INTRODUCTION

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This book results from a sense of dissatisfaction with current thinking about how to address issues of racism and racial inequality. Our sense is that academia and activism are a bit stuck, running hard just to keep still, or treading water. We have spent much of our academic lives puzzling the question of how best to address this problem, but a simple (or indeed any) solution seems to be permanently deferred. Or rather, there are many possible measures and strategies, but how are we to judge which are effective and which should be avoided—let alone which is best? Meanwhile, the problem of racism is itself mercurial and shape-shifting, as one might expect given its historically enduring and deeply embedded interweaving with changing political, economic, and symbolic structures. In the last seventy years or so, racism has become more complex as it has loosened but by no means shed its previous moorings in a discourse of biology, while retaining the language of culture and morality that was always part of its repertoire. This language facilitates the denial and minimization of racism, even as racism simultaneously takes on ever more divisive, judgmental, and exclusionary dimensions, buttressing racialized hierarchies of privilege and disadvantage.

In this landscape, what is an effective challenge to racism? What are good ways to organize for progressive social change toward greater racial equality? Should we support reformist policies and institutional initiatives, even though they are open to accusations of tokenism and co-optation? Should we adopt a radical viewpoint that insists on the need to challenge the historically accumulated, structural, and racialized inequalities of society as a whole, rather than simply integrating marginalized populations

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into an existing democratic and capitalist order that is in principle, or could become, equitable and just? If we take this radical stance, do we run the risk of setting the bar too high, of judging every initiative as falling short in the end, of always saying "Yes, *but . . .*"? As researchers, how do we deal with the ethical dilemmas of critiquing initiatives organized by people whose basic aims we support?

These questions prompted us to begin—or, rather, continue in a different way—an inquiry into a range of organizations that work against racism in Latin America and into their strategies for carrying forward such work. We were also interested in how these organizations deal with the fact that the societies in which they operate are often seen as "mestizo" (roughly speaking, "mixed-race"). This is important, because the history of Latin American societies gives good reason to think that the denial and minimization of racism—and the characterization of those who highlight racism as themselves morally deficient and counterproductive—are particularly well developed in the region by virtue of nation-building discourses that refer to mestizo origins and mestizo futures, discourses that may acknowledge racism in one breath while minimizing it in the next. This suggests that anti-racism in the region might be shaped by the absent presence of racism itself (Wade 2010a).

In the LAPORA project (Latin American Anti-Racism in a "Post-Racial" Age), our inquiry involved working with organizations in Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, and Mexico that operated in diverse ways. Some were predominantly Black or Indigenous grassroots social movements; others were NGOs run by Black, Indigenous, mestizo, and/or white people; others were instances of the state. Sometimes our inquiry focused on individual people, whose battles against racialized injustice were often supported by NGOs or state agencies. We encountered great variety in two respects. First, when the organization or the individual identified a problem and labeled it plainly as "racism" or quite often as "racial discrimination," there were many different strategies for challenging the problem. Second, there were many organizations that did not identify the key issue as "racism" and instead centered their attention on achieving something else—justice, land rights, safety (or simply the right to life), autonomy—while the organizations were driven primarily by Indigenous or Black activists. These were people who were cautious about putting racism front and center of their stage, sometimes because of Marxist leanings toward class solidarity but also because such a stance can be difficult and even painful in a mestizo society, in which questions of racism have traditionally been downplayed both by perpetrators and by victims (who may in some cases be the same person). But they were also people who recognized at some level that racism was undeniably part of the problem, or at least that their being seen as Black

or Indigenous people (or even just proximate to these social positions) was related to the lack of justice, land rights, safety, "good life," and so on that affected them and others who shared their downtrodden condition.

At one point we focused on whether the organizations were explicit in naming racism as the problem, why they did or did not name it, what they understood by the term, and what difference it made to name it or not. For example, we found that some Indigenous organizations could be cautious in using the language of racism—they said "race" was an outmoded concept, or that racism was a skin-color issue more relevant to Black people, particularly as some Indigenous people were physically not that dissimilar from the mestizo or white people confronting them. The focus on naming initially made sense, because it seemed intuitively correct that a truly progressive anti-racism should at least explicitly name racism and place it center stage. This intuition was reinforced in the Latin American case because the minimization of racism—which we are familiar with worldwide today as a discourse of post-raciality (Da Costa 2016; Lentin 2014)—has very deep historical roots in the region. So calling it by its name seemed an important and progressive move. These hunches are not altogether out of place: naming racism has something to be said for it.

