

## INTRODUCTION

# TOWARD NEW COORDINATES?

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Nearly three decades in, the “transnational turn” continues to pull at historians’ spatial moorings. The impetus to look beyond the boundaries of the nation-state, combined with new directions in Atlantic, global, and Pacific history, has led many scholars to cast their empirical nets wide. This, combined with the rise of powerful digital tools, has created opportunity as well as peril. For all the important intellectual and political reasons to trace history across national borders, doing so can risk losing sight of local and national details, sending scholars scrambling to trace “the most far-flung circuit plausible.”<sup>1</sup> Despite concerted efforts to bridge north-south divides, Latin American-based scholars tend to eye transnational history more skeptically than their counterparts in North America. Where, then, does Latin American history as a field stand amid the blowing winds of transnationalism? What is the place of the nation-state in transnational scholarship? And to address the specific focus of this book, how have race and the categorization of race functioned as mechanisms or organizing frameworks for cultural, political, and social inclusion in the Americas? In the context of inclusion, how have such frameworks transcended the national (where authors contemplate “nation” amply)?

Though the answers to these questions vary by author, collectively *Race and Transnationalism* emphasizes the importance of the local, even while remaining attentive to global forces and phenomena, and to the very important and useful ways that transnational inquiry has decentered the nation and forced scholars to think in new ways about borders and history itself. The questions posed above carry unique challenges, amplified by the productive ambiguity that marks “transnational,” a concept that hovers between a category of analysis and a methodology.<sup>2</sup> Understood as the former, “transnational” functions as a means to see and explore histories that cross national boundaries. Defined as the latter, things get murky. One scholar writes, “Transnational history does not designate either a theory or a discrete method . . . and instead a perspective, a manner of casting a gaze on

an object of study.”<sup>3</sup> To two others, transnationalism, “still continues to suffer from confusion over what distinguishes it from the related concepts of globalization and migration.”<sup>4</sup> Pamela Voekel and Elliott Young, two of the founders of the Tepoztlán Institute for the Transnational History of the Americas, an innovative workshop-collective dedicated to debate and collaboration among US- and Latin American-based scholars, call transnational a “deliberately vague moniker.”<sup>5</sup>

*Race and Transnationalism* both inhabits and seeks to break free from the ambiguities of transnational history. Understanding transnational history to be a category (or manner of casting a gaze) more than a fixed or defined methodology, the authors of this volume trace stories across borders but also highlight local and national particularities. In every instance, race plays a disruptive role, simultaneously holding history captive to the nation-state, and demanding historians to look beyond it. Because national governments create legal and penal regimes, censuses, and other tools that codify race and its categories, it would be all but impossible to study race without attention to the nation-state. At the same time, those tools—and the less concrete but equally important cultural pathways along which race is created and challenged—are invariably in contact with conversations, debates, politics, commodities, and spheres of influence that go far beyond national borders. Accordingly, this book takes as a given that transnational forces have fundamentally shaped visions of racial difference and ideas of race and national belonging throughout the Americas, from the late nineteenth century to the present.

To probe the relationships of race, nation, and the transnational flow of ideas, people, and capital, the authors of this book examine exclusionary immigration policies, government attempts to colonize internal “others,” indigenous and Black decolonization movements as well as sport, drugs, music, populism, and film. They focus on the Americas, from New York to Buenos Aires, from the US-Mexican borderlands to Bolivia, and along the coasts of Brazil, Venezuela, Panama, and Jamaica. In so doing, *Race and Transnationalism* engages in broad debates about race, citizenship, and national belonging in the Americas and suggests multiple and new ways to think about the intertwined histories of North America, South America, Central America, and the Caribbean.

### **FROM THE ATLANTIC TO THE PACIFIC . . . AND BEYOND?**

Latin Americanist transnational scholarship has developed in dialogue with two central lines of analysis that marked earlier generations of historical work, especially that focused on slavery. First, transnationalism evolved in part as a response to comparative history, embodied by Frank Tannenbaum’s *Slave and Citizen* (1947), which helped set in place a comparative template

for largely English-language studies of slavery and race in the Americas.<sup>6</sup> Second, Latin Americanist transnational analysis has built on generations of scholarship about links between Africa and the Americas. This was pioneered by Gonzalo Aguirre Beltrán, Melville Herskovits, Fernando Ortiz, and Raimundo Nina Rodrigues, and others who studied African contributions to their respective national “characters.”<sup>7</sup> More recently, scholars have built on but also rejected central premises of Tannenbaum’s inter-American comparative methodology, favoring transnational inquiry over comparison, while also discarding the paternalism and outright racism that marked some of the pioneering scholarship produced by Rodrigues and his peers.<sup>8</sup>

