of Catholicism. Indeed, the effort to convert and save the souls of Afro-Brazilians was secondary to the effort to convert and save the souls of the Brazilian Indians, whose association with Primitivism rather than Barbarism, made them worthier of salvation in the eyes of the Portuguese. Nevertheless, the cultural practices and traditions of the African Other did not escape the attention of the colonists, who used a combination of repression and assimilation to acculturate Africans into the cosmology of the Portuguese Self. Yet, once again, the cultural integration of the Africans would be

the fruit of the attempts of the colonists to impose cultural dominance and the effort of Afro-Brazilians to retain as much cultural autonomy as possible.

The acculturation of the Africans brought to Brazil began prior to their embarkation, with the celebration of group baptisms where each captive was given a Christian name, a practice often repeated upon arrival in Portuguese America. Their baptism and the religious teachings they sometimes received during the voyage had little impact, and the captives entered Brazil pretty much as they had left Africa (Mattoso [1979]1986: 32). In the plantations, the slaves were instructed in the rudiments of Catholicism (Karasch 1987: 255-256). Priests emphasised a message of obedience and penitence, designed to imbue in the slaves the acceptance of slavery as their destiny, as their personal if painful road to salvation and eternal freedom. While all baptised slaves were nominally members of the Catholic Church, their religious life was limited to a superficial practice of Catholicism, usually *juxtaposed* to the practice of alternative expressions of religious beliefs based on their African heritage (Vainfas 1986: 41).

The religious adaptation of the slaves required the formulation of a coherent belief system that could provide them with a sense of self, of community, and of their place in their new world (Klein 1999: 177). This was no easy task, given the limited leisure time at their disposal and the need to contend with the cultural structures of the colonists, in particular, Catholicism. The difficulties were compounded by the fact that the Africans brought to Brazil came from different regions and nations and that slavery broke the bond between traditional values and the social realities that those values reflected back in Africa (Bastide 1978). The solution was to abandon those practices and elements that did not fit in the new environment and adapt those that could be adapted. As it happened, Afro-Brazilians developed their own cultural practices in the interstices of the slave regime and the dominant culture of colonial Brazil. They did so in the spaces afforded by Catholic brotherhoods and Afro-Brazilian cults, known collectively as Candomblé.

The need to formulate religions that could serve as a coherent cultural reference for entire black communities led to the intra-transculturation of African

religious practices and beliefs. In addition, the need to provide 'a cover of legitimacy for religions that were severely proscribed by white masters' led to the acceptance and integration of Catholic beliefs and practices into the local cult activities of Afro-Brazilians (Klein 1986: 181). Curiously, the saints and local cults typical of popular Catholicism 'provided a perfect medium for syncretization of African deities' (Klein 1986: 182). The result was the creation of cults that brought together elements of various African religions and elements of Catholicism. The resulting combinations often evolved into ever more elaborate cosmologies, and complete religions began to emerge by the late 18th century, coming to light in the post-abolition period —although their (partial) recognition as religions came only in the 20th century.

Candomblé was persecuted and violently repressed by the colonial authorities, who permitted the practice of some dances and celebrations but 'never allowed the open practice of genuine religious cults, which seemed to them incompatible with Christianity' (Mattoso [1979]1986: 127). The worship of *orixás* [divinities] was considered a form of sorcery [*feitiçaria*] and prohibited for most of Brazilian history. Candomblé managed to survive, often under the guise of popular Catholicism, due to the *cultural resilience* of the Afro-Brazilian community, not because of the cultural tolerance of the Portuguese or its acceptance by the Catholic Church.

Candomblé became more acceptable only after the formation of hybrid religions, collectively known as Umbanda, in the 1930s and 1940s, and popularised in the 1960s. But until today, the practice of Candomblé continues to suffer police repression and to be treated by many, including followers of Umbanda, as a manifestation of idolatry and barbarism. Afro-Brazilian religions are still considered by many religious leaders and large sectors of the Brazilian society an inferior expression of spirituality at best (Ascher 2001). This *hierarchy of religions* reflects the continuous prejudice towards Afro-Brazilian culture —a culture which continues to be associated with witchcraft and darkness, that is, with the classic portrait of Africa as the Dark Continent.

These days Candomblé is followed in particular by Afro-Brazilians with a strong identification with Africa, who try to reproduce Africa in Brazil (Dantas 1988); as well as by white tourists looking for the exotic Other, and African-American tourists looking for what one might call 'the exotic Same'. However, since the late 20th century, Candomblé has become fashionable to the point that some of the better known and more traditional *terreiros* [sacred precincts] have been absorbed by the tourist industry and the academic elite, especially anthropologists (Fry 1982: 49). The transformation of Candomblé into a national cultural product has meant the displacement of its original producers (poor blacks, often the direct descendants of slaves) from leadership positions, in favour of members of the white middle and upper classes, and their relegation to the position of colourful extras (Fry 1982: 51). Yet, despite being currently fashionable, even amongst an increasing number of whites, these cults remain the object of mainstream society's contempt (Assunção 2005: 157-158) and continue to be stigmatised as expressions of fetishism, culturally inferior to sophisticated or so-called proper religions such as Catholicism.

The ambivalent impact of the nationalisation of Afro-Brazilian religious symbols can also be illustrated by the proclamation of *Nossa Senhora da Conceição Aparecida* [Our Appeared Lady of the Conception] as patron saint of Brazil in 1930. The choice of a black (or, to be precise, almost black) image of the Virgin Mary as national patron saint and its reinvention as symbol of hybridity and/or black mother of a hybrid nation has served to reinforce the notion of racial democracy that became hegemonic in the 1930s (Souza 1996). The symbolic power of this choice is enormous, not so much in the popular title of Appeared (which reflects the fact that the figure was found by three fisherman, giving the figure a popular appeal), but in the official title of Conception (which refers to the Immaculate Conception of Mary, and thus suggests the immaculate birth of Brazil). Moreover, her blackness served to redeem Afro-Brazilians, whose humanity had been questioned by centuries of slavery. Yet, their redemption was also the redemption of the nation, whose (partial) blackness could now be accepted, in tune with the increasing recognition and valorisation of the African

contribution to the formation of Brazil. But crucially, that redemption comes in the form of Catholicism, making this choice yet another step in the consolidation of a Lusocentric definition of Brazilianness.

* * * * *

The official response to Candomblé in colonial Brazil, other than derision and violent repression, was the promotion of religious associations known as brotherhoods [*irmandades*]. The Crown promoted the creation of black brotherhoods and other voluntary associations and welfare societies [*santas casas*], while Church leaders encouraged slaves to follow the cult of *Nossa Senhora do Rosario* [Our Lady of the Rosary], reserved for Afro-Brazilians. Brotherhoods dedicated to her devotion spread around the country, becoming the main source of religious and social assistance for the Afro-Brazilians. These brotherhoods were a corporate response to their collective and individual needs: religious education and spiritual assistance, medical assistance, funds for manumission, and the search for, and display of African identity (Russell-Wood 1974: 129-130). They were also a refuge for democratic aspirations and sentiments, a place to debate issues and current affairs that could not be raised in public (Scarano 1975: 32). Nevertheless, brotherhoods were still part and parcel of the colonisation of Brazil. The State used them to preserve social order, whereas the Church used them to domesticate religious beliefs and forge collective identities based on the solemn glories of Christianity (Silveira 1988: 169), and thus assist the colonial and imperial order, but also preserve the supremacy of Catholicism.

The creation of brotherhoods did not imply absence of prejudice, nor did they eliminate cultural or racial hierarchies in colonial Brazil. Mary Karasch shows how the main formal criteria for membership to religious brotherhoods in Rio de Janeiro were colour and ethnicity, although exceptions were made, especially in the 19th century (1987: 280-284). Members of poor black brotherhoods were often allowed to enter the churches of white brotherhoods, participate in their religious rituals, place black saints on the side altars, and even hold ceremonies in the side

chapels, but they always remained there at the invitation of the white brotherhood (Karasch 1987: 82). The gratitude owed and the dependence created by this situation reinforced white hegemony in colonial Brazil. Having said that, many black brotherhoods also operated a politics of identity that restricted membership or participation in decision making based on ethnicity, creating a further hierarchy between wealthier and poorer Afro-Brazilian brotherhoods (Soares 2000: 188).

The same politics of ethnicity that prevented the assimilation of Afro-Brazilian culture into the dominant culture became 'a major obstacle to the development of slave class solidarity and to the success of slave rebellions' (Reis 1988: 111). The existing rivalries between Afro-Brazilians of different origins was seen by the colonial authorities as the best guarantee of the security of Brazil (Kent 1970: 344). The authorities stimulated rivalries between Afro-Brazilian brotherhoods hoping this would perpetuate 'internal divisions among the slave community and prevent the development of a coherent racial or class identity' (Klein 1986: 182). In this sense, brotherhoods became a tool of *planned syncretism* that papered over 'the permanent class conflict' between masters and slaves (Boschi 1986: 69).

In general terms, brotherhoods succeeded as mechanisms of social control—facilitating social assistance and cultural integration, and thus decreasing the fuel for slave revolts—but failed as instruments of acculturation—at least in so far as they failed to completely eradicate deities, rituals and beliefs brought from Africa (Mattoso [1979]1986: 99-100). In fact, brotherhoods contributed to the survival of African deities and rituals under the guise of Catholicism, as well as the emergence of a syncretic Catholicism. Thus, for example, the absorption of African deities altered the perception of Catholic saints, who went from being mediators for the attainment of divine grace to become, like the *orixás*, guardians of life in this world (Klein 1986: 184). Brotherhoods fostered the cultural pride of the Afro-Brazilian population and legitimised some of their religious beliefs and practices, although they did so within the structures of Catholicism.

The integration of Afro-Brazilian cultural expressions into Catholicism has been a constant in the religious history of Brazil, and is today visible, for example, in the so-called inculturated mass or 'Afro-mass'. This ritual was officially recognised in 1988, in response to the demands of the Black Pastoral, a religious organisation created by young black seminarists to combat racism inside the Catholic Church. The feeling of being treated as blacks led many of them to acquire a previously inexistent racial consciousness, which in turn led them to push for the integration of Afro-Brazilian cultural practices into the Catholic liturgy (Burdick 1998: 52-56). The inculturated mass has since become an instrument to stimulate black consciousness among the Afro-Brazilians who participate in the Church (Burdick 1998: 56). Yet, the ritual is far from problematic as an instrument to fight racism in Brazil. Its central feature are the highly sensual dances performed by black women, dressed in clothing of vibrant colours and loose, flowing fabrics that are supposed to evoke Africa (Burdick 1998: 59). The centrality of the black female body in the celebration of the mass poses a critical limitation to its emancipatory potential. While the ritual allows black women to liberate themselves from the white aesthetic, it reinforces their definition as *bodies* and the definition of their bodies 'as site of pleasure, above all as the pleasure of spectacle and object of male desire' (Burdick 1998: 21). In other words, the inculturated mass furthers the hegemony of whiteness (insofar as the objectified body is black), of patriarchy (insofar as the objectified body is female), and of Catholicism (insofar as the ritual is Catholic).

In sum, African and Catholic beliefs still inhabit the soul of the Brazilian people. Brazilians in general, not just Afro-Brazilians, often resort to one or the other depending on the circumstances. In general terms, there is a syncretism at the external level (i.e. icons and images) but the two religious traditions remain fundamentally different at the internal level (i.e. concepts and beliefs). Yet cultural contact, far from eliminating cultural hierarchies, has enabled the emergence of a more complex *hierarchy of religions* that combines colour and culture. This hierarchy privileges religious practices followed by whites, even in the case of Afro-Brazilian religions; and continues to associate Afro-Brazilian cults with

superstition and sorcery, denying in fact their status and value as religions proper. The analysis of religious interaction shows that syncretism and coexistence are both part of the religious landscape of Brazil; but it also shows that this outcome has had more to do with the cultural resilience of the African Other (Afro-Brazilians) than the religious tolerance of the Portuguese (Luso-Brazilians). Indeed, a look at contemporary Brazil reveals, if anything, a continuation of the old colonial project of religious colonisation of the African Other.

Brazilianness: The Secular Colonisation of the African Other. The dialectic of barbarism and civilisation that underpins religious transculturation and that seeks to curb Afro-Brazilian religiosity has also shaped secular transculturation in Brazil. The clearest illustration of this has been the treatment accorded to the most popular cultural expression of Afro-Brazilianness: the *batuque* [dance to the beat of drums]. The *batuques* were the most common form of entertainment and cultural affirmation of the Afro-Brazilian population in colonial Brazil. They were an integral part of Candomblé which found their way out of the sacred precincts [*terreiros*] to become an expression of the vitality and identity of the Afro-Brazilians (Ramos 1971: 135-144). In a context of hard work, discrimination and the permanent threat of violence, the *batuques* were 'an important means to preserve [their] own identity and demarcate [their] relative independence of spirit in relation to dominant ideology' (Silveira 1988: 172).

The *batuques* were defended by some members of the colonial elite, who saw in these and other pastimes [*divertimentos africanos*] a healthy distraction and a useful mechanism to release pressure from the slave system. Others saw them as bad for labour productivity and feared that they could be used as a rehearsal for rebellion (Reis 2005: 202). Many colonists feared the effects that these diabolical gatherings [*diabólicos folguedos*] could have on social order, and urged public authorities to police or forbid dances connected with African religious rituals (Karasch 1987: 243). Moreover, the excitement generated by some of the dances and their integration into religious ceremonies offended the mores of the

colonists, who often referred to these songs and dances as immoral, indecent, lascivious, obscene and barbarous (Leite 1996: 152).

Yet many found hard to resist the appeal of the batuques and slowly but surely the batuques would give rise to different music and dance manifestations that came to be central to Brazilian as well as Portuguese national identity. Thus, for example, the *fofa* was introduced in Portugal by the black slaves of returning migrants and adopted with such success by the white popular classes that foreign travellers, ignorant of its colonial origin, considered it to be the national popular dance of the Portuguese (Tinhorão 1998: 79-98). The original batuque was transformed by the mulatto population through the introduction of an elaborate choreography into a form of dance and song called *lundu*. Introduced in Lisbon by the black community, the lundu became an immediate success in Portugal in the second half of the 18th century. Considered indecent when danced by the common people on the streets, the lundu was said to be elegant when danced in ball-rooms by the social elite of Lisbon (Karasch 1987: 243). The lundu also gained increasing acceptance in the salons and became the national dance of whites and mulattos in colonial Brazil (Tinhorão 1998: 99-104).

