Decolonizing Empire: Corporeal Chronologies and the Entanglements of Colonial and Postcolonial Time

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In *Provincializing Europe*, Dipesh Chakrabarty laid out a systematic critique of historicism as a marker of essential, racialized difference. Unquestioned assumptions of universal time and *telos* were instrumentalized by colonial power to rank and rule subaltern others. This paper builds on Chakrabarty's decolonizing project by seeking to denaturalize the legacies of imperialism inscribed in ideas about place (Europe or the nation-state) *and time* (the universal chronology of modernity). By provincializing political chronology, I challenge sovereign periodization as the key rubric of historical expertise by focusing on *corporeal chronologies*. This analytic stresses the role of embodiment in Amerindian expressions of colonial resistance; the somatic instantiation of categories of laggard time – the primitive, the savage, the child – produced in imperial knowledge-making imaginaries and projected onto racialized bodies; consider how the past is embodied and reiterated through memory, trauma, and disability; and the everyday spaces of intimacy and interpersonal rapports where categories about self and empire are recapitulated, reified, and lived.
Keywords: Portuguese colonialism and postcolonialism; history of the body; trauma and history; Brazilian history.

Descolonizando o Império: Cronologias Corpóreas e os Emaranhados do Tempo Colonial e Pós-Colonial

Em *Provincializing Europe*, Dipesh Chakrabarty apresentou uma crítica sistemática do historicismo enquanto elemento de uma diferença racializada e essencialista. Na sua análise, os pressupostos inquestionáveis do tempo universal e do *telos* foram instrumentalizados pelo poder colonial para hierarquizar e governar os outros subalternos. Este texto baseia-se no projeto descolonizador de Chakrabarty ao tentar desnaturalizar as heranças do imperialismo inscritas em ideias a respeito do lugar (a Europa ou o Estado-nação) *e do tempo* (a cronologia universal da modernidade). Ao provincializar a cronologia política, questiono as periodizações soberanas enquanto chave do conhecimento histórico focando-me, ao invés, em *cronologias corpóreas*. A partir desta análise, sublinho o papel da corporização na resistência colonial dos Ameríndios; a instanciação somática de categorias de atraso – o primitivo, o selvagem, a criança – produzidos pelos imaginários de produção de conhecimento imperial e projetados nos corpos racializados; analiso como o passado é corporizado e reiterado através da memória, do trauma e da invalidez; e os espaços quotidianos de intimidade e as ligações interpessoais onde categorias relativas ao ser e ao império são recapituladas, reificadas e vividas.
Palavras-chave: Colonialismo and pos-colonialismo português; história do corpo; trauma e história; história brasileira.

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Patrícia Martins Marcos*

POSTCOLONIAL

Madalena and Débora knock on my door in two thousand seventeen.

Madalena and Débora are, respectively, four and nine years old and they ask me what's my name, "Patrícia, and you?". It is two o'clock in São Paulo, the cat juggles the fish for lunch, "my name is Débora and she's Madalena."

Madalena and Débora fix their gaze upon me, without moving. I spare both theirs and my time, we share the entrance to the building, "I speak a strange Portuguese, huh?".

Madalena and Débora nod with their expressive heads, they smile with an immense and mute "you do," they lower their eyes, grabbing the handrail while they swing two of their four legs in-between the steps. "I am from Portugal."

Madalena and Débora listen to me intently, they exchange looks between each other and while walking down the stairs, they release a terribly shy *tchauzinho*, step after step. Only after the first leap, slightly hesitant and somewhat hurried, Débora whispers in Madalena's ear. "We have to ask mommy where that is."

(Patrícia Lino)

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Colonial Endings and Imperial Afterlives

Empires cast exceedingly long shadows. Specters of imperial might project the imperial past well into (post)colonial modernity.[1] Reverberating into the present, coloniality and its afterlives persist in the habits of mind, legal scaffolds, institutions, disciplinary formations, and historical narratives through which human difference is conceived. The case of the Portuguese colonial empire emblematizes this process of colonial durability.[2] In a now notorious tale of spitefulness about the bitter, colonial end, following the 1975 declaration of Mozambican independence, the last Portuguese to leave the newly minted independent nation poured concrete down the toilets of their soon-to-be former homes.[3] This powerful, symbolic gesture – rendered in solidified cement – signifies the conduits and material debris propelling the enduring past into an unending sequence of (post)colonial afterlives.

When Portuguese colonists were physically removed from Mozambique, they also cast perpetual scars upon a land they could no longer claim as theirs. Their resentment was manifold. The loss of Portuguese state sovereignty entailed the concomitant squandering of a middle-class life accessible only by virtue of their relocation to Africa.[4] Colonial life was, for that reason, a slow-moving revolution. It started with sundry items – access to shoes, clothing, basic necessities – it moved to infrastructural projects – sanitation, agriculture, irrigation infrastructures–, and it was finally epitomized in the alchemy of a situational elevation operated *only* in colonial settings. Suddenly, with a

1 Postcoloniality is not merely the predicament of former colonies: it is also in a major way a predicament of former colonial powers," Manuela Carneiro da Cunha, *"Culture" and Culture: Traditional Knowledge and Intellectual Rights* (Chicago: Prickly Paradigm Press, 2009), 1-2. Also: Yuko Miki, *Frontiers of Citizenship: A Black and Indigenous History of Postcolonial Brazil* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018).

2 Ann Laura Stoler, *Duress: Imperial Durabilities in Our Time* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2016).

3 I story I personally heard many times, but which can be found also in: Pamila Gupta, *Portuguese Decolonization in the Indian Ocean World: History and Ethnography* (London: Bloomsbury, 2019), 2.

4 Cláudia Castelo, "Village Portugal" in Africa: Discourses of Differentiation and Hierarchization of Settlers, 1950s-1974," in *Rethinking White Societies in Southern Africa*, eds. Duncan Money and Danelle Van Zyl-Hermann (London: Routledge, 2020), 115-133.

mere tilt in geography, race was rendered relevant and whiteness forefronted as the key organizing principle of social rank and collective life in Africa.

Colonial relocation metamorphosed the pauper into a master. Why would anyone willingly–or cheerfully–give that up? If sanitation was a mark of the civilizing mission's progress in Africa, what better denouement than to render extant colonial infrastructures absolutely obsolete? The gesture was powerful and perennial at once. The destruction of sewer lines reassured colonizers that the formerly colonized could never again access any structures of civilization; that their future was forever bygone and backward. Empire, as the historicist proposition that it was, cast its last act in the deliberate ossification of its subaltern subjects into a perennially uncivilized past. Decolonization wrought loss but did not bring an unequivocal end. Empire did not die in 1974/75. Rather, it was reinvented into a collective imaginary where selective silences, alluring nostalgias, and belabored mythologies became entangled. After 1975, colonial phantasmagorias continued to prowl; the weight of the past lurking still in monuments, memories, bodies, family accounts, and material culture.

Upon their compulsory return to Portugal, former colonists ("retornados") carried with them both memorabilia and memories. Yet, the reconfiguration of sovereignties and political regimes impelling this jilt cannot be overdetermined. The end of colonial rule and the institution of independent governance did not – and could not – change everything; especially not articulations of intimacy, sentiment, and kinship. Thus, despite empire's nominal end, neither war nor revolution managed to subdue coloniality altogether. Shifts in sovereignty, institutions, legal and political regimes altered the ethos and structures of collective life but could not transform what lay before: the modes of thought, rationalizations, and racialized hierarchies underpinning the rearing of an entire country educated and conscripted to see empire as destiny.

Imperialism is a regime of the imaginary. It mobilizes technology, bureaucracies, material culture, and bodies to administer its fabulist figurations. Here, I follow Ariella Aïsha Azoulay and submit that the knowl-

edge-making fictions wielded by political power can be read as "a performance of the naturalization of the imperial premise."[5] Taxonomies of rule hinge on a theory of temporal difference – with time organized through a developmental and evolutionary grid – that is empirically instantiated in bodies othered through ableist, racialized, classist, and gendered hierarchies of being. In Portuguese America, this logic enabled the collapsing of Amerindian plurality into a reductive set of oppositional binaries: either ally or enemy; Tupi or Tapuia; convert or cannibal. All these classificatory schemas presuppose an administration of difference premised on the intersection between physical embodiment, symbolic visuality, and a sequential ranking of embodied temporalities postulated on the heuristic of incremental progress.

