INTRODUCTION

IN A CARTOON in a Rio de Janeiro satirical magazine (fig. I.1), two black city dwellers chat in vernacular Portuguese about the infamous urban reforms that took place under Mayor Francisco Pereira Passos between 1903 and 1906. Their conversation touches on key aspects of the relationship between people of color, the government, and the modernizing spaces of the city:

> "The government's knocking down houses; Mister Passos too. Mister Oswaldo from the hygiene department, he's shutting down everything that don't smell good ... Tell me, where are we supposed to live?"
>
> "Well, I hear the experts been talking 'bout workers' housing problems."
>
> "To hell with the experts! You don't make a house with words, or letters on a page. By the time they sort this out we'll be in a fine mess!"
>
> "Well, there's no way I'm living on the streets. When I have nowhere to lay down my bundle I'll make some noise and force the government to put a roof over my head ..."
>
> "That's easy for you to say, you don't have a wife and children ..."
>
> "Then be like me — don't have any! Nobody can make us! This is a free republic."

The magazine's cartoonist imagines a discussion in which the humble black worker on the left criticizes city and state officials for their inaction in the face of the housing crisis that they have aggravated in a frenzy of demolition related to the reforms. The places that he occupies in the city are being eliminated in the name of hygiene—a social cleansing that also targets a highly visible black presence downtown. The character on the right is represented as a *malandro*, an Afro-descendant street hustler and dandy who typically avoided not only the oppressive menial work available to the black population after abolition but also the responsibilities of family in difficult living conditions. The characters articulate two modes of resistance to the spatial order proposed by the urbanization project. The worker verbally counters and condemns the violence of his negation as a citizen. He is conscious of his inscription by the reformers as superfluous to modernity—he is not the ideal worker that the state has in mind in its eulogizing discourse on labor, so there is little point waiting for the authorities to meet his needs. He also understands his inscription as an obstacle to modernity because he is racially signified as unhygienic. The *malandro* proposes to demand housing from the government using potentially violent protest if necessary. He will occupy the streets and show his dissent for their proposed model of the city, using his body to impose his own spatial practices on the capital. He mobilizes the racialization that produces him as unruly and criminal, but imagines himself as a citizen in a "free republic" when he threatens disorder to the modernizing project. His character implicitly critiques the bourgeois norms idealized by reforms that make black families homeless and make it difficult for the black population to survive and socially reproduce.

Both characters demonstrate a clear political consciousness in their practices of refusal and resistance in the face of the racialized violence of the urbanizing city. They wage their struggle for survival in the context of a genocidal and "topocidal" (Porteous 1989) national project intent on eliminating blackness and annihilating the places in which people of color resided. In fighting for a place to live they fight for their existence. In disputing and claiming territory they create what I call "defiant geographies," interventions into space that can challenge geographies of domination, even if momentarily. I also conceptualize the spaces produced by such practices as "deviant," in the sense that they deviated from those sanctioned by dominant social groups and were spaces in which oppressive laws often were flouted, or social norms contravened. They were, therefore, frequently criminalized and demonized—the targets of police

persecution and the moralizing force of official discourse. This defiance is a fundamental characteristic of Rio's black geographies. According to Katherine McKittrick and Clyde Woods, "Black geographies disclose how the racialized production of space is made possible in the explicit demarcations of the spaces of *les damnés* as invisible/forgettable at the same time as the invisible/forgettable is producing space—always, and in all sorts of ways" (2007, 4). Defiance is therefore the creative capacity to invent and adapt spatial practices that persistently introduced black bodies and subjectivities into prohibited spaces. The spaces of the reformed city are therefore produced by coloniality's structures of racial domination, but also by people considered nonwhite or "less than white" talking back, gazing back, and taking back. The dispute over territory plays out in the ideal models of urbanity that the state, the city, and its elites seek to impose and the ways in which black and blackened subjects use their own decolonizing spatial logics to introduce alternative ways of being in and understanding the city.

This book is about how "race makes space." The brevity of this formulation from Don Mitchell (2000) of the interrelationships between racialization and the production of space belies the many ways in which the two are mutually constituted. Mitchell's aphorism has been the impulse underlying my reading of one of the most important moments in Brazil's urban history. My analysis focuses on the next hugely ambitious project that followed the Passos reforms and that sought to continue its work of Europeanization and erasure. This project was momentous for a number of reasons. First of all, it was designed to commemorate the centenary of Brazil's independence from Portugal in 1922. Because of this the reforms were deeply intertwined with the process of envisioning not just the capital city but also the nation of the future. They therefore offer us privileged insights into the relationship between the production of space, modernization, and the creation of a national imaginary. Secondly, the scheme involved razing to the ground an entire hillside in the middle of downtown Rio within a couple of years, with the technology available in 1920s Brazil. Additionally, the culmination of the plan was the construction of a mini-city containing sumptuous pavilions and palaces to function as the site of an international exposition—the first world fair hosted by a Latin American nation. Considering the monumentality of this endeavor it is curious that a significant body of scholarship on the subject has not emerged.[1] Mitchell explores his pithy statement using apartheid South Africa as a site for his analysis, which means that there are few subtleties

or hidden agendas to unearth in the exploration of race as a geographical project in his case study (2000, 250–55). The challenge of this book has been to unpack how race makes space in a country with one of the largest populations of color in the world, but where race injustice has been notoriously obscured in powerful national discourses of racial harmony and color blindness. In unraveling these dynamics I highlight how urbanization functions as a technology of racial oppression and how racialized subjects defy the implantation of dominant spatial orders. Ultimately, I make an intervention in a body of scholarship on Brazil's urban development that has been overwhelmingly focused on class.