The new styles that kept emerging were invariably appropriated by the white middle-classes, who subsequently 'civilised' or 'modernised' them, eliminating some of their 'vulgarity' and transforming them into 'elegant' ball-room dances and 'sophisticated' song genres, and thus into acceptable national symbols (Wade 2001: 857). This attempt to contain, control and civilise the cultural practices and expressions of Afro-Brazilians has continued beyond colonial Brazil. Two emblematic examples of this process are the so-called civilisation—now redefined as nationalisation—of *capoeira* (turned into the national martial art) and *samba* (turned into the national dance).

Capoeira is a game played to percussive music, where the participants attack each other with fluid, elegant and potentially devastating moves that fall short of contact. Its origins are uncertain, but they are usually situated in the Angolan war dances and forms of stylised fighting still found in southern Africa. In Brazil, capoeira was developed in times of slavery as a form of self-defence by

slaves and Afro-Brazilians in general. The general agreement is that the fighting techniques and choreographic vocabularies were brought from Africa, while 'the strategic blending of fight and dance occurred in Brazil' (Browning 1995: 91). The key to this strategy was the creation of a circle of people [*roda de capoeira*] which enabled a game of capoeira to be instantly turned into or disguised as an innocent samba. In general terms, capoeira is a game that sublimates a fight into a dance (Bastide 1985: 80). In symbolic terms, capoeira can be defined as a dance that embodies the history of slave resistance and racial struggle in Brazil (Browning 1995: 124). Indeed, capoeira was feared by the colonists, who associated its practice with slave resistance and, in the urban settings, with criminality. Its practice was prohibited and fiercely repressed in colonial Brazil.

The nationalisation and depoliticisation of capoeira began in the late 19th century, when the military, writers and folklorists began to hollow out its African heritage (Santos 1999: 27). Ever since, capoeira has been presented as another product and illustration of racial harmony in Brazil. But it was the declaration of Getúlio Vargas in 1953 referring to capoeira as 'the only true national sport' of Brazil—made after witnessing a demonstration by Mestre Bimba, founder of the regional style (a hybrid style which incorporates 'white moves' from boxing and ju-jitsu)—that opened the path for the official acceptance of capoeira in Brazil. The government licensed academies of capoeira, turning the practice into a respectable martial art, and regulating its practice as national sport in 1973 (Santos 1999: 25).

The nationalisation of capoeira has undermined its political significance and turned a cultural practice that was about resistance and difference into a form of entertainment and a tourist attraction. However, this strategy of cultural containment has not been completely successful. In Bahia, where the Angola style (the more traditional and 'black' style) is still widely practiced, capoeira plays a socio-political role in some of the schools. Some academies have become educational spaces where children of politicised black parents are sent to learn about their cultural heritage (Browning 1995: 98). They have become a space of pedagogy and of cultural liberation. In a sense, these academies are the modern circles where cultural resistance can still take place (Lewis 1992).

Samba, the most popular secular dance in Brazil, is another illustration of the processes of nationalisation and neutralisation of the Afro-Brazilian culture in post-colonial Brazil. The origins of samba are also widely disputed, although they are often linked to the social dances of Angola (Karasch 1987: 245). The modern samba evolved from the popular dances developed in the shanty-towns [*morros* or *favelas*] of Brazil. Samba was initially despised by the middle-class and violently persecuted and repressed by the police, forcing the dance to hide within Candomblé. Condemned for decades as barbaric, licentious and uncivilised, samba was considered a minor genre whose black origins disqualified it from being considered a national song form in the 1930s (Garcia 1999: 72). This began to change in the 1920s and by the mid 20th century samba had become the national dance of Brazil.

The nationalisation of samba was helped by 'cultural mediators' such as Gilberto Freyre (Vianna 1995); by the increasing penetration of mass media in Brazilian society (Ortiz 1988); by the increasing popularity of carnival, where samba had become the chief dance (Fry 1982); and, last but not least, by the success of Carmen Miranda, the white samba singer and dancer who exported samba to the world, especially to the United States of America (Garcia 1999). The central role of Carmen Miranda in the so-called modernisation of samba is probably the most clear illustration of the whitening (cultural and well as physical) of the most famous cultural expression of Brazil(ianness). She became the official link between the samba tradition of poor blacks and mulattos and the desire of the white middle-class to create and enjoy an original national identity, and in doing so she helped transform samba into the national dance of Brazil. In short, she translated the black samba for a white audience and thus enabled its integration into Brazilianness ... and then Hollywood. The identification of Carmen Miranda with samba shows also the obsession with Western Modernity. Her success in the cultural markets of the West enhanced her reputation as a national hero and samba's reputation as the modern expression of Brazil(ianness).

This transformation can be explained by the general interest in national symbols and by the specific interest in elements that could reflect or be

constructed as symbols of hybridity that began in the 1920s (Vianna 1995). Thus, a cultural form that narrated the history of contact, conflict and resistance between Africans, Europeans and Indians, was reinvented as the culmination of a benign *love story* between Africans and Portuguese (Browning 1995: 16). In short, samba has become another symbol of the harmonious (and homogeneous) mixture of the three races in Brazil (Vianna 1995). The reinvention of samba is not a simple cultural expropriation but an ideological reformulation —a manner of defusing the threat of cultural conflict and the possibility of cultural resistance against white hegemony and Eurocentrism in Brazil.

The nationalisation of culture reveals and reinforces white hegemony in the formulation of Brazil(ianness). The transformation of black symbols into national symbols, of 'savage' practices (i.e. uncontrolled and dangerous) into 'civilised' ones (i.e. controlled and safe/sanitised) defuses the challenges to white hegemony in Brazil. Indeed, the nationalisation of popular culture has been synonymous with cultural *domestication* —the neutralisation of cultural difference (i.e. samba) and the neutralisation of cultural resistance (i.e. capoeira). This process negates the possibility of cultural autonomy and cultural resistance, turning cultural practices into something inoffensive, and swallowing cultural differences into the hegemonic definition of Brasilianness.

The nationalisation of Afro-Brazilian cultural forms could suggest the successful integration of the Afro-Brazilians in the national imaginary. However, this interpretation would ignore the underlying civilising discourse that still presides over the hegemonic discourse of Brazilianness. The key to the nationalisation of Afro-Brazilian culture has been its gradual *double whitening*: on the one hand, its management by the white elites (and increasingly by the white middle-class); and on the other hand, its so-called modernisation, that is, its integration into the cultural (and economic) structures of Western Modernity. In other words, the cultural integration of the Afro-Brazilian Other operates within a cultural hierarchy that values Europe and the United States (taken as representatives of Modernity and Whiteness) over Africa (taken as representative

of Savagery and Blackness) and shapes the subordinated or dependent integration of Afro-Brazilian culture into Brazil(ianness).

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To conclude: the cultural contacts between Indians, Africans and Portuguese are central to the definition of hybridity as the essence of Brazil. These contacts contributed to the emergence of hybrid religious and secular practices, but this was not the result of the cultural tolerance of the Portuguese. Instead, this was the result of the dynamics of domination and resistance between settlers and natives, masters and slaves. Furthermore, hybridity resulted *despite prejudice*, not in its absence. The fact that Brazilian Indians and Afro-Brazilians found enough energy to (re)create their cultural identity, in a context of subjugation and exploitation, is testament to their *cultural resilience* not to the cultural tolerance of the Portuguese. This resilience forced the State to incorporate cultural expressions, initially rejected because of their Otherness into the normative definition of Brazilianness, under a discourse of cultural tolerance which has little to do with the reality of colonial Brazil and that downplays the *hierarchy of cultures* that still underpins the formulation of Brazilianness in terms of Whiteness and Western Modernity. In short, the cultural dimension of the Portuguese colonisation of Brazil was driven by the desire to colonise the imagination of the Indian and African Others, and that *will to power* still inscribes the cultural relations between Luso-Brazilians, Afro-Brazilians and Brazilian Indians.

The Ideology of Hybridity and Hybridity as Ideology

The miscegenation and transculturation that characterised much of life in colonial Brazil were first identified as central to the national identity in the mid-19th century. The incorporation of hybridity into the national(ist) imaginary followed the need to (re)define the nation after its independence from Portugal. Hybridity

provided the ingredients that could distinguish Brazil from Portugal, not just politically but also physically and culturally. Moreover, hybridity could be invoked as the key to guarantee the physical and cultural unity of Brazil. Finally, addressing the reality of hybridity was essential, given that the visibility of nonwhites was increasingly difficult to ignore, especially after the abolition of slavery in the late 19th century.

The articulation of Brazilianness as hybridity would take many shapes and forms: the pioneer work of José Bonifácio and Karl Von Martius; the pessimistic work of the Realists in the late 19th century; the celebratory work of the Modernists in the early 20th century; and the sacred text of Brazilian hybridity, Gilberto Freyre's *Casa-Grande & Senzala* (1933). However, before analysing the conceptualisation of hybridity in these and other important works, we must revisit those colonial texts which were later appropriated by national(ist) narratives to situate the roots of Brazilianness in colonial Brazil. The analysis of the absence and presence of hybridity in the so-called nativist narratives provides some important insights into the place of hybridity in the Brazilian imaginary.

Nativism: The Birth of a (Bandeirante) Nation. The first texts to come out of Brazil reflected the preoccupation of settlers and missionaries with the material and spiritual conquest of Brazil. Subsequent narratives justified colonisation, evangelisation and the defence against so-called foreign invaders, that is, other than the Portuguese. These texts portrayed natives as natural beings, and blacks as people innately inferior to whites in physical beauty and mental ability, suited to a life in slavery. The Brazilianness of these texts was limited to the fact that they were written in Brazil; but it was still Portugal that exercised the decisive influence. After all, colonial writers were formed in Portugal and wrote for an audience that was mostly Portuguese (Candido [1965]1975: 90-91).

The first tentative formulations of Brazilianness were written in the 17th century, and rescued in the 19th century to lay the ideological foundations of independent Brazil. The classic nativist texts include: Ambrósio Fernandes Brandão's *Diálogos das Grandezas do Brasil* (1618), Frei Vicente do Salvador's

História do Brasil (1627), João André Antonil's *Cultura e Opulência do Brasil* (1711), and Sebastião Rocha Pita's *História da América Portuguesa* (1724). These texts reveal the existence of a colonial-nation defined by: the admiration and love for the land; the idealisation or animalisation of the indigenous; the objectification of the black population; and the representation of the Portuguese colonists and their Brazilian descendants as the main force responsible for the formation of Brazil. These colonial portraits tend to neglect hybridity and see the future of the land in terms of Portuguese America. The subsequent definition of these narratives as the roots of the nation injected their Lusocentrism in the foundations of Brazilianness.

The only colonial author to explore hybridity in some depth was Gregório de Matos, a 17th century poet from Salvador (Bahia). His work was underpinned by a sense of failure and betrayal. The potential of the land had been irremediably ruined by the taste for luxury and ostentation, by political corruption, and by the pretence that characterised colonial Brazil. Gregório de Matos is the first colonial writer to openly display the growing dislike amongst Brazilian colonists towards the new arrivals from Portugal—a trait that has made him into one of the earliest examples of Brazilian Nativism. His biting and violent satires vituperating colonial society gained him the nickname of Boca do Inferno [Mouth of Hell]. However, it was his attention to the figure of the Mulata that would make him a reference point for the formulation of hybridity as the essence of Brazil.

His poems provide the first comprehensive picture of urban life in colonial Brazil, including detailed portraits of the Afro-Brazilian population and a detailed account of the social structure and interactions of Salvador. Regarding hybridity, his main themes were a deeply felt resentment for the pretensions of social ascension of mulattos and freedmen (whom he considered his racial and social inferiors) and the erotic portrait of the mulata (sometimes idealised, sometimes animalised). His portrait of hybridity was deeply *ambivalent*: on the one hand, there was the *insolent* mulatto (driven by social envy); on the other hand, there was the *passionate* mulata (viewed as sexual object). The result was a cocktail of celebration and resentment of hybridity transversed by a clear gender dimension:

resentment of the hybrid male (the mulatto as a threat to white hegemony) and *celebration* of the hybrid female (the mulata as a potential sexual partner).

The poetry of Matos sits astride moralism and eroticism, but the two come together in his poetic treatment of the female characters. On the one hand, he portrays the white woman as a distant lover deserving of ‘a thousand fineries’. The relations with them are presided by physical distance. This is ‘poetry of loss and not possession, of renunciation, not pleasure’ (Bosi 1992: 108). On the other hand, the black and mulatto women invoke desire, physical attraction and repulsion, even sadism. In these poems, one cannot find women's faces, ‘only eschatological exhibitions of genital and anal parts’ (Bosi 1992: 109). In essence, his poems are the foremost early literary expression of the classical dichotomy that identifies white as the colour of love and black as the colour of sex and desire (both as attraction and repulsion) in the Brazilian imaginary.

The work of Gregório de Matos was invoked for the construction of Brazil as a hybrid nation in the late 19th century by Sílvio Romero and in the 20th century by Gilberto Freyre. His dual vision of hybridity and blackness —with a strong emphasis on black female sexuality and the centrality of the mulata— is still very much present in contemporary Brazil. However, the first hybrid figure to be identified with Brazilianness was not the mulata but the Bandeirante.

The figure of the Bandeirante is crucial in the discourses of race and nation and the formulation of hybridity in Portuguese America. In *Nobiliárquia Paulistana, Histórica e Genealógica* (1770), the white aristocrat Pedro Taques de Almeida tried to ennoble the bandeirantes by proving their purity of blood. However, this was no easy task, given that many of them had some level of indigenous ancestry. Unable to remove the stain of hybridity, he tried to redeem it by creating the myth of indigenous *nobility* —presenting indigenous partners as being of noble blood. This strategy was facilitated by the ‘relative dignification of the Indians’ provided in particular by the decrees of the Marquis of Pombal abolishing the slavery of Indians and granting them honours (Candido [1965]1975: 174). In contrast, Frei Gaspar da Madre de Deus, in *Memorias para a história da capitania de São Vicente* (1797), celebrated the fact that many bandeirantes were, like him, people of

Portuguese and Indian descent. Miscegenation, he argued, had ennobled Portuguese blood with Indian virtues. The result was a superior race that combined the best qualities of the Indian and the Portuguese: bravery and nobility, respectively. Their contrasting attitudes on the racial makeup of the bandeirantes prefigured later discourses of race and nation in Brazil: a) the preference for racial purity (dominant for most of the 19th century); and b) the celebration of miscegenation (dominant since the early 20th century). In the end, the narrative of hybridity prevailed, not least because of the increasing need and desire to assert a different and original identity for Brazil (Abud 1985).

