

# Erecting and Erasing Boundaries: Can We Combine the “Indo” and the “Afro” in Latin American Studies?

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One of the ongoing tensions in the field of Latin American history is the relationship between Spanish America and Portuguese America, and to what extent they together constitute a coherent object of study called Latin America. Brazilianists never tire of bemoaning the hegemony of the Mexicanists (particularly in the field of history) and the reluctance of most Spanish Americanists to fully integrate Brazil into their courses and transnational frameworks. And it's not just an issue for historians. I'll never forget that chilling moment when a well-meaning but ingenuous graduate student doing a Ph.D. in Latin American literature asked me if Brazil had produced a literary corpus worth reading. It was genuinely horrifying, if not entirely surprising, to learn that this “Latin Americanist” had never even heard of Machado de Assis, and had surely not read a single one of his novels.

The reason for Brazil's uneasy position in the field of Latin American studies in general, and Latin American history, in particular, is not especially mystifying (despite Brazil being the biggest, most populous, wealthiest, most industrialized, etc., etc., of the Latin American nations). There's the little matter of a different language, as well as a different colonial empire with somewhat discrete logics and cultures, and Brazil's rather idiosyncratic postcolonial experience characterized by relative inter-regional cohesion, an intensification of plantation slavery, and a fairly stable constitutional monarchy for the first 65 years of independence. Also, in many university systems, the expansion of Latin American studies has been fueled by the growth of Latino communities, but Brazilian immigrants are a

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distinct minority among Latinos (and are not even sure if they count as Latinos). Thus the CUNY system in New York City has many more scholars who work on Puerto Rico or the Dominican Republic than on Brazil, and in California it would be difficult to find a program that doesn't have several Mexicanists, but study of Brazil remains optional.

Needless to say, this causes considerable grumbling and resentment among Brazilianists, but one could argue that, intellectually, there's a certain justification for the relative "exclusion" or segregation of Brazil given its different historical trajectory, at least until the twentieth century, its distinctive linguistic and literary traditions, its different ethnic and racial composition, and so on. The insistence that Brazil be proportionally recognized and researched in the field of Latin American studies is typically articulated as a political or professional claim, not an intellectual one. But if we go back to one specific factor of "difference"—Brazil's distinctive ethnic and racial composition—I think we identify another, and perhaps intellectually more compelling "tension" in the field of Latin American studies, and one where the process of inclusion and exclusion raises much more fundamental issues. In effect, this would be the tendency to divide Latin America into regions that have a strong indigenous/Indian presence, currently and historically, and those—principally the Caribbean and Brazil—that are associated with the African Diaspora. Not only do these "separate spheres" awkwardly co-exist, but the work on one side of the divide too rarely informs the research on the other side.<sup>1</sup>

I was prompted to think more systematically about this problem—or at least what I would identify as a problem—by reading a set of then unpublished essays that eventually appeared in the anthology *After Spanish Rule*, edited by Mark Thurner and Andrés Guerrero (Duke University Press, 2003). This innovative and influential volume emerged from a conference called to discuss the relative exclusion of Latin America in the scholarly field of postcolonial studies. Distressed by the omission or elision of the Latin American colonial/postcolonial experience in the hottest new works on empires and their aftermaths, the editors and contributors of *After Spanish Rule* sought to demonstrate not only that the protean concept of the postcolonial can be illuminating for scholars of Latin America but even more, that other colonial/postcolonial histories (whether in Africa, Asia, or the Middle East) are less intelligible if the Spanish Empire and its former colonies are omitted from consideration. However, once you raise the issue of inclusion as your organizing principle, it seems reasonable for readers to consider what was being left out of *that* volume, why, and with what consequences. What I perceived as being left out could be described in two ways: in conventional geographic terms: Brazil and the Caribbean, or in thematic terms: the African Diaspora in the Americas. (Here I should mention that the

original conference and the papers that emerged from it—which provoked these comments—did not include Marixa Lasso’s excellent article on Afro-Colombians and independence, which does appear in the published volume.) This moves me to ask two questions: why were these areas and cultures being omitted? And would it have strengthened the authors’ claims about the centrality of Latin America to the field of postcolonial studies to include them?

Again, my point is not to ritualistically complain that *my* country of specialization is being neglected. After all, the anthology is unambiguously entitled *After Spanish Rule*, not “After Iberian Rule.” Indeed, inclusion for the sake of inclusiveness is not a very compelling argument, so the problem is not the near-complete absence of Brazil *qua* Brazil. Instead, I think, intellectually, it is worth considering why Brazil and the African Diaspora are so often absent from discussions of postcoloniality in Latin America.

