

Transformative Politics
Series Editor Joy A. James

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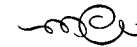
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Never Meant to Survive

Genocide and Utopias in Black Diaspora Communities

João H. Costa Vargas



Hyperconsciousness of Race and Its Negation

The Dialectic of White Supremacy in Brazil

Cidade de Deus (City of God), the much praised and seen movie in Brazil, the United States, and Europe, offers good insights into the problems I analyze in this chapter. Based on the homonymous novel by Paulo Lins, a reality-based fictionalized account of life in one of Rio's west-side favelas, the film focuses on the experiences of its youth, many of whom, it contends, are involved in criminal activities. Starting in the 1960s, and moving to the end of the 1970s, *Cidade de Deus* shows young people in permanent conflict, with each other and with the police. Even though the critics and, apparently, most viewers have largely praised this production for its fast, MTV-like screenplay, its witty dialogue, and, above all, its alleged attention to "real life" in a highly segregated community—so much so that it was expected to be nominated for an Oscar in 2003, which did not occur—I see both the movie and its positive reception as symptoms of how race is and is not approached by Brazilians (and sometimes Brazilianists).¹

It is striking that *Cidade de Deus* depicts a predominantly Afro-Brazilian community as if, save for the police, weapons dealers, and nonfavela drug addicts, it existed in sheer isolation from the rest of the city.² As striking is that the overwhelming majority of the youths in the movie (played mostly by Black actors with little, if any, experience with acting) are involved in criminal activities: drug-dealing and stealing. We see almost no workers, no kids going to school, no interactions between favela dwellers and the

¹ This chapter was previously published as an article in *Identities*, published by Taylor and Francis.

wider society. Most striking, however, is that in no moment of the movie is there a reference to discrimination, prejudice, or racism: no explanation for why almost all the people in the favela are Afro-Brazilian and poor. Especially problematic is the depiction of one of the central characters, Zé Pequeno (played by Leandro Firmino da Hora), as a powerful drug dealer and cold-blooded killer. It is highly suggestive that Zé Pequeno, one of the darkest-skinned characters in the chronicle, is portrayed as aesthetically unpleasant and devilish. As Busca-Pé, main character and narrator of the story states, "Zé Pequeno's problem is that [compared with Mané Galinha, a rare worker in the story who eventually turns to crime and violence to avenge the death of family members by Zé Pequeno's band] he was ugly." In contrast, Bené (played by Phellipe Haagensen), his longtime friend and associate who eventually decides to leave the favela and drug dealing, is depicted as a good-natured, funny, and reasonably attractive young man. Bené is markedly lighter-skinned than Zé Pequeno, and at one point in the story decides to bleach his hair. How can race, color, and racism be absent from a movie made by White and privileged, allegedly well-intentioned producers and directors who lead an almost all-Black, working-class cast?³ Why is *Cidade de Deus* shown isolated in violence, crime and, the movie implies, self-destruction?



In this chapter, i suggest that Brazilian social relations—their practices and their representations—are marked by a hyperconsciousness of race. Such hyperconsciousness, while symptomatic of how Brazilians classify and position themselves in the lifeworld, is manifested by the often vehement negation of the importance of race. This negation forcefully suggests that race is neither an analytical and morally valid tool, nor plays a central role in determining Brazilian social relations, hierarchies, and distribution of power and resources. Try talking to Brazilians of varied racial backgrounds, places of residence, occupation, age, gender, sexuality, and levels of formal instruction about the matter, and most often you will find yourself accused of racism (for insisting on a theme that has no relevance in that country) and/or the conversation will swiftly be redirected away from race.⁴

When reflecting on the hyperconsciousness of race, therefore, We must always consider its negation. The hyperconsciousness/negation of race dialectic energizes how Brazilians think about/repress, interrogate/passively accept, and justify/ignore social hierarchies. Such dialectic is associated with the effects of the racial democracy ideology, systematized by Gilberto Freyre's *Casa Grande & Senzala*. That the racial democracy ideology became clearly hegemonic at that time is less a product of the book's publication and more an index of the dominant political climate regarding race relations.⁵

i contend that the hyperconsciousness/negation of race dialectic is both an effect of the racial democracy myth *and* the evidence that the myth is just this—a myth with little, if any, correspondence in how Brazilian society is structured by resources and power differentials. On the one hand, the hyperconsciousness/negation of race dialectic is an effect of the racial democracy myth insofar as it silences awareness of racial classifications and ensuing practices and representations. By silencing the relevance of race in social relations, the hyperconsciousness/negation of race dialectic obscures the role that race plays in determining one's position in the historical structures of power and resources. When this happens, the myth of racial democracy, based on analogous silencing of the relevance of race in social structures, is maintained. On the other hand, the hyperconsciousness/negation of race dynamic confronts the myth of racial democracy inasmuch as it reveals how Brazilians are acutely aware of racial differences and utilize those to (often tacitly) justify, think about, and enforce behavior and social inequalities.

The dialectic hyperconsciousness of race/negation of the relevance of race needs to be put in the center and front of critical analyses of Brazilian race relations. The dialectic allows us to understand how a system that is on the surface devoid of racial awareness is in reality deeply immersed in racialized understandings of the social world. The focus on the hyperconsciousness/negation of race dynamic opens a window into hegemonic racial common sense.⁶ If We are serious about not only understanding, but also challenging Brazilian inequalities, then We must come to terms with and propose an alternative to the persistent myth that negates the nature, process, and effects of anti-Black racism in the self-proclaimed racial paradise.

To approach the hyperconsciousness/negation of race conundrum, first i briefly review pertinent Brazilian and U.S. bibliographies that focus on problems associated with the racial democracy myth; second, i utilize ethnographic data; and third, i interpret newspaper articles. The ethnographic data and the newspaper articles report on one of the many events of police corruption and brutality that have characterized Rio de Janeiro—Brazil's second largest city—at least since the last decade. i will analyze a failed kidnapping of a young Black man by police officers as it intersected with (a) my observant participation⁷ in Black communities' efforts to organize and express their grievances to the established powers between 2001 and 2003, as well as with (b) newspapers' coverage of yet another case of police misconduct.

By analyzing newspaper coverage of the failed kidnapping, i show how such reports (at the very least implicitly) dehumanize Afro-Brazilians by linking them to crime, corruption, and the favelas—working-class neighborhoods considered to be places where future generations of dangerous Blacks will continue to terrorize the imagination and lives of the non-favela people. News reports express hegemonic commonsense ideas

about Blacks.⁸ As such, they are necessarily linked to, express, and support structural discrimination against Afro-Brazilians resulting from policies and everyday behavior.

Similar to *Cidade de Deus*, Rio news stories depict Black people in the favelas by rarely, if at all, mentioning race. At the same time, stereotypes about Blacks are maintained, if only by the absence of any reference to race. When poor neighborhoods, crime, drugs, and violence are mentioned, the tacit—but nevertheless powerful—connection that is made is with Black people. This pregnant silence only reinforces the stereotypes and justifies discrimination. Silence seems to be atmosphere in which racism respires and persists. Silence, furthermore, protects its producer from being seen as overtly prejudiced, and since few, if any people seem prejudiced, the Brazilian myth of racial democracy continues.⁹ The dynamics of the hyperconsciousness of race and its negation are pivotal in how the myth of racial democracy and its greater beneficiary, White supremacy, survive mostly unchallenged.

THE PERSISTENCE OF THE RACIAL DEMOCRACY MYTH

In spite of increasing challenges against the myth of racial democracy in Brazil, the myth is still hegemonic, and shapes as well as reflects social hierarchies whose dynamo are prevailing notions of and practices associated with race.¹⁰ According to the existing myth, Brazil is a polity characterized by the relative unimportance of race both as a cognitive-moral category and as a determinant of one's structural social position. One of the myth's expressions—perhaps its most notorious—is the myriad of color classifications Brazilians utilize to identify themselves and others. Clóvis Moura,¹¹ for example, notes that the 1980 Brazilian census listed 136 colors non-White persons utilized to describe their complexion. The color spectrum, according to Oracy Nogueira's typological reading of the prevalent myth, indicates that, rather than paying attention to one's ancestry (*origem*), Brazilians focus instead on a person's appearance (*marca*).¹² Contrary to the apartheid regimes in the United States and South Africa, for instance, where ancestry determines one's racial classification, Brazil's attention to one's external characteristics makes for a more flexible and therefore less pernicious sociability system—or so goes the myth and its proponents.¹³ Thus, rather than constituting a rigid, bi- or tri-polar classificatory system, Brazilian color denominations emphasize multiplicity, indefiniteness, in-betweens. In this logic, prejudice, if and when it exists, is based on superficial traits that can be—and the myth asserts: almost always are—overridden by social class and economic power. Thus, one's appearance is always mediated by one's social position.¹⁴ It is be-

cause of this logic that Black persons who have managed to attain some level of social status can affirm that they know what it is to be Black since they, alas, have been Black themselves.¹⁵

Such mythical construction, however, negates the obvious: the multiple color system is predicated on and indeed reveals the assumption that Blacks can and should aim for the erasure of their Blackness in favor of increasing degrees of Whiteness.¹⁶ Wishes of Whiteness are widespread among Whites and non-Whites. Among Whites, contrary to the myth, and with regional variations, there is marked and increasing resistance against miscegenation.¹⁷ For non-Whites, in a given generation Whitening is attainable through social status and, better yet, by marriage and procreation with a lighter-skinned person.¹⁸ The resulting lighter progeny will guarantee not only immediate increased status, but also will contribute to the country's (deemed necessary, according to the myth) transgenerational and genocidal de-Blackening process.¹⁹ Hence the common, playful yet normative saying in non-White Brazilian families that "we need to purify our blood."²⁰

The multiplicity of colors non-Whites employ to talk about their phenotype often constitute attempts to place themselves closer to the White ideal and as far away as possible from the less ambiguous Black categories their physical appearance may suggest. According to Moura,²¹ such attempts to "substitute the concrete reality for a deceitful chromatic magic (*magia cromática*)," are motivated by a desire by non-Whites "to symbolically approximate . . . [themselves] to the symbols created by the ['White'] dominator." Consequently, the myth of racial democracy and its seemingly inoffensive color spectrum implies and reinforces the whitening ideal—an ideal that is unmistakably anti-Black and whose ultimate success means the elimination of Afro-Brazilians.²²

