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The integrationist approach that formerly characterized the social and cultural policies of many Latin American governments has been displaced in recent years. The new principle, variously interpreted by different states, is that the cultures and institutions of the diverse 'indigenous peoples' who constitute the nation should be respected, taken into account, and 'activated' to participate in national debates and decisions (Sieder 2002; Hoffmann & Rodríguez 2007). This view of 'indigenous peoples'—widely debated concerning its essentialist or pragmatic aspect (Béteille 1998; Carey 2007; Childs & Delgado 1999; Field 1994; Kenrick & Lewis 2004; Kuper 2003)—refers to the descendants of social groups that existed before the European colonial conquest and the creation of the state in which those descendants now live. Besides prior occupancy of the national territory, the definition of 'indigenous' also implies, according to the United Nations, a voluntary perpetuation of cultural distinctiveness, self-identification as a distinct group recognized by the state, and a past or current experience of subjugation, marginalization, dispossession, exclusion, or discrimination (Kenrick and Lewis 2004: 5). Furthermore, in Latin America, these experiences—which current multicultural policies are supposed to

remedy—have since the Conquest affected also other groups in colonial history identified by traits perceived as 'different,' such as the descendants of black African slaves. Nevertheless, this recognition of difference involves a normative usage of the relevant social categories, notably those describing 'Indian' and 'black' groups, based on supposedly 'cultural' criteria, but which range from language use to skin color and include specific social and cultural institutions (kinship, oral tradition, law), while other sectors of the population remain 'ethnically neutral' (Alexander 2006: 156).

These categorizations are perceived in different ways depending on locus (Canessa 2008), thus creating, between the institutional center and the community out in the field, 'indigenous spaces' (Hathaway 2010) where specific social universes emerge out of a vast range of interpretations and implementations of these identity-related and identity-creating concepts and categories. Yet the sociocultural identities lived daily by the groups in question do not necessarily match those attributed to them by institutions (Chakrabarty 2002: 88, cited by Alexander 2006: 160). As Omura (2003) points out, only the daily practices of the groups classified as 'indigenous' can show us which social categorizations are relevant for the individuals they describe. How, then, can we capture their daily reality without naturalizing the categories created 'from the outside'? What sort of categorization emerges from praxis, and what does it teach us?

The first part of this paper explains how the historical and political contexts interfere in the analytical approaches. Next we examine four groups in Colombia and in Mexico, identified as 'Indians' or 'blacks,' by their neighbors and/or

institutions; we analyze local narrations that they use to situate themselves in the national societies to which they belong. The third part of the article explores possible, non-exclusive ways in which the different kinds of 'otherness' arising out of these narrations might be categorized. This comparative approach will shed some light on what drives the similarities and differences between groups. In this way, the internal social ideologies underlying the categorizations applied in each case become more evident.

Analyzing the Institutional Categorizations of Subaltern Populations

Despite the extensive ethnic intermixing that characterizes most Latin American countries, contrasting positions persist and are transmitted from generation to generation through the national histories of social and cultural diversity and the commemorative systems instituted by the state—systems that include official and school-taught history, specialized institutions, specific legislation, memorial ceremonies, etc. The 'Indian,' who as a descendant of pre-Hispanic civilizations occupies a historic and generic place in the nation, has greater prestige than the 'black,' whose place, as the descendant of slaves, is denied and nearly non-existent. Regardless, these two population categories are socially considered of lower status than, and basically subordinated to a third one, namely that of the 'mestizo' (Mexico) or the 'white' or the 'criollo' (Colombia), which are all associated with the image of Western culture and the idea of progress.

In order to grasp the contemporary logic of these categories, their possible inadequacies, their effects, and their issues, many researchers have undertaken to

analyze them not only in terms of their historical context, but also in their discursive relations with the state, with capital (the market, the economic elites), and with the whole constellation of actors in the local, national, and international spheres, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), etc. (Alexander 2006; Canessa 2008; Dupuy 2008; Gros & Strigler 2006; Obarrio 2010). Yet these analyses often return to the binary opposition of state versus Indians—or some other minority—just like the simplistic classifications that reduce indigenous peoples to representatives of the impoverished class.

