

Todos Somos Iguales, Todos Somos Incas

Dilemmas of Afro-Peruvian Citizenship and Inca Whiteness in Peru

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On December 7, 2008, a day known as Popular Leaders Day in Peru, Peruvian president Alan García provided radio talk-show hosts with an incredibly juicy newsbyte. In the midst of a long diatribe against pesky NGO emissaries, he revealed his color-coded, classist vision of Peru's civil society: "I don't like all the white yuppies involved in leftist politics. I like the copper-colored men who are the real Peruvians that fight for justice" (*El Comercio* 2008). Multiple members of the press blasted him for the overtly racialized remarks. His use of a term such as *pituco* (the closest translation I can come up with is "white yuppie") in reference to the leaders of large NGOs involves multiple registers.¹ The term connotes simultaneously class, race, style, language, and urban geographic districts (particularly within metropolitan Lima). And his reference to men with *cobrizo*-colored skin is a clear historical reference to indigenous Andeans.

García's comment apparently constructs whiteness and Andeanness as a contrast. Indeed they often do contrast in the Peruvian context. But upon further reflection about the history of race and power in Peru, this simple white/Andean dichotomy breaks down and García's comment could in fact be read differently. García clearly speaks of an abstract Andean subject: one who is color-coded in racial terms but who is also a "real Peruvian" and thus is at the center of his nationalist discourse. In other words, he speaks of an abstract Andean actor who is central to Peru's current liberal democratic operations and neoliberal economic policies: an actor thought to somehow be involved in some way at the very centers of power and prestige that define "real" Peruvianness. In short, he speaks of an Andean subject who in at least one of many discursive and contradictory manifestations is a representation of the Peruvian nation.

As such, García's copper-colored man is not nearly as distant from the discourse on whiteness as one might believe. Indeed, I will argue that in one particular representation, Andeanness and whiteness are deeply connected in Peru's

national history and the convoluted discourses of race and power found there. The central idea rests on an abstraction of Andeans as the inheritors of Peru's coveted Inca past: the past that serves as the core narrative of what Peru as a nation is and who Peruvians as a people are. The Inca legacy, in other words, is central to discourses of power, nation, and citizenship in Peru and in some measure always has been (see Greene 2007a). Following the work of thinkers such as Alberto Flores Galindo (1988), and my earlier work on this topic (Greene 2007a, 2009), I argue that the abstract representation of "the Inca" in Peru serves as a central discourse of nation, civilization, and citizenship. It is thus necessarily conflated with discourses of whiteness, modernity, democracy, and liberalism in contemporary Peru. It also serves to make invisible multiple other forms of postcolonial ethnic difference and the subaltern forms of citizenship that certain members of Peruvian civil society are currently using as they make claims on the state. This includes everyday Andeans (i.e., those envisioned by the Peruvian elite as the downtrodden, impure leftovers of a glorious Inca past) and native Amazonians, who are often written out of Peru's Andean-centric history altogether. It also includes Afro-Peruvians, whose different historical trajectory leads them to be largely invisible in the Peruvian imagination. The status of Afro-Peruvians is particularly difficult to visualize from the point of view of Peru's national narrative because they are represented as both not Inca and not Indian: neither as contributors to Peru's national "civilization" nor indigenous to Peruvian soil.

This historical invisibility of Peru's various racialized groups has become the subject of greater debate in recent years. This has resulted in a fair amount of political discussion and a few, relatively superficial, legal changes. Peru's current context, like that of many other countries in the Latin American region, is now being shaped by the widespread adoption of a global discourse on multiculturalism and anti-racism. Originally inspired in large part by the mobilization of various social movements and civil society actors, Latin American states throughout the region now seek to respond. They are doing so by adopting in greater or lesser degree multicultural and in a few cases affirmative action-type legislation, particularly with regard to indigenous and Afro-descendant rights (see Greene 2007b; Hale 2006; Hooker 2005; Htun 2004). In previous work I focused on how Afro-Peruvian activists narrate their historical invisibility as a function of something more complex than their blackness and its difference from global whiteness. I demonstrated that Afro-Peruvians' struggle is centrally defined by their non-Andeanness within a country that idealizes the Inca past (see Greene 2007a). In this chapter I build on that work by focusing on how the Peruvian state responds to Afro-Peruvian struggles and the largely race-based claims through which they seek social justice. I do so primarily by examining the

work of a congressional committee set up in 2004 to debate indigenous Andean, Amazonian, and Afro-Peruvian issues. I argue that the articulation of complex state discourses on Incanness and democratic liberalism in this congressional committee serve not only to further whiten the Inca but also to continue ignoring the legitimacy of Afro-Peruvian claims.

Theories of Race and Class through the Lens of Inca Whiteness

In the last half of the nineteenth century, Karl Marx elaborated an important theory about the relation between capital and citizens. He argued that bourgeois discourses of liberal citizenship are the perfect disguise for what is really happening in that "hidden abode of production" that is the main focus of his critique of capitalism (Marx 1977). This famous metaphor refers to the sphere where capitalists appropriate the products of other people's labor. They are able to do this "legitimately" because of the liberal state's defense of private property and its faith in contractual arrangements between "freely" acting laborers and their employers. Liberalism constructs an image of a world in which everything is free and equal: my dollar is as good as yours; your labor is worth exactly the amount of your wage on the free market; you have the same rights I have in front of the judge, and so forth. Such liberal discourses serve as a curtain, making it difficult for the oppressed to see the material structures of inequality in the sphere of production that underpin the liberal and ideologically "free" and "equal" society in which they live.

One of the major critiques of Marx, however, was that he saw almost everything in terms of class and very little in terms of race (see Gilroy 1993). He developed his theory in the context of Europe's industrialization, when the transformations in class relations were particularly visible. But the nineteenth century was also the pinnacle of colonial processes of racialization. The second wave of European imperialism led by the British and French was ideologically supported by the development of an emerging scientific discourse on the superiority of the white race. Race scientists in European and U.S. universities worked to justify colonization and defend the threatened institution of slavery, both of which were intimately tied to industrialization and global commerce. In short, Marx's political-economic dichotomies meant nothing without the racialized dichotomies to which they were attached. Country to city, peasant to laborer, proletariat to bourgeoisie, subject to citizen meant nothing without savage to civilized, colonized to colonizer, slave to master, black to white.

