

About anti-mestizaje

José Antonio Kelly Luciani

About anti-mestizaje



Cultura e Barbárie
Desterro, 2016



Cultura e Barbárie

www.culturaebarbarie.org | editora@culturaebarbarie.org

Editorial board: Alexandre Nodari, Flávia Cera,
Leonardo D'Ávila de Oliveira, Rodrigo Lopes de Barros

L937a Luciani, José Antonio Kelly

About anti-mestizaje / José Antonio Kelly Luciani. – Curitiba PR:
Species – Núcleo de Antropologia Especulativa : Desterro,
[Florianópolis] : Cultura e Barbárie, 2016.
106 p.

Inclui bibliografia

ISBN: 978-85-63003-02-7

1. Ensaios. 2. Antropologia. 3. Índios Yanomami. 4. Relações
Étnicas. 5. Etnologia – América Latina. I. Título.

CDU: 391/397

Catálogo na publicação por: Onélia Silva Guimarães CRB-14/071



species - núcleo de antropologia especulativa

<http://speciesnae.wordpress.com/>

species is a transdisciplinary research group based at the Universidade Federal do Paraná, and coordinated by Alexandre Nodari, Flávia Cera, Guilherme Gontijo Flores, Juliana Fausto, Marco Antonio Valentim, Miguel Carid, Rodrigo Tadeu Gonçalves, Vinícius Nicastro Honesko and Walter Romero Menon Junior

SUMMARY

Introduction	7
<i>Structure of the essay</i>	9
<i>A few clarifications and afterthoughts</i>	11
I. “El dominador cautivo”: the <i>criollo</i> position	16
II. The ideology of <i>mestizaje</i>	23
III. From <i>mestizaje</i> to multiculturalism	31
IV. Anti-<i>mestizaje</i>: a case of non-fusional mixture	42
<i>The Yanomami conventional sociopolitical space</i>	42
<i>Ocamo, the gradient of exchange and “becoming <i>napë</i>”</i>	43
<i>Becoming <i>napë</i> and the “<i>napë</i> transformational axis”</i>	45
<i>Contrasting Yanomami hybridity with <i>mestizaje</i> and the <i>criollo</i> position</i>	48
<i>Mestizaje and anti-mestizaje</i>	49
<i>On civilization</i>	49
<i>Being <i>criollo</i> vs. becoming <i>napë</i></i>	50
<i>Forms of domination, captivity, rejection and negation</i>	51
<i>Making society vs becoming <i>napë</i></i>	54
V. Other forms of anti-<i>mestizaje</i>	58
VI. Anti-<i>mestizaje</i>: mixture against the state	74
<i>Two histories, two ongoing processes</i>	81
<i>Criollo and indigenous dilemmas</i>	83
VII. What States would those “against the state” be against?	88
<i>Coda</i>	97
References	98

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This essay is part of my post doctoral research that received the generous financial aid of the CAPES Foundation, Ministry of Education, Brazil (project No. BEX 0026/15-8). I thank Nicole Soares Pinto, Levindo Pereira and Marcos de Almeida Matos for their translation into Portuguese, as well as Hanna Limulja for her revision of that version. I equally thank Chloe Nahum-Claudel and Scott Head for their revision of the manuscript in its English version. Several colleagues read the text at different stages of elaboration, I thank Alejandro Reig, Scott Head and Eduardo Viveiros de Castro for their comments. I thank the students of the Lowland South America Ethnology course (semesters 2014/2 and 2015/1) at the postgraduate program in anthropology of the University of Santa Catarina, Brazil, who read and discussed the manuscript in its preliminary versions. Finally, I am deeply indebted to Alexandre Nodari of *Cultura & Barbárie* for encouraging and making possible the publication of this essay, as I am grateful to him and Marcos de Almeida Matos for the precious time and effort invested in the editorial process in the midst of family and fieldwork duties.

INTRODUCTION

This essay is born from the confrontation of some of the conclusions regarding the Upper Orinoco Yanomami's experiences of cultural change, which I earlier reached through the analysis of their engagement with the state-provided health system (Kelly, 2011a), and the instigating analysis of *criollo* historical consciousness deployed by Venezuelan historian German Carrera Damas (1988; [1993] 2012). One of the points I put forward was how Yanomami people in the conglomerate of villages of Ocamo, despite several decades of considerable transformation through contact and exchange with representatives of "national society", together with their self-perception as "civilized" or of "becoming *napë*" (glossable in this context as "becoming *criollo*"), did not counterpose this status to that of being Yanomami. Neither was their hybrid culture conceived as resulting from a process of fusion of Yanomami and *criollo* cultures, but rather was performed by alternating from relational positions of being Yanomami and being *napë*. Somewhat inadvertently, I described a historical process and a current situation that defied received notions of Venezuelan nation-building through the process of *mestizaje*. Attending to the fact that Yanomami discourses on becoming *napë* did not represent a desire to become *mestizo*, I later sketched a notion of "anti-*mestizaje*" taking the Yanomami as my ethnographic example (Kelly, 2011b).

A long time later, I read Carrera Damas' work on "*criollo* culture".¹ His is a clear effort to de-westernize the history of Latin America and part of this project requires rendering explicit the *criollo*-centered notions of history, culture and identity. His essay "*El dominador cautivo*" is stimulating for two reasons. First, because Carrera Damas speaks of *criollo* culture as the culture of "implanted societies", that is, Spanish and their descendants in America that would establish themselves as polit-

1 I thank my colleague Alejandro Reig for bringing Carrera Damas' work to my attention. I owe the term "anti-*mestizaje*" to a comment jotted down by Anne Christine Taylor on my thesis when she was reading it for my viva in 2003. Presumably a comment intended for herself, some years later Eduardo Viveiros de Castro encouraged me to pursue it further, having noted its potential more than myself at the time.

ical elites after independence. With the progressive breakdown of the colonial system of casts based on different racial mixtures, *criollo* culture became evermore inclusive of mixed peoples (*mestizos*) and the paradigm of national culture.² Despite this trajectory, Carrera Damas treats contemporary Venezuela and Latin American countries as “implanted societies” stressing the coevalness of 16th century forms of engagement with indigenous societies and 20th century forms of *criollo* articulation with a wider world system. The theoretical maintenance of the “implanted” character of *criollo* societies is critical to challenge mainstream understandings of national history. Second, because instead of describing *criollo* culture in terms of its content, Carrera Damas does so in terms of its relations with European, indigenous and Afro-American cultures. What Carrera Damas focuses on when he talks about “*criollo* culture”, then, is the relationally constituted position of the *criollo*. As an elite-focused (i.e. *criollo*) relational analysis, Carrera Damas’ propositions become immediately comparable to, and complementary with, a trend in the analysis of indigenous cultural transformations that stresses the positional nature of categories such as “Indian” and “white”, but centered on the indigenous position (Gow, 1991; 1993; Kelly, 2011a).

Carrera Damas’ focus is on Venezuela, although one could, with caution, extend his approach to other Latin American countries (at least those derived from Spanish and Portuguese conquest). He frames his essay as a call to “overcome the *criollo* vision of its history” because it is “primordial for the development of the Latin American implanted societies from a triple stand point: it is vital to clear the way for the process that will culminate in the resumption of their historical course for some aboriginal societies; it is necessary to free *criollo* consciousness from structural limitations that affect the creativity of its culture, due to the double relation of acceptance–negation in which it unfolds in relation to the aboriginal societies and the European and Anglo-American context; and it is key, in the last instance, for the definitive constitution of the historical being of the Afro-American societies” (1988:13–14, my translation).

2 The evolution of the meaning of the term “*criollo*” is of course more complicated than this. I shall not dwell on it in this essay beyond what is relevant to my argument that basically follows Carrera Damas’ analysis. A detailed account of the history of the term in Colombia is offered by Lozonsky (2008). Judging by Carrera Damas’ work, the Colombian and Venezuelan cases are quite similar in this regard.

This essay is a contribution to Carrera Damas' call by way of counterpoising indigenous and *criollo* understandings of their relations. I do so by trying to explore, in as many ways as possible, the contrasts between a) the dilemma of the *criollo* elite, described by Carrera Damas as the acceptance and negation of both Euro-American and indigenous cultures, and Yanomami "becoming *napé*"; b) the theory of *mestizaje* and that of anti-*mestizaje*; and c) the logical "neither-nor" operator that articulates *criollo* hybridity with *mestizaje* and the logical "and" operator that articulates Yanomami hybridity with anti-*mestizaje*.

My strategy has been to expand my previous sketch of "anti-*mestizaje*" to its fullest consequences *via* a deeper incursion into *criollo* historicity and theory of *mestizaje*, and by going beyond the Yanomami case I know first-hand, to examine other ethnographies of indigenous South American peoples that dwell on social transformation and forms of hybridity. My focus is also on Venezuela, but given the recurrence of many features of *criollo*-Indian and state-Indian relations throughout Latin America, my hope is that the analysis presented will find resonances elsewhere. This essay draws on my previous work (Kelly, 2011a) because to thread the contrasts I am pursuing, I need to summarize my previous analysis. At some points in sections III and IV, fragments have been only slightly modified and updated, at others, I have tried to rewrite my descriptions in order to make them more compatible with Carrera Damas' language. I have also refrained, up to the concluding sections, from an excessive incursion into Amazonianist theoretical debates in hope of keeping the text readable for a wider audience.

Structure of the essay

The essay unfolds in seven sections. The first is dedicated to spelling out Carrera Damas' theory of *criollo* relational 'inbetweenness,' which is the position of Venezuelan and Latin American elites, caught by their dilemma of rejecting and accepting both metropolitan (Euro-American) and indigenous cultures. I then extend this thesis to bring it to bear on 20th century indigenous policy in Venezuela. The next section reviews

some key aspects of Latin American elites' understanding of *mestizaje* as a process of consumptive fusion of peoples and identities. This is a move Carrera Damas does not make himself, but in doing so, I hope to illustrate how *mestizaje*, as an ethnographic theory by and for *criollo* elites, furnishes them with a "solution" to the conundrum set up by the "dominant-captive" position.

The third section is devoted to analyzing contemporary indigenous policy in Venezuela, particularly during the Chávez era. Having laid out Carrera Damas' thesis on *criollo* historical consciousness and the key features of *mestizaje* nation-building ideology, this section asks whether the shift to multiculturalism - and its attendant burial of the *mestizaje* paradigm - within the Bolivarian Revolution's refounding of the nation, has challenged the key features of *criollo*-Indian, and consequently state-Indian, relations in Venezuela. This being the "acid test" for Carrera Damas' thesis, I argue that despite this paradigm shift, it still holds, for what we are witnessing in much state multicultural policy has a tendency to induce 'mestizo-izing' effects.

The fourth section, based on my own work among the Yanomami in Amazonas state in Venezuela, provides what I am calling a theory of anti-*mestizaje* and explores all the avenues of contrast between mutually-implicated Yanomami and *criollo* forms of hybridity, social organization and temporal change. This is an exercise in casting two counterpoised, and yet interacting, ethnographic theories of mixture and change in each other's terms. The fifth section extends the analysis of Yanomami anti-*mestizaje*, reviewing a number of Amerindian ethnographic accounts of mixture and change. Such a review is necessary to show that anti-*mestizaje* is a useful concept beyond the limits of Yanomami specificity or the peculiarities of their engagement with the Venezuelan state. Accounts are derived from indigenous peoples with different social organizations and with different historical relations with their respective states (including Brazil, Peru and Mexico). This review is also a first in Lowland South American anthropology and closes with a suggestion as to which potentialities of indigenous socio-cosmologies could be the mainspring for engendering anti-*mestizaje* forms of mixture and change.

The sixth section explores the political implications of anti-*mestizaje*. Having described *mestizaje* as a theory by and for *criollos*, a theory “for the State” that is, I draw on Clastres’ political anthropology, to tease out a fundamental “against the State” quality of anti-*mestizaje*. This line of analysis leads, on the one hand, to an almost inevitable debate with Lattour’s (1993) analysis of Moderns’ production of nature-society hybrids and the view of Pre-moderns that goes with it and, on the other, to a comment on what could be called “the Amerindian politics of perspective” as a foil to engage with recent talk on the “politics of Amerindian perspectivism”.

The final section reflects on the political character of the Venezuelan state with which indigenous peoples like the Yanomami engage. The issue addressed is what kind of state peoples “against the state” are dealing with and nowadays part of; the *mestizaje*-inducing effects of state multiculturalism; the need to recognize that the “indigenous issue”, is not separate from, but integral to, the “dominant-captive” predicament of *criollos*, and the fact that multiculturalism must be accompanied by plurisocietalism (a plurality of forms of social organization) if it is to be true to its purported objectives.

A few clarifications and afterthoughts

This essay is something of a stretched insight. To keep it as such, to retain whatever critical force the argument may have, I have foregone much of what standard academic prudence demands, and which so often leads to halfhearted suggestions about the world, full of disguised preemptive moves against foreseeable critique. Best be done with some warnings and clarifications at the outset to then let the argument walk on its own.

The reader must be warned that much of what is said here about *mestizaje* and historical relations between *criollos* and Indians is far from novel. Recent papers by Pérez & Perozo (2003) and Mansutti (2006), for example, coincide with the reading of *mestizaje* offered in this essay for the Venezuelan case. I shall not be addressing the variability of *mestizaje* or academic debates around it, for what is perhaps more valuable

in the essay is the contrast it progressively draws, between *mestizaje* and anti-*mestizaje*, and the comparison between *criollo* and indigenous approaches to mixture and change that Carrera Damas' analysis allows for.

Upon finishing this text I was struck by its old-fashioned ring, at least in two regards. Firstly, it is true that I am guilty of sustaining my analysis through what many in anthropology consider outdated overarching oppositions. In my defense I should say they are not solely artifices of my argument, but part of the anthropological analyses of both *criollos* and people like the Yanomami, and an aspect of their understandings that is even more relevant in their direct relations. I am far from thinking that it is only western scholars who are given to thinking in dichotomies. I am also aware that, for example, "the state" and "the Yanomami" are categories that allow for significant internal heterogeneity, and I have teased such variations out in my descriptions accordingly. I nonetheless retain certain categorical oppositions, for I am interested in the implications that certain assumptions have for state-Indian or *criollo*-Indian relations. Such assumptions operate at a level where all the perceivable variation amounts to currents or maneuvers within conceptual limits that only the confrontation with alternative premises can elicit, both analytically and for the actors involved. In any case, I leave it to reader to judge whether such a strategy has still any light to shed.

Secondly, I use the words "culture" and "society" liberally and pretty much in the same ways they gained currency in American cultural and British social anthropology, meanings that have long been object of critique, refurbishment, and even declared past their sell-by-date. One reason for their reappearance here is their resonance with commonsensical understanding of these terms within state discourse. If it is true, for example, that "society" in its classical durkheimian sense can no longer be taken for granted as a concept with any place in many indigenous imaginations about social relations, its abundant presence among those who run state societies as that which a state is supposed to be acting upon - building, rebuilding, sustaining, speaking for, assisting, protecting - calls for its maintenance in the kind of exercise I have embarked upon. Put shortly, the same reasons that make us steer clear from "society" when speaking about the Yanomami, for instance, make us reintroduce "socie-

ty” when speaking about *criollo*-Indian or state-Indian relations. Since I am interested in contrast I hope the different contexts of analysis along the essay will allow the reader to distinguish between “society” as “state society”, where an idea of “social contract” plays a part, and “society” as a shorthand for “social organization” whatever its form. When I refer to *criollos* wanting to “make society” in the context of nation-building or instilling conventions to live “in society” with the Yanomami, it is the first, “social contract” understanding, that I am speaking about. When I speak of “indigenous societies” or the “Yanomami conventional socio-political space” I am pointing to “social organization” in all its variability. “Culture” also appears carrying a western bias towards things produced, artifact and technique, in the way that it was for so long uncritically deployed in anthropology, as Wagner (1981) makes clear. Again, this is its currency among *criollos* and how it appears in state public policy. Keeping hold of these terms in this way allows us to see the part they play in the state’s dealings with Indians; that it is no coincidence, for example, that the state has cuddled up with “culture” as an avenue of relations with indigenous people in a way that finds no parallel with “society”, despite - or precisely because of - the category’s centrality for the state.

The fact that I am not a historian surely affects the quality of my rendering of Venezuelan history. In this regard I take cover in Carrera Damas’ own knowledge and the sense of adequateness I feel when reading his work, a sense that comes from my own status as a Venezuelan *criollo*. Although not enough to correct the possible pitfalls stemming from my sole reliance on Carrera Damas, I must say my reading of Oviedo y Baños’ early account of the Spanish conquest and colonial formation in Venezuela has infused more trust in Carrera Damas than the opposite. Published in 1723, besides its value as a reconstruction of the process of implantation, what makes this work anthropologically interesting is that it is a reflection of *criollo* thought about Indians and the Spanish. The fact that the conquistadores are referred to as “*los nuestros*” some 200 years after their initial deeds is telling: it is the voice of the implanted speaking.³ The same feelings of confirmation of Carrera Da-

3 It is true that the manuscript had to be approved by Spanish authorities to be published. It would be hard for me to determine the extent to which this affects the account.

mas' treatment of *criollo* culture, in particular the 'inbetweenness' of the *criollo* position, comes from reading Herrera Luque's (1979) historical novel *Los Amos del Valle*, a description, half way between fact and fiction, of the colonial period in the province of Caracas. Further corroboration is found in the civilization vs. barbarism struggle that frames Rómulo Gallegos' (1929) famous novel *Doña Barbara*, otherwise known for its status as a commentary - and a very *criollo* one at that - on the Venezuelan nation and its predicaments.⁴

Some caution is also due when speaking of *mestizaje* as a Latin American ideology. Given the varying weight it has in different countries I should clarify that I shall be referring to *mestizaje* in Latin American nation-building narratives, "where applicable" as-it-were. I think it is safe to say that our analysis of *mestizaje* and *criollo*-Indian historical relations in Venezuela finds plenty of resonance in countries like Colombia, Ecuador and Brazil. It resounds with narratives of Peru as well, though here it counterpoints with discourses of *indigenismo* (cf. de la Cadena, 2000). I am not sufficiently familiar with the histories of other Latin American or Central American nations as to comment any further, though I would be surprised if fragmental echoes were not found there too.

The category "*criollo*" is also historically shifting and carries different meanings as we move from one country to another, to the extent that in Brazil its content bears no resemblance with its use in Venezuela. Regardless of its existence or not as a social category, what is said about "*criollo* culture" can be equated to the position and thought of the socially white or whiter (acknowledgely *mestizo* or not) elites that have historically monopolized the production of nation-building narratives due to their prominence in the internal power structure and in the establishment of "national projects" in different Latin American countries.

The path the essay walks includes a critical assessment of the Bolivarian Revolution's indigenist policy. It could not be otherwise because what contrasting *criollo* and indigenous theories of mixture and transformation allows us to see in clearer light, is the continuation of certain historical relations where many in Revolution see radical departures.

4 Carrera Damas comments on both Oviedo y Baños and Gallegos in similar terms (2012: 97,72).

Beyond the analysis of specific government policies, the more profound critique this essay puts forth, and that has come as a revelation even to myself, is the Revolution's failure to break with a *criollo*-centric view of the nation-state. Historically in Venezuela, state-Indian relations coincided with *criollo* culture's relations with indigenous ones; despite all the talk of Revolution and the embracement of multiculturalism, this synonymy has yet to be assumed, let alone disentangled. This failure limits the effects of all the juridical, political and symbolic refurbishment of the status of indigenous people and indigeneity associated with the multicultural state. In Venezuela some would consider this judgment heavy-handed, others still overly sympathetic, and yet the question as to what such a departure from *criollo*-centricity really implies is one that needs to be approached free of the filters that have left little room for argumentation in the Venezuelan political field.

- o -

In the urban north of Venezuela, the term *criollo*, spoken by middle class *criollos*, refers to things (ex. Food, music, dress) being Venezuelan in contrast to being foreign - the predominant context being North America or Europe. In the state of Amazonas, home to many indigenous peoples, the term *criollo*, means first and foremost "non-indigenous". This shift in the implicit background of the term "*criollo*" from Euro-American to Indian, succinctly captures the historical relations this essay examines.

I. “EL DOMINADOR CAUTIVO”: THE *CRIOULLO* POSITION

Carrera Damas argues that “*criollo* culture” was historically constituted by a double “struggle of contraries”: accepting and rejecting Spanish metropolitan culture, on the one hand, and incorporating and rejecting indigenous culture, on the other.

“...the essential meaning of *criollo* culture, and consequently national culture and the Venezuelan cultural formation, usually goes unnoticed; that is, an agnostic identification with paradigms, governed by a dynamic of acceptance and rejection with respect to metropolitan cultures, - as a means of negative differentiation -, and by a dynamic of incorporation and rejection with respect to the dominated cultures, and further obfuscated by a longing for intelligibility of the Venezuelan *criollo* by others, the latter determined in a selective manner.

Summing up, today the Venezuelan *criollo* doesn't properly see that s/he is inserted in a cultural formation whose axis is constituted by a culture that is, simultaneously, a culture of domination and a captive culture, that is, by *criollo* culture” (1988:30-31, my translation).

Let us examine each of these two “struggle of contraries” in turn.

It is not hard to perceive that, throughout the colonial and then the republican phases of the implantation of Venezuelan society within the American indigenous base, *criollos* constituted a culture of domination of indigenous and Afro-American populations. Less evident is that this position is a function of the identification of *criollo* culture with metropolitan cultures - an understanding that has “never abandoned the Venezuelan *criollo*” (Ibid.: 32) and consequently also a function of *criollo* differentiation from indigenous people throughout history. The achievement and maintenance of these mutually implicated effects requires an active effort on the part of *criollos*.

“The identification of *criollo* culture with the metropolitan one, erected as ‘The culture’, is an obvious manifestation of the relation of domination initiated by the peninsular European and continued and perfected uninterruptedly to our days, by the American and Venezuelan *criollo*” (Ibid.:32, my translation).