In fact, however, the issue is much more complex. As an example, the dialectical borrowings between self-designation and legal-administrative terms do not derive solely from the Machiavellian machinations of the state or from purely self-serving motives on the part of the groups in question. Our concern, then, is with the debate over the categories of indigeneity in the broad sense of the term—that is, we would like to move beyond the official categorizations of subaltern sectors that have passed from invisibility to statutory visibility, and include those categories that are created by these sectors themselves. Our study seeks to analyze the social representations used out in the field, outside the context of a public assertion of difference—in other words, within the groups themselves, where categories preconceived elsewhere are not mentioned and where no one boasts of association with any specific 'culture' (Briones 2005). These are groups that have not emerged on the political stage.

Legitimizing Local Narratives

We are interested in rural groups that are 'integrated' in the national collective but relatively marginalized and geographically peripheral, and that do not make political claims based on their 'ethnic' (or racial)[1] identities. That does not mean that their discursive productions do not include reinterpretations and reappropriations of the national discourse—a discourse which is itself far from being homogeneous and disembodied. However, these groups, unlike others (in some cases in the same region), do not rely on a politicized rhetoric of difference.

We studied four groups. On one hand we had two modern-day neighboring Indian groups, Teeneks and Nahuas, in the Huastec region of northeastern Mexico, who do not emphasize their Amerindian culture, even while taking it for granted and living it fully through social and magico-religious practices. We paired them with two groups of Afro-descendants, one in Colombia in the 1980s and the other in current-day Mexico, who, similarly, make no show of their racial appearance, although they fight the discrimination and racism from which they suffer on account of their skin color and their 'distinction' as 'blacks.' Obviously none of these groups is isolated from any identity movements that exist in the region, and in which, in fact, they may often participate (the black mobilization of the 1980s and 1990s in Colombia is one striking example, or the programs of cultural renewal in Mexico).[2] However, at the times and in the places described in this study (2000-2010), political and ideological struggle for recognition of ethnic or racial difference is or was not a significant aspect of the social context, nor expressed by the people themselves. Our study does not compare the 'situations' of these groups, which are extremely diverse and complex, but rather examines a common process and its local variants:

the recourse to commemorative narrative resources based on a cultural language or, to paraphrase Comaroff and Comaroff (1992), the poetics narrative of history, as a basis for the collective identity. To this end, we looked at the founding stories of each community, which may be mythical or historical—myth being understood here as a historical narrative, objective or not, in which a supernatural element is involved to explain the group's present-day situation.

The comparative method involved a specific examination of the role played in these narratives by two criteria of identity mentioned earlier which official discourse brackets together in defining the term 'autochthony' applied to Indian and black populations—that is, the length of time in the country and 'ethnic or racial difference.'

The Black Populations of Mexico and Colombia: Contrasting Settlement Histories
MEXICO:
Although their importance was recognized back in the mid-twentieth century by an important Mexican historian and anthropologist (Aguirre Beltrán 1946 and 1958), the black populations of Mexico have attracted little attention from contemporary researchers. Their near invisibility as a group is obviously largely responsible; for one thing, they have no clearly recognizable phenotype, owing to a long history of frequent ethnic intermixing, so that few individuals match the 'black' stereotype recognized in other countries: Africans, Cuban 'blacks,' and North-American 'blacks.' In addition, they are few in number, since not many individuals identify themselves with a category that has been officially 'abolished' (in censuses, official

documents, public policies) since independence in 1821. The final deathblow was the dominant discourse concerning the melting pot as the foundation of the nation, and hence the favored means of social mobility and integration, to the detriment of other—thereby devalued—identities. Today in Mexico, populations who collectively self-identify as black are a tiny minority concentrated in a few regions—where, however, they do maintain a real presence and a certain social and cultural dynamism (the Pacific coast, certain regions of the state of Veracruz, and smaller enclaves in a number of other regions). Counted individually, they could easily total anywhere from a few thousands to several millions, depending on the criterion used to identify them (phenotype, self-identification, ancestry, cultural practices, etc.). For the purposes of this study, we will focus on the black populations residing in the small area known as the 'Costa Chica' (the 'small coast'), along the Pacific coast between the states of Guerrero and Oaxaca.