Transnational scholars are also indebted to nineteenth- and twentieth-century Caribbean and Latin American intellectuals who wrote anticolonial and anti-imperial works that prefigured today’s transnational scholarship.<sup>9</sup> Lisa Lowe’s *The Intimacy of Four Continents* (2015), an expansive global history and critique of liberalism, begins in the Caribbean with references to Ortiz and C. L. R. James. Both Ortiz and James located Caribbean national origins in “the intimacies of four continents,” a heretofore underexplored set of entanglements linking the Americas, Africa, Asia, and Europe.<sup>10</sup> The anticolonial and anti-imperial roots of transnational scholarship lives on in the shared intention among many current scholars to not only rescue “history from the nation” but also to think about in new ways imperial domination in the global North and South, as well as international solidarity networks meant to counter imperialism and other forms of violence and exclusion.<sup>11</sup>

A key link between earlier and contemporary scholarship is Paul Gilroy’s *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double-Consciousness* (1993), which helped reject the Atlantic as a white-European space.<sup>12</sup> Having appeared just as the “transnational turn” was revving into gear, the book centers all the same on the North Atlantic and erases most of the rest of the hemisphere. Nonetheless, Gilroy’s work has been generative in numerous ways, including the somewhat recent move to conceptualize and better understand the meanings and forms of Blackness on Latin America’s western coast, and a movement among some (Latin) Americanists to envision a Black Pacific to complement Gilroy’s Black Atlantic. The give-and-take that the move to the Pacific entails is embodied in a provocative map that frames *Decolonizing Native Histories*, a 2012 collection about indigenous history and activism in the Americas and the Pacific that seeks to “decenter” the (Latin) Americanist gaze and extend it west.<sup>13</sup> In order to include Hawai’i and other points in the South Pacific, the book’s mapmaker had to slice off the eastern half of Brazil and most of French Guiana. As the map vividly shows, each change in our spatial coordinates has the potential, depending on where one stands, to expand or diminish the horizon.

Gilroy's impact is evident in Heidi Feldman's *Black Rhythms of Peru: Reviving African Musical Heritage in the Black Pacific* (2006), which extends Gilroy's project to write histories of Blackness and Black modernity into the Atlantic world to the western coast of South America, where Blackness has repeatedly been erased.<sup>14</sup> *Black Rhythms of Peru* traces the mid- and late twentieth-century construction of Peruvian Black musical and cultural identities, long subsumed and marginalized to a *mestizo* identity that valorized whiteness and grudgingly included certain aspects of indigeneity. One of the book's more remarkable stories involves the relationship that Nicomedes de Santa Cruz, an Afro-Peruvian musician-activist at the heart of the "revival," developed with Edison Carneiro, a prolific, though often overlooked, polymath Black Brazilian scholar.<sup>15</sup> Santa Cruz met Carneiro when he traveled to Brazil in the early 1960s. After returning, he proposed a genesis of Peruvian *landó* music that ran through *lundu*, a Black Atlantic creation with its own tangled genealogy and which, according to Santa Cruz, traveled from Africa to Brazil to Peru.<sup>16</sup> Though not historically accurate, Santa Cruz's Brazil-inspired genealogy is an exemplary case of cross-border community making and artistic and intellectual creation.

Feldman's reconstruction and analysis of the Africa-Brazil-Peru route proposed by Santa Cruz illustrates how recent transnational Latin Americanist scholarship has expanded and recentered the maps charted by previous generations. The expansion and recentering has taken place across vast spaces, as in the case of Santa Cruz, and also in more compact ones, such as the Caribbean, the site of exciting recent works that trace the flow of ideas and people across smaller but no less significant geographic boundaries than those studied by Feldman. In conversations with recent work on "trans-imperial" colonial histories, Anne Eller and Ada Ferrer have examined how race and nation formed before, during, and after independence in Cuba, the Dominican Republic, and Haiti.<sup>17</sup> Focusing on the first half of the twentieth century, Lara Putnam shows the remarkable ways that migrants, music, goods, and ideas zigzagged across space, helping create a circum-Caribbean whose borders extended all the way to New York.<sup>18</sup> In this volume, Putnam traces similarly vibrant paths even further, demonstrating how British West Indians coped with increasingly exclusionary definitions of citizenship that shaped their lives and defined struggles across (and beyond) the British Empire.

Mainly focused on people of African descent, the works mentioned above have helped galvanize shifts in other areas of study. Tatiana Seijas's *Asian Slaves in Colonial Mexico: From Chinos to Indians* narrates the history of slaves taken to Mexico during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries from Southeast and South Asia, a diverse set of communities lumped together upon arrival in America as *chinos*.<sup>19</sup> Whereas books about the Afri-

can diaspora in Latin America build on (and also struggle against) previous generations of scholarship on comparative slavery, Seijas's work is one of the only extended considerations of Asian slavery during the colonial period, though there is, of course, a large, developed literature on the rise of so-called coolie labor in Latin America.<sup>20</sup> Significantly, that ugly slur originated in South Asia, and over time came to be used as a racist gloss to refer to Asians from all over the continent, much like "chino."<sup>21</sup>