The exposition city that was to symbolize Brazil's progress, its cosmopolitanism, and its bright, white future required a great leap of the imagination. Three decades of Republican rule had been somewhat underwhelming in terms of meeting the state's modernizing goals (Motta 1992, 26). By 1922, although urbanization, industrialization, and modernization were under way, Brazil remained predominantly rural. In 1920 70 percent of the country's employed males were engaged in agriculture, land ownership patterns were neocolonial, and a landed oligarchy continued to wield power (Burns 1980, 373–74). The end of the First World War had brought recession to Brazil's economy. The 1920s therefore began in a climate of economic uncertainty, and a souring relationship between the government of President Epitácio Pessoa (1919–1922) and the military. After the presidential elections of 1922, when the candidate endorsed by the army lost, a group of junior officers revolted at Copacabana in Rio de Janeiro against power sharing in the Republican government between privileged elites from the states of São Paulo and Minas Gerais. The revolt failed, but signaled a more generalized protest against a decadent republic from emerging urban middle-class groups. In the same centennial year the Communist Party of Brazil was founded with a radical agenda for political and social change (Burns 1980, 360, 383, 385–87). Despite or perhaps because of all this the government pressed on with its ambitious plans to celebrate the centenary and create an exposition city that would demonstrate the country's advances.

THE CASTELO NEIGHBORHOOD

A grand gesture was necessary for the production of this ideal space. It came in the form of destruction on a monumental scale of an entire hillside community in the city center. Morro do Castelo, or Castelo Hill, was the site where the

colonial city was founded in 1565, and the area was a treasure trove of architectural history and an important site of collective memory. Yet it was flattened in precisely the year that Brazil was celebrating a hundred years of its independence. Clearly, the meanings of that space had become so degraded that it was considered incompatible with the modernizing impulse of the 1920s nation. Castelo's illustrious beginning belies its inglorious end. It began as a foundational space that symbolized imperial power at its most official. The Portuguese relocated the city to this hillside, strategically overlooking Guanabara Bay and away from the swampland at the mouth of the bay. The hilly terrain was seen as advantageous for military defense, and the colonizers imposed an architecture of power on the land, which included a fortress, the seat of government, a church, and a prison. The viceroy's residence and those of the other highest-ranking dignitaries in the colony were situated there. It was a site from which the Portuguese sought to impose their civilizing mission across a vast, newly claimed territory. By the end of the sixteenth century, however, with swamps being drained at the mouth of the bay and a growing population needing more water and easier access to goods, the hillside began to be abandoned for the reclaimed land below (Nonato and Santos 2000, 60–67). Castelo began its own descent, from a space of colonial authority and domination to a space stigmatized as degraded and criminal by the postabolition period.

The Passos reforms had targeted part of the hillside for demolition to make way for one of the crown jewels of the scheme, the construction of a Parisian-style boulevard—the Avenida Central. A contemporary newspaper report offers us a glimpse of the ruthless determination to modernize the city and eliminate spaces and bodies that stood in the way. In January 1905 city officials served an eviction notice to inhabitants of a rooming house on Castelo, giving them a mere eight days to vacate the property. In fact, the authorities eventually ejected the residents and demolished the building even before the scant period of notice had expired (*Correio da Manhā*, January 5, 1905; *Correio da Manhā*, January 11, 1905). The housing crisis that was created by the extensive demolition of collective housing and the ongoing arrival of new immigrants was felt acutely in those already overcrowded tenements left standing downtown (Vaz 1994). Some of the newly homeless who left the city went to nearby suburbs if they had sufficient resources. However, the majority sought out a space in remaining rooming houses, or swelled the ranks of those finding shelter in hillside communities or in recently configured favelas. The number of collective residences

decreased in the districts of Santa Rita and São José that were vital to the city's commerce and services (the latter the district in which Castelo was located). However, in nearby downtown districts their number had actually increased by 1919, demonstrating that in the main residents did not abandon the central areas of the city as a result of the reforms (Pechman and Fritsch 1985, 76, 180). These densely occupied dwellings defied attempts to alter the occupation of space in the capital. Despite the increasingly difficult living conditions produced by this demand, for ordinary people survival depended on their proximity to the central zone (Abreu 1986, 48). Castelo lost one of its slopes during that urbanization initiative, but the rest of the hill was left intact until 1920, when demolition work began to make way for the world fair. Until then it remained as a site of tension or disruption in relation to the modernizing project. Those who occupied these hillsides downtown bore the stigma of illegality. The chronicler Luiz Edmundo describes the Morro de Santo Antônio (which was adjacent to Castelo and itself flattened from 1952) as being inhabited by criminal types, the unemployed, and the destitute (1957, 147).

This reputation of hillside neighborhoods appears to have been exaggerated, at least in the case of Castelo, as Cláudia Quelhas Paixão argues. Working with district police logs between 1916 and 1922, she finds that out of a total of 426 incidents involving *castelenses*, or residents of Castelo, the latter appear as the offenders in only 104 cases. Of these, the most common problems between residents involved petty theft and physical aggression in their overcrowded living spaces. Significantly, two of the most commonly reported incidents overall, accidents and traffic accidents, indicate that residents were victims of the city's modernization rather than threats to it. Paixão notes that the majority of reported accidents took place in 1921 and 1922 as a result of demolition work on the hill (2008, 155). She concludes that public discourse helped to project the neighborhood as an unsanitary site of criminals and layabouts in order to justify its removal (33).