If this explains the need for accepting metropolitan paradigms, why the rejection? Rejecting and even negating metropolitan culture was the

part of the motivation for, and then inevitable outcome, of the independence wars. The paradox setup was that *criollos* were forced to negate the very source of their dominant position in the internal power structure. This, Carrera Damas highlights, was the critical moment of one of the “struggles of contraries”. The need to compensate for the loss of the connection with Spain forced the relaxation of religious and moral codes that would allow for relations with alternative European cultures (Ibid.: 24). The hope of substituting Spanish for another European cultural reference “characterizes the life of the Venezuelan cultural formation during the 19th Century and is clearly visible in the cycle of the literary and plastic arts” (Ibid.: 34).

To see the other “struggle of contraries” we must look in the other direction: *criollo* culture has historically incorporated and yet rejected indigenous cultures. During the initial phases of colonization, indigenous know-how of life in the American environment was fundamental for the implantation process. The nascent *criollo* culture, nonetheless, rejected indigenous peoples, characterizing them as savage, heathens, lustful and a list of stereotypes that live on to this day - lazy, unreliable, etc. - thus actively differentiating itself against the indigenous base. Carrera Damas notes that towards the end of the 18th Century, just as this differentiating and distancing process reached its peak, the rupture of the colonial nexus with Spain brought about by the independence wars, forced *criollos* to realign their relation with the indigenous base. First, *criollos* fashioned an ideological operation that was to identify them with Indians in the position of victims of European oppression. Next, Indians were granted official “citizenship” in the newborn liberal state, but this was a “timid” (Ibid.: 24) move, for the *criollo* objective of incorporating them via “civilization” to mainstream - and what would increasingly become a “national” culture - was maintained, mainly through missionary activity (Ibid: 35).

“...the objective of ‘incorporating’ Indians into *criollo* culture was maintained, and this reveals a constant in this process: even during the moments of most open admission of the products of indigenous cultures, it has been impossible to acknowledge the autonomy of these cultures, for this would compromise the

hegemonic position of *criollo* culture in the internal power structure” (Ibid.: 35, my translation).

Thus, the *criollo* position is characterized throughout history by a) a constant identification with metropolitan cultural patterns (the sequence shifts from Spanish culture in the colonial period, to other European cultures after independence, and to American culture associated with the 20th Century oil boom) - even when forced to explicitly negate them - necessary to sustain its position in the internal power structure; and b) a constant differentiation against indigenous cultures - even if timidly accommodating to their existence - to avoid the challenge to its hegemonic position that the full autonomy of indigenous societies pose.

Any inversion to this double orientation is either strategic and circumstantial - an ideological re-alignment alongside indigenous societies against Spanish powers during independence - or unmotivated; the inevitable differentiation from metropolitan culture derived from living in a America, a distancing that *criollo* elites unwillingly must ponder about when downgraded by the European regard (ex. When Latin American countries are spoken of as “Banana republics”) (cf. Ibid.: 34, 15).

In broad terms the relational structure of the *criollo* position can be summarized as follows: identification with Euro-American culture is active and circumstantially has indigenous culture as its backdrop, whilst differentiation from indigenous culture is also active and circumstantially has Euro-American culture as its backdrop.

Perhaps the clearest register of this structure can be found in late 19th Century efforts, on the part of the *criollo* elite, to whiten their overly mixed society with European immigrants. Rooted in racial prejudice and deeply entrenched fears of the possibility of mixed and black peoples taking over or impeding the governability of the nation (Carrera Damas, 2006; Wright, 1990), and compounded by a sense of fragility and fragmentation resulting from the long period of devastating civil wars that followed independence from Spain, the Venezuelan elite turned to diagnosing its ills and envisioning ways out of what was judged as a very poor state of affairs.

“Towards the end of the XIXth century a sizeable sector of society still harbored doubts regarding the viability of Venezuelan society, to the extent that a project to incorporate what still could not be considered a society – and that according to all evidence would never become one – to the British Empire as a protectorate, was encouraged so it could at least aspire to a degree of development similar to that of the British Antilles” (Carrera Damas, 2006: 78, my translation).

These evaluations, supported by European positivist conceptions of race, were incorporated by *criollo* elites, and associated the political chaos and economic deprivation of the country with several factors, always including the basic incapacity and ill-equipped nature of the majority of its constituents. Governability and productivity required law, a work ethic, and standards of civility that European culture embodied and that mixed race, indigenous peoples and Africans of the new nation were thought to lack. Importing whiteness, and hoping for its spread through *mestizaje*, was considered the only chance of achieving political stability and progress, and of saving the nation from itself (Carrera Damas, 2006: 70-88; Wright, 1990: 43-68).⁵

There was an obvious continuity, felt by the *criollo* political elite, between the requirements to run a colony and those to run a new born state and establish a “national project”, to use Carrera Damas’ wording. We can understand this as a need to “make society”, to establish the conditions, the rules and conventions, that allow for a modern state to be run by the *criollo* political elite. Making society also required that the nation’s components become uniform. This brings us to the integrative function played by *criollo* culture throughout history.

“Until the beginning of the XIXth century, the dominant character of *criollo* culture was inseparable from its integrating role. Both indigenous and African cultures seemed destined, by the force of the rationality of the domination scheme inherent to the process of implantation, to extinction through selective integration into *criollo* culture. The integrative role of *criollo* culture was consubstantial with the hegemonic position of *criollos* in the internal power structure, and subservient to it a vast apparatus of social norms, administrative decisions, more or less legitimate juridical practices and forms of crude coercion was set-up. The results were all to contribute to the consolidation of *criollo* hegemony in all terrains.

5 The Brazilian positivist-inspired nation-building motto “*ordem e progresso*” succinctly expresses this type of quest, common to the history of many Latin American nations.

The rupture of the colonial nexus, ending up in the attempts at the formulation of the national project, reinforced the integrative role of *criollo* culture, which by now had become the national culture, implying, as I have said, the subordination to it of all partialities and cultural particularities, as well as the subordination of all regional cultures to the national one” (Carrera Damas, 1988: 36-37, my translation).

If the *criollo* project of maintaining its dominance within the internal power structure implied turning its culture into a national culture, its rejection of the dominated cultures also meant it was trapped, or “captive” in this sense, by its own unwillingness to fully tap into these cultures’ creativity, the sole source of originality that could distinguish it from Euro-American paradigms when *criollos* felt the need to develop a positivized view of their culture. Hence Carrera Damas’ characterization of the *criollo* position as simultaneously “dominant” and “captive”.

It is true that, in different periods, certain elements of indigenous culture have been selectively recognized, mainly in the artistic - plastic or literary - field. But Carrera Damas insists that this movement has always been marked by an “unsurpassable limit” (Ibid.: 22) and that they fall far short, even in the more permeable field of material culture and folklore, of a full-fledged recognition of indigenous creativity. In my own experience, which is a register of the extent to which Carrera Damas’ view of *criollo* consciousness applies today, many elements of Venezuelans’ everyday life that can be easily traced to indigenous cultures - present in food, agricultural techniques, language, music, etc - are in effect subsumed under the category of “*criollo*” or “Venezuelan” culture, precisely because the implicit contrasting background are foreign cultures - this dominant contrast betrays the Eurocentric nature of *criollo* self-understanding. In any case, it is important to note that, if “making society” is the requirement for which Euro-American cultures offer themselves as sole references, when it comes to indigenous peoples, any scent of autonomy or recognition, on the part of the *criollo* elite, has been limited to the plane of culture. It must be kept in mind that such allowance is overshadowed by the more encompassing process of “making society” - the aforementioned incorporations, assimilations and other more brutal efforts towards elimination.

A brief review of state-Indian relations - the so called "Indian issue" - in the 20th century is enough to show the *criollo* machine at work. The imperative to "make society" composes and subsumes both the identification with Euro-American paradigms and the differentiation from indigenous cultures and is active in several coherent thrusts: downplaying social heterogeneity and rendering indigenous peoples invisible; achieving development and progress; and defining legitimate forms of social and economic engagement with the state.

Until the drafting of the new constitution in 1999, Venezuela was one of the least progressive countries regarding indigenous legislation among the American nations. The relative invisibility of Indians in the national imagination and the official abandonment and delegation of the Indian issue were hallmarks of the nation's attitude toward indigenous people. The task of assimilating Indians in the national cultural and economic milieu was either delegated to different missionary orders or left to the natural integration of peoples expected from the expansion of economic fronts, the population of apparently empty spaces, and the spread of development and modernity. Dominant Hispanist views of national history normally characterized Indian cultural and economic ways as obstacles to civilization (Carrera Damas, 2006: 24) and as hindering progress in national development schemes. Since the 1970s, the stubborn, yet ultimately fruitless attempts to transform indigenous shifting agriculture into modern farming to increase productivity is a good example of this view (Freire, 2007). Even when the 1961 agrarian reform provided legal possibilities for indigenous land tenure, it did so at the expense of imposing on Indians peasant models of land use and socio-political organization.

Venezuelan national identity has been predicated upon the notion of *mestizaje*. An indigenous component of national identity was celebrated not as a living aspect of today's multicultural scenario but rather as a historical component of nation building. Generally speaking, given that the Indian was perceived as having little of good in himself, the process of colonization was cast more, to paraphrase Thomas (1994:124), as an operation of welfare than of conquest, conversion to Christianity being very much the vehicle and symbol of improvement.

A commitment to achieving modernity that has characterized the politics of the Venezuelan petro-state (Coronil, 1997) introduces another type of discontinuity between Indians and non-Indians. Indians embodied the very opposite of modernity and hence could hardly be seen as a potential source for it. They represented what the modernizing project should transform in the country's efforts to escape underdevelopment. There is, then, an ideological affinity between a theory of *mestizaje* as a means for social improvement *via* the spread of European and Christian values and the petro-state's aspiration to propel the nation into modernity: the continuation of "civilization" by other means.

- o -

After this brief review, let me suggest that what Carrera Damas calls "*criollo* culture", its integrative role and its relation of identification with Euro-American culture and differentiation from indigenous culture, was embodied and perfected, in the 20th century, in the state's relation to indigenous peoples within the ongoing nation-building, modernizing and developmentist national project. We can also conclude that what is most long-lasting in the *criollo* elite's identification with Euro-American paradigms, beyond specific cultural elements, is with the idea of a governable society: the social, political and economic conventions that allow for the establishment of a viable state. In this sense, more than identifying with Euro-American culture - a historically shifting sequence of codes of decency and less relevant fads - the *criollo* elite identifies with Euro-American society, in order to make its own. The inverse is true of the selective and episodic identifications with indigenous peoples: what comes into view is always limited to culture.

II. THE IDEOLOGY OF MESTIZAJE

In the previous section we focused on *criollo* culture, and Carrera Damas' analysis provided a bird's-eye view of the historical unfolding of the double "struggle of contraries" that characterizes this position. In this section I describe the main features of the ideology of *mestizaje* as it has been deployed in Venezuela, and, to different extents, other Latin American countries. I do so because *mestizaje* appears to be, above all, the theory of mixture *criollo* elites put forth when they consider the historical transformation of Venezuela. It is an ideology that goes hand in hand with the project of expanding *criollo* culture into the national culture. In fact, the term *criollo*, in contemporary Venezuela, conveys the meaning of *mestizo*-ness, the fusion of black, Indian and white peoples, even when the term *mestizo* itself is not commonly used as category of social classification. Finally, I dwell on *mestizaje* because later I shall contrast it with other forms in which indigenous peoples conceive of mixture, forms that invert many of the implicit principles of *mestizaje*.

- o -

Miscegenation (*mestizaje/mestiçagem*), however vaguely defined or assumed, is at once a social scientific theory of biological and social/cultural mixture and a key nation-building ideology in Latin America. The notion of *mestizaje*, as deployed by many influential political thinkers of the region, betrays an unexamined theory of social mixture and change which can be summarized as the consumption of distinct entities in their fusion and the yielding of a new type of person, people, class or nation with distinctive physical, social, moral or spiritual character (depending on the emphasis).

To identify some of the key features of *mestizaje* I draw on Mexican intellectual José Vasconcelos' influential essay *The Cosmic Race* (1925). Written against the backdrop of American racial policies and European positivist-inspired depreciative views of Latin American mixtures, the essay has the character of a manifesto that contests these Euro-Ameri-

can views and exalts mixture as the definitive feature of Latin American nations.⁶ But I also draw on Vasconcelos because it is surprising to verify the longevity of his ideas, some of them predated by figures such as Bolívar and Martí, as the review of more recent Venezuelan authors will show. The essay is dated only superficially, and it speaks of the depth and endurance of the *criollo* consciousness caught between Europe and America.

- o -

The idea of consumption through fusion is very clear in *The Cosmic Race*:

“There is no going back in History, for it is all transformation and novelty. No race returns. Each one states its mission, accomplishes it, and passes away... The days of pure whites, the victors of the day, are as numbered as were the days of their predecessors. Having fulfilled their destiny of mechanizing the world, they themselves have set, without knowing it, the basis for a new period: The period of the fusion and mixing of all peoples” (Vasconcelos, [1925] 1997:16).

The fusion of races is later cited as a key insight of several of the founding nation-builders of Latin America:

“Hidalgo, Morelos, Bolívar, Petion the Haitian, the Argentineans in Tucuman, Sucre, all were concerned with the liberation of the slaves, with the declaration of the equality of all men by natural right, and with the civil and social equality of Whites, Blacks and Indians. In a moment of historical crisis, they formulated the transcendental mission assigned to that region of the globe: The mission of fusing all peoples ethnically and spiritually” (Ibid.:19).

Two features of this conception of mixture as consumptive fusion stand out. First, the fusion in *mestizaje* presents an unequally valued contribution of white, Indian and black races or cultures. It is, above all, white social organization, work ethic, and Christian morality that is uplifting and enabling of Latin American societies. Second, each race gives

6 Miller (2004) provides a full analysis of *The Cosmic Race*, its predecessors, influence in different Latin American countries, main critiques, and its resonances with other nation-building ideologues as well as important figures within Latin American literary and artistic movements. For example, a cursory review of Gilberto Freyre's influential *Casa Grande e Senzala* is enough to find many resonances with Vasconcelos' ideas in Brazil's nation-building narrative, synthetically referred to as the myth of the three races.

its contribution to the mix, but, through *mestizaje*, indigenous culture is inexorably bound for assimilation. *Mestizaje* and “assimilation” are both metaphors for consumptive fusion.

On these subjects Vasconcelos writes:

“The Indian has no other door to the future but the door of modern culture, nor any other road but the road already cleared by Latin civilization” (Ibid.: 16).

“This mandate from History is first noticed in that abundance of love that allowed the Spaniard to create a new race with the Indian and the Black, profusely spreading white ancestry through the soldier who begat a native family, and Occidental culture through the doctrine and example of the missionaries who placed the Indians in condition to enter into the new stage, the stage of world One” (Ibid.: 17).

Let us now consider how these ideas appear in more contemporary Latin American understandings of *mestizaje* and its relation to indigenous people.

Rosenblatt, in a comprehensive two volume study on the state of *mestizaje* and indigenous peoples in each Latin American country writes in 1954:

“The sign of America is the fusion of peoples and races. The indigenous population and that of African origin tend to incorporate themselves to the population at large. In some regions that incorporation is already almost complete (Argentina, Uruguay, Costa Rica). In the rest there is an alternation with more violent contrasts. But alongside these we always find the intermediary forms, with a progressive tendency to whitening. The extremes are increasingly less representative, numerically... The general tendency is the Europeanization of the continent” (35, my translation).

Without reference to specific policies, he also stresses that moves towards a more humane treatment of Indians will result in their de-indianization.

“We welcome the *indofilia* of recent times that is born from a humanitarian and generous impulse. We welcome the rediscovery of the Indian and the new indianist policy that responds to a broad sense of justice. But it is indubitable that the more generous the attitude towards the Indian, the more humanitarian society behaves towards the Indian, the sooner it will incorporate him/her to the activities of modern life, society will de-indianize him/her sooner” (Ibid.: 33, my translation).

Europeanization, whitening or de-indianization: different names for the same process of a white/western dominated consumption of indigenous cultures *via mestizaje*. This prediction, that in many Latin American countries was a prescription, is, at least in the Venezuelan case, the net result of making *criollo* culture coincide with national culture. Thus, the humanization of the treatment of Indians could not be seen in other terms. Clastres ([1980] 2010) reminds us, in his text on “ethnocide”, how the cultural destruction of peoples at that hand of missionaries has always been cast as an exercise in humanism. As we shall see in our next section, despite Venezuela having entered an era of multiculturalism, “social inclusion” policies can end up being as inattentive to native social and cultural forms, as the previous tactics of “assimilation”. What indigenous people in Venezuela are being included into is, in effect, a re-defined version of *criollo* culture, the set of relations the state has defined as appropriate for its subjects in a new national project.

The following are extracts of the opinions of three particularly renowned intellectual and political figures in Venezuela that show the resilience of the main ingredients of *mestizaje* ideology.

Consider Arturo Uslar Pietri, one of the best regarded Venezuelan intellectuals of the 20th century (writer, politician, journalist, once minister of education):

“The historical country called Venezuela is alien to the pure Indian, the pure Black and the pure Spaniard. As alien as Guaicaipuro would be to the historical and cultural reality of our collective being, would also be king Miguel de Buria and Diego de Losada. What we have received from each one of them, in variable degree, we have mixed and modified in a thousand ways. We carry a heritage from all of them in the language, in the customs, in the skin, but what has resulted from that mixture, namely Venezuela, *is something fundamentally different from what they represented in their pristine and pure being*. The nation has been built through a process of *mestizaje* that is not only of blood, but of spirit and sensibility and what has resulted, taken together, *is different from the pure Spanish, the pure Black and the pure Indian*” (2008: 342, emphasis added, my translation).

Guillermo Morón, member of the national Academy of History, goes further, writing of *mestizaje*, not just as a past fusion, but as a desir-

able policy towards the final consumption of all forms of indigenous life. The text is taken from a high school history reader:

“Should indigenous communities be preserved? This cannot be desired by anybody. Communities are destined to slowly disappear although today’s comprehensive and well-established political action is speeding up this process. We must hope that in a near future – with the conquering of the forest and when all the lands are filled with towns and cities – there will remain not a single group speaking Carib or another aboriginal language... To hope for the contrary is to preach for a backtracking in the cultural process to stages already overcome by the country.

The Indian is part of our history as a composing factor of *mestizaje*; in this way it accomplished a purpose that no one can deny him. But it is necessary to assimilate him altogether, integrate him to our way of understanding culture. *Mestizaje* is the historical means for this incorporation” (Morón, 1974: 16, my translation).

It can only be from the *criollo* position, that has internalized the mandate to “make society” and direct the national project, that one can say what the historical purpose of a people is and when it has been accomplished.

Paradigm shifts foster controversies that have the virtue of exposing mainstream understandings that otherwise remain unsaid, installed in automatic behaviors and situational predispositions. My last extract is also the most recent, and it expresses the significance of *mestizaje*, as we have described it, in *criollo* thought. It appeared in the context of Venezuela’s official assumption of its multicultural character (that came with the 1999 constitution) which explicitly subverted this national origin myth.

Reacting to President Chávez’s announcement of his decision to change the name of Columbus Day (October 12) from *Día de la Raza* to *Día de la Resistencia Indígena*, Jorge Olavarría, at the time a well-known and respected politician among the Venezuelan middle class, explained in a nationwide-newspaper article.

“The truth is that the integration of the aboriginal peoples to the new *mestizo* societies that began in the sixteenth century was the first formative step of the Hispanic peoples of America. In contrast to what occurred in Anglo-America, there was neither segregation nor annihilation of Indians, but rather they were incorporated to the culture and the fundamental values of the Western Chris-

tian civilization to which we belong... These were the values that Bartolomé de las Casas and many others preached and wrote about, to defend the human rights of the Indians, rights that Indians neither knew nor recognized . . . What Chávez decrees to commemorate in an inverse and contrary way of what happened, ignores or denies what the Franciscans, Dominicans, and Jesuits did to gain for Catholicism the Hispanic peoples of America ...The indigenist-Marxist interpretation of history denies the evangelizing work of Spain...[that] planted the seed of Christ in the ductile souls of Mexicas, Mayas [long list of ethnic groups] vertebrating in the Christian ethics the mestizo societies that were hence formed” (Olavarria, *El Nacional*, 12.10.02, my translation).

Uslar Pietri, Morón and Olavarria’s comments expose the unawareness of Eurocentricism in *criollo* thought. *Criollos* see Indian others with the eyes of European others when taking a deep look into themselves.

- o -

My argument is that the dominant and integrative role of *criollo* culture is fully congruent with the theory of *mestizaje*. In preaching the construction of nations through the workings of a fusion machine, *mestizaje* is nothing less than the theory of history at the service of the *criollo* project of transforming their culture into a national culture.

Let us return to the “captive” predicament of the *criollo* position. Carrera Damas speaks of the self-imposed limit on fully accessing indigenous and Afro-American creativity *criollos* have historically been subject to, when trying to resolve the dilemma of establishing an autonomous and original national culture for themselves. In search of a “positive definition of itself” *criollo* culture struggles to free itself from its identification with metropolitan culture but forbids itself from identification with the dominated cultures, for this compromises its position of dominance and would oblige an overhaul in the configuration of the internal (national) power structure (Carrera Damas, 1988: 38-40).

Criollo culture is in an in-between position and its relations to metropolitan and dominated cultures - indigenous and Afro-American - are articulated by a neither-nor logical operator. This seems to be the essence of its “captive” aspect and a conundrum that goes far back in Venezuelan history and perhaps goes beyond the issue of cultural originality.

In his famous Speech for the Angostura Congress in 1819, Simón Bolívar speaks of the specificity of American-born *criollos*:

“...We are not Europeans, we are not Indians, but a middle species between the aborigines and the Spanish. Americans by birth and European by law, we find ourselves contending with the natives for titles of ownership and trying to maintain our rights in a country that gave us birth against the opposition of invaders; thus, ours is the most extraordinary and complicated case” (Bolívar in Uslar Pietri, 2008:229, my translation).

“We are not Indians, we are not Spanish”, this middle position, this “neither nor” place, is fully consistent with the dominant notion of *mestizaje* as the consumptive fusion that yields a new type, *criollo* culture, which is neither one nor the other of the mixture’s original ingredients, because it is a fusion machine. “Neither nor” ‘inbetweenness’ strikes me as one of the persistent features of the Latin American elites’ search for their historical, geopolitical and cultural place in the world.