HYPERCONSCIOUSNESS OF COLOR EQUALS HYPERCONSCIOUSNESS OF RACE

As made clear by Antonio Sergio Alfredo Guimarães,²³ color categories in Brazil are always already racialized. When Brazilians employ the 136-color code available, we in fact classify a person according to a White-Black continuum. Based on ethnographic work conducted in one of Rio de Janeiro's favelas, Robin Sheriff perceives that, in spite of the multitude of color categories employed by her informants, there are only two true racial types: Black and White.²⁴ Although the chromatic continuum has obvious kinship with analogous constructions in Africa and the African Diaspora,²⁵ it is specific to how Brazilian society conceives of Whiteness and Blackness. Whereas Whiteness can be attained by lighter-skinned

persons through social status—differently, therefore, than the United States, where the one-drop rule applies—Blackness constitutes stigma's fulcrum, from which non-Whites constantly attempt to distance themselves.²⁶

Multiple color categories signify restricted racial notions by, precisely, attempting to negate the relevance of racial notions. In this logic, since most Brazilians are neither Black nor White nor Indian, but rather a combination of the original three races, as rendered commonsensical by one of Brazil's founding fables,²⁷ it becomes necessary to find descriptive terms that account for the multiple phenotypes resulting from centuries of miscegenation. What this logic silences, however, is that it is clearly dependent on the very racial categories which, albeit unmentioned, themselves generate the multiple color denominations. In other words, there would be no color multiplicity if it were not for the awareness of the races that generated them. Indeed, the common saying that "passou de branco preto é," literally meaning "if you're beyond White [or, if you can't pass as White] then you're Black," reveals that underlying the color spectrum is a clear understanding of a White/non-White binary system that determines social privileges based on race. In this, Brazilian race codes seem to be much closer than previously imagined, for example, to the U.S. binary racial system,²⁸ in which, to use Nogueira's terminology,²⁹ *origem* is more important than *marca*. Chromatic multiplicity, therefore, constitutes the racial democracy myth's translation of racial categories.

A White Brazilian woman interviewed by Twine expressed this understanding:

Today people do not want to acknowledge that [racial inequality] exists, understand? Precisely because everyone is *so conscious of racial differences*, they do not want to admit being aware of racism. They are ashamed to admit they are racists.³⁰

The relevance of race, however, is not restricted to the realm of mythology and everyday talk of color. Analyses of political economy confirm and give a concrete, appalling dimension to the White/non-White binary informing Brazilian social structure: greater differences in life chances and outcomes (employment, education, infant mortality, and susceptibility to police abuse, for example) exist between non-Whites and Whites than among non-Whites.³¹

Since color equals (and/or alludes to and/or derives from) race, the surprising, numerous, and creative color hyperconsciousness that defines Brazilian social classifications equals (and/or alludes to and/or derives from), after all, race hyperconsciousness. But because Brazilian historical common sense is immersed in the racial democracy myth,³² racial hyper-

consciousness is often repressed. The abundance of color denominations as well as the deafening silence about racial matters, therefore, can be understood as a manifestation of the centrality that race occupies in Brazilian social structure and common sense. Which is to say, the hyperconsciousness/negation of race dialectic is the mode through which the social construction of race in Brazil is manifested.

IN THE BOWELS OF THE BEAST: WHEN "RACISM IS EVERYWHERE" YET ABSENT

Winter in Rio de Janeiro can sometimes feel like, well, winter, as it did on 28 June 2001. It was raining heavily, and it was cold. Rumba Gabriel invited me to have lunch with military police officers. Racism and police brutality were the agenda. The event was certainly odd for several reasons. The main one is that the focus on race is far from being popular among Brazilians, especially those in positions of power. It is difficult enough to talk about race among people of color in poor communities, even more so with those who have a vested interest in maintaining the silence around race relations and hierarchies.³³ In addition, the thought of having lunch with police officials responsible for a sanguinary and racist corporation was unnerving.³⁴ More so because my contact and one of the organizers i was collaborating with, Rumba, had become a well-known outspoken favela activist against the recurring racist brutality committed by the police in mostly Black, poor neighborhoods. Not surprisingly, Rumba had also been accused several times, and eventually arrested, for alleged connection with drug traffickers. Let me add that, as someone who came of age among political exiles and who voted for the first time only in 1989 (for president) after long years of military dictatorship, socializing with those who conducted torture and assassination during the period of repression was not high in my priority list.

Still, i had been told there were exceptions, and Lieutenant Colonel Gilberto Azevedo, the commanding officer of the Fourth Military Police Battalion (São Cristovão), near downtown Rio, was one of them. A reputable Black man in his early fifties who had risen to the top ranks of the corporation in a lifetime of service, Azevedo had shown interest in some of the programs for youth We were developing in favelas, and was willing to talk about racism as well as strategies to curb police brutality. The recognition that there was a pattern of police brutality, and that the pattern was somehow connected to race, made Azevedo a potential ally with whom We had to at least engage. He was especially concerned with the Mangueira favela—a mostly Black community, as are many of the favelas in Rio—where he had noted, by talking to residents, that when the

number of police in the community decreased, the sense of security increased. He worried too because Mangueira is the home for one of the most traditional and recognizable samba schools, where musician and composer Cartola spent most of his life and became nationally famous. In addition, Mangueira has one of the most successful social programs in place, housed in the Vila Olímpica, where youths receive academic, cultural, and sports training. So tourists and officials from all corners of the world frequently visit Mangueira—Bill Clinton and Nelson Mandela among them—thus heightening Azevedo's concerns.

Azevedo had invited for lunch four other commanding officers and their assistants from neighboring battalions, as well two civilian chiefs of police (*delegados*). Interestingly, Azevedo was the only Afro-Brazilian among the officers, and indeed one of the few other Black people in the room with the exception of a community activist and retired police officer whom Rumba had invited, one of the civilian chiefs of police, Rumba, and me. Uneasily, the activists and the police officers sat side-by-side in a long, U-shaped table while we were tended by lower-ranked military personnel.

The stern atmosphere did not ease when Azevedo motioned Rumba to speak. Rumba addressed the audience by describing how Rio police, from at least the beginning of the twentieth century, dealt with poor and Afrodescended communities in violent, excluding manners. By stressing the continuity between representations developed during the times of slavery and those still in place in police corporations, Rumba suggested the reasons for contemporary police's brutality against the people of the favela was twofold: a heritage of racism, and its defense of the elites. There was a culture in the police corporation that predisposed its members against those considered not full citizens, namely, the poor and those of color. He acknowledged, however, the bad police officers were a numerical minority in each battalion. He also mentioned that, as one of the few careers open to Afro-Brazilians other than the traditional menial jobs, the police offered opportunity for social advancement and relative economic gains. Rumba concluded by enumerating recent occurrences of police misconduct against people of the favela, and asked for the opening of the dialogue between the people of the favela and the police leadership.

A colonel sitting between Azevedo and I offered that education was the only solution: both police officers and the people of the favelas needed to be alphabetized, informed, and trained so that they could become better professionals and citizens. He added that those who were already in the world of drugs—*mun-do das drogas*—were hopeless. The implications of this intervention were obvious: while recognizing that some in the police cadre could be better trained so that abuse and misuse of force could be prevented, and relations with favela communities improved, this colonel's narrative criminalized the already stigmatized communities

and, by extension, exempted his men of blame for their brutality against those deemed beyond remedy. Brutality was indeed justified as a service for the greater good, since those people whose houses the police often invaded with no justification, and whom they beat and many times summarily killed—those people were a permanent burden to society. This narrative's ultimate logic is apparent: the recurring executions perpetrated by the police in daily operations in the favelas were justified by a perverse argument that defended Brazil's unwritten but widely practiced swift death penalty against the mostly Afrodescended and poor. Reason prevailed as long as the objects of police brutality were those whose nature was deemed outside of civilization's realm.³⁵

Because the colonel's reasoning was based on the assumption that favelas were places where drug trafficking involved a large proportion of their population, the activists felt they needed to counter the notions about, on the one hand, what the colonel described as drug trafficking, and on the other, the favelas' widespread participation in it. We insisted that what took place in favelas was not trafficking, but commerce.³⁶ The drugs that were sold by relatively small dealers and their almost-bureaucratic organization of lookouts, runners, and various levels of managers³⁷ in reality were part of a transnational web whose main administrators are not of the favelas, nor are they in the favelas. Studies conducted by favela organizations show that the proportion of locals participating in drug commerce is infinitesimal, often not reaching 0.1 percent of the community. The activists in the room also made the point that most drug consumers are part of the middle and upper classes. Rumba suggested that the police start directing their operations in universities, exclusive condominiums, and rich neighborhoods. Like most working-class Afro-Brazilians, who are excluded from the public university system's better education and tougher entrance exams, as a student in one of Rio's private colleges, he had firsthand knowledge of what he was talking about. He described his rich colleagues' parties where powder cocaine was served in trays.

At this point, one of the colonels who was already visibly uncomfortable with Rumba's intervention abruptly hit the table with his closed fist, got up, and made the following angry remarks:

First of all, you [looks at Rumba] should have stayed away from those drugs, shouldn't you? I don't care who does it. If you're around it, then you're also guilty! And besides, we have no authority to go into those closed condominiums, you understand that? Now, [he raises his voice] no one is going to come to my house—this is my house, you understand?—and tell me that I need to tell my men to change how they deal with those people [in the favela]! No one! Everyone in those favelas is a suspect. Those *filthy* places. All they do is do drugs and shoot at us. No work, no decency, nothing! And you come here telling us to talk to them? I've had enough! I'm not taking any

more of this bullshit while you all [pointed to the other colonels, but not to Azevedo] listen quietly. You excuse my language, but this is absurd.

He directed his gaze to Azevedo, me, and then to Rumba. His disgust was palpable. He proceeded to put on his cap and walk away, at which time two other colonels and their aides also left the room. Azevedo was somewhat embarrassed, but quickly recovered, saying the police have a long way to go in the process of learning how to communicate. To his remaining guests he said many police officers live in favelas, and go through considerable pains to conceal their occupation. Azevedo added that, if the police are to overcome their highly negative image among the poor, it is fundamental to start dialogues with favela activists.

As We had lunch, the conversation resumed. One of the remaining colonels recognized police culture made it so that favelas were seen as the enemy and that it was understandable that many inhabitants of those communities saw the police as an occupying, violent force.³⁸ The Black civilian chief of police added to this thought that racism explained much of the police behavior: since favelas were the areas concentrating the larger number of Afrodescended persons, it was no surprise that hatred and violence was systematically applied there. He concluded: "racism is everywhere; even we who combat it sometimes fall prey to it, without realizing it."

