Hemispheric racial formations: Making sense of Central and South Americans' experience of race and ethnicity in Toronto, Canada

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by

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Toronto is celebrated as a shining example of a multicultural urban centre. Over 50 percent of Toronto's population are born outside of Canada and over 50% of migrants to Canada choose Toronto as their destination (Veronis, 2006a, 2007). People from the Central and South American regions arrived to Canada relatively recently and are an extremely heterogenous and multidimensional group made up of various races, ethnicities, classes, genders, sexualities, (dis)abilities, and nation-states (Goldring & Landolt, 2012; Veronis, 2006a). Throughout this paper I use the term "Central and South American" (CSA) to refer to the variegated and heterogenous community/group/population of Spanish-speaking people from these nation-states and have migrated to Canada and are now classified as 'Latin Americans', 'Latinos/as/x', 'Hispanics', or 'Spanish speakers'. I exclude the large non Spanish-speaking regions, such as Brazil and Guyana, and the non-Spanish speaking Caribbean nation-states. Furthermore, throughout this paper I also use the term 'Indigenous' peoples to connote the Nahuatl, Mixtec, Kiché, Quechua, Guarani, Aymara, Maya, and Zapotec nations or other potential Indigenous peoples living in Central and South America, and use First Nations, Metis, and Inuit (FNMI) when discussing the Indigenous peoples living in Canada. I acknowledge my use of the terms 'Central and South American', 'Indigenous peoples', and FNMI itself homogenizes people from this region and places diverse peoples into a taken-for-granted containers (Goldring & Landolt, 2012).

In this paper I attempt to make sense of how migration shapes CSAs' experience of race and ethnicity and how these experiences influences their community formation and their political incorporation in Toronto, Canada. Specifically, I examine how the hemispheric transnational racial projects of *mestizaje* and multiculturalism operate through the triadic Settler-Savage-Slave racial formation when racializing and ethnicizing CSAs in Canada (King, 2019; Veronis, 2006a). I utilize the hybridized idea of 'ethnorace' for several reasons; first, to enhance my linguistic

capabilities in attempting to make sense of CSAs' experiences of race and ethnicity in Canada. Second, and more importantly, ethnorace enables me to account for the racialization of CSA's ethnicity through Canada and the United States' deployment of overly broad and deterministic pan-ethnic categories, such as Latin American, Latinx, Hispanic, and Spanish-speakers (Alcoff, 2012) For instance, ethnorace enables me to account for how CSAs were lumped together into a single pan-ethnic container based on their shared geographical heritage, their common Spanish language, and their shared experience of colonization by Spaniards; not because of any biologic basis, but the perception of a collective identity that has evolved over time that resulted in common bodily and cultural attributes (Alcoff, 2012). Thus I utilize the term ethnoracialization to connote the racialization of ethnicity and see pan-ethnic categories as tool to camouflage ethnorace. Finally, ethnorace enables me to avoid using the binary framework of race and ethnicity and creates space for a more finely-tuned analysis as I attempt to make sense of CSAs' experiences of ethnorace and community in Toronto (Alcoff, 2012).

In pursuit of my goal I rely on Omi & Winat's (2015) notion of racial projects as "efforts to shape the ways in which human identities and social structures are racially signified, and the reciprocal ways that racial meaning becomes embedded in social structures" (p. 13). As such, racial projects are the "building blocks" (p. 13) that construct "larger racial formation processes" (p. 13) and for this reason racial formations are the vast collection of past and present values, practices, and structures that messily merged and created massive complex matrices, relationships, and identities "labeled race" (p. 13). While racial schemas are the "racial categories and the set of rules for what they mean, how they are ordered, and how to apply them to oneself and others." (Roth, 2012 p. 12). Thus, I examine CSA's experiences negotiating and

