
Beyond Compare: Comparative Method after the Transnational Turn

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As this special issue of *Radical History Review* confirms, interest in transnational approaches to history now reaches from the most radical to the most orthodox branches of the profession.¹ My historical training has been entirely on the cusp and in the heyday of this movement; these lenses have filtered all my reading in the literature of my field, race in the Americas. In such a light, the field reveals the relative weight of some of the methods available to world and transnational historians. Even the sardine-packed subfield of comparative work on race in the United States and Brazil, my focus, has something new to teach in this perspective. Not about Brazil or the United States, however, nor about “race,” national character, the relationship of racial consciousness to racism, or most of the other conclusions comparative scholars have pulled from their work. Instead, because the theory driving the so-called transnational turn shows us a new way of understanding the relationship between comparison and the process of subject-formation, it helps question the neutrality of comparison as method.

This essay attributes the transnational turn to anti- and postcolonial scholarship and argues that this body of thought contains an implicit critique of comparative method.² In the first of two parts, the article considers the underpinnings of the transnational turn and its consequences for understanding subject-formation and, therefore, comparative method. It reflects on the lessons anti- and postcolonial scholarship can offer comparativists. From Frantz Fanon to Edward Said to Elsa

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Barkley Brown, anti- and postcolonial intellectuals compel attention to the transnational and caution against comparisons. The second part of the essay applies their cautions, moving to the historical literature. Taking historiography as narrative, this section selects a handful of authors from the great number of scholars who have interested themselves in comparisons of the United States and Brazil, presenting them as active agents in the construction of race and of notions of national character. It follows the ways in which the field of comparative history has been shaped by overtly political comparisons that have helped produce the very notions, subjects, and experiences of national difference that in turn attract further comparative study.³ Academic comparisons help make race, and they should be treated by historians of ideas and of racial construction not as methodological models but as subjects in their own right.

Since I argue in favor of a particular stripe of transnational history, I will offer a working definition, understanding that conceptions of transnational history vary. My sense is that the term was coined to distinguish this field from international history, the study of nation-states interacting as such. Transnational history examines units that spill over and seep through national borders, units both greater and smaller than the nation-state. International models have guided diplomatic history, military history, and related fields; their state focus proves less compelling for historians of nonelite subjects, which in part explains the embrace of transnational method by social and cultural historians. Transnational history does not simply cover more ground; it is not equivalent to world history—world historians, like everybody else, must still choose between transnational and international approaches. Indeed, some adepts of transnational method treat phenomena that fall within a single set of national borders, revealing the traces of the global in the local. Perhaps the core of transnational history is the challenge it poses to the hermeneutic preeminence of nations. Without losing sight of the “potent forces” nations have become, it understands them as “fragile, constructed, imagined.”⁴ Transnational history treats the nation as one among a range of social phenomena to be studied, rather than the frame of the study itself.

Why transnational history? Why now? Observers of the transnational turn in history often understand the popularity of global perspectives as the outcome of recent—say, postwar—phenomena, grouped under the rubric of *globalization*. That term, however, describes a set of conditions of varying vintages. Granting it “newness” and agency forgets the global encounters that have long driven grand social and political forces. It is not so-called globalization, but the mobility and resistance occasioned by colonialism, as translated by anticolonial and postcolonial intellectuals, that have lit the hottest fires in the engines driving the transnational turn.⁵

Protagonists of the “immensely complicated tale of global transformation and struggle” against colonialism and racism in a sense could do no less.⁶ Twentieth-century anticolonial movements relied on and discovered webs of resistance movements

worldwide. They laid bare aspects of the relationship between colony and metropole underestimated by metropolitan observers, namely, their interdependence. Many colonial intellectuals lived or traveled in multiple peripheral places and spent long stints in first world centers for education or work, and subjects of internal colonialism live full-time in the belly of the whale. Anticolonial scholars have come face to face with a range of transnational interconnections, including the deep marks colonialism inflicted in the metropole, and they have exposed the history of those connections.⁷

Anti- and postcolonial intellectuals' insights on subject-formation reflect such experiences. Encounters across the Atlantic catalyzed Frantz Fanon's acute understanding of the psychological interdependence of subjects, whether metropolitan and colonial or white and black.⁸ Fanon understood that "to exist is to be called into being in relation to an otherness," in Homi Bhabha's gloss.⁹ Bhabha may pull Fanon closer to French psychoanalytic theorist Jacques Lacan's discussion of the self's formation in relation to others, but that approximation to a European theoretical tradition moves him no further from the struggle against colonialism. For French poststructuralism also developed amid manifestations of anticolonialism in that metropole in the 1950s and 1960s, and it is stamped by that intellectual tradition.¹⁰ As Chela Sandoval argues, Roland Barthes observed (and suffered) the effects "of colonial psychology as it is effected in dominant consciousness [revealing] the horrifying effects of racism and colonialism on the perpetrators themselves."¹¹ Foucault's insights on power as a fluid relation, dependent on the participation of the subordinated, bear the mark of those struggles brought inescapably home, as in Paris, 1968.¹²

Related experiences underlie the immensely fruitful theorizations formulated by historians of African American women such as Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham and Elsa Barkley Brown. Rooted in transnationally connected traditions of struggle against internal colonialism in the United States, they conceptualize identity as a fluid relation across multiple interacting planes.¹³ That is, categories such as race and gender take on meaning in tandem with each other (so that no abstraction, such as "woman" or "black," can have any social salience), and also in contrast with their opposites or others. Such a model reflects lived heterogeneity and adaptability to social context far more accurately than notions of fixed or constant identity. It posits social definition as a boundary-setting process that ties identity categories together in the specular play of subject-formation familiar to scholars in many fields.

Historians interested in comparative methods have much to gain from the insight that subjects form in relation, for defining a self in contrast to (an) other(s) is essentially an act of comparison. Comparison *is* the process of relational self-definition. This is as true for the formation of geopolitical entities as for individual subjects. The nation, like the self, emerges in relation to others.

Historians today who have integrated postcolonial insights into their transnational perspectives enjoy a sharp grasp of the interdependence of global agents. Frederick Cooper and Ann Laura Stoler note how inextricable Europe was from its “imperial projects,” pointing out the dependence of those projects on “conflicts within Europe itself.”¹⁴ Cedric Robinson and Robin D. G. Kelley link “the invention of the negro” with “the fabrication of Europe,” following Edward Said’s compelling revelation that Europe’s “study of and romance with ‘the East’ was primarily about constructing the Occident.”¹⁵ Scholars working along these lines render faithfully the experiences of people for whom transcending national boundaries has been the norm rather than the exception, or whose experiences of mobility have been particularly acute. The benefits to historical scholarship include clear visions of connections over the encumbrances of borders, of heterogeneity within seemingly monolithic groups, and of the multivalent conversations and negotiations in any human interaction, even those distorted by gross inequalities.¹⁶

These developments are putting comparative scholarship on the defensive, for most comparisons are resolutely nation bound. Comparative history tends to be international, not transnational, history. Correspondingly, historians have begun to doubt its potency as panacea for the profession’s provincialism. Comparison’s extroverted focus may have proved a useful challenge to a certain ethnocentrism at one point, but, as Ian Tyrrell observes, even comparisons launched as dissent still served the cold war state in the era of consensus history and fed American exceptionalism.¹⁷ “The critical absence has not been comparative and international perspectives themselves,” Tyrrell remarks, “but rather the failure of comparative history to transcend the boundaries of nationalist historiography.” In agreement, Frederick Cooper charges comparative history with obscuring far more complex, productive, and interesting tales unconfined by national borders.¹⁸

Critiques such as these help historians refine a method ill adapted to the transnational turn. Comparison requires the observer to name two or more units whose similarities and differences she or he will then describe. This setup discourages attention to exchange between the two, the very exchange postcolonial insight understands as the stuff of subject-formation. Foucault’s insights into power suggest that a view of two parallel objects that never meet proves inadequate to the explication of this dynamic relation. Comparisons obscure the workings of power.

Above all, setting up parallel objects for study obscures the exchange fostered by comparisons themselves. The suggestion that study might shape or even create its own data is hidden by the Oz effect (“pay no attention to the man behind the curtain”) of scholarly claims to scientific objectivity. These are claims comparative study shares with most other traditional academic methods. But could comparisons avoid being active participants in social processes when the people who make them are? Comparativists join cultural or social units whose material rela-

tion to each other involves particular social dynamics. They write in dialogue with popular and academic conversations and reflect their positions in the range of networks enmeshing any individual in culture and society. In this they are no different from their colleagues in any other field. Ideas and methods, those of comparison or any other, carry no predetermined value in the abstract. Yet the academy and intellectual production—to academics' great benefit—have never existed in the abstract.

Comparers of racial systems plant their social positions deeply in the work they produce, for they must engage particularly intimately with their source material. They are called on to mediate between and among multiple divergent, overlapping symbolic systems: cultural, linguistic, and racial. All three of these systems are characterized by yawning gaps between sign and signified. Cultural systems, including those that regulate social categories such as race, have this in common with language: they fix signs arbitrarily—though in deeply material, socially and historically embedded ways—to their signifieds.¹⁹ Those who attempt to bridge those systems are called comparativists, or translators, or both.²⁰ They take on twice the everyday burden of skirting the abyss between language and meaning. After all, if there is no exact equation between sign and signified in one place, there is even less hope for perfect equivalence when trying to reconcile two—or more, if the people involved speak different languages, and more again if the observer stands at another historical vantage point, since racial schemas change over time even in a single place (the past being yet another country). A comparative historian working to reconcile two or more languages, places, and periods faces a labor of mediation daunting to behold.

Misplaced modesty underlies the assumption that such labor is not productive. It may not do the work its author wishes it would, but, as physics counsels, energy is never expended without effect. “Are the facts about the object of study neutral givens, or are they produced by interaction between the investigator and the object?” wonders translation theorist Lydia Liu. Poststructuralist-influenced readers will agree with Liu that study in part produces its own “raw” material; for these scholars, “the comparatist’s task is then to be redefined as the exploration of interactions, which is far more interesting than the evaluation of similarities and differences.”²¹ Elevating connections over contrasts, Liu sights comparison squarely in the postcolonial crosshairs of the transnational turn.

All this suggests that scholars interested in transnational approaches should consider cross-national comparison as subject rather than method.²² After all, comparisons are both a site and a motor of transnational exchange. They entail movement over various sorts of borders. Comparisons pull together the bodies compared, rhetorically; they pluck individuals from originating locations and set them down in foreign fields; they force scholars to absorb foreign languages and histories; they ask readers to join in their transnational gazing. They apply methods of analysis to con-

texts other than the ones in which they were developed; the methods change, and then take their new selves “home.”