The remark was surprising, at least to the activists who looked at each other as if to make sure We had heard it correctly. Azevedo, however, decided to downplay the chief of police's comment by reminding his guests that the police had great numbers of people of color (*gente de cor*), and that while discrimination existed, it was certainly not the most important problem to discuss. In his opinion, the police needed to understand that not everyone in the favelas is a criminal, and favela dwellers had to realize, through concrete police actions, that the police were not there to brutalize them indiscriminately. At this point, the community activist who came with us observed that police corruption was rampant, and it had become common practice for officers to extort those they thought were connected to drug dealers. When extortion failed, they resorted to kidnapping. In Jacarezinho, the favela for which Rumba was the neighborhood association's president, he and i added that such was an almost daily reality. Ransom payments were becoming inflated, and fifty thousand reais (at the time the equivalent of about fifteen thousand dollars) were common.

URBAN SPACE AND FAVELAS: WHEN THEY BECOME CODES FOR RACE

It is remarkable that in a meeting convened by a Black commanding officer, in which the main theme was racism and police brutality, race and

racism were almost absent from the dialogue that ensued. The community activists' efforts to link police abuse, extortion, kidnapping, and assassinations with race prejudice fell on apparently deaf ears. Azevedo's willingness to host the meeting and serve as an intermediary between the representatives of Black communities and police commanders was not enough to produce an open dialogue about the ingrained racism in police corporations and, indeed, Brazilian society in general. Even when one of the civilian chiefs of police intervened, emphasizing the ubiquity of race in everyday life, the topic was swiftly diverted by Azevedo. The almost seamless manner in which Azevedo shifted the conversation away from the topic of race only reinforces how difficult it is to frankly and directly talk about race. Most revealing is the following: race was left out of a discussion that, on the one hand, had Black persons arguing for the importance of addressing racism, and on the other, race was absent in a dialogue whose object—the favelas—are predominantly Black communities. What explains this apparent absence? Does this apparent absence mean that race is not relevant in how police officers in particular, but Brazilians in general, think about and act in society?

While the open talk of race did not materialize, there were important turning points in the meeting that reveal the centrality of race in forming perceptions and actions. I would like to propose that the *avoidance* of race-talk is suggestive of the heightened racial awareness which, dialectically, manifests itself by the negation of such awareness. One of the turning points was the colonel's abrupt exit, interrupting the Black community representative's narrative. The atmosphere was already tense, and the colonel's actions and words only expressed some of the reasons for the generalized uneasiness. The colonel was visibly irritated by the presence of Black people from the favela, as he put it, in "his house." More infuriating was the suggestion that his men were behaving indiscriminately against citizens of communities whose race, class, and place of residence seemed enough to condemn them to systematic disrespect, brutality, and death. It is clear to me that his fury had much to do with the fact that a Black man, resident of a favela, was telling military police commanders how their divisions should operate. There were at least three levels of hierarchy being challenged by the Black activist: social class, geography, and race. How could a working-class Black man, from a favela, speak to a White, middle-class (obviously nonfavela dweller), high-ranking military police official? In a society as racially hierarchical as Brazil, such circumstances were filled with tensions.³⁹

Crucial to the colonel's abrupt decision to leave was the fact that the activist was Black, his narrative's focus was racism, and the meeting's theme was race. The resistance to engage with racial matters, if on the one hand generated a loud silence around the violent racism practiced by the

police, on the other produced actions and phrases that, albeit a-racial on the surface, were nevertheless suffused with racial awareness. The reference to "my house," for example, needs to be put in the context where, to this day, Black people in Brazil are expected to enter residences through "service doors" and "service elevators"; Blacks are not expected to be in elite shopping and recreational areas; and Blacks, in general, are not expected to be outside of poor neighborhoods—except, of course, if working in menial occupations such as domestic servants, babysitters, and street cleaners.⁴⁰ Brazilian apartheid allows for the relative and temporary inclusion of Blacks into residential and commercial areas and networks of sociability in which they are not supposed to be as long as, and only if, their inclusion is facilitated by labor relations or by a non-Black person—these two conditions obviously often intersect. Outside of labor relations, the condition of possibility for Black inclusion is that the non-Black person owns the "house," or is familiar with and respected in the social context into which the Afro-Brazilian is going to be introduced. Docility, thankfulness, and silence around racial matters are expected from the Blacks who are the objects of such inclusion. By challenging the colonel's methods and his troops, and by talking frontally about race, the Black activists were breaking some of the consecrated unspoken rules of racial protocol.

"My house" has also obvious deeper historical meaning, according to which, during the regime of slavery that lasted formally in Brazil until 1888, the "big house" (*casa grande*) was the enslaved master's quarters whose position of power and authority was expressed by his control of and distance from the enslaved's houses (*senzala*).⁴¹ By emphasizing that the Fourth Battalion was "his" house, the White colonel reaffirmed a hierarchy of which race is (and was) a central organizer. The hyperconsciousness of race, however, impeded the explicit reference to race. Brazilian sociability etiquette requires that explicit race talk be avoided, especially when around people of color.⁴² Instead, place (the favela) became an index that signified race without having to name its reference. It is no accident that the colonel's insistence about the generalized wickedness of the favelas is supported by the very concepts that are usually associated with Black people, not only in Brazil, but also throughout the Americas/Africa/Europe complex: dirt, promiscuity, aversion to work, violence, irrationality, lawlessness, danger, and subhumanity. Not surprisingly, the brutality perpetrated against those of the favelas is, to use a current notion, preemptive: the police strike first because, otherwise, they, the police, and the wider society, will be the object of the favelada/os violence. The police only apply to the community what the community would do if it could, or if were not anticipatorily repressed.⁴³ The colonel did not have to explicitly mention race and Blackness. We all understood

what he was talking about. Urban space became a metaphor, a code concept for Blackness, in the same way that the favela was rendered a code word for Blacks.⁴⁴ If there were any doubts, those evaporated when, during his tantrum, while carefully avoiding the White officers, he fixed his angry gaze at the Afro-Brazilians in the room as if to say "Black people like you are whom I am talking about."

POLICE KIDNAPPERS

Little did We know that, as We discussed police-favela relations, the Fourth Battalion and its commander, Colonel Azevedo, were about to be involved in one of the greatest publicized scandals involving police corruption that the city had experienced.⁴⁵ The incident unveils some of the dynamics between the police and favela residents that activists such as the ones present in the meeting described above were attempting to bring to the attention of police commanders. As importantly, the incident adds another layer to the analysis of the hyperconsciousness/negation of race as expressed in the local news media.

O Dia, arguably the most-read daily newspaper in the city of Rio de Janeiro, on 5 July 2001 reported the event in a first-page, highlighted box:

MILITARY POLICE BATTALION BECOMES PRISON AND COMMANDANT IS FIRED BANDITS—POLICE WILL BE EXPELLED

Absurd 1—In Mangueira, four Military Police officers kidnap Reinaldo da Costa, 17, mistaken for a dealer's cousin, and ask for a 50,000 Reais ransom.

Absurd 2—Officers take the youth to the 4th Battalion (São Cristovão), from where they negotiate with dealers his release.

Absurd 3—From the Military Police General Headquarters, in downtown Rio, the victim's lawyer orients dealers to act as if they accepted the police officers' extortion, thus setting up a flagrant.

Absurd 4—One of the police-kidnappers is lieutenant-colonel 4th Battalion commandant Gilberto Azevedo's cousin.

In the end—Two police officers are arrested at the place set for the ransom's payment, and two others turn themselves in later. Gilberto de Azevedo . . . is fired.

"Those officers will have the same treatment given to over a thousand officers accused of corruption."

Governor Anthony Garotinho

Details about the case filled the almost entirety of that day's edition page 12. For those of us working in favelas in Rio, events such as these were almost everyday occurrences. This kidnapping's singularity lay in the fact that its victim was lucky enough to have a lawyer help in the

negotiations and with the capture of the corrupt police officers. Reinaldo da Costa only survived the ordeal because a neighbor called his cell phone. Answering the call, the kidnappers told the person on the other side of the line that they wanted a ransom, in the absence of which they would kill the young man. Costa's family immediately phoned his godfather, a police officer, who then contacted Esio Lopes Neves, the lawyer. Following a suggestion by Costa's family, Neves rushed to the military police headquarters, where the officer in command took over the negotiations with the kidnappers while Neves began contacting the dealers in Mangueira. Neves convinced the dealers, who at first refused to talk to the kidnappers saying they had the wrong person, to act as if they were going to pay the ransom at an established meeting place and time. As soon as the kidnappers agreed to the arrangement, according to which Costa's eighteen-year-old girlfriend would make the first twenty-five thousand reais installment, a special police operation was put in place to arrest the bandits. Two of them were promptly caught, and the remaining two turned themselves in the next day.

On the surface, this story and the newspaper rendition of it do not add much to our analysis of the hyperconsciousness/negation of race in Brazil. After all, race at first does not seem to be of relevance in determining the course of the events. The large color photograph that centralizes the reader's gaze shows, in the center, Costa sitting and looking, seemingly still frightened, at what probably is a large concentration of reporters. To his right, also sitting, is Neves, the lawyer, a graying White man who is looking at the kidnappers who sit between Costa and the reporters. The kidnappers are covering their heads with their T-shirts, and are unmistakably Afrodescended. To the left of Neves, standing behind a desk, is the civilian police commander, José Renato Torres, a White man in his mid-thirties, who was one of Azevedo's guests during the lunch I described earlier. The civilian police station (*delegacia*) Torres commands stages the kidnappers' presentation to the press, the kidnapped, his lawyer, and the weapons, drugs, and jewelry apprehended during the rescue operation. Both Neves and Torres are wearing suit and tie.