Data collected in 1908 by a life insurance company provides evidence of residents who were involved in the informal economy that was profoundly criminalized by the 1890 Penal Code. The neighborhood was also famous for its fearless capoeira fighters. However, the insurance data also lists professionals such as architects, engineers, and teachers among its residents (*Almanaque Laemmert* 1908, iv). Paixão also mines the police logs to find professions such as domestic servant, stevedore, vendor, tailor, carpenter, bricklayer, soldier, and corner-store owner. Nor was housing unregulated in Castelo, although

(as discussed in chapter 3) there were informal dwellings in the neighborhood. City officials had previously inspected the tenement building mentioned above whose residents were given the eight-day eviction notice, and reported that it conformed to building codes and regulations. Many tenements were owned by prominent members of the Republican elite and were inspected and regulated by the city (Directoria Geral de Saúde Pública 1906). In fact, the government owned several properties on Castelo Hill where they housed retired military personnel and their families. This did not prevent public discourse from producing the neighborhood as a degenerate space of illegality. Interestingly, one rooming house on the Rua do Castelo belonged to the father of the writer Olavo Bilac, one of the most strenuous critics in the press of the persistence of the "barbarous" customs of the poor in the modernizing city center (see Fridman and Moraes 1999).

Contemporary chronicles offer a glimpse into the racialized landscape of Castelo close to the time of its destruction.[2] Castelo had a significant Italian, and to a lesser extent, Portuguese immigrant population. In fact, the writer and art critic Gonzaga Duque, writing under the pen name Américo Fluminense, observed that Italians were in the majority by the time of the Passos reforms, and that the neighborhood's historically largely black population had dwindled significantly (Fluminense 1905, 45–46).[3] Despite this demographic change, Castelo persisted in the urban imaginary as a black space. A 1911 political cartoon, for example, identifies Castelo as a place of capoeira fighters, *mulatas*, and carnival revelers.[4] It appears that public perception continued to associate the hillside with black social "types"; for example, "candomblé priests, ex-slaves and *capoeiras*" (Stuckenbruck 1996, 56), even after the demographic shift. Despite the diminished demographic presence of Afro-descendants in the neighborhood by the early twentieth century, blackness continued to signify the space, and accounts of the time often produced white residents as black. The neighborhood acquired a racial script that gave certain meanings to the spatial and cultural practices of its inhabitants. Even when a grammar of racial difference is not explicit, the spaces of the poor in Brazil are often referenced with what Jaime Alves calls an "alternative vocabulary to delineate a social geography that has everything to do with race" (2012, 32). The descriptors that official public discourse and the press employed for Castelo were also used to characterize blackness: *backward, colonial, criminal, indolent, insanitary*. In this sense, if we understand Castelo as a "black space" in an urban imaginary, we can comprehend the vehemence and determination with which it was destroyed.

INVISIBILIZING BLACKNESS

In 1922 Brazil's ideal capital city could only be imagined via a mnemonic erasure of the history of slavery. A policy facilitating white European immigration supported the urbanization project that aimed to achieve this. Both initiatives were hopelessly optimistic in their attempts to eradicate blackness from the city, when around 60 percent of the country's population after the abolition of slavery was Afro-descendant (Tinhorão 1998, 264). In fact, newspaper chronicles in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century frequently complained that Rio's urban spaces had the appearance of an African street market—such was the presence of former slaves and their descendants on the streets (Moura 1983). Therefore, one of the main motivating factors in early twentieth-century public works was finding a solution to the overwhelming perception of Rio de Janeiro as a black city. In the state's modernizing vision there was no place for blackness—blackness as phenotype, and also as behaviors, sociabilities, subjectivities, and as certain ways of occupying space. The targets of the early twentieth-century urbanization projects were therefore people of color as well as poor European immigrants blackened by their occupation of the same spaces of the city as former slaves and their descendants.

Saidiya Hartman has argued that the ruling visual logic of plantation slavery was hypervisibility (1997, 36). She observes that the plantation was laid out so that the slave was the permanent object of the surveying gaze of the overseer. Black bodies had to be visible in order to be forcibly subordinated. The early Republican state and the municipal authorities of Rio demonstrated a keen interest in constraining and punishing black bodies, but not in training them for entry into the labor market. They considered the black population incapable of adapting to modernity. This is an idea that prevails in public discourse until at least the late 1940s. The report that accompanied a 1948 census on favelas in Rio's Federal District describes the black population as "inherently backward, lacking ambition and ill-adjusted to the social demands of modern life" (quoted in Valladares 2005, 65). Reforming black bodies and behaviors to support an emergent capitalist economy was therefore not on the official agenda. Instead, the state opted for reconfiguring its labor force through European immigration, which would also achieve the objective of whitening the population. The fantasy of total dominion over the black body that was reliant on its hypervisibility in the plantations gave way to a fantasy of eradicating blackness from the most valued spaces in the city. Hypervisibility gave way to its inverse: a logic of removal or

invisibilization. Postabolition legal codes supported removal, criminalizing black cultural expression such as capoeira street fighting and dance, and black forms of sociability in public spaces, such as gatherings around the street vendor's stall, serenades, and the rowdy carnival revelry of the *cordões*.[5] The vagrancy law targeted occupations of the street with literal expulsion from the city—infractors were loaded into the holds of steam ships and dispatched to remote areas in the Amazon, Acre, and the island of Fernando de Noronha in the north of the country (Sevcenko 1993, 69–70; Carvalho 1999, 178–79).