The very origin of these populations has been disputed. Certainly one established reference point is the beginning of slavery in the handful of enormous haciendas that extended along the coast, where in most cases slaves were used to aid in cattle raising, but sometimes to work cotton or sugar-cane plantations as well. A few researchers, however, also mention the existence—hitherto undocumented in any archives—of palenques or villages of runaway slaves in that remote area, which was nearly inaccessible until the mid-1900s. Others report nineteenth-century migrations of free 'blacks' supposedly from Veracruz or other parts of Mexico, attracted by very lightly populated regions where land was still available, with or without legal title. Family legends offer almost no additional information. Ancestral

memories do not go back further than three or four generations, but they do highlight an interesting trait common in many Latin-American black societies: the very high residential and matrimonial mobility of not only individuals, but also households and sometimes entire villages.

A third source of collective memory, after scholarly accounts and family chronicles, is a 'mythical' legend pervasive in the villages, according to which a slave ship was wrecked on the coast, permitting the escape of men and women who consequently set foot on the American continent as free people, founding villages that had nothing to do with slavery. This particular legend, sometimes interpreted as a source of identity, dignity, and possible integration without the stigma of slavery (Lewis 2001), is found in nearly all the coastal regions inhabited by the descendants of slaves in America (Colombia, Ecuador—where in fact the event is well documented—Venezuela, Honduras, etc.), as well as in the Caribbean Islands. These commemorative accounts appear to have a great narrative heterogeneity. The events—historical or mythical—are not clearly situated in space and time; the accounts all tend to be standardized in the format of a simple legend, and there appears to be little interest in determining which version might be the true or legitimate one. Depending on the village or the day, the same individual may not tell the same version twice, as though, ultimately, historical veracity is not the issue. The story of their origins, their foundation, is of little value if it evokes social and racial discrimination rather than serving as a foundational element worthy of group 'recycling' and patrimonialization. The cultural record (dance, music, festivals),

certainly very rich (Moedano 1997), also demonstrates the intensity of the ethnic intermixing that has historically characterized the region.

The attitude to the land is also very ambiguous. As long as the population was still very sparse and the legal owners of large landholdings were absentee landlords (before the liberal reforms of the end of the nineteenth century, and especially the Revolution at the beginning of the twentieth century), access to land did not pose a problem: 'everyone took what he needed' to farm, without any property title but with the consent of the landowner, who thereby controlled labor. The elders accept their 'foreignness': 'we are 'newcomers,' we grabbed [the land] wherever there was any' (Somos arribeños—from'arribar,' 'arrive,' not 'arriba,' 'above,' as in other regions—agarramos donde había). After the Revolution (1910-1920), the agrarian reform redistributed the land, legally transferring it to agrarian 'communities' which then began to consolidate around these freshly acquired land rights.

COLOMBIA

The situation is very different in the areas of black population in Colombia, such as the Pacific coast. This population, which has undergone very little intermixing, has had unlimited access to tropical lands not much prized by the Spaniards and their descendants, and also very tenuously linked to the interior of the country. Some of the inhabitants have been building their villages and cultures on these lands for more than two centuries. The villagers, descended from slaves liberated in the mid-nineteenth century but also, primarily, from blacks free since the eighteenth century, have made use of the forest (lumber), the subsoil (gold mines), natural resources (ivory nut), and the rivers (fishing) for the greater benefit of white businessmen

settled in the few towns, but without any daily restrictions on their work habits and their mobility. In these villages, the elders can give a precise account of the migrations that brought them to their current homes, name the 'founders' of family lines and villages, and describe past trials and tribulations and relocations, voluntary or enforced. Their oral tradition is extremely rich, combining ancient Hispanic poetry (sixteenth and seventeenth centuries) long forgotten elsewhere, a record of national popular culture (Velázquez 1959), and expressions clearly African in origin. Their funeral rites (De Granda 1973), kinship system (Friedemann 1974), and musical and linguistic habits (De Granda 1977) all connect back to specific systems, as do the myths of origin and healing rites, which are often inspired by those of the neighboring Indians but are largely reappropriated (Losonzcy 1991). Without falling into exoticism or blind essentialism, we must nevertheless note a complex, coherent originality unique to the Pacific region and the black populations who live there. Here history pops up everywhere, the tools of memory—whether explicit or not— are diversified and consistent with each other, and the group acts fully as an everyday culturally mobilizing force. There is no mention of 'autochthony,' but the ancestors are definitely present and the rites of healing define a group distinct from the neighbors, with shifting borders of identity (Hoffmann 2004; Losonzcy 1997) that are nevertheless recognizable by anyone, whether outsider or insider. That does not imply, however, a unanimous identification as 'blacks' or 'black communities,' which would reduce and to some degree mutilate the complexity of the social and cultural field, but rather a collective consciousness shaped around memory and its tools.