In the end, however, we found this analytic focus too narrow. The underlying assumption that explicitly naming racism was per se a positive strategy turned out to be weak because, of course, certain actors (e.g., state policy makers) might name racism explicitly but then only propose superficial or even mere token measures to address it. We are also aware of the trap of thinking that naming was equivalent to doing—how naming racism can also become the anti-racist action in itself, which requires nothing else (Ahmed 2012). On the other hand, we were missing the intuitively less obvious but progressive anti-racist effects of movements that did not place racism at the center of their concerns. In particular, we had been insistent from the start that we wanted to embrace Black and Indigenous actions and organizations, even if racism could be found more easily or more explicitly at the center of Black agendas. So we moved toward a wider focus that looked at the diversity of strategies for progressive social change and their anti-racist effects, whether or not racism was central to the organization's agenda and named as such. In this sense, the division between the two kinds of diversity noted above (a variety of ways of combatting explicitly named racism and a variety of struggles of other kinds) dissolves into a single kind of diversity—various strategies for pursuing progressive social change that have anti-racist effects.

The research team therefore arrived at the concept of "alternative grammars of anti-racism" so as to capture the actions and discourses in which racial inequality and racism were not explicit or central, although not entirely

absent, but which nevertheless had what we considered to be anti-racist effects in that they challenged the racialized distribution of power and value, material and symbolic. The word "grammar" already carries the implication of something that organizes practices, which is unspoken and underlying, yet partly subject to verbalization (e.g., in terms of what "sounds right" or in terms of well-known rules of thumb). An alternative grammar of anti-racism is, then, an organizational matrix referring to elements that, when verbalized or excavated, do not seem to talk about anti-racism or even perhaps racism. Our contention is not that racism is necessarily absent as a referent but, rather, that it does not form the key organizing frame or grammar for the discourse and practice of the movement, organization, struggle, or action in question, the element against which the whole enterprise is defined. For example, we were struck by the presence of a "racially aware class consciousness," in which people's sense of suffering injustice and inequality was basically shaped by perceptions of the distribution of wealth, power, and privilege but was also infused with an underlying sense that their racialized condition had something to do with it.

This is a function of the way in which racial and class inequalities intersect in Latin America: the frequent congruence of these two dimensions means that references to class—e.g., an idiom such as *los de abajo* (those from below)—would more or less automatically invoke the figure of racial difference, as a presence sometimes ghostly, sometimes visceral. Another, more familiar, example of intersectionality involves racism and gender, in the sense that racism and anti-racism necessarily operate in a gendered fashion, whether this is made explicit by the people involved or not. This means that, in a racially unequal society, struggles that mobilize idioms of gender, such as manhood or motherhood (e.g., campaigns by mothers of victims of police brutality), will very often be complicated by a racialized dimension, either explicit or not. Opening ourselves to alternative grammars of anti-racism obviously implicates explicit grammars of anti-racism. The cases we studied cover both possibilities, and their diverse affordances and limitations enrich and complicate what can be understood and mobilized as anti-racist or not.

The difference between radical and reformist approaches in judging anti-racism is complicated by the Latin American material, which shows us that radical anti-racism can also be present in actions that are not directly about racism in the first place. The counterpart to this—that actions that explicitly name racism can still be highly reformist, tokenistic, and co-optative—is well known and an axe that has been frequently ground by academics and activists alike. Less obvious are the radically anti-racist effects of the actions that do not place racism center stage. The diversity of Latin American anti-racism, which includes many movements for progressive social change that

have significant racialized dimensions, develops in new and important ways the existing acknowledgments of the heterogeneity of anti-racism (Bonnett 2000; Lentin 2004).