- o -

We can now thread the elements of the argument I wish to put forth. The following aspects of the *criollo* cultural formation are all congruent and re-enforcing: a) the double “struggle of contraries”, the acceptance and rejection of European and indigenous cultures together with the “dominant” and “captive” relation to others and itself; b) the neither-nor logical operator articulating the *criollo* position *vis-à-vis* Europeans and indigenous peoples. This operator is the sign of the unresolved state of the *criollo* positional contradictions; c) the theory of *mestizaje* understood as consumptive fusion of cultures that ends up in a novel type.

I noted above that *mestizaje* is the theory of historical transformation *criollos* fashioned for themselves. Self-serving as it may be, it is important not to dismiss it as wrong, but rather to see it for what it is: the auto-ethnographic analysis of *criollos* through their relations with others. As a *criollo* theory, *mestizaje* speaks more of *criollos* than of Indians. What we need is to match *mestizaje* against what we learn about indig-

enous peoples when we examine their understandings of relations with others, *criollos* in particular. This is the object of sections IV and V.

Finally, given that *criollo* culture, the product of *mestizaje*, is the culture of the political elite, their point of view is equitable to that of the state, which is implemented as policy. The implicit proposition is: One state = One culture, National culture, *Criollo* culture. *Criollo* culture, subscribes to a theory of the historical fusion of the many into the One. In a Clastrean phrasing, it is a theory “for the State”, in a quite literal sense.

Our next section is devoted contemporary state-Indian relations in Venezuela, where I hope to show the resilience of what we have said about *criollo* culture and *mestizaje* despite the official adoption of multiculturalism by the Venezuelan state.

III. FROM MESTIZAJE TO MULTICULTURALISM

Venezuela voted, in 1999, a new multicultural constitution. Particularly in its initial years, the “Bolivarian revolution” recovered the indigenous issue from official oblivion. These, and other changes in the State’s relation with indigenous peoples, provide us with an “acid test” of sorts, for they appear flatly incompatible with the configuration Carrera Damas describes for the *criollo* elite. The legal recognition of indigenous peoples, along with the granting of cultural and territorial rights, amounts to the acknowledgement that the nation is composed by distinct peoples with specific and equally legitimate cultures. Officially, the nation’s identity moves away from the image of a homogenous *criollo* nation, thus putting an end to the project that equated *criollo* culture with national culture. This would seem to be the final release of the barrier that kept *criollos* from fully acknowledging indigenous peoples as autonomous entities.

The rise of the indigenous issue within the Bolivarian Revolution is part of a more general renewal of official discourses of national identity and culture and the promotion of Latin American integration. Government-sponsored media constantly celebrate traditional Venezuelan culture, and several national cultural institutions, hitherto dedicated exclusively to universal “high culture”, now mix their programs with a variety of national cultural manifestations. Bank notes of the new Venezuelan currency, the Strong Bolívar, include - in contrast with the previous notes - an array of historical figures and images representative of the country’s cultural and environmental diversity. The notes include images of Guaicaipuro and Negro Primero, the former, an Indian symbol of resistance to Spanish colonial powers, and the latter, an Afro-Venezuelan hero of the independence wars. President Chávez used to publicly comment on his indigenous ancestry and occasionally recalled experiencing the dire reality of the Pumé and Cuiva Indians in the State of Apure, where he was posted as a young army officer.

Since the ratification of the 1999 constitution, legislation that guarantees rights to indigenous people in Venezuela has been growing. In

2001 the International Labor Organization's Convention 169 was ratified, and in 2003 a law was enacted to further land demarcation processes. The Organic Law of Indigenous Peoples and Communities, dealing with specificities for the implementation of constitutional rights, followed in 2005. So, while many of the constitutional rights remain to be adequately guaranteed for indigenous peoples, the legal grounds on which to fight for them has become increasingly solid.

In the face of the gap between indigenous rights on paper and their implementation, perhaps the rapid growth of indigenous political participation in mainstream politics has been more relevant in terms of the political clout of indigenous individuals. By law, indigenous peoples are accorded three representatives in the National Assembly (parliament). There has been an Indian governor in Amazonas for three terms. In the states of Amazonas, Bolívar, Delta Amacuro, and Zulia, Indians have been elected as mayors. A new ministry for indigenous people was created in early 2007, and Indians have headed the Indigenous Peoples offices of the ministries of health and education for several years. The number of Indians incorporated into local and regional governments and ministries has also grown.

A final significant change can be registered in the content and relevance of official discourse on Indians. Indigenous people have been officially portrayed in at least three ways during the Bolivarian Revolution, all of which associate Indians with the nation rebuilding process and thus make them key symbols of the new nation (cf. Angosto, 2008). Indians have become a state symbol of resistance in a rereading of history that provides a different origin myth of the nation-state. Thus, the traditional name for the twelfth of October, *Día de la Raza*, suggesting a nation born from the mixing of races - as we have discussed, generally considered a felicitous process of improvement - has been changed to *Día de la Resistencia Indígena*, suggesting a nation born from the indigenous struggle against the Spanish empire. Indigenous peoples are named as heroic forbears of the nation alongside the heroes of the independence wars in the preamble of the 1999 constitution.

This image of indigenous resistance is attuned to the discourse of struggle for a more just society and the rejection of - mostly American -

imperialism on which the current Bolivarian project is predicated. The historical continuity between the two Bolivarian moments - independence and the Chávez period, two births of the nation against imperialism and social injustice - gives the new nation a politically motivating image, an anti-imperialist and fighting essence. Indians provide a connecting thread for this history, an ideological operation of making indigenous and national history coincide.

More recently in the Bolivarian period indigenous peoples have been cast as the original socialists. Reprising the thoughts of the early twentieth-century Peruvian socialist José Carlos Mariátegui, the government's political ideology, known as the "twenty-first century's socialism", is often cast as having roots in an indigenous socialist ethos as opposed to other forms of socialism. Drawing on images of indigenous communal life and values provides a political philosophy consistent with a spirit of resistance and thus adds a socialist essence to the anti-imperialist nature of the new nation.

A third crucial way in which Indians appear in governmental discourse is as historically excluded citizens and, along with peasants and the urban poor, prime objects of re-dignifying government policies. As hyper-excluded peoples, they simultaneously represent the dire results of the unhampered spread of dominant political and economic forms and values (capitalism, neoliberalism, individualism, materialism) and become prime candidates to demonstrate the benefits of the application of the opposite principles (socialism, cooperation, solidarity) promoted as the basis of government policies.

We could question the veracity of these descriptions, whether Indians are or are not like this or that. Anthropological criticisms of essentialism and Romanticism are well known, but we cannot forget that these images are produced in a specific political environment. The rebuilding of the nation is precisely about inventing traditions, selective essentialization, making emblems, and differentiation from moral enemies.

It is not hard to see in Indians' symbolic relation to the rebirth of the nation a repetition of history with a twist. Whereas independence was obliged the *criollo* elite to align themselves with Indians as victims of, and opponents to, foreign oppression - an identification of *criollos* with Indians - in the Bolivarian period the ideological operation repeats itself, aligning indigenous history of resistance with the new nation's anti-imperialism - again identifying *criollos* with Indians. Considering the added socialist ethos that Indians offer to the Bolivarian project, and the growth of their numbers within government ranks, we could consider this a process of national "indianization", a twist not apparent in the independence-induced realignment of *criollos* and Indians.

In Carrera Damas' analysis, the *criollo* position towards Indians after independence quickly fell back to acceptance-negation scheme: Indians were citizens *vis-à-vis* the new republic but nonetheless needed to be incorporated, criollized or de-indianized for its fruition. Has this structural relation taken a new configuration in the new multicultural era? Let us consider the degree of implementation of rights and forms of political participation.

Having been identified as excluded citizens, Indians are now consistently included in governmental social programs. These programs have highly diverse objectives, such as education (from basic literacy to higher education), food provision and security (from subsidized food outlets to special food packages for the elderly and sick), cultural promotion, reforestation, and micro-economic development. There is no doubt many indigenous communities have benefited from all these programs, but one cannot help pondering about the pertinence of some of them and about the way they have been put in place, when considering these two aspects in case of the Yanomami of the Upper Orinoco. Often, these programs are applied with little or no adaptation to local culture or history; program managers are also pressed to produce results and demonstrate maximum "social inclusion", at any expense. Little follow-up on implementation is carried out. Some programs are launched with much publicity and soon wither into oblivion. One of the main activities of the Ministry for Indigenous Peoples has centered on the distribution of food and other materials, activities that one would be hard pressed to

distinguish from the “uplifting”, “civilizing” and otherwise incorporating ethos of a time against which the Bolivarian government contrasts itself.⁷ Neither does the clientelistic manner in which the regularly substantial municipal resources are distributed mark this period off as singular; on the contrary, in this regard, the flow of goods and salaries provided in clientelistic terms has intensified. Alongside this sea of programs, health indicators among the Yanomami, for example, remain painfully high, infant and general mortality rates are orders of magnitude above national averages. This Yanomami example illustrates how, when socio-political and cultural differences with the general criollo population are marked, it has been extremely difficult for the Bolivarian social inclusion effort to take them into account. Ridding itself from vices such as clientelism and chronic policy discontinuities has also been a challenge.

One of the more notable consequences of this new period is the change in character of the indigenous movement. From militant non-governmental organizations fighting for specific rights during the ‘80 and ‘90s, during the Bolivarian period, many of the more seasoned indigenous representatives have incorporated themselves into government bodies in both the executive and legislative branches of power, occupying, alongside *criollos*, positions of policy execution and resource management, and increasing their participation in mainstream party politics. Initially, owing to its historical granting of indigenous rights, the Chávez government was generally seen as allied with the indigenous cause. The caution with which indigenous leaders first couched their demands and grievances has progressively eroded and been met by the government’s own indigenous personnel to dialogue and negotiate. Nowadays the public face of indigenous politics is to be found mostly in state-sponsored, large-scale events: “Primer Congreso Indo América Joven en con-

7 In the 2010 annual report (*memoria y cuenta*) of the Ministry for Indigenous Peoples we find the following: “Vulnerable communities are those that find themselves in extreme poverty, dislodged from their ancestral territories, displaced as a consequence of the assimilationist policies of discrimination and extermination implemented by the governments of the IV Republic that directed the destiny of the Venezuelan nation up to the coming of the Bolivarian revolution, with total absence of the recognition of ancestral rights” (Cited in Bello, 2010: 314, my translation).

tra de la Miseria y el Imperialismo”⁸; “Segundo Congreso Continental Gran Nación de Pueblos Indígenas Anti-imperialistas”⁹; “Jornadas de Formación Tecno-política Internacional de Pueblos Indígenas”¹⁰ (Bello, 2010:311). This has become the official and legitimized form of indigenous political expression. Behind the scenes, indigenous public officials tend to articulate an informal support network across the different government bodies they belong to, and sometimes with indigenous organization representatives, mainly to overcome the inefficiency of the state apparatus and to sense the views coming from the community level.¹¹ Taking into account more than a decade and half of the Bolivarian government, what we have seen is the progressive transformation of the indigenous movement, from being constituted by civil society organizations, to a combination of what Angosto (2015) calls a ‘state-supporting and state-sponsored’ movement, and a critical civil society movement (composed by old and new indigenous organizations). With a shifting and porous frontier between these two sectors, the first has prioritized socio-economic betterment over territorial and self-determination rights (and is thus aligned with the government’s agenda); the second, without forfeiting their participation in social programs, maintains the banner of political autonomy and territorial rights, this being, along with the increase in illegal mining in indigenous lands, the basis of their dissatisfaction and criticism (again cf. Angosto, 2015).¹²

8 “First Indo-American Youth Congress against Misery and Imperialism”.

9 “Second Continental Congress: Great Nation of Indigenous Anti-Imperialist Peoples”.

10 “International Tecno-Political Training Workshop for Indigenous Peoples”.

11 The operation of this kind of network was fundamental to the work of the Indigenous Health Office of the Ministry of Health where I worked for several years. The network included all sorts of kin and friends from the indigenous movement involving governors, mayors, indigenous organization leaders, parliamentary representatives and members of different branches of the executive power.

12 The exceedingly polarized Venezuelan political field works against the indigenous movement finding an alternative channel to voice their demands. Whereas indigenous organizations have increasingly become critical of the government they are far from seeing in the political opposition a viable ally. One reason for this - more based on my knowledge of the situation in Amazonas state - is they are not against the government in principle but rather critical of its practice. Neither has the political opposition engaged indigenous peoples at large other than to criticize the government. High governmental sensitivity to criticism and a tendency to quickly see it as opposition politics, regardless of its source, also tempers and sometimes limits indigenous organizations’ political strategies.

What about territorial rights, the quintessential indigenous demand? The vast majority of land titles given to indigenous peoples are comparatively small extensions and have been given to groups of communities, rather than to territorialized indigenous peoples – the exceptions being the Yukpa and Bari in Zulia state and the Mapoyo in Bolívar state. South of the Orinoco, unquestionable indigenous lands, like those of the Yanomami, Yekuana and Piaroa, among others, remain to be demarcated. The more successful demarcation cases, like those of the Hoti and Pemon, are but fractions of the total territories traditionally occupied by these peoples. A recent assessment by COIAM (*Coordinadora de Organizaciones Indígenas de la Amazonía Venezolana*, 2014), a forum gathering many grass-roots organizations in Amazonas state, stated that demarcation processes have been very slow and comparatively little land has in fact been legally recognized as indigenous. The Yekuana-Sanema territory of the Caura basin in Bolívar state is fully compliant with the law and has been waiting for presidential sanctioning for several years – no doubt its large extension and the growing illegal mining activity in the region have worked against its approval. Obstacles to land demarcation include its perceived incompatibility with national sovereignty and territorial integrity and the apparent conflict it presents to national development schemes and Latin American integration projects (specifically oil ducts, gas ducts, roads and electric lines connecting Venezuela with Brazil and Colombia). My general impression is that the government has long been internally divided in relation to indigenous land demarcation, and that if some may see it favorably, there have been enough who are not sufficiently convinced as to its convenience, fear its potential consequences, or are more attuned to economic interests that would be affected by land demarcation. This delay in land demarcation becomes ever more problematic if we consider the steady growth of illegal mining and associated illegal activities (fuel smuggling, prostitution, the spread of armed groups) in indigenous areas in the last decade or so, some of which depends on the complicity of government officials. The appearance of large-scale mining projects in the governmental policy horizon, which are perhaps thought of as a solution to curb the aforementioned illegal enterprises, just seems to augment the list of obstacles to demarcation.

The role of the Ministry for Indigenous Peoples merits special attention because it epitomizes an inherent contradiction in the way indigenous political participation has evolved: the division of loyalties between defending indigenous rights and communities and defending government strategic orientations and implementing its policies. Thus far, the Ministry has unfailingly folded in the government's direction, becoming its staunch promoter among Indians rather than the inverse.¹³ On territorial issues, contrary to constitutional principles, the Ministry for several years championed a community, rather than people-oriented, policy for the granting of land titles, promoting 'communal councils' and 'communes' among the indigenous population, thus subsuming land demarcation process under the nation-wide, and government-led, geopolitical reorganization of the country (for a more detailed account see Angosto, 2010). Moreover, the Ministry in its 2011 annual report, had among its guidelines "raising awareness among indigenous communities of the importance of having the Socialist State direct the exploitation of strategic and mineral resources so that they can be distributed with equity among communities" (MINPPPI Memoria y Cuenta, 2012:3, my translation). Although no further statements of this kind can be found in latter reports, it is clear where the Ministry has stood in relation to the long-lasting confrontation between the State's access to natural resources and the right of indigenous peoples to their lands. Finally, as most public institutions do, the Ministry has been active in fostering public demonstrations of solidarity with government decisions, policies and candidates; in the public media, it strives to present its work in terms of the incorporation of indigenous peoples into government plans, projects and more general orientations (e.g. the socialist project, see Angosto, 2010).

13 Luis Angosto who has written on the Bolivarian government's relation with indigenous peoples comments: "Great expectations were formed with the creation of the Ministry among those who thought it would become an organ to channel demands from indigenous communities to the government. In general, it was perceived positively by the indigenous organizations of civil society...In practice, we realize the natural essence of the Ministry: it is a promoting arm for government policies and projects in indigenous areas... (Angosto, 2010: 122-123, my translation). Another, more critical analysis of the Ministry's performance can be found in Perera (2009).

Another of the main thrusts of the Ministry has been the transference of economic aid to indigenous communities. This is done in two forms. The first is the distribution of a wide range of material aid conceived as measures for poverty alleviation. Beyond their questionable efficacy, these measures look more like an intensification, than a re-orientation, of past governments' projects for indigenous peoples. The second, much more consistent with the people-empowering side of government practices, is the financial aid given to indigenous "communal councils" for the implantation of projects defined by the communities themselves. Many groups of communities that have come together to constitute these councils (there is a law that regulates this matter) have benefited from this more bottom-up approach to development and rent distribution - this being perhaps one of the few points of agreement that currently exist between supporters and critics of the implementation of Bolivarian policies among indigenous people.

- o -

It is undeniable that the new juridical and symbolic place of Indians represents a sea change in favor of indigenous peoples and that this opened unprecedented possibilities to reduce discrimination and inequality. In this or that ministry, for longer or shorter periods, specific culturally-sensitive policies have been put in place. The increased presence of indigenous peoples and their problems in national political debate is an indispensable step towards the engagement with multiculturalism, beyond its mere recognition. It is equally true that in general, Bolivarian policies have fared better at treating indigenous peoples as an undifferentiated part of the impoverished population, than as collectivities with socio-political and cultural distinctiveness. Put otherwise, indigenous people have strengthened their position as citizens of the Venezuelan petro-state, given the higher share of rent they have access to (cf. Coronil, 1997). And yet this has come less as an addition to, and more as a substitution for, strengthening their position as indigenous peoples with specific social, economic, political, cultural, and territorial rights. Whilst many indigenous people may be satisfied with, or have surren-

dered to, this either-or state of affairs (cf. Angosto, 2015), this is neither what people like the Yanomami appear to desire (see section IV), nor the spirit of the multicultural Constitution of 1999.

The State's promotion of uniform modes of political and economic organization and participation; its difficulty in avoiding a homogenizing vector in its social inclusion policies; and its reluctance to recognize indigenous peoples as collective subjects of territorial rights amounts to a negation of indigenous peoples as societies - i.e. with no social organization of their own, nor territories in which to live it out. The essence of the *criollo*-Indian relation remains: acceptance, and now promotion of cultural flow and exchange, coupled with the negation of indigenous societies as such. Indians continue to be called upon to contribute to a monolithic end - previously the *mestizo* nation, nowadays the Bolivarian-socialist nation.

What has been implemented for Indians by the state as policy and extracted from them by government discourse, exposes the shortcomings of multiculturalism when it is decoupled from the social contexts of its emergence. Strathern (1995) notes the "traveling power" of the culture concept cannot be found in that of society. Furthermore,

"Its ubiquity becomes a problem when culture ceases to work as a relational term...For as long as culture was understood as referring to local forms or expressions, it was thus contextualized by other descriptions of (social) relations between people. What is likely to disappear nowadays is that relational contextualization" (157).

Ethnic minorities are not societies. From the state perspective, indigenous collectivities are fragments of an all-too-mobile culture to be "expressed" in whatever social context, not lived out within specific social relations. In these terms the state/*criollo* absorption of indigeneity, its indianization, inevitably also results in the "statification" of Indians. This is the state's very own form of "indigenization", and the encompassing ground for all the "indigenizations of modernity" (Sahlins, 1997) taking place among indigenous peoples.

Latin American indigenism in the past half century rightly devoted much time and effort to reverting the invisibility of Indians within

each nation state. This hard-won battle fought by indigenous peoples themselves and their non-indigenous allies served a necessary purpose of putting the “indigenous issue” into national political debate. It appears, nonetheless, that it is time to recognize that visibility has come less as a solution to invisibility and more as an added set of challenges. State multiculturalism brings problems of its own and it is imperative for us to ask to whom Indians have become visible; and into what are they being “included”. So far, for indigenous people like the Yanomami, objectives such as land demarcation, tending chronic health crises, and keeping illegal mining at bay, have played a distant second fiddle to inclusion and participation in the government’s more general agendas. So it is, that beneath the recent visibilization of indigeneity, the invisibility of indigenous socialities continues unhampered, concealed by the policies directed to indigenous peoples and understood as “repaying an historical debt”, “including”, “redeeming”.

IV. ANTI-MESTIZAJE: A CASE OF NON-FUSIONAL MIXTURE

In this section I discuss the manner in which the Yanomami of the Upper Orinoco speak of their recent historical transformations and detail some of the main features of how their hybrid Yanomami/*criollo* context of life is played out. In Venezuela, where *mestizaje* ideology is being challenged by multiculturalism, Mansutti Rodríguez (2006) rightly observes some of the issues this raises for mainstream *criollo* thought:

“What troubles the ideologue of *mestizaje* is for Indians, being biological and cultural *mestizos*, not to acknowledge themselves as ‘westernized *criollo mestizos*’ and for them to reaffirm cultural difference instead of dissolving it in the dominant and accepted cultural syncretisms. This is a matter of ‘*mestizo* Indians’ who cannot be recognized as ‘Venezuelan *mestizos*’ because they persist in being culturally Indian and this disrupts the societal homogenizing ideal that imposes the standard *mestizo*” (2006: 19, my translation).

Through the ethnographic analysis of a Yanomami case, I want to exemplify how, among indigenous peoples, we can find those who do not recognize themselves as “westernized *criollo mestizos*” because they do not share the *criollo* theory of consumptive fusion implied by *mestizaje*. We have made it clear so far that *mestizaje* is a theory of mixture and transformation specific to the *criollo* elite and made “national” by the expansion of *criollo* culture. I can only argue thus if I can propose the existence of an alternative view on mixture. It is to this alternative that we now turn.

The Yanomami conventional sociopolitical space

The Yanomami people in Venezuela occupy a large territory stretching from the southern part of the state of Bolívar and the south-western corner of the state of Amazonas. In Amazonas, they occupy some 250 communities dispersed along the Upper Orinoco and Siapa watersheds.