Urban reform was a key tool of removal and invisibilization. As mayor, Pereira Passos was the first to conduct a radical social engineering experiment through public works that aimed to eliminate people like the characters in our opening cartoon from the city center. This was an extremely ambitious initiative and the mayor enjoyed unconstitutional powers to realize his goals and those of the federal government (Sevcenko 1993, 45–48). The reformers destroyed 1,600 buildings, made 20,000 people homeless, and incurred a huge debt in the process of remaking downtown Rio in the image of Haussmann's Paris (Rocha and Carvalho 1995, 77). The demolition frenzy constituted a violent attack on the city and its humblest inhabitants, making way for the construction of elegant avenues, monuments, and high cultural institutions (Abreu 1997, 59–67; Meade 1999, 84–94; Needell 1984, 400–403; Sevcenko 1993, 48–68). Contemporary newspaper commentators taken aback by the scale of the destruction complained that many demolished buildings were perfectly solid and had been unnecessarily destroyed. Ultimately, the reforms aimed to reorganize space so that the city center was reserved for the production and circulation of goods, the emerging areas of the south zone for the affluent, and the new suburban neighborhoods for the less well-off and the poor (Abreu 2003). Additionally, this ambitious urbanization scheme aimed to alter social and cultural uses of space. Public health and sanitation concerns were used to do away with popular forms of socialization and informal commerce, and inculcate the social and cultural values of the elites in the center of the city.[6]

This and subsequent violent modes of urbanization were inextricably bound up with race, though important studies of the Passos reforms have tended to analyze them primarily as attacks on the popular classes.[7] One reason for this, no doubt, is the significant degree of coexistence in spaces of the poor between Afro-descendants and poor whites, including recently arrived immigrants primarily from southern Europe, but also from places like Turkey and Syria.[8] They also shared overcrowded housing with internal migrants from Brazil's rural

interior who frequently had Portuguese and some indigenous blood, occasionally with African heritage, too. The challenge of this book has been how to deal with a racially and ethnically diverse population thrown together in a densely occupied space without erasing difference by subsuming them all under the category of class. I explore the racialization of three of the groups that inhabited this dynamic landscape in the context of the centennial urbanization project, while also looking for traces of social and cultural practices that hint at racial or ethnic self-identifications in these spaces. Throughout this work I therefore examine official discourses of race and space, while gleaning clues as to the experiences of living in the city of Afro-descendants, poor southern European immigrants, and rural migrants from the interior. In this way, I explore the interdependence of race and geography in the production of spaces of the poor. This study therefore understands race as a structuring principle in analyzing space and sociocultural relations in a Brazilian city at a particular historical moment.

RACE AND MODERNITY

Marly Motta characterizes the history of Brazilian social thought in the twentieth century as an effort to understand and encourage modernity (1992, 8). In fact, blackness is what modernity imagines and constructs itself against, from the perspective of the state and dominant social groups. In the postabolition period social scientists such as Raimundo Nina Rodrigues (1862–1906) and Francisco José de Oliveira Viana (1883–1951) elaborated theses on the "problem of blackness" as an obstacle to progress and considered the possibilities offered by whitening. These two notions are fundamental to Republican thinking on modernization and have persisted in Brazilian development models in various forms to the present day. Scholarship on black Atlantic populations has engaged in considerable discussion of modernity's ambivalence toward black subjectivities (Gilroy 1993, 191), and the ways in which progress and nation building are underwritten by black oppression.[9] Critical race theory has drawn attention to how racist ideas are constitutive of a modern imagination, and the principles and practices of universality (Crenshaw et al. 1995). Richard Iton has observed that black experiences of modernity are of exclusion from meaningful participation in political life and civil society, while black populations served as raw material for the naturalization of modern social, political, and economic arrangements (2008, 17).

Political and legal theorist Denise Ferreira da Silva has commented that critical race theory approaches that focus heavily on presenting quantitative

and qualitative evidence of social exclusion may not offer the most effective framework for understanding racial subjugation in a country like Brazil, in which racial democracy is such a powerful ideology. For her the problem with the focus on race-based exclusion is that "if one's race difference is not explicitly found to determine unfavorable social thoughts or actions, exclusionary ideas and behavior, it cannot be proven to be the ultimate cause of the ensuing harm to that person's rights." This means that denunciations of race injustice become difficult to articulate as such when they do not meet the criterion of "race invocation." In Brazil, she argues, race injustice occurs because blackness and whiteness indicate distinct kinds of modern subjects. The bodies and the spaces inhabited by people of color are signifiers of illegality, while white bodies and spaces of whiteness are produced to signify the notions of universal equality and freedom that underlie modern conceptions of the just and legal (2001, 426, 441).

This book examines an early moment in this naturalization of whiteness as the ideal outcome of modernization and urbanization. It also explores how blackness "haunts the dreams of ordered civilization" (Gilroy 1993, 191) articulated in a national project like the Centennial World Fair. I examine the community annihilated to make way for the exposition city, as well as the strategies for disappearing the nonwhite or less-than-white population deployed in the exhibition's imagined nation. This study seeks to establish a historical point of reference for the ongoing social pathologizing of raced bodies and spaces that places them outside legality and makes their removal entirely justified in order to maintain order and facilitate progress. Morro do Castelo in 1922, or Vila Autódromo nearly a century later—these two communities, decimated in the name of mega-event preparation, are not spaces of exception where laws are suspended to modernize and serve real estate speculation. They were already produced as illegal, and were therefore perceived as rightful victims of the deterritorialization and violence meted out by private/public consortia.