That the idea of race and racism can come both into and out of focus, constituting an absent presence (Wade 2010a), has been noted for other contexts, such as Europe (M'charek, Schramm, and Skinner 2014a), usually in the context of remarking on the submerging (especially after the Second World War) of biological discourses of race and dominance of a language of culture and ethnicity. In France, for example, race-conscious policies and even the use of the word *race* in legislation and policy are forbidden. Yet racism as a problem to be addressed often has some public legitimacy, even if there is also a powerful discourse of post-raciality undermining that legitimacy by arguing that to highlight racism is counterproductive and antipatriotic.

In Latin America, the absent presence of race and racism is more deeply constitutive of racial orders (Wade et al. 2014), because of their mestizo character—understood not just as an elite ideology but as one that pervades society, albeit sometimes in a contested and refracted fashion (Moreno Figueroa 2011; Moreno Figueroa and Saldívar 2016; Wade 2005). The fact that racism is constantly present and deeply embedded, while very often being veiled, unacknowledged, misrecognized, minimized, or with its significance delegitimated, means that anti-racism in the region can take profoundly heterogeneous forms. We need a broad, open-minded, and inclusive approach to grasp the full diversity of how anti-racism can operate—and, if this is true for Latin America, it is also true for other regions where the language of race is submerged and the importance of racism is minimized and where alternative grammars of anti-racism also exist.

Being inclusive and open-minded, and complicating the radical-reformist opposition, is not the same as throwing critical judgment to the winds and abandoning a radical stance. We argue that a radical structural and racialized frame should act as a kind of political horizon against which anti-racist actions can be seen and evaluated. This frame is informed by a range of theoretical approaches (discussed below in more detail), including those developed by decolonial theorists, radical Black thinkers, and critical race theorists. This is an eclectic array of theories, but a common thread running through is the idea that racial difference and racism—and gender difference and sexism—are *constitutive* of "modernity" (meaning capitalism, from its earliest forms, and liberal forms of governance) and of "the West" as a spatiotemporal construct. That is, racism and racialized inequality are not simply historical contingencies that can be corrected by perfecting the operations of capitalism and liberalism. Racism and racial hierarchy have been necessary to the historical development of these systems and are

thus so deeply embedded that radical structural change is needed to address the problems.

In this sense, not all anti-racist actions, including ones using alternative grammars of anti-racism, have the same potential. Some actions might name racism explicitly but propose measures that do not tackle structural inequality and may fall into the realm of tokenism. These actions could be strengthened by a greater engagement with the deeply structural character of the racism they are seeking to address. This, however, does not mean they should necessarily be dismissed, as simply calling the problem by its name can be a useful contribution, especially in some Latin American contexts. Other actions might address structural inequality but name racism only in passing, instead of placing it center stage, even if such actions may produce anti-racist effects and, indeed, may involve a background awareness that racism is somehow part of the problem. These actions could be strengthened by greater engagement with the deeply racialized character of the structural inequalities they are seeking to address. Again, this does not mean these actions should be dismissed as inadequate, because pointing out the deeply rooted structural dimensions of inequality can be a useful contribution.

Our approach is to err on the side of inclusiveness, to see the positive in each of the diverse anti-racist strategies to which people dedicate much of their time and energy. We look at many strategies and assess their strengths and weaknesses, always with a willingness to appreciate the diverse ways in which helpful contributions can be made—for example, toward making visible the presence and significance of Black and Indigenous minorities, calling out racism (perhaps via the judicial system), encouraging the transformation of individual and collective self-esteem, challenging or changing racialized inequalities, or campaigning for land rights, better services, or safer lives. But we also use a radical, structural, and racialized frame as a horizon, which should function as a way to help strengthen actions rather than simply critique or even dismiss them.

RACISM AND ANTI-RACISM

Racism

In our view, the concept of racism should combine a recognition of two elements (Wade 2015, ch 1). First, its historical origins in European processes of reconquest and re-Christianizing within Europe (expelling Muslims and Jews from the Iberian peninsula, or forcing their conversion, and discriminating against people with Muslim and Jewish *raza* or ancestry), followed by processes of European conquest and colonization of other regions. This not only underpinned the development of Western "modernity"

in the broadest sense, it also prompted the emergence of a relational matrix of specific categories of persons, in particular color coded as white, black, brown, yellow but also geographically coded as European, African, "Indian," and Asian, from which emerged a proliferating set of derivative labels. These categories corresponded to the consolidation and hierarchization of a relational complex of existing spatial categories (Europe, Africa, America, Asia), revealing the deeply rooted spatial dimensions of racialized thinking.