Their socio-political organization was best described by Albert (1985) and can be summarized, from the point of view of any given

community, as the articulation, through marital, economic and verbal exchanges, of a group of geographically close allied communities, further circumscribed by a number of communities classified as “enemies” (Y. *napë*) or potential enemies, who live at an increasing spatial remove from the reference community. With these latter communities exchanges involve different kinds of harmful relations that cause disease and death, including raiding with arrows, stealth sorcery attacks, aggressive long-distance shamanism and the killing of animal alter-egos by members of communities who inhabit the limits of the known social and geographic space. All deaths are considered to be caused by the aggression of enemy Yanomami or of a number of non-human spiritual agents such as *yai* demons or *pore* spirits of the dead. Even if social categories such as allies or friends and enemies are stable, the shifting nature of political relations makes the content of each category historically contingent: allies can become enemies and vice-versa. Henceforth, I shall refer to this socio-political organization based on degrees of amity or enmity, articulated by different forms of positive and negative exchange involving an etiological and pathogenic content as the “Yanomami conventional (socio-political) space”.

Ocamo, the gradient of exchange and “becoming napë”

Santa Maria de los Guaicas - known today simply as Ocamo - is the name of the Salesian mission located at the confluence of the Ocamo and the Orinoco rivers, founded in 1957 by Fathers Cocco and Bonvecchio among two Yanomami groups - the *Iyëwei t^beri* (the blood river people) and the *Rihu una t^beri* (the chigger people). The original population of both groups totaled 59 Yanomami. The mass provision of manufactured products fostered the accretion of relatives who had been living higher up the Ocamo and the Padamo rivers. By 1972 the population of Ocamo had grown to 139 Yanomami (Cocco, 1972: 479). In 2001 Ocamo was a cluster of ten communities in the close vicinity of the Salesian mission. Most are the product of internal fission in the original communities.

Community size ranged from 7 to 75 people, amounting in total some 370 people.

Ocamo has a permanent health service and the Salesian's intercultural bilingual school that runs up to sixth grade. In addition to the primary school and the health post, Ocamo hosts a branch of SUYAO, the Yanomami economic cooperative. Here Yanomami can exchange indigenous products like baskets and arrows for machetes, pots, cloth, fishing nylon and hooks, soap, lamps, and such. All these items can also be bought with cash, an option available to a growing number of Yanomami who earn salaries or are related to those who do. Some women of Ocamo also work sewing cloth to make shorts and T-shirts or weaving nylon hammocks in the Watota, a female side of the cooperative. Ocamo is also a node of *criollo*-oriented political activity. *Criollo* politicians, as well as *criollo* representatives of state institutions, are obliged to include it in their itineraries and hold meetings there, for it represents a block or sector, a Yanomami decision-making unit *vis-à-vis* the state.

This arrangement of a cluster of communities settled around a Salesian mission, a school, a health post and an economic cooperative repeats itself in the clusters of Mavaca, Platanal, and Mavakita further up the Orinoco river.¹⁴ Given the location of these clusters, I shall refer to the Yanomami living there as "Orinoco Yanomami" to distinguish them from those living up different tributaries and beyond.

As we move away from the Orinoco, access to health and education services becomes intermittent and quickly fades to almost nothing. Access to manufactured goods, obtained by exchange with the Orinoco communities, is more widespread, but at a further remove from the clusters, these too drop in quantity and quality. More expensive prestige items such as outboard motors and shotguns are found almost exclusively in Orinoco communities.

After some 60 years of permanent presence of *criollos* (mainly missionaries and different kinds of health workers), and with their goods and services unequally distributed among Yanomami communities, it is

14 A similar structure can be found in the mid and highland clusters of Koyowë and Parima B where the New Tribes Missions was in operation until 2006 when they were expelled from indigenous territories by President Chávez.

easy to perceive a gradient of exchange and participation in things and processes coming from the world of *criollos*, decreasing outwards from the communities originally settled around the missions.

Becoming napë and the “napë transformational axis”

Ocamo people’s narratives of the transformations they have undergone during this period concentrate on two aspects: their changing body and *habitus* and the acquisition of *criollo* knowledge. On the one hand, they refer to using clothes, knowing how to eat *criollo* foods, possession of manufactured goods, zinc roofing, etc. On the other, they focus on how they have learned to speak Spanish, read and write, handle money, and in general have learned to deal with *criollos* in economic exchange and politics. Yanomami understand these aspects as two inseparable facets of a single “civilizing” process, which boils down to the addition in their lives of a context of relations where a *criollo* sociality can be enacted. Yanomami may refer to this process by the term *napëprou*, “becoming *napë*”, *napë* in this context meaning “*criollo*”.

So it is that nowadays we find, alongside the “Yanomami conventional space”, which continues to determine relations between Yanomami communities, a new context of relations, or a new “space”, that sprung from the use of the conventional space to conceptualize relations with *criollos*, their objects and the diseases they brought in their train (see Albert, 1988). This innovational space is structured, not along ally-enemy lines, but rather, along the different degrees of transformation into *napë*, observable as one moves away from mission cluster communities. I shall call this meaningful context of relations the “*napë* transformational axis” because of its relatively linear up-river / down-river configuration.

A register of the co-existence of these two “spaces” is found in the use of the term *napë*. In the first one, *napë* has connotations of alterity in terms of enmity. Its simplest meaning is foreigner, non-Yanomami, and hence potential enemy, as reflected in a series of derivative terms, such as *napëmai*— “to hate, to detest or have aversion for someone”—and *napëmou*— “to threaten, to show hostility” (Lizot, 2004: 250). Yet the

semantic field of *napë* has another side that refers to *criollos*: *napëai*, “to begin to know the *criollos*, to imitate them, to have their objects” (250); *napëmou*, “to behave like *criollos*; to speak Spanish”; and *napëprou*, “to become *criollo*”. In both cases, *napë* is a strictly relational concept referring to how one person or group stands relative to another. The *napë* semantic field encompasses the historical shift in relations with *criollos*, from enemies to sources of *criollo* bodies and knowledge. The fact that *criollos* are still called *napë* reminds us that the innovation is an extension and not obliteration of convention: *criollos* retain an enemy-like aspect.

This “*napë* transformational axis” implies a history of becoming *napë* in the terms described above, but, most importantly, it is a context of relations that distinguishes Yanomami people as being more or less *napë*. Up-river communities who live deep in the forest, have little knowledge of the world of *criollos*, no access to state-provided health and education, and fewer and more worn-down manufactured objects can be considered “real” Yanomami when contrasted with Orinoco communities who consider themselves “*civilizados*”. On the same basis, down-river communities from a place like Ocamo, composed by other ethnic groups and *criollos* are considered more *napë* than Orinoco community inhabitants. “Real” *napë* are people who live far from the Upper Orinoco, in cities and that are more powerful, in constructive or destructive terms, than the resident *criollos* (local missionaries and doctors for example) who, through co-residence and conviviality, become something like attenuated versions of real *criollos*.

In this context, the category “*napë*” is complementary to “Yanomami” which is correspondingly contextually variable. With reference to themselves only - the Yanomami that is - the neighboring Yekuana can be seen as *napë*. When the context involves non-indigenous people, all Indians can be spoken of as Yanomami. Only in a mythical context can *criollos* be considered Yanomami, for they too are the result of transformations of ancient Yanomami. Beyond this, in no context are *criollos* considered Yanomami, and in this sense, they are *napë yai*, “true *napë*”. The Yanomami term “*yai*” connotes meanings of “real, essential, true”, its Spanish equivalent in Yanomami usage is the term “*propio*”.

Hence when Ocamo Yanomami say they are “*civilizados*” they are implicitly referring to this becoming *napë* (civilized) history and contrasting themselves with the upriver compatriots who have travelled less far down this transformative road. Most importantly, for Ocamo people there is no contradiction between being Yanomami and “*civilizado*”. Both aspects can be contextually emphasized with pride.

What the condition of *civilizado* enables is a kind of hybridity or Yanomami/*napë* duality that allows Orinoco Yanomami to assume a *napë* position in relation to up-river communities - by channeling goods in their direction, for example - or a Yanomami position when faced by real *napë* - when they demand goods from missionaries and doctors or when they demand proper health and other services from visiting state representatives. Taking up a Yanomami or *napë* position is a performative matter, by which I mean not theatricality - which is how *criollos* see it - but the conventional assumption of a position in hope of affecting another person according to one’s desire, highlighting one “side” of the duality while eclipsing the other. This spectrum of possibilities includes, of course, the assumption of a Yanomami position when faced with other Yanomami - contexts in which Orinoco Yanomami downplay any difference they have with upriver folk - or the assumption of a *napë* position among *criollos*, for instance, when Yanomami mingle with *criollos* in the city of Puerto Ayacucho.

There is an additional complexity to this performative spectrum. In my analysis, many exchange relations between Orinoco and up-river Yanomami are meaningful in both the *napë* transformational and Yanomami conventional contexts. To give a machete to an up-river fellow differentiates an Ocamo Yanomami as *napë* in relation to the receiver in the *napë* transformational context. And yet it conveys an opposite collectivizing sense in the Yanomami conventional context where giving such an item relieves a kinsman from the suffering or indignity of lacking an appreciated tool. The exchange or gift differentiates in one way and establishes a moral continuity in another. The same production of simultaneous differentiating/collectivizing meanings can be found in contexts where Yanomami engage with *criollos*.

The Yanomami/*napë* duality we have been describing is specific to Yanomami engagement with the world of *criollos*. That a person can be conceived as dual and partible is not. Duality is found in the human/spirit nature of Yanomami and many other Amazonian shamans, manifest in their capacity to alternate from human and spirit points of view in order to defend, through curing and attack, their kin and community. Beyond shamanism, duality is experienced in the process of disease and death when a person's internal invisible self/other aspects become tangible. Death is seen less as special moment where life ends and more as the progressive transformation of the living person into a ghost of the dead. In the process the relation between a sort of dormant ghost aspect of the person and his/her invisible aspect related to conscious processes is progressively reversed: the ghost within, this Other aspect constitutive of the person, ceases to be dormant and takes command over the invisible aspect related to consciousness (Albert, 1985). This is why the kin of a seriously ill person may say that s/he "does not feel like a person" (Y. *pubi Yanomamimi*) or that s/he is no longer recognizing her/his kin. In preparation for a war raid, Yanomami can incorporate affects of different spirits of the forest (Y. *bekura*) thought to transfer their specific capacities useful for success in the raid (Ibid.). In another sense, all Yanomami know themselves to be consanguinal kin to some people and affine kin to others. All these are manifestations of a self/other duality constitutive of the person.

Contrasting Yanomami hybridity with mestizaje and the criollo position

Having exposed the outlines of Orinoco Yanomami inbetweenness and hybridity, we are now in the position to compare it with *criollo* culture's own inbetweenness and view of mixture, as we have discussed them in sections I and II of this essay.

Mestizaje and anti-mestizaje

It must be clear by now that this Yanomami hybridity is anything but *mestizaje*. It does not involve a consumptive fusion of difference, but rather the adding of a different (*napë*) sociality which allows Orinoco Yanomami to differentiate from upriver Yanomami and down river *napë* to different political effect. Difference, in the form of “real” Yanomami and “real” *napë*, must exist at the poles of this axis, because it enables the possibility, by creating contexts for incorporating difference and contrasting against it, of being Yanomami and civilized. With the imperative of expanding *criollo* culture, armed with a notion of *mestizaje* that has always been a matter of whitening or westernization, *criollos* are motivated to “incorporate” or “assimilate” indigenous difference hoping to transform the Other into a self. The Yanomami relation with *criollo* culture involves an incorporation of difference that seeks to transform the self into Other. On all these grounds we can properly call this hybridity “*anti-mestizaje*”.

On civilization

To be civilized in this Yanomami understanding means first and foremost the incorporation of a context of experience, or a “side” of the person, that amounts to the addition of an Other’s sociality or set of conventions. There is a wealth of anthropological literature that testifies that this is in-keeping with the origin of culture for many Amerindian societies: typically cultural items and practices – adornments, songs or rituals – have been acquired through exchange or theft from human or non-human others, either in mythical or historical times. This sense of civilization does not imply the self-domestication of supposedly natural human dispositions, in imitation of how culture domesticates nature, that western senses of civilization and culture carry (Strathern, 1980). Neither is it cast in evolutionary terms, in which the passage from putative primitive stages implies the definitive leaving behind of henceforth untenable beliefs or social forms – from magic to science; from band to

state; from kinship to contract and so forth - in a trajectory of indisputable human improvement.

The non-contradiction with which Yanomami experience their Yanomami/*napë* duality (their civilized status), is in stark contrast with the perspective of *criollos* in Amazonas state, for whom being Yanomami, the regional epitome of indianness, is irreconcilable with civilization. In the wider context, *criollos* have historically opposed Indians to civilization, initially identifying them with barbarism and then with the backwardness that needs to be overcome to escape under-development.

Being criollo vs. becoming napë

Yanomami, or least the large majority I have come to know over the years, do not aspire to be *criollos*. My impression is that Yanomami aspire to more control and a leveling out of power relations with *criollos* in order to continue producing kin and community with a hybrid Yanomami/*napë* quality. Not so much wandering off to live in a *criollo* city or transforming their community in imitation of one, but reaping the benefits of living in the forest, exchanging and visiting kin and allies and experimenting with *criollo* sociality and culture, whilst ameliorating the effects of their increasing integration into the nation-state mainly through access to healthcare and training in health and education. This duality is somewhat experimental, more about the experience of *criollo* affects, the incorporation of new capacities that allow for more amiable relations with *criollos*, on the one hand, and for a contextual and political differentiation, from their upriver (less transformed) compatriots, on the other. Yanomami becoming *napë* is neither a matter of identification - a desire to be *mestizo* or *criollo* - nor resistance, a flat out negation of *criollo* culture. It is a form of other-becoming, perhaps akin to the deleuzian sense of the term. *Criollo* culture is like a horizon and source of 'particles' of *napëness*. The excitement, the kick, is in the becoming and not the arrival at a permanent *napë* state.

For *criollos* the transformations apparent among people like the Yanomami can only be seen in terms of exiting an Indian, lower stage

of progress, and entering a *criollo* higher one. The passage is a historical transformation, a complete change of phase. This is how *mestizaje* is understood, a fusion that creates a new, and hopefully improved, type. For the Yanomami becoming *napë* is not being *criollo*. The whole sense of *napëness* is lost if Yanomaminess is not always present as a collectivizing motivation or a contrasting context for differentiating action. The transformations in Yanomami life have indeed happened in time but are not historical in *criollo* terms. They are instead analogous to mythological transformations that resolve themselves in post-mythological time in the figure-ground reversals that characterize human-animal relations. Animals retain a human soul remnant of their mythological human status within their animal bodies. If in one sense animals constitute past (mythological)-present composites, they also constitute the co-presence of alternative conventional worlds. Mythological states are sequentially superseded by different circumstances (other states) in post-mythological time, but they also constitute a permanent or inexhaustible source of capacities and qualities of the world in the form of the contemporary spirit aspect of all that is. Accessing these capacities and qualities is what shamanism is all about. This correlation between past and present and their alternative conventions is what we find in the articulation of *napë* transformational and Yanomami conventional contexts as they are lived out by Orinoco Yanomami. Correspondingly, the alternations from *napë* to Yanomami positions are analogous to shamanic positional and perspectival shifts (Viveiros de Castro, 1988). In short, instead of a linear historical sequence we have a temporal mythico-shamanic bifurcation of conventional worlds.

Forms of domination, captivity, rejection and negation

In Carrera Damas' analysis, *criollos* are dominant (in the internal power structure) and captive of their own negation of the dominated cultures. This dominant-captive condition is a correlate of the double "struggle of contraries" involving acceptance and rejection of Euro-American and

indigenous and Afro-American cultures. In this regard we find further contrasts when we compare *criollos* to “civilized” Yanomami.

The non-contradiction between being Yanomami and being civilized is an indication that Orinoco Yanomami do not reject or negate either *criollo* or Yanomami culture. The introduction of bio-medicine and its practices in state-provided health posts, for instance, has not dented Yanomami shamanism. Access to the biomedical, “modern”, western, system is seen as useful against diseases and a step in becoming *napë*, but it does not require the relinquishing of the shamanic, “pre-modern”, Yanomami system. The two health systems are conceptually and practically complementary in Yanomami understanding. Orinoco Yanomami also actively engage in *criollo* and Yanomami politics. In general, there is constant participation in both Yanomami conventional and *napë* transformational meaningful contexts when interacting with other Yanomami and *criollos* alike.

Because there is no negation of their own or another’s culture (Yanomami and *criollo*), their articulation involves no contradiction of the type that marks the *criollo* position in between two “struggles of contraries”. *Criollo* inbetweenness articulates with Euro-American and indigenous cultures with a NEITHER-NOR logical operator. A positive self-image, of what would otherwise return emptiness, is provided by *mestizaje*: a new type resulting from the consumptive fusion of the cultures *criollos* neither-nor are. In the Yanomami case, it is an AND operator that articulates Yanomami and *napë* positions. Orinoco Yanomami oscillate between one and another position, alternately eclipsing Yanomami and *napë* meanings. As relational positions, *napë* and Yanomami can only function as full states, they cannot fuse into each other, any more than you can meet a tall-short person. Neither can you be half-and-half, you can only swing from one full state to the other. In short, the AND operator is a correlative of *anti-mestizaje*: instead of the historical consumption of cultures you now NEITHER-NOR are, the alternating experience and figure-ground articulation of one Yanomami AND another *napë* conventional context.

Now to domination and captivity. Differentiations on the “*napë* transformational axis” introduce an element of hierarchy into up-river /

Orinoco community relations and the former may experience this as humiliating. It is also true that Orinoco Yanomami have the upper hand in upriver-Orinoco Yanomami marriage obligations and in military capabilities. In short, Orinoco communities hold political, economic, marital and military advantages over upriver ones. But there are compensating factors. For example, Ocamo Yanomami may extract women from upriver communities in marriage without the young men moving to the woman's community and working for her parents as is expected in the traditional bride-service regime. This loss for the upriver community may be compensated by a hard to come by item such as a shotgun, but more importantly, the upriver community has gained a down-river ally that will represent its interests in *criollo* political terms - securing the upriver community a place in projects, or in the delivery of goods or salaried posts. Ocamo Yanomami may also refrain from venturing upriver when they have nothing to balance out a previously acquired debt. In broad terms, the permanence of the "Yanomami conventional space", in which alliance and enmity are played out - including, for example, invitations to funerary rituals, ceremonial dialogues between distant communities, the procurement of shamanic services, military alliance - and the maintenance of a morality that Yanomami value and involves the appropriate management of exchange relations with co-residents, allies and enemies serves as a counterbalance to the establishment of something approximating a fixed class structure, and ultimately collectivizes the Yanomami as a whole as against *criollos*.

The power Orinoco Yanomami exert over their upriver counterparts depends on mediation and control, of relations and goods that originate in the world of *criollos*. This mediation between *criollos* (mainly state representatives) and upriver communities does not involve blocking the latter's access to new benefits, so as to make them an exclusive privilege of Orinoco communities. On the contrary, Orinoco Yanomami promote increased access to health and education services, as well as the flow of manufactured goods upriver. Upriver-Orinoco inter-marriage and the wider web of kinship relations derived from them, secure Orinoco Yanomami alliance in this regard. When upriver Yanomami are critical of their Orinoco counterparts it is on the grounds of their

mediation not being sufficiently effective. Orinoco Yanomami tend to excuse themselves, blaming *criollos* and pointing to their stinginess and overall lack of real interest in Yanomami welfare. In any case, the expression of this power and inequality does not involve, as in *criollo*-Indian relations a negation of Yanomami society. It is precisely the obligations stemming from the socio-political organization we have been referring to as the “Yanomami conventional space”, shared by Orinoco and upriver Yanomami alike, that keeps inequality within the dominion of the *napë* transformational context and impedes the formation of a class structure. Finally, given the creative engagement of Orinoco Yanomami with *criollo* and Yanomami culture, their middle position does not make their hybrid culture a captive one, as it does for *criollos* in the terms of Carrera Damas’ analysis.

Making society vs becoming napë

If we recall our exposition in Section II, the double acceptance/rejection position of *criollo* culture ends up taking a European model of *society* – the foundations of the modern state – and selectively tolerating the less morally objectionable aspects of indigenous *culture*. The relation to European or western paradigms and indigenous ones is also one sided: *criollo* culture consistently identifies with the western paradigm of society (i.e. the modern state) and consistently differentiates against indigenous people, negating their society. In this latter regard, the Yanomami offer another contrast for they seem to occupy *napë* and Yanomami positions in *criollo* and Yanomami scenarios quite unproblematically. Their forms of incorporation and differentiation are not one-sided.

But it is in the negation of the other’s society where I find Yanomami and *criollos* in agreement. The historical *criollo* project of civilizing the Yanomami, most aptly incarnated in missionary activity since the 1960’s, involved the inculcation of *criollo* patterns of decency, like the use of clothes, nuclear family housing, hygiene practices; conversion to Christianity; the adoption of *criollo* political and economic forms, like the installment of community chiefs (the local term is “*capitán*”), and pro-

motion of productive projects. These efforts have been sustained with different degrees of intensity, intention and success. The introduction of biomedical health services (first by missionaries and then the Ministry of Health) and the formal bilingual education program (delegated to Salesian missionaries on the Orinoco) are also marking features of the overall State-Yanomami encounter. This constitutes the local expression of the more general effort at “incorporating” Indians into the national *milieu* that is characteristic of the *criollo*/state-Indian relation. All the elements of this project that were consonant with Yanomami becoming *napë*, that is, all that involved the incorporation of *napë habitus* and knowledge have been, as we have discussed, welcome by the Yanomami by and large. In effect, they can’t get enough of it, this being the main content of their demands to state representatives.