Two Neighboring Indian Populations in Northeastern Mexico

In the township of Tantoyuca, in northeastern Mexico (Huasteca region), two Indian groups, the Teeneks and the Nahuas, live side by side. They belong to two of the numerous ethnic groups enumerated in Mexico by government agencies. However, the two groups put down roots in fundamentally different processes. The Teeneks, who have lived in the region since the second century A.D., have a social and territorial organization that dates back to the end of the nineteenth century, and they bought the lands where they lived and worked during the colonial period through their own efforts. The Nahuas, in contrast, came from the other side of the mountain, fleeing the violence of the Revolution, and settled in the area in the early twentieth century; consequently, their social and territorial organization is more recent, and they gained official access to their lands as a result of a post-Revolutionary (1910-1920) grant after negotiation with the mestizo landholders and the state.

The two groups express these different temporalities of territorial settlement symbolically in distinctive narratives that support their collective history and lay out their relationship to the land. In fact, the Teeneks of Loma Larga, a very strongly marginalized group, tell a creation myth in which the arrival of the sun led their prehuman ancestors to seek refuge underground, making them authochtonous figures and providing justification for Teenek ownership of the land. This myth engendered worship of these prehuman ancestors, the Baatsik'—expressed through certain rituals that safeguard a balanced cohabitation between humans and supernatural beings necessary to ward off illnesses. The myth thus underlies a narrative structure

that explains different misfortunes. In fact, the same narrative framework that explains both the presolar cataclysm that drove the ancestors underground and the diseases to which their descendants fall prey is also applied by the Teeneks to other narratives that explain the Spanish Conquest and the accompanying Christian evangelization, as well as the Mexican Revolution that stripped them of their land—in short, social misfortune in general, including their extreme poverty. It is not a fixation on the past, but rather a narrative resource that organizes the contemporary Teenek world in the form of binary opposites—on one hand, these supernatural forefathers who cause illness, but with whom the Teeneks identify by continuing to pay them homage; and, on the other, the intruders of each era—attributing a unicultural space to each (Ariel de Vidas [2002] 2004). Thus, the Teeneks' myths and practices are a form of interpretation allowing them to understand and legitimize the present by transferring the represented contemporary world to the past. The Teenek myth of origin reflects the depth of this group's territorial roots in the region and a historical consciousness of the metamorphoses undergone since the Spanish Conquest and the Christian evangelization. Thus, for the Teeneks it is a structural transmission, repeatedly updated to reflect new circumstances, of the memory of that encounter in the past with the cultural Other, each new reiteration allowing them to cement their belonging to the place and to justify the group's marginal position.

The Nahuas of La Esperanza, a group that is somewhat better integrated socially and economically in its region, tell a much more recent foundation story than their Teenek neighbors. This story takes place in the mid-twentieth century, when a terrible drought struck the Huastec region and was followed first by an

outbreak of foot-and-mouth disease that ravaged the cattle ranches, and subsequently by a famine that killed many. According to local history, a man from a neighboring community decreed that to bring rain, the ritual of Chicomexochitl should be performed on the top of the mountain near the village. In the Nahuatl language, Chicomexochitl means 'seven flowers'—it is the name of the spirit of the corn that provides sustenance and nourishes the human soul, invoked in the course of a common ritual of the Nahua culture in the Mexican high plains (Sandstrom 1991: 133). The villagers accordingly made offerings to the mountain, consisting in food, dances, and music; and, all at once, ears of corn began to rain down. From then on, each year on their patron saint's day, the villagers would leave offerings at the top of the protecting, nourishing mountain, 'the seat of the rulers of the place,' according to one of the ritual specialists of the village. This experience, recounted by the elders of La Esperanza with great emotion, was an initiation into the desired state of coexistence with the masters of the earth, a coexistence that had previously been ignored by the villagers because they were 'new.' 'We will not forget this custom again. Before, it was abandoned because the elders who knew of it had died.'