This becomes abundantly clear in comparisons of the United States and Brazil. Scholars comparing these two countries have facilitated the circulation of people, ideas, and cultural forms, created transnational networks, and participated in the construction of social categories—signally, race, since race has been their overwhelming focus. The comparison of race in these two nation-states constitutes one of the richest veins of comparative history available. According to one observer, Brazil and the United States are drawn into comparison more often than any other pair in writing on “racial relations” in the twentieth century.²³ The very density of this tradition was a red flag pointing me to wonder at the broad endeavor. What has prompted so many students of race in the United States or Brazil to reach for each other?²⁴

The answers have to do, I will suggest in the next section, with the notions of national racial characters that comparisons have generated by juxtaposing these two countries: the United States as a place of overt racism and a stark, dichotomous racial system, and Brazil as a site of subtle, gradated multiplicity. These portrayals have retained their general contours despite shifting views of their meanings and value, and despite long-standing evidence that these characterizations prove far too simple. They have become archetypal, anchoring powerful discursive fields and treasured political projects. Students of race in Brazil who are “comparing it implicitly or explicitly with what is happening elsewhere . . . tend . . . to be using Brazil as an object lesson rather than as an object of analysis,” observes a longtime practitioner of Brazilian history.²⁵ Comparisons have provided tools with which to intervene in debates over the scope and content of racial categories, national identity, and state policy regarding both.²⁶

Not that comparisons support any single political position—far from it. Yet there is one arena of collaboration even among sworn opponents: all participate in the construction of the categories they set out to study, race and national difference, and in linking the two to each other. Comparative history imposes the frames of these assumptions on the results of its investigations, as comparison proponent George Frederickson discloses: “For most historians and social scientists, comparative history is a way of isolating the critical factors or independent variables that account for national differences.”²⁷ Should we be surprised that comparisons reify the units they place at both starting and end points?

Elevated to those twin peaks of irreproachability, common sense and scientific method (“hypothesis-testing,” in William Sewell’s classic term), comparison has explicitly and inadvertently generated a momentous legacy of “knowledge” about the United States and Brazil’s respective racial systems and national characters.²⁸ Comparativists disregard the productive transnational exchange in which they are

involved, even as they buttress the logic of their arguments by passing their findings back and forth over the Equator, bowing to the authority of each other's experience to lend their shared conclusions greater weight.

To follow some of these exchanges, this essay now turns to its second portion. Highlighting a modest historiographic slice of comparative approaches to race in the United States and Brazil, it traces the transnational exchange that this comparison rested on, and fed, and comparers' active roles in processes they hoped merely to understand.

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In the first decades of the twentieth century, North Atlantic colonial administrators with anthropological aspirations were fascinated with Brazil. Their thinking merged two diametrically opposed lines of predecessors equally obsessed with that country: eighteenth- and nineteenth-century abolitionists, with their positive readings of the harmony of Brazilian racial relations during Brazilian slavery; and nineteenth- and early twentieth-century eugenicist racial "scientists" who heaped disdain on Brazil's supposedly unchecked miscegenation.²⁹ Standing at the junction of these two traditions was the British liberal statesman James Bryce who published an account of his travels to Brazil on the eve of World War I.

Bryce was favorably impressed with the harmony he concluded reigned among the races in Brazil, in contrast to the North Atlantic "Europe and North America." Bryce's positive view of Brazilian racial harmony rested on prior comparisons and well-worn images of the particular tolerance of the Portuguese imperial (later Brazilian national) character, long the bases of a defense of Brazilian slavery as comparatively milder than other American slave systems.³⁰ To that mainstay of nineteenth-century abolitionism, Bryce added the tenets of racial "science." His belief in Anglo-Saxon superiority and his observation of Brazilian "miscegenation" made him worry that "the white part of the Brazilian nation—and it is only that part that need be considered—seems altogether too small for the tasks which the possession of this country imposes."³¹ Bryce did find a small trade-off in the supposed ubiquity of noncoercive interracial sex, an idea that greatly appealed to him. Inasmuch as Bryce's portrait of Brazil was also a defense of a certain set of priorities for governance of "Europe and North America," both domestically and in its colonies, it was a brick in the edifice of the powerful discursive field underlying the exercise of colonial power. Bryce's comparison resembled those Stoler indicts, "itself part of colonial projects that also served to secure relations of power."³²

Bryce's fears infuriated his Brazilian hosts, although they often shared them in private. Modernizing elites hated the view of Brazil as a sensual, disease-ridden, tropical backwater, and they fought it in every available venue. Bryce particularly offended politician Gilberto Amado, who was still fuming forty years later. In the

intervening years, Amado opposed black and Chinese immigration into Brazil, supported a monument to the iconic Black Mother of slavery times to honor “appropriate” Afro-Brazilian contributions to the nation, and embraced “whitening,” Brazilians’ patriotic revision of North Atlantic “scientific” racism.³³ Whitening’s advocates celebrated the progressive loss of the African presence, crediting European immigration and the racial mixture prompted by Brazil’s famous lack of racism. Critics have ably noted the contradictions between whitening’s lip service to racial tolerance and its deeply racist logic.³⁴

Amado and his fellow politicians’ desires to whiten Brazil and to monumentalize a particular memory of racial relations deepened in response to the insult dealt by Bryce and the broad context of similar North Atlantic disdain.³⁵ Comparisons galvanized them to live by a tenet (whitening) that was in itself a comparison. As Thomas Skidmore noted in his now classic study of Brazilian racial thought, comparisons are ubiquitous in the rhetoric mobilized to explain and justify the theory of whitening and its public policies.³⁶ Whitening as a hypothesis created and communicated its meaning in comparison, especially in comparison to the United States, powerfully shaping Brazilian racial politics and national identity.

Like Bryce, British students of Brazil and other supposedly peripheral places derived conclusions to support their government’s paternalist colonialism. The posture the British administrator of Africa, Sir Harry Johnston, took in *The Backward Peoples and Our Relations with Them* (1920) also roughly equaled the stance the United States had recently assumed in its affairs in the Caribbean and the Pacific, and it was in this political climate that North American observers in significant numbers began to contemplate Brazil.³⁷ From the turn of the century until World War I, the United States stepped into several pairs of British shoes, becoming both an imperial power and the dominant commercial trading partner in the Americas.³⁸ It also began to figure as the principal point of comparison to Brazil—a development dissimilar in scale, yet still related.

Johnston corresponded amicably with Theodore Roosevelt, with whom he shared many sensibilities. Like the British colonial administrator, the North American champion of eugenics and tight control of the U.S. colonies harbored a yen for travel. Roosevelt, too, would soon enjoy happy adventures in Brazil. He traipsed “through the Brazilian wilderness” and more of South America in 1913 and published several accounts of his voyage. Distributing a genre of Amazonian exoticism not unique to him, Roosevelt reported on the countless shades of “fair” and “negro” people he found living together throughout the Amazonian interior, where “the fusion of the colors was going on steadily.”³⁹

Roosevelt relied on a Brazilian “statesman, himself of pure white blood” (as were the majority of those occupying high social positions, he reassured his readers), to ventriloquize the contrast between Brazil’s reproductive confusion and Roosevelt’s

beloved, eugenically tidy home. Through that “statesman,” Roosevelt allowed himself to express positive views of racial mixing quite surprising for such a fan of eugenics as he. While Brazilians were becoming uniformly white, this deep throat warned, in the United States, “negroes” remained a “menacing element in your civilization.”⁴⁰

Roosevelt’s Brazilian informant might very well have been Manoel de Oliveira Lima, essayist and historian, former government minister and attaché at embassies in Berlin, London, and Washington, DC, friend of the historian of Brazil Percy Martin and the young Gilberto Freyre.⁴¹ As early as 1899, Oliveira Lima had compared the United States and Brazil, finding the “problem of the races” in the United States grossly worse and explaining the contrast as a result of the relative mildness of Brazilian slavery.⁴² In *The Evolution of Brazil Compared with That of Spanish and Anglo-Saxon America* (1914), Oliveira Lima reiterated the United States–Brazil contrast for his English-speaking audience. Here is the passage so resonant of Roosevelt’s “statesman”:

Indeed, in your country, which is in so many ways the most progressive in the world, and the one in which the greatest progress has already been made toward the regulation of ethical problems, this racial question continues pressing. . . . Yet we of Latin America have already settled this same problem . . . by fusion . . . in which the inferior elements will shortly disappear. Thus, when mulattoes and half castes shall no longer exist among us, . . . you will be threatened with preserving indefinitely within your confines irreducible populations, of . . . hostile sentiments. . .

I will not say that the general tone of your culture has not gained by this aloofness of the races, by the consequent integrity of the purity of the white race which has contributed so greatly to the present superiority of your civilization; but the *dénouement* brought about by love is always preferable to that which is the result of hate.⁴³

As good patriots, Oliveira Lima and Roosevelt both professed to prefer their own nation’s solution—slightly slower “progress” but less racial conflict in Brazil, and more of both in the United States. Despite the national opposition they centered, both positions agreed that whiteness and progress went hand in hand.⁴⁴ This generative exchange constitutes a chapter in the construction of a whiteness that meant different things in different places.

The above was far from the last appearance of this particular juxtaposition. From the anonymous Brazilian’s mouth to Roosevelt’s pen, the passage doubled back to Brazil, where a Rio de Janeiro daily, the *Correio da Manhã*, translated and republished it on its front page, drawing the two nations further into the intimacy of their comparison.⁴⁵ For *Correio da Manhã* readers, the lesson was clear: their nation could earn recognition and kudos from the citizens of the fastest-rising star in the

hemisphere by emphasizing their peaceful racial relations and ever-increasing whiteness. North American fans of Roosevelt's adventure tales learned from them that racial conflict at home was unfortunate but inevitable, given their nation's exceptional pace of growth. The contrast between racial harmony in Brazil and purity in the United States helped explain and defend exceptionalisms on both sides: U.S. civilization, modernity, industry, practicality, and progress, and Brazilian cordiality, shortsightedness, sensuality, passivity, chaos, and the masses' need for discipline. Brazil–United States comparisons served to prove Jim Crow segregation appropriate and necessary in North American contexts, and to validate proposals for the whitening of Brazil.

Like any other metaphor, however, comparisons are empty vessels, waiting for readers to endow them with meaning. Some critics embraced this comparison for purposes elite observers did not intend. Comparisons of Brazil and the United States devoted to maintaining the racial hierarchies of the status quo clashed and meshed with comparisons by African American and other antiracist observers intended to disrupt them. Roosevelt's claim, circulating widely in the United States, appeared frequently in the African American scholarly and popular press.⁴⁶ There it was offered to challenge the notions of racial hierarchy that Roosevelt and Oliveira Lima intended it to uphold.