The other, less obvious but more transformatively powerful, element of *criollo* civilizing, involves the establishment of fixed conventions for “living in society”; the rules allowing for the smooth running of health and education systems, for example. This is where Yanomami becoming *napë* and *criollo* civilizing, afford friction to one another. *Criollos* (missionaries, doctors, state representatives) tend not to identify any social organization among the Yanomami and hence see them as overly disordered and inconstant. Correspondingly, an important component of their activity with the Yanomami involves the creation and recreation of rules and agreements. It is very often overlooked, for example, that the main problems surrounding the articulation of western and indigenous health systems is not the differences *criollos* and Indians indeed have involving theories of disease, the body and health, but the difficulty in grounding the systematicity of the services provided, organized as they are in technical-administrative terms, within a social organization such as the “Yanomami conventional space”. In short, where Yanomami and *criollo* understandings of the process of civilization differ most fundamentally, is with regard to the latter’s effort to “make society”, which finds no counterpart motivation among the Yanomami. The conventional sociopolitical space is a community-centered organization that does not construct an overarching totality and, what is more critical, does not separate political power from the social relations within

the community (Clastres, 1974). Nothing like a “social contract” or supra-community political representativity is germane to the Yanomami conventional space. In this sense, it is correct to say Yanomami have no society, and it is predictable that *criollos* should feel the urge to inscribe it among them, in the form of rules and *capitanes*. It is incorrect, nonetheless, to suggest Yanomami have no social organization; it simply does not take the form *criollos* recognize as such because their most familiar form of society is their own state society.

It can be said, then, that becoming *napë* is a form of incorporating *criollo* culture at the expense of *criollo* society. Relations between Yanomami and resident *criollos* and the administrative bodies they represent, involves the constant accommodation of partially overlapping projects and expectations (that include a mutual interest in improving health and education, for example); between becoming *napë* and making society; coupling society with the Yanomami conventional space. In the process, the local forms of these health and education systems sustain an organizational compromise between Yanomami and *criollo* forms.

If this constitutes a resistance to *criollo* society on the part of the Yanomami, there are also more explicit expressions of what could be seen as a rejection of *criollo* society. Yanomami tend to be critical of *criollo* stinginess and the bossiness they come to know through resident *criollos* (missionaries, doctors, soldiers, anthropologists). In another context, I recall a Yanomami friend mentioning how in the city of Puerto Ayacucho, capital of the state of Amazonas, “nobody helps you, everything is done with money”. Another friend mentioned his surprise in seeing homeless people in Puerto Ayacucho scavenging in garbage mounds. Both these memories crept up when, reading Davi Kopenawa’s auto-ethnographic and “cosmopolitical manifest” (to use Albert’s words), I came across the following comment by the renowned Yanomami spokesman on the occasion of his visiting the UN in New York.

“However, if at the centre of this city [New York] houses are tall and beautiful, on its edges, they are in ruins. The people who live in those places have no food and their clothes are dirty and torn. When I walked among them, they saw me with sad eyes. That made me feel sorry. Those whites that have created commodities think they are ingenious and brave. However, they are stingy and

take no care of those among them who are deprived of everything. How can they think of themselves as great men and find themselves so clever? They don't want to know anything about the miserable ones among their own people. They reject them and let them suffer on their own. They don't even look at them and are satisfied to call them, at a remove, 'poor people'" (Kopenawa & Albert, 2010: 460; my translation).

Comments on the lack of generosity and disregard for others, along with Kopenawa's more profound reflections, make me think that those Yanomami who have more knowledge of the *criollo* world reject their lack of kinship and the equanimity with which they tolerate inequality, that goes with it. In other words it is *criollo* society - epitomized in the relation between the citizen and the state, the very inverse of kinship - that is rejected whilst their culture - their objects and technologies - are incorporated as part of *napë* becoming.

V. OTHER FORMS OF ANTI-MESTIZAJE

This section is devoted to exploring some other cases of indigenous people that experience their mixed status in ways that are incompatible with the consumptive fusion inherent in the notion of *mestizaje*. This short review of the literature serves to dispel any possible doubt that Yanomami duality, as I have described it, is an exception, a point out of the curve. In taking examples from peoples with very different histories of exchange with colonial agents and national societies, this brief survey also allows us to suggest that anti-*mestizaje* is perhaps a pretty widespread phenomenon, and that it must have its roots in indigenous transformational potentialities not accountable for by reference to a specific case of contact and exchange with Latin American *criollos* and their respective state. Though not exhaustive, the account I offer is long because it is the first review, to my knowledge, of native understandings of mixture in the anthropological literature on the region.

My first case is based on Gow's (1991) ethnography of the Piro, an Arawak speaking people who live in the Bajo Urubamba area of the Peruvian Amazon. I dwell on it extensively because it is an ethnography from which I have drawn much inspiration for my own analysis among the Yanomami, and also because it is based on a people with a much longer history of contact than the Yanomami. The comparison suggests that anti-*mestizaje* can be quite resilient to historical developments.

Piro people's history of exchange with non-indigenous society covers more than two centuries, including Catholic missionaries and/or the indigenous peoples under their influence; hit also by the rubber boom; next working as bond-laborers in local white-owned *haciendas*; then missionized and educated by protestant missionaries; and finally attended directly by Peruvian state institutions leading to the regularization of schools and the establishment of legally sanctioned "*comunidades nativas*".

In the 1980's Piro people spoke of themselves as a "mixed blood" and civilized people. The mix refers to the bringing together, in the time of the *haciendas*, of different indigenous groups that previously lived in en-

dogamous dispersed settlements fighting each other. This cohabitation began the sequence of generalized intermarriage that, in Piro understanding, is at once the genesis of kinship and the beginning of history. This mixing that made and continues to make kinship, is the history of how they got to where they are, living in “*comunidades nativas*”, and is one basis on which they differentiate themselves from both “forest people” and “whites” who live beyond this kinship-history.

“It is clear” Gow writes,

“that the category *gente nativa* is constructed on the basis of kinship...They are *gente de caserío*, ‘village people’, or *gente de chacra*, ‘garden people’, in opposition to ‘city people’ and to ‘forest people’. All these are idioms of kinship, references to the sources of kinship in people’s corporeal strength, in their work in producing gardens and villages” (1991: 266).

Furthermore,

“Neither ‘white people’ nor ‘wild indians’ are associated with these values of kinship. Neither ‘white people’ nor ‘wild indians’ eat ‘real food’, nor do they work in the production of gardens or villages. ‘White people’ eat ‘fine foods’ and live by ‘doing business’... ‘Wild indians’ do not eat real food, but disgusting and undercooked food. They do not make gardens or villages, because they live in the forest” (Ibid.: 267)

In a different but interrelated context, their being “civilized” is contrasted to the life of other indigenous groups, like the Yaminahua, who live deeper in the forest, and seem to refuse full participation in the regional economic system that brings in manufactured goods, “fine things”, in exchange for indigenous products or labor and that binds whites, living in regional cities, with people like the Piro, forest dwellers who live in “*comunidades nativas*” on river banks.

For the Piro, time - the process of self-transformation; space - the localities typical of peoples with different degrees of civilization that can be linked to the stages of self-transformation; and kinds of people - social categories such as “wild Indians”, “*civilizados*” and “whites”, that as relational positions, are available for any to assume given the establishment of appropriate economic and living arrangements - are intimately

linked in a way analogous to what I have called a “*napë* transformational axis” for the Yanomami.

The co-existence of a meaningful context of kinship–history that allows for differentiation with significant others in one way and a context integral to the transformations and meanings established through participation in the regional economic system, that allows for differentiation against others in another, is, again, very similar to what I have described in terms of the articulation of “conventional sociopolitical” and “*napë*-transformational” spaces.

Like the Orinoco Yanomami, Piro people are not only at a mid point between a more “Indian” and a more “white” pole but also live out the crossover and hinging of these two meaningful contexts: they share certain qualities with whites that distinguish them from “wild” Indians in one context, but they also share qualities with these Indians that differentiate them from whites, in the other.

“When asserting this civilized status, native people point to their real villages, with legal recognition and schools, and to their consumption of the ‘fine things’ which circulate in *habilitación*. It is on this basis which they contrast themselves to ‘forest people’. But equally they contrast themselves as *gente nativa*, ‘native people’, who eat ‘real food’ and who live by working, to *gente blanca*, ‘white people’, who eat ‘fine food’ and who live by doing business. Both are assertions of moral superiority but they are never brought together by native people. The ‘civilized people’ category cannot be opposed to the category ‘native people’, but nor are they coterminous. Not all ‘civilized people’ are native people, nor are all native people ‘civilized’. The important thing is that the native people of the Bajo Urubamba are both” (Ibid.: 265).

The Piro mixing and kinship–creating machine, if one may call it that, like the Yanomami *napë*-becoming is not consumptive of the differences that compose it.

“It is the existence of these peoples who lie outside of kinship, and hence outside of the category *gente nativa*, which allows history to continue. History has made the ‘white people’ of the Bajo Urubamba less than ‘real white foreigners’ and the Amahuaca less than ‘real wild indians’ as they have come to be included within kinship. But the existence of ‘white foreigners’ and of ‘wild Indians’ who are not included in kinship means that history, and hence kinship, can go on being produced” (Ibid.: 268).

A crucial element common to both Piro and Yanomami hybridity is the always partial sharing of qualities of those in the middle position with those situated at the opposite pole positions. This always partial overlapping is due to the fact that what is shared in one context, the conventional socio-political or kinship-history context or the “*napë* transformational” context, the one symbolized by the status of “being civilized”, is not only not shared in the other, but actually conceptually excluded from the other. It is this impossibility of full participation of “whites” and “uncivilized Indians” in both meaningful contexts that makes the becoming element of *napë*-becoming the central focus of the process; it is the ongoingness, the transformation that is relevant to life, complete, finished, overall conversion into the Other is neither desirable nor possible. This suggests why neither Piro nor Yanomami want to be *mestizos* and why whites are, by and large, kept at the fringes of kinship, which is where they are useful as providers of goods and knowledge to constitute hybrid Yanomami or Piro persons and communities.

The hybrid status and middle position of the Piro is shared by many indigenous groups that constituted themselves during missionary reduction processes in the 16th and 17th centuries in the Upper Amazon in Peru and Ecuador. Regionally known as Christian or “tame” Indians they formed buffers and bridges between whites or *mestizos*, and those “wild” Indians (*indios bravos*) who fled or refused missionary reduction and later remained on the fringes of the regional economic system, which was structured by the rubber boom. It is not uncommon to find ethnographic descriptions of these people having two “sides”: one experienced as the “Christian” or “tame” aspect of their lives active in *milieus* and relations considered “white” (e.g. town ritual life or commercial exchange) and another, “forest” aspect associated with their living in the forest river margins and/or active in relations with other indigenous groups considered “wild”. Gow (2009) speaks in these terms of the Jeberos, Cocama, Cocamilla, Lamista Quechua, Chayahuita and others as having constituted, out of the mission reductions, a regional inter-ethnic system in the Bajo Huallaga river in Peru.

Taylor (2009) uses the same language for situating the Canelos Quíchua in neighboring Ecuador:

“The highly dynamic indian societies of colonial origin such as the Canelos and the Shiwilu are relatively diverse both in their initial ethnic conformation and in their salient cultural traits. Nonetheless, they share a number of features that justify treating them as a single class. They are all built around the linkage between their dual ‘faces’, the one they present to nonindigenous outsiders as ‘tame’, Christianized, ‘civilized’ indians (*alli runa*, in the idiom of the Canelos Quechua) and the one they present to their *auca* Indian neighbors as knowledgeable and powerful *sacha runa*, forest people (Whitten, 1976). Their major collective rituals, combining elements of the Catholic liturgy and of the Andean system of *cargos*, are centered on the enactment of the mediating role that constitutes them as distinct societies with a specific identity. These rituals explore the tension between, on the one hand, the state of savagery incarnated by the *indios bravos*, who are also presented as a metaphor of the *mansos*’ own past as projected in their historical discourse, and, on the other hand, the mechanized, predatory world of white men, representing an equally fearsome mythic future” (140).

As Gow’s and Taylor’s descriptions testify, in both these cases the dynamic of relations between the different peoples of the region involves a complex system where binary meaningful oppositions – like Christian vs. wild or city vs. forest – are cast out of a triadic field of social categories including wild Indians, tame Indians and whites or *mestizos* which function as positions with associated temporal as well as spatial correlates.

- o -

I now turn to a case involving a people whose Indian/white mixture is not related to colonial missionary activity, and cannot be tied to their participation in a wide regional economic system, such as that articulated by the Amazonian rubber boom and its later derivatives.

The Wari’ are a Txapakura speaking people, living in the state of Rondônia in Brasil. The first encounters of whites with the Wari’ took place at the beginning of the 20th century, they later suffered persecution by *seringueiros* (rubber tappers) and were finally “pacified” in the late 1950’s (Vilaça, 2000: 64). The attraction efforts of the Brazilian Indian service led them to establish themselves next to institutional Indian posts which later became villages composed by different Wari’ sub-groups, other Indians and local whites. Living together with whites and

Indians considered foreigners and denoted by the term *wijam*, “enemy”, the Wari’ took on the white elements of their life: clothes, whites’ foods, tools and other useful or “luxury” objects.

Wari’ understand many of the behaviors typical of animals and persons to be rooted in their bodies in what has become known as a perspectivist notion of the body (Vivieros de Castro, 1998). The term “body” points, first and foremost, to what a specific entity can do, to what relations it can establish, to what and whom it can affect and how, and vice-versa, to what and who can affect it. The body is thus a habitus and affords its bearer certain capacities or dispositions. Wari’ shamans say they have two bodies, meaning that their spirit partakes of social life with a specific animal species in the same way as their physical body entertains everyday life in the Wari’ village. The body/spirit duality is coupled with a human/animal duality such that a shaman’s spirit is a human body among the animal *socius* that the rest of the Wari’ only know as forest (mostly prey) animals. In this perspectivist ontology (Idem.) the animals a shaman refers to, see themselves as human beings with Wari’ culture and correspondingly see living Wari’ people as animals of prey. This human/non-human duality allows the shaman to move in and out of these two social worlds, alternating between the perspective of living Wari’ and animal spirits. Alternation between ontological positions and assumption of their corresponding points of view are the means used to cure kin and attack enemies in Wari’ and many other forms of Amerindian shamanism. This excursion into Wari’ shamanism has been necessary because Vilaça argues that the becoming-*wijam*, or becoming-white of the Wari’, involves an alternation between Wari’ and white bodies analogous to shamanic switching between human and animal points of view. This is why Wari’ may say they are “fully white” at no expense of their being Wari’.

Vilaça’s analogy holds if we consider Wari’ shamanism and inter-ethnic relations as temporal processes. A Wari’ man becomes a shaman by establishing affinal ties with a spirit-animal people which is what underpins his dual body, life and perspective. At death, the shaman ceases to be dual, for he finally marries the woman that hitherto was his animal bride and he himself fully transforms into a member of the animal species. It

is the unrealized or potential affinity that allows for the duality of the body. Now let us move to the inter-ethnic historical context. In their new settlements, Wari' have intermarried with the named sub-groups and other Indians previously classified and treated as enemies (*wijam*). With them, real affinity has effectuated a process in which enemies have become "us": *wijam* became Wari'. But the Wari' do not marry whites, who are now alone in being called *wijam*. The Wari' have preferred to have whites as a kind of "intimate enemy". As with the shaman's unrealized affinity, it is their not marrying whites that allows for a duality of experience; it keeps the difference from collapsing; it avoids complete transformations.

Thus far we have been dealing with people who, on the whole, keep whites beyond or at the fringes of kinship. It would seem that the possibility of anti-*mestizaje* mixture hinges on avoiding intermarriage with whites. Let us now consider Nunes' (2010) ethnography among the Karajá, a Macro-Gê speaking people of central Brazil. It is interesting to our discussion, for despite their relatively open policy towards marriage with non-indigenous locals (known as *tori* in their language) beginning in the mid 1970's, that is, despite their having the obvious biological ground for what is understood by *mestizaje*, they speak of their mixture in anti-*mestizaje* terms.

Buridina is a small Karajá community, a tiny pocket of indigenous life immersed in the city of Aruanã in the state of Goiás. Nunes (Ibid.: 205) mentions how they have long been characterized in the ethnological literature as heavily acculturated and that today they indeed carry all the features that would suggest their full blending into the surrounding non-indigenous society: use of clothes and a full set of western technology, use of the Portuguese language and a diet barely distinguishable from the regional one. In fact, Aruanã dwellers consider Buridina just another quarter of city. Nunes describes the history of this community as involving an active choice, on the part of their founders and their descendants, to experiment and learn how to live the life of the *tori* (Ibid.:215). Nowadays 77,8% of marriages involve *tori*. Buridina people speak of three main categories of people: pure Indians, *mestizos* (born from mixed marriages) and *tori*. This notwithstanding, they have conceptually dislodged

the fusion implied by intermarriage from culture, in such a way that, so long as indigenous culture is present in their lives – elements like language, ritual life, shamanism and other practices characterized as markedly Karajá – marriage with whites is relatively inconsequential to them being Indians. So it is that for Buridina Karajá everything has two sides; people are struck through by duality: the food they eat, the language they speak, their personal names, are both karajá and *tori*. Their interaction with the city is conceptually organized around community life where the “Indian law or way” holds and beyond the community gates where the “law of *tori*” reigns. All in all, Nunes’ analysis confirms our previous conclusion that the world of whites for the Buridina Karajá is experienced as an other sociality added to their own and where the language of mixture refers, not to fusion or blending of cultures, but to the possibility, and in this context the need, to alternate from one sociality to the another and achieve a mastery of both. One of Nunes’ informants casts this duality in terms of *tori* and Indian memory chips that Buridina people must switch as they move from community to city and back: “Thus we must have these two memories, both are very important for us” and then he continued, with an expression of caution recognizing this is not an innocuous situation “but you must know how to deal with them, if not a person may go mad. It will not be long before we have people fishing in the road”. If the two sides fade into each other that would “muddle things up” (2012: 97-98, my translation).

- o -

Up to this point in our review, we have concentrated in cases marked by the tendency to “become white” that appears in many ethnographic contexts in Lowland South America. We should not lose sight, however, of the underlying process as one of “becoming other”, or of how this “other” is also subject to the alternative of “becoming Indian”. I cannot offer here an equivalent analysis of these processes, which are increasingly common to many indigenous groups. In general the analysis of these cases has been undertaken in another theoretical language that includes themes like “territorialization” and “ethno-genesis” very much

circumscribed by the more favorable juridical status of Indians in Latin American legal charters stemming from the recognition of indigenous rights in national constitutions and other international legislation such as the 169 ILO convention. The analysis of this variant of “becoming other” in an idiom equivalent to that which has been recently developed for “becoming white”, and the contrast it might offer to the understandings generated by concepts of “ethno-genesis” and the like, remains, by and large, an open field of enquiry. I shall thus limit myself to a brief presentation of a case for the sake of illustration of the potential for this kind of exercise.

A recent paper by Marcela Coelho de Souza (2010), ethnographer of the Kisêdjê (also known as Suya) people that live in the Xingu indigenous park in central Brazil, offers us such a possibility. After a long history in the Xingu river area marked by successive migrations and inter-ethnic relations oscillating between harmony and hostility, the Kisêdjê are the only Gê speaking people that partake of the multiethnic and plurilinguistic complex established in the Xingu indigenous park. They do as a marginal group that, as several others in similar conditions, has undergone a significant incorporation of the traits that have made the dominant groups of Xingu famous, including elaborate inter-tribal rituals, sophisticated musical repertoire, exuberant body decoration and a pacifist ethos in which inter-tribal ritual, as opposed to hostility, guides interaction with the others. In short, their long history of relations with their Xinguano neighbors and their accommodation into the Xingu indigenous park has fostered an “acculturation” or “xinguanization” rendering their cultural life into a mixture of Xinguano and Kisêdjê forms. In the wake of Brazilian policies of cultural promotion, the Kisêdjê have turned to the reconstitution of their own culture against a Xingu background where “culture” is epitomized by the Xinguano features and where people like the Kisêdjê appeared as having no culture at all, or at least no culture of their own, due to the aforementioned xinguanization. The interest of the Kisêdjê case Coelho de Souza describes, lies in that beyond this “becoming Kisêdjê” having the Xingu forms as a backdrop and implying a kind of “de-xinguanizing” effort, it occurs within a Kisêdjê self-appraisal of the kind we have been discussing, that is, the percep-

tion of their “becoming white”. The increasing participation in the culture of whites occurs alongside Kisêdjê “revivalism” as two simultaneous and non-contradictory unfoldings of “becoming other”. Coelho de Souza casts both processes as matters of differentiation, in Wagner’s (1981) terms of de-stabilizing (Xinguano) convention, where both “white” and “Kisêdjê” function as attractors for Kisêdjê becomings.

“Kisêdjê revivalism is a conscious effort, but it seems to me, that in all these initiatives they are less concerned with differentiating themselves from their neighbors (or whites) than with *differentiating from themselves*. ‘When we were pure Indians’, as the daughter-in-law of the chief says referring to the times when they were xinguanized kisêdjê... ‘Purity’ here is relative to the culture of whites: ‘*purinbos*’, ‘really pure’, is how they qualify, with admiration and some nostalgia, the peoples they see in films, without clothes and with traditional ornaments, in communities and houses without aluminum pots, cement constructions and other industrialized objects. If today she says they are ‘becoming white’, it is because of their diverse experiences of involvement with the knowledge, food, clothes, machines and so many other objects (and customs) they obtain from their relation with us. That involvement is actively procured as a means of auto-transformation that does not imply any contradiction with the rebirth of ‘ancient’ (pre-Xinguano) kisêdjê culture – on the contrary. As with the knowledge of whites, access to that other knowledge (ancient culture) is also a means of auto-transformation. This is a Renaissance, in which the indigenous interest is certainly not to ‘remain the same’ (and much less a return to the past). If there is something they surely want to preserve, it is not a culture, but the integrality of their ‘social’ relations (intra and extra human), and for that it is necessary to continue transforming themselves, (differentiating)... Faced by a xinguanization that was already there – that was *given* – as ‘convention’, to become white (in the sense of appropriating whites’ knowledge and instruments) and becoming kisêdjê are part of the same movement” (ibid.: 106, emphasis in the original, my translation).