Transnational gazes have also shaped recent work on indigenous peoples in Latin America. Rebecca Earle's *The Return of the Native: Indians and Myth-Making in Spanish America, 1810–1930*, embraces a hemispheric approach to studying the discursive construction of indigeneity among Latin American elites during the "long nineteenth century."<sup>22</sup> In ways that resemble what Jace Weaver calls the "Red Atlantic," Nancy E. van Deusen and José Carlos de la Puente Luna examine the West-to-East flow of indigenous people to Europe during the colonial period.<sup>23</sup> Focused more on the genesis of ideas than the circulation of people, James E. Sanders and Mark Thurner trace similarly innovative routes across time and space into the national period. Both Sanders and Turner stretch the maps that van Deusen and de la Puente Luna expanded east across the Atlantic back to Latin America, where they reveal hidden American origins of liberalism and historicism.<sup>24</sup>

Though often treated in isolation, scholarship on indigenous peoples and the African and Asian diasporas in America share important points of contact and dialogue with each other, as well as with literature on Jewish and European immigration and diasporas. Jeffrey Lesser's work has pushed Brazilianist scholars to expand their cognitive maps by exploring East Asian and Middle Eastern origins, influences on, and connections to Brazil, much as Ranaan Rein's work in this volume (and elsewhere) has done in Argentina.<sup>25</sup> Andre Kobayashi Deckrow builds on Lesser's work while taking the story in new directions by using Japanese archives and Japanese-language sources in Brazil to reveal novel insights about Japanese imperialism and its surprising relationship with Brazil.<sup>26</sup> By centering a substantial amount of research in the Pacific, Deckrow helps redirect narratives of nation and belonging in Brazil, and in the process bolsters the importance of following transnational histories not only within the Americas or toward Europe or Africa but also across the Pacific.

In different ways, all of these works raise questions about the intellectual horizon: How far west should we travel? Should our maps extend even beyond Hawai'i, the Philippines, and East Asia into the Indian Ocean? The questions, in turn, point to a central challenge raised by transnational history: how to travel beyond the boundaries of the nation-state without losing sight of the local, and without spinning out of control into an never-ending search for every global connection imaginable. South Asia, which appears

in two chapters of this volume, offers a case in point. Whereas there is significant literature on South Asian indentured labor and migration to the Caribbean and the northern coast of South America, very little is known about the rest of Latin America. Benjamin Bryce's contribution to this volume helps address that lacuna and also illustrates how even a relatively small group of migrants, such as the six hundred Sikh workers who arrived in Argentina in 1912, can cast "light on some of the latent contours" of larger racial dynamics.<sup>27</sup> As Bryce shows, the erasure of South and East Asians from Argentine historiography distorts our understanding of politics and the nature of racism. Contrary to prevailing wisdom, Bryce shows that early in the twentieth century Argentine officials were intimately concerned with Asian immigration.

If Bryce's chapter suggests why it can, indeed, be fruitful to expand the map even beyond the Pacific, Marc Hertzman's exploration of the *Filhos de Gandhi*, a Carnival group founded by Black port workers in Bahia inspired by Mohandas Gandhi, leads toward another conclusion. Whereas Bryce conjures a map framed on one end by South Asia and the other by South America (and provides a separate map that highlights Europe), the *Filhos de Gandhi* could be illustrated through two different cartographic representations: one of the entire globe to account not only for India but also Gandhi's time, impact, and reception in Africa, as well as in England, where striking British port workers helped inspire the Brazilian stevedores who founded the *Filhos de Gandhi*. The second map would be much smaller and would magnify Salvador, its unique history, and the political and cultural moment there that gave birth to the *Filhos de Gandhi*. Together, Bryce's and Hertzman's chapters suggest that although expanding and decentering the map sometimes makes sense, in other cases transnational flows anchor the story in the local, often a repository of audaciously global and heterogeneous influences that ultimately, and perhaps ironically, root us ever more deeply at home. The collective takeaway is to avoid endlessly stretching, decentering, and recentering the map in a relentless search for one more "hidden" global connection or group and to instead craft studies that first and foremost honor and understand local and national subtleties and complexities, and that then proceed to approach the transnational and the global not as obvious realities but rather as subjects meant to be studied, questioned, and challenged.

### **CONNECTIONS, DISCONNECTIONS, AND DIVISIONS**

Our book proposes new scales and methods for studying transnationalism and illustrates why multiple lenses are necessary for understanding local manifestations of transnational histories of race. In *The Intimacy of Four Continents*, Lowe shows how the indelible links between capitalism and

racism run the gamut from intimate to global. In a similar spirit, *Race and Transnationalism* maneuvers across macro and micro dimensions, in the process splintering the United States and the world binary that still defines much of transnational history and dislodging the nation-state and migration as the principal scales for comprehending transnational flows. Many of those flows, the contributors demonstrate, have become entrenched through surprising practices and experiences that often present more obviously as local, national, and everyday.