Were the myth of racial democracy to be valid, this incident would prove it. Costa, the innocent victim, is Black. The two corrupt officers who appear in the photograph are also Black. The lawyer and the chief of police are White, and they seem genuinely concerned with Costa's well-being and proud of how the event was concluded. Good and evil are distributed among the persons of color, demonstrating that morality is not attached to race. Even more interesting, Costa, a young Black man, a street vendor and resident of a favela who, as such, incarnates the preferred target of police harassment and object of fear in everyday conversation and media news,⁴⁶ is the victim and virtuous citizen in the story. His charac-

ter, worker status, endurance, effective social network, and intelligence stand as strong arguments for the futility of anti-Black prejudice. When Costa's image is contrasted with that of the two Black officers covering their heads, an implicit argument is made about the fact that, if some Blacks can be corrupt and criminal, others are honest, dignified workers.⁴⁷

A problem with how the incident was portrayed is that, while it naturalizes race relations in Brazil, it forcefully silences its obvious racial aspects. On the one hand, the men of law, knowledge, and power—the lawyer and the civilian police commander—are White. On the other hand, Costa and both low-ranked officers are Black, and their proximity to poverty is readily confirmed by the location of the kidnapping, the officer's low ranking, and Costa's low-paying occupation in the informal economy. It all happens as if Blacks are always already poor. The point here is not to question that, in fact, Afro-Brazilians are overrepresented among the poor, the homeless, the victims of police brutality, and those who do not receive adequate formal education.⁴⁸ Rather, it is to interrogate this naturalized race and class correspondence and suggest that the hyperconsciousness/negation of race contributes to the maintenance of this correspondence. Without this interrogation, class and race correlations are rendered self-evident, ubiquitous, and permanent. One of the consequences of this naturalized correlation is that considerations about how and why Whites occupy better social and economic positions, while Black persons like Costa and his family live in poor neighborhoods like Mangueira—these considerations are not part of how news stories in particular, and Brazilian society in general, think about themselves and are reflected upon. Silence about discrimination and prejudice is thus not surprising since the naturalization of race and class connections makes it reasonable to discard racism and accentuate classism as explanation for why Blacks continue to be marginalized. The structural and historically persistent disadvantages Blacks experience would thus be a result, not of how White supremacy excludes Afro-Brazilians, but of prejudice and discrimination against the poor.⁴⁹ Such naturalization becomes a convenient tool for how the hyperconsciousness of race is silenced and transfigured into concerns about and explanations that stress class. Ultimately, the absence of racial analyses contributes to the maintenance of racial hierarchies, knowledge, and attitudes, which in Brazil unmistakably favor Whites.⁵⁰

A second problem with how the kidnapping was reported is that there was not a hint of effort to explain why Costa had been mistaken by the police officers for a cousin of a powerful drug dealer. The race/class naturalization, which represses concerns about race, provides one answer: Costa must have looked the age of and happened to be in same area as the intended target. The hyperconsciousness/negation of race that inhabits

this reasoning can be readily unveiled when We recognize that age and urban space, as they are connected in Costa's case, form a powerful index for danger and criminality—danger and criminality deriving from the fear of young Black people resident in favelas such as Mangueira. In reality, therefore, Costa's race and appearance must have been a critical factor in his being mistaken for the drug dealer's cousin. That is, given the omnipresent associations that are made by Brazilians between Blackness, youth, and favelas, the singling out of Costa as a suspect is no surprise. The police officers-turned-kidnappers must have had information on the appearance of their intended victim. Costa looks unmistakably Black, wears his hair short like most hip-hop influenced youths, and because he is dressed in nice-looking clothes, the officers must have assumed he was connected with illegal activities.⁵¹ It is implied here, of course, that Blacks are not supposed to look well groomed—the ones that do are suspect by definition because they challenge the hegemonic correspondence that is unspoken, but well understood, between Blackness and dirt.⁵² The naturalized, conscious yet silent connection between Blackness and dirt generates, and in turn is supported by, connections between Blackness and laziness, poverty, untidiness, and unattractiveness.⁵³ The police officers' mistake, We can now deduce, and because immersed in the logic that denigrates Blackness, was an "honest" one, that is, perfectly aligned with the myth of racial democracy.

The third problem with the article is how the police officers were depicted. Because the naturalization of racial hierarchies and knowledge that dehumanize Blacks are silenced by the hyperconsciousness/negation dialectic, the corrupt Afro-Brazilian police officers are portrayed as if their actions are related to, not so much their own racialized perceptions as well as their dire economic predicament, but to individual choice and failure. It is ironic that while the police offer one of the few careers open to Afro-Brazilians' relative social ascension, it is also one of the worst-paid occupations.⁵⁴ Police officers are known to have one or two extra jobs that provide a marginal increase in their income. Sometimes, as this event vividly illustrates, officers will resort to criminal activity. It is also common for officers to provide private security for small businesses, and their participation in the killing of Black youths suspected of stealing, while performing such extra-police duties, has been documented.⁵⁵ The great majority of officers, however, do not participate in criminal activities, and the poorer ones reside in the very favelas the police much discriminate against.⁵⁶ Low-ranking officers must therefore negotiate two difficult realities: how favelas are criminalized by the institution they work for, and how favela residents see the police as an occupying, corrupt, and often murderous body. One common survival strategy adopted by police officers residing in favelas is to conceal their uniforms and occupation from

their neighbors, which of course generates considerable anxiety and fear.⁵⁷

The corrupt police officers obviously share the negative understanding about young Black men, especially when they are well dressed: this understanding led them to arrest Costa. By avoiding the topic of race, and silently naturalizing race relations, news media such as *O Dia* also hide the obvious: anti-Black racism is not exclusive to Whites and to the well off—it is not a one-way process. Anti-Black discrimination in Brazil also operates among those who are themselves the object of discrimination, and in this manner shows a kinship with other anti-Black marginalization in the Americas and Africa.⁵⁸ More specifically, the Black participation in the technologies of anti-Black genocide resonates with the secondary levels of marginalization that occur in Black communities in the United States, as We have seen in previous chapters. Anti-Black racism in Brazil is thus ubiquitous, involving the participation of even those who are its main victims.⁵⁹

Social status and income are necessarily determined by race, yet the newspaper article, with its deafening silence around issues of race, prevents the reader from attaining such understanding. The article therefore presents the Black police officers as individuals detached from the historical social relations marked by hierarchies, anti-Black racism, and White privilege. As long as the greater structure of racialized economic opportunities is not addressed, terrible actions such as the kidnapping become nothing more than the silent confirmation of Blacks' assumed propensity to crime, as detailed national surveys have showed.⁶⁰ And insofar as the persistent racialized inequalities are not recognized and discussed, the naturalization of race and class correspondences will remain, thus energizing the self-perpetuating images that depict Whites indisputably contained in the world of morality, wisdom, and power, while Blacks remain isolated in a representational circle of evil, ignorance, and necessary submission.

Far from unrealistically asking the newspaper to bring complex analyses of how the Brazilian structure of economic opportunities is greatly determined by race, I only stress how the hyperconsciousness/negation of race prevents a historical, structural, and ultimately more accurate perception of reality. Hegemonic perceptions of social facts in Brazil, of which news coverage is one instance, tend to repress the importance of race while holding clear—if unspoken—views on the spirit and character of Black folk. My point is not so much about how the newspaper article failed to mention and elaborate on race, as it is about the consequences of the widely held yet silent notions about Blackness that not only shape the understanding of social facts, but also perpetuate racialized inequalities. While depicting Afro-Brazilians in many of their crime and police pages,

Rio newspapers confirm their expected subordinate, inferior, and dangerous conditions. As far as there is an absence of structural and historical awareness, and as long as Black critical voices are almost always excluded from mainstream news media,⁶¹ Blacks are not only stereotyped and silenced but they are also negated in their existence as political subjects and, ultimately, their very humanity.⁶²

CHAMELEONIC RACISM AND BLACK GENOCIDE IN TIMES OF LULA: WHAT IS TO BE DONE?

The case of police misconduct documented in this chapter is part of an emblematic, persistent pattern of the widespread anti-Black racism that pervades Brazilian society.⁶³ Rio newspaper clippings for the period between December 1990 and September 2003 are replete with descriptions of extortions, kidnappings, and fatal beatings and shootings—all enacted by police officers mostly against people of African descent.⁶⁴ In line with the hyperconsciousness/negation of race dynamic, however, neither the race of the victims or perpetrators, nor (at least allusions to) anti-Black racism figure in the press coverage of such events. Even when the depictions of violence do not implicate the police, the pattern is repeated. For example, the events that took place in Rio between the night of 15 October 2002 and dawn of the next day—when purported drug dealers shot and threw grenades at the state governor's palace, a shopping mall in the southern, rich area of the city, and at the Sixth Civilian Police Headquarters—were described as being connected with and planned in "Rocinha, the Headquarter of Terror."⁶⁵ While this heading utilizes common codewords to talk about Blackness—Rocinha is the largest favela in Rio—thus substituting urban space for race, it still manages to avoid an explicit racialized language. Revealing the hyperconsciousness/negation of race dialectic, however, the avoidance of explicit racialized language goes hand in hand with the expression of clear, albeit silenced, racialized statements. The phenomenon is certainly not new. Abdias do Nascimento,⁶⁶ among others, has written on the amorphous character of Brazilian racism:⁶⁷

It is very easy to fight against manifest usurpation. From such perspective the North American Negroes, or South Africans, Rhodesians, and Angolans—each with . . . [their] own peculiarities—enjoy a situation paradoxically more advantageous than us, the Brazilian Negroes. For what are the forces that bar our progress? Are our enemies declared or adversaries rancorous? Obviously not. Among us racism has the shape of a chameleon, constantly changing in tactics and strategy. It even takes the form of paternalism, cordiality, benevolence, and good will, as if it stood for miscegenation, acculturation, assimilation.

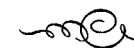
What is there to be done? How do We combat a form of racism that is so veiled and which often appears as its almost exact opposite, that is, as benevolent and well-intentioned narratives and practices that apparently do not take race into account? How can We effectively challenge the hyperconsciousness/negation of race dynamic? I have not given up on the utopia the Workers' Party embodies. To end hunger, promote land reform, distribute wealth, and combat corruption, We need to come to terms with the myth of racial democracy, destroy it, and fight for justice for Afro-Brazilians. We need to break the mythical mirror in which many of us Brazilians imagine We see ourselves as raceless beings. As long as the majority of Brazil's population, which is poor (and, contrary to official statistics, non-White), is excluded from citizenship through multiple forms of everyday and state-sanctioned violence, the historical role of the Partido dos Trabalhadores (Workers' Party) in addressing and redressing five hundred years of injustices will not be fulfilled. It cannot be stressed enough that many of these injustices are racialized, that is, anti-Black in nature, modes of expression, and results.