While one could point to a number of thinkers who contributed to making these connections between political economy, liberalism, and race explicit, one of the most important is W.E.B. Du Bois. By the early part of the twentieth

century Du Bois had begun to explicitly delineate the connections between European imperialism, racialized relations, and the emerging global political-economic and democratic order. He identified whiteness as an ideological weapon used to exclude racialized nonwhites from civil society and as fundamental to the mechanisms the self-proclaimed white elite of the world used to dominate nonwhites. Indeed, Du Bois's view of a world divided by the "color line" translated into multiple demands for inclusion into a modern liberal order and equal access to material resources by those who had been historically excluded from it.

While both Marx and Du Bois launched all-encompassing global visions of the contradictions in an emerging liberal democratic capitalist system, they were also influenced by the contexts in which they lived. Neither vision is fully adequate to describe how global discourses of liberalism, race, and political economy took specific forms in places such as Peru. During the first wave of European imperialism led by the Spanish and Portuguese, the encounter between Europeans and Andeans was never conceptualized in terms of a simple dichotomy of colonizer and colonized or white and nonwhite. Indeed, while the history of conquest in South America is a tale of blood, manipulation, and violence, like colonial adventures everywhere, it is also a tale of complex negotiations among different rulers. It was not simply a confrontation of losers and winners but also an encounter between two imperial states comparing notes about what it meant to be "civilized" among "savages" and what it meant to wield sovereign power over subjects in need of subjection to that power.²

Throughout the colonial period an indigenous noble class, made up of members of Inca lineages and regional *kuraka* (chief) intermediaries, continued to enjoy rights and privileges that set them apart from other indigenous and Afro-descendant inhabitants. These groups of "noble Indians," formally recognized as such by the Spanish crown, played the role of local aristocratic intermediaries between indigenous commoners (or *indios del común*) and the Spanish government. This history of recognizing an indigenous ruling class, which would later turn against the Spanish during the massive uprising led by Tupac Amaru in the early 1780s, kept the idea of the Inca sovereign's power and historical vitality alive. Indeed, although the uprising resulted in an immediate ban on Inca imagery and a prohibition of texts such as Garcilaso de la Vega's *Comentarios Reales* (2004), it also ultimately fueled one of Peru's long-standing national narratives: the promise of the eventual creation of an Andean utopia to be led by an Inca returning to claim a soil that is rightfully his.

Peruvian political actors and national ideologues have sought to appropriate the Inca patrimony as central to the national project a number of times in the nation's history. Although we are most familiar with this phenomenon in the context of Andean resistance movements like that led by Tupac Amaru (Sinclair

2003), from colonial times to the present other actors have vied to control the Inca idea and utopian Andean project as their own. And they often did so in an effort to claim a privileged place in Peru's social and political hierarchy, in the context of the nation's claim that it is the birthplace of an autochthonous and admirable Andean "civilization" comparable to the best Europe has to offer. Those who have sought to imagine themselves as inheritors of Peru's Inca image range from colonial *encomenderos* and *criollo* independence leaders to twentieth-century *indigenistas* and military leaders during the 1970s agrarian reforms (see Greene 2007a; Earle 2007; Flores Galindo 1988).³ Thus, historically members of the country's elite have often sought to imagine themselves as part of the Inca imaginary and thus define discourses of national pride and republican power as derivative of Inca civilization's accomplishments or, in my term, Inca whiteness.

I use the term "whiteness" here as it is used by critical race theorists such as Lipsitz (1998). In such theoretical work whiteness is essentially a representation of power, prestige, and privilege that is ideologically associated with a particular narrative of world history that is deeply Eurocentric. Most important, such work suggests that the key to the power of Europe's whiteness is its ability to constitute itself as the universal standard. Whiteness is that which refuses to mark itself as different and in so doing constitutes other non-Europeans or nonwhites as different and whiteness itself as the implicit norm. This dimension is central in some measure to whiteness almost everywhere it is found, although there are important exceptions. These are made obvious by the long-standing discourses on rural whites (i.e., "white trash") or ethnic/immigrant whites (for example, the Irish and Italians in the United States). And such exceptions result in wonderfully creative book titles like Jim Goad's *Redneck Manifesto* (1997).

Notably, in Peru there is no discourse of rural whiteness or white trashiness. Thus, whiteness is inevitably used as the equivalent of economic and political power and social prestige. However, whiteness in Peru is exceptional in ways that make it different from the discourses of white supremacy found in Europe and the United States. Historically, Peruvian ideologues and national leaders have struggled to establish an equivalence between whiteness and Incanness, or Europeanness and Andeanness in their abstract ideological forms. In part, this struggle is related to the long-term project of comparing Incan "civilizational" achievements with all that is presumed to be universally good and superior in the white civilization that Europeans claimed to have built. Such discourses stretch back to the earliest of colonial writings such as that of the *mestizo* Inca Garcilaso de la Vega, who was also a product of aristocratic negotiation as the child of a conquistador and an Inca princess. Garcilaso de la Vega's *Comentarios reales de los Incas* (2004) explicitly compared Inca society to Rome, one of the key mythical sources of Europe's claim to civilization, and set a precedent that

Peruvian ideologues continue to draw on when trying to define the importance of Peruvian identity in both national and global context.

This colonial discourse of Inca civilization was eventually conflated with an explicit discourse on Inca whiteness during the heyday of race science in the nineteenth century. Various Peruvian and other South American intellectuals as well as a few Europeans explicitly sought to whiten the Inca by incorporating them into the Aryan race or in some cases even by "Incanizing" white Europeans. This kind of Inca-centric thinking, typically rooted in linguistic comparisons between Quechua, Aymara, Sanskrit, and Greek or archaeological analysis of large Inca monuments, was particularly strong in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Writers such as the Uruguayan philologist Vicente López (1871) argued that the Inca were in fact a New World offshoot of the early expansion of the Aryan race. Others such as the Bolivian Emeterio Villamil de Rada (1939) took such Andean-centric thinking to entirely new levels. He combined his Bolivian nationalism, which he pitted against Peru's claim to be the keeper of ancient Andean civilization, with a complexly Judeo-Christian and scientific critique of Vicente López's work. Villamil de Rada suggests that Aymara, which is found primarily in Bolivia (as opposed to Quechua, which is found primarily in Peru), is the language that should be analyzed because it is more ancient. He goes further to imply that Vicente Lopez has pointed the arrows that direct us to world history and civilizational influence in the wrong direction. The point is not that ancient Andeans, who ostensibly were like ancient Egyptians in the older traditions of Aryanist Egyptology, are the descendants of an invading Aryan race, a history that would clearly link them to the expansion of Europe's white civilization. Rather, Villamil de Rada claims, it is the ancient Aymara who are the world's original inhabitants and original creators of the world's languages and standards of civilization. Not only did they give birth to the eventual greatness of the Inca, they gave birth to all great civilizations of the world, including those of the Aryan race. In short, according to Villamil de Rada, the Old World did not discover the New World; instead, the New World is the Old World: hence the title of his work, *La Lengua de Adan y el Hombre de Tiaguanaco* (The Language of Adam and Tiaguanaco Man).