The hybrid character of the bandeirantes enabled their centrality in the formation and formulation of Brazil. On the one hand, their knowledge of the land, acquired through their indigenous heritage, facilitated the penetration of the interior, the raiding and capture of natives, and the discovery of the mines—their main contributions to the formation of Brazil. The bandeirantes were credited with the territorial expansion and the economic, biological and cultural integration of Brazil. They came to symbolise the racial vigour of the colonists—the ‘race of giants’ in the words of Saint-Hilaire. The Bandeirante became the central figure in the history of São Paulo, and by extension a central figure in the history of Brazil (Abud 1985). They came to be considered the *architects* of Brazil.

On the other hand, their indigenous ancestry gave them an aura of *authenticity* that was essential for the definition of Brazilianness, and that came to explain their centrality in the ideological formulation of Brazil. The bandeirante and other similar hybrid figures (i.e. the *sertanejo* and the *gaúcho*) would function as enchanting terms that legitimised the process of colonisation and the spread of modernity while retaining a sense of authenticity, with deep roots in pre-colonial Brazil. The colonisation and modernisation of Brazil, when presented as the work of the bandeirantes, appears Brazilian, even though they acted all along as colonial agents, and the model of development followed was European. They elicited a sense of fusion between tradition and modernity, between indigenous culture and western civilisation; between the new world and the old world—and thus they could be constructed and celebrated as Brazilian. And indeed they were.

So much so that the idealised image of the Bandeirante —one that omits the violence they inflicted on the natives— became one of the most, if not the most admired figure in Brazil (Moog [1954]1966: 197). Thus, for example, none other than Gilberto Freyre argued that they had been the main force responsible for the construction of ‘the social and ethnic democracy so typical of Brazil’ ([1963]2000: 100). The figure of the Bandeirante was also invoked as the soul of the nation to drive and legitimise the expansion into the interior, the so-called ‘*Marcha para o Oeste*’, instituted in the late 1930s.

IHGB: The Historiographical Subordination of the Others. Independence demanded a specific and distinctive identity for Brazil. In his vision for the nation, the Patriarch of Independence, José Bonifácio, included a politics of hybridity destined to consolidate the social, cultural and biological unity of Brazil. His vision required the emergence of a new race with a common culture. The idea was to produce ‘a homogeneous and compact whole that does not crumble at the small touch of any new political convulsion’ (Andrada e Silva 1998: 49). The solution was double: miscegenation (through intermarriage and white immigration) and civilisation (through education and evangelisation). Hybridity should fulfil two fundamental roles: ‘eliminate the profound racial differences and at the same time civilise Indians and blacks, through the biological and cultural mix with whites’ (Dolhnikoff 1996:126). José Bonifácio considered *mestiços* [mixed-bloods] the ‘best race of Brazil’ —but only in the sense of their superior physical adaptation to the Tropics. Thus, whites had the task of imbuing in them the virtues of the most advanced civilisation, that of Europe. The new culture would be essentially Western: a Brazilian synthesis of French Enlightenment and Roman Catholicism. He believed that the superior culture would prevail through miscegenation, and thus he proposed the inoculation of the nation with European blood, calling for incentives to European migration. His proposal of a biological solution (miscegenation) to a perceived cultural problem (backward civilisation) prefigures the confluence of biology and culture that would affect national(ist) thinkers well into the 20th century.

The production of a national memory following independence was entrusted to the Instituto Histórico e Geográfico Brasileiro [IHGB]. The Institute was created in 1838 by a group of intellectuals concerned with the need to legitimise and formulate a national identity for the Brazilian Empire (Guimarães 1988). In his speech at the founding of the IHGB, Januario da Cunha Barbosa described its purpose as being to 'eternalise the historical and memorable events' of the nation and produce a national history 'purified of errors' and 'inaccuracies' (Reproduced in Baily 1971: 38-42). Their objective was to produce a complete, accurate and coherent portrait of Brazil. The thought that accuracy (historical truth) and coherence (national history) might be opposing forces was never a consideration. The concept of the *nation as destiny* meant that the histories of the particular provinces had to be subordinated to the national history, the history of Brazil. The nationalisation of history served a triple purpose: it provided a coherent historical memory (past); legitimised the new political regime (present); and facilitated the process of modernisation envisaged by the elites (future). This was a *teleological narration* of the nation that emphasised the continuation between past, present and future. Modernity and Brazilianness were the continuation of the civilising mission initiated by the Portuguese. In essence, modern Brazil was the culmination of Portuguese America.

In 1840, the IHGB held a competition entitled 'How to write the History of Brazil'. The winning essay, written by German naturalist Karl Philipp von Martius, emphasised the need to focus on the three races that composed the Brazilian nation and examine their respective contributions on the formation of Brazil: 'the copper-colored, or American; the white, or Caucasian; and the black, or Ethiopian' ([1844]1967: 23). This notion of contributions served to erase the domination, exploitation and conflict that shaped the relations between the three groups. Moreover, behind the apparent integrative approach, the essay offered a deeply Lusocentric view of the history of Brazil. To begin with, Von Martius attributed the mixture to the providential will, adding that: 'The powerful river of Portuguese blood ought to absorb the small tributaries of the Indian and Ethiopian races' (24). He then dedicated four pages to 'The Indian and *their history*

as part of the History of Brazil'; seven pages to 'The Portuguese and *their part in the History of Brazil*'; and less than two pages to 'The African race and *its relation to the History of Brazil*' [italics mine]. The Indians are depicted as primitive people with an obscure past, 'a very ancient, though lost history' (26), currently in a 'state of moral dissolution' and 'brutal degeneration' (28). The Portuguese are depicted as the architects of the nation: 'discoverers, conquerors and masters' and 'the most powerful and vital force' (23). The Africans are depicted simply as slaves. The only contribution attributed to Indians and Africans are their popular myths—referred as superstition and fetishism—which could become the source for a distinctive cultural identity from Europe (36). Von Martius illustrates here the appropriation that would define the cultural integration of Indian and African Otherness into Brazilianness. In any case, the space dedicated to each group, the subtle variations in the titles of each section, and their respective portraits present the Portuguese as the only significant historical agent in the construction of Brazil.

Von Martius' essay is the first systematic reflection of the history of Brazil using the concept of race, as well as the first systematic formulation of Brazil as a hybrid nation. But although Von Martius argued that Brazilian identity was to be found in the fusion of races, he still concluded that: 'The history of Brazil will always be primarily a history of a branch of the Portuguese' (37). Admittedly, he added that if Brazilian history was to be complete it could never exclude 'the roles played by the Ethiopian and Indian races' (38). However, their roles were mostly symbolic (the mythical past of the Indians) and mechanical (the slave labour force of the Africans), rather than rational (the civilising project of the Portuguese). Moreover, his work is imbued with the type of paternalism, evolutionism and Eurocentrism typical of future Brazilian narratives of hybridity. Thus, the contributions of Brazilian Indians and Afro-Brazilians are *permitted* because of the tolerant and humanitarian character of the Portuguese. In short, Von Martius continued to attribute the formation of Brazil to the Portuguese and offered a very brief and ambiguous assessment of the influence of Indians and Africans.

The central figure of the IHGB, Francisco Adolfo de Varnhagen, produced a monumental *História Geral do Brasil* (1854-57), eulogising the Portuguese

colonisation of Brazil and promising a glorious future for the newly independent nation, illuminated by the exemplary lives and actions of the Portuguese colonists (Reis 2000: 23-50). In a few ethnographic chapters, he portrayed the Brazilian Indians as barbaric and uncivilised; while paying little attention to Africans and Afro-Brazilians, enough only to present them as the malaise of Brazil. In his comparative evaluation of the civilization of the colonizers, the barbarism of the slaves, and the savagery of the indigenous, Varnhagen followed Von Martius. However, neither he nor his colleagues at the IHGB developed the idea of hybridity as far as Von Martius had suggested. Instead, their desire to situate the Brazilian Empire within the confines of Western Modernity led them to exclude from the portrait of Brazil(ianness) those whose actions and customs they associated with tradition and Barbarism (Guimarães 1988: 7). In short, the concept of nation produced by the IHGB was eminently Lusocentric, written by and for Luso-Brazilians.

Indianism: The Literary Subordination of the Indian Other. The portrait of Brazil in the literature of the post-independence period was dominated by the Brazilian version of the European literary movement known as Romanticism. In Brazil, Romanticism was also known as Indianism. In fact, Brazilian Romanticism was the continuation of earlier Indianism —an ideological construction of the nationalist intellectuals built on the foundations laid down in the late 18th century by two epic poems: *O Uruguai* (1769), by José Basílio da Gama; and *Caramuru* (1781), by José de Santa Rita Durão. These poems reveal a warm feeling for Brazil: they depicted the natural beauties of the land; reproduced the notion of noble savage; and evoked glorious episodes of the Portuguese colonisation of Brazil. The poems contain the space and time of colonial Brazil. They narrate two events that take place at opposite extremes of Portuguese America: Bahia (the North) and Uruguay (the South); and they portray events that frame the beginning and the end of the old civilising mission: the evangelisation of Brazil. More importantly, these poems signal the transition of the Indian from natural being into mythical figure, transition that culminates in José de Alençar's *O Guarani* (1857).

Indianism took two main forms: the celebration of the pre-colonial Indian, and the exploration of the contact between the Indians and the Portuguese. The former offered an idyllic view of the land prior to the arrival of the Portuguese, based on images of the noble savage and the Garden of Eden. These works served to create 'a Brazilian Middle Age' (Leite [1954]1992: 173). The latter created a myth of origins based on the cordial relationship between Indians and Portuguese. Thus, Indianism became a crucial moment in the discursive construction of Brazil(ianness). Its general shape has been perfectly summed up by Ria Lemaire: 'Brazilian Indianism glorifies the Indian as the original inhabitant of Brazil and proclaims him the main source and origin of the new, superior race and civilization that has originated in Brazil, thanks to the miscegenation of two races and cultures: the Indian and the white, European' (1989: 59)

However, the Brazilian Romantics retained some clear and fundamental distinctions. On the one hand, they differentiated between those who aided and 'loved' the Portuguese (the good Indians) and those who resisted and fought the Portuguese (the bad Indians). Insofar as the narrative treatment of the Indians was based on their friendly or hostile relation with the Portuguese, Indianism remained essentially Lusocentric. On the other hand, the Brazilian Romantics retained a clear distinction between the Barbarism of the Indians and the Civilisation of the Portuguese. However, in their desire to redeem the good Indians—who had become integral to the symbolic construction of the nation—they reformulated Barbarism in a developmental fashion, as Primitivism. Thus, while the epithet of barbarism continued to apply to the bad Indians, the good Indians were portrayed as children whose innocence was to be admired, but whose childhood—a stage of human development considered inferior to adulthood—demanded evolution, even if this came as a painful process for the Brazilian Indians. Admittedly, the Romantics expressed nostalgia for the lost pre-colonial Brazil and mourned the loss of innocence and the decimation of the Indians, but they sought comfort in what they saw as their spiritual regeneration through Christianity (Brookshaw 1988: 37). This teleological narrative, which saw the march of progress as necessary and inevitable, justified the colonisation of

Brazil and came to inform the civilising discourse that demanded the integration of the Brazilian Indians into Western Modernity.

The iconic figure of Brazilian Indianism is José de Alençar. His work sought national roots in the Indian and provided the most influential interpretation of the relations between the Indians and the Portuguese in the formulation of Brazilianness. The most influential of his books is *O Guarani* (1857), an allegory of the colonial history which recreates the myth of origins of Brazil(ianness) in the union of the two main characters, the white maiden Cecilia and the noble savage Peri. Cecilia, or Ceci, is the beautiful daughter of D. Antônio de Mariz, a feudal lord and patriarch of a corner of rural Brazil, which he refers to as 'forever Portugal'. Cecilia represents Christian purity, the embodiment of the Virgin Mary. Her beauty and purity inspire adoration in Peri, who, after saving her life, forsakes his family, his tribal identity and his independence to serve and protect Ceci. His devotion overcomes her prejudice and Ceci warms to Peri, but their relation remains Platonic. Their union symbolises the spiritual fusion of America and Europe in Brazil (Brookshaw 1988).

The text has a clear cultural and moral hierarchy: at the bottom (outside morality) are the unreduced Indians, depicted as pagan cannibals on the fringe of humanity; at the top is Ceci, embodiment of Christian morality and European superiority; and in between is Peri, whose move from the tribal village to the colonial settlement and his contact with Ceci move him up the moral and cultural scale. Their relation is a story of moral progress, where the perfection of the spirit/culture (Europe) elevates the body/nature (America) to a superior state of being, transforming carnal desire (passion and nature) into love/romance (reason and culture). The spiritual union between Peri and Ceci symbolises the mythical birth of Brazil as the union of the strength and exuberance of the Indians and the culture and morality of the Portuguese, which at the time meant first and foremost Iberian Catholicism. In essence, their union symbolises the union of Portuguese Culture and American Nature (Brookshaw 1988).

The union of Ceci and Peri legitimates and celebrates the Portuguese colonisation of Brazil, but is far from a celebration of *actual* hybridity. Their

relationship is spiritual, and thus free from the alienation and degeneration the text associates with miscegenation —aspects illustrated by the relationship between Isabel, the mestizo daughter of a pre-marital affair between D. Antônio and an Indian woman, and Alvaro, an adventurer in D. Antônio's service. Isabel represents the tragedy of miscegenation, in contrast to the racial and moral purity of Cecilia. Isabel is the product of sin, of passion, of an affair between an Indian woman and a Portuguese man; a sin that informs her relation with Alvaro. She bears the burden of guilt because of her illicit birth. She is a tragic and resentful figure who hates her Indianness but is not fully accepted into the world of her Portuguese father (Brookshaw 1988: 113). The love of Isabel and Alvaro is governed by passion and located in the world of Nature, unlike the love of Ceci and Peri, which is governed by spirituality and located in the world of Culture. Alençar presents alienation as the normal and logical consequence of miscegenation. Similarly, the text does not value Indian culture or any form of transculturation between Indians and Portuguese. The only true culture is that of the Portuguese, and the cultural process is unidirectional: the acculturation of Peri into the culture of Ceci, the conversion of the Indians to Catholicism.