But imperial imaginaries also summon the mnemonic and material to colonize bodies and minds. *Corporeal chronologies* explores the tension between the imperial objectifying gaze and subaltern, agential resistance. Excavating the numerous ways in which colonialism is constituted as praxis; a system enacting physical and symbolic corporeal control, with race mapped onto geographies of subalternity and laggard time. Thus, while empire entailed imaginary, desire, and projection, colonization demanded operations wielding imperial fantasies into being. In colonial settings, conversely, in geographies far removed from the corridors where metropolitan hubris was fabricated, distance entailed some latitude. While bulwarks of colonial power realized their discretionary power to punish, subdue, and enslave by carrying on unsupervised and unsanctioned; colonial subjects ingeniously used embodiment to resist by fleeing, maintaining ritual performance, kinship making beyond bloodlines, or adopting other-than-human relatives.[6]

Provincializing Time, Place, Land, and Bodies

To think about the ongoing legacy of Chakrabarty's *Provincializing Europe* entails considering the ability that teleological, historical time had

5 Ariella Aïsha Azoulay, *Potential History: Unlearning Imperialism* (London: Verso, 2019), 3.

6 Kim Tallbear, "Making Love and Relations Beyond Settler Sex and Family," in *Making Kin Not Population*, ed. Adele Clarke and Donna Haraway (Chicago: Prickly Paradigm Press, 2018), 145-164.

to subjugate and racialize. In what follows, I unpack a series of moments exemplifying the rippling reverberations of the colonial past and its many (post)colonial afterlives. This gesture connects Chakrabarty's account of modernity with Jodi Byrd's *Transit of Empire*, thus exposing how shared discourses of "Indianness," savagery, and infancy prefigured "the present everydayness of settler colonialism."[7] By engaging with moments of repeated tropes and "stock scripts," I lay bare the temporal logic undergirding the reproduction of colonial structures of power, legal regimes, and ways of governing indigenous life across colony, empire, republic, and contemporary Brazil. Given this temporal span, stress laid on echoes, continuities and imperial debris deemphasizes rupture in order to recognize how contemporary, colonial leftovers are "deferred through repetitions," and articulated through intimacy, embodiment, and identity.[8] Without losing sight of how change and contingency are constitutive of historicity, this paper centers embodiment to capture the unrelenting "presentness" of the colonial past, while considering "histories that yield neither too smooth continuities nor too abrupt epochal breaks."[9]

As noted in *Provincializing Europe,* chronology is heterotemporal. Along this present replete with layered, superimposed pasts, extant cement not only prefigures an archive of residues documented through "material memories" but also conjures traces of events, lives, and experiences.[10] Hence, the materiality of *pipes-turned-into-concrete-tubes* intimates the fallibility of political and legal regimes as the principal scaffold of historical knowledge-making. Instead, the physical endurance of matter accentuates continuity rather than rupture, thus probing the deep colonial roots of the present. Through this framework, the case of Brazil as a settler colonial state is presented,[11] while Portugal is interpreted as a not yet decolonized empire.

7 Jodi Byrd, *The Transit of Empire: Indigenous Critiques of Colonialism* (Minneapolis: Minnesota University Press, 2011), xxi.

8 Byrd, *Transit of Empire*, xviii.

9 Stoler, *Duress*, 6.

10 Laurent Olivier, *Sombre Abîme du Temps: mémoire et archéologie* (Paris: Seuil, 2008).

11 Michael Goebel, "Settler colonialism in Postcolonial Latin America," in *The Routledge Handbook of the History of Settler Colonialism*, eds. Edward Cavanagh and Lorenzo Veracini (London: Routledge, 2016), 139-152.

By engaging with the problem of hierarchies of time, I connect the chronology of embodiment, personal temporality, and lived experience (infancy versus adulthood) to the colonial and historicist idea of "civilization" that emanated out of 19th century thought.[12] The imperialist innuendo of age performed a simple metonymic function. As "savages," Brazilian Amerindians exhibited a lack of preparedness for self-government and sovereignty.[13] This situation only came to a formal end in 1988, with the approval of the new Brazilian Constitution, the end of assimilationist policies, and the acknowledgement of originary rights to land and self-determination.[14] Still, despite the Portuguese Crown and the Brazilian State's best attempts to govern strictly from above, all legal regimes and frameworks were also persistently resisted from below. For centuries, the colonial desiderata of Portugal and Brazil were met with Amerindian resistance, defiance, and skillful negotiation techniques.[15] Thus, the limits and possibilities of any legal scaffold must be understood as a *contact zone* where the ambitions of central planning always had to contended with subaltern agency and strategies of resistance.

The colonial ranking of temporalities and the racialization of historical difference – first understood within a biblical timeline, and subsequently taken as a single, linear telos – discussed at length by Chakrabarty, readied the colony for extractivist economies. From the very start, Brazil was named after its prime, exportable commodity: *pau-brasil* (brazilwood). Fecund nature and pliable natives were frequently foiled together in a metonymic contrivance designed to sub-

12 On 19th century Peter Hanns Reill, *The German Enlightenment and the Rise of Historicism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975).

13 For Alcida Rita Ramos, the Brazilian state regards Amerindians as "nearly juvenile," since they remain "frozen" in this condition since 1916 (Civil Code), being deemed as "relatively incapable" ("*relativamente incapazes*"), until 1985, along with married women and minors below 21 and above 16 years old. *Os direitos do índio no Brasil: na encruzilhada da cidadania* (Brasília: Universidade de Brasília, 1991), 1. On the mechanisms of *compadrio*, "paternalist" Crown administration, and the deprivation of self-government as a device separating indigenous body from land, John M. Monteiro, "De índio a escravo. A transformação da população indígena de São Paulo no século XVII," *Revista de Antropologia* 30/32 (1987-89): 151-174.

14 Manuela Carneiro da Cunha, Índios no Brasil: História, Direitos e Cidadania (São Paulo: Claro Enigma, 2013).

15 Seth Garfield, *Indigenous Struggle at the Heart of Brazil* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2001) and Cunha, Índios no Brasil.

sume mastery over one into the domination of the other. Yet, the heathens depicted as naked and faithless *tabula rasa* ready to be shaped, dressed, baptized, and domesticated were not quite as pliant as the clay conjured by Jesuits.[16] Indeed, the intransigent persistency of native resistance to Portuguese colonial efforts, led to a dichotomous split in the representational tropes used to depict Amerindians between intelligent and docile converts or a cannibal heathens.[17]

Owing to a shifting geometry of native interests and their rapports with Europeans, resisting Amerindian polities were collapsed into a dualistic, racializing schema. Essentialized readings of time, place, and phenotype played instrumental, legitimating roles because native enslavement necessitated a supporting logic and jurisprudence: "just war."[18] Thus, the savage and inimical Tapuia resisting colonization into the *sertão,* was a creation of colonial necessity. The collapsing of multiple native polities into a dualistic schema afforded rationales for the dispossession of Amerindian life, bodies, and territory. In separating the universal human from the non or nearly human, "Nature" was crafted by the Portuguese Crown and the Brazilian State as an empty, uninhabited, and eminently unexploited space awaiting conquest and mastery.[19]

Similar logics continue to materialize in Brazil's (post)colonial model of natural resource, capitalist extractivism. According to Patrick Wolfe, "[l]and is life."Despite assurances to land sovereignty inbuilt into the 1988 Constitution, indigenous land and body remain subject to predation.[20] Hence, contests for land are not only conflicts *for* life, but

16 Manuela Carneiro da Cunha, "Imagens dos Índios do Brasil: O Século XVI," *Estudos Avançados* 4, no. 10, (1990): 91-110; John M. Monteiro, "The Heathen Castes of Sixteenth-Century Portuguese America: Unity, Diversity, and the Invention of the Brazilian Indians," *Hispanic American Historical Review* 80 (2000): 697–719.

17 Cunha, "Imagens" and Monteiro, "The Heather Castes".

18 Monteiro, *Blacks.*

19 Tracy Devine Guzmán, *Native and National in Brazil: Indigeneity after Independence* (Chapel Hill: University of South Carolina Press, 2013), Garfield, *Indigenous Struggle* and Anthony Pagden, *The Fall of the Natural Man: The American Indian and the Origins of Comparative Ethnology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987).