We are faced here with another form of inbetweenness. Neither the identity search of *criollos* between Indians and Europeans, nor quite the middle point in a network of relations between poles of whiteness and Indianness as in the case of the Yanomami and the Piro, it is the acculturation into Xinguano culture that now allows for a two-pronged white-and-Kisêdjê becoming. Acculturation into Xinguano culture gives the Kisêdjê the possibility of inventing themselves towards both their ancient forms and white ones. And if acculturation is a pervasive current of self-invention (always in Wagner’s (1981) terms) in Lowland South

America, we have reason to believe that the singularity of this Kisêd-jê example is only apparent, owing less to the specific circumstances of cultural promotion in Brazil, and more to the this wide-spread quality of self-invention itself. Whatever else can be said about the non-contradiction or the analytical inappropriateness of terms such as “tradition-ism” and “modernization” (see Salhins, 1985; Coelho de Souza, 2010), this language would be referring to processes with strands of continuity with the way peoples have always invented and transformed themselves out of their past and present contexts, in shifting intra and inter-ethnic political circumstances.

- o -

My final example turns to the Tzeltal, a maya speaking people living in the state of Chiapas, Mexico. In doing so, we leave the Amazonian scenario, whilst remaining within the realm of Amerindian-white relations, thus slightly extending the comparative reach of our analysis.

As they are described by Pitarch (2010), the Tzeltal of the Canuc district, instead of offering the highly westernized outward appearance we could expect from 450 years of Spanish and Mexican contact, come across as a strikingly Indian presence. The region is “exceedingly conservative culturally, even by Chiapas highland standards” (Ibid.: 16). And yet what is more remarkable is that, it is the world of Tzeltal souls, that has, somewhat monopolistically, absorbed all the elements of historical inter-ethnic relations that Tzeltal bodies and *habitus* don’t evoke.

Tzeltal cosmology comprises a “solar world” derived from the appearance of the sun and consists of opaque matter with a stable identity; things pretty much as we see them. Then there is another world, “the other side”, referred as the sacred *chu’lel* state of things in which all is flux and instability (Ibid.: 2).

Humans have an array of this “other side” within them in the form of souls which can number from four to sixteen. One such soul, also called *chu’lel*, is located in the heart and has a human bodily appearance, the others, called *lab*, can take the form of animals, atmospheric phenomena, and other things. All these souls, as encapsulated fragments of the

“other side” within the body, are not simply spiritual representatives of ordinary beings; they are shot through by signs of European culture. In Pitarch’s rendering:

“In other words, Indian/European polarity is the privileged figure of difference. Animals, spirits, the dead and other forms of ‘otherness’ that make up the array of Indian souls are subsumed in a more fundamental plane of difference related to interethnic relations. What is more, the distinction between body and souls reproduces the contrast between the Indian and the European: if the body, which is outermost, public and ordinary, is culturally Amerindian, the hearts (and souls), which are its antithesis, are distinguished by their European qualities” (Ibid.: 6).

This coupling of the body/souls division with the Indian/European opposition means that, contrary to the Christian and Western tradition, the soul is a site not of identity and continuity but of strange otherness, epitomized by the figures and practices of European culture. The catalogue of souls include “Catholic priests, scribes of the Crown of Castile, schoolteachers, Mexican cattle ranchers, metallic instruments, goats, sheep, and chickens...” (Ibid.).¹⁵

The *chu’el* souls inhabit the heart but, as members of the “other side” they have a double or counterpart that resides in a mountain. Each of the main Tzeltal lineages has a mountain containing its souls. This place is made of things imagined by the souls and is also overtly non-indigenous.

“The inside of the mountain has thirteen stories, one on top of other in a pyramid shape, and these in turn are divided into numerous compartments with doors and windows, which include lounges, chambers, anterooms, studies, corridors, vaults, stairs and storerooms. All the rooms are magnificently appointed, with huge tables, armchairs and benches, and beds or bunks in the bedrooms” (Ibid.: 25).

The souls in the mountains also have a markedly non-indigenous political organization:

“Each mountain has a lineage council, complete with civil servants, that is elected every four years from among the most capable souls. There are also embas-

15 This description of the European alienness of Tzeltal souls, provides a vivid example of how the soul for many Amerindian peoples is a site of otherness rather than a locus for self or identity, as suggested by Viveiros de Castro (2001).

sies of souls from other towns and countries. "They have a president, a mayor, trustees, councilors, police officers, and police chiefs - everything; it is they who govern the lineage" (Ibid.: 25).

The mountain life of *chu'el* souls is both overly strict and licentious with regard to the ordinary life of the living Tzeltal. Their strictness is manifest in complex juridical processes resulting mainly from constant moral offenses between overly sensitive souls. In many ways resembling the living Tzeltal juridical system, it nonetheless substitutes its conciliatory nature for a European-inspired character that seeks not conciliation but absolute decisions and punishment. The licentious character of the souls is lived out as an extravagant engagement in European/Mexican lifestyle. In the many fiestas they hold, Mexican music, booze, and particularly the liberal expression of emotions, contrast with the contained demeanor of Tzeltal life. Pitarch further notes the profusion of non-indigenous technical devices for reproducing images, sounds and texts (cameras, recorders, type writers and computers) that make up the world of souls. If this world is a duplicate of that of whites, in its mastery over non-indigenous means of imagery reproduction, it is doubly white (Ibid.: 83).

There is another dimension to Tzeltal animism, expressed through the category of illness-giving *lab* souls that turn out to be true personifications of historical power relations. The heart's hen soul that priest *lab* covet and written personal names that scribe *lab* jot down in paper, for example, cause disease in today's world, but are all related to past forms of domination by the church and other representatives of the colonial or post-colonial power. To continue with our example, both hens and census procedures were integral to the extraction of tribute from subjected Indian communities. Correspondingly, shamanic curing songs are marked by European foreignness.

Pitarch also dwells on the nature of this mixture. Contrary to their *mestizo* neighbors, who do not distinguish in their practices what is of indigenous origin, Tzeltal appear meticulous in this regard. The body/souls divide, composes but does not otherwise blend, the history of contact with whites and the indigenous body and *habitus*.

- 0 -

In the exploration of mixture among different Amerindian groups we have covered in the last two sections we have identified some key features of anti-*mestizaje*. If these were answers to what these transformations were about, I now close this discussion by addressing the question of why some Amerindian peoples' transformations take anti-*mestizaje* forms, that is, which could be the potentialities of Amerindian socio-cosmologies that, in varying degrees from one case to another, play an important part in shaping anti-*mestizaje*. The search for these potentialities is based on the premise, in agreement with the stance of authors like Viveiros de Castro (1999) and Gow (2001), that the engagement with whites and their world involves the extension of indigenous conceptual imaginations - their conventions, categories, morality - to account for novel circumstances. This has been my general stance in seeing the *napë* transformational space as an extension, and hence also a transformation, of the Yanomami conventional space. This closing summary generalizes this approach, looking into what indigenous peoples may have extended and transformed in generating anti-*mestizaje*.

The Yanomami, Piro, and in general, the "tame" Indians in the Upper Amazon of Peru and Ecuador that we have discussed, are similar in that they find themselves in a middle position of a regional system that binds different kinds of people and yet are meticulous in conceptually discriminating between them. The system is complex and dynamic involving the enactment of dyadic oppositions of more or less antagonistic social categories - such as Indian and white; savage and civilized - whose meaningfulness comes from their embeddedness in a triadic chromatic temporal-spatial field that links transformations with localities and kinds of people (cf. Gow, 1991). This play of two and three is the structure we find repeated in Lévi-Strauss' discussions on the articulation of diametric and concentric dualism - that expresses a dialectics between static symmetry and dynamic asymmetry in spatial terms ([1958] 1974) - and his discussion of the "perpetual disequilibrium" evoked by Amerindian mythologies - that expresses a dialectics between static and dynamic oppositions in temporal terms (1991). In both cases, there is an inherent

incompleteness of a system that cannot reach wholeness - the space that encompasses the village, the time disequilibrium unfolds into - that appears to be supplemented by an openness to the other and the outside in which transformation and disequilibrium become virtually synonymous. As Lévi-Strauss says, this configuration is less a property of social organization or mythology than a “method applicable to the solution of multiple problems” (1991: 312). This method is a potentiality of the kind we are looking for (cf. Gow, 2001: 304), that when applied to the problem of the engagement with the world of whites yields mixtures of the anti-*mestizaje* kind because others are necessary to the system’s work of producing people, kinship and community out of exteriority. But to suggest a supplementarity of exteriority or alienness is still slightly misleading, because what we learn from indigenous conceptions of kinship is even more radical in the sense that exteriority and strangeness are in fact given qualities of relations out of which kin are fabricated (Viveiros de Castro, 2001). People “make kin out of others” to use Vilaça’s (2002) apt phrasing, regardless of their being in an overtly mixed context or not.

Other cases we have explored display more clearly the dual, divisible and self/other composition of Amerindian personhood. Be it in terms of the articulation of body and soul(s), “two sides” of people’s identity, or conventional and transformational contexts, the self without the other is insufficient for the makeup of a person. If making a person is a matter of constantly carving out a specific self from a background of given otherness, the latter must remain an alien element within the person and/or his/her *habitus*. This necessity underlies the scrupulous demarcation of Indian and white elements of peoples’ lives. The dividual (Strathern, 1988) character of Amerindian personhood, and the additional independence with which parts of the person can develop, suggests itself as another potentiality for anti-*mestizaje*. We can thus verify that, at personal and collective scales, self/other composites cannot be maintained by processes of fusion of difference such as *mestizaje*.

Last but not least, an epistemology that demands the personification of that to be known and consequently the assumption of the other’s point of view, coupled with an understanding of the body that equates this point of view with novel affects or capabilities is a final potentiality

for anti-*mestizaje*. These perspectivist (Viveiros de Castro, 1998; 2004a) premises make of the engagement with the alterity of whites an experience of an alternative sociality analogous to the shamanic experience of plunging in and out of animal/spirit worlds. But what is more relevant to our discussion is that, as points of view or positions, “Indian” and “white” are not susceptible to fusion, they can only be elicited, eclipsed, matched or countered in relations.

Summing up, we can see in the necessity of exteriority and alienness for constituting persons and communities, the dividual character of personhood, and the deictic nature of the social categories that distinguish interiority and exteriority, self and other, Indian and white, propensities for conceiving mixture as anti-*mestizaje*.

VI. ANTI-MESTIZAJE: MIXTURE AGAINST THE STATE

In this section I want to tease out with more detail the political character of anti-*mestizaje*. In sections I and II we saw how the *criollo* project for the nation since independence involved the equation of *criollo* culture with national culture. Fundamental in the realization of this project was a theory of history that proclaimed the consumptive fusion of the many (indigenous and Afro-American peoples) into the One (nation). *Mestizaje* is, thus, a very explicit and applicable theory “for the state”, in Clastres’ (1974) terms. In sections IV and V we have delineated anti-*mestizaje* attributing its “anti-” character to the many ways in which it inverts the premises of *mestizaje* and the more general aspects of *criollo* culture’s relation with its relevant others (Euro-American and indigenous cultures). But in a more complete sense, this “anti-” must be read also as “against”: these Amerindian theories of mixture are “against fusion” and congruent with a political philosophy that Clastres famously ascribed to them and summarized in conceptual expressions such as “primitive society”, “societies against the One”, and thus, “societies against the State”.

In “primitive society”, each community is a “*totalité une*”: a totality, in that it is politically complete onto itself (i.e. autonomous), and a unity, in that it is internally homogenous or undivided - avoiding the separation into haves and have-nots, holders of power and followers. It is this unity that makes it a totality meaning “it does not allow any configuration of One to detach itself from the social body in order to represent it, in order to embody it as unity” (Clastres, [1980] 2010: 261). But each community is surrounded by “others”, all equally striving to realize or maintain their status of “*totalité une*”. Radical difference with others is a requirement for the sustenance of a “*totalité une*” and what makes all communities politically equivalent. In order to remain as such, “primitive society” is given to segmentation or fission as a way to avoid the dangers of internal differentiation and the establishment a supra-local One that would concentrate the power to command the obedience of its constituents. Through the maintenance of a multiplicity of these units, local and supra-local hierarchy is preempted. Any breach of this config-

uration results in the establishment of the One, an attack on someone's "*totalité une*".

"The unification of the multiplicity of partial We's into a meta-We, the elimination of the difference unique to each autonomous community would abolish the distinction between the We and the Other, and primitive society itself would disappear" (Ibid.: 264).

If above we concluded that *mestizaje* is a theory "for the state", we can now add the complementary view, that it is the enemy of "primitive society", because fusion is the path to the One. In short, *mestizaje* is "for the state" and "against primitive society", correspondingly, anti-*mestizaje* is "against the state" and "for primitive society".

- o -

Now it would be difficult to reconcile Clastres' "primitive society" with what we have discussed in section V about the incompleteness of self and the collective if we do not introduce into this political concept a scaling factor that makes the self/other divide necessary to the constitution of the person - inwards from the community limit - and of aggregates of communities - outwards from the community towards the limits of the ethnic group, further to those considered Indian *vis-à-vis* whites, and in a perpendicular direction to this axis of alterity, to the non-human persons that populate indigenous cosmologies. "Primitive society" with this caveat becomes more compatible with what modern ethnographies reveal about the dividuality of the person and the constitutive character of the Outside, adding to anti-*mestizaje* a political dimension we had not fully acknowledged: the maintenance of the self/other distinction, at whatever scale, is a matter of political autonomy. This dimension becomes particularly apparent in a comment by Pitarch in relation to the Tzeltal. In the radical demarcation between Indian and white that results from the encompassment of otherness in the Indians' inner souls, Tzeltal have a means of making the symbols of foreign subjection present in their lives (as disease) in a way that precludes their transformation into *habitus*, the culmination of colonial domination (2010: 123). Tzeltal are

zealously vigilant over the contamination of their bodies with any signs of the same whiteness their souls revel in, “[t]here can be no doubt that this is because that last stage of being, a decolonized body, constitutes the principal means of defense against the procedures of political subjugation” (Ibid.: 124). Encroaching *criollo* societies aim at the dissolution of difference as a means of subjugation – *mestizo* society being the sign of their effectiveness. Anti-*mestizaje*, – the maintenance of Indian-white difference – is a defense against this domination.

And yet this is not an overt form of resistance in the form that *criollos* recognize as such. As we have noted, Yanomami and other indigenous peoples seem to embrace *criollo* culture quite openly and even eagerly, and as Gow suggests in the Piro-white context, *criollos* are quite happy to cast their differences with indigenous peoples in terms of inequalities and to see their own action upon them as complimentary evidence of their transformative agency (2001:311-312). It is not a specific reaction to specific states we are calling attention to, it is the result of a political philosophy that preempts the emergence of stable forms of separation of power from the *socius* (Clastres, 1974). This political philosophy does not require the miss-encounter with *criollos* to exist, the encounter just makes it surface into relevance in the form of indigenous peoples’ incorporation of *criollo* culture and their rejection of *criollo* society; in the friction-laden misfit between the Yanomami conventional space (and its equivalents among other indigenous peoples) and the *criollo* notion of society.

There is more. We have cast anti-*mestizaje* as a form of hybridity in a way that evokes a certain work of purification: the meticulous separation between self and other at personal and collective scales. It is hard not to be reminded here of what Latour (1993) says of Moderns. In his influential essay on Moderns and their ontology – he uses the metaphor of a Constitution that defines the properties of humans and non-humans and the kinds of relations allowed between these entities – Latour describes Moderns as those who scrupulously separate nature and society, object and subject, what belongs to science and what to the social sciences, and nonetheless produce an ever growing number of hybrids of the same categories that are supposed to be opposite poles of reality. In

Latour's analysis, to purify is to assign to nature all the qualities of objectiveness and to society all those of subjectivity. Moderns conscientiously purify nature and society from every phenomena but are unaware that technology, and objects in general, do the opposite work of mediating – both connecting and distinguishing – between nature and society taken as opposed polar categories. Doing both the work of purification and mediation but unaware of their mutual implication, Moderns have produced a massive amount of nature-society hybrids that their Constitution forbids to exist.

My proposition, in a nutshell, is that people like the Yanomami do with the human/non-human or self/other categories what Moderns do with the categories of nature and society, that is, they mediate between these categories – such is the work of shamans, dreaming and what happens to people who fall sick – and simultaneously purify them as mutually exclusive ontological terrains. The zealous separation of white things, practices, parts of persons, and contexts from indigenous ones we find in anti-*mestizaje* is a sign of a powerful purifying machine that is less interested in nature and society than in Self and Other. This introduces what appears to be a necessary twist into Latour's theory. Latour, it seems to me, is correct when he intends to shed light on the contrast that Moderns see between themselves and others, considered Premoderns – a matter of externalizing in the us/them divide, the internal great divide Moderns posit between nature and society. And yet by retaining the categories of nature and society his light on Premodern views on themselves and Moderns is not as bright. As the theory of Amerindian perspectivism (Viveiros de Castro, 1998) shows, nature and culture in Amerindian cosmologies function not as substantial categories but as points of view and hence cannot be ontological categories. If we are to speak of ontological terrains in an Amerindian context, we must then pass to human and non-human “state spaces” (in the mathematical sense) where what exists in each one are culture-nature composites that account for one's own self-image (culture) and the image that is contextually actualized by encounters with non-human persons (nature). So if we are to retain the symmetry Latour so forcefully calls for, we must acknowledge that Amerindians are not the Premoderns that Moderns

see, but just as Modern by mediation and purification of a different pair: self/other or human/non-human. In not accounting for this twist, Latour is less than convincing in his assertion that what does distinguish Moderns from Premoderns, and accounts for the domination of the former over the latter, is the length and strength of the chains of hybrids they produce. Moderns would multiply hybrids because they do not see them, whilst Premoderns keep them in check, seeing nature-society connections uninterested in their purification. Lévi-Strauss' monumental volumes on Amerindian mythology are the best demonstration of a continent-wide network of human/non-human hybrids. Shamans are renowned for their capacity to see in space and time well beyond the local scene and the current moment, in fact, they pretty much do away with the fixity of spatial and temporal dimensions making the distant appear close and the ancient contemporary (cf. Kopenawa & Albert, 2010). For shamans, their technology is no less powerful than the Moderns' laboratory instruments, books and means of communication. So it would not be the length of networks of hybrids that would so distinguish Moderns from Premoderns but rather to what the processes of mediation and purification are put to work. A world of generalized humanity poses itself the problem of mediating and purifying between particular and general forms of humanity. This is not the problem of nature and society Moderns pose themselves.

Viveiros de Castro (2010:48) has called attention to how Amerindian perspectivism can be considered a "cosmology against the state", precisely because of what we are saying about the problem posed by having to distinguish particular from general forms of humanity. The political problem installed by a perspectivist ontology is that of a subject having to retain its human position when all other non-human persons (like spirits and animals) are doing the same. No two ontologically distinct entities in relation can be human at the same time. The parallel with the problem posed for "primitive society" in Clastres' analysis is clear. By taking this cosmo-political problem into account, we can also redeem Clastres from the criticism of his argument being more of a transcendental deduction than an empirical one, of Indians having to imagine that power is in essence coercion, negating it on the basis of intuition (Descola, 1988:22). A

world of generalized humanity is not directed against the state *per se*, it is a constant battle for the human position, which in turn, as a side-effect so-to-speak, preempts the separation of power from the *socius*, primarily, it seems to me, because such separation is dehumanizing for those subjugated to another's command. Hence it is not by prefiguring the state in some form of imagination that Amerindians would anticipate and negate the state form, but rather by efforts to retain their humanity, efforts to avoid a durable subject-object shift in their midst. "Primitive humanity", if we could now conflate Viveiros de Castro's and Clastres' insights, also offers an alternative view for what many ethnologists have said about Amerindian egalitarianism (see specially Overing, 1989). At least in certain cases, egalitarianism would appear less as an explicitly articulated political philosophy, and more a secondary consequence of the pressing matter of remaining human.

Moderns in their turn, seem to do with the Self/Other pair exactly what they accuse Premoderns of doing with the Nature/Society pair. Moderns accuse Premoderns of failing to purify nature from society and are thus compelled to "correct" this confusion *via* any number of civilizing efforts, including the miscegenation machine. *Mestizaje* thus becomes the Modern failure to purify Indian from white, "including", "converting", "civilizing" the former into the latter, in any case, blurring the distinction. To remain within Latour's language, it would seem then, that to account for western domination over the Premoderns it does not suffice to analyze the work of mediation and purification in terms of nature and society, we should also include these two processes along the human/non-human axis and then compare the Modern (mediation and purifying) and Premodern (blurring, blending, mixing up) aspects of Moderns and Premoderns, if such categories in this reading are still worth retaining.¹⁶

16 The discussion of Latour in this context was brought up by the students in a course on Amerindian Ethnology in the postgraduate program of anthropology of the University of Santa Catarina, where I teach. The ideas presented took shape in the debate the students prompted and I wish here to acknowledge their collective construction. Viveiros de Castro, in an expanded essay on Amerindian perspectivism, touches on other connections between perspectivism and Latour's analysis of Moderns (2002: 370; 398).

In light of the above elucidation of the inherently political character of perspectivism when it comes to accounting for human/non-human relations, on the one hand, and its potentiality for engendering anti-*mestizaje* forms of mixture we have discussed in the previous section, on the other, one cannot but feel surprised with Alcida Ramos' (2012) sweeping comments on the ethnographies that have found perspectivism enlightening in a variety of contexts: "perspectivism bypasses the political reality of interethnic conflict to concentrate on the principles of ontology and cosmology internal to indigenous cultures" (482). Further on: "[b]y and large, perspectivism is indifferent to political considerations regarding the predicament of indigenous peoples in adverse interethnic contexts, but it can be the object of political scrutiny" (483). These statements of political insensitivity – read "accusations" – have found wider echo than Ramos' argument, or the evidence she asks her readers to overlook (Ibid.), would seem to support, even for a sympathetic or uninformed reader. Michael Fischer, for instance, endorses her views assured (2014: 345).