Miscegenation is the central theme of Alençar's other major work, *Iracema* (1865). This novel tells the love of the Indian maid Iracema, whose name is an anagram of America, for the Portuguese warrior Martim. Moacyr, the product of their union, is 'the first Cearense' and by extension one of the first Brazilians (Brookshaw 1988: 72). The gestation of Brazil is a process where the seed of Europe/Martim was implanted into the land of America/Iracema. Crucially, the birth of Moacyr causes the death of Iracema. Moacyr becomes the 'child of suffering' —a clear indication of the pain that came with the contact between Portugal and America. Like the Romantics in general, Alençar accepted the demise of the Indians as the inevitable price to pay for the implantation of European civilisation in America. The death of America/Iracema was the sacrifice required for the birth of Brazil/Moacyr (Brookshaw 1988: 76). In a patriarchal context, this narrative of the gestation and birth of Brazil is patently Eurocentric.

The literary myths produced by the Brazilian Romantics complemented the historical narratives produced by the IHGB. The mythical formulation of the national past celebrated the pre-colonial Indian roots but above all celebrated the relations between the Indians and the Portuguese, whilst completely ignoring the African presence in the construction of Brazil(ianness). Indeed, their idealised view of the nation came largely from ignoring the social reality of the country, in particular the slavery that still bonded most Afro-Brazilians. In short, the Brazilian Romantics were highly selective towards hybridity and the incorporation of the Others into Brazilianness: they ignored the influx of African blood and culture whilst valuing the blood and bravery of the Indians; they praised the 'good' Indians and rejected the 'bad' Indians; they praised the spiritual union between Indians and Portuguese, but only valued their physical union when the male was Portuguese. In essence, their portrait of Brazil(ianness) in general, and of hybridity in particular, was selective, patriarchal and Eurocentric.

Degeneration: The Subordinate Integration of the African Other. The late 1870s marked the shift from Romanticism to Realism and, with it, the shift from mythology to biology, from portraits of Indians as mythical beings in the Garden of Eden to their depiction as natural beings living in the Tropics. The term Indian was replaced with others such as caboclo and sertanejo, words that described people of the interior, often descendants from miscegenation between Portuguese and Brazilian Indians. In the realist narratives, these hybrid types were depicted as degenerate, illustrative of the backward state of the nation. Thus, the generally optimistic portrait of the nation painted by the Romantics, anchored on the exaltation of idealised mythology, was replaced with a *pessimistic* one, preoccupied with the social reality and the social ills of Brazil.

The intellectual figure that best represents this new take on the nation is Silvio Romero. His work provided the most comprehensive analysis of Brazilianness in the late 19th century and greatly influenced the reflections of future major intellectual figures, such as Euclides da Cunha, Oliveira Viana and Gilberto Freyre. The importance of his work derives from the pioneer application

of scientific methods of inquiry, proper of the natural sciences, to study Brazilian social reality. In particular, Romero pioneered the use of Evolutionism, whose two tenets were: a) that human history could be explained with physical and/or biological criteria, that is, race and climate; and b) that human history followed a linear trajectory whose end point was 19th century Europe. In short, Evolutionism was the marriage of Scientism and Eurocentrism.

The application of Evolutionism to Brazilian reality almost invariably led to pessimistic views about the state and prospects of the nation. The presence of two so-called inferior races and numerous people of mixed descent offered a grim portrait of the present and little hope for the future of Brazil. The popularity of the degeneration theories in social and medical studies manifested itself also in the many portraits of the nation as 'puffy, ugly, slothful and inert' (Borges 1993: 235). This pessimism was present in almost all interpretations of Brazil penned in the late 19th and early 20th century, with the notable exception of Afonso Celso's *Por que me ufano do meu pais* (1900), written to commemorate the 400th anniversary of Brazil.

The problem most authors faced was how to combine their deep seated pessimism with their deeply felt nationalism. Painting a glorious portrait of a nation supposedly inhabited by a degenerate population was no easy task. The Romantics had solved this by ignoring social reality, in particular the predicament of the Afro-Brazilians, focusing instead on the imaginary and idealised figure of the Indian. However, the emergence of science as the main signifier of modernity—one the national(ist) intellectuals aspired to—demanded that attention be paid to social reality rather than mythology, by definition beyond the scope of scientific observation. The challenge was to use scientific methods of inquiry to rethink the nation, while escaping the seemingly inescapable conclusion that Brazil was doomed. The effort to square this circle would shape national(ist) thinking between the 1870s and 1920s.

The solution offered by Romero was to integrate hybridity into the analysis while emphasising the predominance, and hoping for the eventual triumph of, Whiteness. He valued hybridity as 'factor of national differentiation' (Ventura

1991: 51). Hybridity might mean inferiority, but at least it was original and it was Brazilian. Indeed, was the only authentic Brazilianness. So much so that Romero would famously assert that 'The Indian is not Brazilian' (Cited in Leite [1954]1992: 184). Brazilianness was the product of hybridity between Indians, Africans and Portuguese shaped by the tropical climate and foreign cultures, mainly Portuguese. This interpretation gave recognition to the centrality of hybridity, but was still far away from its celebration a la Gilberto Freyre. Indeed, Romero defined the product of miscegenation and transculturation as a hybrid *sub-race* that was distinct from, but also inferior to the European (Cited in Leite [1954]1992: 186). However, this pessimism was tempered by the hope that, in a more or less distant future, all would be for the better, with the definitive whitening of Brazil.

Romero emphasised the contribution of the Indian and African Others insofar as they had aided the white to endure the hardships of the tropical climate, but sustained that: 'the white type will continue to predominate through natural selection until it emerges pure and beautiful as in the Old World' (Cited in Eakin 1985: 163). He even took the step to 'proclaim the hybrid vigour of the mestizo' but only to open the path to 'advocate miscegenation and the gradual whitening of the population' (Eakin 1985: 164). Thus, while valuing the contribution of the Others to the physical survival of the nation through their miscegenation with the Portuguese, that same miscegenation was now seen as the (necessary) force to deliver Brazil into Whiteness, to eliminate those Others.

Similar contradictions and ambivalences can be found in the influential work of Euclides da Cunha entitled *Os Sertões* (1902), a superb study of Antônio Conselheiro's messianic community at Canudos and their massacre by the republican army in 1897. Da Cunha sustained with similar conviction the idea that Brazil lacked racial unity, the fear that it might never possess such unity and the hope that, given time, Brazil would produce a 'historical race'. He defined the *sertanejo* [the mameluco of the interior] as the best hope for the emergence of a strong and historical race, authentically Brazilian. That belief led him to argue and denounce the fact that it was 'the very heart of our nationality, the bedrock of our race' that was being attacked at Canudos (Cunha [1902]1944: 464).

But at the same time, Da Cunha considered miscegenation prejudicial for the nation because 'in addition to obliterating the pre-eminent qualities of the higher race, serves to stimulate the revival of the primitive attributes of the lower' (85). The resulting hybrid (i.e. mulattos, mamelucos and cafusos) was 'almost always an unbalanced type' (85), a degenerate type of rudimentary morality, a 'dispersive and dissolvent' element, and an intruder in 'the marvelous competition of peoples' (86). The same 'vivid traces' of the 'primitive attributes' of 'inferior races' (85) that explained their unstable, restless, inconstant, neurotic behaviour, also explained their desire to mix with whites, in an attempt to eliminate in their offspring the signs of their inferiority (86). In essence, the mulatto was an *irritating parenthesis* in the emerging of Brazil into Modernity.

The racial prejudice towards Afro-Brazilians in the work of Silvio Romero and Euclides da Cunha was mild when compared with the blunt racism in the work of Oliveira Viana. His *Populações meridionais do Brasil* (1918), *Evolução do povo brasileiro* (1923) and *Raça e assimilação* (1932) are the foremost racist interpretation of Brazil(ianness). Viana explained the *hierarchy of races* based on their relation with civilisation. He regarded Africans and Indians as incapable and refractory of civilisation, respectively —and even postulated that black civilisation could only have been created by whites, or at best by mixed-bloods [*mestiços*]. He condemned all hybrid types but sustained that there were some 'superior mulattos' susceptible of whitening and capable of ascending to the high ranks of nationality and of collaborating with the whites in the organisation and civilisation of the country (Leite [1954]1992: 227). This articulation of hybridity left a small escape hatch —in an otherwise rigid hierarchy— that was a perfect fit for his personal condition, that of an educated mulatto who belonged to the aristocracy. In essence, his work seemed designed to cleanse him of the stigma he associated with miscegenation, and that he blamed for all the illnesses of Brazil.

Many other authors, intellectuals, politicians and diplomats reflected on the state of the nation through the lenses of scientific racism, using mainly the concepts of race and climate. Nina Rodrigues, Arthur Ramos, José Verissimo, Paulo Prado and many others, offered interpretations of the nation, paying special

attention to miscegenation and 'the black problem' (Leite [1954] 1992; Skidmore [1974]1993). Their work reveals anxieties of contamination fed by a fear of blackness as backwardness. Yet, the sheer volume of blacks and mulattos meant that the only conceivable 'solution' to the 'black problem' was more miscegenation, in the hope of the eventual whitening of the whole population. The hopes for a white Brazil rested on the national demographic trend, which appeared to be eliminating blacks, and on the increasing arrival of white migrants from Europe. The massive importation and infusion of white blood into the national body would eventually erase the negative influence of inferior bloods—with some authors, such as the Director of the National Museum, João Batista de Lacerda, predicting this process would be complete 'in the course of another century' (Cited in Skidmore [1974]1993: 66), that is, by the beginning of the 21st century.

In short, Brazilian Realism meant the adoption and adaptation of scientific racism to interpret the nation and hybridity in terms of contamination and degeneration, and finally whitening. The image of a degenerate nation prevailed, but the nationalist sentiment and the stubborn reality of hybridity stretched racial theories to the point of absurdity. Dante Moreira Leite captured this beautifully, when he defined this realist nationalism as 'a curious set of incongruities: in a poor climate, three inferior races are destined to a great future' ([1954]1992: 192). The only way out of this conundrum was rethinking hybridity as whitening. This was largely achieved by a selective borrowing of racist theory, which 'discarded two of that theory's principal assumptions—the innateness of racial differences and the degeneracy of mixed bloods' (Skidmore [1974]1993: 77). This original solution—examined in detail and theorised as *hybrid science* by Lilia Moritz Schwarcz in *O Espetáculo das Raças* (1993)—provided a general 'sense of relief—sometimes even superiority— [...] when comparing [Brazil's] racial future to the United States' (Skidmore [1974]1993: 77). Hybridity was beginning to serve a double ideological purpose. On the one hand, it provided the nation with a myth of origins that could be used to assert national unity and challenge accusations of racism, while continuing to erase the physical traces of blackness. On the other

hand, it provided the nation with a sense of authenticity, while continuing to erase the traces of Africanness. Paradoxically, the attempts to integrate an original (i.e. hybrid) Brazil into Western Modernity were taking place at the same time that any traces of that hybridity, and thus the originality of the nation, were being engineered out of Brazil(ianness).

Modernisation: The Regeneration and Salvation of Brazil(ianness). The difficulty of asserting national pride using racist concepts in a highly hybrid country led to increasingly creative reformulations of national identity and hybridity. One of the most important situated *public policy* at the centre of national identity, emphasising the role of the state in the formation of Brazil. The public policy approach to national identity as *racial identity* can be traced back to the white migration policy instituted in the 1850s. However, the realisation that white migration alone was not enough to whiten the population, let alone modernise the nation, brought to the fore the need to attend to the precarious health and education of large sectors of the population. The ensuing reformulation of Brazilianness was a classic tale of modernisation whose main expression took the form of a movement for public health known as Sanitarismo.

In the early 20th century, *sickness* emerged as a metaphor for the state of the nation. In 1917, Miguel Pereira famously referred to Brazil as an 'immense hospital'. Freyre himself would use the metaphor of sickness to argue that 'the fearfully mongrel aspect of the population' was not due to the existence of mulattos and cafusos, but to the existence of sick mulattos and cafusos ([1933]1956: xxvii). The association between hybridity and degeneration came to be increasingly explained in terms of (public) health rather than race, but the focus on biology somehow made the distinction between hybridity and sickness rather tenuous. Indeed, the focus continued to be mostly on the biological dimension of national identity: on the *body* of the nation.

The identification of health as the main key to modernise the nation led to the emergence of a movement for public health, developed in faculties of medicine, government departments, and institutions such as the Liga Pró-

Saneamento do Brasil [Pro-Sanitation League of Brazil] and the Sociedade Eugénica de São Paulo [São Paulo Eugenics Society]. The movement that carried out the policies, and the ideology that inspired them, came to be known as Sanitarismo. The discourse of public health was often articulated in terms of the health of the nation (the people), not just of the nationals (the population), that is, not in strictly medical/biological terms but also in cultural/ideological ones. Preoccupation with the national body continued to regard hybridity as a source of racial degeneration and moral degradation. However, this diagnosis did not condemn the country to barbarism and inferiority, but pointed to the treatment: *modernisation*. The task of modernising the nation was framed in a discourse of hygiene and education underpinned by eugenic thinking (Schwarcz 1993; Marques 1994; Stepan 1991). The solution came in the form of the State intervention on the social body via hospitals and doctors, schools and teachers, justice and lawyers—in a fashion illustrative of the biopolitics and micropolitics theorised by Michel Foucault (1975 and 1976).

The impact of Sanitarismo in the formation and formulation of the nation was somewhat paradoxical. Its emphasis on health and hygiene undermined racist determinism, but that emphasis reinforced a biological definition of identity, which often turned sickness synonymous with backwardness, itself synonymous with blackness. In fact, blackness went from being a marker of racial inferiority to one of social and cultural backwardness (later called underdevelopment), leaving the traditional hierarchy of peoples (increasingly defined as cultures rather than races) basically untouched. In essence, the movement for public health was synonymous with the adoption of Eurocentric Modernity and the rejection of all that was related to Africa, still regarded as the Dark Continent. In short, the physical health of the nation was conceived, first and foremost, as the essential condition to enable the entry of Brazil into Western Modernity.