This is not an entirely new or original concern, of course. Over a decade ago, Peter Wade cogently criticized social scientists’ tendency to study blacks and Indians separately, and to approach the former as a matter of race and race relations, and the latter as a question of ethnicity. While he acknowledged that, historically, blacks and Indians have “fitted in different ways” into what he terms “structures of alterity,” Wade urged us not to be confined by the distinctions created by colonial rule and contended that “it is necessary to bring blacks and Indians into the same theoretical frame of reference, while recognizing the historical differences between them and the consequences of these at the political level.”<sup>2</sup> I enthusiastically agree with his arguments in this regard, but I think there is the additional consideration of the conventional divisions produced by the way we have organized historical knowledge about Latin America. The linguistic and pedagogical separation of Spanish and Portuguese America, and the association of the Spanish Empire with Indian tribute-payers and the Portuguese Empire with African slaves, has embedded this conceptual split in our conferences, textbooks, survey courses, and scholarly research.

It may well give discussions of postcoloniality a greater degree of coherence and thematic unity to limit the category of subaltern to people of indigenous descent, and to restrict the evidence to postcolonial situations in which Indians form or get defined as the “problem” population for emerging nations. The elaborate regime of imperial laws and regulations that ruled the “República de Indios” in the colonial period—and proved so difficult to dismantle whether in the formal liberal discourse of citizenship or in customary practice—has meant that “indigenous America” provides an especially fertile ground for exploring the postcolonial challenges and paradoxes faced by the new Latin American states-in-formation.<sup>3</sup> Perhaps more easily than in the case of former colonies where slavery, with its increasingly privatized power relationships,<sup>4</sup> was the

central institution of the colonial order, the heavily indigenous regions of Latin America permit us, in Gyan Prakash's words, to "recognize another history of agency and knowledge alive in the dead weight of the colonial past."<sup>5</sup>

Nonetheless, I would argue that we need to reflect on what we lose or suppress by defining, and hence limiting, the colonial/postcolonial order in this way—that is, by making postcolonial Latin America equivalent to those societies where the subalterns were of indigenous descent. No scholar, to my knowledge, has contended that postcolonial theory (or better, the insights offered by the theoretically informed concept of postcoloniality) applies exclusively to the nations of Latin America with large indigenous populations. Still, by restricting the discussion of the postcolonial to Spanish American societies with significant indigenous populations, the effect is to re-inscribe a deeply problematic division between indigenous and African America, and at a time when there is a nascent trend toward bridging that divide.<sup>6</sup> Moreover, this division seems especially incongruous with the very aims of postcolonial studies, which surely include the contesting and blurring of conventional categories and boundaries.

In the remainder of this essay, I will consider the implications of this splitting of subaltern histories from three perspectives. First, I will discuss a few parallels between Spanish and Portuguese America in terms of the dilemmas regarding citizenship and national identity posed by the postcolonial condition. Second, I will explore ways in which a dialogue with postcolonial theory would invigorate new and encouraging trends in the Brazilian historiography. And finally, I will argue for a *Latin American* (not Spanish American) postcoloniality, that conceptualizes the Latin American subaltern as including slaves and free people of color, as well as Indians and mestizos, and will contend that a sequel entitled "After Iberian Rule" would not dilute but strengthen claims to the indispensability of the Latin American case for the field of postcolonial studies.

Many of the concerns that animate the articles in *After Spanish Rule* can also be found in recent research on postcolonial Brazil by scholars focused on Brazilians of African descent, whether slave or free. For example, a provocative essay by Hebe Maria Mattos on slavery and citizenship in the decades following Brazilian independence closely parallels aspects of Andrés Guerrero's discussion of the "regime of customary citizenship" in postcolonial Ecuador.<sup>7</sup> Mattos' argument centers *not* on the usual Brazilian cast of characters, the masters and the slaves, but on free people of color and their efforts (similar to the mestizos in Guerrero's story) to distance themselves from those "Brazilians" whose enslaved condition excluded them from the category of citizen and clearly marked the outer limits of national belonging. Crucial to these efforts was an insistence on the "deracialization" of slavery—that is, the unlinking of the slave status from skin color. In a classic liberal move, the Brazilian Constitution of 1824 (extend-

ing reforms of the Pombaline era that paralleled those of the Bourbon period in Spanish America) made race or skin color irrelevant to formal citizenship rights, and Mattos contends that free people of color jealously guarded against the slightest attempt to revive and re-codify colonial hierarchies based on race, color, or “blood” (*mancha de sangue*). Indeed, she goes so far as to argue that Brazilian elites refrained from defending slavery on racial grounds (in sharp contrast to their southern United States counterparts) precisely because it would have so enraged free people of color, many of whom were actively engaged in the political life of the new nation, including a significant segment who were men of property and standing.

At the same time, Mattos insists that the militancy of free people of color on such matters did not necessarily have implications for the institution of slavery itself, which went largely unquestioned until well past the mid-nineteenth century, nor for distinctions based on income and property. Just as the mestizos in Ecuador violently rejected taxation as reducing them to the status of the colonial Indian population, while not objecting in the least to Indians continuing to pay the tribute, so did free people of color assert their rights as citizens and resist racialization of political status while affirming or acquiescing to the limits of citizenship in the institution of slavery.<sup>8</sup> In both locations the emergence of an “intermediate” category did little to blur the lines of stratification in the new nation.