20 Manuela Carneiro da Cunha, *Cultura com Aspas* (São Paulo: Ubu Editora, 2018); *Martírio: Indigenous Brazilians Struggle to Survive*, directed by Ernesto De Carvalho, Tatiana Almeida and Vincent Carelli (Brazil: Video das Aldeias, 2016).

also battles *against* erasure. For, as Deborah Bird Rose noted, "all the native has to do is stay home." Exactly because "Indigenous peoples obstructed settlers' access to land," the primary reason for their elimination was not race *per se*, "but access to territory." This rationale of elimination—tethered to land control—not only "destroys to replace," but dispossesses to extract and commodify.[21] In Brazil, both historically and today, the repeated killings of indigenous leaders, pollution, toxicity, predatory mining, fires, and deforestation, all recapitulate (settler) colonial processes through the extirpation of life from bodies and lands. It is in this sense also that the Amerindian body configures a *corporeal chronology.* As noted by Walter Mignolo, "one feels the weight of the modern-colonial world in the body as that body dwells in the legacies of colonial histories."[22] Thus, either through historical resistance or the appropriation of bodies "forced to live inside someone else's imagination," Amerindians found "historical time inscribed onto flesh."[23] The production of such meanings determines both biological fates and collective trajectories today.

Embodied Time and the Other

In *Provincializing Europe,* Chakrabarty centered his critiques of historical difference on the purported universality of time and theory. The moments naturalized as pivotal in the staccato of historical time – 1789, 1848, 1917 – defined key rhythms in the apportioning of progress from Europe to the world. The model was unchanging and universal. The imprimatur of a universal telos determined that "civilization" had uncomplicated, unified meanings, and a single goal. Revolutions, liberal democracy, science and technology, biomedicine, the rise of the individ-

21 Patrick Wolfe, "Settler colonialism and the elimination of the native," *Journal of Genocide Research* 8, no. 4 (2006): 387-409, particularly 387 and 388; Deborah Bird Rose cf. Patrick Wolfe, 388.

22 Walter Mignolo, "Sylvia Wynter: On Being Human as Praxis," in *Sylvia Wynter: On Being Human as Praxis*, ed. Katherine McKittrick (Durham, Duke University Press, 2015): 106-123, particularly 111.

23 Respectively: Ruha Benjamin, "The New Jim Code?" (lecture presented at the Science Studies Student Choice Speaker, UCSD, May 31, 2018); Didier Fassin, *When Bodies Remember: Experiences and Politics of AIDS in South Africa* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007): xv.

ual, not to forget Marxist theory, offered some examples of universal time and telos.

Failing at the checklist of civilized progress – modeled exclusively on European political sovereignty and institutions – intimated a state of backwardness. Here, individual and collective embodiment were conjoined. The state of guileless infancy endured by colonial populations legitimated British colonial rule. Left to their own devices, autochthonous peoples inevitably succumbed to innate idleness, allowing nature to run its course without industry, agriculture, or technology.[24] But the lessons drawn from Marx's inherent particularism were also valid elsewhere. Beneath the surface, the universal always was highly contingent. Moreover, the historicist telos of political modernity, i.e. the very reason India had to submit to British rule, was not just provincial, but also parochial. In the end, even a portable theory like Marxism conversed with the situated time and place of an industrializing, capitalist Europe embroiled in political turmoil. Such was the high time of historicism.

But the idiom of infancy and laggard time was not unique to the British Empire. In colonial Brazil, both the Portuguese Crown and religious missionaries also had its go at classifying Amerindians as humans *in potentia*.[25] In 1757, the *Directório dos Índios* –instituted by the Marquis of Pombal and pursued in Brazil, operated an alchemy of subjecthood.[26] Brazilian Amerindians, whose slavery was outlawed in 1755, were subsequently, through legal sleight of hand, turned into Portuguese subjects – with the aim of creating a singularly Brazilian race.[27] To this end, the Crown deployed every technology necessary to

24 David Arnold, *The Tropics and the Travelling Gaze: India, Landscape, and Science, 1800-1856* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2015) and Gyan Prakash, *Another Reason: Science and the Imagination of Modern India* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999).

25 Amerindians as savages and childlike humans *in potentia* see Pagden, *The Fall*, 57-108.

26 *Directório que se Deve Observar nas Povoações dos Indios do Pará e Maranhão* (Lisboa: Na Officina de Miguel Rodrigues, 1758). Law was passed in 1757 and printed in 1758. Previous laws decreeing the end of indigenous slavery approved in 1609 and 1680.

27 Patrícia Alves-Melo, "The Portuguese Crown's Policies Towards Indians in the 17th and 18th Centuries," in *Oxford Research Encyclopedia, Latin American History* (Oxford University Press, 2020). https://tinyurl.com/y4xgkcrp; Cunha, Índios no Brasil.

transmogrify Indians into vassals:[28] a patriarchal household, interracial marriages, a Portuguese surname, commerce, clothing, agriculture, sedentary life, different diet, and the Catholic faith.

But this Amerindian transmutation also required a controlled environment. With that intent, the Crown set up a critical laboratory of humanity in the Amazon: the *Vila*, a secular recasting of the missionary *Aldeia*.[29] This time, instead of a religious headmaster, Amerindian populations now followed the secular rule of a "Director." In a well-tried argument familiar to natural slavery debates, Amerindians were portrayed as not yet able to self-govern.[30] Placed under "tutelage status,"[31] the "director" occupied the role of an overseer whose mission was to "direct them [the Indians] in the means of civility [...] [and] persuade them in the precepts of rationality."[32]And, just like that, legal and political subjecthood – operationalized through the title of "vassal" (*vassalo*) – was at once both granted and suspended. The theory was fairly simple, (on the surface, at least): Amerindians were redeemable as humans, constituting pliable human matter, but their *modus vivendi* was only "civilized" *in potentia*. Thus, while capable of becoming subjects, they had not yet achieved their human telos: agriculture and the capacity to transform and tame their natural environment through labor.[33]

Undergirding the edifice legitimating the interim position of the director as "tutor" of all Amerindians *en route* towards adult subjecthood, was a form of historicist reasoning.[34] According to Chakrabarty,

28 Ângela Domingues, *Quando os Índios Eram Vassalos*: *Colonização e Relações de Poder no Norte do Brasil na Segunda Metade do Século XVIII* (Lisboa: Comissão Nacional Comemorações dos Descobrimentos Portugueses, 2000).

29 The Jesuit Order was expelled in 1759. Previous laws e.g. the 1755 law abolishing indigenous slavery, claimed to free the "Indians" from their Jesuit enslavers, see Alida Metcalf, "The Society of Jesus and the First *Aldeias* of Brazil," in *Native Brazil: Beyond the Convert and the Cannibal, 1500-1900*, ed. Hal Langfur (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2014), 29-61.

30 Pagden, *The Fall*.

31 Tutelage was codified in Portuguese Law in 1603, Ordenações Filipinas, in Title 102, Book IV. It was linked with the status of orphans which determined "the duty of administering the person and the possession of a minor, imposed by Law or by the will of man." See Cunha, Índios.

32 *Directório*, 1.

33 Pagden, *The Fall*.

34 *Directório*, 37.

"the politics of historicism" fundamentally "posited historical time as a measure of cultural distance (at least in institutional development)."[35] Thus, in the absence of institutions recreating the scaffolding of Portuguese metropolitan life, the *Vila* became a field station; a site for the historical process to be expedited towards its inextricable telos. This precipitation of civilized life within the patriarchal household, engendered a quotidian manufacturing of subjects. Day after day, the household meant to tame Amerindian elusiveness and inconstancy.[36] Rendered monogamous, sedentary, no longer cannibal, and appropriately dressed, Amerindian women bore the onus of reproducing empire, thus singularly embodying the contours of a new colonial frontier.[37] Despite rhetorical flourishes, however, the Índias were not fully fledged historical subjects but mere objects of historicist time who existed to be governed through their reproductive bodies, the household, and the *vila*.

Power is pragmatic. And, unlike what subsequent appropriations of the *Directório* would claim, miscegenation *was* colonization. By the twentieth century, the fictive and overly sexualized version of Amerindian womanhood presupposed in the *Directório*, was fully codified in Gilberto Freyre's *Casa Grande e Senzala*.[38] While insisting on the Portuguese propensity to, unlike their Spanish counterparts, overlook *limpeza de sangre*, Freyre restated the idiom of infancy to validate Portuguese colonialism. According to Freyre, "the environment in which Brazilian life began was one of near sexual intoxication."[39] Freyre assured his reader that the indigenous groups encountered by the Portuguese were "primitive" seen as they had no "palaces, human sacrifices

35 Dispesh Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2008), 6-7.

36 Eduardo Viveiros de Castro, *The Inconstancy of the Indian Soul* (Chicago: Prickly Paradigm Press, 2011).

37 On discussions of interracial marriages and the role of Amerindian women under the *Directório*, see Barbara A. Sommer, "Cupid in the Amazon: Sexual Witchcraft and Society in Late Colonial Brazil," *Colonial Latin American Historical Review* 12, no. 4 (2003): 415-446 and Hal Langfur, ed., *Native Brazil: Beyond the Convert and the Cannibal, 1500-1900* (Albuquerque: New Mexico University Press, 2014).