Thus, the Nahuas of La Esperanza, a group that, although newly constituted in the area, derives its cultural patrimony from the common core of the Mesoamerican culture, resorted to this foundation myth dating from the mid-twentieth century for an explanation of the modalities of convivial relations with the rulers of the recently appropriated land. Although the La Esperanza villagers are culturally and linguistically part of the majority ethnic group in Mexico, which claims descent from the Aztec civilization, they rarely evoke those remote pre-Hispanic times. The

identity discourse in the village is local and non-ethnic, and the miracle on the mountain is its point of departure. The establishment of La Esperanza's mountain ritual, which came during the same period as the official confirmation of the community's real property rights (1955), seems thus to have served as a symbolic construction of local identity during a moment of crisis.

Through their mythical-historical narratives, the Teeneks and the Nahuas studied here draw upon different time periods that express not only the relative historical depth of their territorial settlement in the region, but also their concept of belonging, which is ultimately not dependant on that historic depth but rather on the establishment of a relationship with the land on which and from which they live.

Beyond Ethnic Displays: The Contribution of Cross-Comparisons

Keeping these ethnographic data in mind, we now want to explore the different perspectives on the position occupied by these 'indigenous peoples' in the larger society, beyond the one in which they live. This exploration will allow us to grasp the complexity, the diversity, and perhaps even the contradictions inherent in the relations maintained between the state, social groups, and individuals at different levels.

The first configuration refers to the state's relationship with 'its' minorities, as explained earlier in this article, with a clear division between groups defined, respectively, as black and Indian. This 'traditional' binary view invites several comments. It reveals a 'normalized' image of the country's composition in terms of 'ethnic groups,' cultural diversity, even multiculturalism (which is not the same

thing), but always based on the idea of a mosaic, of groups that are separate and adjacent. It treats the designation criteria differently: 'racial' and 'regional' for one group, 'ethnic' and 'cultural' for the other, according to two different logics that in fact share a broader ethno-racial outlook (Greene 2007: 332). It is accepted and used by actors who are in some cases antagonists but who all find in it a kind of strategic convergence: States, ethnic activists (all with their own specific agendas), international agencies with programs targeted at the populations involved. In short, this rather simplistic interpretation 'works,' masking historical truths such as, perhaps, the difference in many basic ways between a history of slavery on one hand and a history of colonial domination on the other.

However, this black/Indian cleavage can be completely turned around if, for example, we no longer consider the state's relations with 'its' subaltern groups, primarily in terms of public policies, but rather look at the images conveyed in the popular collective imaginaries—in literature, for instance, or the visual arts (painting, drawing, caricatures, etc.). Indigenous people ('Indians') are present there in the form of either the historical, imperial Indian (in Mexico, Nahuas are the archetype of this, as the presumed direct descendants of the Aztecs), or the poor, marginalized, or contemptible outcast or charity case, depending on the circumstance. Similarly, 'blacks,' where they exist at all, appear in national imaginaries as either a bothersome, 'atypical' enclave, poor, foreign folks whom people would prefer not to see, or—when they can no longer be overlooked, as in Colombia—as a group 'apart,' heirs to a special history worthy of being disseminated in textbooks and taught in schools and universities (Maya 2000).

If we adopt the perspective of the popular imaginaries, we see similarities first between the Costa Chica inhabitants and the Teeneks, in Mexico, who are both groups that have long been unknown or misunderstood, enclaves 'that stick out like a sore thumb,' and 'do not manage to blend in.' Thus, up until the 2000s, the 'blacks' of Costa Chica have not presented an image of otherness that could be integrated into the national story. They are characterized primarily as a minority, a 'special group' apt to be exoticized and naturalized, with no cultural roots other than the mythical slave ship. The Teeneks, for their part, conduct a discourse of autochthony through their myths about their underground ancestors, and, through these myths, maintain a clear distinction between 'us' and 'others' (whites, mestizos). Using self-denigration as a defense against the world around them (Ariel de Vidas [2002] 2004), the Teeneks have erected a cultural 'barrier' of inferiority that has enclosed them in a symbolic enclave—as well as real economic and geographic marginalization.