Slavery, indentured labor, voluntary migration, commerce, culture, and other forces that brought individuals from across the world to the Americas in turn helped generate connections, return routes, and other lines of contact and exchange that traversed national boundaries, as did racial, indigenous, feminist, LGBTQ, labor, environmental, and other forms of activism. Though such connections are central to transnational history, one of the most influential recent Latin Americanist works, Heidi Tinsman's *Buying into the Regime: Grapes and Consumption in Cold War Chile and the United States* (2014), provides a cautionary note. As tantalizing as commonalities, bonds, and links can be, Tinsman emphasizes "the importance of studying *disconnections* as well as connections."<sup>28</sup>

What kinds of connections and disconnections mark the transnational histories of race in the Americas? In this volume, Alexander Dawson argues that during the 1940s in Mexico and the United States "a transnational indigenista project was simply impossible," and Stephen Lewis details an inward-looking gaze of Mexican national racial projects that nonetheless resonate in remarkable ways with related projects across the hemisphere.<sup>29</sup> Waskar Ari-Chachaki shows how racism, as much as racial solidarity, flowed into Bolivia along transnational pathways, a powerful counterpoint to examples of cross-border solidarity and resistance.<sup>30</sup> These examples illustrate the book's project to engage and explore the tension between connection and disconnection, and each contributor's mindfulness of transnationalism's potential to threaten political and intellectual projects that, by choice or by force, retain the nation-state as a central point of reference.

Music and other cultural forms, what Putnam calls the "non-material lines of transnational connection," provide especially rich material for exploring these dynamics. Cultural products, Putnam writes, "circulate and overlap, reflecting past lines of connection and new ones."<sup>31</sup> Those products also have the capacity to differentiate and delineate—to disconnect. Music, for instance, so often and so easily travels beyond national boundaries, and yet it is also frequently held up as a symbol of unique and even insular national identities. In chapter nine of this volume, Sonja Stephenson Watson shows how "transnational circuits of cultural, racial, and linguistic exchange" shaped Panamanian *Reggae en español*. Like Putnam before her,

Watson expands reggae's map, introducing coordinates far west of Jamaica that challenge earlier narratives.<sup>32</sup>

Studies of music often link and flatten out musical traditions across the African diaspora, though a closer look reveals a more complex picture. The Charleston, which took the United States and other parts of the world by storm in the 1920s, is an exemplary case. Flávio Gomes and Petrônio Domingues show that although the music enjoyed success in Brazil, Black communities there had multiple reactions to it, sometimes embracing the dance and other times rejecting it in favor of national music.<sup>33</sup> In addition to reaffirming the importance of local and the national subtleties, Gomes and Domingues challenge the notion advanced in Pierre Bourdieu and Loïc Wacquant's ill-conceived and widely discussed essay that Afro-Brazilians were "mere receptacles and passive reproducers of foreign influences."<sup>34</sup> By tracing the global flows of music in ways that also pay serious attention to local realities, Gomes and Domingues exemplify how the best transnational scholarship not only looks past national borders but also keeps a close eye on what is happening inside them, in the process contributing to larger debates about history and power.

Those debates have taken different directions across the Americas. In general, US- and Canada-based academics have adopted transnationalism more eagerly and more explicitly than their counterparts in Latin America, though that divide can be misleading considering the way that C. R. L. James and others helped lay the groundwork for the "transnational turn." The Tepoztlán Institute and other North-South collaborations further blur the line, as do books such as Ricardo Salvatore's edited collection, *Los lugares del saber: Contextos locales y redes transnacionales en la formación del conocimiento moderno*, Diego Galeano's *Criminosos viajeros: circulaciones transnacionales entre Rio de Janeiro e Buenos Aires, 1890-1930*, and Catherine Vézina's *Diplomacia Migratoria: una historia transnacional del Programa Bracero, 1947-1952*.<sup>35</sup> Salvatore's volume examines the ways that international currents shaped the production of knowledge—cultural, scientific, political, legal, and more. Galeano's innovative study uses archives in Argentina and Brazil to show how policing models and stereotypes flowed across borders. Vézina examines the renegotiation of the Bracero Program, providing insights not only about high politics but also much more local concerns. By rooting the book in Guanajuato, one of the main sending states for Mexican laborers who went to the United States, and California, a principal US "consumer" of those laborers, Vézina uses a transnational lens to write an also deeply local history.<sup>36</sup>

These examples do not mean that the North-South divide is not real. Voekel and Young relate that one Central American participant at Tepoztlán rejected an initial invitation "because the term *transnacional* evokes



multinational corporations for Spanish speakers: she feared that we were gathering to celebrate neoliberal globalization.”<sup>37</sup> Barbara Weinstein implores “scholars following the transnational turn . . . to consider the drawbacks of a historical approach that attenuates connections to scholars in Latin America whose main analytical references is still the national context.”<sup>38</sup> Similar concerns have been raised by indigenous scholars, who point out the significance that the nation-state retains for indigenous communities seeking to gain rights from it.<sup>39</sup> In Latin America, suspicion also derives from early transnational works that seemed to do little more than place the United States at the center of histories that expanded outward to the “rest” of the world. It is for good and multiple reasons, then, that transnational method is often viewed with skepticism in Latin America.