The modernisation project included also the issue of education—the single most important solution to the social problems facing Brazil, according to Manoel Bomfim—and the industrialisation of the nation—the dimension emphasised by the work of Alberto Torres. Torres and Bomfim rejected biological explanations of

the state of the nation, arguing instead that the root of the national problems were historical and economic conditions. A healthy and educated population was the key to the kind of industrial and productive work force required to generate a modern competitive economy. In the 1930s, education became part and parcel of the medical-pedagogical project of social and mental hygiene designed to (re)produce modern Brazilian workers. The perfect worker was a deracialised, disciplined, obedient and productive worker. This construction of the worker was the essence of what came to be known in Brazil as *Trabalhismo* (Gomes 1988).

The eugenic approach to the (re)production of the labour force reflects the biopower conceptualised by Michel Foucault in *History of Sexuality* (1976). On the one hand, control over the human body as a machine, to maximise physical potential through mechanisms of training to create a docile and hard-working labour force. On the other hand, control over the human body as species, regulating controls over biological processes: birth-rate, longevity, mortality, life expectancy. Eugenics was the mechanism to purify and discipline the national body. Thus, for example, Jerry Dávila has shown how the social reformists of Rio de Janeiro, in the period 1917-1945, 'saw public education as the key to modernity, and equated this modernity with whiteness' (2003: 122). The title of his study suggests that what the students received at the end of their education was a *diploma of whiteness*. In short, the perceived defects and handicaps exhibited by the highly hybrid population were used to justify white supremacy and demand—in the name of progress and modernity—the gradual whitening of the national body.

The symbolic illustration of the transition from a discourse of degeneration to one of modernisation can best be seen in Monteiro Lobato's reinvention of his character Jeca Tatu that was part of his collection of short stories *Urupês* (1918). Initially portrayed as a lazy and indolent parasite, unadaptable to civilisation, Jeca Tatu was transformed into a productive and prosperous landowner in a newspaper article entitled 'Jeca Tatu: The Resurrection', included in a collection of articles entitled *O Problema Vital* (1918), published jointly by the Sociedade de Eugenia de São Paulo and the Liga Pro-Saneamento do Brasil. The article attributed the poor state of the nation to its poor health rather than its racial

makeup. Lobato concluded that: 'O Jeca não é assim; está assim' [This is not *what* Jeca is; this is *how* he is] (Cited in Lima & Hoschman 2000: 322). The move from *ser* [to be as permanent state] to *estar* [to be as temporary state] signalled the possibility of salvation. The key to Jeca's salvation and subsequent success—he became so rich that now surveyed his estate with a telescope from the veranda—was modernisation. In this case, it meant modernising his property, introducing new crops and technology, and learning to speak English (Lima & Hochman 1996: 32). His transformation signalled the abandonment of racial determinism and the adoption of Western Modernity, symbolised here by the adoption of Capitalism and the learning of English.

Modernism: The Brazilianisation of the Others. The other major reformulation of Brazilianness of the first half of the 20th century defined culture as its crucial dimension, and sought to assert the cultural independence of the nation, or in the words of Menotti del Picchia: 'the Brazilianisation of Brazil'. What came to be known as Brazilian Modernism was a tropical adaptation of the Modernist movements(s) of early 20th century Europe. The Brazilian Modernists recognised European literary tradition as a valuable legacy but rejected the strict adherence to foreign conventions and cultural modes of expression, principally Parnassianism and Romanticism, but also Realism and Positivism (Velloso 2000: 49-52). In order to create a genuine national aesthetic, these authors looked for national themes, stories and experiences, drawing in an unprecedented fashion on popular culture and everyday life. Moreover, their language was Brazilian, that is, the Portuguese spiced up with words and phrases typical of Brazil.

Brazilian Modernism drew inspiration and plenty of concepts from European radical aesthetics such as Futurism and Dadaism. This strategy has been the matter of much debate, giving birth to one of the most interesting (postcolonial) concepts to come out of Brazil: *the originality of the copy* (Schwarz 1987). The claim of originality rests on the notion that Modernists were not simply *adopting* foreign forms but *adapting* them, and thus appropriating them and making them original in the process. The classic illustration of this concept is the

quote from the *Manifesto Antropófago*: “Tupi or not Tupi, that is the question”. Oswald de Andrade consciously and playfully cannibalises the work of William Shakespeare in a way that is both solemn (central to a manifesto for a new national aesthetic) and satirical (note the almost identical sound of “to be” and “Tupi”). In other words, the expression is both copied and original; almost the same, but *not quite*—to paraphrase Homi Bhabha.

The Modernist take on cultural relations reflected a desire to break with the past and complete the independence of Brazil. However, since that desire was driven by a deeply felt nationalism, the movement became inherently paradoxical. Nationalism forced the Modernists to look back for roots in order to anchor the nation, and in doing so they brought the past back to the centre of Brazilianness. In the end, the Modernists did not break with the past, but rather reinvented the national past. The different positions over the past—what later came to be known as history wars or culture wars—caused a schism between progressive and conservative nationalists, which led the latter to formally withdraw their affiliation to Brazilian Modernism. The two most important cultural groups formed following the schism were Cannibalism [*Canibalismo*] and Greengiltism [*Verdeamarelismo*]. In social terms, the Cannibalist movement was the product of the new bourgeois world (urban capitalism), whereas the Greengilt movement reflected the interests of the traditional oligarchy (rural plantations) of Brazil.

The conservative nationalism of the Greengilt movement followed on the steps of the work of Euclides da Cunha, who had defined the hinterland [*sertão*] as the heart of the Brazilian nation. The Greengilts drew their inspiration from the hinterland and praised the virtues of the backlander [*sertanista*]. They emphasised the collaborative nature of the Portuguese colonisation of Brazil—a process they portrayed as a product of love, of the mutual attraction between the Indian and the Portuguese. The most salient figure in these narratives was the Bandeirante, to whom they attributed the central role in the formation of Brazil. This portrait of native-settler relations continued to ignore or downplay the destructive actions of the bandeirantes, and not surprisingly translated into a structural indifference

towards the physical disappearance of the Brazilian Indians. The only thing that mattered was that their so-called spirit remained part of Brazilianness.

The essence of conservative nationalism was contained in the *Manifesto Nhengaçu Verde-Amarelo* (1929). This text embraced the modernist desire to break with the past, but only the *immediate* past. Its authors displayed great nostalgia for the period when Brazil was a colony of Portugal. That period, they argued, had been one free from prejudice, when people of different races lived in harmony. Moreover, the Greengilts deplored the 'contemplative, lunatic, lachrymose, and anarchic mentality' of their Modernist counterparts, the Cannibalists, arguing the need for a 'vigorous and healthy' mentality that could 'solve Brazilian problems in a Brazilian way' (Cassiano Ricardo, cited in Martins 1969: 94). The Greengilts understood tradition as something sacred that should be preserved. But given that tradition had been abandoned, their task was to rescue and revive the harmony of the colonial past, and use it to drive the modernisation of Brazil.

The work that best illustrates the ideology of the Greengilts is Cassiano Ricardo's *Martim Cererê* (1926), the story of a serious and patriotic bandeirante who travels throughout Brazil. Martim departs from São Paulo to explore the other regions but always returns to São Paulo. His trajectory is always the same: São Paulo - Brazil - São Paulo (Velloso 2000: 70). This work portrays a heroic and idyllic view of the past, reflected in its subtitle: 'Brazil of the Poets, the Children and the Heroes'. The text presents the past as model for the present (i.e. history as moral tale and civic lesson), idealising the role of the bandeirantes and establishing continuity between the colonial past and the national present, culminating in São Paulo, symbol of modern Brazil and of the embrace of Western Modernity. São Paulo stood here metonymically for the modern white[ned] nation as a whole and against the backward dark Northeast. This vision of Brazil(ianness) was also reproduced by the foremost journal of early 20th century Brazil, the *Revista do Brasil* (Luca 1999).

The progressive nationalism of the Cannibalist movement sprang from the renewed Indianism formulated by Oswald de Andrade in the *Manifesto da Poesia Pau-Brasil* (1924), under the rubric of Primitivism. The Primitivists regarded the

concept of the noble savage an archaic symbol of an outdated era, championing instead a 'return to what was barbarous and truly Brazilian' (Nist 1967: 78). The foremost illustration of this new spirit was Menotti del Picchia's article 'Matemos Peri!' [Let's kill Peri] (1921), where the author proposed to kill the hero of Alençar's *O Guarani*. The Primitivists repudiated foreign influences and advocated a return to the primitive origins of Brazil. Not surprisingly, the artificiality and impossibility of this position made Primitivism more a pose than a substantive change of the Indianist tradition, leaving them open to accusations of producing little more than 'a surrealist and dadaist Indianism' (Plinio Salgado, cited in Martins 1969: 95).

Primitivism was soon replaced by a more radical and assertive manifestation of modernist thinking: Cannibalism. The principles of the Cannibalist movement were enunciated in the *Manifesto Antropófago* (1928). The manifesto was dated from Piritininga, on the 374th year of the killing and eating of the first bishop of Brazil, Dom Pedro Fernandes Sardinha, by the Caeté Indians, after his ship sank on its way to Portugal. In other words, the Cannibalists declared 1562, the year of the most famous episode of cannibalism in Brazilian history, the founding moment of the nation. The shift from Primitivism to Cannibalism led to a significant change in the formulation of Brazil(ianness). Cannibalism came to symbolise cultural independence through the radical assimilation (the eating) of the cultural Others. Indeed, *cannibalism* was defined as the essence of Brazilianness, symbolised in the painting by Tarsila do Amaral entitled *O abaporu* (1928), from the Tupi *aba* [man] and *poru* [eat], which together meant 'the man who eats' and, here, the 'eater of cultures' (Velloso 2000: 62-64). The main postulate was unequivocal: 'Cannibalism alone unites us. Socially. Economically. Philosophically'. In artistic terms, cannibalism became a metaphor for cultural independence that demanded the transformation of foreign influences into something recognisably Brazilian. In general terms, cannibalism became a potent metaphor to articulate national unity as the assimilation and/or transformation of Otherness into Brazilianness.

The most salient example of the Cannibalist ideology was Mário de Andrade's *Macunaíma* (1928). The novel tells the story of a hero who travels across Brazil. Macunaíma's travels lack the circular structure of the travels of Martim Cererê, but have a trajectory of their own that takes him from the interior to the city of São Paulo. Mário de Andrade does not offer São Paulo as the model for Brazil. Macunaíma's essential virtue is his indolence [*preguiça*]. His famous catchphrase —'Ai! que preguiça' [Can't be bothered!]¹— is given a positive and heroic inflection that ridicules the hard work demanded by the competitive capitalism associated in Brazil with the city of São Paulo. This and his other (im)moral traits (i.e. sadomasochism, sexual perversion, gluttony, lying) define him as the opposite of the healthy and modern citizen espoused by official nationalism. In this sense, *Macunaíma* can be read as satire of the modernisation of Brazil. However, the articulation of race and nation in the text undermines its potential to subvert the politics of whitening and, more precisely, of modernisation as whitening in contemporary Brazil.

The subtitle of the novel synthesises the essence of the protagonist and, by extension, the essence of the nation in the author's eyes: Macunaíma is *O Herói sem Nenhum Caráter* [The Hero with no Character]. Mário de Andrade did not find this lack of character problematic, but a simple reflection of a nation still in formation. If anything, he seemed to celebrate that fragmented and incomplete character, that lack of a finalised and fixed identity. However, the trajectory of Macunaíma in the story reinscribes —even if unwittingly— the hegemonic articulation of race and nation at the time: the whitening of Brazil (Nunes 1994: 79). Macunaíma is an *impossible hybrid* who embodies all of the nation's racial categories: He is the black son of an Indian mother who turns white, blond and blue-eyed when he steps in a pool of holy water (Borges 1993: 254). The celebration the plurality and hybridity of this character tends to omit the *linear trajectory* of his transformation towards whiteness, as well as the fact that this transformation occurs as he travels from the interior of the country (where he was born) to the city of São Paulo. This double trajectory validates the view of those who argued the need to whiten the nation if Brazil was to successfully enter Western Modernity.

Macunaíma might be a hero without any character, but the path towards his characterisation is marked by his transformation from nonwhite (Indian and African) to white (European). It is hard to escape the conclusion that Macunaíma's lack of character was little more than a reflection of the crisis of identity afflicting the Modernists. Similarly, his satirical characterisation seems to reflect the ambivalence they felt regarding the integration of Brazil in Western Modernity. The outcome of this tension between the desire to be modern and the desire to be original is a narrative of assimilation that reflects the double relation towards colonialism in Brazilian Modernism. On the one hand, cannibalism enabled a radical questioning and reformulation of the hierarchies engendered by colonialism, encouraging the development of Brazilian culture that went beyond the cultural elements imported from Europe. On the other hand, that same narrative provided 'the means by which to create (if only in theory) a homogeneous and stable national identity' (Nunes 1994: 12). The result was a formulation of the nation that transformed hybridity into an ideology of assimilation and homogeneity, into a paradoxical form of essentialism, where the cultural assimilation of the Other is *essential* to produce Brazilianness, and Others can only become truly Brazilian if they let themselves be eaten and partake in the cannibalisation of Others.

But what must be remembered here is that while the cannibalistic ethic of *Macunaíma* was inspired by the Brazilian Indians, the cannibals in the text are white (and male). The rest (nonwhites and females) are the food, the eaten. In the context of a discourse where it is better to eat than to be eaten, white males become once again the real agents, the active force responsible for the construction of Brazil (Nunes 1994). On a separate but related note, the widely held view of the novel as a celebration of miscegenation sidelines the fact that its only depiction of miscegenation is that of black men raping Indian women —also a motif in Freyre's *Casa-Grande & Senzala*. The combined effect of these elements is a narrative that reinscribes the centrality of white (male) agency in the construction of Brazil(ianness). This formulation of the nation, shared to some degree by both currents of Brazilian Modernism, perpetuated the colonisation of the Brazilian

Indians and Afro-Brazilians, this time in the context of the cultural integration of Brazil into Western Modernity.