The conditions of possibility for greater racial awareness are in place. Never has Brazil had so many Black nongovernmental organizations focusing on health, violence, media, culture, and electoral politics. Never has Brazil had so much Black music and so many dance groups engaging with, openly criticizing, and proposing alternatives to endemic Brazilian racism—Olodum and Ilê-Aiyê in Salvador, Cidade Negra and Afroreggae in Rio being only the very tip of a vital movement that does not shy away from the national public sphere while engaged in local grassroots anti-racist efforts. Never has Brazil had such vigorous debate on affirmative action, reparations, and historical forms of racialized discrimination. Never has Brazil had so many self-defined Afro-Brazilian elected representatives at the local, state, and national levels. Never has Brazil had so many weekly magazines run by and targeted to Blacks. And, it seems, never, sadly, has Brazil had such levels of police brutality, death, and other forms of violence perpetrated against Blacks, especially in large cities such as São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, Belo Horizonte, Salvador, and Recife. Blacks are still and increasingly the main and disproportionate victims of preventable diseases, malnutrition, joblessness, AIDS/HIV infection, and clinical depression. We live in a time of great promise and great danger. As Afro-Brazilians organize and make themselves heard, the ugly facets of anti-Black genocide are as evident as ever.

A crucial step in the organized struggle against anti-Black racism in Brazil is to denounce the historical and ongoing genocide against people of African descent. We need to denounce not only the genocide that is taking place through hegemonic whitening ideals whereby Black people are encouraged to look like and seek lighter-skinned partners,⁶⁸ but also the

genocide that is more direct and causes the physical and civil death of Afro-Brazilians at the hands of the criminal justice system, segregation, and other multiple forms of marginalization. This is all the more urgent as we witness that, while the ideological appeal of the racial democracy myth seems to be as challenged as ever, there seems to be a corresponding increase in the genocidal forms of violence perpetrated against and in Black communities.

6



When a Favela Dared to Become a Condominium

Challenging Brazilian Apartheid

The installation of gates and cameras around Jacarezinho, Rio de Janeiro's second-largest favela, in July 2001 began with an intriguing idea: given that middle- and upper-class condominiums throughout Rio de Janeiro and in other major urban centers in Brazil were defined by such protective devices, why not adopt the same strategies in an attempt to curb police abuse and drug dealing?¹ The activists who came up with the thought did not even bother consulting the rest of the community. They were sure that the idea of gates and cameras would be approved unanimously, and so they went ahead and installed the security devices at key points in the favela. The cameras, one of the neighborhood association members told me, had been donated by "a Gypsy who had heard about our work."² Handheld camcorders complemented the strategy.

The daring experiment, however, was short-lived. Local activists anticipated negative reactions against the favela-condominium, and putting the idea into practice was a calculated attempt at creating public-political facts revealing the dire conditions in a poor and marginalized neighborhood. The news traveled fast, not only in the city and state of Rio de Janeiro but also in São Paulo, Brazil's largest metropolis, where, in spite of its escalating urban violence, the historical fascination with Rio's favelas generated a full-page article in the nation's leading daily, *Folha de S. Paulo*. Still, favela activists were surprised by the intensity of the reaction of the police, nonfavela public, and the politicians, including leftist ones, to this allegedly lunatic concept. In Brazil's two largest urban

¹ This chapter was originally published in *Latin American Perspectives* 33(4): 49–81. 2006.

coverage of African Americans in the U.S. press do not focus specifically on either the uprising or how it was covered by the *Times*.

24. Gooding-Williams, ed., *Reading Rodney King*; D. Hunt, *Screening the Los Angeles Riots*.

25. The *Times*' staff published its post-fact rendition of the events in a useful, although predictably not self-reflexive volume. See the *Los Angeles Times*, *Understanding the Riots*.

26. As several authors have shown, the burning and looting of 1992 were targeted and systematic. For these reasons, rather than being a riot, it constituted a rebellion. See Oliver, Johnson, and Farrell, Jr., "Anatomy of a Rebellion," in *Reading Rodney King, Reading Urban Uprising*, ed. Gooding-Williams (New York: Routledge, 1993), 118. While working at the Coalition Against Police Abuse, between 1996 and 1998, in Los Angeles, I was told by several of its members that the focal points of the rebellions corresponded to the areas where intense community organizations existed, thus strengthening the argument in favor of the political character of the uprising. Vargas, *Catching Hell in the City of Angels*. Hence the use of the word "riot" in between quotation marks. On 30 May 1992, as if to announce the end of the coverage of the rebellions, it was noted that the Marine troops were leaving the city.

27. Sears and McConahay, *The Politics of Violence*; Gerald Horne, *Fire This Time: The Watts Uprisings and the 1960s* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1995).

28. In spite of the videotaped evidence showing that Harlins was shot in the back of the head, the Korean-American shopkeeper received a six-month suspended sentence and six months of community service. The motive of the shooting was a dispute over a carton of orange juice. Harlins was an honor student at a local high school.

29. T. Morrison, ed., *Race-ing Justice: En-gendering Power* (New York: Pantheon, 1992); Lipsitz, *The Possessive Investment in Whiteness*.

30. Oliver, Johnson, and Farrell, "Anatomy of a Rebellion"; Oliver and Shapiro, *Black Wealth/White Wealth*.

31. For an analysis of a similar model where Blacks and Whites occupy extremes in a continuum of humanity, see L. R. Gordon, *Her Majesty's Other Children: Sketches of Racism from a Neocolonial Age* (New York: Rowman and Littlefield, 1997).

32. Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks* (New York: Grove Press, 1967); Russell, *The Color of Crime*.

33. Dylan Rodriguez reminds me that in 2002, leaders of the Korean American community and business organizations commemorated the "riots" by marching down LA streets hand-in-hand with members of the LAPD. This suggests that images of varied racialized groups—in this case that of Korean Americans—are not stable and require constant intervention so as to maintain their positive character. Closeness to and support of apparatuses clearly linked to White supremacy as is the LAPD is, in theory at least, an effective way to produce acceptance.

34. Waldinger and Bozorgmehr, *Ethnic Los Angeles*; Davis, *City of Quartz*.

35. Vargas, *Catching Hell in the City of Angels*.

36. E. Smith, "Transmitting Race: The Los Angeles Riot in Television News," *Research Newspaper R-11* (1994), 6.

37. Davis, *City of Quartz*; Miller, *Search and Destroy*; Donziger, *The Real War on Crime*.

38. For example, Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*; Russell, *The Color of Crime*; Lipsitz, *The Possessive Investment in Whiteness*; Kelley, *Yo' Mama's Disfunktional!*

39. Miller, *Search and Destroy*.

40. K. S. Murty, J. B. Roebuck, and G. R. Armstrong, "The Black Community's Reaction to the 1992 Los Angeles Riot," *Deviant Behavior* 15 (1994): 85, 94.

41. Murty, Roebuck, and Armstrong, "The Black Community's Reaction," 97.

42. On founding aspects of democracy and totalitarianism, see Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (San Diego: Harcourt Brace 1979 [1948]), Claude Lefort, *L'Invention Démocratique: Les Limites de la Domination Totalitaire* (Paris: Fayard, 1981).

43. Class differences among Blacks were recognized in the article "Middle-Class Blacks Feel Sense of Betrayal." The core of the argument was that "for middle-class Blacks, many of whom used education and hard work to rise from impoverished beginnings, the not-guilty verdicts in the trial of four White police officers was a slap in the face by White America" (3 May 1992: A14). It is interesting that, in this perspective, non-middle-class Blacks would not be as unjustified by the not-guilty verdicts. Implied, perhaps, is the notion that poorer Blacks are more likely to be part of the "criminal underclass."

44. Morrison, ed., *Race-ing Justice*, xv.

45. Claude Lévi-Strauss, "A estrutura dos mitos," in *Antropologia estrutural* (Rio de Janeiro: Tempo Brasileiro, 1985).

46. Eduardo Bonilla-Silva, *Racism without Racists: Color-Blind Racism and the Persistence of Racial Inequality in the United States* (Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield, 2003); L.G. Carr, *Color-blind Racism* (Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage Publications, 1997); Lipsitz, *The Possessive Investment in Whiteness*.

47. Gilmore, "Globalisation and US Prison Growth"; Donziger, *The Real War on Crime*.

48. Kurshan, "Behind the Walls," in *Criminal Injustice*, ed. Rosenblatt (Boston: South End, 1996).

49. Cohen, *The Boundaries of Blackness*.

50. Bullard, *Dumping in Dixie*; Lipsitz, *The Possessive Investment in Whiteness*.

5. HYPERCONSCIOUSNESS OF RACE AND ITS NEGATION

1. Confirming its national and international appeal, and as if to rectify the previous year's Academy rejection, *Cidade de Deus* was nominated for four Oscars in 2004: best director (Fernando Meirelles), best adapted screenplay (Bráulio Mantovani and Paulo Lins), best edition (Daniel Rezende), and best photography (Cesar Charlone). It did not win in any of these categories, but the four nominations were a first for Brazilian cinema. In 1998, *Central do Brasil* was nominated for two Oscars: best actress (Fernanda Montenegro), and best foreign film (*Folha de S. Paulo*, 27 January 2004, www.folha.com.br). It did not win in either. Still, the film's wide appeal indicates how the focus on favelas, which necessarily, albeit often silently, imply the recognition of how race, class, gender, and urban space

create and express markedly unequal experiences in the nation-state. Indeed, at least in Brazil, the myriad of commentaries about *Cidade de Deus* are expressions of the hyperconsciousness/negation of race dialectic that I investigate in this chapter. Among forty-nine e-mails sent to *Folha de S. Paulo* between 29 February 2004 and 5 March 2004 discussing the film, there was not a single message that mentioned explicitly the characters' race. Most e-mails, however, talked about favelas as dangerous and violent places. Such a dynamic—avoidance of race and recognition of specific areas where Blacks are the majority—is at the core of the hyperconsciousness/negation of race dialectic I develop below.

2. Unless specified, I will utilize Afro-Brazilian, Black, non-White, and of color interchangeably. This is not to diminish the ongoing conflicts around race and color classification among Blacks, nor the relative advantages that lighter-skinned Blacks enjoy compared to darker-skinned Afro-Brazilians. Yet there is data showing that greater social separation exists between Afro-Brazilians and Whites than between Afro-Brazilians of different colors; see Nelson do Valle Silva and Carlos Hasenbalg, *Relações raciais no Brasil contemporâneo* (Rio de Janeiro: Rio Fundo Editora, 1992) and Telles, "Ethnic Boundaries and Political Mobilization," in *Racial Politics in Contemporary Brazil*, ed. Hanchard (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1999). See also Degler, *Neither Black Nor White* and *Folha de S. Paulo/Datafolha, Racismo cordial: A mais completa análise sobre o preconceito de cor no Brasil* (São Paulo: Editora Ática, 1995), for analyses of color and how differences among Afrodescended people, from the perspective of Whites, vary by region.