Stepping into the fray in 1914, W. E. B. Du Bois interrupted the happy trading of compliments between Roosevelt and his unnamed Brazilian colleague. Reprinting the same text also selected by the *Correio da Manhã*, Du Bois challenged Roosevelt's insufficient recognition of Brazil's racial equity. Roosevelt's "timidity" distorted the facts, Du Bois charged; Roosevelt lied in claiming that Brazilians regarded "the Negro element in their blood as 'a slight weakening.'" In fact, claimed Du Bois, Brazilians felt no reluctance at all to embrace the Afro-descended among them, showing U.S. conditions to be needlessly severe.⁴⁷

A year after publicly correcting Roosevelt, Du Bois turned to James Bryce, champion of Anglo-Saxon supremacy. For his 1915 opus *The Negro*, Du Bois pulled a rosy picture from Bryce's book: Brazil was the only country besides the other Portuguese colonies "in which the fusion of the European and the African races is proceeding unchecked by law or custom. The doctrines of human equality and human solidarity have here their perfect work."⁴⁸ Quoting accurately but selectively, Du Bois moved his bottom line a good distance from where Bryce had set it.

Working to control the meaning of the United States–Brazil comparison, Du Bois used his position as editor of the *Crisis*, the organ of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), to distribute his own and others' work. The year *The Negro* appeared, *Crisis* readers were treated to R. W. Merguson's "Glimpses of Brazil,"⁴⁹ an informative travelogue focused on regional racial variation and mixture and the cordiality with which the author was received. Fol-

lowing the prevailing antiracist logic, Merguson invoked Brazilian racial harmony to accentuate the needless excesses of U.S. racial strife. The *Crisis* would also shortly publish a celebration of the life of Afro-Brazilian abolitionist José do Patrocínio, protesting the impossibility of similar national recognition for distinguished African Americans.⁵⁰

Du Bois's role in the NAACP also widened the reach of his version of the United States–Brazil comparison. Roy Nash, a friend of Du Bois and his colleague in the NAACP, helped out with his 1926 *The Conquest of Brazil*.⁵¹ Nash's book was widely read inside and outside the academy by a reading public both black and white, and by Brazilian as well as U.S. audiences, especially after its translation into Portuguese in 1939.⁵² Nash rehearsed the dichotomy between Latin mingling and U.S. ostracism, imposing a familiar pair of rosy comparative lenses: "Brazil's welcome of her Negro slaves into the ranks of freemen has in one generation become sincere, complete, and unqualified," he enthused, denouncing lynching and white hatred of blacks in the United States. "Brazil is the one country in the world where fusion of Europeans and Africans is going on unchecked by law or custom. More than in any other place in the world, readmixture . . . is there injecting meaning into the 'égalité' of Revolutionary France and the 'human solidarity' of philosophers and class-conscious proletarians."⁵³ If the passage sounds familiar, it should—Nash was quoting, paraphrased and without attribution, Du Bois's 1915 citation of Bryce's 1912 travelogue. This comparison's self-authorization is more than circular: it is a densely tangled knot.

The articulate dissent of antiracist writers infused the discussion of United States–Brazil contrasts with immediacy, interesting ever more observers in the comparative endeavor. One finds a sure sign of this scholarship's long reach in the rise it got out of white supremacists, who had long placed Brazil in global comparisons to prove the "degeneration" of miscegenated societies. Edward Byron Reuter, one such "scholar" of comparative civilizations, engaged African American thinkers directly, citing the *Chicago Defender*, Du Bois, and other popular and scholarly African American sources.⁵⁴ Reuter's response suggests that this comparison was an important enough tool in the white supremacist battery to rally proponents to its defense, and that antiracists wielded it skillfully.

That white supremacists were able to engage antiracists in debate over the comparison of the United States and Brazil reflects a shared project.⁵⁵ Both camps compared degrees of physical racial mixture, positing the United States and Brazil as opposites. Although they intended this opposition to advance contrasting arguments, they necessarily shared its underlying assumption: the idea of racial purity, cornerstone of racial essentialism. Antiracists often resisted engaging the notion of purity directly, but any discussion of mixture, even a celebratory one, assumes an originating purity. As Verena Stolcke reminds us, mixture and purity differ only diachroni-

cally: “The idea of miscegenation . . . presupposes the previous existence of distinct populations.”⁵⁶ Positioning U.S. purity and Brazilian mixture at the furthest ends of the possible restricted the entire scale to an essentialized, biological definition of race.

Further, as imagined by these two groups of comparativists, the purity in question was limited to a single pair of expressions: blackness and whiteness. These were the categories the two nations appeared to share. Neither antiracists nor white supremacists who compared the United States and Brazil in this period tended to note any category beyond black, white, and their mixture. No longer did white supremacists, for example, posit “Anglo-Saxon” purity as a bulwark against a cacophony of differences in the United States, all melded multiply in Brazil. Instead, they used the comparison to discuss the place of blackness in each society. So did their antiracist opponents. Absent from Nash’s and Du Bois’s discussions of “the fusion of the European and the African races” was the plurality that formula could imply; gone was the indigenous element of Brazil’s favorite foundational narrative; invisible were all the other nonblack, nonwhite categories, including migrants from Asia to both places and from Latin America to the United States, and the “dingy” white migrants from southeastern Europe and the Middle East then thronging to all the Americas’ Atlantic shores. Indeed, the comparison’s inattention to elements beyond black and white was one of the reasons opponents of antiblack racism and champions of white supremacy were drawn to it in the first place.

The United States–Brazil comparison therefore constituted one of the rhetorical gestures with which North Americans advanced a dichotomous view of race after World War I, a stance eugenicist Lothrop Stoddard began to term “biracialism.”⁵⁷ Conceptions of race in general shifted from a broad, plural racial schema to one with a smaller handful of categories, with white and black the most salient in the U.S. Northeast and South, and often extrapolated to the rest of the United States. While both plural and dichotomous schema had coexisted throughout the nineteenth century and continued to coexist, the latter lost ground in this period. The narrowing was a sign, first, of the eloquence and determination of African American resistance, and second, of the high material and ideological “wages of whiteness” for immigrants and other groups who had previously been not quite white.⁵⁸

Participants in this ideological shift did not speak with one voice, and many were ambivalent. Du Bois, for example, in some ways saw through the comparison. He pointed out racial mixture in the United States within the category *black* (Negro, then) as early as 1911, dreamed early and often of anticolonial, antiracist coalitions of oppressed people of color worldwide, and would come to acknowledge Brazilian racism by the early 1940s, far earlier than most.⁵⁹ In the 1910s and early 1920s, however, he was interested in using the idea of Brazil’s freedom from racism and abundant racial mixture to critique U.S. racism, and he did so powerfully, with character-

istic eloquence and fire. The pointed comparative arguments he and others circulated in African American academic and journalistic outlets helped activists mobilize the outrage and support that would lead to profound changes in U.S. racial relations in the century's latter half. This is one of the obvious ways people set the United States–Brazil comparison to shaping the lived experience of race. Less obvious are the ways the comparison fed racial essentialism and the dichotomous black-white schema that moved to the fore after World War I.

Expecting 1920s thinkers to step far enough outside their ideological contexts to imagine alternatives to racial essentialism is unrealistic. Still, the lessons their positions can teach observers in the twenty-first century are worth the while. Comparisons structured partially or explicitly as national serve to reify race by imparting the racial landscape they describe to the entire nation. They decline to entertain suspicions of partiality or of differences in racial schemas in different regions and in rural as opposed to urban areas. The Brazil–United States comparison fit a national frame over its focus on black and white, spinning an obfuscatory tale of race and national character.

Dichotomous views of race narrowed the field of possibility in many ways, but they nursed a flowering in another. What Du Bois called “race consciousness” and others have termed “black nationalism” was in its pan-African, diasporic “global vision,” as transnational as it was national.⁶⁰ It emerged with particular intensity across an Atlantic of radical scholars focused on the African diaspora. American, Caribbean, African, and European colonial and migrant intellectuals moved along transnational networks of antiracist intellectual production and struggle, trading sparks with the class and race radicalisms of the postwar period and the global depression (Bolshevism, Garveyism, pan-Africanism, and labor organization, among others).

Brazilian scholars participated fully in this conversation. By the 1930s, a cohort of innovative Afro-Brazilianists was effecting a sea change in academic views of race. The views of scholars such as Raymundo Nina Rodrigues and Francisco José de Oliveira Vianna, whose conclusions were so derogatory to Brazil, ceded to the cultural anthropology and cultural history of such scholarly heavyweights as Arthur Ramos, Manuel Querino, Edgar Roquette-Pinto, Edison Carneiro, Mário de Andrade, Gilberto Freyre, and others who exalted Brazilian culture in general and venerated Afro-Brazilians in particular as worthy and valuable subjects of study.⁶¹ These were no solitary toilers, nor did they simply work in “parallel” to North Atlantic schools of thought. The postwar period's thriving networks of transnational exchange, both popular and scholarly, transcended the strictures of global inequalities in language acquisition, publishing, and academic reputation. They ensured that Brazilian scholars fully participated in the scholarly production of work on the African diaspora in the Americas.

Communication among North American, Caribbean, and Brazilian scholars on the question of nation-based monographs on “the Negro” reveals this community in action. The 1939 study of *The Negro in Brazil* by medical anthropologist Arthur Ramos, a thoroughly transnational collaboration, serves as the quintessential example. Ramos wrote that book specifically for publication in English at the request of North American professor Richard Pattee, the work’s translator, and with the encouragement of Negro history champion Carter G. Woodson, the bibliographic resources of New York Public Library curator Arthur Schomburg, and against the backdrop of interest provided by North and Latin American scholars such as Du Bois, Rayford Logan, Rüdiger Bilden, Arthur Springarn, and “Ortiz, Ramos, Freyre and the rest,” as Pattee wrote to Schomburg in 1937.⁶² Though confined in focus to a single country, *The Negro in Brazil* was intended as fodder for comparison to other national units, especially the United States. To this transnational community of Africa-oriented scholars, it also suggested links and networks within the Americas and across the Atlantic.⁶³

Not only have Brazilian scholars formed a critical part of the transnational academic community that conceptualized the African diaspora; Brazil has also provided critically convincing examples and experiences. The Brazilian Candomblé, for example, is “cited more often and with greater certainty than any other African American institution as proof that African culture has ‘survived’ in the Americas,” writes J. Lorand Matory.⁶⁴ Among the scholars Matory cites is U.S. anthropologist Melville Herskovits, who would enjoy an eye-opening visit to Brazil two years after the appearance of Ramos’s *The Negro in Brazil*. In 1941, Herskovits researched and traveled in Brazil, the same year he published his groundbreaking work on New World African survivals, *The Myth of the Negro Past*.⁶⁵

The diaspora as a concept pulls away from a comparative perspective. Opponents of the idea have therefore sometimes responded by caging its radical suggestions in comparative frames. Sociologist E. Franklin Frazier, one of the most eloquently vehement opponents of the idea that African Americans were significantly African, did just this in 1944. Overwhelmed by his observations of African elements in Afro-Brazilian customs (made when he, too, traveled to Brazil in 1941), Frazier wriggled out of admitting New World survivals with a comparison. He portrayed African survivals as greater in Brazil than in the United States, clinging to the claim that black people in the United States were thoroughly “American.”⁶⁶ Struck by a recognizably Orientalist impression of Brazil in comparison to the United States (the savage, underdeveloped tropical backwater versus the civilized, progressive center of commerce and science), Frazier stonewalled the labor of approximation undertaken by Ramos, Herskovits, their colleagues, and even Frazier himself.