navigating the encounters, interactions, and frottages between the two dominant transnational hemispheric racial projects - *mestizaje* and multiculturalism – when living in Canada. I rely on Macharia' (2020) analytical tool 'frottage' because it tries to grasp the mundane intimate realities of intra- and inter-racial dynamics caused by "frictions and irritations and translations and mistranslations" (p. 7) between *mestizaje* and multiculturalism. I use frottage to show the plurality of thoughts and feelings associated with CSAs' navigation and negotiation of competing, clashing, and conforming pre-migration and post-migration racial formations, racial projects, and racial schemas. Their feelings range from anxiety, confusion, disorientation, and exhaustion to compassion, recognition, pride, and intimacy (Macharia, 2020). Put simply, frottage enables me to explore the violent, painful, palliative, intimate and uneven rubbings during *mestizaje* and multiculturalism's encounters and explore questions surrounding how CSAs' negotiate a sense of self. With this in mind, we are left with the questions, how do CSAs develop a sense of community? Why and where do CSAs feel they fit in their community? Why and where does the CSA community fits into the larger Canadian national imaginary?

Currently, there is a dearth of academic literature that focuses on CSA's variegated experiences of racialization in Canada and to remedy this I interrogate academic literature that examines CSA's experience of racialization in Canada, the United States (U.S.), and Central and South America. Canada and the U.S. are both Anglo-dominant settler-colonial nation-states that are rooted in White supremacy, anti-blackness, and anti-indigeneity, but Canada's multiculturalness, though strongly contested, has become more enshrined into the national imagination (Bannerji, 1993; Thobani, 2007; Walcott, 2016, 2019). I draw insights from U.S. literature because CSAs have a longer and larger presence in the U.S and therefore U.S social

institutions and social actors have more experience testing, utilizing, and implementing ethnoracialization processes and CSA's scholars, activists, and politicians, etc. have a longer history of navigating, negotiating, theorizing, and contesting these ethnoracialization processes. However, to conduct a complete cartography of CSA's experiences of ethnicity and race in Canada is beyond the scope of this paper. Instead, I interrogate CSA's formation of communities and their political incorporation in Toronto Canada to illuminate some of the contours, cleavages, and sutures that form during CSA's animation, adherence, ambivalence, and contestation of ethnoracial labels in Canada's multicultural neoliberal milieu (Walcott, 2019).

This paper is comprises five sections. First, I will provide an overview of *mestizaje* and multicultural racial projects and explore how each project is deployed. Next, I will discuss transnational studies and how I applied their conceptual tools to my analysis to examine how multiculturalism and *meztizaje* encounter one another. Afterwards, I will explore how differences are produced from above by examining how Canadian multicultural social institutions deploy race making technologies onto CSA bodies. I will then explore how difference is produced from below by exploring the variegated experiences of race and ethnicity that shape the contours, cleavages and sutures of CSA's community. I close with some closing thoughts and remaining questions for further exploration.

Mestizaje and multicultural projects

I see both *mestizaje* and multiculturalism as transnational racial projects that are rooted in the triadic Settler-Savage-Slave racial formation. They manifest anagrammatically throughout the hemisphere as their deployment needs to fit the unique needs and racial make-up of the nation-states which enact their racial management technologies. The varying needs and racial

make-up of nation-states shapes how social institutions and actors interpret both racial projects and thus shape their deployment. The influence of both projects' racial schemas transcends international borders and shapes people's understanding of their identity, their relationship to other people, and thus who they see as a part of their community (Joesph, 2015; Miller, 2009; Roth, 2012; Walcott, 2019). The means and modes of their racialization processes transcend any frottagery and rely on the same racial orthography that exalts, privileges, and centers whiteness and attempt to control, dehumanize, and disenfranchise Black peoples, and people of colour (BPOC) and FNMI, but in divergent ways.