### REIMAGINING THE ATLANTIC (AGAIN) AND THE POLITICS OF RACE AND LABOR

To Galeano, borders represent the grist of transnationalism’s intellectual mill. “Transnational history,” he writes, “attempts to make visible the fissures that open along nations’ borders.”<sup>40</sup> Keila Grinberg examines such fissures, in the process expanding and also complicating a central insight about colonial and imperial borders—that slaves crossed them to escape bondage and to take advantage of imperial rivalries and competing legal regimes—with a series of innovative arguments about what Silmei de Santana Petiz calls Brazil’s history “beyond the border.”<sup>41</sup> People often moved across Brazil’s southern border to pursue freedom, but in so doing also helped create “a new frontier of enslavement” for Brazilian slave catchers, who targeted Blacks in Uruguay and Argentina while pursuing slaves who had fled Brazil.<sup>42</sup> Cross-border movement also “established unprecedented diplomatic situations” and “led to the creation of a new jurisprudence in the domain of international law.”<sup>43</sup> By blending micro-history and the stories of individual slaves and runaways with larger legal regimes and international politics and law, Grinberg reveals transnationalism to be a means for centering marginalized and forgotten histories and also for reimagining the creation of national borders and the shape of international diplomacy and justice.<sup>44</sup>

Transnational scholarship has also helped counter North-heavy interpretations of the Atlantic world, a larger project encapsulated in a special issue of the *Luso-Brazilian Review* dedicated to “ReCapricorning the Atlantic.”<sup>45</sup> That cartographic reorientation not only gestures South but also emphasizes the kind of East-West back-and-forth across the Atlantic highlighted by other scholars of the African diaspora and the “Red Atlantic.” Anchored in Bahia and Yorùbáland, J. Lorand Matory shows that Black “travelers, scholars, writers, pilgrims, merchants, and priests” cannot be understood within the confines of a single country. “Since the mid-19th cen-

tury,” he writes, individuals in Brazil and elsewhere have acted “in defense of their own interests, and who, in so doing, have sagaciously interpreted forces far beyond any single country of origin or country of destination.”<sup>46</sup> Expanding, decentering, and “ReCapricorning” the Atlantic also means questioning the relationship between nation and diaspora, and the shape of both.<sup>47</sup> Lauren Derby makes related points about Haitian Vodou, though by orienting our gaze not only toward Africa but also Europe and the United States. Although the story she tells is undeniably transnational, it is driven toward understanding the forging of a Haitian national identity that engaged, appropriated, and repelled foreign threats in a way that gave rise to a “martial ethos . . . as a renegade nation that forged its identity against the world through the barrel of a gun.”<sup>48</sup> Together, Derby and Matory illustrate how transnational studies of diasporic religion may at once counter and account for US and European hegemony, while alternately centering and traversing the nation.

Haiti, the world’s first “Black republic,” and Brazil, held by many (including its current president) to be a mythical “racial democracy,” represent just two points in a larger American kaleidoscope of racial configurations and racialized national mythologies.<sup>49</sup> Many, perhaps all, were forged in conversation with and in the shadow of a purportedly “white” Europe and United States. In chapter seven of this volume, David M. K. Sheinin writes about Venezuela, whose citizens “have at times constructed a distinct, parallel vision of US Blackness based on a binary US segregationism, with a range of cultural implications that include distinguishing a putatively less racist Venezuelan society (absent segregation and other violent US discriminatory forms) from the United States.”<sup>50</sup> Similar comparisons and claims of racial exceptionalism are found throughout the Americas. Revealing the lie behind apocryphal national stories of racial harmony helped dislodge comparison as a lens of analysis and imbue transnationalism with extra appeal.

Labor history has also become increasingly focused on global and transnational questions, sometimes in dialogue with histories of race and gender, though gender, it is worth noting, is often conspicuously absent from transnational scholarship.<sup>51</sup> As slavery was abolished throughout the Americas, schemes to bring in different kinds of laborers—especially Asian and European—came to the fore, almost always accompanied by discourses about how those foreign laborers would improve the racial composition of the nation. But whereas there is a sizeable literature, for example, on the large-scale projects to bring Asian laborers to Cuba, Peru, and Brazil, other national case studies of such migrations have fallen by the wayside. One such history is the construction of the Madeira-Mamoré rail line in the Amazon, made possible by more than twenty one thousand immigrant workers from more than thirty different countries. Many came from the Antilles, whose

experiences have been “completely forgotten within Brazilian working-class and immigration history.”<sup>52</sup>

Closely related to labor is the history of Marxism and radical leftist politics in the Americas, a body of literature increasingly attuned to transnationalism. In *Indians and Leftists in the Making of Ecuador's Modern Indigenous Movements* (2008), Marc Becker writes, “From its beginnings in the 1920s . . . Indigenous activism must be understood and contextualized within international trends.”<sup>53</sup> Jaymie Heilman similarly frames her account of politics and indigenous activism in rural Ayacucho within global events such as the Mexican and Bolshevik Revolutions.<sup>54</sup> Although attentive to global flows of movements and ideas, both Becker and Heilman root themselves deeply within their respective national contexts, and for good reason—most of the people they study did, too.