Frazier’s comparative approach to Brazil extended the life of an eerily familiar passage. Congratulating Brazil on its avoidance of racism, Frazier explained to the

audience of the magazine *Common Sense*: “It is generally accepted as an unexpressed national policy that the Negro is to be absorbed into the total population. It was with this in mind that a Brazilian statesman reminded Roosevelt that in a hundred years Brazil would have no Negroes, whereas the United States would have the problem of twenty or thirty million Negroes.”⁶⁷ The knot, in its umpteenth recycle, naturalized to the status of general assumption, truly deserved airing in a forum of this name.

In the 1940s, the notion of Brazil’s moral accomplishment would come to be known as *racial democracy*, a term associated with sociologist Gilberto Freyre. Both the “author” and the concept have enjoyed inordinate influence, to the point that we need not detain ourselves with them here. Suffice it to say that racial democracy is a concept forged in transnational and comparative context, and one deeply influential in the United States.⁶⁸ The comparative ideas about race in the United States and Brazil that enjoyed such prestige from the 1930s through the 1960s, namely, the twin myths of racial democracy and racial purity, shaped the lived experience of race in both places. Incorporated into public policy, they shaped the way the state codified racial categories and dictated political possibilities for contesting racism. In this same period, though, developments were brewing that would challenge the comparative consensus. Hoping to find clues to help prevent the reoccurrence of World War II’s terrible bloodshed, UNESCO, beginning in the early 1950s, launched its famous series of studies of Brazilian racial harmony.

Researchers funded by UNESCO and the generation of revisionists that followed quickly on their heels began to erode the basic elements of the United States–Brazil comparison on the Brazil side. They demolished the myth of the friendly master and showed that racism did indeed structure social relations in Brazil. Some of this revisionist work headed in the direction of a transnational perspective by arguing that national settings were less important in determining the experience of slavery than crop, plantation size, gender, and so on. Some simply flipped the comparison to argue that Brazilian slavery was worse than those of other imperial or national units, contributing little to a view of transnational connections. Yet even these, by cracking the idea that Afro-Brazilians had been thoroughly embraced and assimilated, opened a space for others to investigate African cultural continuities and thus develop the transnational idea of the African diaspora. This idea finally gained ground, supported ideologically by the struggle against colonialism in Portuguese Africa and elsewhere and for Black Power in North America, and methodologically by the innovations of E. P. Thompson and other practitioners of social and cultural history.⁶⁹ In the United States, related political and scholarly currents produced sharp challenges to those parts of North American history that underlay the U.S. side of the comparison.⁷⁰

The counterposed notions of stark U.S. racial hatred and subtle, harmonious

Brazilian mixture ought to have been withering on the vine. Yet comparative studies of race in the United States and Brazil continued to reach back to time-honored traditions. In one of the most widely read revisionist contributions, U.S. scholar Carl Degler pointed out that racial definitions were dissimilar in the United States and Brazil. His insight turned on the axis of the mulatto, who would invariably be classified as Negro in the United States, but in Brazil might have recourse to an “escape hatch” of social mobility.⁷¹

Degler’s admirable strides toward the understanding of race as a social construction were hobbled by his retention of the assumptions of the waning era of consensus history, namely, the exceptionalist search to explain the “apparent uniqueness of the United States” in categorizing mulattoes as black.⁷² The comparative frames Degler applied proved well suited to the defense of American exceptionalism. Degler concluded that the units of his analysis were one “dynamic, competitive, Protestant, socially mobile society and one that was stable, traditional, hierarchical, and Catholic.”⁷³ Could there be clearer evidence of the opportunities comparative scholarship offers to reify national character? While not a direct citation, this astonishing overgeneralization essentially recapitulates the Teddy Roosevelt–Oliveira Lima view of conflictual progress versus harmonious stagnation, wound through comparative historian of slavery Frank Tannenbaum’s 1940s importation of Gilberto Freyre’s comparative observations made as a youth in 1920s New York.⁷⁴ The net’s knots multiply and tighten.

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At the turn to the twenty-first century, the comparison has shifted again. In the wake of the U.S. civil rights movement and Brazil’s *Movimento Negro Unificado*, or Unified Black Movement (both widely, and wrongly, seen as over), observers are more likely to portray Brazil as the country where racism reigns and the United States as the place to look for guidance in its contestation. In line with social historical and Africana studies perspectives, comparativists tend to focus now on black subjects rather than white, admiring African Americans’ “proclivity to mobilize” and bemoaning Afro-Brazilians’ “lack of racial militancy and assertiveness.”⁷⁵

This update of the United States–Brazil contrast is misleading. Afro-Brazilians have undeniably been agents of their own—and their broader society’s—transformation, as historians able to see resistance outside the narrowest formulations of “the political” have solidly documented.⁷⁶ In addition, the U.S. civil rights movement has suffered an enormous backlash that has sharply constrained its achievements, which this flip in perspective neatly elides. Finally, as usual, the comparison erases difference within national groups of Afro-descendants and similarities across transnational formations, recycling a familiar set of national characteristics. In only slightly modified terms it lauds proactive, practical, progressive North Americans

and chides South American laggards, providing yet another opportunity to reprise U.S. national superiority. Under its breath, this comparison whispers a twisted congratulation to North American whites for the brutally explicit form of their racism. This ostensibly antiracist, proactivist comparison, then, moves contrary to its proponents' good intentions. As the contrast of progress and stagnation constitutes a critical part of the sense of national self in both places and an alibi for state policies that preserve social hierarchies, this stance feeds deep-set currents of nationalism and racism.⁷⁷

Underlying contemporary comparisons of the United States and Brazil is a continued sense that Brazil is, to borrow an *Animal Farm* sort of paraphrase, almost as unique as the United States. A whiff of North American noblesse oblige wafts around scholarly justifications of study of Brazil as a "puzzle," a "conundrum," "peculiar," "deceptive," or possessed of a uniquely "elaborate" racial ideology—the "conventional wisdom in sociological studies," charges sociologist Denise Ferreira da Silva (as a Brazilian expatriate, a transnational figure in her own right).⁷⁸ Such exceptionalisms—*elaborate* is related to *labyrinth* etymologically and shares its connotations of convoluted mystery—continue to marvel at a familiar Brazilian exotic. They forget that every society in the Americas (or anywhere else, for that matter) structures social relations along shifting lines of class, ethnicity, and gender, as anthropologist Teresa Caldeira points out. "In this sense, Brazil is not even peculiar . . . and does not constitute any special case of incompleteness," she scolds, underlining the link between Orientalist exceptionalism and notions of (Afro-)Brazilian "lack."⁷⁹ For U.S. audiences, the suggestion of legibility at home and confusion abroad stands as the cornerstone of a contemporary Orientalism, the handmaiden to American exceptionalism. The notion of Brazil's national uniqueness stokes the coals of nationalism in the abstract and fortifies U.S. nationalism in particular, given the mutually constitutive connections linking U.S. and Brazilian national ideologies.

Scholars who would rather not feed this beast might reconsider the comparative gestures that have become almost second nature. Perhaps it is time to call a moratorium on comparative study. Instead, students of race in the United States and Brazil, or the Americas broadly, might formulate analyses in related and global perspective, honoring the debt the transnational turn owes to critical struggles against colonialism. Some already are, to excellent effect.⁸⁰ For tracing the genealogy of new and not-so-new transnational methods to their anticolonial historiographic context reveals a theoretical imperative. It is the charge to illuminate the complex, global network of power-inflected relations that enmesh our world, including those connections generated by academic engagement and observation. For scholars committed to this radical legacy, comparison serves as a better subject than method.

Notes

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1. More traditional forums hosting such calls include Eric Foner, "American Freedom in a Global Age," *American Historical Review* 106 (2001): 1–16; Thomas Bender, *La Pietra Report: Project on Internationalizing the Study of American History* (New York: Organization of American Historians, 2000); Thomas Bender, ed., *Rethinking American History in a Global Age* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002); several *Journal of American History* special issues in 1999; and the *American Historical Review* 96 (1991).
2. On the problems posed by the terms *colonial*, *anticolonial*, and *postcolonial*, see Anne McClintock, *Imperial Leather: Race, Gender, and Sexuality in the Colonial Conquest* (New York: Routledge, 1995), 9–17; and Ann Laura Stoler, "Tense and Tender Ties: The Politics of Comparison in North American History and (Post) Colonial Studies," *Journal of American History* 88 (2001), www.historycooperative.org/journals/jah/88.3/stoler.html, par. 2. For purposes of this essay, I use *anticolonial* and *postcolonial* as rough equivalents to identify thinkers who have resisted North Atlantic colonialism throughout the twentieth century.
3. Thanks to Ian Fletcher for a wonderful reformulation of this point.
4. David Thelen, "The Nation and Beyond: Transnational Perspectives on United States History," *Journal of American History* 86 (1999): 965. See also Federico Neiburg and Marcio Goldman, "Anthropology and Politics in Studies of National Character," *Cultural Anthropology*, no. 13 (1998): 56–81, citing Gregory Bateson and Margaret Mead, *Balinese Character: A Photographic Analysis* (New York: New York Academy of Sciences, 1942); and Dante Moreira Leite, *O caráter nacional brasileiro: História de uma ideologia (Brazilian National Character: History of an Ideology)*, 5th ed. (São Paulo: Editora Ática, 1992). Thelen writes to soothe concerns that transnational methods will overlook nations' potency. Such concerns are articulated by Michael McGerr, "The Price of the New Transnational History," *American Historical Review* 96 (1991): 1056–67; and George M. Frederickson, "From Exceptionalism to Variability: Recent Developments in Cross-National Comparative History," *Journal of American History* 82 (1995): 587–604.
5. Robin D. G. Kelley, "'But a Local Phase of a World Problem': Black History's Global Vision, 1883–1950," *Journal of American History* 86 (1999): 1045–77; Stoler, "Tense and Tender Ties," par. 48; Sidney Mintz, "The Localization of Anthropological Practice: From Area Studies to Transnationalism," *Critique of Anthropology* 18 (1998): 117–33; and Michelle A. Stephens, "Black Transnationalism and the Politics of National Identity: West Indian Intellectuals in Harlem in the Age of War and Revolution," *American Quarterly* 50 (1998): 592–608.
6. Frederick Cooper, "Race, Ideology, and the Perils of Comparative History," *American Historical Review* (1996): 1135. Here Cooper is discussing "the history of white supremacy and black liberation," a significant branch of anticolonial struggle, and a more than metonymic gesture toward the whole. See also Cooper, "What Is the Concept of Globalization Good For? An African Historian's Perspective," *African Affairs* 100 (2001): 189–213.