Asking which groups could assert themselves as legitimate political actors also helps us re-think the regional rebellions that wracked Brazil during the decade following the abdication of Dom Pedro I (1831), and explore their commonalities with unrest in other parts of Latin America. In his recent study of the Balaiada Rebellion (1838-1841) in the northern province of Maranhão, Matthias Röhrig Assunção not only emphasizes the intense participation of the popular classes (readily acknowledged by earlier studies of the revolt), but also insists that popular leaders articulated their demands within the liberal discourse of citizenship rights. And they were cautious about endorsing actions or forming allegiances that would be seen as transgressing acceptable political limits. Free people of color in one sub-region did ally with maroons who had been active in that area for some time, but they took this step only as a last resort, once it became clear that elite liberals would not grant their movement political legitimacy. This strategic alliance between rebels and maroons, however, further enabled regional elites to denounce the rebellion as beyond the bounds of (civilized) national politics and thus worthy only of armed repression, not political negotiation, a response that parallels similar developments in the Andes.<sup>9</sup>

Whether we are addressing the expansive, suggestive interpretation in Hebe Mattos’ essay, or the more empirically grounded case study in Assunção’s article,

we can observe processes very similar to those highlighted in *After Spanish Rule*. As in highlands Ecuador or the Oaxaca region of Mexico, we have subaltern groups pressing for a thoroughgoing decolonization, including the suppression of any traces of the “mancha de sangue” that reinforced colonial hierarchies, but expressing their claims in a liberal language that reproduced other binaries (slave and free, propertyless and propertied) that set limits on the inclusiveness of citizenship and constructed “new” bases for political rights on concepts of civilization and political capacity derived from the colonial period. Furthermore, in an additional parallel to the Andean case, one could argue that the Liberal/Conservative state in post-1840 Brazil, though eschewing a resurrection of certain colonial-era distinctions, increasingly relied on the putative “private sphere” to administer (free) subaltern populations through an elaborate network of patron-client relations and political bossism. Thus, whereas freemen of color expressed their opposition to the military draft in the 1830s through collective protest, by mid-century, according to Richard Graham, a typical Brazilian of the popular classes would seek to avoid the draft through the intervention/protection of a powerful patron.<sup>10</sup>

Other analogous issues emerge from a survey of recent historical research on postcolonial Brazil. Despite the absence of the sort of Inca or Aztec ruins that figure prominently in Mark Thurner’s essay on “Genealogies of History and Nation,” Brazilian elites eagerly sought to construct a glorious Indian past that would both sharply distinguish them from the Portuguese colonizers and distance them from the nation’s more culturally/racially “troubling” African inhabitants.<sup>11</sup> Several elite Brazilian families ostentatiously adopted indigenous surnames in the era of independence, and Hendrik Kraay notes that the “caboclo” (an acculturated Indian or mestizo peasant) was foregrounded as the archetypical Brazilian in Bahian celebrations of 2 de Julho, a regional independence holiday, despite (or perhaps because of) the city’s overwhelmingly African/Afro-Brazilian population.<sup>12</sup> “Letrados” who congregated in São Paulo’s Instituto Histórico e Geográfico in the early twentieth century assiduously identified genealogical, linguistic, and cultural ties between postcolonial paulista society and the region’s indigenous Tupi inhabitants, but denied any influence from the still sizable African-descended population.<sup>13</sup>

Assunção, Mattos, and Kraay’s work all represent a major shift away from earlier scholarship on post-independence Brazil that tended to emphasize the smooth and peaceful transition to nationhood, the reproduction of the colonial order in the new nation, and explained away the uprisings of the 1830s as an aberrant radical-liberal interlude punctuated by isolated pre-political popular outbursts.<sup>14</sup> This narrative proved remarkably durable: just a decade ago I presented a paper to a Brazilian audience in which I described the (then) current develop-

ments in the literature on postcolonial Spanish America, citing the influence of subaltern studies and the concept of "everyday forms of state formation," and speculating as to why there were so few echoes of these trends in the Brazilian historiography. On that occasion I attributed this silence to the scholarly "common sense" that Brazilian postcolonial elites had suppressed all popular political participation and significant ideological conflict, and that this historical assumption, however dubious, served as a major deterrent to engaging with these new historiographical trends.<sup>15</sup> A survey of the most recent historical scholarship would reveal that this sense is no longer so "common" and that many students of Brazilian history have gone well beyond the premise that postcolonial elites smothered all dissenting voices, and have taken up themes and interpretations that indicate considerable convergence with recent historiographical trends in Spanish America.<sup>16</sup>

Indeed, I think there is no better case than postcolonial Brazil to demonstrate the flaws in Jorge Klor de Alva's controversial contention that the transition to independence simply brought a subset of the colonial elite to power and therefore Latin America has not yet had its postcolonial moment.<sup>17</sup> Though he certainly intends his position to reflect a critical perspective on elite domination of Latin American politics, its main effect is to reproduce a familiar and unproductive narrative of Latin American political history in which subaltern groups are marginal and elites are nearly omnipotent, and where binary oppositions of class and color, of colonizer and colonized, are starkly defined and efficiently imposed.