Such debates about the greatness of Andean civilization became so prominent in the nineteenth century that they effectively bridged the culture versus race and religion versus science divides. Hence, a Peruvian writer such as Clemente Palma, the son of the influential intellectual Ricardo Palma, could take the logical step of assuming that the Inca were white not only on cultural and linguistic grounds but also on biological grounds. In his infamous bachelor's thesis, written at the turn of the twentieth century, his scathing pessimism about Peru's racial predicament was obvious. Yet in the middle of a long diatribe against the

various Indian, black, Chinese, and mixed races that make up Peru he made room for an important, if inherently contradictory, exception. The Inca lineage, whose civilized state was mythically founded by Manco Capac, a legendary leader from a legendary foreign land, was partially white because Manco Capac had a “few drops of Aryan blood.” Or, as Palma puts it:

It wasn't those old, miserable, Indians that created that relatively prosperous Empire; it was the spirit of a mysterious man, of a wise legislator, who perhaps had a few drops of Aryan blood, who was perhaps a stranger, who perhaps emerged out of that same disgraced [Indian] race like an exotic flower, like one of those unexplainable anomalies of nature that allow an intellectual to be born among a generation of idiots and an idiot among a generation of intellectuals. That's how since the ninth century, according to some, and since the eleventh century, according to others, Manco Capac appeared and until the beginnings of the sixteenth century with the Conquest there was a period of well-defined living, of organized living, of nationality among the Indian race due to the rising spirit of a civilizing lineage. (Palma 1897, 13)

Even “full-blooded” white Europeans of the era were occasionally in dialogue with such ideas. And at times they were clearly convinced of these racial connections between imperial Indians and the inherent superiority of their invented whiteness, which at the time was also explicitly imperial. Vicente Lopez's book *Les Races Aryennes du Perou* was written in French rather than Spanish and was published in Paris rather than Montevideo because he explicitly sought a scientific European (i.e., white) audience. And according to the book's preface, this publication venue was made possible by intellectual and logistical support from Gaston Maspero, not coincidentally a leading French Egyptologist at the time.

In a parenthetical remark in his famous critique of early race science, Stephen Jay Gould (1981, 64) notes how the nineteenth-century Philadelphia physician Samuel Morton was completely baffled by one particular detail in the racial data he collected. It had to do with an apparent anomaly in his measurements of Inca heads. Morton is now infamous for his contrived methodology for measuring cranial capacity and his scientific endeavor to prove the existence of superior and inferior races based on false assumptions about a relation between intelligence and cranial size. When he measured Inca heads, he found that ancient Peruvian crania were actually very small, in fact, way, way too small. Not only was the Peruvian average skull size smaller than the averages for Europeans (which he no doubt expected) and Asians (who he had fewer concerns about), it was also smaller than the average skull size for “negroes,” who were by all accounts at the very bottom of his list, since his argument about white superiority was ultimately

a justification for the continuation of black enslavement. Furthermore, Morton found that the Inca average was the smallest of all crania in his collection from Native American groups, including many who were by his standard clearly still in a savage state compared to the highly civilized Inca. It simply made no sense: how was it that an advanced civilization that Morton appreciated in his more ethnological descriptions of ancient Peru as something comparable to ancient Greece or Egypt would be run by humans with such small heads? This was a question for which Morton had no answer.

In fact it made so little sense that other European intellectuals interpreting Morton's studies simply ignored his data on the Inca and put them back in their rightfully racially superior place, right alongside white Europeans. Explicitly footnoting and yet completely misreading Morton's work, the eminent British historian William Prescott published this remark in his oft-cited *History of the Conquest of Peru* in 1847:

It was the Inca nobility, indeed, who constituted the real strength of the Peruvian monarchy. Attached to their prince by ties of consanguinity, they had common sympathies and, to a considerable extent, common interests with him. Distinguished by a peculiar dress and insignia, as well as by language and blood, from the rest of the community, they were never confounded with the other tribes and nations who were incorporated into the great Peruvian monarchy. After the lapse of centuries, they still retained their individuality as a peculiar people. They were to the conquered races of the country what the Romans were to the barbarous hordes of the Empire, or the Normans to the ancient inhabitants of the British Isles. . . . They possessed, moreover, an intellectual preeminence, which, no less than their station, gave them authority with the people. Indeed, it may be said to have been the principal foundation of their authority. The crania of the Inca race show a decided superiority over the other races of the land in intellectual power; and it cannot be denied that it was the fountain of that peculiar civilization and social polity, which raised the Peruvian monarchy above every other state in South America. (Prescott 1847, 38–39)

Based on earlier work on Inca nationalism and its central place in Peruvian history, I once suggested, countering Bruno Latour's (1993) famous manifesto against modernity, that from a certain point of view the Inca have always been modern (Greene 2007a). Here, by resituating that argument within global racial discourses about Peru's ostensible place in the Eurocentric version of world history, I've been trying to suggest something that is related but slightly different: the Inca have also always been white.

Indeed, the comment from President Garcia that opened this chapter about copper-colored men as the “real Peruvians” could easily be read as a recent manifestation of this old and complicated fusion of ideas about the relation between whiteness and Incanness in Peru. And so a question arises about what other aspects of contemporary state discourse might continue to reflect the way the ideology of Inca whiteness is used to marginalize other race-based claims to citizenship. The peculiar notion of Inca whiteness governs Peruvian nationalism. In other words, Inca whiteness is a form of hegemony in which the Inca continue to be implicitly white and thus the implicit standard by which all Peruvians are judged, including those, Afro-Peruvians, for example, who are necessarily constituted as racially and culturally different.

White Liberal Incas within Peruvian Congressional Committees

Compared to other Latin American countries, for example Ecuador or Colombia, where significant constitutional changes have taken place in recent years, Peru’s multicultural reforms are largely superficial. Yet in large part influenced by such regional trends and neighboring cases, debate among civil society actors and certain state institutions on such issues has become a constant. Indeed, it has taken on newly institutional forms in Peru since the election of Alejandro Toledo in 2001.