7. In the Americas, this literature is deeply indebted to the work of scholars of the African diaspora. See W. E. B. Du Bois, *Black Reconstruction: An Essay toward a History of the Part Which Black Folk Played in the Attempt to Reconstruct Democracy in America, 1860–1880* (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1935); Eric Eustace Williams, *Capitalism and Slavery* (1944; Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1994); C. L. R. James, *The Black Jacobins: Toussaint L'Ouverture and the San Domingo Revolution* (New York: Dial, 1938). See also Robin D. G. Kelley, "A Poetics of Anticolonialism," *Monthly Review* 51 (1999), 1–21; Kelley, "But a Local Phase"; Kelley and Tiffany Ruby Patterson, "Unfinished Migrations: Reflections on the African Diaspora and the Making of the Modern World," *African Studies Review*, no. 43 (2000): 11–45; and Stephens, "Black Transnationalism."

Diaspora studies remains a site of some of the most imaginative and innovative transnational work. I have recently found especially delightful Peter Linebaugh and Marcus Rediker, *The Many-Headed Hydra: Sailors, Slaves, Commoners, and the Hidden History of the Revolutionary Atlantic* (Boston: Beacon, 2000); Brent Hayes Edwards, *The Practice of Diaspora: Literature, Translation, and the Rise of Black Internationalism* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2003); and Edwards, "Rendez-Vous in Rhythm," *Connect* 1 (2000): 182–90.
8. Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks* (New York: Grove, 1967).
9. Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (London: Routledge, 1994), 44; Henry Louis Gates Jr., "Critical Fanonism," *Critical Inquiry* 17 (1991): 457–70.
10. Thomas J. Csordas, "Introduction: The Body as Representation and Being-in-the-World," in *Embodiment and Experience: The Existential Ground of Culture and Self*, ed. Csordas (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 1–24. Csordas cites Terence Turner, "Bodies and Anti-bodies: Flesh and Fetish in Contemporary Social Theory," chap. 1 in the same volume, and Pierre Bourdieu, *Homo Academicus*, trans. Peter Collier (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1988). A longer view would also remember poststructuralism's debt to surrealism, another metropolitan intellectual tradition indebted to colonial encounters. See Kelley, "A Poetics of Anticolonialism"; and Brent Hayes Edwards, "The Ethnics of Surrealism," *Transition* 78 (1999): 123–34.
11. Chela Sandoval, *Methodology of the Oppressed* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000), 126; Diana Fuss, "Interior Colonies: Frantz Fanon and the Politics of Identification," *Diacritics* 24 (1994): 20–42.
12. Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, trans. Robert Hurley (New York: Pantheon, 1978); Ann Laura Stoler, *Race and the Education of Desire: Foucault's "History of Sexuality" and the Colonial Order of Things* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1995).
13. Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham, "African-American Women's History and the Metalanguage of Race," *Signs* 17 (1992): 251–74; Elsa Barkley Brown, "African-American Women's Quilting: A Framework for Conceptualizing and Teaching African-American Women's History," *Signs* 14 (1989): 921–29.
14. Frederick Cooper and Ann Laura Stoler, *Tensions of Empire: Colonial Cultures in a Bourgeois World* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 1. This claim resonates intentionally with overtones of Fanon; see also Stoler, *Race and the Education of Desire*.
15. Kelley, "But a Local Phase," 1062–63, placing Cedric Robinson in the tradition of Said. Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage, 1978); see also Micaela di Leonardo, *Exotics at Home: Anthropologies, Others, American Modernity* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998).

16. For example, see Mauricio Tenorio-Trillo, “Stereophonic Scientific Modernisms: Social Science between Mexico and the United States, 1880s-1930s,” *Journal of American History* 86 (1999): 1156–87; Olivia Gomes da Cunha, “‘Apprentices, Anthropologists, and Specialized Travelers’: Anthropology, ‘Race,’ and Nation in Brazil and Cuba during the 1940s” (forthcoming); Richard White, “The Nationalization of Nature,” *Journal of American History* 86 (1999): 976–86. Recognizing transnational flow as a conversation among several parties can help scholars avoid charting the vectors of “influence” flowing in a single direction (from the United States to the rest of the world), which even recent, careful observers continue to do. Matthew Guterl, for example, describes Manhattan as “the entrepôt from which the growing obsession with whiteness and blackness was exported, shipped around the world as if it were steel, or art, or the techniques of scientific management.” Matthew Pratt Guterl, *The Color of Race in America, 1900–1940* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001), 11.
17. Ian Tyrrell, “American Exceptionalism in an Age of International History,” *American Historical Review* 96 (1991): 1035. On the roots of comparative history in wartime studies of national character, see Neiburg and Goldman, “Anthropology and Politics.”
18. Ian Tyrrell, “Making Nations/Making States: American Historians in the Context of Empire,” *Journal of American History* 86 (1999): 1033; Cooper, “The Perils of Comparative History.” See also Amy Kaplan, “‘Left Alone with America’: The Absence of Empire in the Study of American Culture,” in *Cultures of United States Imperialism*, ed. Kaplan and Donald Pease (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1993), 3–21; Robert Gregg, *Inside Out, Outside In: Essays in Comparative History* (New York: St. Martin’s, 2000); Mary L. Dudziak, *Cold War Civil Rights: Race and the Image of American Democracy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000); and Stoler, “Tense and Tender Ties.” See also George Reid Andrews, “Comparing the Comparers: White Supremacy in the United States and South Africa,” *Journal of Social History* 20 (1987): 585–99; and Raymond Grew, “The Comparative Weakness of American History,” *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 16 (1985): 87–101. Stoler interprets Grew as critiquing exceptionalist comparative history (“Tense and Tender Ties,” par. 45); I am not sure Grew is being critical here.
19. Jacques Derrida, “‘Des Tours de Babel,’” *Semeia* 54 (1991): 3–34; Walter Benjamin, “The Task of the Translator: An Introduction to the Translation of Baudelaire’s *Tableaux parisiens*,” in *Illuminations*, ed. Hannah Arendt, trans. Harry Zohn (New York: Schocken, 1969), 69–82; Lydia Liu, *Tokens of Exchange: The Problem of Translation in Global Circulations* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1999).
20. The French historian and advocate of comparative history Marc Bloch also placed comparativists and translators in proximate relation. He hoped that history would emulate linguistics’ adoption of comparative methods. See Marc Bloch, “Pour une histoire comparée des sociétés européennes” (“Toward a comparative history of European society”), *Revue de synthèse historique (Review of Historical Synthesis)* 46 (1928): 15–50; William H. Sewell Jr., “Marc Bloch and the Logic of Comparative History,” *History and Theory* 6 (1967): 208–18; Alette Olin Hill and Boyd H. Hill Jr., “Marc Bloch and Comparative History,” *American Historical Review* 85 (1980): 828–46; William H. Sewell Jr. and Sylvia L. Thrupp, “Marc Bloch and Comparative History: Comments,” *American Historical Review* 85 (1980): 847–53.
21. Liu, introduction to *Tokens of Exchange*, 7. See also Teresa P. Caldeira, *City of Walls: Crime, Segregation, and Citizenship in São Paulo* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), 9.

22. Ann Stoler has also suggested that scholars “might treat comparison, not as a methodological problem, but as a historical object,” but she then pulls her punches, implying that comparison buttressed power relations only during formal colonial regimes and offering an ample range of methodological prescriptions. She is content either “to do better comparisons, to pursue the politics and history of comparison, *or* to reach for connections that go beyond comparison altogether. These are not mutually exclusive, but they do place the analytic emphasis on different historiographic zones and archival places.” Stoler, “Tense and Tender Ties,” par. 92 (emphasis added). While Stoler may be correct that some historiographies and topics better support a focus on connections than others, might such an admission indulge the reluctance to imagine ways of engaging historical sources that can uncover those connections?
23. George Reid Andrews, “Desigualdade racial no Brasil e nos Estados Unidos: Uma comparação estatística” (“Racial Inequality in Brazil and the United States: A Statistical Comparison”), *Estudos Afro-Asiáticos (Afro-Asiatic Studies)* 22 (1992): 47.
24. As Robin Kelley has pointed out to me, the focus on race and nation in United States–Brazil comparisons stands in distinction to the transatlantic points of comparison favored by scholars seeking to shed light on issues of class in the United States. Robert Gregg also makes this point in *Inside Out*, 6.
25. David H. P. Maybury-Lewis, “Introduction to the Paperback Edition,” in *The Masters and the Slaves: A Study in the Development of Brazilian Civilization* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986), lxxviii. Other students of this tradition have also noted that comparisons allow observers to find whatever it is they seek. See Leslie Rout, “Sleight of Hand: Brazilian and American Authors Manipulate the Brazilian Racial Situation, 1910–1951,” *Americas* 29 (1973): 471–88; Caldeira, *City of Walls*; and Mario Carelli, “Sottisier raisonné des stéréotypes franco-brésiliens” (“Analytic Catalogue of Foolish Franco-Brazilian Stereotypes”), in *France-Brésil: Bilan pour une relance (France-Brazil: Basis for a New Approach)*, ed. Carelli, Hervé Théry, and Alain Zantman (Paris: Éditions Entente, 1987), 1–27, esp. 26.
26. The most prominent transatlantic national racial comparison, United States–South Africa, equally invested in constructing racial and national categories, bears this out. See Gregg, *Inside Out*, 3, 5.
27. Frederickson, “From Exceptionalism to Variability,” 587.
28. Sewell, “Marc Bloch,” 208.
29. On the comparative emphasis of abolitionists, see Celia Maria Marinho de Azevedo, *Abolitionism in the United States and Brazil: A Comparative Perspective* (New York: Garland, 1995); Marinho de Azevedo, “O abolicionismo transatlântico e a memória do paraíso racial brasileiro” (“Transatlantic Abolitionism and the Memory of Brazilian Racial Paradise”), *Estudos Afro-Asiáticos* 30 (1996): 151–62; Larissa Moreira Vianna, “As dimensões da cor: Um estudo do olhar norte-americano sobre as relações inter-étnicas, Rio de Janeiro, primeira metade do século XIX” (“The Dimensions of Color: A Study of the North American Gaze on Interethnic Relations, Rio de Janeiro, Early Nineteenth Century”) (Master’s thesis, Universidade Federal Fluminense, 1998); Luis Costa Lima, “Ah, a doçura brasileira” (“Ah, Brazilian Sweetness”), in *Cultura, substantivo plural: Ciência política, história, filosofia, antropologia, artes, literatura (Culture, Plural Noun: Science, Politics, History, Philosophy, Art, Literature)*, ed. Maria de Paiva, Maria Ester Moreira, and Costa Lima (Rio de Janeiro: Centro Cultural Banco do Brasil, 1996), 147–58; and Rout, “Sleight