The metaphor of cannibalism suggested an image of assimilation far more potent than any other, incorporating for the first time the African as a constitutive part of Brazilianness. However, the ahistoricism and formalism of the movement kept most of its radical and original ideas enclosed in a circle of artists and intellectuals. Thus, for example, the Modernists continued to hold a reified view of the Indian and to ignore the real Indians. This abstract and disembodied concept of the Brazilian Indians accounted in part for the lack of improvement in their living conditions during a period where they were as central as they have ever been in the formulation of Brazil(ianness). This detachment from, or formalistic approach to, reality left the door ajar for the conservative Luso-Tropicalism of Gilberto Freyre to step in and crush the revolutionary potential of Brazilian Modernism.

Luso-Tropicalism: Eurocentric (and Patriarchal) Brazil(ianness). The definitive exorcism of the national(ist) inferiority complex and agony over race came with the publication of Gilberto Freyre's *Casa-Grande & Senzala* in 1933. Freyre led the nation from a state of anxiety to one of ecstasy, from a resigned acceptance to a euphoric celebration of hybridity. The past in general, and hybridity in particular, did not condemn but redeemed Brazil. Once again, Freyre defined Brazil as the product of the three peoples that inhabited Portuguese America: Indians, Africans and Europeans. However, for him the result of this mixture was not only a unique and original nation, but a superior model of civilisation: the Luso-Tropical Civilisation. Brazilians had nothing to be ashamed of, but should instead be proud and rejoice in the outcome of a process that had produced a model of race relations, a *racial democracy*. Freyre elevated hybridity and, in particular, miscegenation 'almost to the point of mysticism' (Nist 1967: 41).

Highly praised in the early years, Freyre's theories were strongly criticised in the 1950s and 1960s by the so-called School of São Paulo. The core of their criticism related to his omission of the economic and political structures that

shaped life in colonial Brazil. Yet Freyre and the School of São Paulo shared one fundamental point: they both rejected racial prejudice as the basis of social inequality in Brazil, pointing instead to class as the main culprit. Indeed, Freyre's assertion that social distance was 'the result of class consciousness, more than of any racial or colour prejudice' ([1963]2000: 139) could have been penned by any of the authors from São Paulo School. The last couple of decades have seen a renewed interest for his work —largely related to the increasing interest in the cultural dimension of national identity. Notwithstanding previous and current praises and criticisms, the work of Gilberto Freyre in general, and *Casa-Grande & Senzala* [hereafter: CGS] in particular, remain in many ways the key to unlock the almost mythical status of hybridity in Brazil.

CGS is the first part of a trilogy that interprets Brazilian history in light of the evolution of patriarchy in Brazil. The second part, *Sobrados e Mucambos* (1936), covers the decadence of rural patriarchy and the development of the urban patriarchy; whereas the third, *Ordem e Progresso* (1959), studies the disintegration of patriarchal society in Brazil. But it is CGS, the study of the formation of patriarchal society in Brazil, which occupies the iconic place in the formulation of Brazil(ianness). Perhaps the author who has best expressed the centrality of CGS in the Brazilian imagination is renowned Brazilian film director Nelson Pereira dos Santos, when he affirmed in an interview with José Geraldo Couto that: 'CGS is for Brazil what the Old Testament is for humanity' (2000: 10).

The publication of CGS had a profound impact in the portrait of the nation, in three main ways: the reassessment of Brazilian slavery as a somewhat benign institution; the definition of Brazil as a racial democracy; and the celebration of hybridity, especially miscegenation, as the essence of Brazilianness. To this, one could add the increased recognition of the role of Africans and Afro-Brazilians in the formation of Brazil —although their incorporation into Brazilianness was done within the powerful Eurocentric (and patriarchal) framework laid down by Gilberto Freyre. It is this framework that will reveal itself as the key to fully grasp the implications of his work for the formulation of Brazilianness.

Crucial to Freyre's work is the idea that Brazilian slavery was a somewhat benevolent institution. He writes, for example, of 'the relaxed atmosphere of Brazilian slavery' ([1933]1956: 345). This conclusion hinges largely on his emphasis on domestic slavery, attributable in great part to his definition of and focus on the patriarchal family as the foremost structure of colonial Brazil. This led him to interpret slavery as a *familial* institution that enabled intimate relations between masters (whites) and slaves (blacks). Admittedly, Freyre does not shy away from depicting the violence of slavery but the overall picture that emerges is one of general *harmony* rather than conflict, and one of *acquiescence* rather than resistance on the part of the slaves. Indeed, Freyre makes almost no reference to slave resistance —something that can be largely explained by the fact that CGS offers 'an ahistorical interpretation of slavery in Brazil' (Ianni 1978: 87). Instead, he speaks of the black slave as 'the greatest and most plastic collaborator in the task of agrarian colonization' ([1933]1956: 285). Of the three references to the quilombos, one is linked to the rape of Indian women by the fugitive slaves (68-69), and another mentions their Europeanising effect, by spreading Portuguese language and Catholicism amongst the Indians (285).

Not surprisingly, the iconic black figures in Freyre's work are the *sinhama* or *mãe-preta* [mammy] and the *mucama* [house girl], who appear, first and foremost, as responsible for the wet-nursing and sexual initiation of the sons of their white masters, respectively. Freyre's work reveals a profound but *selective tenderness* for blacks. This feeling is reserved to the black slave, and more precisely those blacks who 'know their place'. Thus, for example, in *Nordeste* (1937), he shows deep nostalgia for the 'faithful black' ('capable of giving his life for his white'), for the *mãe-preta*, for the *mucama* ('almost person of the house') and for the *malungo* ('almost member of the family') (Freyre [1937]1967: 105).

This overlooking of resistance is central to the formulation of his central concept, one on which everything else hinges: miscegenation. In the preface to CGS, Freyre identifies miscegenation as the problem causing him the most anxiety of all the problems confronting Brazil ([1933]1956: xxvi). His anxiety was triggered by the sight of a group of Brazilian mulattos and cafusos crossing

Brooklyn Bridge, in New York. Freyre saw in them 'caricatures of men' who reminded him of a sentence from a book on Brazil written by an American traveller: 'the fearfully mongrel aspect of the population' (xxvii). But then, Freyre had an epiphany and his shock and horror turned into praise and admiration for the hybrid population of Brazil. The reason for the sudden change was his 'studies in anthropology under the direction of Professor [Frantz] Boas' (xxviii). Professor Boas taught him 'to regard as fundamental the difference between *race* and *culture*' and in doing so revealed to Freyre the black and the mulatto in their just value (xxviii). But before turning our attention to the issue of race and culture in his work, we must first examine his formulation of miscegenation.

Freyre explains miscegenation by the vague and imprecise character of the Portuguese, whose main traits were their plasticity, adaptability and, above all else, their ability and predisposition to mingle with Others. The Portuguese, he argued, lack racial prejudice and had no objection to mixing with Other women, due to 'the intimate terms of social and sexual intercourse on which they had lived with the coloured races' that had invaded or were close neighbours of Portugal (11). Their admiration of, and sexual encounters with, Moorish women had led the Portuguese to embrace miscegenation in all their colonies around the world, including Brazil.

Freyre did not hide the violence, the excess, the perversion and the 'sexual depravity' that was typical of slavery (324). However, as Marilyn Miller notes, he tended to offset this intimate depravity with frequent references to an intimacy that was nurturing, affectionate and familial (2004: 98). Moreover, the terms in which Freyre articulates the analysis of miscegenation in CGS are highly problematic insofar as he brings together the 'sadism of the master and the corresponding masochism of the slave' (76). In speaking of the masochism of the slaves, Freyre attributes autonomy and even pleasure —'the pure enjoyment of suffering, of being the victim, of sacrificing oneself' (77)— to the female slaves in these relations. Interestingly, he notices how in colonial Brazil the white woman 'is so often the helpless victim of the male's domination or abuse, a creature sexually and socially repressed, who lives within the shadow of her father or her

husband' (76). But here there is no reference to female masochism or to 'the pure enjoyment of suffering'. The implication is that black female slaves, and only them, were *willing* victims, complicit of their suffering, a suffering from where they derived pleasure. This formulation of miscegenation effectively brushes aside the asymmetry of power that structured those relations, and in doing so denies their oppressive and exploitative character. In other words, to speak of miscegenation in terms of the sadism of the masters and the masochism of the slaves as complementary forces is to transform sexual abuse into consensual sex. To put it bluntly: the articulation of miscegenation in these terms is effectively 'a celebration of rape' (Ferreira da Silva 1998a: 221).

Later on, Freyre absolves black female slaves from their responsibility in the sexual precocity of the small white boys in a way that, if anything, further shows their willingness to engage in sexual relations with them. We cannot hold her responsible, he argues, since all that she did was 'to *facilitate* the [young master's] deprecation by her *docility* as a slave, by opening her legs *at the first* manifestation of desire on the part of the young master' (396) [italics mine]. Freyre adds that 'it was not a request but a command to which she had to accede' (396). But given the easiness and promptitude with which she is said to have 'opened her legs' the impression is one of consent, if not outright willingness. In fact, Freyre even manages to reverse the process of sexual power by eroticising the black woman's bondage, which reinscribes her as the initiator, binding boys in 'physical love' and thus presenting sexual encounters not as the result of rape but of 'black exuberance and white naiveté' (Browning 1995: 22).

This interpretation of miscegenation in GGS becomes even more insidious by the fact that Freyre does, in fact, mention rape in his work ... but *only* when referring to sexual relations between black fugitive slaves and indigenous women (68-69). This contrasts with the many references to how indigenous women 'offered themselves to the white man's sexual embrace' (71); how they 'were the first to offer themselves to the whites' (85), and did so 'with their legs spread far apart' (96). Once again, Freyre reverses the power relations between

male colonists and female natives by explaining their sexual encounters as the simple product of the 'exacerbated sexuality' of the Indian woman.

The notion that sexual relations in a context of inequality, dependency and the permanent threat of physical violence, that is, in the context of slavery, can lead to a democratic outcome, sexual or otherwise, is at best wishful-thinking and at worst one of the most insidious tenets one can espouse. Yet it is this reinvention of miscegenation—a fundamentally exploitative relationship in the history of Brazil—as an act of erotic adventure and sexual experimentation that is at the heart of his notion of racial democracy, that informs his portrait of Brazilianness, and sustains, to a large extent, white (and male) hegemony in contemporary Brazil. Indeed, it is perfectly possible to conclude that Freyre's national myth can be read as 'reinscribing racial hierarchy by equating it with gender hierarchy (and vice versa)' (Appelbaum *et al* 2003: 16)

But gender is not the only dimension of hybridity in which Freyre's work has been pivotal for the (re)formulation of white hegemony in Brazil. The other crucial dimension is culture. Freyre's explicit intention of talking about cultures and not races suggests a radical break with the scientific racism that had dominated Brazilian thought. However, his use of the terms culture and race was at best confusing. To begin with, he spoke constantly of racial democracy—a concept that presupposes the existence, if not the centrality of races. Moreover, he used the expression ethnic democracy—a term that did not pick up popularity—in a way that was interchangeably with his notion of racial democracy, revealing the tenuous distinction between the biological and the cultural with which he operated. But more significantly, his treatment of cultures as monolithic entities which could be easily identified with the colour of their practitioners made the separation between colour/race and culture practically impossible. Thus, he referred indistinctly to backward races and advanced races; backward peoples and advanced peoples; backward cultures and advanced cultures; and even linked together in one sentence 'exotic peoples and backward races' (263). He questioned the use of 'superior and inferior races' by prefacing these terms with

'so-called', but the overall effect of his work is one where it is impossible to differentiate between race, people and culture.

This imprecision and ambiguity have led some authors to argue the preponderance of race in his work (Lima 1989) and others to argue the prevalence of culture (Araújo 1994). However, it is possible to take a slightly different approach, and suggest that more important than Freyre's questionable ability to escape the traps of racial thinking, what makes his work particularly—or even more—problematic to counter racism in contemporary Brazil is the way in which he articulates the relation between cultures. In fact, to the point that his work softened scientific racism—and there are arguments to suggest that his work did that—it did so by articulating a developmental formulation of the cultural stages of different peoples that retained a clear hierarchy of peoples and cultures which privileged the Portuguese.

Thus, the key issue is the Eurocentrism that is at the heart of Freyre's overarching concept: Luso-Tropical Civilisation. The fundamental structure of this concept can be found in his reference to colonial Brazil as 'European feudalism in the American tropics' (xi). Europe is the content, the Culture; the Tropics are the context, the Nature. The history of colonial Brazil was a history of 'civilizing activities' carried out by the Portuguese in a tropical land that was 'in a state of disequilibrium, marked by great excess and great deficiencies' (22-23). The Brazilian was 'the ideal type of modern man for the tropics, a European with Negro or Indian blood to revive his energy' (71). Here, the Other is not culture, but Nature. Indeed, Freyre referred to Indian culture in naturalistic terms: as a *vegetable* culture. Even in their mode of aggression, the Indians were vegetable, 'little more than auxiliary of the forest' (82).

Not surprisingly, Freyre conceived the colonisation of Brazil as a Catholic project, the expression of Portuguese Humanism. Freyre stated that in colonial Brazil it would be 'difficult to separate the Brazilian from the Catholic: Catholicism was in reality the cement of our unity' (41). Brazilianness becomes a product if not a form of Catholicism, albeit 'impregnated with animistic or fetichistic influence that well may have come from Africa' (78). In essence, the

'synthetic principle' (xiii) used to bring about the 'union of cultures' (xii) retained a *hierarchy of cultures* that gave pre-eminence to Catholicism and therefore to the Portuguese and the Luso-Brazilians.²⁰

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The formulation of Brazil in terms of hybridity has a long a complex history, mostly related to the need to (re)define the nation after its independence from Portugal. Hybridity was invoked to define the cultural and biological specificities of Brazil, as well as to guarantee the physical and cultural unity of the Brazilian Empire. Initially, the formulation of hybridity was highly restrictive and selective in their incorporation of Otherness into Brazilianness: they ignored Afro-Brazilians and valued Indians insofar as they had 'embraced' the Portuguese. Consequently, the first important hybrid figure was that of the Bandeirante. Defined as the offspring of the loving relations between Indian women and Portuguese men, the figure of the Bandeirante served to legitimise the colonisation of Brazil. Moreover, as agents of 'development' they came to be considered pioneers of Western Modernity in Brazil.