Another similarity exists between the 'black communities' of the Pacific coast in Colombia and the Nahuas in Mexico, who represent, each in their own way, an image of the 'other,' historicized and recognized as a 'partner' of the national society, at least in discourse. The Colombian 'blacks,' who have long roots in their own lands, have constructed their own collective discourse, nourished by the relative autonomy deriving from nearly two centuries of isolation and demographic strength. They formed a black 'regional society' of their own (Hoffmann 2004), rich in specific cultural practices and narratives. They have not really needed a myth to justify their presence; that presence is undeniable and their 'difference' cannot be

disputed—so much so that in the 1990s, when the new constitution was drafted, it provided the basis for 'official' black otherness in Colombia. In short, they represent an emblematic difference in the nation. In that respect they constitute a special case, as noted by Restrepo (2007) and Ng'weno (2007), since they can be most easily assimilated to the case of 'Indian' groups, unlike so many other Afro-descendants who do not fit into any cultural-ethnic pigeonhole.[3]

Similarly, the Nahuas do not have the same sense of inferiority vis-à-vis the world around them that their Teenek neighbors in the Huastec region do. They know they are numerous, visible, historically 'present,' with or without a founding myth. Their history, which they can find in textbooks, is sufficient to prove their legitimacy. Even unspoken and lacking any cultural elaboration, their relation to the ancient Aztecs is known and accepted. In a way, they are the Mexican Indian, the figure that is honored in the twentieth century by intellectuals and artists as the source of the national identity (Gamio 1982 [1916]; León Portilla 1997 [1956]). In short, viewed from the perspective of a group's position relative to or within the national history, a comparative configuration takes shape, in which the parallels have nothing to do with the ethnic or racial 'nature' of the groups in question, nor with their degree of autochthony as measured by the objective, archivally documented age of their settlements: the black groups of Mexico and Colombia were both established in the eighteenth century or even earlier, yet have very different memory 'systems' or tools. Similarly, the Teeneks and the Nahuas, although both 'Indians' in the same region and both subject for centuries first to Spanish, then mestizo rule, do not carry the same 'baggage' where their memories are concerned.

What seems to matter here is not a static situation, but a dynamic relationship, a relation to the nation: a relationship of recognized, even emblematic, otherness (the black communities of the Pacific in Colombia, the Nahuas of Mexico) in one case, and a denied, or in any case 'forgotten' relationship in the other (Costa Chica, the Teeneks).

The two divisions noted so far (public policy, national history) do not exhaust the possibilities for different positionings, notably because they still involve a state/group opposition, thereby eliminating any chance of understanding from within the emic positions on these subjects. Let us consider a third option, the view that the groups themselves have of their history, their own stories, and those of their neighbors.

To begin with, we should recall that in none of the cases mentioned is the criterion of 'autochthony' locally relevant in the sense given it by the governmental categories ('Indians' versus 'blacks'). On the other hand, it does seem, in the sense elaborated by the local populations themselves, to establish a collective identity on the basis of a subjective attitude towards the group's origin: Are not the Teeneks' Baatsik' witnesses to their autochthony? And the black communities of Colombia are definitely 'at home' in the Pacific, whereas, in the recent history retransmitted by oral tradition, the Nahua groups of La Esperanza and the 'black' communities of Costa Chica in Mexico are 'newcomers' on the lands 'of others.' These narratives, through which 'memory is incorporated into the constitution of identity' (Ricoeur 2000: 103), give rise to a new configuration which analyzes commemorative tools by introducing something we will call 'insularity' versus 'extroversion'.