Largely the work of the first lady, Eliane Karp, the Toledo administration oversaw the creation of two arenas of state discussion over indigenous and Afro-Peruvian issues. The first is the Instituto Nacional de Desarrollo de los Pueblos Andinos, Amazónicos, y Afroperuano (Institute for the National Development of Andean Peoples, Amazonians, and Afro-Peruvians; INDEPA). It is an institution with ministerial ranking that includes state-appointed officials and ethnic representatives from Peru’s Amazonian, Andean and Afro-descendant populations. Most activists and NGOs working on indigenous and Afro-Peruvian issues view INDEPA as an inefficient and mostly symbolic effort. A controversial past, frequent budgetary woes, a marginal status within the ministerial rankings, and an increasingly passive role on issues of racism and cultural recognition make it an incredibly weak institution. But INDEPA is nonetheless a state institution that continues to play a role in Peru’s multicultural and race politics (see Greene 2007a).

Issues of racism, multicultural reforms, and indigenous and Afro-Peruvian issues are routinely debated in a second governmental context in Peru. Since 2004, the Peruvian Congress has had a committee that oversees debate and proposed legislation dealing with Andean, Amazonian, and Afro-Peruvian claims. To my knowledge the work of this committee has yet to be analyzed. Below I

present an initial examination of the committee’s work with a particular emphasis on the fact that although Afro-Peruvian issues are rarely discussed, Inca whiteness often appears. My analysis relies on transcripts of the committee’s meetings from 2004 to 2008.

The name of the committee, which originally was the Committee on Amazon, Indigenous and Afro-Peruvian Affairs (Comisión de Amazonía, Asuntos Indígenas y Afroperuanos), was later changed to the Committee on Andean, Amazonian and Afro-Peruvian Peoples and Ecology and Environment. The change brought the name into alignment with INDEPA’s specific regional demarcation of Andean, Amazonian, and Afro-Peruvian (who are implicitly coastal) populations. It also reflects the fact that the committee merged with another committee that had previously dealt exclusively with environmental issues, both urban and rural. This makes the committee a strange place for debate at times. Sometimes the environmental and indigenous themes coincide, particularly regarding environmental issues in the Amazon. But sometimes they do not, as for example when entire sessions are dedicated to discussing contamination in factories or the need for more green space in Lima.

The debate within the committee represents a microcosm of Peruvian political ideologies and party positions. During its existence Congress members from across Peru’s party spectrum have participated, ranging from loyal Fujimoristas and cosmopolitan independents to Apristas and politicians with rural roots in the Peruvian provinces.⁴ The committee is a particularly interesting space of debate because of the participation of three Congresswomen who openly identify as representatives of Peru’s ethnic and racial minority populations. Martha Moyano Delgado, a devout Fujimori supporter and sister of the shantytown activist Maria Elena Moyano (who was killed by the Shining Path in 1992), openly identifies as Afro-Peruvian. Congresswoman Paulina Arpasi was on the committee during its first two years of existence. She was very active until 2006, when she left Congress. Arpasi is an Aymara speaker and longtime Andean peasant activist from Puno with a history of participation in the Confederación Campesina del Perú. In 2006 an indigenous woman from Cuzco, Hilaria Supa Huamán, was elected to Congress and is now also a member of the committee in its more recent manifestation.

Much like the multicultural INDEPA, this congressional committee is relatively superficial. While Congress members do discuss deep historical problems related to racism and ethnic marginalization, the solutions they propose are inevitably more symbolic than structural. In its five years of existence the committee has seen almost no major legislation passed regarding indigenous or Afro-Peruvian issues. The legislation regarding indigenous land rights, bilingual education, and minimal legal autonomy that pertains to Peru’s titled Andean

and Amazonian communities has been on the books for decades; these laws are clearly the product of a different historical era (see Greene 2009). And the various proposals for new legislation dealing with cultural and linguistic rights and constitutional reform put forth by indigenous organizations have effectively gone nowhere.

One important exception in terms of new legislation the committee has overseen in the last few years is Law #28761. Passed in 2006 at the initiative of Moyano Delgado, the law declares June 4 Afro-Peruvian Culture Day. Modeled a bit like the Martin Luther King Jr. holiday in the United States, it is meant to promote Afro-Peruvian contributions to Peruvian culture and recognize the struggles of Afro-Peruvians against racism. It does so by commemorating a memorable Afro-Peruvian icon and intellectual. June 4 is the birthday of Nicomedes Santa Cruz, a folklorist and ethnomusicologist who spearheaded the initial renaissance of Afro-Peruvian cultural expression in the 1950s and 1960s (see Feldman 2006 and in this volume). As a result of the recent legislation June 4 now marks a day when Afro-Peruvian NGOs and community leaders organize various public cultural events to celebrate Afro-Peruvian culture and to debate current black struggles in Peru. But the legislation was passed without much discussion in committee or in the assembly because it in effect represents merely symbolic change.

Despite the relative absence of new legislation passed on issues of multiculturalism and racism, the committee is an interesting space because it allows us a glimpse into the ways that race, culture, and nation are being debated by state officials in the political body that represents the nation at large. Some members represent themselves as part of Peru's ethnic minority groups, while others do not. But as a matter of political positioning and posturing, all have to maintain a constant engagement with nationalist discourse as members of Congress and participants in the process of defining the nature and importance of Peruvianness.

I have several impressions of the committee as a result of having read and analyzed its work from 2004 to 2008 with regard to Afro-Peruvians. The first is that despite the passage of the Afro-Peruvian Culture Day act in 2006, Afro-Peruvian issues are in fact rarely discussed. Although indigenous community and environmental issues are the mainstay of the committee, the issue of blackness typically only comes up when Moyano Delgado brings it up. And more often than not, when she does so, it provokes no real debate or even a complete unwillingness to engage with the issue. In other words, the basic strategy of the other Congress members is simply to ignore blackness as an issue. And yet when the issue of Andean indigeneity emerges, as it often does in the committee, it tends to lead toward an ideological free-for-all whereby all members discuss

what it means to be indigenous (or more specifically Inca) as a way of talking about what it means to be Peruvian.