- of Hand.” On eugenicists, see Nancy Stepan, *The Hour of Eugenics: Race, Gender, and Nation in Latin America* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991), 44–45; Dain Borges, “‘Puffy, Ugly, Slothful, and Inert’: Degeneration in Brazilian Social Thought, 1880–1940,” *Journal of Latin American Studies* 25 (1993): 235–56; Mario Carelli, “Deuxième partie: Interactions culturelles franco-brésiliennes” (“Second Part: Franco-Brazilian Cultural Interactions”), in Carelli, Théry, and Zantman, *France-Brésil*, 140.
30. On eighteenth- and nineteenth-century comparisons, see Marinho de Azevedo, *Abolitionism*; Vianna, “Dimensões da cor”; Costa Lima, “Doçura brasileira”; and Rout, “Sleight of Hand.”
- Scholarly consensus now admits the brutality of Brazilian slavery. See Emília Viotti da Costa, *The Brazilian Empire: Myths and Histories* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985); Mary C. Karasch, *Slave Life in Rio De Janeiro, 1808–1850* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1987); Kátia M. de Queirós Mattoso, *To Be a Slave in Brazil, 1550–1888*, trans. Arthur Goldhammer (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1986); João José Reis and Eduardo da Silva, *Negociação e conflito: A resistência negra no Brasil escravista* (São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 1989); Stuart B. Schwartz, *Slaves, Peasants, and Rebels: Reconsidering Brazilian Slavery* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1992); Barbara Weinstein, “The Decline of the Progressive Planter and the Rise of Subaltern Agency: Shifting Narratives of Slave Emancipation in Brazil,” in *Reclaiming the Political in Latin American History*, ed. Gilbert Joseph (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2001), 81–101.
31. James Bryce, *South America: Observations and Impressions* (New York: Macmillan, 1912), 419–21. See discussions of Bryce in Thomas E. Skidmore, *Black into White: Race and Nationality in Brazilian Thought* (1974; Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1993), 147; and E. Franklin Frazier, “Some Aspects of Race Relations in Brazil,” *Phylon* 3 (1942): 249, 287–95.
32. Stoler, “Tense and Tender Ties,” par. 87.
33. Gilberto Amado, *Sabor do Brasil (Flavor of Brazil)* (Rio de Janeiro: Edições O Cruzeiro, 1953), 46, cited in Skidmore, *Black into White*, 259 n. 7; “Monumento a Mãe Preta: Foi unanimemente assinado pela Comissão de Finanças da Camara” (“Monument to the Black Mother: Was Unanimously Signed by the Finance Commission in the Legislature”), *A Notícia (News)*, November 6, 1926, 1; “Monumento á Mãe Preta: Luminoso parecer do deputado Gilberto Amado” (“Monument to the Black Mother: Brilliant Speech of the Deputy Gilberto Amado”), *A Notícia*, November 8, 1926, 1; “A nossa victoria de 28 de Setembro” (“Our Victory of September 28”), *O Clarim d’Alvorada (The Dawn Bugle)*, January 6, 1929, 1–2; Amado, *Mocidade no Rio e primeira viagem à Europa (Youth in Rio and First Visit to Europe)* (Rio de Janeiro: J. Olympio, 1956). On this monument movement, see Micol Seigel, “Mães pretas, filhos cidadãos” (“Black Mothers, Citizen Sons”), in *Quase-Cidadão: Histórias e antropologias da pós-emancipação no Brasil (Almost Citizens: Histories and Anthropologies of the Post-emancipation Period in Brazil)*, ed. Flávio dos Santos Gomes and Olívia Gomes da Cunha (forthcoming).
34. Skidmore, *Black into White*; Leite, *O caráter nacional brasileiro*; Stepan, *The Hour of Eugenics*; Giralda Seyfirth, “Construindo a nação: Hierarquias raciais e o papel do racismo na política de imigração e colonização” (“Constructing the Nation: Racial Hierarchies and the Role of Racism in Immigration and Colonization Policy”), in *Raça, ciência e sociedade (Race, Science, and Society)*, ed. Marcos Chor Maio and Ricardo Ventura Santos (Rio de Janeiro: Centro Cultural Banco do Brasil e Editora FIOCRUZ, 1996), 41–58; Nísia

- Trinidade Lima and Gilberto Hochman, “Condenado pela raça, absolvido pela medicina: O Brasil descoberto pelo movimento sanitaria da primeira república” (“Condemned by Race, Absolved by Medicine: Brazil Discovered by the Sanitarist Movement in the First Republic”), in Chor Maio and Ventura Santos, *Raça, ciência e sociedade*, 23–40; Lilia Moritz Schwarcz, *O espetáculo das raças: Cientistas, instituições e questão racial no Brasil, 1870–1930* (*The Spectacle of the Races: Scientists, Institutions, and the Racial Question in Brazil, 1870–1930*) (São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 1993); Borges, “‘Puffy, Ugly, Slothful, and Inert’”; Schwarcz, *Retrato em branco e negro: Jornais, escravos e cidadãos em São Paulo no final do século XIX* (*Portrait in Black and White: Newspapers, Slaves, and Citizens in São Paulo in the Late Nineteenth Century*) (São Paulo: Editora Schwarcz, 1987); Sidney Chalhoub, *Cidade febril: Cortiços e epidemias na corte imperial* (*Feverish City: Tenements and Epidemics in the Imperial Court*) (São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 1996); Jeffrey D. Needell, “History, Race, and the State in the Thought of Oliveira Viana,” *Hispanic American Historical Review* 75 (1995): 1–30; and Sueann Caulfield, “Raça, sexo e casamento: Crimes sexuais no Rio de Janeiro, 1918–1940” (“Race, Sex, and Marriage: Sexual Crimes in Rio de Janeiro, 1918–1940”) *Afro-Ásia* 18 (1996): 125–64.
35. Bryce’s example can be multiplied for the many foreign comparers who set Brazil in implicit comparison to countries of supposedly greater Anglo-Saxon concentration, for example, Louis Agassiz, *Journey in Brazil* (Boston: Ticknor and Fields, 1868); Arthur Gobineau, *Essai sur l’inégalité des races humaines* (*Essay on the Inequality of Human Races*), 4th ed. (Paris: Didot Frères, 1853–55); Henry Thomas Buckle, *History of Civilization in England*, 2 vols. (London: J. W. Parker, 1857–1861); or José Maria Bello, *Ruy Barbosa e escritos diversos: Ensaios políticos e literários* (*Ruy Barbosa and Other Writings: Political and Literary Essays*) (Rio de Janeiro: Livraria Castilho, 1918). On Buckle and Bello, see Skidmore, *Black into White*, 232 n. 76. A later such contribution comes from F. Garcia-Calderon, *Latin America: Its Rise and Progress*, trans. Bernard Miall (New York: C. Scribner, 1924), a classic view of Brazilian racial mixture as “unfortunate” and accounting for Brazilian “backwardness.” See comments on Garcia-Calderon in J. K. Eads, “The Negro in Brazil,” *Journal of Negro History* 21 (1936): 365–75, esp. 374.
 36. Skidmore, *Black into White*; see also George Reid Andrews, “Brazilian Racial Democracy, 1900–90: An American Counterpoint,” *Journal of Contemporary History* 31 (1996): 483–507; Jeffrey D. Needell, “Identity, Race, Gender, and Modernity in the Origins of Gilberto Freyre’s *Oeuvre*,” *American Historical Review* 10 (1995): 51–77.
 37. Sir Harry H. Johnston, *The Backward Peoples and Our Relations with Them* (London: H. Milford Oxford University Press, 1920), cited in Rout, “Sleight of Hand,” 471, 475 n. 18. See also Johnston, *The Negro in the New World* (London: Methuen, 1910).
 38. Emily S. Rosenberg, ed., *World War I and the Growth of United States Predominance in Latin America* (New York: Garland, 1987), esp. Rosenberg, “Anglo-American Rivalry in Brazil,” 77–111; Rosenberg, *Spreading the American Dream: American Economic and Cultural Expansion, 1890–1945* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1982).
 39. Theodore Roosevelt, *Through the Brazilian Wilderness* (New York: Scribner’s, 1914), 59.
 40. Roosevelt, “Brazil and the Negro,” *Outlook*, February 2, 1914, 411. On Roosevelt, see Gary Gerstle, “Theodore Roosevelt and the Divided Character of American Nationalism,” *Journal of American History* 86 (1999): 1280–1307; Gail Bederman, *Manliness and Civilization: A Cultural History of Gender and Race in the United States, 1880–1917* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995); Thomas G. Dyer, *Theodore Roosevelt and the Idea of Race* (Baton

- Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1980); Frank Ninkovich, "Theodore Roosevelt: Civilization as Ideology," *Diplomatic History* 10 (1986): 221–45.
41. Percy Alvin Martin, introduction to *The Evolution of Brazil Compared with That of Spanish and Anglo-Saxon America*, by Manoel de Oliveira Lima (New York: Russell and Russell, 1966); Gilberto Freyre, *Tempo de aprendiz: Artigos publicados em jornais na adolescência e na primeira mocidade do autor, 1918–1926* (*Apprentice Time: Newspaper Articles Published in the Author's Adolescence and Early Youth, 1918–1926*), ed. José Antônio Gonsalves de Mello (São Paulo: Instituição Brasileira de Difusão Cultural e INL, 1979); Needell, "Identity, Race, Gender," 55; and Skidmore, *Black into White*, 71.
 42. Manuel de Oliveira Lima, *Nos Estados Unidos: Impressões políticas e sociais* (*In the United States: Political and Social Impressions*) (Leipzig: Brockhaus, 1899). For a discussion, see Skidmore, *Black into White*, 71–73. Gail Triner claims that in this work, Oliveira Lima "offered arguments similar to Freyre," but much earlier. Triner, "Race, with or without Color? Reconciling Brazilian Historiography," *Estudios interdisciplinarios de America Latina y el Caribe* 10 (1999), 121–40; www.tau.ac.il/eial/X_1/triner.html, n. 19.
 43. Oliveira Lima, *The Evolution of Brazil*, 39–40. The shape of this comparison, plus the words *fusion* and *threatened*, suggest Oliveira Lima as Roosevelt's source. Roosevelt might also have been quoting José Veríssimo, whose similar sentiment is cited in Skidmore, *Black into White*, 76, or someone else entirely.
 44. Oliveira Lima, *The Evolution of Brazil*, 122.
 45. Skidmore, *Black into White*, 68, 241 n. 76, citing the *Correio da Manhã* (*Morning Mail*) of April 7, 1914.
 46. David J. Hellwig's wonderful *African-American Reflections on Brazil's Racial Paradise* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1992), 23–34, reprints three mentions of Roosevelt: "Brazil vs. United States," *Chicago Defender*, February 28, 1914; "Brazil and the Black Race," *Philadelphia Tribune*, March 14, 1914; and W. E. B. Du Bois, "Brazil," *Crisis*, April 1914, 286–87.
 47. Du Bois, "Brazil."
 48. Bryce, *South America*, 479–80, cited in W. E. B. Du Bois, *The Negro* (New York: Henry Holt, 1915), 165. E. Franklin Frazier would also engage Bryce; see Frazier, "Some Aspects of Race Relations in Brazil."
 49. R. W. Merguson, "Glimpses of Brazil," *Crisis*, November 1915, 38–43.
 50. Jessie Faucet and Cezar Pinto, "The Emancipator of Brazil," *Crisis*, March 1921, 208–9.
 51. David Hellwig reports that Nash was a former executive secretary of the NAACP by 1926. Hellwig, "Racial Paradise or Run-Around? Afro–North American Views of Race in Brazil," *American Studies* 31 (1990): 51; Roy Nash, *The Conquest of Brazil* (1926; New York: AMS, 1969), 166.
 52. Nash was scholarly in his citations (Du Bois, Franz Boas) and terms ("cephalic indices"); the work was received in such crossover venues as Mary White Ovington's "Book Chat" column in the *New Amsterdam News*, August 18, 1926, 20. The Portuguese edition is Roy Nash, *A conquista do Brasil* (*The Conquest of Brazil*), trans. Moacir N. Vasconcelos (São Paulo: Companhia Editora Nacional, 1939).
 53. Nash, *The Conquest of Brazil*.
 54. Edward Byron Reuter, *The Mulatto in the United States, Including a Study of the Rôle of Mixed-Blood Races throughout the World* (New York: Haskell House, 1969). In the preface, he thanks anonymous "prominent Negroes" whom he consulted; cites the *Defender's*