The second element in our definition of racism is its characteristic natural-cultural discourse that links bodies, behavior, and biocultural heredity in a self-explanatory circle (Wade 2002). In this circular thinking, certain behaviors, qualities, or dispositions are seen as linked to certain bodily features associated with the categories of persons noted above. These aspects are typically skin color, hair type, and facial features, but they may also include hair styles, body odors, beards, body movements, adornments, and even clothing, which blurs the boundary between "body" and "behavior" (M'charek, Schramm, and Skinner 2014b; Wade 2002; Weismantel 2001). The link is thought of as transgenerational and therefore as durable—but not rigidly fixed—because it is inherited via "blood," biology, genes, and cultural tradition, all of which may be understood as adaptations to an original environment and climate. This circular argument may also propose that it is "human nature" to prefer people whose bodies, biology, and traditions are like one's own (Stolcke 1995).

The first component of this definition reveals that racism's raison d'être is to distribute power, resources, and privilege unequally, and often with violence and violation, between the social groups originally defined in this history of colonialism, privileging some lives and bodies as more worthy and valuable than others. The second component reveals the grammar of naturalization with which it creates and maintains this unequal distribution. This is a grammar that uses a syntax as much affective as logical and, crucially, as much cultural as biological.

The usefulness of this definition lies (1) in its historical specificity (not *all* naturalizing thinking that links bodies, behavior, and heredity is linked to racism; racism is tied to the particular history of European colonialism) and (2) in its biocultural inclusiveness within that historical trajectory. Racism does not necessarily have to invoke the existence of "races" or refer to "biology" in order to work; it may, for example, refer to *indio* as a category defined more in terms of culture than biology (without biology therefore being irrelevant). But the fact that this definition refers to the colonial category indio and locates it implicitly in relation to other categories such as mestizo or *blanco* (all seen as durable assemblages of bodies and behaviors) marks it as an element in a discourse of racism. Theorists have remarked on the emergence in the last few decades of "cultural racism" (Taguieff 1990),

"racism without racists" (Bonilla-Silva 2003), or "raceless racism" (Goldberg 2008), in which the language of biology becomes taboo, at least in public discourse. But in these formulations it is sometimes hard to see why this qualifies as racism at all. The answer—implied in the argument that indio is indeed a racialized category—is that this kind of "cultural" racism targets the same categories as previous forms of racism, the categories that are linked to a long colonial and postcolonial history of domination by Europeans and their descendants.

A further corollary to our definition is that concepts of "race" derive from racism, not vice versa. It does not make sense to posit a neutral mode of classification, called "racial," which may or may not be deployed in a "racist" way (contra, for example, Goldberg 2008, 4). Racism emerged as an ideology for the domination and exclusion of certain categories of people and, at certain times and in certain places, the word "race" (or *raza*, *race*, *razza*, *raça*, etc.) has been applied to these categories, whether to refer to a line of ancestry or "blood," a supposed underlying biological type, a statistically defined gene pool, or a collective group attributed with shared biocultural features. The meanings of the term have changed over time and have been, and still are, different according to region (Banton 1987; Hartigan 2013b; Wade 2015, chs. 3 and 4). At other times, the word "race" has not been used in relation to these categories, or not consistently. For example, in the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Anglophone world, the word was not common in literate circles. After the Second World War, it has also become awkward or even taboo in some places (e.g., much of northwestern Europe). Thus "race," when used as an analytic shorthand, is an umbrella category referring to a heterogeneous complex of shifting processes and relationships, in which the word "race" may or may not appear. In this book, we use the term and its derivatives—"racial," "racialized"—to refer to processes linked to *racism*, as defined above.