BLACKNESS AND WHITENESS IN BRAZIL

"Whether they consider me mulatto or black, I am forever condemned to be mistaken for the hired help. . . . Life is hard when you're not white" (Barreto [1915] 1961, 52–130). This condemnation of antiblack racism in early twentieth-century Brazil comes from the pages of the *Intimate Diary* of one of Brazil's most important writers. Afonso Henriques de Lima Barreto died in the year of the centennial, and he published withering critiques of the mayor, the city's well-off, and the

demolition of Castelo in the press, especially the weekly magazine *Careta*.[10] Lima Barreto's accounts of the everyday humiliations he experienced as a man of color negotiating the spaces of light-skinned elites provide rare first-person glimpses of racial prejudice in Brazil at this time. The quote above underlines how a white gaze, and the discourses and representations that inform it, produce him as a racial other. As Lima Barreto notes, this gaze sometimes constructs him as mulatto and other times as black. According to this conception of race in Brazil, the author is able to alternately (or simultaneously) occupy two categories of raced being.

I do not draw attention to Lima Barreto's observation in order to argue for the supposed fluidity or ambiguity of racial classification in Brazil. To do so would suggest that race operates very differently from a binary system of white/black because of the many color descriptors that Brazilians use in racial speech and identification (Harris 1964, 1970). Many influential authors have disproven the notion that race relations, identifications, and forms of discrimination in Brazil are entirely different from similar phenomena in other countries such as the United States where a biracial model predominates (Silva 1985; Hasenbalg 1985; Skidmore 1993; Andrews 1991; Sheriff 2001).[11] Nevertheless, some scholars remain convinced that analyzing Brazilian race relations in terms of whiteness and blackness imposes a foreign, binary paradigm upon Brazil.[12]

In the 1990s Silva questioned analyses of Brazil in relation to the United States in which the latter's racial system is understood as a kind of universal model. For her the particularities of race in Brazil lay not in the much-discussed issue of racial ambiguity but in "the attempt to write race (black) consciousness against a (national) construction of race, which was produced against the idea of race separation. In Brazil, unlike the United States, neither culture nor social structure [is] organised around the idea of racial division" (1998, 213). Silva thus suggests that comparative possibilities between the two countries depend on acknowledging that the "intrinsically multiple quality of black subjectivity demands attention to the specific historical and discursive developments informing a society's strategies of racial subordination. However, because race has been the common discursive basis for worldwide subordination of nonwhites throughout the history of modernity, the study of any specific strategy of racial subordination must account for its placing in the global historical and discursive context in which the histories of modern societies and the biographies of racialised subjects have been written" (230).

Silva therefore argues that the US racial system should not be a default model

against which we read race in Brazil. However, since racial oppression has been a mechanism of modernity the world over, national forms of subordination can be analyzed with reference to processes elsewhere. Such analyses should take account of a society's particular conditions. One of the most salient differences for her between the US and Brazilian racial systems is the absence of legal segregation in the latter that, as mentioned earlier, can make it difficult to hear denunciations of race injustice (2001, 426). Additionally, Brazil's discourse of racial mixing[13] has obfuscated the operation of race difference as a mechanism of exclusion, so that social, political, and economic disadvantage becomes the result of class difference. Therefore, the raced dimension of systemic and structural oppression is frequently silenced or rendered elusive (2001, 441, 427).

Despite the lack of segregation laws in Brazil, early twentieth-century urban reforms in the capital city explicitly aimed to whiten and Europeanize these spaces. Segregation has ultimately come about in practice, with over 70 percent of the country's urban black population living in self-constructed housing in the twenty-first century.[14] In this book I explore an important early moment in this racialization of space and how notions of whiteness and nonwhiteness informed spaces and imaginaries of the city. I am attentive to the particularities of time and place, grounding my study in a 1920s neighborhood whose past, present, and stymied future were profoundly influenced by assumptions born out of local, national, and global conceptions of race. I analyze these assumptions as they appeared in public discourse, visual forms, and as they materialized in the built environment and the ways that people occupied it. Because these are notions of race articulated in the press, in texts by nation builders, intellectuals, and social theorists, and in visions of the city by travelers, artists, or the official city photographer, they can only hint on occasion at what ordinary city dwellers made of the lived experience of race.

In 1920s Brazil, historian Paulina Alberto argues, the average Afro-descendant individual would not have identified publicly as "black," given the profoundly negative characteristics associated with the term; nor would they have joined explicitly race-based causes when faced with the urgent problems of hunger, poverty, and unemployment (2011, 5, 20). However, her study focuses on a vocal minority of black intellectuals who did publicly and proudly claim their African heritage. These claims were part of what Alberto terms a "conceptual agility" that denounced racial injustice while often endorsing national ideologies of racial harmony. She traces the moment when the notion of Brazil's flexible racial system gained acceptance as the 1870s, when both visitors and Brazilian thinkers

remarked on the mixture between people of different colors as something unique in the Americas. Brazilian social theorists and abolitionists imagined this supposedly harmonious coexistence as an opportunity to assimilate and civilize the Afro-descended population (8–9). Alberto explores how black intellectuals often embraced the progressive potential of an ideology that equated racial mixture with social inclusion. As she argues, they strategically deployed notions of racial harmony as an ideal that they demanded be realized (10, 4). In this way, they strived to locate blackness centrally within Brazilian identity. It may seem incongruous that the Republican government pursued a policy of whitening while the country was beginning to emerge in the national and international consciousness as a site of racial tolerance and mixture. However, as Alberto explains, "Even as this ideology of 'whitening' envisioned the disappearance of nonwhite people, particularly those of African descent, it simultaneously cast Brazilians' willingness to intermix as evidence of their unique openness and enlightenment in racial matters" (10).