The Bolivian-based French sociologist Hervé Do Alto shows how Evo Morales's Movimiento al Socialismo (Movement for Socialism, MAS) creatively and effectively brought together Marxism and “*indianismo*” under a nationalist umbrella.<sup>55</sup> The achievement, Do Alto shows, is especially remarkable when considered in a larger context. Bolivia, after all, was the site of Che Guevara's death, a grim reminder of the way that local and national realities can trump transnational links and collaborations. But that does not suggest a zero-sum game: MAS successfully incorporated into its iconography figures as diverse as the Argentine-born-cum-Cuban revolutionary Che; Túpac Katari, the famous eighteenth-century Aymara leader; and Marcelo Quiroga Santa Cruz, a prominent late twentieth-century Bolivian socialist.<sup>56</sup>

In some cases, local and national affiliations have helped generate strategic differentiation among members of diasporas. Arlindo J. Vieira dos Santos, the founder of the Black Brazilian Front (FNB, Frente Negra Brasileira), rejected “any sort of alliance with foreign blacks,” Paulina Alberto writes, and shunned ties with Africa altogether.<sup>57</sup> Jessica Graham's *Shifting the Meaning of Democracy: Race, Politics, and Culture in the United States and Brazil* (2019) highlights conversations and exchanges among and about Black political actors in the United States and Brazil. Eschewing the false choice between comparative and transnational models, Graham employs both approaches, tracing cross-border exchange while also contextualizing and comparing her case studies. The result is an unprecedented accounting of the ways in which Black political actors in both countries shaped and were shaped by entreaties from Communists and Fascists, and ever-louder (though still empty) proclamations of racial democracy and equality.<sup>58</sup> Aruã Lima casts his research net even wider, incorporating archives in Brazil, the United States, Russia, and Finland into a research itinerary that yields new insights about the Comintern, and race and radicalism in Brazil.<sup>59</sup> Just as

Communists sought to make good on Comintern directives to recruit more Black Brazilians, so too, Graham and Kim Butler show, did fascists and the *Ação Integralista Brasileira* (Brazilian Integralist Action).<sup>60</sup> The remarkable, if also limited and sometimes strained, mutual affinity between Brazilian integralists and the *Frente Negra* takes Tinsman's admonition to account for disconnections a step further, underscoring the importance of also accounting for previously unseen connections and alliances that run against the scholarly grain.

### **TOWARD A TRANSNATIONAL HISTORY OF RACE IN THE AMERICAS**

In the pages that follow, twelve scholars explore a fascinating collection of histories, some of which were previously neglected, and others that have received attention but merit reconsideration. Together, the essays cover a broad area and place in conversation histories of indigeneity, the African diaspora, and Asia, and in doing so serve as a rejoinder to some of the more stubbornly calcified epistemological categories of Latin American Studies. The volume opens with Bryce's chapter on race and immigration in Argentina. In addition to the South Asians previously referenced, Bryce shows how from 1890 to 1920 Argentine writers, politicians, and officials sought to use political and labor market maneuvering to prevent immigration from South and East Asia. The chapter demonstrates the presence of Asian immigrants in Argentina much earlier than is often suggested and shows that race-based immigration exclusion also predates the typical chronology. While stretching the conceptual map across and beyond the Pacific (with an eye also on Europe, and a fascinating Argentine government map of it), Bryce connects the flow of global migration to Argentine racial ideology, demonstrating the kind of productive back-and-forth that can occur when our guiding coordinates are thought of as an open question rather than as a fixed border.

Borders are a central concern of chapter two, where Waskar Ari-Chachaki explores and attempts to create an "Indian Republic" alongside a "white Republic" in 1920s and 1930s Bolivia. Of special interest is Gregorio Titiriku, an indigenous intellectual who helped advocate for the recognition and implementation of "Indian Law," a set of ideas and concepts meant to integrate views of and beliefs about mother earth with colonial and republican legal precepts. While the Bolivian state repressed and segregated indigenous people, Titiriku and others in the network of *Alcaldes Mayores Particulares* (AMPs), or major autonomous mayors, creatively and subversively appropriated the colonial idea of "two nations." Calling Bolivia an "Aymara land," Titiriku advocated for the creation of the Republic of Qul-lasuyu. Indigenous people, he maintained, were imbued with the right to create the borders of such a republic because, unlike the white "guests" who

ran Bolivia, he and his fellow native people “were in their own country.”<sup>61</sup> Though his project did not come to fruition, it anticipated and helped lay the groundwork for future mobilizations and provided a forceful rebuke of the main flows of transnational racism through eugenics, *mestizaje* ideology, and the memory of Indian removal in various parts of the continent.<sup>62</sup> Titiriku’s “two republics” project also vividly illustrates both the power and limits of transnationalism. By resisting continental traditions of racist ideology and by seeking to literally redraw Bolivian borders, Titiriku clearly transgressed national boundaries. At the same time, much of his project’s genius lay in its clever utilization of national structures and ideals, a clear illustration of how the very idea of transnationalism can seem anachronistic or even threatening.