There are many problems in Ramos' swift remarks, some of which have been addressed by Calavia Sáez (2012), I would simply add the obvious: how is it that "concentrating on the principles of ontology and cosmology" – if that is what has happened, which is questionable, considering the wide range of topics into which perspectivism has unfolded – is not political? How is it that the challenge "multinatural perspectivism" poses to Western epistemology is not political? Were the social sciences not responsible for teaching us to see the political where it appeared not to be? Ramos' attempt at the "political scrutiny" of perspectivism becomes all the more ironic if we consider how perspectivism has already subjected anthropology to a thorough "political scrutiny" of its own. In any case, this criticism just adds to the timeliness of pointing out that, if we are correct in noting the "anti-*mestizaje*" effect of perspectivism – along with that of other notions like dividuality and the ternary dualism we have drawn from authors criticized for their political oversight – a history of Latin America that intends to consider indigenous conceptual imaginations could not do without it. And if an indigenous-inspired

theoretical challenge to *criollos'* theory of history and *mestizaje* is not of political import in Latin America, well then fair enough.

Two histories, two ongoing processes

Carrera Damas insists on the need for *criollos*, that is, the dominant class of what remains an implanted society, to come to terms with its “dominant-captive” predicament. This essay points to one way in which *criollo* historical consciousness can begin to free itself from its structural limitations, for the indigenous forms of mixture and transformation we have explored offer themselves as a foiling counterpoint for the taken-for-grantedness of the *criollo* historical nation-building narratives. Carrera Damas is surely correct to note the contemporariness of different phases of Latin American implantation processes, the co-existence in Venezuela - but also evident in every country - of 16th century forms of engagement with indigenous peoples in territorial hinterlands with the later developments of nation-building, modernization and the ultimate articulation of *criollo* society with 20th century capitalism that find higher expressiveness in the national urban centers (Carrera Damas, 1998:19-20). This makes the counterpoint offered by indigenous peoples all the more pertinent and obliges us to see the implantation process not as one ongoing historical development - as *criollos* see it -; neither simply as a process that has another, subaltern, side to it - the assumption found in much of what goes under the label of ethno-history -; but definitely as two simultaneous processes unfolding within, despite and at cross-purposes with each other. This is the only analytical option available if we are to refrain from having to legitimize one or the other as “what is really happening”: *criollo* historical consciousness happens, *mestizaje* happens, the “dominant-captive” predicament happens, to and for *criollos*, as much as indigenous temporal transformations, anti-*mestizaje* and “openness to the other” happens, to and for peoples like the Yanomami.

If this position is accepted we must account for its invisibility: the relative lack of awareness on the part of *criollos* and analysts of the “homon-

ymous disagreements” or “uncontrolled equivocations” (cf. Kelly, 2011a; Viveiros de Castro, 2004b) that have facilitating and impeding effects on *criollo*-Indian relations and that motivate both parties to this encounter. Uncontrolled equivocation or homonymous disagreements turn on the misrecognition, by *criollos* and Indians alike, of alternative meanings or underlying assumptions guiding their mutual interest in each other. Perhaps the most overarching equivocation that characterizes the *criollo*-Indian or state-Indian relation, when it is not overtly antagonistic, is “civilization”, for pits the *criollo* “making society” and miscegenating machine against the Indian “making people” and anti-*mestizaje* machine, yet often concealing these counterposed assumptions under experiences of mutual understanding or misunderstanding. For example, when missionaries progress in installing *criollo* patterns of decency amongst Indians, and the latter achieve access to a *napë* sociality in the adoption of these patterns, both parties see their projects advance and the success itself diverts those involved from an enquiry into the other’s motivating assumptions. On the other hand, when *criollos* explain the inefficacy of their civilizing projects in terms of Indians’ inconstancy, lack of organization, unproductiveness, non-rationality and Indians reject *criollo* society, and fight for territories in which to develop a more autonomous relation with nation-states, both parties stumble on the resistance offered by the other. *Criollos* far more than Indians, usually misrecognize the difference in their underlying assumptions as a misunderstanding that can be resolved through negotiation – often buying people off (“compensation” is the juridical term). In short, the equivocation of “civilization” allows for the flow of cultures and simultaneously impedes or hinders *criollo* recognition of Indians’ social organization and motivates the rejection, on the part of Indians, of society, that is, *criollo* state society.

Part of what *criollos* need, to leave behind the “dominant-captive” position from which they understand their national histories, must then include the awareness that, to paraphrase Wagner (1981:20), “their misunderstanding of us is not the same as our misunderstanding of them” and that the mismatch between misunderstandings is the symptom of the presence of alternative meaningful worlds: the mark that “making society” is not a motivation shared by *criollos* and Indians despite the

flow of culture; that not all social organization constitutes a Society; that not all temporal processes constitute a History despite the transformations both imply; that not all forms of mixture constitute *mestizaje* despite Indians' westernized appearance.

Criollo and indigenous dilemmas

We have just dwelt on the *criollo* need to exit its “neither-nor” position in order to disencumber its relations with those internally-dominated peoples. It would be somewhat of a fantasy for us to think that the “and” form of articulation with *criollos* in anti-*mestizaje* fashion did not pose its own dilemmas. The issue has been neatly summarized by Viveiros de Castro pretty much in the terms of this essay:

“But if the problem of the origin of whites is, in a way, resolved since before the beginning of the world, [this is a reference to Indian myths that deal with the origin of whites] the inverse and symmetric problem of the destiny of Indians remains, I think, crucially open for them. For the challenge and enigma with which Indians are faced consists of knowing whether it is really possible to use the technological potency of whites, that is, their mode of objectification (their culture), without letting themselves be poisoned by their absurd violence, their grotesque fetishisation of commodities, their unbearable arrogance, that is, by their mode of subjectification—their society” (Viveiros de Castro, 2000:51, my translation).

The question, which in my view, Yanomami with different experiences of *criollos* and the state pose themselves with varying degrees of immediacy, is whether so much becoming will not end in being. What I mean is whether the Yanomami, or some of them, entertain the idea - or will in the future - that too much engagement with the world of *criollos* is detrimental to their status as Yanomami, that is, that “performing *napé*” is no longer a “side” or context of experience but a majoritarian canon. To be sure this is already the case for some Yanomami, but these tend to youngsters rather than the more influential men, many of which pass through a phase of *napëness* to then return to a more “traditionalist” stance. Quite interestingly, in 2008 when visiting the conglomerate of

communities of Platanal in the Upper Orinoco with Davi Kopenawa, the local headman spoke in a meeting among the Yanomami “*pēmaki bore bore napëprou*”, “we are becoming *napë* in vain/falsely”. It was a striking comment considering it came from a community with signs of heavy investment in becoming *napë* – loud music had been heard during the day, we had been invited to drink rum, a very rare occurrence in a Yanomami community that seemed like an explicit effort to show off *napëness* – but one that seemed to convey the awareness of the experimentation or even playful engagement with the impossible. Women, on their part, due to their overall secondary place in matters of mediating relations with *criollos*, have become a kind of reservoir of Yanomaminess within the hybrid landscape that characterizes Orinoco Yanomami life. In any case, the question remains open and any answers Yanomami may envision have the status of a hypothesis always open to revision.

But the issue of whether Indians can assimilate *criollo* culture without their society has another facet particularly pertinent for indigenous organizations and their leaders, whom out of the historical necessity of having to deal with their respective states in the latter’s terms, have adopted forms of organization and power relations that are reflections of Society. Their novel task as representatives of “ethnic groups” charged with guiding the engagement with state institutions places them in the ambiguous position of being fragments of the state form that has no reference within the indigenous milieu. The Yanomami conventional space is a community-centered organization of exchange relations where leadership is confined to community limits at best. No view of a totality, supra-local representativity, or external reference for collective guidance is germane to it. The situation is paradoxical, in that in order to survive as distinct social forms, the only means at hand lies in the dominant form the indigenous organization is defending its people against. Becoming *napë*, from the indigenous organization perspective, is both a requirement for their constitution and a condition they envision in more ambiguous and less favorable terms than their constituents living in the hundreds of forest communities they speak for (Catão, 2013:89-90). The ambiguity that becomes all the more visible from this point of view indicates that, at least for some Yanomami in this position – indig-

enous organization representatives - becoming *napë* is not an innocuous process.¹⁷ The Tzeltal provide us an example that becoming can survive for centuries, but I think the issue lingers in some Yanomami minds as a possibility and is surely a motivation behind recent efforts, particularly in Brazil, to strengthen cultural practices (like shamanism and ecological knowledge), added to the older and more urgent work of warding off whites' interest in extracting natural resources from their territories. In any case, the balance between embracing and containing *criollos* is a delicate one.

The question of when a sociocultural transformation can be considered a radical break, a departure from one social form to another considered as an opposite in analytical terms, becomes a pressing matter in the midst of this discussion because the proposition of anti-*mestizaje* forms of hybridity can easily be read as an infinite capacity of Indians to incorporate, or otherwise deal with, whatever changes the state may have in store for them. On the one hand, it would seem to amount to a kind of "license to kill" in ethnocidic terms, for ethnocide, in any of its variants, would in fact be impossible. On the other, it seems that so much resilience offers little guidance as to ethical state policy regarding Indians. Let me attempt a discussion on these two issues one of which has been recently raised by Fausto in a comment to a paper on Yanesha "hybrid bodyscapes":

"When we affirm that changes are not merely cultural loss but part of a pattern of allopoietic cultural invention, are we implying that the indigenous world is a machine capable of infinitely digesting the nonindigenous world? What are the limits to and conditions for such an openness to function as a means for indigenous continuity? This is a complicated question because it has significant impact on contemporary Amerindian peoples, who are always on the verge of being considered "acculturated" or *mestizos*. The Yanesha have reconfigured their tradition many times throughout their history in interaction with distinct powerful Others, such as the Inca, the Spanish, and Peruvian national society.

17 Davi Kopenawa's recent auto-ethnographic account and cosmo-political critique of whites (Kopenawa & Albert, 2010), although directed to a non-indigenous audience, has a clear message for the Yanomami themselves regarding the dangers of excessive incorporation of white culture. In Coelho de Souza's analysis presented in the previous section, she too is careful to cast Kisédjê transformations as involving a risky and experimental character, the risk being, in her appreciation as in ours, the possibility of complete transformation, that is, the end of becoming (Coelho de Souza, 2010: 107).

These are different Others immersed in different historical processes. How do these differences affect indigenous modes of transformation? Is the openness to the Other an absolute ontological desideratum, or is it also inflected by the very structure of the wider historical process in which it operates?" (Fausto in Santos-Granero, 2009:497-8).

In the first place, I would stress that anti-*mestizaje* shows that indigenous forms of cultural change can be very different from the theory of *mestizaje criollos* take for granted, and this indeed is an indication of much more resilience than *criollos* are willing to recognize. But resistance to the adoption of Society, *mestizaje* and national Histories does not mean that the forceful imposition of these forms and projects, by explicit efforts to "civilize" or those implicit in multicultural policies (see section III), is correct or ethical on the part of *criollos* and the State, no more than it is ethical to give someone a beating because s/he can withstand it. And if we are to agree with Carrera Damas, the problem is crucial not just for the subjected Indians but also for the "dominant captive" *criollos*.

Neither, as Fausto hints, can we consider that anti-*mestizaje* forms of change and hybridity are themselves unchanging. Anthropologists have a wealth of categorical oppositions between "kinds of societies" that may aid in analyzing radical transformations: "hot" and "cold" societies in Lévi-Straussian (1962) terms; societies "for" and "against the state" in Clastres' (1974); "conventionalizing" and "differentiating" traditions in Wagners' (1981); "performative" and "prescriptive" structures in Sahlins' (1985), to cite but a few. Each of these oppositions focus on distinctions that are, each in their way, useful to think about the nature of the difference within and between social groups and the nature of the transformations they undergo. Usefulness notwithstanding, in the final analysis it is not for anthropologists to decide if and when a radical break has occurred - we have erred on this account more than once -, only the Indians looking upon themselves and their transformations are in the position to qualify the nature of these processes. But could we venture an answer that would presumably coincide with indigenous notions of radical change? Perhaps we could hazard a suggestion based on what Indians fear about their engagements with *criollos* or on their critique about them. In these fears and critiques indigenous values appear as if

in a negative film (cf. Bashkow, 2006). We discussed in section IV the Yanomami critique of *criollo* Society, focused on the separation of power from the *socius* - the bossiness - and the overall absence of kinship in a State social form. Perhaps people like the Yanomami would consider the impossibility of making kin in their own terms a limit to their form of transformation (cf. Matos, 2014 who reaches this conclusion exploring a version of this problem faced by the Matses of the Javari valley in Brazil). Besides this possibility, in the processes of peoples who are not on the trail of becoming *napë* but rather of becoming Indian again, what is taken as an indigenous form of life projects elements of an imagined past into a desired future. "Culture" has become both a heritage and a project (Houtondji in Sahlins, 1997:131). This invention of indianness is analogous to - and hence as legitimate as - what the renaissance was for Europeans at the time, as Sahlins has poignantly highlighted (1993: 3-4). Inventing stuff we could call "tradition" is common to all peoples and historical moments and yet *criollo* political elites are biased in thinking they hold a monopoly of rights to such procedures.

As for ethical guidance for multicultural state policies, it is imperative for *criollo* elites to realize what we have pointed out in section III, that if state multiculturalism is to be true to its purported objectives, it cannot mobilize indigenous culture, preserving, promoting or otherwise administering it, if it does not in the same movement allow for a plurality of forms of indigenous social organizations in the midst of their nations. Multiculturalism is bound to promote its opposite, *mestizaje*, if it is not accompanied by plurisocietalism, and by "plurisocietalism" I mean not just many societies within a nation, but more profoundly, diverse conceptualizations of social organization, only one of which is Society. Neither can policy prescribe what counts as "culture". If *criollos* cannot avoid the criollization of Indians anymore than Indians the indigenization of modernity, this very awareness should at least focus their attention on the power unbalance in which they and the states they run have the upper hand, and leave wider margins for indigenous people to maneuver their inventive futures as they see fit.

VII. WHAT STATES WOULD THOSE “AGAINST THE STATE” BE AGAINST?

“The state” in Clastres’ political concepts - “societies against the state” and “primitive societies” - primarily refers to power separated from society, specifically coercive forms of enacting power, the relation of command-obedience, the overarching One implied by political representation, that is, the conceptual preconditions for the development of fully-fledged State societies. Exploring the notion of anti-*mestizaje*, this essay has contributed to examine, however limitedly, the relevance of “against the state” political principles in understanding the engagement of indigenous peoples with more concrete expressions of statehood than those present in Clastres’ essays.

A key issue to be addressed, if an enquiry into the relations with concrete state institutions and representatives is to be carried out, is the character of the states Indians are dealing with and subject to. What kind of states would these societies be against? I am sure there are many ways in which we could begin to answer this question. In posing it I simply want to offer a description of the Venezuelan state in a language continuous with the terms we have been using to talk about indigenous political forms.¹⁸

It would be hardly surprising if centuries of *criollo* incorporation of indigenous peoples and the promotion of *mestizaje*, had not resulted in the absorption, by *criollos*, of some of the very qualities they so staunchly rejected in Indians. If anti-*mestizaje* highlights the inefficacy of the *criollo* national project, if it is the evidence of its incompleteness, let us now turn, however briefly, to its more efficacious side. I am now pointing to the more conventional historical notion that *criollo* society has indeed assimilated fragments of indigenous societies that have lost any

18 This type of enquiry would be a fertile terrain to combine Clastres’ political anthropology with a Foucaultian analysis. The former, developed an analysis on the seeds of statehood based on ethnographies of state-less societies, the latter, developed an analysis of the effects of state power beyond stately institutions based on historical and ethnographic material of state societies.

consciousness of their indigenous roots, identify themselves as *criollos* and may do so in opposition to contemporary indigenous peoples. Even if *criollo* culture tends to eclipse, blur, negate or remain indifferent to a reflection on the indigenous contributions to its makeup, this does not mean we cannot suggest a continuity between elements of *criollo* culture and indigenous cultures. The historical specifics of such continuities would require an exercise well beyond my reach, but it would be hard to believe, that at least some of the elements of the contemporary Indian-*criollo* relations we can examine today, did not have a part to play in the historical constitution of *criollo* society.

The continuity I am interested in is not about dress, music, culinary, or whatever form of what today would fall under the category of *criollo* (i.e. Venezuelan) traditional culture. My question is whether so much “incorporation” of Indians, along the lines privileged by uncontrolled equivocations, those affinities between Indians and *criollos* articulated by homonymous disagreements, have not been channels of transference of political qualities between these initially distinguishable social groups.

I am aware that in suggesting a positive answer to this question I am perhaps speculating more than I should, but I am not alone in this regard. Venezuelan anthropologist Alexander Mansutti Rodríguez (2006:16-17) speaks of the resistance offered by *criollos* to the granting of indigenous rights during the discussions that led to the 1999 constitution and thereafter.

“The agreement and approval of Chapter VIII [of the new constitution that deals with indigenous rights] in the plenary of the ANC [the National Constituent Assembly, elected to draft the new constitution] produced a state of euphoria among the Indians and those of us who were accompanying them. However, reflecting on what had happened during those discussions [in the ANC], sensing the streets and the mood among the working class sector of society, the different forms of incomprehension of indigenous rights among chavistas, indicated at the time that we had won in the Assembly but we had not convinced the nation, and that the support for indigenous rights in the *Carta Magna* was more the result of the President’s political will, than that of the conviction of his followers.

Where does this resistance come from? For some time now we have been furthering the hypothesis that egalitarianism and *mestizaje* are two interrelated and founding discourses of Venezuelan nationality. They are part of the ideal

that founds the republic and the imaginary of its people, especially after the Federal War. Venezuelan egalitarianism, that in our judgment finds its most refined roots in the ego-centered egalitarianism of the Carib peoples of the center and west of the country, constantly pushes for the redistribution of all spaces of power, including those of wealth and knowledge, subject to a fierce exercise of discredit of all leadership that competes with one's own, an exercise that can end up cannibalizing the latter. This theme, extensively treated by Pierre Clastres for the case of the indigenous peoples of Lowland South America in his essays on political anthropology (1980; 1974) assimilates this generalized attitude to a kind of anti-state sociological machine that finds its most perfected expression in western Venezuela. Here, all accumulation, be it of power or wealth, is discredited and submitted to public derision, both in the discourse of men of State and in that of the people, among whom criticism of businessmen and politicians is rampant. This exercise of permanent discredit of those who augment their wealth and power constitutes a permanent push for the destruction of symbolic difference, in such a way that it cannot be the ground for a growing accumulation. All accumulation that is not directed to equalize will always be confronted in will and discourse. How many of us that defend indigenous rights were not told on the streets: 'why are we going to give so much land to the Indians? We are also Venezuelan, I am also entitled!' And this was said by wealthy businessmen, prestigious scientists and the most humble of workers, all of whom feel irritated by the fact that Indians are treated differently. Acting in this manner, the Venezuelan *mestizo* acts like the Carib Indians.

Equality in Venezuela does not ignore difference, but it sets limits that should not be surpassed. The privileged instrument and symbolic ground for the egalitarian discourse is *mestizaje*. This discourse initiates as a call for *criollization* towards the end of the XVIII century, when it [the term *criollo*] ceases to allude to the differences between the Europeans of Europe and those of America, to give way to the idea of the birth of new nations founded on the citizenship of the descendants of Europeans, now Americanized, that is, Indianized and Africanized. It was a popular and liberating discourse in the face of the oppression of the European colonizing State, but one that carried the seeds of exclusion of indigenous and Africanized sectors of society that did not fit within the concept due to the maintenance of their differentiated specificity (Palmié, 2006)" (16-17).

Mansutti Rodríguez suggests that *criollo* anti-Indian discourse, in the wake of the granting of specific rights to Indians based on their difference in relation to the *criollo* majority, was a Clastrean "against the state" reaction to what was perceived as an unacceptable legitimation of a difference that renders a benefit to some: territory.

In a very different and earlier context - the discussions on the reform of the Venezuelan state and political system led by a specific presidential

commission created in 1984 for the task¹⁹ - the acute Venezuelan playwright and journalist José Ignacio Cabrujas, devotes a considerable part of an interview on the notion of “State” in Venezuela, to Venezuelans relation with power.

“Some politician of the XIXth century, I am sorry I cannot recall his name now, said that Venezuelans could lose their liberty but never their equality. What we understand as equality is that formidable leveling rod whereby we are all dressed by the same tailor, where what is important is for you not to come to me bigheaded, for you not to think of yourself as a ‘a so and so’, because if you think too highly of yourself, I will tear you down, I will finish you off, I will say the truth, I will reveal who you really are, the kind of shameless ruffian you are, so you don’t get too smug, so you don’t become predominant and spectacular (Cabrujas, 1987: 6).

Cabrujas provides an interesting example of how Venezuelan president Luis Herrera Campins (1979-1984) made conscious efforts to downplay the solemnity of his position by appearing as commonplace as possible in the preludes to his fortnightly question and answer sessions with the press, televised nationwide. All his friendly gestures were efforts to show everyone watching that he wasn’t really taking his stature that seriously, that he continued to be an ordinary man, dispelling any possibility of people thinking that power had got to his head. The late president Chávez took this downplaying of presidential importance to much higher levels in his weekly TV program despite, and perhaps precisely because of, an enormous concentration of power in his figure that the same program displayed week in, week out.

Cabruja’s overall view is that the assumption of the “majesty” of institutionalized power is one of Venezuelan’s long-lasting “impossibilities”. National constitutions, considered always “treatises of contemporaneity and conceptual profoundness” were never a reflex of Venezuelan society. “Instead of this kind of sincerity that so much good could have done us, we chose certain elegant principles, apollonian more than elegant, by means of which we would belong to the civilized world” (Ibid.:4). Consequently the state is permeated by acts of dissimulation: constitutions,

¹⁹ COPRE “Comisión para la Reforma del Estado”, “Commission for the Reform of the State”

laws and the lot of bureaucratic procedures are a gigantic “as if” that gives the nation an appearance of modernity, of Statehood, that disguises the real way power is exercised in the running of the state apparatus.