Alberto acknowledges that her study focuses on a small category of Brazilian society—educated, potentially upwardly mobile people of color writing in the black press (20). However, her examination of their interventions is important in demonstrating both their regional and historical specificities, as well as how race came to be understood nationally as primarily relations between whites and blacks (21, 5–8). As far as indigenous peoples were concerned, "foundational fictions" (Sommer 1993) in the mid-nineteenth century wrote them into the national narrative as a race disappearing because of war, sacrificial death, and miscegenation (Alberto 2011, 8).[15] As Alberto points out, the first national census of 1872 did not include a category for "Indians," only *caboclos*—those of part indigenous and part European ancestry. As discussed in chapter 1, the civilizing potential of the caboclo became an important topic of conversation among some social thinkers and in press representations in the first two decades of the twentieth century. Despite the chronic problems that nation builders ascribed to their character on account of racial mixing, it seemed that caboclos' distance from blackness made it possible to imagine them as a redeemable racial group.[16]

In addition to *caboclo*, people may have self-described or been described in Brazil's big cities in the 1920s as *crioulinha, preto retinto, cor escura, pardo-claro, mulata, branco sardento,* and many other variations on black or white.[17] Despite all of these subgroupings, blackness and whiteness remained fundamental to understandings of race in the capital. The color descriptors above come from the novel *Clara dos Anjos* that Lima Barreto completed in the year of the cente-

nary and that appeared posthumously in 1948. Lilia Moritz Schwarcz describes the work as Lima Barreto's most insistent on detailing the race and color of the capital's residents (2017a). She notes that his prose lingers over its descriptions of dark skin in a way that was unusual for the time, given that writers, artists, and photographers tended to hold whiteness as the aesthetic norm, and alleged technical difficulties in representing brown and black subjects (2017a, 126, 127). In the novel, Clara, for instance, is a young woman who lives in the suburbs of Rio de Janeiro, part of a respectable family of modest means. Her father, the author tells us, is mixed race with lighter skin (*pardo-claro*), but "with bad hair, as people say" (36). Her mother is darker-skinned but has straight hair. Their daughter inherits her father's lighter skin and her mother's straight hair, and is brought up to believe that with the love of her parents and a good education she could be somebody in life. However, after her "seduction" by a *modinha* singer, Cassi Jones de Azevedo, Clara becomes pregnant. Cassi is from a white family that is better off economically and that has delusions of grandeur on account of a real or fabricated aristocratic English ancestor. Clara pays a visit to Cassi's mother and demands that he marry her: "Dona Salustiana was livid; the mulatto girl's interjection infuriated her. She looked her up and down, in a deliberate and unhurried way. Finally, she spat out, 'What did you say, you little *negra*?'" (103). In the space of a couple of sentences, Clara is both *mulatinha* and *negra*. Race talk may describe her as *mulatinha* because of her racial mixture, lighter skin, and straight hair. However, the white woman's gaze constructs her unambiguously as *negra* when reinforcing the racial hierarchy. Thus, despite all of the creative color codes of everyday speech, Clara experiences a moment much like Frantz Fanon's when he violently encounters the gaze that fixes him in white imaginations and splinters his body into racist stereotypes (Fanon 1967, 109–40). Just as Fanon is "burst apart" on the train in Paris (109), the white gaze destroys Clara's sense of self; she is unable to escape this gaze in the crowded space of the tram that carries her home: "Her upbringing, full of protective vigilance, had been misguided. She should have learned directly from her parents that her girlish and womanly virtue was besieged from all quarters, and she should have been taught this with real life examples, of course. . . . The tram was packed. She looked at all those men and women. . . . There was probably not a single person among them who was not indifferent to her plight. After all, she was just a little *mulata* and the daughter of a postman!" (104–5).

The novel ends with Clara's desperate utterance, "We are nothing in this life." As a result of Dona Salustiana's injurious racial slur, Clara experiences a

second violation, what George Yancy describes as having one's body penetrated by the white gaze and then having that body returned in a distorted form (2008, 66). At this moment when Clara experiences her (non)being through others, she is trapped within what Fanon describes as a "crushing objecthood" (1967, 109). Fanon begins his essay with a realization akin to Clara's that racial marking destroys a sense of one's humanity and possibilities: "I came into the world imbued with the will to find a meaning in things, my spirit filled with the desire to attain to the source of the world, and then I found that I was an object in the midst of other objects. . . . All I wanted was to be a man among other men" (109–12).

The encounter with Cassi's mother occasions a similar trauma and revelation for Clara. Her upbringing has been all wrong and in vain. The insult reveals that "she was not 'just a girl' like all the others. According to her society's generally accepted beliefs, Clara was something much less" (104). In the tram, Clara looks back at the passengers and understands how they see her. They are indifferent to the disgrace that has befallen her because her body is already freighted ("battered down" in Fanon's words [112]) with the supposed deficiencies of her race. Racial descriptors and social niceties may construct her as mulatinha, but the gazes of those on the tram expose a violable negra who is sexually available to white men.

Lima Barreto's own experiences also underline the ways in which whiteness and blackness framed social interactions and relations. For the purpose of my analysis, whiteness and blackness are also important in terms of thinking about the production and negotiation of spaces of the city. While he may have been *mulato* in some social contexts, as the author points out in his diary, white society and those who police its boundaries are ultimately unequivocal about his blackness. His indictment, "Life is hard when you're not white," comes after an incident at a reception that he attends as a functionary of the Ministry of War. There were many "aristocratic young ladies" at the festivities, he notes, and no one else was required to produce an invitation, except for him ([1915] 1997, 31). Lima Barreto's qualification of his racial status—mulatto or black, or however "they" consider him—makes it clear that he is not self-identifying in a fluid way. These are descriptive terms that others assign to him. He may have been a mulatto to fellow intellectuals and those aware of his reputation as a writer.[18] However, he is an anonymous black man to the functionaries in a government office, and they subject him to exactly the same gaze that Cassi's mother directs toward Clara—deliberate and disdainful.