- January 15, 1916, article on Bahia on 36 n. 65; cites African American scholar Edward Wilmot Blyden approvingly on 127; and disagrees with Du Bois by name on the question of coerced sex between slave-owning men and enslaved women, 144 n. 49. See also Earnest Sevier Cox, *White America* (Richmond, VA: White America Society, 1923); Cox, *The South's Part in Mongrelizing the Nation* (Richmond, VA: White America Society, 1926); Alexander Harvey Shannon, *The Racial Integrity of the American Negro* (n.p.: Smith and Lamar, 1907); and Alfred Holt Stone and Walter Francis Willcox, *Studies in the American Race Problem* (New York: Negro Universities Press, 1969).
55. Matthew Guterl also suggests that prominent holders of these antagonistic viewpoints shared elite educations and aristocratic expectations and often held each other in respect. Guterl, *The Color of Race*, 144.
 56. Verena Stolcke, "Brasil: Uma nação vista através da vidraça da raça," *Revista de cultura brasileira* 1 (1998): 216. See also the cautions in Denise Ferreira da Silva, "Facts of Blackness: Brazil Is Not (Quite) the United States. . . . And Racial Politics in Brazil?" *Social Identities* 4 (1998): 201–34, esp. 207.
 57. Guterl, *The Color of Race*, 143, 149. Guterl introduces Stoddard's term *bi-racialism* in *The Color of Race*, 6, citing Lothrop Stoddard, *Re-forging America: The Story of Our Nationhood* (New York: Scribner's, 1927).
 58. *Ibid.*; Grace Elizabeth Hale, *Making Whiteness: The Culture of Segregation in the South, 1890–1940* (New York: Pantheon, 1998); Matthew Frye Jacobson, *Whiteness of a Different Color: European Immigrants and the Alchemy of Race* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1998); David R. Roediger, *The Wages of Whiteness: Race and the Making of the American Working Class* (London: Verso, 1991); for a later periodization of this change after World War II, see Karen Sacks Brodtkin, "How Did Jews Become White Folks?" in *Race*, ed. Steven Gregory and Roger Sanjek (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1994); and Brodtkin, *How Jews Became White Folks and What That Says about Race in America* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1998).
 59. W. E. B. Du Bois, "The Negro Race in the United States of America," in *Papers on Inter-racial Problems, Communicated to the First Universal Races Congress, Held at the University of London, July 26–29, 1911*, ed. Gustav Spiller (London: P. S. King, World's Peace Foundation, 1911), 348–64. This paper about the United States was comparative in both its presentation on the same panel as and publication alongside Brazilian anthropologist Jean Baptiste de Lacerda's paper, "The Metis, or Half-Breeds, of Brazil," *Papers on Inter-racial Problems*, 377–82. For another early acknowledgment of mixing within the category *Negro*, see Joel Augustus Rogers, *As Nature Leads: An Informal Discussion of the Reason Why Negro and Caucasian Are Mixing in Spite of Opposition* (1919; Baltimore, MD: Black Classic Press, 1987); and Rogers, *Nature Knows No Color-Line: Research into the Negro Ancestry in the White Race by J. A. Rogers*, 3rd ed. (St. Petersburg, FL: Helga M. Rogers, 1980). For Du Bois's transnational imagination, see Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk* (Chicago: A. C. McClurg, 1903); and Du Bois, *Black Reconstruction*; on his evolving views of racism in Brazil, see Hellwig, "Racial Paradise or Run-Around?"
 60. Stephens, "Black Transnationalism"; Kelley, "But a Local Phase"; Patrick Rael, *Black Identity and Black Protest in the Antebellum North* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002).

61. Raymundo Nina Rodrigues, *Os africanos no Brasil (The Africans in Brazil)* (São Paulo: Companhia Editora Nacional, 1932); Nina Rodrigues, *L'animisme fétichiste de nègres de Bahia (The Fetishistic Animism of Bahian Blacks)* (Bahia: Brésil Reis, 1900); Gilberto Freyre and Rodrigues de Carvalho, eds., *Novos estudos afro-brasileiros segundo tomo: Trabalhos apresentados ao 1. congresso afro-brasileiro do Recife (New Afro-Brazilian Studies, Vol. II: Works Presented at the First Afro-Brazilian Conference in Recife)*, vol. 2 (Rio de Janeiro: Civilização Brasileira, 1937); Oliveira Vianna, *Raça e assimilação: Os problemas da raça; Os problemas da assimilação (Race and Assimilation: Problems of Race; Problems of Assimilation)* (São Paulo: Companhia Editora Nacional, 1932); Oliveira Vianna, *Ensaio inédito (Unpublished Essays)* (Campinas: Editora da Unicamp, 1991); Oliveira Vianna, *Evolução do povo brasileiro (Evolution of the Brazilian People)*, 2nd ed. (São Paulo: Companhia Editora Nacional, 1933); Oliveira Vianna, *Problemas de política objectiva (Problems in Objective Politics)* (São Paulo: Companhia Editora Nacional, 1930). On Oliveira Vianna and other racial “scientists,” see Leite, *O caráter nacional brasileiro*; João Quartim de Moraes and Elide Rugai Bastos, *O pensamento de Oliveira Vianna (The Thought of Oliveira Vianna)* (Campinas: Editora da Unicamp, 1993); Needell, “History, Race, and the State”; Caulfield, “Raça, sexo e casamento”; Stepan, *The Hour of Eugenics*; Seyfirth, “Construindo a nação.” Key early Afro-Brazilianist works include Manuel Querino, *Costumes africanos no Brasil (African customs in Brazil)* (Rio de Janeiro: Civilização Brasileira, 1938); Edison Carneiro, *Religiões negras: Notas de etnografia religiosa (Black Religions: Notes on Religious Ethnography)* (Rio de Janeiro: Civilização Brasileira, 1936); Mário de Andrade, *Ensaio sobre musica brasileira (Essay on Brazilian Music)* (São Paulo: Brasil I. Chiarato e Cia., 1928); de Andrade, *Compêndio de historia da música (Compendium of the History of Music)* (São Paulo: Brasil I. Chiarato e Cia., 1959); de Andrade, “A calunga dos Maracatús” (“The Calunga of the Maracatús”), in *Estudos afro-brasileiros: Trabalhos apresentados ao 10 Congresso afro-brasileiro reunido no Recife em 1934*, ed. Gilberto Freyre (Rio de Janeiro: Ariel, 1935).
62. Pattee to Schomburg, April 27, 1937, Schomburg papers, microfilm collection, reel 5, 132. See also Pattee to Schomburg, February 14, 1937; June 1, 1937; April 1, 1938; “List of Books on Brazil in the 125th Street Branch,” all in Schomburg papers, microfilm collection, reel 5, 132–38. Marcos Chor Maio notes Ramos’s contact “with the North American academic scenario of the ’30s and ’40s, through courses, lectures, correspondence with [North] American scholars [in English in the original] (Melville Herskovits, Lewis Hanke, Donald Pierson, Ruth Landes, T. L. Smith and others), book publication, articles in journals and anthologies and reviews [or summaries] of their work in North American scientific publications.” Chor Maio, “O diálogo entre Arthur Ramos e Costa Pinto: Dos estudos afro-brasileiros à ‘sociologização da antropologia’” (“The dialogue between Arthur Ramos and Costa Pinto: From Afro-Brazilian Studies to the ‘Socialization of Anthropology’”), in *Ideias de modernidade e sociologia no Brasil: Ensaio sobre Luiz de Aguiar Costa Pinto (Ideas of Modernity and Sociology in Brazil: Essays on Luiz de Aguiar Costa Pinto)*, ed. Chor Maio and Gláucia Villas Bôas (Rio de Janeiro: Editora da Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Sul, 1999), 210–11. See also Mark Healy, “‘The Sweet Matriarchy of Bahia’: Ruth Landes’ Ethnography of Race and Gender,” *Dipositio/n* 50 (2000): 87–116.
63. This history explains some of diaspora studies’ underemphasis on the Pacific, noted in Kelley and Patterson, “Unfinished Migrations.”
64. J. Lorand Matory, “The English Professors of Brazil: On the Diasporic Roots of the Yoruba Nation,” *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 41 (1999): 72–103.