A particular example will demonstrate this point. At an early stage in the committee's history there was a lengthy and important meeting to discuss the creation of INDEPA as well as proposals for constitutional reforms that would create certain mechanisms of recognition for Afro-Peruvian and indigenous communities. This meeting, which was held on September 29, 2004, included the participation of architect Luis Huarcaya. A history and archaeology fanatic, Huarcaya has worked at the National Institute of Culture and was named director of INDEPA by Alejandro Toledo. He had thus come to participate in the discussion and help define a formal relationship between INDEPA and the committee. Notably, according to his personal blog he is also apparently a self-described "Ancestral Wiseman and Descendant of the Inca" (see <http://luishuarcaya.blogspot.com>).

After Huarcaya's presentation on how he envisioned INDEPA's work, Congresswoman Moyano Delgado intervened with two remarks that referred to two key issues that Afro-Peruvian activists have been debating about for years. The first was a question about different kinds of ethnic terminology and the political implications for self-representation of such language in the law that would create INDEPA. Moyano Delgado said:

We . . . I say this because there is a group of Afro-descendants that has entered into debate about whether or not we Peruvian Afro-descendants consider ourselves black. There's a debate, for example, about the word "black" that was a concept, a word, a pejorative insult that slave-traders gave to us to treat us as just a thing, like fourth-class persons, or not even persons but just animals. And there's another concept that is all over this legislative proposal [to create INDEPA] [problem in the recording] . . . language where people identify as Andean persons and speak of the concept of "indigenous." (Committee on Amazon, Indigenous and Afro-Peruvian Affairs, September 29, 2004).⁵

Notably, neither Huarcaya nor anyone else responded to the question of being black versus being Afro-Peruvian, a key terminological distinction and cause for constant debate in diaspora contexts over issues of racism, ideology, and political correctness. The key question of whether the word black, or "negro" in this case, necessarily entails a racist ideology or can in fact be overcome by revalorizing the word was left aside entirely.

However, the comment sparked a long conversation about the implications of the words *indígena* and *originario* (indigenous and first peoples) versus *campesino* (or peasant). Huarcaya and several Congress members including

Paulina Arpasi, Valderrama Chavez, Molina Almanza, and Santa María del Águila, the president of the committee, all chimed in. While there were certain differences in opinion—most notably Molina Almanza insisted he does not accept use of the word “*indígena*”—the basic consensus pointed to a strategic compromise. Multiple members of the meeting recognized that *indígena* is a problematic term because of its colonial connotations generally and more specifically because in some parts of the Peruvian Andes communities consider themselves campesinos and actively reject the term indigenous. Yet the consensus points to the fact that ultimately the word indigenous is internationally recognized and thus must remain as the official terminology. As Huarcaya put it, “I don’t like the word indigenous because nobody likes it, neither Paulina nor Martha, nobody likes it. But it is accepted in international agreements” (Committee on Amazon, Indigenous and Afro-Peruvian Affairs, September 29, 2004).

The discussion over the word campesino then provoked Moyano Delgado to raise another major point of debate within Afro-Peruvian activist circles. She remarked:

For example, when someone says representative of a peasant community [*comunidad campesina*] or when we speak of peasant communities we are always referring to the Andes. Sir, on the coast there are peasant communities, Afro-Peruvian peoples worked basically on the land on the coast and there are Afro-Peruvian peasants. So there’s an error in our concept here. No? (Committee on Amazon, Indigenous and Afro-Peruvian Affairs, September 29, 2004)

Moyano Delgado was alluding to a long-standing argument within black activist circles about the invisibility of rural or small-town Afro-Peruvian communities, such as those around Chíncha in the south or small towns such as Morropón and Ypatera in the north. Many of the members of these towns continue to be small landowners or are primarily involved in low-level agricultural labor. More important, in cases such as Morropón, Ypatera, and Chíncha, descendants of Afro-Peruvians historically worked on large haciendas in conditions of servile labor until the agrarian reforms of 1968 effectively abolished such forms of land tenure. In other words, she was trying to make an important historical point about the existence of a black rural class that is overshadowed by the national image of the peasant as an essentially indigenous Andean farmer. Again there was no engagement with the issue she brought up. Instead, Congressman Valderrama Chavez intervened and pushed the president to move immediately toward a vote to approve the INDEPA law. Committee president Santa María de Águila did so and Moyano Delgado’s comment was ignored entirely.

Of course it is one thing to pay attention to how blackness is being made

invisible by ignoring it in practice within state arenas, and it is another to pay close attention to the kind of national discourses that continually overshadow blackness. Two very important discourses emerge in this context, both of which are linked by their appeal to Peruvian nationalism. The first is the classical discourse of liberal political democracy, an old abstract idea that obeys the logic of “if we are all citizens then we must all be equal.” And yet it is used ideologically as a form of political discourse with which to dismiss the legitimacy of claims for social and historical justice. In other words, it is just the kind of perfect ideological cover for real and more hidden structural inequality that Marx and Du Bois, with their respective emphases on class and race, were talking about.

The political utility of liberal democratic discourse becomes most obvious when political proposals for structural or significant institutional changes are being debated. This became obvious in the September 29 committee meeting. When INDEPA was being created, several proposals circulated to reform the Peruvian constitution to recognize a specific set of ethnic and cultural rights for Peru’s minority populations. Eliane Karp spearheaded one of the initial proposals in April 2002. Her efforts resulted in a text prepared for circulation within the committee that discussed constitutional issues and became a point of reference within the committee on Andean, Amazonian, and Afro-Peruvian affairs as well (see Comisión de Constitución, Reglamento y Acusaciones Constitucionales 2002). A year later a large group of Andean and Amazonian activists from all the major indigenous rights organizations in Peru organized a national-level consultation with community representatives. They formulated their own proposal for constitutional reform and produced a document that was also circulated to Congress members (COPPIP 2003).

From the point of view of the Committee on Amazon, Indigenous, and Afro-Peruvian Affairs the most controversial issue that came up in the proposals was the one dealing with ethnic quotas in Congress. The two proposals clearly followed the precedent set by Colombia’s 1991 Constitution, which mandates two seats in the upper house for indigenous representatives and two seats in the lower house for Afro-Colombian representatives. The proposal circulated by Andean and Amazonian representatives talks in general terms about the need for “direct political participation in the Parliament of the Republic as happens in other countries” and remarks that this participation “will permit the society and the Peruvian state to broaden the margins of equality and foment an exercise in true citizenship” (COPPIP 2003, 6–7). The text proposed by the Comisión de Constitución, Reglamento y Acusaciones Constitucionales, which oversees constitutional affairs, in which Karp had a hand, actually goes further. In a short book published by the Congress the committee proposes that 10 percent of members of Congress should be specially elected by indigenous and

Afro-Peruvian populations (Comisión de Constitución, Reglamento y Acusaciones Constitucionales 2002, 61).