38 Gilberto Freyre, *Casa Grande e Senzala: Formação da Família Brasileira Sob o Regime da Economia Patriarcal,* (São Paulo: Global Editora, 2003 [1933]), 351-514.

39 Freyre, *Casa Grande*, 296.

to the gods, monuments, bridges, or irrigation infrastructures and the exploitation of mines."[40] In short, Brazilian Amerindians had no "mature or exuberant culture." Rather, they were like "flocks of big children; [with] an incipient and unripe culture; still in their milk teeth."[41] In historicist terms, childhood became a bio-temporal metaphor for race and difference; instantiating the corporeal antithesis of universal, civilized time.

For Freyre, like the historicists critiqued by Chakrabarty, time was not just linear and progressive, but explicitly hierarchical. Civilization was instantiated in white, European bodies. From the Portuguese viewpoint, objects substantiated social and colonial hierarchies both through production and purchase. Racial difference and social rank – coded into architecture, commerce, and the strictures of the patriarchal household – made Amerindian indifference to feather caps and other dictates of Portuguese taste, legible *only* as barbarity. After 1798, when the *Directório* was abolished, a new regime of kinship, community, and labor relations was introduced by Crown fiat. While non-village Indians were ruled by an expanding orphan statute, those without a permanent abode were forced into compulsory services. The introduction of contracts binding individuals to specific Índios, resource to land leases in sites where Indians were traditional, "natural lords," and the introduction of free trade concessions ultimately curtailed the historical indigenous capacity to mobilize collectively in order to resist.[42] Consequently, despite all assurances included in colonial and (post)colonial law — rights following European models of property and land sovereignty — the commodification of territories and its mutation into property became a *fait accompli* while land plunder turned systematic.[43]

40 Freyre, *Casa Grande*, 290.

41 Freyre, *Casa Grande*, 291.

42 Patrícia Melo Sampaio, "'Vossa Excelência Mandará o que for Servido...' Políticas Indígenas e Indigenistas na Amazônia Portuguesa do Final do Século XVIII," *Tempo* 12, no. 23 (2007): 39-55; Domingues, *Quando os Índios*; Mauro Cezar Coelho, *Do Sertão para o Mar: Um Estudo sobre a Experiência Portuguesa na América, a Partir da Colônia: O Caso do Diretório dos Índios (1750-1798)* (São Paulo: Universidade de São Paulo, 2005).

43 For a Quilombola perspective Antônio Bispo dos Santos, "Somos da Terra," *PISEAGRAMA* 12 (2018): 44-51. https://piseagrama.org/somos-da-terra/. Cunha, Índios no Brasil.

Embodying Time and Telos: infancy and racial hierarchy

The rhetoric of infancy and the insistence on Amerindian incompetency enter political and economic adulthood became a recurrent, 19th century historicist trope. The models used to depict originary peoples as primitive were naturalized, becoming biological – with racialized, historicist time ranked according to age.[44] This argument was articulated in Varnhagen's *General History of Brazil* (1854), when he noted: "of such peoples still in their infancy, there is no history: there is only ethnography."[45] Such statements, contemporaneous to the Brazilian Empire's *brandura* policy, recapitulated colonial molds by repeating the *Directório*'s civilizing methods.[46] The deployment of the patriarchal household as a technology of colonization and interracial marriages. Much like under the *Directório*, citizenship debates in imperial Brazil centered the problem of legal equality, assimilation, and civilized convergence (all epitomes of historical progress). Yet, the very first Brazilian constitution (1824) deliberately excluded Amerindians precisely because of another historicist conundrum. To enter the social pact, "Indians needed to be civilized, and in doing so, they were no longer Indian."[47] Amerindian status precluded the possibility of being and becoming a future subject.

In the eyes of settler elites, historicist time was a marker of difference and a key racializing feature. Amerindians embodied a chronology of laggard time. Thus, both in imperial and republican Brazil, discrepancies about perceived chronological hierarchies of progress doomed Amerindians — now seen as an unfit, lesser biological species — to disappear. In this representational iteration, framed by scientific racism, infancy and laggardness were juxtaposed with cranial size and evolutionary thought.[48] The same way a child's brain was smaller and less

44 For a detailed discussion of scientific racism and age as a trope utilized to rank "inferior races," Stephen Jay Gould, *The Mismeasure of Man* (London: W. W. Norton & Company, 1996).

45 Cf. Cunha, Índios no Brasil, 8.

46 Miki, *Frontiers*.

47 Miki, *Frontiers*, 34.

48 Detailed discussions about polygenism and monogenism, Darwinism and Lamarckian evolutionary biology in 19th century Brazil in Lilia Moritz Schwacz, *The Spectacle of the Races* (New York: Hill & Wang, 1993); Nancy Leys Stepan, *The Hour of Eugenics* (Ithaka: Cornell University Press, 1991) and Gould, *The Mismeasure*.

evolved than that of an adult, Amerindians ranked below Europeans. Historicist hierarchies began coalescing with biology, turning subjugation into an inexorable fact of "Nature."[49]

Indigenous extinction and racial inferiority became biological facts and natural outcomes of the historical progress. For that reason, 19th century ethnographic writings about Brazilian Indians insisted on their incompatibility with modernity.[50] How could the demands of civilized, modern, and urban life be in any way congruous with Amerindian inconstancy and nakedness? Throughout the 19th century, the conjoining of evolutionary thought with degeneration theory informed a new reinvention of the *Directório*'s principal tool: miscegenation. (Post)colonial Brazil's *indigenista* policy gained particular coherence after 1845, during D. Pedro II's reign (1841-1889).[51] Yet, contradicting Freyre's *luso-tropicalismo*, miscegenation was neither benign nor tolerant. In fact, racial mixing represented "the opposite of racial inclusion": ultimate extermination.[52]

After 1845, the explicit aim of *indigenismo* was Amerindian extinction.[53] Social evolutionists equated a universal model of progress with racial fitness, classed Indians as a "degenerate" and "doomed race," and used those schemas to legitimate violent incursions into the hinterlands – in continuity with colonial *bandeirantes*.[54] Thus, the myth of Amerindian eradication aligned words with deeds; providing the empirical soil needed to make a rhetorical production pose as scientific

49 Darwin travelled to Brazil aboard the Beagle. Under the auspices of Emperor D. Pedro II, many foreign scientists were invited to Brazil. The most notorious was the polygenist Louis Agassiz who visited Rio de Janeiro in 1865.

50 Patrick Brantlinger, *Dark Vanishings: Discourse on the Extinction of Primitive Races, 1800–1930* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2003), 1.

51 1845 was when the *Regulamento ácerca das Missões de catechese, e civilisação dos Índios* (Regulation concerning the Missions of Indian Catechism and Civilization), was passed.

52 Warwick Anderson, Ricardo Roque and Ricardo Ventura Santos, eds., *Luso-Tropicalism and its Discontents: The Making and Unmaking of Racial Exceptionalism* (New York: Berghahn, 2019). Cláudia Castelo, *Um Modo Português de Estar no Mundo: O Luso-Tropicalismo e o a Ideologia Colonial Portuguesa (1933-1961)* (Porto: Edições Afrontamento, 1998); Gilberto Freyre, *O Mundo que o Português Criou* (São Paulo: É Realizações, 2010) and Schwarcz, *The Spectacle.*

53 Miki, *Frontiers.*

54 Langfur, *Forbidden Lands*; Monteiro, *Blacks of the Land*; Lilia Moritz Schwarcz, *The Spectacle* and Miki, *Frontiers.*

fact. In the 20th century, as Claude Lévi-Strauss prepared to leave for Brazil, the "production of extinction," was consummated.[55] Before his departure for Brazil, upon encountering the Brazilian ambassador in Paris, Claude Lévi-Strass was swiftly assured by the diplomat that there was no job at all for him in Brazil since all the "índios" were eradicated.[56] Suffice it to say, the Indians were still there; resisting and disproving every settler fantasy about their "degeneracy." However, their deliberate exclusion from the text of the 1824 constitution, citizenry, and the body politic exacerbated the racializing heuristics of temporal difference. By turning extinction into the *status quo*,the settler imaginary denied indigenous life any chance of futurity. Amerindians became symbols of a deep, pre-historical past – their image being deployed only as the ancestral kernel of Brazilian nationhood. Cast as incommensurable with modernity and incapable of bio-cultural evolution, Indians became foregone relics and impossible future citizens.