Direct and Structural Racism

The next point of conceptual clarification relates to how we understand the operation of racism. Which acts, mechanisms, and processes count as "racist" in the sense of operating to distribute power, resources, and privilege unequally among the social groups originally defined in the history of European colonialism, using ideas that link bodies, behavior, and biocultural heredity in a self-explanatory circle? It is useful here to adopt a conventional distinction between direct and structural racism. The term "direct racism" refers to acts of stigmatization, in which people demean and violate the worth of others (with insults, jokes, assaults, threats, negative stereotyping, negligence, etc.) and acts of discrimination in which people deny others access to valued resources (employment, land, services, housing, etc.). This

may require a certain level of conscious intention, but it may not. Many acts of stigmatization and discrimination, for example, can be driven by taken-for-granted, barely conscious assumptions about people in the social groups concerned, assumptions that fit into a whole worldview and value system. Racism awareness training seeks to make some of these assumptions visible and demonstrate their negative consequences. Most anti-racist legislation is aimed at direct racism and focuses on specific acts carried out by identifiable actors, whether the focus is on stigmatization (as in Ecuadorian legislation on "hate crime" and in French laws about "hate speech") or on discrimination as exclusion (as in much Colombian, Brazilian, Mexican, UK, and US anti-discrimination legislation).

Structural racism (sometimes known as "institutional racism") is a more complex phenomenon. The term refers to "the operation of established and respected forces in the society" (Carmichael and Hamilton 1967, 4), the effect of which is, for example, that Black or Indigenous people suffer higher rates of child mortality because of poverty, poor living conditions, and lack of access to health care. Structural racism refers to a diverse set of processes and forces that work to disadvantage a racialized category, processes that work through concrete organizations but also through social structures that extend beyond the bounds of particular institutions, understood as concrete organizations. This is why we refer to structural rather than institutional racism.[1] A historical perspective is vital here in order to grasp processes that were in the past overtly racialized (e.g., enslavement, colonial practices of violent dispossession, land expropriation, labor exploitation, policies and practices of racial segregation) and that established deeply rooted material-semiotic patterns of inequality. These patterns may persist because of the operation of policies and practices that no longer appear overtly racialized but that still work to maintain racial inequality.

Two related issues arise here. One is the "conceptual inflation" of the concept of racism to encompass various processes that are not apparently about "race" (Miles 1989, 50–61). The other is the question of individual agency and intentionality. For example, Black people in many Latin American contexts tend to be overrepresented in some occupations (say, domestic service) or industrial sectors (say, construction), and it may be that these occupations and sectors are negatively affected by broad economic processes such as a decline in the demand by the middle classes for domestic servants because of shrinking middle-class incomes or a global recession causing cutbacks in the construction industry. These are all structural processes that do not seem to be shaped by racialized factors. Also, the intentions of individual actors may not be clearly racist. A middle-class family may not be able to afford a maid anymore; the owner of a construction business may have to lay people off.

To avoid conceptual inflation, it is necessary to remain open-minded about what to include as a mechanism of structural racism but also to insist on precision—that is, to trace in detail how the structures in question lead to specific acts that, collectively and perhaps as an unforeseen consequence, lead to disadvantage (or privilege) for a given racialized category of people, and to trace if and how racialized ideas and concepts fit in with these processes. For example, the fact that Black and Indigenous women are overrepresented in domestic service in many Latin American contexts today is clearly linked to a history of disadvantage that has roots in colonialism, slavery, and post-abolition processes of gendered racial discrimination. It can also be linked to persistent stereotypes that associate Black and Indigenous women with domestic service and other low-status occupations and that restrict their access to other economic opportunities. The same line of argument applies to Black and Indigenous men in the construction sector. So, when middle-class incomes fall and domestic service work becomes more scarce, the effects on Black and Indigenous female employment are certainly linked to long-term racialized processes of political economy. Even if the intentions of the middle-class families are not racially motivated when they fire their Black or Indigenous maids, their worldviews will still be shaped by the racialized hierarchies of the societies where they live, in which Blackness and Indigeneity almost always connote low status and in which it is "normal" for many Black and Indigenous women to be maids and many maids to be Black or Indigenous women.