3. There are a few references to "*branquela/s*," literally "Whitey," when characters refer to light-skinned and White people in the movie. However, there are no derogatory terms against Black people, which is surprising given their ubiquity in Brazil.

4. For example, D'Adesky, *Pluralismo étnico e multiculturalismo*; Degler, *Neither Black Nor White*; Gilliam, "From Roxbury to Rio," in *African-American Reflections*, ed. Helwig (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1992); Twine, *Racism in a Racial Democracy*. The debate between Hanchard, on the one hand, and Bourdieu and Wacquant, on the other, exemplifies how such accusations are also present in the academic environment. Bourdieu and Wacquant accused Hanchard of superimposing U.S. racial codes on, and therefore seriously misinterpreting, Brazilian social reality. Bourdieu and Wacquant, in their critique of "U.S. imperialist reasoning," reproduce the same problem they locate in the U.S. scholar by proposing a "French" solution to Hanchard's purported shortcomings. Bourdieu and Wacquant's lack of knowledge about Brazilian society has been pointed out by French. Michael Hanchard, "Política transnacional negra, antiimperialismo e etnocentrismo para Pierre Bourdieu e Loic Wacquant: Exemplos de interpretação equivocada," *Estudos Afro-Asiáticos* 24 (2002): 63–96. As I argue elsewhere, there is much to be learned from U.S. racial history, critique, and analysis, not because they provide parameters to be mindlessly emulated by Brazilianists and anti-racism activists, but because they present us with the possibilities and even shortcomings that strategic forms of racial solidarity generate. See J. H. Costa Vargas, "The Inner City and the Favela: Transnational Black Politics," *Race & Class* 44, no. 4 (2003): 19–40. For further views on the debate in particular, and on the theoretical and political possibilities a comparison between race in the U.S. and Brazil, see Olívia

Maria Gomes da Cunha, "Black Movements and the 'Politics of Identity' in Brazil," in *Culture of Politics, Politics of Culture: Re-Visioning Latin American Social Movements*, ed. S. Alvarez, E. Dagnino, and A. Escobar (Boulder: Westview, 1998); John French, "The Missteps of Anti-imperialist Reason: Bourdieu, Wacquant, and Hanchard's *Orpheus and Power*," *Theory, Culture, and Society* 17, no. 1 (2000): 107–28; Peter Fry, "Why Brazil Is Different," *Times Literary Supplement* (8 December 1995): 6–7; Rita Segato, "The Color-Blind Subject of Myth; or, Where to Find Africa in the Nation," *Annual Review of Anthropology* 27 (1998): 129–51.

5. Gilberto Freyre, *Casa-grande & Senzala: Formação da família Brasileira sob o regime da economia patriarcal* (Rio de Janeiro: José Olympio, 1964). In the version Freyre popularized, the racial democracy ideology/myth, as it allegedly challenged openly racist views held by hegemonic intellectuals such as Nina Rodrigues, Silvio Romero, and Oliveira Vianna, emphasized the Portuguese's supposedly color-blind nature. Miscegenation and harmonic social relations proved it. See Carlos Hasenbalg, *Discriminação e desigualdades raciais no Brasil* (Rio de Janeiro: Graal, 1979). This paradigm dictated that Brazil was defined by an absence of stigma related to Blacks and to Black blood. Blacks, indeed, were to be incorporated into the Brazilian population whose genetic and phenotypical content would eventually dilute the African presence to irrelevant levels; for example, see D'Adesky, *Pluralismo étnico e multiculturalismo*, 174. In its more direct formulation, the racial democracy myth suggests that all Brazilians, independently of their racial background, are equals and live without racially motivated conflict. The force of such myth becomes impressive when we take into account that Brazil has the largest Afrodescended population in the hemisphere, and is second only to Nigeria in the world. It is also significant that, historically, Brazil was the very last country to end slavery, in 1888. Still reverberating today, the myth thus constituted an impressive ideological tool extremely useful to Brazilian elites: by emphasizing harmony and racelessness, inequalities that were, at base, derived not only from class, but also from race and gender, among others, were silenced and replaced with a sense of national pride and moral superiority. Pride and superiority, in turn, resulted from the comparison between Brazil's "paradise" and the racism of Germany and the United States.

In the 1950s and 1960s, the myth was somewhat challenged by ethnographic research funded by the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). The following studies emphasized the role that race played in producing social inequalities: Roger Bastide and Florestan Fernandes, *Relações raciais entre preto e branco em São Paulo* (São Paulo: Cia. Editora Nacional, 1955), Fernando Henrique Cardoso and Octavio Ianni, *Cor e mobilidade social em Florianópolis* (São Paulo: Cia. Editora Nacional, 1960), as well as Marvin Harris, *Town and Country in Brazil* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1956), Harry Hutchinson, *Village and Plantation Life in Northeastern Brazil* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1957), and Charles Wagley, *Amazon Town: A Study of Man in the Tropics* (New York: Macmillan, 1952). Still, the myth remained insofar as this body of work tended to (a) accentuate social class as the ultimate determinant of social hierarchies and (b) projected the resolution of racial differences as an epiphenomenon of more just social class relations. This latter point is made vivid in Florestan Fernandes, *A integração do negro na sociedade de classes* (São Paulo: Dominus e EDUSP, 1972) and *O negro no mundo dos brancos* (São Paulo: Difel, 1972).

It is only in the 1970s, at a time when U.S. civil rights claims began to resonate in Brazil, and the military dictatorship began to slowly recede, that Brazilian racism and the centrality of race in the polity were first conceptualized and challenged. For example, Hasenbalg *Discriminação e desigualdades raciais no Brasil*; Abdias do Nascimento, *Racial Democracy in Brazil, Myth or Reality? A Dossier of Brazilian Racism* (Ibadan, Nigeria: Sketch, 1989), and *Brazil: Mixture or Massacre?*

In spite of growing academic and activist challenges against its validity, the myth was and is able to survive, not so much as an imposed construct, but as part of a hegemonic architecture. To this day, the myth is able to obfuscate the historical, sociological, and political reality of Blacks' exclusion and imposed marginality.

Brazil's racial democracy myth is certainly impressive in its hegemonic pull, but it is not unique. At least since the 1920s and 1930s, the Brazilian myth appeared in several analogous forms—especially as *mestizaje*—in Mexico, Venezuela, Nicaragua, Colombia, and Cuba, among others. See, for example, Alejandro de la Fuente, "Myths of Racial Democracy: Cuba, 1900–1912," *Latin American Research Review* 34, no. 3 (1999): 39–73; Magnus Morner, *Race Mixture in the History of Latin America* (Boston, Mass.: Little, Brown, 1967); Richard Graham, *The Idea of Race in Latin America, 1870–1940* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1992); Wade, *Blackness and Race Mixture*; Winthrop Wright, *Café con Leche: Race, Class, and National Image in Venezuela* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1993); Norman Whitten, Jr. and Arlene Torres, eds., *Blackness in Latin America and the Caribbean*, vol. I (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1998).

6. Gordon, *Disparate Diasporas*; Twine, *Racism in a Racial Democracy*.

7. Participant observation is always determined by the anthropologist's moral principles. In my case, and especially considering my active involvement with unapologetic grassroots organizations, *observant participation* better describes the ways in which i obtained my data. The "fly on the wall" approach in anthropology, still taught as an antidote to the influences of one's subjectivity on the research process, only occults the fact that, even those who try to be insects are, at the very least, already influencing the social environment in which they conduct their fieldwork and, more importantly, are already committing themselves to a very clear moral and political position—that of letting things remain as they are, of leaving the status quo untouched. Neutrality is impossible—or better still, neutrality may work for the maintenance of your/our privileges, but it doesn't work for all. Think otherwise and you will be supporting, through your unawareness, the many forms of oppression, exclusion, and death perpetrated in the name of objectivity and detachment.

8. Stuart Hall, "Race, Articulation, and Societies Structured in Dominance," in *Sociological Theories: Race and Colonialism* (London: UNESCO, 1980) and "The Rediscovery of 'Ideology': Return of the Repressed Media Studies," in *Culture, Society, and the Media*, ed. M. Gurevitch, et al. (London: Methuen, 1982).

9. Countrywide sample survey research conducted by *Folha de S.Paulo/Datafolha*, *Racismo cordial* indicated that whereas 89 percent of Brazilians polled said there was racism in the country, only 10 percent admitted being racists. The same research, however, concluded from the analysis of the answers to questionnaires that 87 percent of non-Black persons revealed some form of prejudice (17).

One of this research's problems is its refusal to engage with the term "race" and how it relates to the multitude of color categories.

10. Athayde Motta, "The Culture Wars of Race and Black NGOs in Brazil," (master's thesis, University of Texas at Austin, 2003); Antonio Sérgio Alfredo Guimarães, *Racismo e anti-racismo no Brasil* (São Paulo: Editora 34, 1999); Hasenbalg and Silva, "Educação e diferenças raciais," in *Cor e estratificação social*, ed. Hasenbalg, Silva, and Lima (Rio de Janeiro: Contracapa, 1999); Kabengele Munanga, *Rediscutindo a mestiçagem no Brasil*.

11. Clóvis Moura, *Sociologia do negro Brasileiro* (São Paulo: Ática, 1988).

12. Oracy Nogueira, *Tanto preto quanto branco: Estudos de relações raciais* (São Paulo: T. A. Queiroz Editora, 1985).

13. Degler, *Neither Black Nor White*.

14. Nogueira, *Tanto preto quanto branco*.

15. Munanga, *Rediscutindo a mestiçagem no Brasil*, 103, utilizes a quote from Darcy Ribeiro's *O povo Brasileiro*, 225, who reported on a dialogue between two Black persons, a well-known painter, Santa Rosa, and a young, aspiring diplomat. Commenting on the young man's complaints about discrimination, Santa Rosa replied that he understood the issue well, since he had "also been Black." This imagined logic would of course be diametrically opposed to the U.S. race classificatory system, by which wealthy Blacks would not be immune to traffic stops, denial of credit, and other manifestations of anti-Black discrimination. Public intellectual and Princeton Professor Cornel West's well-chronicled experiences with the police while driving, as well as Columbia Law School Professor Patricia Williams' travails while buying a house would be good examples of such a system.