The crux of the plotline of produced extinction was once again temporal; concerning, at its core, the very organization of linear, historical time. While the modern, Brazilian nation deployed the image of the ancestral índio to legitimate its existence, the language of miscegenation justified ethnogenesis and Amerindian incompatibility with modernity. The promissory telos of the nation-state – which lay in the future – and the timelessness bound to indigeneity – which lay in the past – proffered a narrative of utter incompatibility. This temporal mismatch also propitiated the conditions needed to manufacture Indians into museum objects.[57] Any expressions of idiosyncratic, material culture – quotidian objects, adornments, even bodily remains – were recast by "civilized" scientists into anthropological collectibles and artifacts. As beings became objects, life was reconfigured into mere knowledge. Caged behind Plexiglas, natural history museum dioramas froze the native in time. Museum displays curated a flattened, fetishized, and

55 Miki, *Frontiers*, 100-134.

56 Robert Stam and Ella Shohat, *Race in Translation: Culture Wars Around the Postcolonial Atlantic* (New York, NY: NYU Press, 2012), 34; Claude Lévi-Strauss and Didier Eribon, *Conversations with Claude Lévi-Strauss* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), 38.

57 Schwarcz, *Spectacle.*

static image of *every* "native," reduced into an essentialized and universal exemplar of a "barbaric" *modus vivendi*. Thus, the diorama became a visual technology essential to codify racialized, historical difference. Outside museum walls, conversely, the aesthetics of temporal difference thrived in archaeological and anthropological knowledge-making methods. Ethnographic observation and description inscribed social structures onto bodies, presenting Amerindians as anachronistic, live specimens of the deep past.

Over time, as the move to decolonize museums and repatriate looted items gained momentum, museum advocates defended its role as a site of preservation.[58] Get rid of the museum, so the argument went, and artifacts from defunct "civilizations" would find no refuge or progenitor to care for them. Conversely, if the "civilization" on display was not yet dead, but facing financial strain or armed conflict, the museum could guarantee a caring custodian.[59] The fire at Rio de Janeiro's *Museu Nacional*, on 2 September 2018, defied this discourse[60] At the root of the museum's formation lay an encyclopedic ambition of collecting totality to attain universal knowledge. With 20 million items – the British Museum holding about eight – the fire consumed the last remaining records of many indigenous cultures. Amerindian polities, once casualties of colonization and *brandura*, faced in 2018, what many called a "new genocide."[61]

58 Amy Lonetree, *Decolonizing Museums: Representing Native America in National and Tribal Museums* (Charlotte: UNC Press, 2012). Sabrina Alli, "Ariella Aïsha Azoulay: "It is not possible to decolonize the museum without decolonizing the world." *Guernica*, March 12, 2020. https://rb.gy/msrwls ; Julia E. Rodriguez, "Decolonizing or Recolonizing? The (Mis)Representation of Humanity in Natural History Museums," *History of Anthropology Review,* January 10, 2020 https://rb.gy/hfeqaa

59 James Cuno, *Museums Matter: In Praise of the Encyclopedic Museum* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011); Mirjam Brusius and Kavita Singh, *Museum Storage and Meaning: Tales from the Crypt* (London: Routledge, 2018); Margaret M. Miles, "War and Passion: Who Keeps the Art?", *Case Western Reserve Journal of International Law* 49 (2017): 5-21; Boris Jardine, Emma Kowal and Jenny Bangham, "How Collections End: Objects, Meaning, and Loss in Laboratories and Museums," *British Journal for the History of Science* 4 (2019): 1-27.

60 Cassia Roth, "Up in Flames: The Death of Brazil's Museu Nacional," *Nursing Clio*, September 11, 2018 https://nursingclio.org/2018/09/11/up-in-flames-the-death-of-brazils-museu-nacional/.

61 According to José Urutau Guajajara, a member of the Tenetehára-Guajajara, see Manuela Andreoni and Ernesto Londoño, "Loss of Indigenous Works in Brazil Museum Fire Felt 'Like New Genocide'", *New York Times*, September 13, 2018. https://www.nytimes.com/2018/09/13/world/americas/brazil-museum-fire-indigenous.html

After the fire, only 40.000 artifacts survived by happenstance and irony.[62] They happened to be in Brasília, at an exhibit called *The First Brazilians*.[63] Judging from the title, the 2018 exhibit insisted on a well-trod script: the originary narrative. In its own words, the exhibit "incorporated [Amerindians] into the process of national formation."[64] And, while the curators were careful to place indigenous experience squarely in the present – devoting one of the five temporalities to contemporary experiences – ancestry and the deep, pre-colonial past were recapitulated as the locus of Amerindian legitimacy to land and citizenship. These conditions, as stated in the catalogue, were legal in nature. The scaffold of rights foreseen in the *Statute of the Indian* ("Estatuto do Índio") of Brazil's 1988 democratic Constitution, granted indigenous communities, for the first time, the right to exist as a differentiated polity – with manifestations of specific social organization, customs, languages, worldviews, and traditions. Yet, as well intended as the gesture may have been, it remained assimilative in nature – *lusotropical*, even – because it legitimated the Indian's place in the Brazilian imaginary through the unquestioned telos of Western sovereignty and the settler nation-state.

This move imposed a colonial grid of space as property, and of land as nation. Thus, it inflicted a colonial conceptual schema tethering transborder kinship ties – e.g. like the Guarani or the Huni Kuin – exclusively to the confines of the Brazilian nation-state.[65] Despite its best intentions, this deliberate curatorial gesture echoed Eduardo Viveiro de Castro's casting of Brazilian Amerindians as the *The Unwitting of the Nation*.[66] According to the anthropologist, Indians were involuntarily assimilated into the settler colonial

62 "Únicas peças do acervo indígena do Museu Nacional estão em Brasília," *R7*, September 8, 2018 shorturl.at/dtK01

63 João Pacheco Oliveira, *Os Primeiros Brasileiros: Catálogo* (Rio de Janeiro: Arquivo Nacional, 2019), http://www.arquivonacional.gov.br/images/Catalogo_exposicao_OPB.pdf

64 Oliveira, *Os Primeiros Brasileiros*, 2.

65 The Guarani, for example, are scattered across territories claimed by modern day Paraguay, Argentina, Brazil, Uruguay, and Bolivia.

66 Eduardo Viveiros de Castro, "Os Involuntários da Pátria", *Caderno de Leituras* (Belo Horizonte: Edições Chão de Feira, 2017). https://chaodafeira.com/catalogo/caderno65/. Paper presented at the conference "Questões indígenas: ecologia, terra e saberes ameríndios", in Teatro Maria Matos in Lisbon, 5 may 2017. An earlier version was presented during the event "Abril Indígena", at Cinelândia, Rio de Janeiro, 20 april 2016.

nation-state; "a nation which fell on their heads and which they did not ask for."[67] This imposition hinged on the consecration of a human/non-human dualism, the blurring of temporal difference with degrees of development, and the resulting institution of a colonial and Western hierarchy of being.[68]

In extremis, this move led to what indigenous scholar and activist Ailton Krenak called the institution of a limiting conception of universal humanity. As Krenak pointed, it was in "this blender called humanity" that a discrete separation between human and land–and an equivalency between land and extractable capital–was facilitated.[69] Echoing Krenak, Viveiros de Castro concurred that "the Land is the Indian body, as the índios are part of the body of the Land."[70]

According to the colonial grid of space as property and of land as nation, Amerindian kinship was not only cut and colonized by the imposition of imperial and state borders, but also by the expropriation of land, the excavation of mountains, and the killing of rivers. Nature as commodity entailed indigenous extinction. Thus, the colonial desideratum of useful nature – the same goal animating Alexandre Rodrigues Ferreira's "philosophical travels" (1783-1792) in the Amazon, persisted all throughout colonial, imperial, republican, and contemporary Brazil. The valorization of land as promissory surplus severed the fundamental Amerindian land/body continuum, "animating and de-animating certain beings" to justify hierarchies.[71] Indian life and corporeality threatened the ambitions of Portuguese and Brazilian settler colonialism.[72]

67 Castro, "Os Involuntários da Pátria", 2.

68 The idea of "hierarchies of being" comes from Native American scholar Kim Tallbear, see Kim Tallbear, "Beyond the Life/Not-Life Binary: A Feminist Indigenous Reading of Cryopreservation, Interspecies Thinking, and the New Materialisms," in *Cryopolitics: Frozen Life in a Melting World*, ed. Joanna Radin and Emma Cowal (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2017), 179-202.

69 Krenak, *Ideias*, 11.

70 Viveiros de Castro, "Os Involuntários", 3.

71 Alexandre Rodrigues Ferreira, *Memory of Amazónia: Alexandre Rodrigues Ferreira and the Viagem Philosophica in the Captaincies of Grão-Pará, Rio Negro, Mato Grosso e Cuyabá (1783-1792)* (Coimbra: Universidade de Coimbra, 1994). On animation and de-animation, see Mel Chen, *Animacies: Biopolitics, Racial Mattering, and Queer Affect* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2012).