Mesitzaje's aspirations

In postcolonial Central and South America, social structures, social institutions, and social actors invented and deployed the *mestizaje* racial project to celebrate miscegenation in order to create a 'cosmic race' (raza cósmica) of *Mestizo/a* people who are a hybrid of Spanish colonizers and Indigenous colonized peoples (Miller, 2009). Postcolonial Central and South American intellectuals and politicians hoped the miscegenation glorified by the *mestizaje* racial project would create unity out of diversity and produce racial homogeneity out of racial heterogeneity to transcend the region's race, ethnic, and class divisions caused by its colonial legacy to withstand the Anglo-Americas' creeping imperialism (Gibbings, 2016; Mignolo, 2005). In reality, the *mestizaje* racial project maintained the colonial order whereby whiteness continued to be privileged and centered throughout the region, and White people's continued conquests across the region (Mignolo, 2005). Thus revealing that whiteness is more than a

colour, it is a privileged inscription in the historical trajectories of power and a way of being in the world.

Scholars examining *mestizaje* deployment across Central and South America argue its manifestation hinges on the goals of the social institutions and social actors in power and the racial and ethnic makeup of the people who inhabit a nation-state's territorialized space (Miller, 2009). For instance, Brazil, Colombia, and many Caribbean nation-states formulated *mulataje* to bind their large Black-descendant, Indigenous, and European population together and account for their Indigenous history while disguising the continued presence of Indigenous peoples and denying any presence of blackness in the nation-state (Laó Montes, 2007; Miller, 2007). While Argentina, Chile, and Guatemala deployed *mestizaje* to encourage European migration to their areas to further whiten their population and further obscure Indigenous peoples continued presence in their nation-states (Bastia & Vom Hau, 2014). However, scholars studying the region noted how various Indigenous peoples, such as the Zapatista and the Frente Indigena Oaxaqueño Binacional (FIOB) and Black peoples, such as the Garifuna, have organized social movements to contest *mestizaje* and celebrate their identities, their ways of knowing, and their ways of being (Dixon & Burduck. 2012; Hale, 1996; Hernandez-Castillo, 2016; Stephens, 2007)

Mestizaje's ongoing hegemony resulted in '*Mestizo/a'* becoming the national identity in many nation-states (Miller, 2009). But *mestizaje's* glorification was underpinned by colonial structures that created hierarchies that privileged White peoples over *Mestizo/a* peoples, privileged *Mestizo/a* peoples over Indigenous peoples, and Indigenous peoples over Black peoples (Hale, 1996; Oboler & Dzidzienyo, 2005; Wilderson, 2010). Thus, *mestizaje's*

technologies concealed the schemas which supported White and *Mestizo/a* people's conscious and unconscious support of *mestizaje's* ongoing antagonistic and violent policies, practices, and processes to continue its conquest in relation to Indigenous and Black peoples (King, 2019). That said, Indigenous peoples hold an aporetic position as their historical presence and practices are sanctified in varying degrees across the region while their contemporary presence and practices are ignored and hidden in varying degrees due to the myth they had been subsumed. Meanwhile, Black people's historical and ongoing presence was ignored and denied in varying degrees throughout the region. Thus, whiteness, *mestizaje*, indigeneity, and blackness exist in a relational and antagonistic paradoxical dynamic whereby *mestizaje's* animation depends on the concealment, marginalization, disenfranchisement of Indigenous peoples and the denial, abjection, and dehumanization of Black peoples to obtain the power central to its existence and for its coherence (King, 2019; Wilderson, 2020). *Mestizaje* must continually (re)position itself as close as possible to the periphery of whiteness's periphery to maintain its power, thereby revealing its aspirational nature and a desire to latch onto some facet or element of whiteness. Further, this aspirational positioning requires *mestizaje* to continually differentiate itself from blackness and indigeneity through racializing technologies that obscure its relationship to and its subsumption of Indigenous ancestry and Black descendance (Lugones, 2016; Mignolo, 2005; Wade, 2016). Put simply, *mestizaje* generally works to ignore and obscure present-day Indigenous identities and deny and erase past and present people of Black descendance by placing their identities, epistemologies, and ontologies firmly in the past in the name of modernity. Which goals *mestizaje* accomplishes and how they are accomplished hinges on the specific context of the space where it is deployed (Lugones, 2016; Mignolo, 2000; Wade, 2016).