16. Anani Dzidzienyo, *The Position of Blacks in Brazilian Society* (London: Minority Rights Group, 1971).

17. Ianni, *Raças e classes sociais no Brasil* (Rio de Janeiro: Civilização Brasileira, 1972); Silva and Hasenbalg, *Relações raciais no Brasil contemporâneo*, 68–70.

18. Twine, *Racism in a Racial Democracy*, chap. 5.

19. D'Adesky, *Pluralismo étnico e multiculturalismo*, 173, 174.

20. Carlos Hasenbalg, "Relações raciais no contexto nacional e internacional," in *Racismo: Perspectivas para um estudo contextualizado da sociedade Brasileira* (Niterói: Editora da Universidade Federal Fluminense, 1998).

21. Moura, *Sociologia do negro Brasileiro*, 64.

22. See, for example, Nascimento, *Brazil, Mixture or Massacre?* Fry, "Why Brazil Is Different," Segato, "The Color-Blind Subject of Myth," and Sheriff, *Dreaming Equality*, among others, have warned against reducing the Brazilian mythology to deception. While i share their concerns about simplifying a complex phenomenon, as well as not reducing it to a variant of U.S. processes, i cannot emphasize enough the profound and sustained negative impacts that such mythology has on Brazilian Blacks.

23. Guimarães, *Racismo e anti-racismo no Brasil*.

24. Sheriff, *Dreaming Equality*.

25. L. Gordon, *Her Majesty's Other Children*; E. Gordon, *Disparate Diasporas*; Wade, *Blackness and Race Mixture*.

26. Degler, *Neither Black Nor White*; Dzidzienyo, *The Position of Blacks in Brazilian Society*.

27. Roberto Da Matta, "Digressão: a fábula das três raças, ou o problema do racismo à Brasileira," in *Relativizando: Uma introdução à antropologia social* (Petrópolis: Editora Vozes, 1981), 82.

28. Telles, "Ethnic Boundaries and Political Mobilization among African Brazilians."

29. Nogueira, *Tanto preto quanto branco*.

30. Twine, *Racism in a Racial Democracy*, 139, my emphasis.

31. Kahn, *Velha e nova polícia*; Ricardo Henriques, *Desigualdade racial no Brasil: Evolução das condições de vida na década de 90* (Rio de Janeiro: IPEA, 2001); Human Rights Watch, *Police Brutality in Urban Brazil*; Mitchell and Wood, "Ironies of Citizenship"; Telles, "Ethnic Boundaries and Political Mobilization among African Brazilians."

32. Da Matta, "Digressão," in *Relativizando* (Petrópolis: Editora Vozes, 1981); Guimarães, *Racismo e anti-racismo no Brasil*; Munanga, *Rediscutindo a mestiçagem no Brasil*.

33. Resistance against talking about race and/or identifying oneself as Black was common during weekly Rio favela meetings that I attended in 2001; see Vargas, "The inner city and the favela."

34. According to Human Rights Watch, in 1998 the police killed, in Rio, an estimated 720 people; see *Police Brutality in Urban Brazil*. On an average day, two persons lost their lives due to police operations.

35. It is intriguing that, although 76 percent of people polled in Rio and São Paulo believe policemen are active in death squads; see Human Rights Watch, *Police Brutality in Urban Brazil*. There is little, if any, support for organizations and events that protest police brutality that is not of the favelas. For disproportionate criminalization of Blacks by the police and courts, see Sérgio Adorno, "Discriminação racial e justiça criminal em São Paulo," *Novos estudos CEBRAP* 43, November (1995): 46–63; Kahn, "Justiça e discriminação no Brasil," *Boletim conjuntura criminal* 11 at www.conjunturacriminal.com.br and *Velha e nova polícia*.

36. The distinction between commerce and traffic that is made by local activists is the following. Traffic involves the import and export of large amounts of drugs, and is coordinated by a few drug traffickers who also sometimes control the processing and packaging on the merchandise in the drug-originating countries. Local commerce, on the other hand, is the final process of the greater, transnational drug trafficking, and is defined by the selling of small amounts of drugs to individual consumers. There are, of course, intermediaries in every step of drug-producing and distributing processes. Well-known drug dealers in Brazil, however, are but middle-men who distribute and coordinate the selling of drugs not only in favelas, but also in middle- and upper-class neighborhoods. The point Rumba made about commerce emphasized the fact that drug traffickers and the wealthier, more powerful local drug dealers are not in the favelas. Favelas are only one of the final destinations of drugs. The profits from the trade are neither controlled by those of the favelas, nor are they invested in the favela.

37. For analyses of the drug commerce dynamics, see Zaluar, *Condomínio do diabo*. The bureaucratic organization of drug commerce is illustrated in an *O Dia* article (20 June 2001: 1, 7) in which the detailed bookkeeping (that included the amount paid to the police) provides a glimpse of the operations. A measure of how detailed and precise is drug commerce bookkeeping is given by explanatory notes about missing pages, times of transactions, persons involved, types of car utilized, and of course the amounts sold. In Jacarezinho, every time I walked past one of the dealer's armed checkpoint barriers on my way to the neighborhood association, young boys (between 9 and 12) would implore for a job. Their desperation was testimony to the everyday tensions in the drug commerce, and the realization that they would likely be killed or incarcerated.

38. The view coincides with studies about the police in Rio and elsewhere in Brazil conducted by Cano, *Letalidade da ação policial no Rio de Janeiro*; Holloway, *Polícia no Rio de Janeiro*; Kahn, *Velha e nova polícia*; Paixão, "O Problema da Polícia," in *Violência e participação política no Rio de Janeiro*, Série estudos n. 91. Rio de Janeiro: IUPERJ, 1995; and J. Silva, *Violência e racismo no Rio de Janeiro*.

39. Da Matta, "Digressão," in *Relativizando* (Petrópolis: Editora Vozes, 1981); Fernandes, *O Negro no mundo dos brancos*; Sérgio Buarque de Holanda, *Raízes do Brasil* (Rio de Janeiro: José Olympio Editora, 1936).

40. See Milton Santos, "É preciso ir além da constatação," in *Racismo cordial: A mais completa análise sobre o preconceito de cor no Brasil* (São Paulo: Editora Ática, 1995). Ethnographic research conducted in Rio and Salvador between the months of June and July, 2003, in company of a dark-skinned Haitian woman and her teenage brother only reinforced such views. It quickly became too obvious for them how, because of their unmistakable Blackness, they were considered out of place in predominantly middle-class environments such as certain beaches and shopping malls. There was never an open manifestation of racism, but the dissimulated uneasiness with which they were ignored and/or treated had a profound, negative impact on them, not accustomed to the hyperconsciousness/negation of race dialectic that characterize the mythical Brazilian racial democracy. As for me, after a decade of residing in the United States as a Black person, my light-brown skin signification and privilege in Brazil shifted markedly. Unprompted, vendors spoke with me in English in both Rio de Janeiro and Salvador. I was later told by a Black Brazilian that my assertiveness was taken as a sign of foreignness. All of this meant that non-White Brazilians are neither supposed to be in tourist commercial areas, nor are they supposed to demonstrate self-assurance. Thus, if you are Black, are assertive, and happen to be in an affluent commercial area, then you must be non-Brazilian.

41. Freyre's *Casa Grande & Senzala*, translated as *Masters and Slaves*, is organized around the social relations taking place among the enslaved and the masters, a significant proportion of which are inside the master's house.

42. This avoidance may be another trait of what Holanda, in his 1936 *Raízes do Brasil*, locates as Brazilian cordiality. Cordiality implies the seemingly benevolent proximity between those occupying different social positions. The result of this proximity, however, is the maintenance of domination. Hence the widespread use of first-names and diminutives, for example, in Brazilian sociability. Though Holanda did not write much about race, attempts to utilize his conceptualization

in the realm of race relations are quite revealing; see for example D'Adesky, *Pluralismo étnico e multiculturalismo; Folha de S. Paulo/Datafolha, Racismo cordial*. In the framework i am proposing, avoiding race is one of the mechanisms for this perverse cordiality whose result is, precisely, affirming and perpetuating racial hierarchies.

43. Similar preemptive dynamics have been noticed regarding the Los Angeles Police Department officers' beating of Rodney King; see Gooding-Williams, *Reading Rodney King*.

44. Thomas Sugrue, in *The Origins of the Urban Crisis: Race and Inequality in Post-war Detroit* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996) makes an analogous argument in his key study of Detroit starting in the 1930s.

45. The high point of Rio police demoralization, however, took place on 19 July 2001, when prime time national television, during the *Jornal Nacional*, the massively watched evening news, showed a videotape of a group of police officers receiving money from drug dealers in the favela Morro da Providência. "In times of war the corrupt police officers would have been executed," said the military police general-commander, Wilton Ribeiro. His words, printed in the largest letters, were in the first page of *O Dia* on 20 July 2001, next to photographs of the officers receiving money from dealers.

46. D'Adesky, *Pluralismo étnico e multiculturalismo; Zalar, Condomínio do Diabo*.

47. Such impressions were reverted when, on 17 October 2001, the four police officers accused of the kidnapping were declared not guilty. Alcides da Fonseca Neto, the judge presiding over the case, stated that the only disciplinary infraction the officers committed was that they turned off the satellite tracking system with which every police car is equipped—at precisely the time in which the kidnapping took place. The judge added that, if anything was clear, was that Costa "lied shamelessly (*descaradamente*) about key moments of the kidnapping" (*O Globo* 18 October 2001).

48. For an analysis of police brutality and racism in Brazil, see Mitchell and Wood, "Ironies of Citizenship." Henriques, in *Desigualdade Racial no Brasil*, analyzes wealth distribution, ownership of durable goods, child labor, and housing conditions. The author's main argument is that social and economic differences between Blacks and Whites in Brazil resist time and the general life improvement of the non-Black Brazilian population. Thus, he argues, the need for antiracist policies and affirmative action in the country.

49. Degler, *Neither Black Nor White*; Guimarães, *Racismo e anti-racismo no Brasil*; Munanga, *Rediscutindo a mestiçagem no Brasil*; Twine, *Racism in a Racial Democracy*.

50. Nascimento, *Brazil: Mixture or Massacre?*; Henriques, *Desigualdade racial no Brasil*.

51. As in the United States and other countries of Africa and the African diaspora, Black youths in Brazil, contrary to commonsensical expectations such as those held by police officers, value brand-name clothes and will go to great lengths (work overtime and save) to acquire them. Nike, Adidas, Reebok, among others, feature as favorites. See Rita de Cássia and Vilma Homero, "Eles só usam marca," at www.vivafavela.com.br.