Rather than seeing structural racism as separate from direct racism, we should think in terms of a continuum that stretches from overtly racist acts, through acts driven by unexamined racialized assumptions rooted in the value system of society, to structural mechanisms in which the racialized dimensions need careful and often historical excavation. The actions of individuals are linked to structural patterns in a complex and changing interplay of mutual constitution: structural patterns and cultural norms can only exist through the actions of the individual, but they also form the collective context that shapes the individual. People who intend only to "do the best for the family" in terms of making a living, educating children, seeking security, and so on will tend to reproduce the unequal structures of the society that shape their opportunities and their ideas about what "a safe neighborhood" or "a good school" looks like. In this sense, although direct racism will clearly reproduce racialized inequality, other actions that are less explicitly racist or even apparently non-racialized will also tend to reproduce existing racialized inequality, unless those actions are consciously aimed at challenging such inequality. Such challenges may themselves be more and less explicit about the racialized dimensions of the action.

Anti-racism

So what do we think anti-racism consists of? Anti-racism can challenge direct racism and individual acts of stigmatization and discrimination. For example, it may consist of explicitly calling out racism and trying to shame its perpetrators; it may involve creating legislation that outlaws acts of direct racism and that prosecutes such acts; it may consist of racism awareness training or education, including the visibilization of Black and Indigenous peoples and the recognition of their presence and social contribution; it may involve building knowledge and self-esteem for racialized groups; it may consist of challenging racialized stereotypes and trying to provide alternative images of the subaltern group and the whole society.

All these actions tend to be directed at individuals, ideas, and specific acts identified as racist in the sense of being driven by prejudiced and ignorant attitudes. In that sense, such actions are not well suited to addressing structural racism. Critical views contend that attempts to enhance self-esteem and change the image of the nation by bolstering subaltern cultural identities are divisive and may be superficial. Such recognition and identity politics in the multiculturalist mold may, it is said, fit neatly into the political mainstream, provide mechanisms for neoliberal governance through co-optation and bureaucratization, and feed the commodification of "ethnic" culture (Andrews 2018; Bonnett 2000; Comaroff and Comaroff 2009; Gilroy 1990; Hale 2005; Lentin 2004). Indeed, this perspective might say that such actions are worse than nothing, because they can give the impression that something is being done when, at best, mere tokenism is at work and, at worst, mechanisms for dominance are being strengthened.

Already, however, we can see some structural elements at work. Multiculturalism may in some scenarios be reduced to simple co-optation and appeasement, but in others it "opens up sociocultural arrangements to a more diverse set of habits" (Goldberg 2008, 17; see also Wade 2011). Challenging racialized stereotypes means contesting a whole symbolic structure—a Eurocentric aesthetic of beauty, for example (Moreno Figueroa 2013; Tate 2009)—that is itself rooted in material structures of inequality and difference. Going further, providing alternative images and role models (university-educated or middle-class Black and Indigenous people, etc.) means changing, at least to some extent, patterns of the distribution of wealth and value. Recognition and redistribution, or culture and political economy, are not only both necessary components of progressive social change but are also inherently linked together (Fraser and Honneth 2003; Wade 1999; Young 1990). In this sense, some of these actions are useful and significantly better than nothing. The point is that they open a field

on which their meanings and effects are the object of a struggle rather than fixed in advance.

Nonetheless, the idea that anti-racism could address racism's structural dimensions in a more radical way is a powerful one. What we are calling a radical approach has roots in varied theoretical currents. First, there is a long and varied tradition of radical Black thought, which some trace back to Black US and Caribbean abolitionists and to key figures such as W. E. B. Du Bois, Cedric Robinson, C. L. R. James, Stokeley Carmichael, Angela Davis, Stuart Hall, and Paul Gilroy, many of whom combine threads from a Marxist analysis of capitalism with an understanding of the centrality of racial difference—especially Black-white difference—to its historical constitution (Andrews 2018; Kelley 2002; Makalani 2011; Robinson 1983).