Insularity is typical of groups that have long been settled in the region (the Teeneks of Loma Larga, the black populations of the Colombian Pacific). With or without official title to their lands but very strongly rooted in space or time (millions of inhabitants in the Colombian Pacific, a settlement a few hundred years old in the case of the Teeneks) and 'protected' from the dominant majority by their extreme geographic marginality, these groups have managed to develop diversified cultural creations that are very rich in meaning and that are endowed with both stability and great historic depth. Their view of history intertwines with mythical times to explain the present—a phenomenon that evokes Detienne's 'myth-ideology' (2005: 20). Extroversion, for our purposes, applies to groups whose territorial roots are recent, or challenged by a different, dominant socio-ethnic environment (the Nahuas of La Esperanza, who arrived in the early twentieth century in flight from the violence of the Revolution; the black villages of Costa Chica, which had no land rights before the agrarian grants). Survivors of previous relocations, these groups face a hostile environment while in conditions of social break-down. They are made up of small population nuclei, either unstable or recently stabilized, formed during the agrarian reform of the twentieth century, which gave them territorial and political legitimacy after they had already arrived in the area. Cultural creation comes after social creation. The community establishes itself and only subsequently achieves cultural legitimacy. The institutions of commemoration are devised a posteriori, both from materials gleaned from individual memories and from those that are made available by the historical context of the moment, the government, the institutions, and the national narrative. This belongs to the realm that Bhabha (1994) calls 'the third

space,' that in-between space that accommodates the negotiation of values and the articulation of opposites.

Extroversion implies an openness to the other. In Costa Chica, the 'blacks' see themselves as newcomers on their land in their own narratives, organize themselves in relation to other neighbors, and espouse an ancient logic of mixed race that is cultural as well as biological. The Nahuas, for their part, draw on a recent founding narrative, and although possessed of an accepted ethnic identity, they easily handle their relations with the non-Indian world, which are consequently not as traumatic as they are for the Teeneks.

These case studies reveal two locally differentiated modalities of collective affiliation: affirming 'insularity' on one hand, and accepting 'extroversion,' on the other. The division here is not between 'Indians' and 'blacks,' nor between 'emblems' and 'enclaves,' but rather between 'newcomers' and 'already there.' This cleavage is part of a social phenomenon that is probably quite widespread, analyzed in the classic works of Elias (1994 [1965]) and noted by Dupuy (2008) in Guyana, for example.

From comparison to its prospects

If, instead of categorizing populations by ethnic or racial criteria or by their priority in time, we use our system of multiple comparisons based on types of group representation, we can see the cross-similarities between the groups, with each configuration underlining similarities or differences that are not based on a hypothetical supra-local ethnic affiliation, but rather on different uses of collective discourses that, depending on the case, infuse a coherent mythology/cosmology

and/or cobble together or invent group traditions in the midst of contradictions and impositions of all kinds.

The flexibility of these concepts is, furthermore, easily confirmed by the recent changes made in the definitions of, for example, the 'black' populations in Latin America. For proof of the feasibility and efficacy of identity reinvention, we have only to look at how, in Colombia from the 1990s onward, an intensive popular mobilizing effort, arising in part from legislative changes that finally opened the door to the recognition of 'blacks' as an 'ethnic group' forming part of the nation, permitted a complete, almost essentialist, redefinition—political, cultural, social—of that group. Moreover, it can be expected that sooner or later Mexico will have to join the other Latin American countries in recognizing a 'black mobilization' of which we are now seeing the first nascent signs.

Lately Mexico's Indian populations, too—currently undergoing major structural changes due largely to the processes of emigration—have been reformulating their concept of 'Indian identity.' That concept is no longer directly related to the land and to the system of magic and ritual that went along with it in the days of agrarian culture, when the social reproduction of Indian groups was closely associated, both practically and ideologically, with their immediate natural environment. Contemporary identification with the community of origin takes different forms—and those forms, too, are occasionally tinged with essentialism and shaped by the external discourses produced by the state apparatus or ethno-political movements.

Conclusion

In this article we have explored three different ways of configuring related identity categories: the official break-down, in which the two Indian groups are contrasted with the two black groups; the national imaginary in which one of the Indian groups studied is classed with one of the black groups in the category of national emblem, albeit a subaltern one, while the other two groups—black and Indian—come under the rubric of marginalized enclave; and finally, the third configuration, which derives from another cross-positioning between the black and Indian groups studied, this time based on the criteria of insularity or extroversion. Each of these configurations could be set out as is or modified according to other parameters. Above all, these three options can combine, coexist, reinforce each other, or conflict with each other. Accordingly, these data do not allow here to propose 'a model' of relations. These configurations rather illustrate how social multi-dimensionality can be conceptualized for the purposes of better understanding the ways of relating in specific contexts.