The Multiculturalism myth

Multicultural technologies were deployed in the U.S., the United Kingdom (U.K.), and Canada to promote a mythology of inclusion and diversity. The U.S. and the U.K. have since deconstructed their multicultural technologies while Canada has moved to cement multiculturalism into its constitutional framework (Gilroy, 1990; Walcott, 2016, 2019). That said, in the forty plus years since Canada's inception and its implementation of multiculturalism, it has been widely discredited as a policy, practice, and process able to produce structural and systemic changes that reconciles Canada's engagement, implication, and complicity in the genocide and slavery of Indigenous and Black peoples (Bannerji, 1993; Thobani, 2007; Walcott, 2019). Instead, Canada's segregationist and genocidal policies towards Black and Indigenous peoples have been further camouflaged and Canada's historical implication and complicity in the enslavement of Black peoples has been all but forgotten. In reality, multiculturalism cemented White-English and White-French peoples at the centre of the nation-state by claiming they were Canada's founding cultures and therefore outside the boundaries of race and ethnicity. As founding cultures, White-English and White-French peoples are responsible for deciding which non-English and non-French peoples to extend hospitality to and responsible for managing how they live their lives in Canada in order to maintain a dominant feeling of White Europeaness through the country's national imaginary (Razack, 1998; Haque, 2012).

This multicultural lie has kept in place the hemispheric Settler-Savage-Slave racial frame and disguised the racist relational dynamic whereby White-Europeans maintain the power to control BPOC/FNMI in Canada (King, 2019; Wilderson, 2020). Walcott (2019) demystifies this

antagonistic dynamic and reveals how multiculturalism's race management technologies conceal that Canada remains a White-European settler-nation-state and all BPOC/FNMI constitute "its 'colored' adjunct citizenry" (p. 398) who must be managed in order to maintain the power of whiteness. The sharpness of whiteness' violence is dulled by sub-institutions such as human rights offices and tribunals, diversity offices and officers, equity offices and officers, and culturally specific non-governmental organizations. These sub-institutions buttress the myths that post-multicultural Canada has become a colour-blind, post-racial, diverse, equitable landscape focused on social justice, but do nothing to dismantle Canada's hidden structure of violence and conquest that underwrites BPOC/FNMI mundane and spectacular experiences of racial violence (Walcott, 2019). Instead, these organizations were invented and developed with an inherent degree of toothlessness in order to protect and sanction whiteness's innocence and ignorance from attack all while keeping BPOC/FNMI managed and placated (Bannerji, 1993; Razack, 1998, Walcott, 2019).

White-European Canada finds itself in a parallel antagonistic paradox to the Central and South American nation-states that deploy *mestizaje,* in that it focuses on controlling and managing BPOC/FNMI peoples through dehumanizing, disenfranchising, and violent racial technologies to maintain its ill-begotten structural power central to its existence and coherence as Canada's founding peoples. However, instead of obscure, subsuming, and denying the contemporary existence of Black and Indigenous peoples to maintain power, White Canada engages in tactics focused on dividing, classifying, and conquering BPOC/FNMI, including the racially diverse CSAs, to maintain the politics and logics that justify whiteness' place at the country's structural centre (Thobani, 2007; Walcott, 2016, 2019). Therefore, this paper attempts

to make sense of how CSAs arriving to Toronto navigate the rubbings, abrasions, translations, and mis-conversions between *mestizaje's* familiar racial formations and schemas and Canada's unfamiliar racial formations and schemas. Specifically, how these unfamiliar formations and schemas place them into unfamiliar positions in Canada's racial hierarchies by homogenizing their racial heterogeneity. My analysis of multiculturalism and *mestizaje's* frottagery reveals *mestizaje*'s transnational nature in Canada and reveal how its racial orthography underpins CSAs' formation of transnational spaces, transnational communities, and their acceptance, ambivalence, and contestation of ethnoracial labels such as Latin American, Latino/a/x, Hispanic, and Spanish-speaker.