The integration of the Afro-Brazilian into the definition of Brazilianness was also related to the modernisation of Brazil, or more precisely, the desire to integrate Brazil into Western Modernity. Initially, this took the explicit form of whitening, but increasingly this strategy has been reformulated into a more sophisticated discourse that celebrates the contribution of all human groups in the formation of the nation, while still fundamentally committed to the project of Western Modernity, one which continues to define Africa as the Dark Continent, and White as the colour of Modernity. The transformation of hybridity into an ideology of assimilation and homogeneity, in which the essence of the nation is the assimilation of Otherness, far from illustrating a racial democracy at work (i.e.

²⁰ Freyre's Eurocentric formulation of Brazil(ianness) is also evident in *Novo Mundo nos Trópicos* (1963) [New World in the Tropics]. Once again, Brazil is defined as a 'European Civilisation in the Tropics' ([1963]2000: 159). And once again, there is a clear dichotomy between Europe as Culture and the Tropics (which include the Indian and the African) as Nature.

the end of racism), continues to reproduce important hierarchies that undermine such an optimistic conclusion. This is clear in the work of Gilberto Freyre but also in the main icons of hybridity in contemporary Brazil: Carnival and the Mulata.

Celebrating White Hegemony: Carnival and the Mulata

The celebration of hybridity as the essence of the nation takes place every year during the celebration of the Brazilian national party: Carnival. The expression that best reflects the centrality of carnival in the Brazilian imaginary was formulated by Jorge Amado, who defined Brazil as the Land of Carnival [*O País do Carnaval*]. Carnival is the ritual celebration of Brazilianness, and more specifically, the celebration of miscegenation, that is, the celebration of the Mulata. The popular media leave no doubt about the centrality of the mulata in carnival: 'The mulata is the goddess of samba and queen of carnival. Carnival without mulata is no carnival' (Cited in Queiroz 1992: 137-138). Every year Brazilians celebrate the mulata in a staged display of pride and joy for the whole world to see: the carnival of Rio de Janeiro, and more precisely the carnival of the samba schools and the Sambodromo [Samba-Drome]. This is not the only carnival in the country, but it is the one that attracts most of the attention of the national and international media, and the one that is commonly associated with the image of Brazil. If Brazil is the Land of Carnival, Rio de Janeiro is the Capital of Carnival. It is therefore only natural that we focus here on the carnival of Rio de Janeiro.

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The emergence of the modern popular carnival dates from the 1920s and early 1930s, when carnival groups were organised by the poor, mostly Afro-Brazilian population of the shantytowns of Rio de Janeiro. During the week of carnival, these groups paraded to the rhythm of samba through the streets. The popularity of the parades led to their officialisation, and the creation of samba schools during

the presidency of Getúlio Vargas in the 1930s, becoming the dominant form of celebration of carnival in the 1950s (Queiroz 1992: 44-61). Over the course of the 20th century, the carnival of Rio de Janeiro has been transformed into a competitive, subsidised and sponsored spectacle staged for television cameras and a live, well-heeled paying audience. The high point of this process of corporatisation and mediatisation was the construction of the Sambodromo of Rio de Janeiro in 1984, which permitted the transmission of the parade and the integration of direct sponsorship of the schools and the parades by corporate enterprises such as Varig (the national airline). This has also meant the professionalisation of the samba schools and their increasing control by the white middle-class—something which has been referred by some authors as the ‘theft’ of carnival by the white elites (Sheriff 1999; Rodrigues 1984). With this context in mind—one which already suggests that carnival is far from an expression of racial democracy—it is now time to analyse the content of the ritual of Brazilianness.

Brazilian carnival has been interpreted as an inversion of the established social order: the celebration of chaos (or the inverted order). The main exponent of this theory is Roberto DaMatta. In his influential work *Carnavais, Malandros e Herois* (1979), DaMatta defined carnival as a democratic event which allows the Brazilian people, through the inversion of roles and conventions, to inject egalitarian and democratic values in an otherwise hierarchical and authoritarian society. Carnival dissolves order and reason into chaos and the absurd. It overthrows the exalted and the elegant and elevates the humble and the grotesque. It allows a maid to dress as a queen, a man to dress as a woman, and a woman to appear naked in public. Carnival is a time when everything is permitted and people use the occasion to enjoy freedom, especially sexual freedom. In short, carnival offers the opportunity to experience a world alternate to the everyday: a world of freedom and pleasure, a world of happiness and joy, a world where struggle gives way to partying. In essence, carnival is a time and a space for pleasure as well as a time and a space for parody and subversion (DaMatta 1979).

DaMatta idealises carnival, but he does not idealise Brazilian social reality. He reminds us that the inversion produced during carnival is *temporary*, and that when carnival ends, life returns to normal. Carnival is an escape valve, a form of social catharsis, opium for the people. But this does not imply that carnival is a false consciousness or even a controlling institution. On the contrary, DaMatta highlights the emancipating, transgressing and democratic character of carnival, which allows the people to visualise and even experience that other world: the desired world or, perhaps more accurately, the world of desires. In particular, carnival would symbolise the liberation of the body, above all the female body, which the rest of the year would be repressed and controlled. It is in the realm of the sexual where the inversion of carnival is perfect, according to DaMatta.

The problem with this interpretation is that the popular carnival is far from an inversion of the established order. The strong police presence alone is evidence that an appropriate order (public order) exists. In fact, one of the many rules of carnival is the prohibition of dressing up as a police officer. But the level of order in carnival goes much deeper than that. As Maria Isaura Pereira de Queiroz has demonstrated, popular carnival, far from being disordered, is an event where order reigns—and not just in terms of public order, but in terms of the social, sexual and racial order that defines everyday life in Brazil. De Queiroz illustrates with numerous examples how: ‘socio-economic barriers, the domination of women by men, the prestige of the authorities, the prejudices of all types, principally colour prejudice— continue to be alive and kicking’ during carnival (1992: 194). In this sense, carnival is not just a controlled inversion, but a reproduction of the traditional order, another illustration of the status quo ... only one with more thrills and spills.

Thus, for example, the cost of the costumes [*fantasias*] and the cost of tickets to attend many of the carnival shows in private clubs, not to mention in the Sambodromo, reproduce the socio-economic structures of everyday life. Similarly, the different inversions performed by men and women during carnival reproduce the gender structures of everyday life. Whereas men often cross-dress (i.e. they are allowed to play with their masculinity), women mostly undress (i.e. they are

compelled to perform their femininity, preferably in the nude). The colourful and erotic photos of nude women in all the major Brazilian carnival magazines are compelling evidence of the dominance of male sexual fantasies during carnival. If, as DaMatta argues, carnival liberates the female body, this is only for the purpose of titillating male fantasies of sexual abundance and erotic abandonment.

The continuation and reproduction of the status quo during carnival can also be seen in many of the rural or regional carnivals, as well as in the salon carnivals [*carnaval de salão*]. The carnival of Bom Jesus da Matta (Recife), for example, is described by Nancy Scheper-Hughes as highly segmented and segregated: it is a carnival where whites and blacks, rich and poor, men and women, children and adults, street children and other children, know their place and keep it during the celebrations (1992: 484). Similarly, many middle-class whites refrain from participating in the popular street carnival, preferring the private balls at hotels and country clubs. The latter reproduce a familiar division of labour: the naked dancing mulata performs the exotic/erotic show, for a largely white middle and upper class audience, catered by for a largely black staff.

Despite this, carnival in general, even in its most orderly forms, such as the carnival of the samba schools, does offer a space for criticism and transgression for those who, aside from carnival and popular culture in general, have little time and space to make their voice heard. The transgressive character of carnival can be observed, for example, in the many parades of the samba schools, which year after year perform biting critiques of the state of the nation. The emancipating character of carnival can also be seen in the increased visibility of Afro-Brazilian culture, for a long time actively repressed, but now increasingly present in carnival, especially in the carnival of Salvador. Having said that, it is worth noting that the carnival of Salvador, famous since the 1970s for its subversive performances, has been progressively reinscribed as 'a defining instrument of oppressive structures' (Bacelar 2001: 196). This is particularly visible in the use of ropes to separate different social groups during the celebration of the parades.

Yet, amidst all this diversity and complexity, there is one element that is predominant in the meaning of Carnival: the Mulata. In Brazil, and around the

world, the image of the Brazilian carnival in magazines, newspapers, television programmes and the internet is that of the mulata, and more precisely of the naked or scantily dressed mulata, mostly from the carnival of Rio de Janeiro. The references to female beauty and sensuality, especially of the mulata, are everywhere in the media coverage of the Brazilian carnival. The reification of the female body in newspapers and television programs is articulated in terms of praise, both of the mulata and of the nation. In essence, the mulata is the queen of Carnival and the triumphant symbol of Hybridity.

The most emblematic manifestation of the mulata as the sexual and decorative object of carnival is arguably the figure of *Globeleza*, the icon of carnival in Rede Globo. The origin of *Globeleza* dates back to 1989, when an eighteen-year-old Afro-Brazilian girl, named Valeria Valenssa, entered a beauty contest named after the famous song by Vinicius de Moraes and Tom Jobim, *Garota de Ipanema* [Girl from Ipanema]. Valeria did not win the contest, but was spotted by Hans Donner, a known graphic designer, who saw in her 'the perfect mulata' and decided to transform her into the symbol of carnival for Rede Globo. In 1990, she began to appear in television commercial intervals as a link between advertisements and carnival events. Valeria appeared totally naked, covered only by brushes of paint or tiny accessories placed in strategic parts of her body. The idea was a total success, and in 1995 Valeria became *Globeleza*, a role she would perform until 2004, when pregnant with her second son she was replaced by a virtual (computer generated) Valeria. Since 2005 there is an annual contest to select the mulata *Globeleza*. *Globeleza's* mediatic samba announces the arrival of carnival and promotes the television channel Rede Globo. The syncopated movement of her body, decorated with futuristic motifs, combines tradition (the world of samba) and modernity (the world of neon). *Globeleza* enables Brazil to see itself as a hybrid, beautiful and modern country, without abandoning the colonial imaginary, now defined as the national imaginary, where the mulata remains the perfect sexual object.

The objectification of the mulata in the Brazilian imagination goes far and beyond the iconic figure of *Globeleza*. One of the most significant and recent

examples is that of businessman and self-proclaimed *mulatólogo* [expert in mulatas], Oswaldo Sargentelli, who became rich and famous organising mulata shows in Brazil and abroad, mainly the United States, somewhat making good the popular contention that the mulata is ‘the only national product worth exporting’ (Cited in Nascimento 1978: 62). Sargentelli is the paradigm of the construction of the mulata as sexual object for visual consumption. The so-called Sargentelli's mulatas were the Brazilian equivalent of Hugh Heffner's playmates. The glorification of the mulata as a sexual object is also patent in the work of Jorge Amado, arguably the most potent voice praising Brazilian hybridity after that of Gilberto Freyre. As Teófilo de Queiroz Jr rightly noted, Amado's work has a tendency to ‘physically exalt mulattas without ever granting them respectability or marriageability’ (Cited in Stam 1997: 306). This is particularly evident in what is arguably his foremost novelistic celebration of miscegenation, *Tenda dos Milagres* (1969). These are only a few examples of the perfect marriage of sexism and racism that defines the place of the African Other in the Brazilian imagination.

Unfortunately, even publications openly aimed at promoting black self-esteem reinforce the sexualisation of Afro-Brazilian women. This is the case of the magazine *Raça* [Race], whose emphasis on the aesthetics of blackness (i.e. black is beautiful) and the body, especially the *female body*, reinforces the connection between (black) identity and biology, and in doing so contributes to the hegemony of racial thinking, and even to sustain white hegemony in Brazil. Something similar can be said of the image of the mulata in national and international music-videos which showcase the ‘beautiful mulata’ —one of the most popular being *Beautiful* (2003), by Snoop Doggy Dogg, featuring Pharrell Williams. The celebration of the black woman in general, and the mulata in particular, as objects of desire can be taken as a positive development —insofar as it can liberate black women from the white aesthetic— but often that liberation fails to challenge their subordination to the (black and white) male gaze, and thus their representation as sexual objects.

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In short, the ritual celebration of the hybridity —operated through the celebration of the mulata in the national ritual of carnival— reinscribes and puts white hegemony on display for the nation (and the world) to see ... through the cameras of Rede Globo. Indeed, far from revealing the lack of racial prejudice, carnival parades that prejudice for all to enjoy, especially men. In a way, Brazilian carnival is the greatest illusionist act in the world. It is a magnificent case of the emperor-with-no-clothes, where the naked body of the mulata reveals the racism (and sexism) of the nation, but the nation (the emperor) remains oblivious to that revelation. The centrality of the vibrant nudity of the mulata in carnival and the national imagination at large (i.e. her formulation as the body of the nation) is the most visible expression of white (and male) hegemony in Brazil.

Conclusion: The Mortar of White Hegemony

Hybridity, in its biological and cultural forms, has been the most recurrent trope in the formulations of Brazilianness. The frequency of miscegenation and transculturation has been interpreted as a sign of racial harmony, as well as a sign of the racial tolerance of the Portuguese. However, a critical examination of these processes reveals that hybridity has taken place despite the presence of racial prejudice rather than because of its absence. The picture that emerges from the analysis of miscegenation is one where white males have treated nonwhite females as sexual objects. In other words, the picture that emerges is one where hybridity tends to prevail, but in a context of white male domination and nonwhite female subordination and sexual exploitation. Similarly, the picture that emerges from the analysis of transculturation is one where Luso-Brazilians have pursued to great lengths the acculturation of Brazilian Indians and Afro-Brazilians, first and foremost into Catholicism, and then (as now) into Eurocentric Brazilianness. Once again, hybridity has prevailed, but has done so despite strong

cultural prejudices and mostly because of the cultural resilience of the Indian and African Others, not of the cultural tolerance of the Portuguese Self.

The need to acknowledge the reality of hybridity has led to the increasing and systematic nationalisation of cultural practices that had been initially despised because of their relation with the Others, in particular those related to the African Other. The eventual integration of cultural difference (of Otherness) in the national imaginary has taken place within a conceptual framework that still privileges Whiteness and Western Modernity, that is, within Eurocentrism. Hybridity has been used and useful to formulate an original national identity, but this has been done through what Denise Ferreira da Silva has called a *teleology of assimilation* of Otherness into a Eurocentric formulation of Brazil(ianness). Carnival and the Mulata are but the ritual celebration and the iconic figure of the articulation of hybridity as white hegemony. In essence, Hybridity is the mortar that binds together the Eurocentric pillars that sustain white hegemony in Brazil.