At first glance the Brazilian transition from colony to nation, with the transfer of the Portuguese Court to Rio (1808) as its central episode and with armed struggle nearly absent, might seem to be the example, *par excellence*, of what Klor de Alva is claiming. After all, it was not just the local representatives of imperial culture who seized power, but the very people located at the (temporary) epicenter of the empire. Yet, as Kirsten Schultz shows in her important study of the Portuguese Court in Rio, the transfer of the imperial capital from Europe to America involved more than mere physical relocation.<sup>18</sup> Rather, the shift led to a questioning of the very bases of imperial rule and monarchical authority, which could not be simply and easily reconstituted in a New World setting, creating instead a destabilized context in which the concept of a constitutional monarchy (with its implied transformation of subjects into citizens) became increasingly thinkable on both sides of the Atlantic. At the risk of over-simplifying, one could argue that the transfer of the Court made too manifest the ambiguities in the "colonizer/colonized" binary. Klor de Alva's "one elite for another" argument could hardly account for these tensions and disruptions, and if his claims do not apply to the Brazilian case, their interpretive value would seem even less compelling for Spanish America.

Schultz's study, together with such books and articles as those by Mattos, Kraay, and Assunção, have begun a process of rethinking post-independence Brazil that challenges the narrative of a smooth, elite-engineered process of transition to nationhood, with the popular classes either subdued by patron-client networks or manifesting historical agency only in spontaneous, pre-political eruptions of violence. Mattos' research provides us with a new terrain on which to explore the surprisingly durable (and popular) notion of Brazil as a "racial democracy." Instead of being the result of a special "Lusotropical" disposition toward racial mixing, or an elite-engineered attempt to mask continuing racial discrimination and undermine Afro-Brazilian militancy, we can trace its roots, at least partially, to the postcolonial campaign by free people of color to "deracialize" enslavement, to expunge the last traces of the "mancha de sangue" ideology of the colonial era, to assert their full rights to citizenship, and to stigmatize any elite effort to justify slavery on a purely racial basis as a revival of (backward/decadent) colonial practices.<sup>19</sup>

While earlier narratives tended to valorize what was exceptional and idiosyncratic in the Brazilian historical experience,<sup>20</sup> these new historiographical tendencies can be described as reinserting Brazil into the broader Latin American historiography. But this is still a relatively new and fragile enterprise, one that will depend not only on innovative forms of research and interpretation, but also on the construction of new circuits of scholarly production and exchange. Under these circumstances, the exclusion of Brazil from discussions of postcolonial Latin America has implications that go beyond laments about a lack of inclusiveness, for it could serve to entrench, however unintentionally, the concept of Brazilian exceptionalism.

Having retreated for most of this essay (despite my protestations to the contrary) to the borders of my country of specialization, I want to return now to my earlier remarks about the place of the African Diaspora in postcolonial studies. More specifically, I want to consider what we can understand better or illuminate further by not divorcing the indigenous subaltern from the African/Afro-Latin subaltern. One potentially illuminating episode that such a divorce omits from *After Spanish Rule* is the Haitian Revolution (which only merited a brief reference in the introduction to the initial draft). Yet we know that the slave rebellion in Saint-Domingue and the creation of the nation of Haiti had repercussions well beyond the French Empire and the Caribbean, and that self-defined "whites" and landowners throughout the Americas used Haiti in a variety of ways to craft their notions of citizenship and "civilized" nationhood, with Haiti often playing the role, in the elite imaginary, of the "impossible nation." The delegitimization of collective protest among certain ethnic groups in postcolonial Latin America as "race war" probably owes more to the historical construction of the Haitian



Revolution than to the Andean uprisings of the late eighteenth century.<sup>21</sup> After all, in the case of Saint-Domingue/Haiti, the designated forces of barbarism and disorder actually won the war and seized power.

Secondly, many of these articles cite the nineteenth-century shift in ideas and attitudes about race (indeed, the invention of the very concept of race) as it pertains to indigenous peoples' access to citizenship rights, but this shift is simply unintelligible without reference to the question of slavery and emancipation in the New World. Much of the history of the age of emancipation treats this conceptual shift as occurring independently of campaigns against slavery, as if it were merely a piece of bad luck that the abolition of slavery in its last remaining New World redoubts coincided with the heyday of scientific racism.<sup>22</sup> But I would argue that the history of "race" as a discourse, and its role in the second age of imperialism, is inseparable from the history of slavery and emancipation in the New World, and I would go further and argue that racialized notions about the indigenous peoples of Latin America cannot be understood without reference to preexisting constructions of blackness and whiteness even in areas where African slavery had been a relatively minor feature of the colonial enterprise.<sup>23</sup>