72 Kittiya M. Lee, "Cannibal Theologies"; Michael Goebel, "Settler Colonialism in Postcolonial Latin America", *The Routledge Handbook of the History of Settler Colonialism*, eds. Edward Cavanagh and Lorenzo Veracini (London: Routledge, 2016), 139-152.

Today, the scripts crafted about Brazilian Amerindians in the colonial past continue to linger and continue to perform their insidious labor. In January of 2020, the Brazilian President declared that "the Indian is changing, it is evolving. Increasingly, the Indian is becoming more like a human being equal to us."[73] The indigenous body that was first infantilized, then incorporated into a universal, albeit protracted, conception of humanity – only to be subsequently extricated from the land to become governmentally legible as expandable as life; was now, according to Jair Bolsonaro, not even a full universal human anymore. The economy, as an ecosystem of fungible beings, had no place for the índio.[74]

Colonial stock scripts persist today in insidious ways.[75] Still, Amerindians resist, enduring death, dispossession, toxic exposure, land and water contamination. While deforestation in Brazil reached an all-time high, the number of fires, environmental disasters, toxic lands, and polluted waterways also increased. Additionally, at a time when the national number of assassinations fell by 19%, homicides that specifically target indigenous communities increased by approximately 20%.[76] Echoes of coloniality continue to reverberate, enduring like extant debris. In February of 2020, the Bolsonaro government nominated a Christian evangelical missionary, Ricardo Lopes Dias, as FUNAI (*Fundação Nacional do Índio*) director. The nomination was halted by the Brazilian courts in May of 2020, but the haunting echoes of old colonial methods returned. The Brazilian government's persistent unwillingness to demarcate indigenous lands restaged, once more, the colonial imperative of utility and profit. In statements to the press, the Bolsonaro declared his admiration for the "North American cavalry,

73 João Ker, "'Cada vez mais humano', 'fedorentos' e 'massa de manobra': as declarações de Bolsonaro sobre índios", *O Estadão*, January 24, 2020, https://rb.gy/wug9hy.

74 On the idea of the economy as ecosystem, see Michelle Murphy, *The Economization of Life* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2017).

75 Giovana Girardi, "Desmatamento consolidado da Amazônia em 2019 superou 10 mil km², afirma Inpe", *O Estadão*, June 9, 2020 https://rb.gy/fy2lcf

76 "Em 8 meses, assassinatos no Brasil caem 22%; mapa mostra índice nacional de homicídios atualizado até agosto", *Globo*, 22 October, 2019, https://rb.gy/bxkqdb ; Patrícia Figueiredo, "Número de mortes de lideranças indígenas em 2019 é o maior em pelo menos 11 anos, diz Pastoral da Terra", December 10, 2019, https://rb.gy/xecwvq ; "Número de assassinatos de indígenas cresce 20% no Brasil em 2018", *O Globo*, September 24, 2019, https://tinyurl.com/y2cokr9a

which decimated their Indians in the past, and, for that reason, does not have this [Indian] problem in their country, today!" He then added, "I don't recommend doing the same thing to Brazilian Indians, only that [...] indigenous reservations are demarcated with a size compatible with that of their population." Concluding by noting that "increasingly, fewer and fewer lands would be demarcated. [Because] in the future, they would be taken and [...] explored by foreign capital."[77]

Be it through missionary work, the body/land binary, and the valorization of land over life, colonial stock scripts echo past changes to national institutions and political regimes. Despite transformations in status – from Brazilian colony to independent nation – colonial modes of thought and praxis endure and linger. The Indian – severed from the land and assimilated by law into a universal humanity – continued to embody an epistemology of racialized, laggard time. Mere Amerindian corporeal appearance – nakedness, adornments, phenotype, and skin color – attested to their need to be expedited in time. And, as in former scripts, the future meant incorporation into whiteness and a time without Amerindians. Today, the índio still embodies the weight of coloniality. The racialization of bodies and their underlying temporal hierarchies demand a provincialization of time and political chronology. If the official chronologies of the nation state are demarcated by the rhythms of specific moments of regime change, corporeality and embodiment shift the *locus* of attention to the capacity human experience has to cross-section the illusory discreteness of singular moments, both by existing before and persisting afterward. Bodies, lives, and experiences vividly link past and present.

Postcolonial Traumatic Disorder

Across the Atlantic, the specters of coloniality soak the fabric of everyday life in Lisbon, heart of the old imperial metropolis. Everywhere,

77 "'Cada vez mais humano', 'fedorentos' e 'massa de manobra': as declarações de Bolsonaro sobre índios", *O Estadão*, January 24, 2020, https://rb.gy/wug9hy.

remnants of imperial performativity persist.[78] Imperial debris too ubiquitously bestrewn to become either visible or noticed was naturalized *in situ* as both ancestrally there and destined for eternity.[79] The projection and performance of the mythos of empire entailed concretizing in monumental form an ideology of power and colonial possession whose only real, effective nature was discursive.[80] Empire was an ambition staged in the metropolis.[81] A spectacle produced for the consumption of local elites hoping to naturalize their own power and establishing universal history as destiny.[82] In Portugal, throughout several centuries, the resolute commitment to empire was politically transversal.[83] Irrespective of political regime – absolute or constitutional monarchy, republic or dictatorship – each new set of elites evoked the deep past of "discoveries" and "arrivals" to cast themselves as the protagonists of the new, modern future. Monuments, thus, materialized an ideology of rule and social order that was stubbornly unmatched by the precarious realities of life in the colonies. In stark contrast to the indigenous body, the universal man chiseled into monumental form was corporealized by the ideal of the male, upper class, subject/citizen – a literate, affluent, and land-owning paterfamilias. An imaginary was thereby crafted where

78 Inês Beleza Barreiros, "Heritage of Portuguese Influence as Erasure: Cultural perspectives on the recreation of the past in the present," *Portuguese Literary & Comparative Studies* [forthcoming]; Elsa Peralta, *Lisboa e a Memória do Império. Património, Museus e Espaço Público* (Lisboa: Le Monde Diplomatique/Outro Modo, 2017).

79 Ann Laura Stoler, *Imperial Debris: On Ruins and Ruination* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2013).

80 My definition of *imperial performativity*. On the contrast between the ideal of empire etched by Jesuits and the difficult realities on the ground, see Ananya Chakravarty, *Empire of Apostles: Religion, Accomodatio, and the Empire in Early Modern Brazil and India* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018).

81 Barreiros, "Heritage".

82 Márcia Gonçalves, "Of peasants and settlers: ideals of Portugueseness, imperial nationalism and European settlement in Africa, c.1930-c.1945," *European Review of History,* 25, no. 1 (2018): 166-186; Orlando Raimundo, *António Ferro: O Inventor do Salazarismo* (Alfragide: Edições Dom Quixote, 2015) and Marcos Cardão, "Allegories of exceptionalism. Luso-tropicalism in mass culture (1960-1974)", *The Portuguese Journal of Social Science* 14, no. 3 (2015): 257-273.

83 Cláudia Castelo, "Novos Brasis" em África: desenvolvimento e colonialismo português tardio," *Varia História* 30, no. 53 (2014): 507-532; Miguel Bandeira Jerónimo. *The 'Civilising Mission' of Portuguese Colonialism, 1870-1930.* (London: Springer, 2015). Ricardo Roque, *Headhunting and Colonialism: Anthropology and the Circulation of Human Skulls in the Portuguese empire, 1870-1930* (London: Springer, 2010) and Valentim Alexandre, *Velho Brasil, Novas Áfricas: Portugal e o Império (1808-1975)* (Porto: Edições Afrontamento, 2000).

some subjects embodied domination, while others corporealized the duty to obey. Monuments materialized this performance of dominion through a grammar of ambition that posed as a *fait accompli*. Empire was a production, colonialism the "leave-no-stone-unturned" effort to will those fantasies into being.[84]

In the bustling city center, pedestrians, tourists, and commuters striving for punctuality venture to and fro across the *Marquês de Pombal.* The towering monument presents a loaded stratigraphy of meaning. An enormous statue of the Marquis stands with a watchful eye, surveying over the city whose reconstruction he oversaw following the great 1755 disaster. Yet, this colossus first ideated in 1917, by a republican regime struggling to navigate the tenuous waters of the Great War whilst precariously trying to sustaining its African colonies, was only inaugurated in 1934, by Salazar, one year after a new Constitution sanctioned his undisputed rise to power (where he remained until 1968). Both regimes, the *República* and the *Estado Novo,* invested their own set of ideological commitments in the Marquis. Respectively, a symbol of secularism and modernization, or, as Salazar would rather have it, the emblem of what a visionary, reformist minister could do: rebuild the empire anew and restore the metropolis to its former glory. Below the figure of the great man, each of the four sides of the monument list a generous menu of great feats wrestled by the 20th century from the 18th. Prominently featured among "great deeds" stands the "liberty of the Indians;" recast in monumental perpetuity for a modern, metropolitan audience. The trope of miscegenation, racial harmony, and of the production of the *mestizo* as a sign of benevolent rule returned also to serve the political expedient of a colonial shift from Brazil to Africa. Yet, despite the change in geographies of subjugation and regardless of who ruled and how, the themes, scripts, and logics of colonization continued to replay unperturbed.