Let us recall that the four groups concerned here do not make ethno-political claims and do not make use of the administrative ethnic categories usually brought into play in the interactions with other political actors. This situation makes it thus possible to draw attention to original and local forms of identifications. As Escobar stated about Colombian Pacific coast, those forms do not borrow Indians or black identity politics rhetoric, but leave room to specific narrative productions, anchored in the local cultures and histories (Escobar 2008:10). For sure, these modes of local identifications are always related to specific historical structures of domination.

Finally, the stories of domination as constructed and transmitted through a group's representation of itself and the other in memorial narratives reflect an autonomous sense of history. Indigeneity is thus always a negotiated position, a structural relationship with history and power (Canessa 2008), and never an essentialized, static situation.

The analysis presented in this paper, concerning the positions of four social groups categorized by their respective governments as 'Indians' or 'blacks,' shows that their ways of identifying themselves socially cannot be systematically considered as 'Indian culture' or 'black culture,' but rather reflect a relationship to place and history, a relationship that cuts across these classifications and suggests others. We do not reject the relevance of the governmental categorizations, which are historically and culturally constructed (de la Cadena & Starn 2007), nor do we deny the processes of ethnification that may result from them. We seek rather to understand how social identity is categorized, by examining the subjective perceptions of groups that are targeted by contemporary Latin American multicultural policies.

Far from being a stand on principle, our approach arose out of an intellectual exchange over two prolonged and quite different (both anthropologically and geographically) field experiences carried out in two different countries with distinctly different national histories. A comparison of our case studies revealed some congruencies: first, the impact of distinct national traditions on the relationship between the state and minority groups—traditions that affect ethnic configurations; and second, the existence of unexpected intersections among the positions of

individuals and groups both between the two countries and within each of them. Accordingly, we have made a systematic, concentrated comparison of the positionings of four social groups officially classified as 'blacks' or 'Indians' by the state, in order to grasp the way that the group's place in relation to other social groups is understood from within. The result is a weakening in the 'logic' of ethnic or racial borders, and a blurring of externally created identifications and classifications—which are based on cleavages assumed to be 'traditional' or even 'natural' between groups.

By paying attention to the locally expressed collective memory and the vision it proposes of the historical formation of the group, we were able to contrast national ideological constructions concerning different sectors of the population, on one hand, with the ideological constructions of four groups, blacks and Indians in Colombia and Mexico, concerning their own positions in relation to other social groups, on the other hand. The focus of our comparison was the tools of memory construction—that is, the myths, rituals, and narratives that feature the group versus 'others.' Our demonstration confirmed an idea that is widespread but that has never been adequately documented ethnographically: Identities are always negotiable and flexible, resisting the classifications devised and imposed by the hegemonic powers. The three showed cases, or 'systems,' ultimately raise the question of the social attitude towards time and space, inflected according to both the regime of historicity (Hartog 2003) and that of temporality (Dubar and Rolle 2008) activated by the societies studied. Depending on how history is written or retold, the collective insertion in the national scene varies according to the different configurations of the

group and the 'others' built by this history. It is not, in fact, 'ethnicized (or racialized) nature' that determines a nation's relation to the other, but rather one's own self-perception that allows—or does not allow—one to approach others. And this connection is accomplished by 'putting it into words,' or 'organizing' and sharing history in the form of a narrative or more or less mythic story.

Our comparison between cases also underlines the role of appropriated space as a foundation for myths and identity narratives—although the appropriation is neither 'cultural' nor immanent, contrary to that currently represented by the image of the sacred ancestral territory. It is thus not official, declarative 'autochthony' that determines a people's relation to land, but a historically constructed 'insularity' that makes possible, or impossible, the elaboration of mythical or historical stories that explain and justify the group's presence in a given spot.

Notes

[1] The word 'racial' refers here to the social and political construction that attributes to individuals and groups a 'difference' based on a combination of criteria (origin, culture, etc.), the main one being phenotypical appearance (skin color).

[2] See Agudelo (2005) for Colombia and Ariel de Vidas (1994) for Mexico.

[3] Restrepo (2007) contends that in Latin America there are three different models of state recognition of black and Indian populations: equivalence, circumstantial equivalence, and unthinkable equivalence. The standard is always the Indian and the trinomial 'culture + language + territory = un pueblo' (Green 2007: 345).

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