In following the trend set by Colombia for ethnic quotas, indigenous activists and supporters such as Karp pushed the state to contemplate what Mala Htun (2004) has called the need to instate a "self-perpetuating" logic of ethnicity in many countries. The idea is that by inscribing such multicultural measures into a document such as the constitution, which is after all the text that literally constitutes the nation, one perpetuates the existence of a nation that is permanently divided along ethnic lines. In attempting to address historical grievances and recognize past wrongs, such measures challenge the classic nationalist ideologies about a singular and homogeneous national body. But they also contribute to the hardening and often the institutionalization of ethnic boundaries that are in reality rather porous. In short, to elect an indigenous or Afro-descendant representative, one has to first explicitly define who is and who is not indigenous and Afro-descendant.

This kind of debate about ethnic quotas emerged in the Committee on Amazon, Indigenous, and Afro-Peruvian Affairs during another session devoted to discussing INDEPA and its legislative implications on March 16, 2005. It is unclear to me which of the various legislative or constitutional reform proposals they were discussing. In the transcript, there appeared to be some confusion among the Congress members themselves as they discussed the possibility of reserving two or four seats for Peru's ethnic minority populations. But the frequent references to classic liberal democratic tenets about the inherent equality of all citizens under the law were very clear. They were used repeatedly as a justification for not supporting ethnic quotas and for suggesting that in fact such quotas would do harm to Peru's ethnic minority communities.

Several examples display this clearly. Congressman Valdez Melendez intervened in the debate by saying:

For example, how would these first peoples elect national representatives? Would it be Amazonians? Would it be Andeans? Would it be those from the North? Would it be people from Cuzco? Would they be from the central jungle? How would it be done, Mr. President [of the Committee]? And, finally, the Constitution guarantees equality before the law. If this is true then all communities, all social groups and all persons have access to the Congress, Mr. President. I think this . . . should not be approved and it seems to me even a bit demagogic. (Committee on Amazon, Indigenous, and Afro-Peruvian Affairs, March 16, 2005)

The logic here is clear. In a liberal democracy all social groups have equal access to the law and equal access to political representation. What is also clear is the

unintentional space Valdez Melendez's language created. His use of the phrase "if this is true" implicitly revealed that equal access is in fact precisely what is in question for ethnic constituencies that seek to implement such quotas. For ethnic minorities in Latin American countries, black and indigenous alike, liberal political practice is completely out of sync with liberal political theory. Marx, as modified by Du Bois, was right. Equality exists in theory but not in practice.

Later in the same discussion Congressman Valderrama Chavez made a similar argument. He said that the logic of a fixed number of ethnic seats is "segregationist because it's as if they [ethnic groups] are being excluded or have a lesser value. And, so by this criteria one should also put a set number for women, a set number for young people; I think it distorts the principle of equality and anti-discrimination that should exist according to the Constitution" (Committee on Amazon, Indigenous, and Afro-Peruvian Affairs, March 16, 2005). Here once again the overriding logic is one of an imaginary equality that the constitution of a liberal democracy such as Peru upholds. Yet his comment adds an important dimension by clarifying that such a policy of ethnic quotas would open the door to many other political interest groups. The subtext of his words implicitly recognizes that there are in fact multiple forms of political marginalization in Peru that stretch well beyond ethnicity and race. Yet the universal ideological recipe for dismissing the claims of such political interest groups is a constant appeal to the myth of liberal democratic equality.

The participation of Congresswomen Moyano and Arpasi in this debate reveals just how complex ethnic politicking is in a country like Peru. Moyano said that she supported the idea, particularly if it includes a seat for Afro-Peruvians but that she also thought they had to be "serious" and "responsible" in debating this issue. Her desire to not be perceived as an ethnic hardliner is palpable; she argued for indefinite postponement. She concluded by suggesting that there are unresolved issues in the proposals because it was unclear whether the ethnic seats would be in addition to the current 120 seats in Parliament (which would require a constitutional change) or would be part of that 120. She then suggested that the timing was not right, saying, "One would have to pick up on how it's being done in international legislation and apply it to us, but now's not the time. I don't want this idea to be abandoned. I defend the idea that there should be representation, but we have to let it mature, Mr. President, for later on" (Committee on Amazon, Indigenous, and Afro-Peruvian Affairs, March 16, 2005).

Congresswoman Paulina Arpasi provoked a discussion that reveals quite a bit about how liberalism and indigenism are deeply, if contradictorily, connected in Peru. Confronted with the apparent disapproval of quota-based representation, she embarked on a personalized diatribe that implicated the other members of the committee.

Truthfully, I feel like I'm being alluded to. I hope that's not the case because I represent, I feel like a representative. . . . I too have questions: When are we going to include these first peoples? When? Never? It would be better just to say, ok, never, that they should leave Peru because that's what this is leading to. And, yes, I am going to ask that somebody tell us where we're from. I'm only going to feel ok when finally they just tell me: Where are you from? You're not from Peru. So, let's [i.e., us indigenous people] just leave. I think everybody would accept that because I feel like they don't want us to be here. But we already have it [i.e., indigenous representation] in Bolivia; we have it in Colombia; we have it in Ecuador; we have it in all those countries. But I don't know in Peru. I'll tell you what's more. People always say to me: Paulina, what is it you want to do? You want to divide the country into two nations: Peru and its *mestizaje* part? For me Peru is not *mestizaje*. Peru belongs to the Inca. We have to get to that point without denying it. We are all indigenous people here; maybe 10% are not indigenous. We are all indigenous but unfortunately nobody wants to recognize that because we are first peoples and they don't want to see us. (Committee on Amazon, Indigenous, and Afro-Peruvian Affairs, March 16, 2005)

One could easily take this discourse as an indication of Arpasi's inarticulate Spanish. Indeed, as an Aymara speaker operating in a Spanish-dominated state context this was a major point of debate as well as cause for racist ridicule on popular Peruvian radio shows throughout her time as a Congress member. Yet her speech here clearly articulates some of the core contradictions in Peruvian nationalism and identifies the ethnic others against which it is pitted. The version of Peruvian nationalism that Arpasi railed against illustrates the contradictions of Andean indigeneity and shows how it makes Afro-descendants in Peru invisible. Arpasi applies the difficulties this ideology creates both for herself as an Aymara woman from Puno who made it to Congress and for the Peruvian nation at large. These difficulties are summed up by the contradiction in the last sentence: "We are all indigenous" alludes to an ideal of national inclusion rooted in indigeneity. Yet this ideal is contradicted by the idea of a permanently divided nation, a nation where "they don't want to recognize us." Here she includes herself in the historically excluded "us"—Peru's first peoples.