65. Melville Herskovits, *The Myth of the Negro Past* (1941; Boston: Beacon, 1990), 16–17, 91, 220–21; Herskovits, “Report of Field Work in Brazil, 1941–1942,” Melville J. Herskovits papers, series 35/6, box 20, folder 15 (“Rockefeller Foundation, 1930–1942”), Northwestern University Archives, Evanston, IL; Herskovits, “Pesquisas etnológicas na Bahia” (“Ethnologic Research in Bahia”), *Publicação do Museu da Bahia (Publication of the Museum of Bahia)* 3 (1943); Herskovits, “The Southernmost Outposts of New World Africanisms,” *American Anthropologist* 45 (1943): 495–510; Herskovits, “O negro do novo mundo como assunto para pesquisas científicas” (“The Negro in the New World as a Question for Scientific Research”), *Revista do Brasil (Journal of Brazil)* 4 (1949): 42–58; Herskovits, “O problema de raça no mundo moderno” (“The Problem of Race in the Modern World”), *Revista do Brasil* 4 (1949): 97–108; see also Herskovits’s colleague Lorenzo D. Turner, “Some Contacts of Brazilian Ex-slaves with Nigeria, West Africa,” *Journal of Negro History* 27 (1942): 55–67.
66. E. Franklin Frazier, “A Comparison of Negro-White Relations in Brazil and in the United States,” *Transactions of the New York Academy of Sciences*, series 2, 6 (1944): 251–69, reprinted in Frazier, *On Race Relations: Selected Writings*, ed. G. Franklin Edwards (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1968): 82–102, esp. 94.
67. Frazier, “Brazil Has No Race Problem,” *Common Sense*, November 1942, 363–65.
68. Needell, “Identity, Race, Gender”; Gomes da Cunha, “Gaining Intimacy: The Brazilian Racial Landscape and National Imagination in the U.S. South, 1937–1945,” in *Theories of the Americas: A Reader*, ed. George Yúdice (Oxford: Blackwell, forthcoming); Richard Morse, “Balancing Myth and Evidence: Freyre and Sérgio Buarque,” *Luso-Brazilian Review* 32 (1995): 47–57; Andrews, “Brazilian Racial Democracy, 1900–90,” 488; Thomas E. Skidmore, “Brazil’s American Illusion: From Don Pedro II to the Coup of 1964,” *Luso-Brazilian Review* 23 (1986): 77; Skidmore, *Black into White*, 274 n. 58; Skidmore, “Obituary: Gilberto Freyre (1900–1987),” *Hispanic American Historical Review* 68 (1988): 803–4; C. Vann Woodward, *American Counterpoint: Slavery and Racism in the North-South Dialogue* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1971), 66, 56; Maybury-Lewis, “Introduction to the Paperback Edition,” lxxxiv; Mota, *Ideologia da cultura brasileira*, 23; Luiz Antonio Santos, “E pernambuco falou para o mundo: O impacto de Gilberto Freyre na historiografia norte-americana, 1946–1971” (“And Pernambuco Spoke to the World: The Impact of Gilberto Freyre on North American Historiography, 1946–1971”), *Novos Estudos CEBRAP (New Studies CEBRAP)* (São Paulo) 18 (1987): 22–32; and Ricardo Araújo, *Guerra e paz: Casa-Grande e Senzala e a obra de Gilberto Freyre nos anos 30 (War and Peace: Casa-Grande e Senzala and Gilberto Freyre’s Oeuvre in the Thirties)* (Rio de Janeiro: Editora 34, 1994), 40, chap. 1. For elaboration of this argument, see Micol Seigel, *Zé Carioca Meets Jim Crow: Making Black and White in Brazil and the United States* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, forthcoming).
69. On UNESCO and revisionist studies, see da Costa, “The Myth of Racial Democracy,” chap. 9 in *The Brazilian Empire*; Roger Bastide, “The Present Status of Afro-American Research in Latin America,” in *Race and Ethnicity in Latin America*, ed. Jorge I. Domínguez (New York: Garland, 1994), 95–97; Skidmore, *Black into White*, 215–16; Marcos Chor Maio, “Costa Pinto e a crítica ao ‘Negro como espetáculo’” (“Costa Pinto and the Critique of the ‘Negro as Spectacle’”), introduction to Luiz De Aguiar Costa Pinto’s *O negro no Rio de Janeiro: Relações de raças numa sociedade em mudança (The Negro in Rio de Janeiro: Racial Relations in a Changing Society)* (1953; Rio de Janeiro: Editora UFRJ, 1998), 17–50;

- Chor Maio and Villas Bôas, *Ideais de modernidade e sociologia no Brasil*; Marcos Chor Maio, “A história do projeto Unesco: Estudos raciais e ciências sociais no Brasil” (“The History of the Unesco Project: Studies of Race and Social Science in Brazil”) (PhD diss., Instituto Universitário de Pesquisas do Rio de Janeiro, 1997); Robert W. Slenes, *Na senzala, uma flor: Esperanças e recordações na formação da família escrava; Brasil sudeste, século XIX* (*In the Slave Hut, a Flower: Hope and Memory in the Formation of the Slave Family, Southeast Brazil, Nineteenth Century*) (Rio de Janeiro: Coleção Histórias do Brasil, 1999), 54 n. 6, 60 n. 43 and n. 45, 61 n. 48; Sílvia Hunold Lara, “Blowin’ in the Wind: E. P. Thompson e a experiência negra no Brasil” (“Blowin’ in the Wind: E. P. Thompson and the Black Experience in Brazil”), *Projeto história (Project History)* (Departamento de História, PUC-SP) 12 (1995): 43–56.
70. James Baldwin, “Color and American Civilization,” in *Freedom Now! The Civil-Rights Struggle in America*, ed. Alan F. Westin (New York: Basic Books, 1964), 3–9; Baldwin, “The White Problem,” in *100 Years of Emancipation*, ed. Robert A. Goldwin and Harry V. Jaffa (Chicago: Rand McNally, 1964), 80–88; Baldwin, “On Being White and Other Lies,” *Essence*, April 14, 1984; and Ralph Ellison and John F. Callahan, *The Collected Essays of Ralph Ellison* (New York: Modern Library, 1995). On this tradition, see David R. Roediger, *Black on White: Black Writers on What It Means to Be White* (New York: Schocken, 1998).
 71. Carl N. Degler, *Neither Black nor White: Slavery and Race Relations in Brazil and the United States* (New York: Macmillan, 1971).
 72. Heidi Ardizzone, “Red Blooded Americans: Mulattoes and the Melting Pot in United States Racialist and Nationalist Discourse, 1890–1930” (PhD diss., University of Michigan, 1997). On page 9, Ardizzone calls Degler’s “one of the earliest and most influential” studies on mulattoes.
 73. Degler, *Neither Black nor White*, 248.
 74. Frank Tannenbaum, *Slave and Citizen: The Negro in the Americas* (New York: Knopf, 1946). On Tannenbaum and Freyre, see Schwartz, “Recent Trends in the Study of Brazilian Slavery,” in *Slaves, Peasants, Rebels*, 3; and John D. French, “The Missteps of Anti-imperialist Reason: Bourdieu, Wacquant, and Hanchard’s *Orpheus and Power*,” *Theory, Culture, and Society* 17 (2000): 107–28, esp. 124 n. 8.
 75. George M. Frederickson, “Race and Racism in Historical Perspective,” in *Beyond Racism: Race and Inequality in Brazil, South Africa, and the United States*, ed. Charles V. Hamilton (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 2001), 13. Frederickson attributes the difference not (only?) to the ideology of racial democracy, but to the subjects’ poverty, which makes “day-to-day survival so difficult and time consuming that it is virtually impossible to concentrate on politics” (13). Studies of resistance among slaves, who more than any other group of people have had to concentrate on “day-to-day survival,” suggest another way to look at this question. See also Michael George Hanchard, *Orpheus and Power: The Movimento Negro of Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo, Brazil, 1945–1988* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994), 5–6, 41, 74; Jonathan W. Warren, *Racial Revolutions: Antiracism and Indian Resurgence in Brazil* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2001), 269; and Howard Winant, *Racial Conditions: Politics, Theory, Comparisons* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1994), 131.
 76. Karasch, *Slave Life in Rio de Janeiro*; Rachel E. Harding, *A Refuge in Thunder: Candomblé and Alternative Spaces of Blackness* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2000); Kim D. Butler, *Freedoms Given, Freedoms Won: Afro-Brazilians in Post-abolition São Paulo and*

- Salvador* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1998); Slenes, *Na senzala, uma flor*. I have argued elsewhere that these postures, when evident, reflect choices taken in relation, not in isolation. See Micol Seigel, “Comparable or Connected? Black Citizens and Their States in 1920s São Paulo and Chicago,” in *Global Conversations: New Scholarship on the History of Black Peoples*, ed. Darlene Clark Hine and the Diaspora Paradigms Publication Committee (forthcoming).
77. On the related accomplishments of the United States–South Africa comparison, see Gregg, *Inside Out*.
78. The description of Brazil as a puzzle appears in David J. Hess and Roberto A. DaMatta, eds., *The Brazilian Puzzle: Culture on the Borderlands of the Western World* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995); the words *conundrum* and *peculiar* are used in French, “Missteps,” 119; *deceptive* in Frank D. McCann and Michael L. Conniff, eds., *Modern Brazil: Elites and Masses in Historical Perspective* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1989), ix; *elaborate* in Hanchard, *Orpheus and Power*, 8. Denise Ferreira da Silva, “Facts of Blackness,” 223.
79. Caldeira, *City of Walls*, 142–43. Myths and ideologies similar (and related) to those prevailing in Brazil are discussed in Peter Wade, *Blackness and Race Mixture: The Dynamics of Racial Identity in Columbia* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993); Jeffrey L. Gould, “‘¡Vana Ilusión!': The Highlands Indians and the Myth of Nicaragua Mestiza, 1880–1925,” *Hispanic American Historical Review* 73 (1993): 393–429; Winthrop Wright, *Café Con Leche: Race, Class, and National Image in Venezuela* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1990); Gonzalo Aguirre-Beltrán, *La población negra de México: Estudio etnohistórico (The Black Population of Mexico: Ethnohistorical Study)* (Mexico City: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1972); Robin Moore, *Nationalizing Blackness: Afro-Cubanismo and Artistic Revolution in Havana, 1920–1940* (Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1997); and Alejandro de la Fuente, “Myths of Racial Democracy: Cuba, 1900–1912,” *Latin American Research Review* 34 (1999): 39–73.
80. Denise Ferreira da Silva, *Race and Nation in the Mapping of the Modern Global Space* (forthcoming); Silva, “Facts of Blackness”; Gomes da Cunha, “‘Apprentices, Anthropologists, and Specialized Travelers’”; Gomes da Cunha, “Gaining Intimacy”; Gomes da Cunha, “The Apprentice Tourist Revisited: Travel, Ethnography, and Nation in Rómulo Lachatañeré and Arthur Ramos’ Writings,” in *Afro-Latin American Anthropology: Critical Histories*, ed. Kevin Yelvington, *Contours* (forthcoming); Caldeira, *City of Walls*; and Mareia Quintero-Rivera, *A cor e o som da nação: A idéia de mestiçagem na crítica musical do Caribe hispânico e do Brasil (1928–1948) (The Color and the Sound of the Nation: The Idea of Mestizaje in Music Criticism in the Hispanic Caribbean and Brazil, 1928–1948)* (São Paulo: Annablume, 2000). Also helpful in this way, I hope, will be Seigel, *Zé Carioca Meets Jim Crow*.

2 Functions of Historical Comparison. The comparative method pursues two goals alternately. On the one hand, it seeks to accentuate the distinctive feature of each individual case, and on the other, attempts to derive evidence on general developments from case studies. While historians tend toward the first approach, the second is more prevalent among social scientists. Beyond Compare: Comparative Method after the Transnational Turn. Article. Dec 2005. *Radic Hist Rev*. Micol Seigel. View. Insufficient difference.Â Unmirroring Pedagogies: Teaching with Intersectional and Transnational Methods in the Women and Gender Studies Classroom. Article. Jan 2010. Dawn Rae Davis. As the U.S. academy increasingly markets "the global" and "diversity" for undergraduate student consumption, feminists face new challenges with respect to the decolonizing goals of teaching.