In chapter three, Lara Putnam provides an intriguing counterpoint that includes significant contrasts and also remarkable similarities with Ari-Chachaki’s chapter. With a sprawling map that illustrates the incredible expanse of the circum-Caribbean, and a story that travels beyond the Americas to the seat of the British Empire and back, Putnam describes how in the aftermath of World War I, race and nation conspired to marginalize Black British West Indians in multiple locales. In Costa Rica, Cuba, Panama, the United States, Venezuela, and other American republics, white nationalist legislators marginalized British West Indian laborers, who found themselves increasingly denied access to a large spectrum of political, social, and economic rights and privileges, and increasingly left on the outside looking in when it came to establishing residence, finding work, and even entering a given country. Across and beyond the British Empire, “race and racism set the boundaries of belonging,” invariably shutting out people of African descent.<sup>63</sup> Hopes that the British state would provide support or assistance were dashed at every turn. As in the Bolivian case, here the nation functioned as a bitter and repressive reality, even if the borders of this story were multiple, distant, and fully discernible only when studied transnationally.

Although the physical US-Mexico border is seen to be easily crossed and in some cases almost irrelevant in chapter four, Dawson also shows the ideological and political lines separating the two countries to have been so extreme as to have short-circuited an attempted cross-border *indigenista* project. Focusing on the 1940 Primer Congreso Interamericano Indígena (First Inter-American Congress on Indian Life), Dawson describes how *indigenismo* remained forcefully and indelibly shaped by national particularities. This is made clear through the case of peyote, a cactus with hallucinogenic powers. During the early twentieth century, a significant amount of the peyote used in the United States was gathered in Mexico, making peyote “a material expression of transnationalism.”<sup>64</sup> Nonetheless, both peyote and its religious uses were understood in dramatically different ways

on each side of the border, making it an illustrative example of how and why the Pan-American indigenist project failed, and serving as one more reminder of the stubborn persistence and significance of the nation-state.

Although the Primer Congreso Interamericano Indígena ultimately failed to galvanize transnational indigenist collaborations and networks, the 1951 founding of a pilot coordinating center in Chiapas under the aegis of Mexico's National Indigenist Institute (Instituto Nacional Indigenista, or INI) floundered in different ways. As Stephen Lewis shows in chapter five, the INI's goal of integrating Tseltal and Tsostil Maya communities into the nation was unsuccessful. Some of Mexico's most influential indigenistas and social scientists came to Chiapas, implementing policies and programs meant to serve as an international model for development and "integration" policies. By 1970, the programs had had little effect, and Tseltals and Tsotsils remained excluded from the nation in every meaningful way. As Lewis shows, the failed project illustrates the emptiness of Mexican *mestizaje* discourses, which praise distant historical contributions of indigenous culture while making clear that living and breathing native people have no place in a nation bent on chasing Europeanized ideals of modernity and progress. Considered together with Gregorio Titiriku's unrealized "two republics" project in Bolivia, Lewis's chapter also illustrates how a nation's internal borders—in this case, the lines separating Chiapas from wealthier regions, and those that trapped Mayans in poverty—can be as important as its external ones.

Keeping one foot in Mexico and placing the other in the United States, chapter six, by Elaine Carey, explores how US policy makers employed racial stereotypes to marginalize and criminalize Mexican Americans and Mexicans in the United States. Almost since its creation, the US-Mexico border has witnessed and helped create oppositional categories of US whiteness and Mexican otherness. Throughout the US Southwest, racist definitions and policies were used to limit Mexican access to economic and political resources. Starting in the 1930s, the US Federal Bureau of Narcotics launched an antidrug campaign to demonize Mexicans as deviants who trafficked in drugs and violence, a template that continues to shape contemporary drug policy (not to mention presidential campaigns and political platforms). As Carey shows, the drug wars that took place between the 1930s and 1950s helped reify white supremacy and marginalize and stigmatize Mexican-Americans on the border and throughout the United States, all while dismissing any responsibility or role in the drug trade of white US citizens. Ultimately, Carey shows that it is all but impossible to understand the intertwined histories of drug policy and racism—not only during the 1930s through the 1950s but also today—without traveling to and beyond the border.