Although one certainly can see a process of "racialization" occurring in white attitudes and policies toward indigenous peoples throughout the colonial and postcolonial period, this process was continually complicated by the difficulty of constructing a White/Indian binary that would allow clear lines of separation and exclusion, and the degree of indigenous non-whiteness (for lack of a better term) always needs to be understood with reference to the racialization of Africanness as blackness.<sup>24</sup> According to Peter Wade, in his *Blackness and Race Mixture*, by the late colonial period the Council of the Indies agreed that marriage between Whites and Indians should be subject to parental consent but not actively discouraged "as their origin is not vile like that of the other *castas*."<sup>25</sup> More generally, he argues that indigenous people occupied a relatively "privileged" institutionalized position in Latin American nation-states, derived from their prior colonial status as members of the *república de indios*, and even after slavery was abolished, "there was a distinct difference between the images of blacks and Indians in debates about the identity of the new nations," with Indians seen as more assimilable and reformable.<sup>26</sup> (This view can also be observed in José Vasconcelos' famous ode to *mestizaje*, *The Cosmic Race*, where Indians are described as a good "bridge" for mixing with whites, in pointed contrast to blacks in the United States). This relative "preference" for the indigenous can be seen as well in the aesthetics of travel writers. It is interesting to note that a European visitor to Lima, fascinated by the semi-veiled women known as *tapadas*, feared *not* that he was flirting with the eyes of a woman who might turn out to be mestiza or Indian, but who might turn out to be African.<sup>27</sup> In other

words, the shifting views of the Indian in Latin America cannot be understood without reference to the shifting and increasingly negative representations of blackness, at least until well into the twentieth century.

Finally, the inclusion of Brazil and the Caribbean in a discussion of Latin American postcoloniality might remedy one of the weaknesses I perceive in much of the recent literature on postcolonial Latin America: in their eagerness to relocate debates about the colonial and postcolonial in the realm of the political and cultural, rather than the social and economic, scholars are focusing so exclusively on questions of citizenship and nation-making that they virtually ignore the issue of labor and how it intersects with these other questions. There are a couple of brief references to forced labor recruitment and the problematic invocation of colonial practices in *After Spanish Rule*, but virtually no systematic consideration of the way either elites or subalterns conceptualized citizens' postcolonial relationship with the material sphere (a silence that seems all the more surprising given that many of the founding historians in the subaltern studies school grounded their work in questions of labor and production).<sup>28</sup> Even Andrés Guerrero's very fine essay on Ecuador's "regime of customary citizenship" treats coercive labor relations as an artifact of the political disciplining of subaltern populations, not the other way around.

Yet one could argue that it was precisely the widespread assumption among elites and middling sectors that certain "racial" groups would refuse to do routinized (and incidentally, low-wage) labor without coercion that eliminated those groups from consideration as full citizens and participants in the nation, and made their inclusion ever less likely since it would threaten elite ability to coerce workers in the absence of a fully developed "free" labor market.<sup>29</sup> Thus the labor issue is hardly incidental or external to the realm of political discourse, even though it tends to be treated that way in many of the recent works in the new political history. In contrast, historians studying colonial/postcolonial discourse in slave and post-emancipation societies usually cannot ignore the issue of labor supply and its implications for citizenship since it was so central to debates and policies during the final decades of slavery and the post-emancipation era. In writing about indigenous peoples, it appears easier to rely entirely on the categories of subject and citizen, and to subsume their identities as producers and laborers within those categories. In writing about slaves and ex-slaves, it is far more difficult to ignore or obscure their status as workers.<sup>30</sup>

In a recently published volume, *Beyond Slavery*, three eminent historians (Rebecca Scott, Thomas Holt, and Frederick Cooper) look at the ways in which free-labor discourse is deployed, modified, or suppressed in post-emancipation societies, and its implications for questions of race and citizenship.<sup>31</sup> Holt, for example, traces the collapse of the post-emancipation initiative to grant freed-

persons in Jamaica full rights as colonial subjects/citizens. Having endorsed the campaign against slavery on the assumption that free labor was moral, enlightened, and natural, while slavery/coercion was immoral, unnatural, and a sign of backwardness, British authorities initially imagined a rapid transformation of freedpersons into a contented proletariat. But the contradictions and ambiguities of the coerced labor/free labor binary at the heart of bourgeois ideology soon became apparent as freedpersons sought to avoid full-time (low) wage labor, and employers reverted to various forms of coercion to overcome this reluctance. The result was an intensifying notion of the Afro-Jamaican as "unfit," not only for free labor but for the exercise of citizenship rights, and Holt concludes that the "beneficent despotism" that British authorities felt compelled to exercise over these "wayward children of the human family" constituted the original "White Man's Burden" and a template for subsequent colonial civilizing projects.<sup>32</sup>

Perhaps even more intriguing is the essay by Frederick Cooper in which he considers the impact of free-labor ideology and the language of contract developed in slave/post-emancipation societies in the New World on European (particularly French) colonial ventures in Africa. Deploying the moral and economic superiority of free labor as a prime justification for European tutelage of the African (who still relied, in productive relations, on what Europeans judged to be forced labor), French authorities soon discovered that their colonial subjects often avoided contractual wage labor, preferring to work under customary arrangements or resorting to options such as peasant farming. This avoidance or refusal led to a discourse of the "peculiarity of the African," and a rapid modification of the definition of acceptable and unacceptable forms of labor recruitment (but again, not because free labor wasn't the superior and preferable form, but because Africans, according to French officials and colonists, were racially or culturally incapable of grasping its superiority).