Lima Barreto deplores this objectification and it provokes a reflection on how the profits of slavery built that space, with its heraldic ornamentation and aristocratic pedigree. His musings contain an explicit homage to black resistance that is extraordinary for its time:

> I don't know how, but the image of a large plantation appeared before my eyes. . . . From the slave barracks, unaware of the warbling of birdsong, several hundred blacks emerged, in dense rows weighed down by captivity. Rows of black bodies fanning out, silent, humble, with the secret energy of a fiber piercing the earth. After penetrating a hundred meters it bursts out like a crystal-clear spring; the more it descends, the higher its temperature and pressure, and the more complex its composition. It returns to the face of the earth as a geyser. The lower it goes, the stronger it becomes, and there in the depths of the earth, it plots, revolts, disturbs, and erupts like a volcano . . . and there are no barons, viscounts, dukes, or kings that can divert it from its course. (27–29)

On another occasion, he reflects on how the same spatial practices that would be tolerated according to naturalized white privilege would be criminalized for him. When asked why he did not join his classmates at the polytechnic school in jumping the wall of a theater to gain free entry, he replies, "Well, you're all white; you're cheeky 'Polytechnic lads'. . . . But what about me? Poor me. A blackie. The police would arrest me first. I'd be the only one taken in" (Schwarcz 2017b, 122).[19] Lima Barreto, therefore, clearly understood his racial position as black or, as he put it in this section's opening quotation, *não ser branco.* He and his character Clara's accounts of being racially marked by the white gaze underline the relationality of blackness and whiteness. In my analysis I similarly frame race relations at this time through prisms of blackness and whiteness, with the understanding that these are markers of what is a complex epistemic field.[20] Distance from and proximity to blackness and whiteness determined life experiences, expectations, and opportunities.

Blackness in early twentieth-century Brazil was fundamentally a category of subordination, although descriptors, context, appearance, and class could differentially affect Afro-descendants' everyday negotiation of social relations. While whiteness was the ideal to which the ruling elites aspired, several scholars have explored the complicated racial status of poor white European immigrants as well. This group appears in my study as city dwellers who shared space in tenement buildings with former slaves and their descendants. They gossiped,

socialized, argued, and fought with their black neighbors and coworkers, all the while resisting the discrimination that resulted from the less-than-ideal whiteness their poverty produced. Public discourse of the time often "blackened" poor white immigrants, constructing them with some of the descriptors used for the black population. In the broader context of the African diaspora Christina Sharpe uses the term "blackened" to describe those whose proximity to blackness and whose material conditions and circumstances position them as not properly white. They therefore have imposed upon them the same negative qualities projected onto black bodies (2010 190). In Brazilian scholarship, the phenomenon of blackening in the late nineteenth century and first decades of the twentieth is a well-established line of inquiry; for example, historians and literary scholars have analyzed the blackening of European immigrant workers in São Paulo (Andrews 1991); and of the Portuguese in Brazilian literature (Bletz 2010); how Italian immigrants were compelled to identify as "white" in order to distinguish themselves from Afro-descendants and avoid discrimination (Bletz 2010; Marques 1994; Lesser 2013); and the profound ambiguity of the relationship between southern European immigrants and modernity, with immigrants described with the same language used for blacks, such as *dirty* or *lazy* (Menezes 1996).

Defiant Geographies is a cultural studies project. It examines a wide variety of cultural texts and forms in order to understand what made a historically important, centrally located community disposable. I analyze primary sources to shed light on the politics of representing racialized space at a key moment in the history of nation formation. These sources include press articles, cartoons, lithographs, paintings, novels, chronicles, photographs, and more. The four chapters of this book all address themselves to unraveling the multifarious ways in which race makes space.

Chapter 1 explores how racialized subjects and spaces are produced discursively in official public and press discourse. One of the primary concerns of the Republican government that replaced the monarchy in 1889, the year after slavery was abolished, and that lasted until 1930 was the negative effects of race mixture on Brazil's population. Nation builders, social theorists, scientists, and pseudoscientists found hope for the country's future in the whitening thesis, which held that an infusion of white blood through immigration would eventually eliminate the country's black and mixed-race racial heritage. The implicit flip side of the whitening project was the creation of "racialized spaces of social death wherein Black lives are rendered less than fully human." I deliberately quote anthropologist Faye Harrison's (2014) assessment of police killings of black men and

women across the United States today, despite obvious contextual differences, in order to highlight a long (and transnational) history of making life impossible for black people. In 1922, when the Brazilian government and dominant social groups asked themselves what kind of Brazil they desired for the next century, it was a Brazil without people of color. They refashioned parts of the capital city with that ideal in mind, and entrenched earlier reforms designed to distance undesirable sectors of the population from downtown in the name of emergent capitalist development. This moment in the city's and the country's urban histories matters greatly because this paradigm of development has resonated so strongly over the century that followed. This chapter builds on existing scholarship on race thinking in Brazil in the first decades of the twentieth century by exploring racial formation in tandem with urbanization. It considers how ideas about race become naturalized in thinking the city. The chapter also attempts to get at racialized meanings and experiences in relation to living in the city, but can only do so imperfectly, considering the available sources.[21] The latter are generally mediated accounts by city officials and in the pages of the press that sometimes offer glimpses of daily life and the struggle of black and blackened people to occupy the city.