Sometimes seen as divergent from these Marxist-inflected approaches, because of their supposed lingering economic reductionism, and as more allied to Foucault, are perspectives linked to decolonial theorists such as Walter Mignolo, Aníbal Quijano, Catherine Walsh, Rita Segato, and Silvia Rivera Cusicanqui, plus Indigenous critics of settler colonialism such as Glen Coulthard and Audra Simpson, and to critical race theorists such as Derrick Bell, Patricia Williams, and David T. Goldberg. Decolonial theory places racism at the center of global relations between North and South, or between Europe and the rest, beginning in the sixteenth century. Racism is one of the "three pillars of the colonial matrix of power," alongside sexism and the naturalization of life (Mignolo and Walsh 2018, 10); "only race refers to the horizon that we inhabit, marked by the foundational event of the Conquest" (Segato 2015, 18). A different but parallel current of decolonial theory comes from Indigenous and other scholars, particularly in the United States and Canada, who see racism, and especially anti-Indigenous racism, as central to the European "settler colonialism," which they analyze as having displaced native peoples from their lands, enslaved them and others in the quest to control labor, and colonized their psyches (Coulthard 2014; Simpson 2014; Wolfe 2016). For many of these scholars, Frantz Fanon is a central inspiration, as someone who can draw together political and psychological perspectives, and this is true also of Afro-pessimists such as Frank Wilderson and Hortense Spillers. From an Afro-pessimistic perspective, "the conceptual framework of racism" should be pushed toward "an apprehension of the world-historical transformation entailed in the emergence of racial slavery" (Sexton 2016, 6), which means that anti-Blackness holds together "the structure of the entire world's semantic field" (Wilderson 2010, 58). Critical race theory likewise sees racism as deeply engrained because of its constitutive function in forming Eurocentric modernity and distributing privilege within the social order (Delgado and Stefancic 2012; Goldberg 1993, 2008).

These admittedly very diverse theoretical perspectives have in common

the perception that racism is woven into the basic structures of liberal capitalist societies, where it also intertwines with sexism, heterosexism, and in some views, the continuing coloniality of power. What does anti-racism look like from such a perspective? Unsurprisingly, there is some diversity of approach, with actions ranging from strategies for the redistribution of power and value in order to correct racialized inequalities within existing structures of capitalism and governance (e.g., using affirmative action policies); to structural changes based on tension between "a radical critique of the law" and "a radical emancipation by the law," the latter of which assumes the possibility of separating legal institutions from their racist roots (Bell 1995, 899); to an insistence that what we need is nothing less than a radical transformation of the entire edifice of Western modernity, seen as inherently racist, sexist, heterosexist, colonialist, and classist. Some of these radical currents tend to focus more on anti-Black than anti-Indigenous racism.

Our view is that these radical approaches, which focus in varied ways on structural racism, are a necessary frame with which to understand the operation of racism and thus inform anti-racist actions. But we need to avoid a situation in which some anti-racist actions are counted out because they are deemed "not radical enough," when they may be able to make a useful contribution. Our work in Latin America impressed upon us the importance—not only for Latin America but more widely too—of appreciating the diversity of anti-racist actions, including ones that remained firmly within, and indeed actively reproduced, the structures of capitalism and liberal governance and ones that did not put racism at the center of their agendas, using instead an alternative grammar of anti-racism. These all have a contribution to make. Their contributions could, however, be strengthened by suggesting elements that derive from a radical, racialized perspective. Radical elements could help when a strategy aims principally at individual acts, motives, and attitudes—for example, it might help to highlight how these acts reproduce (or could change) structural patterns. Elements of a racially aware understanding could help when structural processes are addressed in an overly color-blind fashion or when direct racism is relativized and thus made less visible, by including it alongside multiple other forms of discrimination on the basis of gender, sexual orientation, disability, age, and so on. Among others, Bolivia's Law Against Racism and Ecuador's Constitution take very all-encompassing approaches, as does the UK Equality Act and, to a lesser extent, the US Civil Rights Act (Lentin 2011).

THE TURN TOWARD ANTI-RACISM

Ideas about *mestizaje* or *mestiçagem* ("race" mixture) have figured in the nation-building trajectories of Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, and Mexico and

set the context for our discussion of racism and anti-racism. Traditionally in Latin America, powerful narratives of nation-building that describe societies as fundamentally mestizo have hampered the acknowledgment of racism and made those who signal its presence subject to being minimized, morally delegitimated, or themselves accused of racism. A discourse in which mixture was cast as being fundamentally antithetical to racism allowed a temporal frame in which any racism that was acknowledged could always be seen as a problem in the process of being solved (Da Costa 2014, 27).