Yet the importance of this statement becomes clear only when one pays attention to which particular ideology and identity of indigeneity she identifies as the one that is inclusively and homogeneously Peruvian. It is not just any indigeneity. It is specifically the indigeneity of the Inca. This is what she alludes to directly by saying, "For me, Peru is not *mestizaje*. Peru belongs to the Inca." Indigeneity

is fully inclusive and fully nationalistic only when it appears in its idealized, abstract, and of course imperial form: in other words, in its Incaic version. Hence, from the point of view of Peruvian discourses on the nation, the issue is not that "we are all indigenous" but rather, and quite clearly, that "we are all Inca." When she recognizes her Aymaraness, and implicitly her "everyday" peasant indigeneity, she feels excluded with all the other "actually existing" Andean peoples. But when she stakes a claim on deep Peru, that ancient and powerful Peru of Tuantinsuyo, she is forced to include all Peruvians, implicitly including herself. Why? Because, as she says, "Peru belongs to the Inca."

Notably, at least two other Congress members followed her lead and tried to wrestle with the problem of their own indigeneity as Peruvians. Valderrama Chavez, who is from Arequipa, said, "Paulina feels alluded to here as if she was the only indigenous person. . . . I also feel indigenous because it is an emotional state or a conviction that leads one to recognize oneself as indigenous or a descendant of indigenous people without leading one to identify with indigenism [*indigenismo*] but rather as indigenous. So she doesn't have to feel alluded to or that we direct ourselves at her" (Committee on Amazon, Indigenous, and Afro-Peruvian Affairs, March 16, 2005). Congressman Valdez Melendez, who represents the Amazonian province of Ucayali, made the Incaic dimensions of Peru's indigenous nationalism crystal clear by remarking on the Congress members' respective provincial origins and their relative places in Peru's indigenous hierarchies:

Mr. President, I would like to say clearly to all my colleagues, that when I look in the mirror I see an Indian from Ucayali; when I look at you, president of this dignified committee, I also see an Ucayali Indian . . . when I look at Hipolito Valderrama I'm looking at an Arequipa Indian. And when I look at Mario Molina I'm looking at an imperial Indian; and when I look at Paulina I'm also seeing an Indian from Puno. (Committee on Amazon, Indigenous, and Afro-Peruvian Affairs, March 16, 2005)

Valdez Melendez made an important distinction that illustrates how Incaic indigeneity is inherently hierarchal and serves to perpetuate exclusion. He marked himself and other Congress members as provincial Indians from the departments of Ucayali, Arequipa, and Puno. Notably, none of them except Arpasi speak an indigenous language or have direct ties to the titled Andean or Amazonian communities located in their respective departments. As provincial Indians, they are also implicitly in a relation of historical subordination to an imaginary Inca leader, or what Valdez Melendez calls an "imperial Indian." Congressman Mario Molina hails from and represents Cuzco, which is of course in many ways more of a center than a provincial periphery within the Peruvian imagination.

Aside from the fact that it served as the political center of Tuantinsuyo before the Spanish arrived, it is also a mythic center of Peruvian nationalism in Peru's *indigenista* traditions (see De la Cadena 2000). It thus continues to be a site from which various Cusco-centric claims on Peruvianness, at least in its Incaic version, are made. I see this as another manifestation of that never-ending return to the idea of the ancient Andean emperor who will one day return to rule (see Greene 2006). Valdez Melendez slipped Molina into the Inca slot and he suddenly represented the mythical leader of all Peru's Indians. Implicit in all of this is the idea that Molina is also momentarily the leader of all Peruvians since, as this discourse on indigeneity among a motley crew of Peruvian politicians makes clear, from a certain logic all Peruvians are Indians waiting to be led by an arriving Inca.

While Valdez Melendez's remarks make Peru's Incaic nationalism clear enough, one need only return to the thought of Luis Huarcaya to see how deeply rooted and labyrinthine Inca ideologies can be. Some of Huarcaya's remarks during the session he attended to introduce the mission of INDEPA to the Committee on Amazon, Indigenous, and Afro-Peruvian Affairs are worth noting. Take these, for example:

And why isn't history better known? It isn't correct to say that the Conquest was just the killing of savage Indians. Those savage Indians were wise men and they had five thousand years of history. It hasn't been convenient to say that, hasn't been convenient. But all this is coming to light with the archaeological discoveries that are being found every day. I think, just as is thought in other places, in Egypt, that in archaeology only 20 to 25% of what we have has been discovered. So there is still a lot of work to do. . . . The Inca traveled with 150 boats throughout the entire world in the era of the *amautas* [wise man or philosopher]. Is that in the books? No. It's in the books of the Jesuits. It's in the Archive of the Indies in Seville. But it's not in Peruvian education and so we are not proud of anything. We have no identity because we are not proud of anything but we have so many things to be proud of. How many types of potato do we have? So much time has passed to domesticate the potato, to domesticate vicuñas: five thousand, six thousand years. And that's not in the history. In the universities they teach that there were 14 Incas and there were 108 Incas. We are going against our true soul and our true spirit. (Committee on Amazon, Indigenous and Afro-Peruvian Affairs, September 29, 2004)

Two things about Huarcaya's comments to the committee are important. First, he is incorrect in his remarks about the place of the Inca in Peruvian history books and higher education. It is clear from those who have studied how Peruvian

history is taught in Peru that the Inca are in fact at the center of the national narrative. As early as primary school, Peruvian children from all different regions, ethnicities, and classes memorize basic dates, facts, and figures about the Inca. There's even a popular children's song to help them memorize the names of the fourteen Inca rulers. Other lesser and more provincial Indians and other ethnic groups such as Afro-Peruvians fare considerably worse in terms of representation in official history texts (see Portocarrero and Oliart 1989). To the extent to which Afro-Peruvians are mentioned at all in school textbooks they are usually relegated to a section on the history and eventual abolition of slavery. Relegating them to a period in the past effectively erases them from the present. Huarcaya's portrayal of a lack of Inca history in the history books is deeply self-interested. Clearly, his intent is to put forth a passionate plea to expand such teaching even further and to do so in a way that draws on his own peculiarly Inca-centric view of Peru and the world.