Chapter 2 considers the role of visuality in the interdependent production of race and space. It traces pictorial representations of Castelo Hill at various historical moments in order to unpack the visions of social difference they produce. These portrayals include paintings, lithographs, political cartoons, and photographs from the nineteenth century until the time of the neighborhood's destruction. I go back in time before 1922 in my visual analysis in order to demonstrate the ways in which such material consistently construed Castelo as racialized space over time. These images mobilize ways of looking that help us to understand the spatial and cultural constructions of racialized others. The chapter frames the dynamics of these gazes in the context of their production and circulation, and the ideologies that informed their viewing. These intersections of vision, race, and modernity stage colonial and neocolonial power, reflecting and refracting sociospatial orders and hierarchies on the canvas or paper. They also point to the limits of such representations of authority and alterity, when a subject rendered mute by the artist or photographer speaks volumes by returning or countering the gaze, thereby resisting certain racialized meanings, or refusing to become an object of knowledge. Subjects' active, affective, and embodied engagement with the space they occupy in the image often escapes capture within modernity's authoritarian gaze, or exceeds representation.

This chapter therefore analyzes the drama of racialized visuality—the tension between attempts to fix difference as part of a national project based on the subjugation and elimination of certain groups, and the ways in which the latter often manage to undermine this official visual rhetoric. This defiant "looking back" affords glimpses of alternative experiences of modernity that hint at the reality of inhabiting eliminable racialized spaces.

Chapter 3 considers such alternative spatialities, using newspaper articles, chronicles, photographs, and an archived interview to imagine how residents engaged in mapping and remapping Castelo Hill based on their occupation of and territorial struggles over the neighborhood. It explores everyday life and social and cultural practices in a dynamic tangle of interethnic geographies, in which the spatial practices of different racialized individuals and groups meet, and sometimes clash. This chapter reconstructs *castelenses*, residents of Castelo, as geographical subjects who obstructed the dominant spatialities that the Republican and municipal governments wished to impose downtown. It also considers them as political subjects, not only when they denounced repressive policing, or participated in meetings and protests against the demolition, but in their everyday engagement in a racialized struggle to survive. To remember how castelenses lived, worked, celebrated, and fought is to recount stories that understand them as geohistorical agents. These people also made space in the city, with their street vendors' cries, their carnival clubs, their religious festivals, and their spaces of socialization in yards, on street corners, and around washtubs. They produced their own geographical knowledge that differentiated between micro-communities in the neighborhood and that challenged the homogenizing official imaginaries of the hill. This chapter weaves together strands of information mostly gleaned secondhand, which points to the limits of imagining how residents produced space with the available sources. However, I acknowledge different ways of inhabiting the city from the perspective of the racialized poor. These accounts seem particularly important in the context of the most recent initiatives in Brazil to annihilate communities that stand in the way of mega-events.

In chapter 4 I examine the spectacle of whitening staged by the government and the municipality in the miniature city constructed for the world fair of 1922–1923. This international event was Brazil's first "mega-event," and it presented an unprecedented opportunity to imagine into existence the ideal city of the future, a blueprint for urban development in the modernizing nation. It reflects hallmark characteristics of mega-events, such as the haste of its execution that eschewed

careful planning to integrate the space into the existing built environment; the white elephants it left behind in the form of unused structures and spaces; and as with the events in Brazil of the last few years, the removal of racialized groups from the area that the authorities sought to reclaim. The ways in which the organizers represented and exhibited Brazil's society and culture closely yoked urban progress to racial progress. This notion was summed up in the prevailing concept of the *raça brasileira*, a homogenous "national" classification that in theory could include the diversity of the country's racial heritage, but in fact always reinforced whiteness as the default standard of civilizing achievement. Chapter 4 uses speeches, newspaper reports, commemorative publications, and visual records to explore the ways in which the fair materialized the desires of nation builders for the raça brasileira. It examines the space that the state and municipality created to project the social and cultural values it wished to inculcate. It also teases out conflicting reports on the participation of racialized subjects in events surrounding the commemorations. Some sources suggest a lack of interest in the formal events and a preference for celebrations in popular spaces, while others reveal an interest in accessing the spaces of the official celebrations, or in self-inscription into a centennial national narrative.

In order to facilitate discussion each of the four chapters focuses primarily on a different key aspect of how race makes space: discourse; visuality; spatial practices; and built or material form. However, all of these elements are intertwined, overlap, and produce each other, and they are all present to varying degrees in the analyses of all of the chapters. The impulse of this work has been to shed light on how these elements work to naturalize race and space, and the myriad ways in which racialized subjects defy this process. The effects of this naturalization are profound. In the 1920s the government decided that this neighborhood had value only if it were destroyed to create a stage for an international spectacle of modernization, and to open up land for real estate speculation. This is also a twenty-first-century story of mega-event development in Brazil. The state's violent removal of poor people from their homes for the sake of international events is part of a national project tying urbanization to whitening that is nearly a century old. To join some of these dots, as I begin to do in the epilogue, is to make historical links that might otherwise remain invisible. As Ann Stoler comments in the context of race and imperial ruination, such a critical move highlights the connections that make some people and places repeatedly susceptible to ruin (2013, 18). This book maintains that it is important to understand such under-

takings as part of a racial project. A whole extra set of tools for combating these initiatives may then present themselves to those who organize and mobilize in Brazil in the contemporary struggle of people of color for the right to call some place home.