However, there has been an interesting shift of public attention toward racism, which is changing the landscape for anti-racist work. If unevenly, the issue of racism is more firmly on the table. From about 1990, most countries in Latin America went through some variant of an official "multicultural turn," which opened spaces for talking about and recognizing cultural diversity and gave varied rights to Indigenous and, to a lesser extent, Black minorities (Anderson 2009; Hooker 2009; Paschel 2016; Postero 2007; Rahier 2012; Van Cott 2000; Wade 2010b). Questions of racism and racial inequality, however, received less attention—except in Brazil. Members of Indigenous organizations preferred to talk in terms of ethnic rights to land, bilingual education, and political and legal autonomy, rather than racism. Black groups, which in the 1970s and 1980s had been insistent on the impact of racism, now turned much of their attention to land, autonomy, and cultural recognition, giving less attention to urban Black people competing in job, education, and housing markets who were not the subjects of political reform—except, again, in Brazil, where urban contexts had long been the mainstay of concepts of Blackness (Sansone 2003). From about 2010, however, issues of racism have been coming to the fore outside Brazil (albeit still unevenly across the region's countries), and they are beginning to form part of state discourse and policy and becoming more established among NGOs, social movements, and activists.

This increased attention to racism can be understood as a reaction to three elements. First, it responds to the perceived inadequacies of state multiculturalism, seen to be often superficial and tokenistic and too easily co-opted into other state agendas of development and governance (Hale 2002; Rahier 2012). Second, it is a response to the political backlash that is now occurring (e.g., in Brazil and Colombia) after the not insignificant gains that Indigenous and Black minorities have achieved under multiculturalist regimes, sometimes by pushing them beyond the limits preferred by the state (Hooker 2020). Third, it is a protest at the ongoing intensity of neoliberal enterprise, which is exacerbating social but also racial inequalities through land grabs, extractivist economies based on the intensive exploitation of natural resources, oppressive labor relations, and unequal

exchange in areas populated by Black and Indigenous minorities (Escobar 2008; Hale, Calla, and Mullings 2017; Hooker 2020; Hooker and Tillery 2016; Martínez Novo and Shlossberg 2018). Racialized violence is a worrying feature of this trend, leading some activists we worked with to talk of anti-Black and anti-Indigenous genocide in ways that resonate with recent US activism and decolonial and Afro-pessimistic scholarship (Grosfoguel 2013; Mora 2017; Vargas 2018; Wilderson 2010).

At the same time, Latin American states are alert to the need to adapt their policies to the growing talk of racism, although any measures proposed are generally underpinned by an understanding of racism as direct stigmatization and discrimination rather than as a set of structural processes. In Brazil, this occurred early on when President Cardoso publicly acknowledged racial inequality in 1995 (Cardoso 1995), ushering in race-based affirmative action (Htun 2004). In Colombia, the state has supported campaigns with names such as the Campaña Nacional Contra el Racismo (2009) and Hora Contra el Racismo (2016). And in his inaugural speech to the Mexican public on December 1, 2018, President Andrés Manuel López Obrador explicitly referred to racism in the first of his new government's one hundred commitments.[2] Several countries have passed legislation outlawing racism. In Ecuador, for example, constitutional reform in 2008 and the Plan Plurinacional para Eliminar la Discriminación Racial y la Exclusión Étnica y Cultural (2009–2012) served as a framework for anti-racism laws and affirmative action policies for the employment of Indigenous and Black people within state institutions. There has been an increase of specialized institutions dealing with issues of racial discrimination, such as the establishment in Mexico in 2003 of the Consejo Nacional para Prevenir la Discriminación (CONAPRED). States have also made moves to comply with the UN initiatives such as the International Year of People of African Descent (2011) and the International Decade for People of African Descendent (2015–2024). For example, Colombia's Ministry of Culture declared May to be African Heritage Month (Resolution 0740 of 2011).

In this book we enter the debate at a key moment, when racism is on the table in new ways as a concept to be debated in the Latin American public sphere. We welcome the greater public recognition of racism as a problem but argue that it not just a question of being more explicit about racism. On the one hand, explicit talk about racism can nevertheless present it as a superficial issue and dismiss it by treating it as a fad. On the other hand, organizations that are not explicit about racism can use alternative grammars that are anti-racist in effect. In this book we develop the idea that there are diverse understandings of what social transformation should look like and what role an awareness of racism should play in that transformation.