Ultimately, these continual colonial transgressions of the free labor ideology served as a discursive instrument for an emerging African labor movement which couched its claims for equal wages and working conditions in the liberal language of free labor, making unequal forms of exploitation equivalent to coercion. And it provided an emerging African political leadership with a highly effective discursive strategy for questioning French intentions in Africa. Félix Houphouët-Boigny of the Ivory Coast, speaking in the French parliament, declared that "millions of men have sent us here giving us a precise mandate, to struggle with all our might to abolish the slavery which is still practiced in Black Africa by men, civil servants, and civilians, who are traitors to France and her noble civilizing mission." In April 1946 (nearly a hundred years after the abolition of New World slavery) France finally outlawed forced labor in its African colonies, and in the following month abolished the distinction between

subject and citizen, making manifest the link between labor forms and citizenship rights.<sup>33</sup>

British-ruled Jamaica and French Colonial Africa extend well beyond the boundaries of even a capacious definition of Latin America. However, I mention these essays and the arguments they advance to illustrate the way in which labor questions can be closely tied, sometimes in fundamental ways, to struggles over citizenship rights, and the widening ripples of subaltern (re)interpretations of liberal discourse—not just throughout Latin America and the Caribbean, but across the Atlantic—that pair material concerns with citizenship claims.

Again, the point is not to demand that a volume on postcolonialism in Latin America accommodate all the different locations and subject positions alluded to in the foregoing discussion. Rather, it is meant to help us consider what we might miss if the African Diaspora, or Brazil and the Caribbean, or slavery and emancipation are omitted from the conversation. Not only could that deprive us of insight into certain aspects of the Latin American postcolonial experience, but it could also obscure the “contribution” that knowledge about colonialism in Latin America made to the colonial and postcolonial order in Africa and Asia, a knowledge that continued to be produced and disseminated well into the twentieth century.

After all, at least one Iberian society continued to be a colonial power well after all of Latin America had secured its independence. By way of conclusion, it is worth mentioning the postcolonial ironies of Gilberto Freyre’s notion of Lusotropicalism—the Portuguese colonizer’s reputedly exceptional inclination to mix and coexist with the Other, cited as responsible for Brazil’s peculiar capacity to develop a “racial democracy”—an idea which would become central to post-1930 Brazilian cultural nationalism. It was also eagerly trumpeted in Lisbon at the 1940 *Exposição do Mundo Português* as a major justification/apology for continued Portuguese colonial rule in Africa.<sup>34</sup> It is sobering to observe how easily a past constructed in part to bolster Brazil’s claims to a sphere of moral and cultural superiority vis à vis the North American neocolonial challenge could be arrayed as evidence of the morality and benevolence of an enduring Portuguese colonialism. In other words, if the goal is to make Latin America indispensable to postcolonial studies, and to demonstrate the instability and fluidity of identities across the colonizer/colonized divide, it would be a wise move to include Brazil and the Caribbean in the conversation.

## NOTES

1. For a discussion of this "deep-seated" divide in Latin American studies, see Peter Wade, *Race and Ethnicity in Latin America* (London: Pluto Press, 1997), 25-39.
2. *Ibid.*, 36, 39. It is not surprising that an anthropologist whose main site for research has been Colombia would be the most vocal proponent of this position. Not only does Colombia have large populations of both indigenous and African descent, but both groups have been increasingly visible in the political struggles of the last two decades.
3. See, for example, Brooke Larson's excellent synthesis of these issues, *Trials of Nation Making: Liberalism, Race, and Ethnicity in the Andes, 1810-1910* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004).
4. Though recent research indicates more legal and ecclesiastical intervention into the master-slave relationship than previously assumed. See Herman L. Bennett, *Africans in Colonial Mexico: Absolutism, Christianity and Afro-Creole Consciousness, 1570-1640* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2003); Brian P. Owensby, "How Juan and Leonor Won Their Freedom: Litigation and Liberty in Seventeenth-Century Mexico," *Hispanic American Historical Review* 85, 1 (Feb. 2005), 39-80; and Alejandro de la Fuente, "Slaves and the Creation of Legal Rights in Cuba: *Coartación* and *Papel*," *Hispanic American Historical Review* 87, 4 (Nov. 2007). The latter article is especially revealing since it partly deals with Cuba at the height of the nineteenth-century sugar boom.
5. Gyan Prakash, "Introduction," *After Colonialism: Imperial Histories and Postcolonial Displacements* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995), 5.
6. There are indeed signs that the boundaries are starting to erode, maybe even collapse; the last five years have seen a flood of publications exploring the history of slavery, free people of African descent, and blackness in contexts where they had previously received little attention, as well as relations between peoples of Indian and African descent. These include both synthetic works, such as George Reid Andrews, *Afro-Latin America* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004); anthologies such as Matthew Restall, ed., *Beyond Black and Red: African-Native Relations in Colonial Latin America* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2005); and more monographic books and articles, among them Bennett, *Africans in Colonial Mexico*; Aline Helg, *Liberty and Equality in Caribbean Colombia, 1770-1835* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003); James E. Sanders, *Contentious Republicans: Popular Politics, Race, and Class in Nineteenth-Century Colombia* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2004); Nancy P. Appelbaum, *Muddied Waters: Race, Region, and Local History in Colombia, 1846-1948* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003); and Lowell Gudmundson, "Firewater, Desire, and the Militiamen's Christmas Eve in San Gerónimo, Baja Verapaz, 1892," *Hispanic American Historical Review* 84, 2 (May 2004), 239-276. In the Brazilian historiography, Stuart Schwartz has long insisted on the need to study indigenous and African within the same historical framework. See his pioneering article, "Indian Labor and New World Plantations," *American Historical Review* 83:1 (1978), 43-79.
7. Hebe Maria Mattos, *Escravidão e cidadania no Brasil monárquico* (Rio de Janeiro: Jorge Zahar, 2000).