A different kind of cross-border exchange involving the United States and Latin America is the focus of chapter seven, where Sheinin explores the dynamic paths blazed by Afro-Venezuelan baseball players in the United States, and African American players in Venezuela, who altered understandings and depictions of Blackness and Latin Americanness in both countries. The making of a Venezuelan *criollo* identity affected the ways that race was understood and represented, Sheinin argues, though that hardly translated romantic ideas about racial harmony into reality or signaled improved quality of life for Afro-Venezuelans. Venezuelan racial categories are more complex and numerous than the stark Black-white dichotomy typified by the infamous “one-drop rule” in the United States, a point that Venezuelans (like counterparts elsewhere in Latin America) often use to suggest an absence of racism at home. Sheinin not only shows the emptiness of that myth but also suggests how the transnational movement of baseball players and flow of news and ideas about baseball helped simultaneously prop up and challenge the idea of a democratic Venezuelan *mestizaje*.

Chapter eight, by Marc Hertzman, asks why the Filhos de Gandhi Carnival group chose the Mahatma as their namesake and what the group’s early history may tell us about the relationship between Bahian politics and culture, and the global circulation of Gandhi as an icon and an ideal. Combining Orientalist imagery and symbols with leftist ideology and eventually Afro-Bahian religion, the Black stevedores who founded the group made Gandhi into something distinctly Brazilian and Bahian. Their creation, the chapter shows, is legible only through historical lenses focused both on the creation and contestation of “Global Gandhi” and local and national politics and culture in Salvador. To create their own Gandhi, the stevedores also drew on longstanding masculinist tropes that were mainly at odds, but also at times surprisingly in line, with Gandhian gender ideals. By tracing the local history of a global icon, the chapter illustrates the complex ways that local and national racial categories and fantasies interact with transnational phenomena.

In chapter nine, Sonja Stephenson Watson examines transnational and transcultural webs of exchange linking the United States, the Caribbean islands, and Panama since the 1960s. With Panamanian *reggae en español* as her lens, Stephenson Watson shows how culture “hybridized and transculturated” as it traversed national and also local boundaries. The story of *reggae en español* is one that highlights transnational connectivity and exemplifies how the African diaspora crosses national boundaries and forges bonds among Black people throughout the Americas. By tracing these contours, Stephenson Watson shows how music helped Black Panamanians redefine, reimagine, and reinterpret nationalism and national culture.



In chapter ten, working with a different diaspora—Muslims in Argentina—Raanan Rein reconstructs the project to create a mosque in Buenos Aires beginning in the 1940s, during Juan Perón’s first presidency, through the “grandiose materialization of the project” in the 1990s under the Carlos Menem administration.<sup>65</sup> In the 1940s, Arab Argentines were stereotyped and demonized, before eventually being typecast in a slightly more positive light as well integrated and financially savvy. Like Jews and the Irish in the United States, over time Arab Argentines became “white,” or something close to it. A crucial moment in this transformation came when Perón described Spain’s Islamic history as a means for justifying the presence of Muslims in Argentina. As a group understood to be not-African, not-indigenous, and not-mestizo, Arab Argentines complicate the binary categories that pervade much of the public and scholarly discussion of race in Argentina. The successful completion of the Buenos Aires mosque is an example of how a group once stigmatized and marginalized as outsiders to the nation effectively leveraged what Rein calls “racial ambiguity” within Argentina, as well as international ties to Saudi Arabia, which would eventually provide financial support for the mosque. Here, once again, we see the national, the local, and the transnational working not only in concert but also sometimes at different paces and in different ways.

The volume concludes with an evocative piece by Kevin Coleman, in collaboration with Julia Irion Martins, about *Damiana Kryygi*, a 2015 documentary directed by Alejandro Fernández Mouján and set in Argentina, Paraguay, and Germany. The film tells the story of Damiana Kryygi, an indigenous child who survived an 1896 massacre at the hands of mestizo settlers in Paraguay. Ten years later she was sent to a mental hospital in Argentina where she died. A German anthropologist, Robert Lehmann-Nitsche, measured and photographed her before she perished, and in 2010, Paraguay’s Aché people claimed her remains from the Museo de La Plata and repatriated them. The film documents how members of her community transformed the artifacts of scientific racism into powerful objects of memory and mobilization. By connecting the history of Paraguayan frontiersmen and European scientists who plundered and expropriated Aché land, culture, and life with the reclaiming a century later of the child’s remains, Coleman treats *Damiana Kryygi* as a provocative model of how history and historical knowledge can—and might one day—be made. The film not only connects events across time and national borders but also shows how violence became naturalized as progress, and how that violence was then, in turn, exhumed from the archives so that new historical memories might be generated. Damiana Kryygi’s story provides a fitting last chapter to this book and a salient complement and also counterpoint to the maps that pull our spatial coordinates in new directions while decentering nations,



regions, and continents. After stretching the narrative to Germany and Argentina, the story—and more crucially, Damiana Kryygi's remains—returns to a now marginalized local center: indigenous land at the heart of generations of expropriation, struggle, and triumph.