Transnational formations and projects

Transnational spaces' coproduction

Transnational practices, connections, and networks have been occurring for centuries, however Glick-Schiller, Basch, and Blanc-Szanton (1994) first conceptualized transnationalism to explain the increase in multi-stranded cross-border connections. They explained transnationalism as the "processes by which immigrants forge and sustain multi-stranded social relations that link together their societies of origin and settlement. We call these processes transnationalism to emphasize that many immigrants today build social fields that cross geographic, cultural, and political borders" (Glick-Schiller, Basch, & Blanc-Szanton, 1994 p. 8). Faist (2004) explains the globe's transnational turn was triggered by technological developments in the fields of telecommunications and aerospace which compressed time and space and

facilitated the development of transnational networks, social fields, and transnational spaces. Initially, transnational studies focused on examining and conceptualizing how and why migrants forged and maintained multi-stranded cross-border relationships and networks and the impact these connections have on their pre- and post-migration identities and communities. These early transnational works were rooted in methodological nationalism and conceptualized migrants' identities as rooted in their nation-state and consequently ignored migrants' pre-migration similarities and differences regarding race, class, ethnicity, and context of departure and reception (Goldring & Landolt, 2012; McIlwaine, 2011). Thus, I seek to avoid the limitations associated with methodological nationalism by accounting for the hemispheric hegemony of the triadic Settler-Savage-Slave frame and how this frame underpins the western hemispheres' racial formations and racial projects to privilege whiteness and dehumanize, disenfranchise, and sanction the violence towards CSA, especially those who embody Black and the phenotypes of the Indigenous peoples who live throughout Central and South America.

To accomplish this goal I rely on specific conceptual tools that emerged from transnational studies, specifically transnational spaces (Faist, 2000), transnational practices from above and from below (Smith & Guarnizo, 1998), transnational diffusion (Roth, 2012), and the transnational racial optic (Joesph, 2015). According to Faist, (2000)

> The concept of transnational spaces covers diverse phenomena such as transnational small groups, transnational circuits and transnational communities. … Transnational social spaces are combinations of ties, positions in networks and organizations, and networks of organizations…. These *spaces denote dynamic*

social processes, not static notions of ties and positions (Faist 2000, 191; emphasis added).

I rely on transnational spaces because they multi-stranded cross-border relationships and networks that can be opened from above and below. For this reason, I view transnational spaces as areas whereby actors, institutions, corporate entities, and nation-states hold uneven power to dictate what occurs in said spaces (Smith and Guarnizo, 1998; Çaglar & Glick-Shiller, 2018). I see transnational spaces as unevenly coproduced from above by Canadian multicultural social institutions and social actors, and from below by individual CSAs and CSA-specific non-governmental organizations (NGO) (Smith & Guarnizo, 1998). A byproduct of this coproduction from above and below is the transnational diffusion of multiculturalism's formations and schemas by Canadian social institutions and actors from above and the diffusion of *mestizaje's* formations and schemas by CSAs and their NGOs from below. This diffusion of racial formations and schemas occurs through various multi-scalar mechanisms. Roth (2012) demonstrated how individual CSAs and local NGOs diffuse multicultural schemas to their pre-migration family, friends, and community resulting in their familiarity with Canadian and U.S. schemas and racial hierarchies when they later decide to migrate.