8. I agree with Mattos that political activism by free people of color (many of whom were themselves slaveholders) did not imply a critique of the institution of slavery during the decades following independence, but I do think that we can detect some signs of incipient abolitionist sentiment, especially in attacks on the transatlantic slave trade. In my own research I found that there was considerable slippage from the slave trade to slavery in the discourse of the traffic's opponents. Barbara Weinstein, "The Decline of the Progressive Planter and the Rise of Subaltern Agency: Shifting Narratives of Slave Emancipation in Brazil," in Gilbert Joseph, ed. *Reclaiming the Political in Latin American History* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2001), 81-101.
9. Matthias Röhrig Assunção, "Elite Politics and Popular Rebellion in the Construction of Post-colonial Order: The Case of Maranhão, Brazil (1820-1841)," *Journal of Latin American Studies* 31 (1999), 1-38. Recent studies of the Cabanagem Revolt (1835-40) in the Amazonian province of Pará have also contested earlier portrayals of the revolt as a spontaneous social upheaval, and have emphasized instead the complex political allegiances and ideological influences underlying the revolt, and the way in which racialized language was used to delegitimize the rebel government. See Luís Balkar Sá Peixoto Pinheiro, *Visões da Cabanagem: uma revolta popular e suas representações na historiografia* (Manaus: Valer Editora, 2001); and Magda Ricci, "Cabanagem, cidadania e identidade revolucionária: o problema do patriotismo na Amazônia entre 1835 e 1840," *Tempo* (Niterói) 11:22 (2007), 5-30.
10. Richard Graham, *Patronage and Politics in 19<sup>th</sup>-Century Brazil* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1990). This is not to imply that there were no collective protests after 1840, or that there were no patron-client networks prior to that, but rather to indicate what tended to be the typical means of evading the draft at a particular moment in time.
11. On the "Indianist" novels of José de Alencar, see Doris Sommer, *Foundational Fictions: The National Romances of Latin America* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991).
12. Hendrik Kraay, "Between Brazil and Bahia: Celebrating Dois de Julho in Nineteenth-Century Salvador," *Journal of Latin American Studies* 31 (1999), 255-286. The foregrounding of the "caboclo," an acculturated Indian/peasant figure, is actually quite different from Alencar's romanticized portraits of Iracema and Irapuã. The caboclo might seem, at first glance, more analogous to the "miserable Indian" of the Peruvian postcolonial imagination, but in the context of Bahia's slave plantation society, he clearly represented a hardy, independent, non-European—but non-African—figure.
13. Antonio Celso Ferreira, *A epopéia bandeirante: letrados, instituições, invenção histórica, 1870-1940* (São Paulo: Ed. Unesp, 2002), 141-47.
14. Assunção, "Elite Politics and Popular Rebellion," 1-2. For a more conventional view of the Brazilian transition from colony to nation, see Roderick Barman, *Brazil: The Forging of a Nation, 1798-1852* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1989).
15. "As novas tendências historiográficas nos Estados Unidos e a pesquisa sobre a América Latina," *CEDHAL: Série Seminários de Pesquisa*, Texto 4 (São Paulo, 1997).
16. Aside from the studies cited above, I would include Gladys Ribeiro, *A liberdade em construção: identidade nacional e conflitos antilusitanos no primeiro reinado* (Rio de Janeiro: Relume Dumará, 2002); Keila Grinberg, *O fador dos brasileiros: cidadania,*