Conclusion

Central in this writing of the Brazilian subject, then, is the necessity to produce its essential Europeaness. [...] Thus, while miscegenation provided Brazilian space with its homogeneity and individuality, the history of the nation was but the teleological movement of a slightly tanned European subject.

Denise Ferreira da Silva (1998a: 217)

Eurocentrism

Brazil is a fascinating country. This is partly due to the intensive and extensive interaction between peoples of different continents and different cultures that has defined the history of this part of the Americas since the arrival of the Portuguese in 1500. With over five centuries of miscegenation and transculturation, Brazil has often been considered a paragon of racial harmony: a *racial democracy*. This portrait of the country has been shared by many and is still a popular myth today despite the noticeable social inequality between whites and nonwhites in Brazil. The coexistence of hybridity and racism makes for a complex and intriguing reality, which has led different authors to speak of the Brazilian paradox, the Brazilian dilemma or the Brazilian puzzle. This complex and intriguing reality has been the object of the present dissertation.

This work starts from the premise that economic explanations cannot account for the totality and complexity of the Brazilian paradox. This premise stems largely from the notion that the cultural (in general) and the imaginary (in particular) are crucial to explain human behaviour and social reality. The centrality of the imaginary has led us to focus on the nation—the modern social imaginary par excellence—as the key to unlock the Brazilian paradox. This required a look at the colonial past, not least because one of the building blocks of the Brazilian nation is the arrival of the Portuguese in 1500, the so-called

discovery of Brazil. Moreover, the formulation of hybridity as the defining feature or essence of the nation also demanded a look at the colonial past, insofar as that formulation hinges in the interpretation of patterns of social and cultural interaction established during colonial Brazil. In essence, this amounts to a postcolonial analysis of the formation and formulation of Brazil.

This analysis has produced a *double portrait* of Brazil. On the one hand, the analysis of the *formation* of Brazil reveals a country built on an interminable, unpredictable, and often accidental, ambiguous and ambivalent series of processes, structures and events protagonised at different times and in different spaces by different groups of people. This is a portrait of Brazil with multiple subjects and subjectivities, multiple agents and agencies, including of course the three traditional iconic groups: Indians, Portuguese and Africans in their pre-Brazilian form, as well as in their subsequent incarnation as Brazilian Indians, Luso-Brazilians and Afro-Brazilians. But the analysis also reveals a country with a history of dependence and subordination that has delivered the country into white hegemony, that is, into the supremacy of the Luso-Brazilians.

The critical analysis of the history of Brazil shows the largely dependent and subordinate integration of Indians and Africans into Brazilian society. The former have been mainly integrated via tutelage, a relation of chronic dependency on the State, whereas the subordinate integration of the latter was mainly through slavery, but also through the specific ways in which manumission and abolition were carried out, which guaranteed that their dependence and subordination would continue beyond slavery. In the case of the Afro-Brazilians, the efforts to replace their labour with that of European migrants further entrenched their subordination in post-slavery Brazil. Similarly, the analysis reveals that the process of miscegenation—driven by gender (male/female) and colour/racial (white/black) hierarchies— further entrenched white (and male) supremacy in Brazil.

The dependent and subordinate integration of Indians and Africans in the formation of Brazil has been complemented and reinforced by their dependent and subordinate integration into the *formulation* of Brazil(ianness).

The basic portrait of Brazil(ianness) that emerges from this study is one where the Indians are depicted as natural or mythical figures, the Africans as economic or sexual objects, and the Portuguese as historical agents. Thus, in the narratives that accompany this portrait, the Indians provide the mythical past and the link to the land; the Africans provide the physical work, and are integrated through slavery and sex; and the Portuguese are the historical agents responsible for the formation of Brazil. This basic portrait can be developed a bit further by aligning the three main events defined here as the pillars of the nation and the three foremost figures that have emerged from the interactions between the three topical constitutive groups of Brazil.

Brazilian Indians are essentially depicted as noble savages, innocent beings living in the Terrestrial Paradise. They are at once perfect (as natural beings) and incomplete (as civilised beings: they have no laws, no faith and no rulers). They are mythical beings situated *out of history*. The figure that symbolises the indigenous people of Brazil is **the Indian**. This imaginary figure—as either the good Indian or the bad Indian—is their dominant representation in the narratives of Brazilianness. The event that signals their integration into the nation is the **Discovery** of Brazil, and more specifically the early sexual encounters between male settlers and female natives. The arrival and settlement of the Portuguese is formulated as an idyllic encounter between Portuguese men and Indian women, symbolised by the relationship between Caramuru and Paraguaçu. Theirs is a foundational narrative of *love and marriage* between America and Portugal, the product of which would be Brazil(ianness). Importantly, the symbolism of their marriage retains a mythical aura that presents *the birth of the nation* as something immaculate that can be celebrated in terms of civilisation, and more specifically of Catholicism, and that legitimates the Portuguese colonisation of Brazil.

Afro-Brazilians are essentially depicted as objects: economic objects (tools of production) and sexual objects (tools of reproduction). The event that signals the integration of the African in the Brazilian nation is the **Abolition** of slavery. This event has been portrayed as a peaceful process of gradual manumission

which culminated with *the gift of freedom* given to the remaining slaves by Princess Isabel, who came to be known as the Redeemer of Brazil. The symbolic power of this gift forever locks Afro-Brazilians into a position of *gratitude and deference*, at the same time that expunges the violence of slavery and the struggle against slavery from the history of Brazil. The foremost symbol of their integration into the nation is **the Mulata**. This imaginary figure has come to symbolise the incorporation of the African Other into Brazil(ianness) through sex, or to be precise, through sex with the Portuguese and Luso-Brazilians. Importantly, the articulation of their sexual relations mostly through concubinage means that they retain a stigma, a sense of impurity that gives them a *dark but alluring* place in Brazilianness.

Luso-Brazilians are depicted as historical agents, the people, or more precisely, the *men* responsible for the construction of Brazil. Thus, they are not integrated into the nation as such, because they are the *architects* of Brazil(ianness). But they are particularly prominent as the only visible participant in what is, in national(ist) terms the most significant event of the nation: the **Independence** of Brazil. The blinding whiteness of the portrait of Brazilian Independence, coupled with the symbolic power of the Grito de Ipiranga, furthers white hegemony and exorcises political violence from the national(ist) portrait of Brazil. The figure that has come to symbolise the spirit of independence and the constructive force of the Luso-Brazilians is **the Bandeirante**. This male figure represents the colonial and modern(ising) agency upon whose incommensurable strength and determination the emergence of a modern independent nation-state was possible in Brazil. In essence, this narrative suggests that there would be no Brazil, let alone independent Brazil, without the historical agency of the Bandeirante.

The symbolic integration of the three groups in Brazil(ianness) is transversed by discourses of *gender* and *sexuality*. In essence, the formation of the nation according to this formulation is the product of heterosexual relations between Portuguese males and Indian and African females. Their relations differ in some ways but are similar in one fundamental aspect: the *objectification*

of the Female Others. In essence, both female figures are objects: one mythical (the Indian) and the other sexual (the Mulata). The former is defined by purity and morality; the latter by debauchery and biology. Thus, while Brazilian Indians are integrated via marriage and love (albeit a mythical one), Afro-Brazilians are integrated via concubinage and sex.

In a country that celebrates debauchery in its national ritual (carnival), it is hard to ascertain which Female Other ends up better placed in the formulation of Brazilianness, the pure Indian or the lascivious Mulata, but what is clear is that both remain subordinate to the Luso-Brazilian Male. In both cases, the Luso-Brazilian (Male) Self retains the active and dominant position in the relationship with the (Female) Others, not least because this discourse is located in the profoundly patriarchal society that is Brazil. In short, the analysis of the national imaginary reveals that race/ethnicity and gender/sexuality are intimately linked in sustaining white (and male) hegemony in Brazil.

The overarching framework within which all these characters perform their roles in the play of Brazilianness is that of **Western Modernity**. Those roles are defined by their alleged contribution to the integration of Brazil into Western Modernity. Thus, Brazilian Indians are either located out of Modernity or portrayed as the *spectators* of the arrival of Modernity to this part of the Americas. For their part, Afro-Brazilians are integral to the picture of Brazilian Modernity, but only as the main *obstacle* to the modernisation of Brazil. Finally, the Luso-Brazilians are the *agents* of Modernity, the ones responsible for the arrival of Modernity to Brazil, for the existence of Modern Brazil. Similarly, the three acts of the play (i.e. the three births of Brazil: Discovery, Independence and Abolition) are interpreted in terms of their significance in Brazil's incorporation into Western Modernity. Thus, the Discovery is interpreted as a great scientific achievement, deliberately undertaken, and driven by the advanced (i.e. modern) technology of the Portuguese. Independence is interpreted as the coming of age, the adulthood of the nation that gave Brazil the formal pass required to enter Western Modernity —that pass being the nation-state, the foremost political identity card of Western Modernity. Finally,

the Abolition of slavery —coupled with the transformation of Brazil into a Republic a year later— is interpreted as the definitive welcome of Brazil into the club of modern nations, with the elimination of what were considered to be the last two vestiges of the pre-Modern world: Slavery (and the Monarchy).

The combined effect of this portrait is one where the Indians (the Indian) provide the pre-Modern *roots* of Brazil; the Portuguese (the Bandeirante) establish the *routes* that lead Brazil to Modernity; and the Africans (the Slaves and the Mulata) provide the *tools* of production and reproduction on the road to Modernity. Thus, the Indians are placed in the realm of *mythology*; the Portuguese are placed in the realm of *history*; and the Africans are placed in the realm of *biology*. In other words, this amounts to an epistemological division between *subjects* and *objects* —or, at best, autonomous and dependent subjects.

This division was translated into a racial discourse in the late 19th century. The three constitutive *peoples* of Brazil (Indians, Africans and Europeans) became the three constitutive *races* of Brazil (Red, Black and White). The effect of this translation was to solidify the differences between the three groups and their different places in the formation and formulation of Brazil. The contextualisation of race thinking as part of science and modernity guaranteed that, despite the difficulty of espousing a theory of racial degeneration in a country full of so-called inferior and degenerate people, the identity of the nation was totally reformulated to fit with the new paradigm of modernity, dominated at the time by science and eugenics. But the anxiety created by that paradox and the gradual discrediting of race thinking eventually led to a reformulation of Brazilianness that celebrated what until then had been ignored, despised or only very selectively embraced: **Hybridity**.

The event that marked the definitive embrace of hybridity was the publication of *Casa-Grande & Senzala* in 1933. The book not only proclaimed the absence of racism in Brazil, but presented Brazil as a model on how to defeat the newly proclaimed scourge of modernity: biological racism. The solution was hybridity. The Brazilian colonial past of miscegenation and transculturation was offered as a model of human relations which had

prevented racism and engendered a racial democracy. The popularity of this idea —hybridity as antidote to the poison of racism— has been continuous, despite the increasing numbers of studies documenting the deep racial inequalities between whites and nonwhites in contemporary Brazil.

There is no doubt that Freyre was correct to assert the importance of hybridity in Brazil. But the fact that Brazilian culture is highly hybrid reflects the cultural resilience of the Indian and African Other rather than the cultural tolerance of the Portuguese. The process of transculturation took place despite the efforts of the Portuguese to acculturate the Others into the values and traditions of Portugal, first Catholicism and then Secular Western Modernity. Yet, despite the level of cultural hybridity, Brazil continues to operate culturally within a *hierarchy of cultures* that privileges the values and forms associated with Western Modernity; and the white elite continues to deploy a discourse of civilisation and modernisation against any cultural expressions (musical, dance, religious, etc.) deemed to have traces of barbarism, of Otherness. In the case of Afro-Brazilian culture, Otherness is associated with blackness/darkness, that is, with the so-called Dark Continent, the dark side of Nature. At the same time, the Brazilian Indians are forced either to assimilate into modern Brazil and abandon their cultural identity and traditional practices or remain trapped in Nature, in this case depicted as the idyllic side of Nature. This formulation of Brazil(ianness), best illustrated in the Luso-Tropicalism theorised by Gilberto Freyre, guarantees the supremacy of those who are associated with Western Modernity: Luso-Brazilians, that is, the whites of Brazil.

The portrait of the nation that emerges here is not one of national(ism) by elimination [*nacional por subtração*] —as the one theorised by Roberto Schwarz— but rather one of *national(ism) by subordination*. That is, the subordination of the Indian and African Others to the Portuguese Self, of Indianness and Africanness to a Eurocentric narrative of Brazilianness. This narrative hinges on the historical political agency attributed to the Portuguese, with the depiction of the Others as spectators, extras, or assistants. But it also hinges on the cultural subordination the Others to the Eurocentric mores and tastes of the Luso-

Brazilians. These days, that subordination often takes place through consumption—not only in simple economic terms, although that is also often the case— but through symbolic terms. The Brazilian Indians are consumed mostly as a myth: they are invented and reinvented to suit the national ideological anxieties and projects of the moment. In this sense, Alcida Ramos has shown how the Indian today is a hyperreal Indian, more real than the actual, real Indians, the indigenous peoples of Brazil. For its part, the African Other is consumed through the Mulata. This double process of consumption and subordination of the Others to the Eurocentric Self is driven by a teleology of assimilation whose destiny is to deliver Brazil into Western Modernity and Whiteness. The present dissertation has revealed the presence of this teleology of assimilation (Eurocentrism) at the heart of the three symbolic pillars (Discovery-Independence-Abolition) and the symbolic mortar (Hybridity) that sustain the imaginary edifice that is Brazil.

In short, the celebration of hybridity has served to mask the secular prejudices and the largely exploitative character of the processes of transculturation and miscegenation in Brazil. Moreover, the definition of Brazil as a hybrid nation has not eliminated or dissolved these hierarchies. Instead, the notion of hybridity has retained a Eurocentric formulation of the historical formation of Brazil that incorporates the Other into a structure of dependency (as a dependent subject: as an Object). In this situation, hybridity is not the antidote or the wonder pill to prevent or eliminate racism. Without unthinking and undoing the Eurocentrism that underpins the current formulation of Brazil(ianness), there is little that hybridity can do to undermine racism and white hegemony in Brazil. The struggle against racism and white hegemony requires a *postcolonial* reformulation of Brazil(ianness). Perhaps the time has come for another competition on 'How to (re)write the history of Brazil'.

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