52. In Brazil, when one wants to offend a Black person, the word *sujo/a* (dirty) is often added to *negra/o*. See, for example, Degler, *Neither Black Nor White*.

53. Nogueira, *Tanto preto quanto Branco*.

54. See J. Silva, *Violência e racismo no Rio de Janeiro*. On 22 July 2001, *O Globo*, p. 10, reported that the police in five states were on strike (Paraná, Pará, Pernambuco, Rio Grande do Sul, and Alagoas), while in five others they were on standby (Amazonas, Distrito Federal, Espírito Santo, Goiás, and São Paulo). The strikers were asking for salary raises.

55. Human Rights Watch, *Police Brutality in Urban Brazil*.

56. Data for police officer's place of residence is difficult to gather since favela dwellers will often conceal their address when applying for jobs.

57. Information in this paragraph was gathered while conducting ethnographic work in Rio between 2001 and 2003.

58. Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks* and *The Wretched of the Earth*; Lorde, *Sister Outsider*; Nascimento, *Brazil: Mixture or Massacre?*; Robinson, *Black Marxism*.

59. *Folha de S. Paulo/Datafolha, Racismo cordial*.

60. *Folha de S. Paulo/Datafolha, Racismo cordial*, 115–121.

61. D'Adesky, *Pluralismo étnico e multiculturalismo*; Joel Zito Araújo, *A negação do Brasil: O negro na telenovela brasileira* (São Paulo: SENAC, 2000); Joel Rufino dos Santos, "Invisibilidade e racismo," *Intercambio* 1, Janeiro-Abril (1998).

62. *O Globo* also devoted a full page to the kidnapping. In the top half of the page, three black-and-white photographs depict the two police officers, guarded by a police officer armed with an assault rifle; Costa (showing only his back) and his lawyer (who is facing the camera); and golden jewelry confiscated from the police officers/kidnappers. In the text, the same logic present in *O Dia* operates: while there is not a single reference to race and/or ethnicity, the race of all involved is clear. The bottom half of the article focuses on similar cases. In one of them, a small businessman (whose photo is purposefully darkened) narrates how, since November 1999, police officers kidnapped him twice, shot at his car, and made death threats. This man is married to a notorious drug dealer's cousin, but claims to have no involvement in his activities. In the article Manguera is described as a "drug trafficking area" also known for its "social projects—especially in the areas of sports—for *jovens carentes* (poor youths)" (*O Globo* 5 July 2001: 15). The hyperconsciousness/negation of race dialectic here also operates by substituting race for urban space and crime.

63. Cano, *Letalidade da ação policial no Rio de Janeiro*; Paixão, "O problema da polícia," in *Violência e participação política no Rio de Janeiro*, Série estudos n. 91. Rio de Janeiro: IUPERJ, 1995.

64. Listing and analyzing all such cases of police brutality and misconduct would constitute another study, which i am now beginning to undertake. The newspaper articles collected for this period include pieces from *O Dia*, *Extra*, *O Globo*, and *Jornal do Brasil*—the major dailies in Rio—as well as reports from *Inverta*, a socialist weekly, and *Viva Favela*, a website dedicated to matters pertaining to Rio's favelas.

65. As it was reported in *O Globo* on 17 October 2002. The phrase in quotes is the heading of the article, whose argument is that the attacks were part of a greater conspiracy against Rio's government, planned by the most powerful dealers in the city. The dealer's meeting allegedly took place in Rocinha, from where over three hundred men, according to the report, were mobilized for the operation.

66. See Abdias do Nascimento, "80 anos de abolição," *Cadernos Brasileiros* 10 (May–June 1968): 4, quoted in Degler, *Neither Black Nor White*, 275.

67. It is interesting to note that in the United States, students of racism have perceived a similar transformation of racism, from overt to a more subtle but nevertheless as effective form. See Lipsitz, *The Possessive Investment in Whiteness*; Bonilla-Silva, *Racism without Racists*.

68. Nascimento, *Brazil: Mixture or Massacre?*; Wade, *Blackness and Race Mixture*.

6. WHEN A FAVELA DARED TO BECOME A CONDOMINIUM

1. Teresa P. R. Caldeira, *City of Walls: Crime, Segregation, and Citizenship in São Paulo* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000); Zaluar, *Condomínio do diabo*.

2. While *O Dia* quoted Rumba as saying that the cameras had been bought with NGO funds (see Élcio Braga, "Favela trancada a cadeado," *O Dia*, 8 July 2001, 4), *Folha de S. Paulo* quoted him as saying that they had been "donated by a group of Gypsies" (Sabrina Petry, "Morro carioca cria condomínio-favela," *Folha de S. Paulo*, 25 July 2001, C1). I use the latter version because it is the one I heard from the activists.

3. Luiz César de Queiroz Ribeiro and Edward E. Telles, "Rio de Janeiro: Emerging Dualization in a Historically Unequal City," in *Globalizing Cities*, ed. Peter Marcuse and Ronald van Kempen (London: Basil Blackwell, 2000). They show that 70 percent of the population residing in Rio's favelas in 1991 are of African descent (Brown or Black).

4. In the Brazilian context, I understand "Black" to mean race and not color.

5. Gordon, *Disparate Diasporas*; Hall, "Encoding/Decoding," in *Culture, Media, Language*, ed. Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies (London: Hutchinson, 1980) and "The Rediscovery of 'Ideology,'" in *Culture, Society, and the Media*, ed. Gurevitch, Bennett, Curran, and Woollacott (London: Methuen, 1982).

6. For example, Donna Goldstein, *Laughter out of Place: Race, Class, Violence, and Sexuality in a Rio Shantytown* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003); Guimarães, *Racismo e anti-racismo no Brasil*; Nascimento, *Brazil: Mixture or Massacre?*; Twine, *Racism in a Racial Democracy*.

7. Studies have revealed the relationships between urban space and social class (e.g., Caldeira, *City of Walls*, James Holston, *The Modernist City: An Anthropological Critique of Brasília* [Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989], Lúcio Kowarick, ed., *As lutas sociais e a cidade*, [Rio de Janeiro: Paz e Terra, 1988]); race, gender, and sexuality (Gilliam, "From Roxbury to Rio," in *African-American Reflections*, ed. Helwig [Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1992], Goldstein, *Laughter Out of Place*, Twine, *Racism in a Racial Democracy*); and race and life chances (Hasenbalg and Silva, "Educação e diferenças raciais," in *Cor e estratificação social*, ed. Hasenbalg, Silva, and Lima [Rio de Janeiro: Contracapa, 1999]; Henriques, *Desigualdade racial no Brasil*), but there are few studies directly examining how urban space and race are connected in Brazil. The works by Telles, "Residential Segregation by Skin Color in Brazil," *American Sociological Review* 57, no. 2 (1992): 186–97, and *Race in Another America: The Significance of Skin Color in Brazil* (Princeton: Princeton University Press,

2004); and Oliveira are the exceptions. These works support the premise that race is an independent variable that explains residential segregation as a phenomenon that cannot be reduced to social class alone. Reproducing an argument put forward by Massey and Denton in *American Apartheid*, Telles affirms: "residential segregation among Whites, browns, and Blacks cannot be accounted for only by socioeconomic status; moderate racial residential segregation occurs among persons of similar income in . . . five metropolitan areas [Salvador, Feira de Santana, Rio de Janeiro, Belo Horizonte, Barra Mansa-Volta Redonda]. Thus economics itself cannot explain racial segregation in Brazil." (Telles, *Race in Another America*, 208.)

8. On murders committed by Rio police in favelas and the apparent support for such acts among the general population, see Human Rights Watch/Americas, *Police Brutality in Urban Brazil*; and Mitchell and Wood, "Ironies of Citizenship."

9. Hasenbalg, *Discriminação e desigualdades raciais no Brasil*, and "Relações raciais no contexto nacional e internacional," in *Racismo* (Niterói: Editora da Universidade Federal Fluminense, 1998); INSPIR/DIEESE/AFL-CIO, *Mapa da população negra*; Henriques, *Desigualdade racial no Brasil*; Nascimento, "80 anos de abolição," and *Racial Democracy in Brazil*.

10. While "space" and "place" are indeed mutually defined, "place" indicates the most immediate area defined by specific social interactions as distinct from the larger, more impersonal urban space that frames various places. See Lawrence Grossberg, *We Gotta Get Out of This Place: Popular Conservatism and Postmodern Culture* (London: Routledge, 1992); Yi-Fu Tuan, *Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1977).

11. D'Adesky, *Pluralismo étnico e multiculturalismo*; Guimarães, *Racismo e anti-racismo no Brasil*; Nascimento, *Brazil: Mixture or Massacre?*; Silva and Hasenbalg, *Relações raciais no Brasil*.

12. By Ney dos Santos Oliveira, see "Cidades negras: um estudo sobre a questão da cor nos bairros pobres da Região Metropolitana do Rio de Janeiro" (paper, VIII Seminário de Iniciação Científica e Prêmio UFF Vasconcelos Torres de Ciência e Tecnologia da Universidade Federal Fluminense, 1999); "Segregação em favelas e mobilização política: um estudo comparativo de raça e classe" (paper, Colóquio Arquitetura Brasileira: Redescobertas, XVI Congresso Brasileiro de Arquitetos, Cuiabá, September 26–29, 2001); "The Location of the Poor in Rio de Janeiro: The Influence of Race on Favela" (unpublished manuscript, 2001); "Direito dos negros: distribuição racial, pobreza e moradia na região metropolitana do Rio de Janeiro," in *Anais XXI Encontro e VI Congresso Arquisur* (Salvador: Faculdade de Arquitetura, Universidade Federal da Bahia, 2002).

13. Mendonça and Benjamin, *Benedita*.

14. Goldstein, *Laughter out of Place*; Sheriff, *Dreaming Equality*; Vargas, "The Inner City and the Favela"; and Zaluar, *A máquina e a revolta*.

15. "Jacarezinho Fechado a Cadeado. Inspirada nos condomínios da Zona Sul, segunda maior favela do Rio instala portões nas vielas e câmaras de vídeo em pontos estratégicos. Só que o inimigo é outro: os abusos da polícia, segundo as lideranças. Iniciativa é polêmica por deixar os traficantes ainda mais protegidos em seus guetos."