- escravidão e direito civil no tempo de Antonio Pereira Rebouças* (Rio de Janeiro: Civilização Brasileira, 2002); Ivana Stolze Lima, *Cores, marcas e falas: sentidos da mestiçagem no Império do Brasil* (Rio de Janeiro: Arquivo Nacional, 2003); Iara Lis de Carvalho Souza, *A pátria coroada: o Brasil como corpo político autônomo, 1780-1831* (São Paulo: Unesp, 1998); and Roger A. Kittleston, *The Practice of Politics in Postcolonial Brazil: Porto Alegre, 1845-1895* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2005).
17. J. Jorge Klor de Alva, “The Postcolonization of the (Latin) American Experience,” in Gyan Prakash, ed., *After Colonialism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), 241-75.
  18. Kirsten Schultz, *Tropical Versailles: Empire, Monarchy, and the Portuguese Royal Court in Rio de Janeiro, 1808-1821* (New York: Routledge, 2001).
  19. Also see Hebe M. Mattos de Castro, *Das cores do silêncio: Os significados da liberdade no sudeste escravista—Brasil sec. XIX* (Rio de Janeiro: Arquivo Nacional, 1995).
  20. Even that acute observer of historical processes, Benedict Anderson, fell into this tendency when accounting for Brazil’s success at remaining intact (unlike the fragmentation of the former Spanish American vicerealties) following independence from Portugal. He readily endorses José Murilo de Carvalho’s strained sociological argument that the shared socialization experience of Brazilian elites at Coimbra produced a uniform elite identity and hence the capacity to remain one nation, perhaps the thinnest explanation yet for exceptionalism (compared to, say, the argument that United States political culture and social structure is exceptional due to the absence of a feudal tradition, a problematic claim, to be sure, but one that at least generated some interesting historical debates). Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities* (London and New York: Verso, 1991), 51.
  21. For a classic contemporaneous account that transforms a political rebellion into a “race riot” see Domingos Antonio Raiol, *Motins políticos* (Belém: Univ. Federal do Pará, 1970 reprint ed.), vol. 3, 921-925. For an analysis of the process by which longstanding indigenous political grievances get reframed as “race war” see Tristan Platt, “The Andean Experience of Bolivian Liberalism, 1825-1900: Roots of Rebellion in 19<sup>th</sup>-Century Chayanta (Potosí),” 280-323, in Steve J. Stern, ed., *Resistance, Rebellion and Consciousness in the Andean Peasant World* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1987).
  22. Thomas Skidmore, *Black into White: Race and Nationality in Brazilian Thought* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1993); Lilia Moritz Schwarz, *O espetáculo das raças* (São Paulo: Cia. das Letras, 1993). Both of these studies aptly focus on Brazilian adaptations of “scientific” debates about race, but neither historicizes the rise of racial science itself.
  23. Peter Wade, *Blackness and Race Mixture: The Dynamics of Racial Identity in Colombia* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993), especially chap. 2.
  24. On the racialization of Indian ethnicity, see Wade, *Race and Ethnicity*, 37.
  25. *Ibid.*, p. 31.
  26. The Wade quotation is in Larson, *Trials of Nation Making*, p. 19 n. 20.
  27. Deborah Poole, *Vision, Race and Modernity: A Political Economy of Andean Photography* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997). This also indicates how gender and sexuality differently intersected with racialized Indian and African identities.

28. See, among others, Gyan Prakash, *Bonded Histories: Genealogies of Labor Servitude in Colonial India* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990), and Dipesh Chakrabarty, *Rethinking Working-Class History: Bengal, 1890-1940* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989). Mrinalini Sinha cogently argues that divorcing colonial discourse from shifting material interests tends to de-historicize imperialism and reinforce “universalizing” constructions of the Orient. *Colonial Masculinity: The “Manly Englishman” and the “Effeminate Bengali” in the Late 19<sup>th</sup> Century* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1995), 12-14.
29. Recent studies that do take economic interests into account include Larson, *Trials of Nation Making*, and Greg Grandin, *The Blood of Guatemala: A History of Race and Nation* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2000).
30. Though at least one scholar of the African Diaspora has criticized historians for over-emphasizing Africans’ status as (enslaved) laborers when discussing Africans and their descendants in Latin America. Bennett, *Africans in Colonial Mexico*.
31. Frederick Cooper, Thomas C. Holt, and Rebecca J. Scott, *Beyond Slavery: Explorations of Race, Labor, and Citizenship in Postemancipation Societies* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000).
32. Holt, “The Essence of the Contract,” 33-59, in *Beyond Slavery*. Holt notes that one glaring contradiction in British policy toward freedpersons was the discursive emphasis on the constitution of proper bourgeois households, with their separation of public and private spheres, while the planters resorted to a variety of aggressive strategies to maintain their access to freedwomen’s labor.
33. Cooper, “Conditions Analogous to Slavery,” 107-149 (quoted on p. 138), in *Beyond Slavery*.
34. For a wonderful discussion of Brazil’s presence in this exposition, see Daryle Williams, *Culture Wars in Brazil: The First Vargas Regime, 1930-1945* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2001). On Lusotropicalism, see Gilberto Freyre, *New World in the Tropics: The Culture of Modern Brazil* (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1959).