On a different site of the same city, in 2017, another old colonial trope made a comeback. In a statue dedicated to the seventeenth-cen-

84 Margarida Calafate Ribeiro and Ana Paula Ferreira, org., *Fantasmas e Fantasias Imperiais no Imaginário Português Contemporâneo* (V. N. Famalicão: Campo das Letras, 2003).

tury Jesuit missionary in Brazil, António Vieira, Amerindian infancy was redeployed to render the violence of forced conversions to Catholicism in Brazil, into a palatable discursive production of imperial harmony and tolerance. The eternal infancy of Brazilian índios in need of salvation and "civilizing" was, this time, rendered into bronze and transplanted onto the city's urban fabric. The statue articulates today a paradox of historical embodiment and aesthetic erasure: while labeled as a portrait of Vieira alone, the statue also depicted three Amerindian children – invisibilized and rendered into figurative accessories because only the Jesuit could conceivably embody "History." Since its induction, the statue drew continuous critiques and resistance. From the depositing of red carnations – a symbol of democracy in Portugal – to white flowers – a symbol of Brazilian abolitionism – to graffiti exhortations, articulated in the simple imperative: "decolonize" (*descoloniza*). These inscriptions constitute acts of resistance against hegemonic narratives about the past and its presupposed, fixed meanings; demonstrating, at the same time, how cities and monuments are palimpsestic, susceptible to new interventions and layers of signification.[85]

Those of us who grew up in (post)colonial Portugal – I, personally, having been born on the cusp of the first decade of democracy – were educated to speak about empire in the past tense. But our socialization into a specific verbal temporality only highlights the imperfections of history writing. We were far from a simple past. Beyond such verbal mismatches, there were also the negated words: colonialism, for example. It was as if empire was not colonial at all; but rather a simple, linear sequence of dates, conquered ports, goods traded, and countries that today spoke "our" language. Years later, in high school, when engaging in the futile exercise of comparison between more and less violent empires, I remember the short, rhetorical question posed by my history teacher: "who invented the *mulatto*?" By then, the answer

85 Inês Beleza Barreiros, Patrícia Martins Marcos, Pedro Schacht Pereira and Rui Gomes Coelho, "O padre António Vieira no país dos cordiais," *Público,* February 2, 2020. https://tinyurl.com/wpd998e; Elsa Peralta and Nuno Domingos, "Lisbon: reading the (post-)colonial city from the nineteenth to the twenty-first century," *Urban History*, *Urban History* 46, no. 2, (2019): 246-265; Peralta, *Lisboa e a Memória.*

was all too predictable: Portugal. However, what was truly interesting about that moment was how, in spite of our (then) unfamiliarity with the argument, we all shared a collective, unspoken intuition about the answer. So much had tacitly seeped into our unconscious. The explanation offered would become all too familiar: the Portuguese allowed the races to mix while the Spanish did not; in fact, our historical antagonists had "killed all the Indians." By this point, we were in the 1990s. Yet, the race-mixing mythos animating discourses of benevolent conquest centering child-like Amerindians still ran their course.

But my imperfect ethnography of memory started several years earlier, in primary school. It was in the classroom commanded by "Professora C.," a woman whose career started during *Estado Novo*, as she insistently reminded us, at any minor sign of misbehavior. It was then that the silences and imperceptible colonial erasures of our everyday life began. Under her command we learned how to read, write, and perform essential arithmetic operations. Then, at a later point, as we began delving into Portuguese history, we also heard that, yes, Portugal was indeed small, but, in fact, it was also much vaster. After all, "we" were once a great empire with colonies scattered all across the globe.

We learned all this in a classic *Escola Primária*, a school built under Salazar's political and architectural aegis. The same school attended both by mother and older brother before me – respectively, in the 1960s and 1980s. Despite those two decades of distance, they shared the same schoolteacher, "Professora S." Having reached the height of her career, she eventually retired during my second year in that school. How to account for all these unaccounted continuities? Narrative inertia settles precisely at the sites of quotidian allocution and unproblematic reiteration. Generation after generation, the repetition of the same *vademecum* assured the unquestioned perpetuity of empire as an ideology of fellowship and community. Concomitantly, colonial violence, slavery, corporal beatings, forced labor, and the segregation needed to enforce the illusion of dominance as destiny remained occluded from our sights.

Nevertheless, assertions on the dogmatic catechism of empire were not left to the classroom alone. Outside, even as we played, seem-

ingly carefree, we were still undergoing a silent, routinized training in the tacit mechanics of imperial ideology. My colleagues N., H. and B., all had fathers who fought in the Colonial War (1961-1974) in either Angola, Guinea-Bissau, or Mozambique. According to the stories freely relayed by the boys, their fathers had "to kill rather than be killed." Young boys in the 1990s, between the ages of 6 and 10, nearly two decades after the war ended and the former colonies became independent, still vicariously absorbed the mundane violence lurking under the shiny patina of empire.

My colleagues N., H., and B. were neither abnormal nor unique. Over the years, at every new stage of schooling, many more boys – yes, especially, although not exclusively, the boys – recapitulated their fathers rationalizing defense of the pain and trauma they, too, had endured. But that was not all. Not everyone spoke. My friend S., for instance, mentioned, almost in a leisurely manner, her father's sudden outbursts of violence – the screams, broken dishes, and the angry, uncontrollable utterances. Others, on the other hand, like my friend A., spoke of the silence – the enraged soundlessness to which the war was committed. She mentioned her father's erratic comportment when the war came up, as if, echoing Patrícia Lino's *ANTICORPO*: "I don't speak, but I scream inside."[86] Her father was deployed to Mozambique – and, according to the narration imparted by older relatives, "when he returned, he was not the same person." Many years later, when we met again, A. told me over drinks about the life she built in Maputo (Mozambique) for seven years. She mentioned, the culture, the food, the neocolonialism of Portuguese expatriates, but also "the guilt" – these were her exact words – she felt, living somewhere not too distant from her father's place of military deployment, and how she, too, felt the embodied weight of colonial violence.

From a very young age, either willingly or not, consciously or unconsciously, we had all internalized the justifications, the tacit logics,

86 "Não falo mas grito por dentro," see Patrícia Lino, *ANTICORPO*: *Uma Paródia Do Império Risível* (Rio de Janeiro: Edições Garupa, 2020), chap. 7

and the needed rationalizations about our personal genealogies with colonialism and our family's participation in it all. These exercises were intensified by the enforced silences inflicted by either policy or simply trauma. Just like when in 1951, the regime banned the word "Empire" (*Império*) and replaced "Colony" (*Colónia*) with "Overseas Provinces" (*Províncias Ultramarinas*), our education was riddled with euphemisms and intentional omissions because it remained deeply colonial. The official past, on the other hand, focused entirely on the celebration of imperial fictions – the "discoveries," "conquests," and "arrivals" in far-away places – whilst never uttering the words "colonialism," "violence," or even "slavery."[87] This is understandable, I think. As someone who today reads archival sources loaded with casual, mundane violence, I know first-hand how unpalatable colonialism is. The brute force and bestiality contained in those documents hardly constitutes a source of boastful pride. It is difficult to sugarcoat rape.