This brings us to the second and crucial point. Huarcaya did not wholly invent his Incaic utopianism; much of it was already invented for him long ago. And his way of speaking about the Inca makes it clear that from a certain ideological point of view the Inca should be represented as more than just a civilization central to Peruvian history. From the point of view of this ideology, they should be portrayed as central to the history of the entire world and part of Europe's invented and white privileged centrality within that history. His reference to Egypt as a great world civilization is crucial to the historical narrative of Europe's "whiteness" and to its ostensible legacy of civilizational "greatness." His statement about Egypt implicitly refers to the well-known controversies Egyptology has generated. The discipline has a complex history of deeply racist claims about the ostensibly Aryan basis of ancient Egyptian civilization and the ostensibly inferior and servile nature of "black" Africans.

Huarcaya is drawing on a long and complex intellectual tradition that I do not have space to detail here but is at the foundation of his Incaic vision of Peru and its rightful place in Europe's whitened version of world history. He explicitly seeks to whiten the Inca and configure Peru as central within that particular Eurocentric narrative that sees Europe at the center of all world historical progress (see Chakrabarty 2000). In fact, in some of his own writings Huarcaya goes so far as to Incanize Europe's claims to whiteness by claiming Inca society as a world historical and thus a standardizing form of universal civilization. In promoting one of his many books, *Mil Años Viajando por el Mundo Antiguo*, on his website Huarcaya writes:

This book shows definitively that the Inca civilization located in South America has been one of the most advanced in the world and that it in fact

gave birth to civilizations like those of China and Egypt. The erroneous concept that globalization is new is false because it was practiced by various civilizations in very ancient epochs. (Huarcaya 2009)

In short, Huarcaya, notably the intellectual figure appointed to represent a multicultural Peru, clearly sees himself as the inheritor of a long-standing hegemony of Inca whiteness in Peru, so much so that he stops just short of explicitly calling himself a white Inca. Or, actually, that is the point. It need not be said, because the privileges associated with Inca whiteness make it such that it is already understood.

Conclusion

By this point the reader will be wondering what all this analysis of Inca whiteness and the hierarchical forms of indigeneity found in Peruvian nationalism have to do with blackness. My answer is quite a lot. The complex and contradictory interplay between ideologies of race and ideologies of the liberal and civilized citizen play into a deeply historical logic that is specific to Peru's Andean context. Central to that specificity is an idea about the Inca's rightfully powerful and privileged position in the Peruvian imaginary. It is a curiously contradictory idea that nonetheless continuously surfaces in discourses of state and nation. It is an implicit hegemonic idea that the Inca are both the rightful and yet also the whitened rulers of what is presumed to be an essentially indigenous, essentially Andean country.

As many authors have noted, this overwhelming emphasis on the Inca discourse creates many problems for Peru's actually existing Andean populations (see De la Cadena 2000; Degregori 1998; Mendez 1996). But it also leaves aside almost entirely any mention of blackness as a position from which to construct alternative ideas of Peruvian citizenship or a Peruvian historical subject. I believe that this is a defining feature of the struggles of contemporary blacks as they have evolved within these specific constraints of Peruvian history. In Peru the fight is not simply one against the global doctrine of white supremacy. More specifically, the struggle is to make blackness visible within a space already characterized by a complex fusion of discourses about the white supremacy of the Incas. The global logic of whiteness is indeed manifest in the idea of Peru as a modernizing liberal republic eager to cast out racialized others, including, of course, the masses of "ordinary" Andean Indians. However, this same history of national modernization continues to reserve a special place for the clearly "superior" Indian: the white Inca. And it is in the shadow of this imagined white Inca that Afro-Peruvians continually find themselves fighting to achieve a semblance of black visibility.

Notes

1. The translation "white yuppie" is necessarily a compromise since the term *pituco* in Peruvian Spanish does not directly index skin color the way the adjective "white" does. However, when uttered in context whiteness is often implied. *Blanco* (white) is in fact used in Peru but not nearly as commonly as *pituco*.

2. While they are beyond the scope of this essay, explicit comparisons can be made in this regard to Mexico in the context of the confrontation between the Spanish and the Aztecs and the eventual usage of Aztec symbols in Mexican nationalism (see Earle 2007).

3. There is no adequate English translation of the term *encomendero*. The Spanish crown granted *encomenderos* authority to exact tribute from indigenous populations in exchange for their promise to act as moral guardians of those populations, including instructing them in the Christian faith.

4. Apristas refers to members of the APRA (Alianza Popular Revolucionaria Americana; American Populist Revolutionary Alliance), one of the only historical political parties still functioning in Peru. Originally founded by Victor Raúl Haya de la Torre in the 1920s with a strong socialist bent, it has since increasingly moved toward the right, particularly during the second period of President Alan García.

5. Official transcripts of sessions of the Committee on Amazon, Indigenous and Afro-Peruvian Affairs are obtainable through the Area de Transcripciones of the Congreso de la República in Lima, Peru. Transcripts are cited by date of session within parentheses.

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Sociology and Racial Inequality

Challenges and Approaches in Brazil

ANTÔNIO GUIMARÃES

History presents a challenge for sociological theory because of the contingencies it contains. Inequality, ethnocentrism, and racism are universal phenomena, but they develop differently within different national, political, and economic contexts. Across such differences we may detect commonalities forged by empire, colonialism, migration, and the encounter with cultural difference. The aim of this chapter is to discuss how Brazilian social theorists have explained relations between whites and blacks since the middle of the nineteenth century. My premise is that understanding these sociological explanations enriches social theory in general and public policy in particular.

Sociology began its institutionalizing process in Western universities in the late nineteenth century with the rejection of race, climate, and other natural forces as causal explanations for social phenomena. This rejection did not translate immediately into the understanding that race was a social, cultural, and historical construct; that occurred only after World War II. Although some scholars such as W.E.B. Du Bois and Max Weber used race occasionally as a nonbiological socioanalytical term, the concept maintained its strong biological meaning until the mid-twentieth century. As a result, in its early years, sociology exercised little influence on state policies vis-à-vis the Brazilian black population. At the time, academic thought about race was centered in schools of medicine and law. Public hygiene, eugenics, criminology, legal medicine, and other applied sciences were deployed by the state to construct policies regarding sanitation, education, health, and security that pertained to black Brazilians. Until the second decade of the twentieth century, the most advanced theory that sought to integrate African descendants and counter the view that blackness is an impediment to national development and growth was the claim that continuous miscegenation would introduce white biological virtues into the Brazilian nation (Skidmore 1974; Schwarcz 1993).

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