What I want to suggest is that the Venezuelan state is, to certain extent, “against the state” itself. To what extent this continuity between indigenous and *criollo* political forms could be explained by the historical channeling of qualities in homonymous disagreements would be hard to determine, in any case, this “against the state” quality plays a part in creating the gap between the formal and institutional expressions of order and society – those written down in constitutions, laws and policy – and the way power is exercised throughout the state apparatus. The Venezuelan *criollos* and their state would then be a lot more Indian, in political terms, than most would be willing to admit. Could this be at least partly explained by an “indianization” of the relation with power, largely unacknowledged, though its effects exist as a “public secret”, as Taussig (1999) would say, among Venezuelans? Invisible because interiorized, but also historically prior and more deeply entrenched, this indianization of the *criollos* and the state would be very much the reverse of the recent indianization led by the Bolivarian Revolution which, as we have seen, is more the state-ification of indianness. In any case, what we have is a clastean relation to power inserted in a *criollo* society that aspires the modernity of Euro-American Society, that, as we have argued, has always been the essence of *criollo* culture’s identification with Euro-American paradigms.

A final example from the Bolivarian Revolution serves to illustrate this somewhat paradoxical configuration. After the 2002 *coup d’État* in Venezuela, president Chávez initiated an ever-growing number of social programs called “*Misiones*” in a diversity of fields including health, education, productive schemes, housing, etc. *Misiones* work as more direct, less bureaucratic means of making state resources reach the communities they are intended for. Every *Misión* is inserted as a program within a given ministry, but in practice they serve as a bypass to these established organs in what amounts to the acknowledgement that ministries, with all their formal bureaucracies designed to avoid corruption and their technically modern and state-like procedures, are fatally ill-equipped

to enable the results expected of the revolutionary constitution, laws and policies. The *Misiones* are an ultimate denial of the viability of the Venezuelan state in which by-the-book procedures are experienced as obstacles for implementation of policy: efficiency and legality are in inverse relation. The state apparatus works largely by fooling its own rules and it seems to me that, whatever else the *Misiones* may do, they bring about a degree of sincerity in the institutionalization of “a state against the State”.

I have dwelt on this last issue for some time because I initially wavered as to whether this evaluation of Venezuelan’s relation to power is not a symptom of my own *criollo* status. The pondering stems from the difficulty inherent in my exercise: a *criollo* anthropologist deploying arguments on the articulation of Euro-American, *criollo* and indigenous cultures. Am I not myself seeing *criollos* from a Eurocentric perspective? Is what we have said about Venezuelans’ relation to power equitable to the early 20th century assessments, by the *criollo* elite, of the inability to produce a viable state? In short, am I not exemplifying what Carrera Damas has taken pains to criticize and I have taken up for my own analysis? Despite my hesitation and perhaps unaware of some slippage, in the final (self) analysis I think not, and for the same reasons that Clastres did not cast his account of “societies against the State” in negative light as a fault, lack or impossibility on the part of Indians. There is a positive opening to alternatives stemming from an attitude against established hierarchies and the dislodging of power from the *socius*, *so long as it is understood as such*. What is pernicious is the *criollo* commitment to the State form that ends up in the simulacra, the dissimulation, the “as if” State. So long as this commitment stands, the Eurocentric view will prevail, and the clastrean relation to power will only be cast as an impediment, a pitiful national state of being, doomed forever to engender longings for a nice and smooth, working, modern state. And yet the realization that there is not a single case of a nice, smooth, working state anywhere should help us see the *criollo* predicament as an opportunity to explore alternatives. I am aware that this currently belongs in the world of wishful thinking or utopia, not because alternatives cannot be found, but rather because a prerequisite for such a transformation is for *criollos* to come to terms

with the dominant-captive status, and that requires an acknowledgment of all the colonialism, racism and discrimination *criollos* cannot see in themselves having grown conveniently used to recognizing it only among others: Americans, Europeans. It also demands a serious attempt at imagining an alternative to the State form or the release of market forces. Both these moves seem extraordinarily difficult steps to take. Elements of such experimentation can be found in the Bolivarian revolution, as the example of the *Misiones* and others initiatives attest, but its *criollo*/state side has proved mighty enough to keep many of them “micro”, “local”, “alternative”. As “experiences” – a term convenient for the State – they are kept limited in their capacity to challenge the State form, which is how they can become tokens of revolution.

I am far from able to develop a thorough commentary on current Venezuelan politics. The chavista epoch has been long and heterogeneous enough for any exercise in balance to distinguish improvements and setbacks; radical breaks with the past alongside the permanence of old political vices; the novelty of a rhetoric of “revolution” worn down to meaninglessness. But this far I think is safe to posit: the Bolivarian revolution has developed on twin but contradictory principles that inform discourse and practice. The first is devolution of power to the people, an empowerment that aims to involve the people in processes of design and implementation of policy typically assigned to government institutions. The second is the concentration of power in the Presidency and the State, that was already an aspect of Venezuelan democracy previous to Chávez, but that became if not stronger, at least a lot more evident during the revolution. You can’t have it both ways: either the state dissolves into the people or the people are regimented by the state.

My conclusions in section III of this essay, for example, regarding the development of the revolution’s policies towards indigenous peoples shows how the recognition of indigenous peoples in legal codes has come at the price of progressive government regimentation. Not long after writing this appraisal, a recent report on the right to free association among indigenous peoples of Amazonas, Bolívar and Zulia states, comes as a confirmation that my analysis is not far off the mark. Consider this succinct statement by Esteban Emilio Monsonyi, a weathered

and respected figure in the history of the defense of indigenous peoples in Venezuela:

“A thesis that is not written but is in the air runs like this: ‘I the government acknowledge you [legally] as indigenous, but from now on, in compensation for the [legal] recognition I gave you, I demand absolute loyalty, a transformation, for you to join the revolutionary schema that we are propitiating, not just for indigenous people but State-wide. I acknowledged you [legally as indigenous], but I did so for you to become one of ours, not for you to devise your own independent project” (Monsonyi in *Diagnóstico sobre el derecho a la asociación indígena en Venezuela*, 2014: 22, my translation).

Weighing government criticism in Venezuela is a complicated matter given the aforementioned heterogeneity, the political polarization and the amount of disinformation that is produced as a result. My impression is that Monsonyi’s analysis belongs to a growing “internal critique” undertaken by a sector of society that is aligned with many of the principles of the revolution but disenchanted with their implementation. It is also an anti-anti-government stance that takes distance from official opposition politics. This is where one could also situate the recent resurgence of critique within sectors of the indigenous movement, after the realization that the revolution has opened hitherto implausible avenues of betterment, most notably that of land demarcation, but has failed to deliver on them, backtracking on the more relevant issues and substituting them for an agenda that is not that of indigenous rights. This brings us back to my discussion on “visibility” and “inclusion”: the revolution sees potential members and symbols for its project, not alternative forms of creativity or possibilities for a plurisocietal nation. As mentioned in section III, the socialist nation is promoted as a substitute for the *mestizo* one, but the *criollo*/state character of the project makes it equally monolithic and alien to indigenous social forms. This is partly what comes to light in Monsonyi’s assessment, but also in the following statement of one of the first three indigenous representatives elected to the National Assembly in 1999:

“Suddenly they tell us we are socialists, or that we are communists too. But how is that? I, as an indigenous person, have never known that, we don’t catalogue ourselves like that. They ask us to which model or system we belong, and I am

not going to say that I am socialist, materialist or capitalist, nothing of the kind. I am Indian” (Guillermo Guevara, in *Diagnóstico sobre el derecho a la asociación indígena en Venezuela*, 2014: 22, my translation).

One is reminded - with some metaphoric license, I concede - of Clastres' ([1980] 2010) account of the fate of the indigenous warrior that takes his will to war too far and loses the support of his people. As Monsonyi elsewhere in the referred document hints, and my own experience in Amazonas state confirms, a new wave of indigenous organization is turning away from its experience within or closely aligned with mainstream revolution politics and trying to re-establish a more independent agenda, returning to their longstanding demands. This situation of disenchantment and subsequent return to a previous agenda is also the result of the state of dissimulation we discussed above, for fooling your own rules can easily slip into the exigency of party or project loyalty as the prime condition for partaking of government benefits - very much linked to the definition of citizenship in the Venezuelan petro-state (see Coronil, 1997). This is a paradox for a state “against the state” - if my argument holds any water: eventually the warrior's project is eroded by the same will for autonomy that propelled it in the first place.

Coda

I finish this essay amid the football World Cup held in Brazil, where I currently live and teach, and cannot avoid seeing in it a most clear example of much of what I have here discussed. Many of the issues raised by the large opposition to the manner in which the preparations for the Cup have unfolded, the social cleansing of entire segments of host cities, the temporary surrender of sovereignty by the government into the hands of FIFA, the brutal repression installed to quell protests, are testament to the currency of the political elite's dominant-captive predicament in Brazil - making all efforts to showcase its modernity and progress at the expense of its own citizens. Many examples could be cited, but I shall refer to just one particularly pertinent image: just before the kick-off of the inaugural match between Brazil and Croatia, three children, one of them a Guarani boy with facial painting, headdress and necklace, enter the pitch each releasing a white dove at its center. On their way to exit the pitch, the Guarani boy pulls out a banner reading "*Demarcação*" as a protest against the government's halt on all indigenous land demarcation processes, but surely also against a number of government policies and decisions that ultimately threaten indigenous peoples' survival and the recent upsurge of a most brutal anti-Indian movement among the powerful agro-business sector. Whilst the cultural marks present in the boy's attire was surely part of the programmed exercise of exalting Brazil's diversity - or at least an accepted initiative of the boy himself -, the protest for indigenous territory was not, and was swiftly cut out of the official TV transmission of the event: 1 for culture, 0 for society.

REFERENCES

ALBERT, BRUCE.

1985. *Temps du sang, temps de cendres: Représentation de la maladie, système rituel et espace politique chez les Yanomami du sud-est (Amazonie brésilienne)*. PhD dissertation, Université de Paris X.

1988. "La fumée du métal: Histoire et représentations du contact chez les Yanomami (Brésil)." *L'homme*, 106-07: 87-119.

ANGOSTO, LUIS.

2008. "Pueblos indígenas, guaicapurismo y socialismo del siglo XXI en Venezuela." *Antropológica*, 110: 9-34.

2010. "Pueblos indígenas, multiculturalismo y la nueva geometría del poder en Venezuela." *Cuadernos del CENDES*, 73: 97-132.

2015. *Venezuela reframed: Bolivarianism, indigenous peoples and socialisms of the twenty-first century*. London: Zed Books.

BASHKOW, IRA.

2006. *The meaning of whitemen: race and modernity in the Orokaiva cultural world*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

BELLO, LUIS.

2010. "Los órganos del Estado y la política indígena nacional." In Luis Bello (Ed.). *El estado ante la sociedad multiétnica y pluricultural: Políticas públicas y derechos de los Pueblos Indígenas en Venezuela (1999-2010)*. 1ed. Copenhagen: IWGIA, 2011, v. 1: 293-365.

CABRUJAS, JOSÉ IGNACIO.

1987. "El estado del disimulo." Entrevista realizada a José Ignacio Cabrujas en 1987, por el equipo de la revista Estado y Reforma. Accessed at www.relectura.org/cms/content/view/362/80/ on June 05 2014.

CALAVIA SÁEZ, OSCAR.

2012. "Do perspectivismo Ameríndio ao índio real". *Campos*, 13(2): 7-23.

CARRERA DAMAS, GERMAN.

1988. *El dominador cautivo*. Caracas: Grijalbo.

2006. *Una nación llamada Venezuela*. Caracas: Monte Ávila Editores.

2012 [1993]. *De la dificultad de ser criollo*. Caracas: Editorial CEC.

CATÃO, BRISA.

2013. *Os Yanomami, a Hutukara e os desafios de seu pacto político*. Florianópolis: Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina. Masters dissertation.

CLASTRES, PIERRE.

1974. *La société contre l'état: recherches d'anthropologie politique*. Paris: Éditions de Minuit.

[1980] 2010. *Archeology of Violence*. Trans. Jeanine Herman. Cambridge Mass: Semiotext(e).

Cocco, L.

1972. *Iyewei-teri: Quince años entre los yanomamos*. Caracas: Escuela Técnica Popular Don Bosco.

COELHO DE SOUZA, MARCELA.

2010. "A vida material das coisas intangíveis" In Marcela Coelho de Souza & Edilene Coffaci de Lima (Eds.). *Conhecimento e cultura: práticas de transformação no mundo indígena*. Brasília: Athalaia Gráfica e Editora.

COIAM, 2014.

Comunicado de la Coordinadora de Organizaciones Indígenas de la Amazonía Venezolana (COIAM) sobre el proceso nacional de demarcación de hábitat y tierras indígenas a los 15 años de la aprobación de la República Bolivariana de Venezuela. 28th of November, Puerto Ayacucho, Amazonas.

CORONIL, FERNANDO.

1997. *The magical state: nature, money and modernity in Venezuela*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

DESCOLA, PHILIPPE.

1988. "La chefferie Amérindienne dans l'anthropology politique." *Revue Française de Science Politique*, 38(5): 818-26.

DE LA CADENA, MARISOL.

2000. *Indigenous mestizos: the politics of race and culture in Cuzco, Peru, 1919-1991*. Durham & London: Duke University Press.

FAUSTO, CARLOS.

2009. Comment to Santos Granero, Fernando. 2009. "Hybrid body-scapes: a visual history of Yaneshá patterns of cultural change." *Current Anthropology*, 50(4): 477-512.

FISCHER, MICHAEL.

2014. "The lightness of existence and the origami of "French" anthropology: Latour, Descola, Viveiros de Castro, Meillassoux and their so-called ontological turn". *Hau: Journal of Ethnographic Theory*, 4(1): 331-355.

FREIRE, GERMÁN.

2007. "Indigenous shifting cultivation and the new Amazonia: A Piaroa example of economic articulation." *Human Ecology*, 35(6): 681-96.

GALLEGOS, RÓMULO.

[1929] 2007. *Doña Barbara*. Caracas: Editorial Panapo de Venezuela.

GOW, PETER.

1991. *Of mixed blood: Kinship and history in Peruvian Amazon*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

1993. "Gringos and wild Indians: Images of history in western Amazonian cultures." *L'homme*, 126-28: 327-47.

2001. *An Amazonian myth and its history*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

2009. "Christians: a transforming concept in peruvian Amazonia." In Aparecida Vilaça & Robin Wright (eds.). *Native Christians: modes and effects of christianity among indigenous peoples of the Americas*. Farnham: Ashgate.

HERRERA LUQUE, FRANCISCO.

[1979] 2012. *Los Amos del Valle*. Caracas: Arte.

KELLY, JOSÉ ANTONIO.

2011a. *State healthcare and Yanomami transformations: a symmetrical ethnography*. Tucson: Arizona University Press.

2011b. "Políticas indigenistas y anti-mestizaje indígena en Venezuela". In: Luis Bello. (Ed.). *El estado ante la sociedad multiétnica y pluricultural: Políticas públicas y derechos de los Pueblos Indígenas en Venezuela (1999-2010)*. 1ed. Copenhagen: IWGIA, 2011, v. 1, p. 366-377.

KOPENAWA, DAVI & ALBERT, BRUCE.

2010. *La chute du ciel: paroles d'un chaman Yanomami*. Paris: Plon/Terre Humain.

LABORATORIO DE PAZ.

2014. *Diagnóstico sobre el derecho a la asociación indígena en Venezuela*. www.laboratoriosdepaz.org. Accessed 03/07/2014.

LATOUR, BRUNO.

1993. *We have never been modern*. Catherine Porter (trans.) Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press.

LÉVI-STRAUSS, CLAUDE.

1962. *La pensée sauvage*. Paris: Plon.

[1958] 1974. *Anthropologie structurale*. Paris: Plon.

1991. *Histoire de Lynx*. Paris: Plon.

LIZOT, JAQUES.

2004. *Diccionario enciclopédico de la lengua Yanomami*. Caracas: Vicariato Apostólico de Puerto Ayacucho.

LOSONCZY, ANNE MARIE.

2008. "El criollo y el mestizo. Del sustantivo al adjetivo: categorías de apariencia y de pertenencia en la Colombia de ayer y de hoy" in Marisol de la Cadena (Ed.). *Formaciones de Indianidad. Articulaciones raciales, mestizaje y nación en América latina*. Bogotá: Envión. 269-286.

MANSUTTI RODRÍGUEZ, ALEXANDER.

2006. "La demarcación de territorios indígenas en Venezuela: algunas condiciones de funcionamiento y el rol de los antropólogos." *Antropológica*, 105-6: 13-39.

MATOS, BEATRIZ.

2014. *A visita dos espíritos: ritual, história e transformação entre os Matses da Amazônia Brasileira*. Ph.D. Thesis. Rio de Janeiro: Museu Nacional, Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro.

MILLER, MARILYN GRACE.

2004. *Rise and fall of the Cosmic Race: the cult of mestizaje in Latin America*. Austin: The University of Texas Press.

MINPPPI MINISTERIO DEL PODER POPULAR PARA LOS PUEBLOS INDÍGENAS.

2012. *Memoria y Cuenta 2011*. Available online at <http://www.minpi.gob.ve/index.php/menpgestion/menpgmemoria>.

MORON, GUILLERMO.

1974. *Historia de Venezuela*. Caracas: Italgráfica.

NUNES, EDUARDO.

2010. " 'O pessoal da cidade': o conhecimento do mundo dos brancos como experiência corporal entre os Karajá de Buridina." In Marcela Coelho de Souza & Edilene Coffaci de Lima (Eds.). *Conhecimento e cultura: práticas de transformação no mundo indígena*. Brasília: Athalaia Gráfica e Editora.

2012. *No asfalto não se pesca: parentesco, mistura e transformação entre os Karajá de Buridina (Aruãna - GO)*. Masters dissertation. Universidade Nacional de Brasília.

OLAVARRÍA, JORGE.

2002. "Alo, ignorancia." *El Nacional*, December 10.

OVERING, JOANA.

1989. "The aesthetics of production: the sense of community among the Cubeo and Piaroa". *Dialectical Anthropology*, 14: 159-175.

OVIEDO Y BAÑOS, JOSÉ DE.

[1723] 2004. *Historia de la conquista y la población de la provincia de Venezuela*. Tomás Eloy Martínez (ed.). Caracas: Biblioteca Ayacucho.

PERERA, MIGUEL ÁNGEL.

2009. *La patria indígena del libertador: Bolívar, bolivarianismo e indianidad*. Caraa: Grupo Editorial Random House Mondadori.

PÉREZ, BERTA & PEROZO, ABEL.

2003. "Prospects of mestizaje and pluricultural democracy: the Venezuelan case of an imagined and a real Venezuelan society". *Anuário Antropológico*, 2000-2001: 119-146.

PITARCH RAMÓN, PEDRO.

2010. *The jaguar and the priest: an ethnography of Tzeltal souls*. Austin: University of Texas Press.

RAMOS, ALCIDA.

2012. "The politics of perspectivism". *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 41:481-94.

ROSENBLADT, ANGEL.

1954. *La población indígena y el mestizaje en América*. Volumen I. Buenos Aires: Editorial Nova.

SAHLINS, MARSHALL.

1985. *Islands of history*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

1993. *Waiting for Foucault, still*. Chicago: Prickly Paradigm Press.

1997. "O 'pessimismo sentimental' e a experiência etnográfica: Porque a cultura não é um 'objeto' em extinção (Parte I)." *Mana*, 3(1): 41-73.

STRATHERN, MARILYN.

1980. "No nature, no culture: the Hagen case." In Carol MacCormack & Marilyn Strathern (eds.). *Nature, culture and gender*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

1988. *The gender of the gift: Problems with women and problems with society in Melanesia*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press.

1995. "The nice thing about culture is that everyone has it." In Marilyn Strathern (Ed.). *Shifting contexts: transformations in anthropological knowledge*. London: Routledge.

TAUSSIG, MICHAEL.

1999. *Defacement: public secrecy and the labor of the negative*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

TAYLOR, ANNE CHRISTINE.

2009. "Sick of history: contrasting regimes of historicity in the Upper Amazon." In Carlos Fausto & Michael Heckenberger (Eds.). *Time and memory in indigenous Amazonia*. Gainesville: University Press of Florida.

THOMAS, NICHOLAS.

1994. *Colonialism's culture: Anthropology, travel, and government*. New Jersey: Princeton University Press.

USLAR PIETRI, ARTURO.

2008. *Medio milenio de Venezuela*. Caracas: Editorial CEC.

VASCONCELOS, JOSÉ.

[1925] 1997. *The cosmic race: bilingual edition*. Trans. Didier T. Jaén. Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press.

VILAÇA, APARECIDA.

2000. "O que significa tornar-se Outro? Xamanismo e contato interétnico na Amazônia". *Revista Brasileira de Ciências Sociais*, 15(44): 56-72.

2002. "Making kin out of others in Amazonia." *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, 8: 347-65.

VIVEIROS DE CASTRO, EDUARDO.

1998. "Cosmological deixis and Amerindian perspectivism." *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, 4: 469-88.

1999. "Etnologia brasileira." In *O que ler na ciência social brasileira (1970-1995)*. Volume I: *Antropologia*. Ed. C. Miceli. São Paulo: Editora Sumaré/Anpocs. 109-223.

2000. Os termos da outra história. In *Povos indígenas no Brasil (1996-2000)*. Ed. C. A. Ricardo. São Paulo: Instituto Socioambiental. 49-54.

2001. "GUT feelings about Amazonia: Potential affinity." In Laura Rival and Neil Whitehead (Eds.). *Beyond the visible and the material: The Amerindianization of society in the work of Peter Rivière*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 19–43.
2002. "Perspectivismo e Multinaturalismo na América Indígena" In *A inconstância da alma selvagem e outros ensaios de antropologia*. São Paulo: Cosac & Naify. 181–264.
- 2004a. "Exchanging perspectives: The transformation of objects into subjects in Amerindian ontologies." *Common Knowledge*, 10: 463–84.
- 2004b. "Perspectival anthropology and the method of controlled equivocation." *Tipiti* 2(1): 3–22.
2010. "The untimely again." Introduction to Pierre Clastres, *Archeology of violence*. Los Angeles: Semiotext(e).

WAGNER, ROY.

1981. *The invention of culture*. Chicago. University Press of Chicago.

WRIGHT, WINTHROP.

1990. *Café con leche: race, class and national image in Venezuela*. Austin: University of Texas Press.