But there were many more absolutely banal examples of embodied coloniality pervading through our carefree, 1990s everyday lives. My French high school teacher, "Professora F.", was one of the "returned" (*retornados*). She was rigorous, sardonic, and possessed the kind of gravitas imparted only by an intimate mastery of French grammar such as hers. Once, we debated in class whether African countries' sovereign debt should be forgiven. "Professora F." starkly opposed any pardon. Her dissent was violent and vociferous; and we were left aghast.[88] When exposing her rationale, she described the great Mozambican farm she had grown up in. Her family had cattle, and a lot of land, inferring from her descriptions. "Professora F's" expressions combined sorrow with shades of nausea – contempt, even – when she described the killing of all the cattle following the Portuguese revolution (1974) and Mozambican independence (1975). After this debate, this story returned to our classroom many more times. At every new return, the narrative

87 Lei Nº 2048, *Diário da República*, June 11, 1951, https://rb.gy/fkzrk6.

88 Sovereign debt forgiveness debates were a theme du jour in 1990s Portugal. Then, Jonas Savimbi (1932-2002), UNITA's leader, an insurgent guerrilla group in Angola, was still alive. The Angolan Civil War (1975-2002) was ongoing, in a long-continuing guerrilla insurgency against the post-independence Angolan government.

followed similar motions: Africa was immensely prosperous and fecund, just like the farm she grew up on; if only Mozambicans knew what to do with it, they would prosper. Unfortunately, she added, since independence, all its wealth was squandered.

From a very young age, all of us grew up surrounded by and inured to the aestheticized public performance of empire. Empire was ubiquitous in all our cities and monuments. Privately, however, we lived with the intimate reality of trauma, silence, and with personal stories about life in Africa. These two versions of the past – the public and the private – cohabitated under the same roof, side by side, and in very tight quarters. Unlike some of my school friends and colleagues, my father did not fight in the war. He was drafted in 1964, began his instruction in 1966, and trained to become an officer. In 1969, in a retelling that became very familiar to our family, he opted to leave the army and return to his former job as a technical designer – the office located in the same building, a few floors apart from *Casa dos Estudantes do Império*. In recounting his experience, I could see the counterfactual scenarios that played out in his head at that time, returning once more. The pros of benefiting from a seemingly stable and well-paid military career were cast against the great unknown the war posited. His conclusion restaged the decision-making process decades later: "the war was ramping up. It was only going to get worse." Unlike him, many did not have a choice. My 9th grade math teacher, for example, had very publicly put on a show, feigning madness at the recruitment center, hoping to be declared "unfit for service." I cannot recall whether his elaborate spectacle worked or not, but I recall he was far from the only one. Like him, many other men became protagonists of stories they either shared or silenced. Exile was the only option when it came to avoid conscription.

None of these accounts were abnormal or extraordinary. In fact, their absolute banality rendered them all the more powerful. From a very early age, all of us who grew up both white and Portuguese, internalized the rationalizing imperative of "kill or be killed." Death and war were so tacitly routinized no one even thought of asking *why* all

that even happened. The war was as ubiquitous as the silence about it. A great white noise lulling away the pain, the trauma, as well as our very own personal entanglements with colonialism. But silences cannot restore or relieve; they dither and delay. Extant war debris lingered in the bodies and minds of the conscripted, either in the relationships they built or those they rekindled upon returning.[89] But, more than that, the war remained *visible* on their corporeal surface. Embodied colonial violence persisted, linking past and present, in the disabilities acquired and the tattoos many pressed upon their skin, in defiance of higher military rank.[90] When the regime that drafted them collapsed and the war ended, post-imperial Portugal could not, in its system of reality, accommodate the past they still embodied and that remained visible everywhere they went.

In schoolbooks and classrooms empire emerged as a distant entity, both in time and place. Yet, the colonizing of presumptions and imaginaries happened every day, in broad daylight. It was curricular, state sanctioned, routinized, and by design. It hinged on a mismatch between the official narrative of the nation-state and the personal past. History, it seemed, was embodied only by the stone chiseled statues of ideal, great men, not in the lacerated flesh and maimed bodies of veterans, housewives, and everyday people. The personal offered just "stories;" "History," on the other hand, pledged an all-encompassing narrative of universal destiny. Thus, "Empire" and "History" was what Vasco da Gama did in 1498, arriving in India, not us; not the past lurking in monuments and corporeal debris, haunting every cell of our lives. The war was a private affair. It belonged to our lives, and to us alone; it was no matter of national, historical interest.

89 Ângela Campos, *An Oral History of the Portuguese Colonial War: Conscripted Generation* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017).

90 João Cabral Pinto, *Guerra na Pele: As Tatuagens da Guerra Colonial* ([S.l.]: Edição de Autor, 2019); Bruno Sena Martins, "Guerra e Memória Social: a deficiência como testemunho", *Fractal: Revista de Psicologia* 25, no. 1 (2013): 3-22 and Bruno Sena Martins, "The suffering body in the cultural representations of disability: the anguish of corporal transgression," In *Disability Studies: Emerging Insights and Perspectives*, eds. Thomas Campbell, Fernando Fontes, Laura Hemingway, Armineh Soorenian and Chris Till (Leeds: The Disability Press 2008), 93-107.

Corporeal Chronologies: Embodying colonial trauma, void, and visibility

"I have weapons from the colonies [*Ultramar*] at home, and I am going to kill you!," was the threat made by Bruno Candé's murderer, a 76-year-old former nurse's assistant and a veteran of the Portuguese Colonial War. According to witnesses, these words were accompanied by a recurring deluge of racial slurs that became all too familiar for Candé, a 39-year-old Black man and Portuguese citizen. On 25 July 2020, the harassment escalated, reaching a point of no return. The murderer aimed four point-blank bullets at Candé's neck and chest as he screamed: "go back to the *senzala* [slave quarters]." The crime happened in broad daylight, at a café in the outskirts of Lisbon where Candé frequently sat with his dog. His death was instant and on the spot.

The murderer's assertions recalled and rendered visible Portugal's long history of colonial violence. Despite the political class's silence on the murder and the denialism that ensued, articulated in the media and through a police spokesperson, the reproduction of plantation brutality lay, unequivocal and intentional, in the murderer's words and deeds. While the past of racist violence and colonial conflict was silenced and invisibilized in contemporary Portugal, it was neither foregone nor resolved. Rather, it persists; sanitized and unreckoned with. Archival voids and racist denialism permeate across colonial past *and* present. They are manifested in the selective amnesia through which the exclusion of Black bodies from the historical and citizen imaginary is curated.

Blackness and indigeneity, thus, link colonial and postcolonial time by animating and embodying – through skin and flesh – the inextricable tie between past and present. Or, put differently, Black and Indian physical bodies make archival voids visible. Life as presence and resistance. Black, Amerindian, and veteran corporeal chronologies undo the conceit of sovereign time and defy the seeming universality of official history. They challenge the discrete power of any "great man," moment, or law because bodies cut across the curated tempo of the nation-state, illustrating the complex textures of human experience. Bodies legible as racialized, marginalized, or expendable carry in their

flesh the weight of coloniality, manifesting the entrenchment of the past in the present through structural racism, prejudices, and inequalities. Political regimes may change institutions and laws but cannot not enforce a gestalt switch in tacit belief systems, worldviews, legal structures, and quotidian systems of praxis.

Thus, either the 1974 revolution or the 1975 decolonization were not epitomes but new starts; the inauguration of a new process. In Portugal, that entailed the assimilation of about 800.000 war veterans and 500.000 "*retornardos*". Suddenly, democracy entailed the end of the war, loss of utility, and rupture with the past they continued to signify and embody. Much like the imagined incompatibility of Amerindians with settler colonial modernity, both blackness and bodies maimed by war demanded erasure. Cast out of the universalist telos of progress, the formerly colonized and those conscripted to rule over them became illegible to official history. They were anachronism personified; disruptors of the mythos of decolonization and democracy.

Invisibility can shun and silence but cannot extinguish. In order to decolonize empire – and with it, history writing – the overdetermined centrality of sovereign chronologies, arranged according to political regimes, must be upended. Not only is memory embodied, but bodies – especially those historically marginalized, racialized, and maimed to serve imperial ends – have the power to physically signify and elaborate upon historical representations and narratives. Archives need not be either paper-based or logocentric. Written accounts constitute only a limited universe of documentary sources available to historians. Bodies, lives, their meanings, memories, and intimate networks of affect and interaction also have stories to tell. Under Portuguese colonial rule, Amerindian and Black enslaved bodies subjected to branding and whipping, could be entered as court evidence, sidestepping procedural impediments for them to provide legal testimony. Centering corporeal chronologies, therefore, rather than the imperious categories of the nation-state offers novel narrative and chronological possibilities. Bodies carry meaning and memory through presence, resistance, their defiance of disciplined time and of the discrete boundaries of professional histo-

ry. This move both provincializes time and place but contributes also to denaturalize the present. However, neither history nor empire can be decolonized while the predicaments of Black and Amerindian lives continued to be erased and denied under the banner of universalism. Empire and colonialism *can* be unlearned. After all, in São Paulo, in 2017, Madalena and Débora did not know where Portugal was.

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