Transnational diffusion and frottage

I extend Roth's (2012) notion of transnational diffusion to show diffusion is not a top-down linear process, but rather occurs in variegated, multidimensional, and multi-scalar manners. That said, to explore the variety of methods and mechanisms of diffusion is beyond the scope of this paper and as a result I focus on three methods of diffusion. First, I see the presence

of the Hispanic ethnoracial category and the Latino/a/x ethnoracial category within Canada's national imagination as the result of the diffusion resulting from the transnational interlocution between Canadian and the U.S social institutions and social actors. For instance, individuals CSAs can pass on ethnoracial labels to one another in their transnational communications or Canadian and American government officials can pass on ethnoracial labels during their transnational communications with one another. Second, individual CSAs disseminate *mestizaje*'s schemas in their day-to-day interactions with other CSAs and amongst family when utilizing their transnational racial optic. With this optic, CSAs enact race transnationally and observe, interpret, and negotiate how *mestizaje's* racial schemas conform and clash with multiculturalism's racial schemas (Joesph, 2015). Frottagery ensues as CSAs navigate and reconcile the "frictions and irritations and translations and mistranslations" (Macharia, 2020 p. 7) between the two racial projects. Third, diffusion occurs through CSA NGOs who circulate *mestizaje*'s schemas when interacting with their CSA service users. CSA NGOs also circulate *mestizaje's* schemas when utilizing their transnational racial optic to interact with non-CSA individuals, organizations, and governmental interlocuters who turn to these NGOs for further information regarding CSAs' ancestry and their experiences in Canada. Thus, I argue in Toronto the local diffusion of *mestizaje* from below engages in frottagery with multiculturalism's structures of violence and its ubiquitous rubric of racial management technologies that construct the contours around new ethnoracial categories.

How CSAs navigate the outcome of this frottagery varies and how people decide to enact race, remains temporally and spatially contingent. First, some CSAs may strategically draw on *mestizaje's* orthography*,* but enact race by repositioning themselves to adhere to

multiculturalism's invented, delineated, and semi-permeable ethnoracial categories of Latin American, Latino/a/x, Hispanic, and Spanish-speaker. This adherence echoes people's adherence to the *Mestizo/a* racial container that celebrated and subsumed Indigenous ancestry and obscured and denied Black ancestry in that it also obscures and subsumes CSAs' premigration class, race, ethnicity, and nationality, thereby amplifying the subsumption of indigeneity and the forgetting of blackness. Adherence to ethnoracial labels further homogenizes CSAs' heterogeneity, a heterogeneity that was already homogenized by *mestizaje,* and as a result further obscures CSAs' Indigenous and Black ancestry (Cahous, 2018, 2019). Thus, the prefigured antagonistic relationship between White, *Mestizo/a*, Indigenous, and Black peoples remains coherent and intact, despite its transnational nature. Second, some CSA may maintain a strategic ambivalence regarding their race enactments and, depending on the context, they may move between identifying with ethnoracial labels or identify with their nationality (Carranza, 2007; Smith, 2005). Ambivalence reveals the variety of transnational enactments available to CSAs, but ambivalence still draws on the transnationally prefigured antagonistic relationship between White, *Mestizo/a*, Indigenous, and Black peoples. Furthermore, ambivalence also follows the same politics and logic that underpin *mestizaje* because nationality is a proxy by which people still align themselves with *mestizaje* and the *Mestizo/a* identity (Miller, 2009)oi. Third, some CSA may engage in contestation and reject both *mestizaje* and multiculturalism's racial formations and schemas. Contestation and rejection potentially highlights the ongoing antagonistic relationship between White, *Mestizo/a*, Indigenous, and Black peoples in hopes of unraveling this ongoing dynamic in both racial projects. A review of the literature has revealed people who identify as Indigenous and Black are more likely to contest both *mestizaje* and multiculturalism racial categories while White and *Mestizo/a* peoples remain invested in

continuing the antagonistic relation (Cahous, 2018, 2019; Landolt & Goldring, 2009). The next sections will go into further depth and show how difference is transnationally diffused from above and how difference is diffused from below and how the resulting frottagery shapes the contours, cleavages, and sutures of CSAs' transnationally imagined community.

Producing difference from above

CSAs coming to Canada

In Canada, CSAs are distributed across major urban centres and as a result have yet to develop a viable political or economic force in Canada (Veronis, 2007). CSA migrants began arriving to Canada in the 1960s, this 'lead wave' consisted of European migrants to Central and South America who migrated again to Canada through the early 1960s before 'multiculturalism' was adopted. This 'lead wave' came from industrially advanced countries such as Argentina, Brazil, Mexico, Venezuela, and Uruguay, and were primarily professionals and skilled workers (Landolt & Goldring 2009; Mata, 1985). The second wave began in the early 1970s and was defined as the 'Andean wave' and consisted of economic migrants from Ecuador, Colombia, and Peru. The 'Andean wave' consisted of skilled and unskilled workers who originated from small cities and the countryside as much as larger cities (Landolt & Goldring 2009; Mata, 1985). These first two waves were small in number and did not form a migrant community and as such flew under the Canadian state's radar, but did enjoy secure legal status and were automatically able to become permanent residents (Veronis, 2006a). The third wave was labeled the 'political coup' wave and consisted of political refugees from Chile, Argentina, and Uruguay and started in 1973

and lasted through rest of the 1970s. Canada was involved in organizing refuge for the 'political coup wave' which was made up of white collar and blue collar migrants fleeing political persecution and their arrival coincided with Canada's multicultural moment. The fourth wave, deemed the 'Central American wave,' consisted of Central Americans fleeing bloody civil wars, with the support of the Canadian institutions and actors, that raged across the region and lasted through the 1980s into the mid 1990s (Landolt & Goldring 2009; Mata, 1985). The 1990s through to present day saw an increasing variety of Central and South American positionalities coming to Canada. Migrants arrived to Canada with a range of legal statuses, such as Temporary Foreign Workers, from Costa Rica, Brazil, Mexico, and Argentina and waves of professional migrants from Mexico, Colombia, and Argentina (Goldring & Landolt, 2012). Statistics Canada last estimated that approximately 447, 325 to 674,640 people who identify as Latin American, and 225,000 people who identified Spanish as their first language, making Latin Americans the fifth largest cultural group and fastest growing in Canada (Statistics Canada, 2016a, 2016b).

Race making through the Canadian census

We can see how the Canadian census produces racial difference from above when we focus on CSAs' experience of migrating and living in Canada. In the 1970s, during the rise of the multicultural project and the arrival of the 'political coup wave', the Canadian census began to categorize this burgeoning heterogenous population under the ethnoracial label of 'Latin American' or 'Spanish speaker' (Goldring & Landolt, 2012; Veronis, 2006a). The Canadian census was formulated to generate statistical knowledge nation-states needed to govern and is therefore one of nation-states most powerful sources of information (Batarseh, 2019; Thompson,

2016). The sections, categories, and questions contained within the census dictate the most relevant cultural, social, and economic characteristics of a nation-state at a given time (Batarseh, 2019; Thompson, 2016). Building on Thompson (2016), I see the Canadian census as an influential and powerful colonially-rooted race making technology. The census continues to evolve to respond to the interplay between transnational understandings of race and domestic social institutions and social actors' enactments of race (Batarseh, 2019; Thompson, 2016). It draws boundaries to categorize and classify and therefore ethnoracialize migrant groups, such as CSAs and people from South and East Asia, into homogenizing pan-ethnic containers for bureaucratic and tracking purposes to help the Canadian state 'manage' diversity during their multicultural project. Thus, showing pan-ethnic labels are in reality, ethnoracial categories that come from the racialization of a groups ethnicity.

We can see the government's evolving understanding of non-White migrants through how it uses the census to ask questions surrounding race and ethnicity. The questions invented and asked by the census revealed Canada's continued constitutive role in producing ethnoracial differences from above to 'manage' ethnic and racial differences and sustain Canada's White centre. Multiculturalism's lies ensure the continuation of the whiteness's antagonistic and violent relationship with the BPOC/FNMI secondary citizenry living in Canada, including racially diverse CSAs (Bannerji, 1993; Thobani, 2007; Thompson, 2016 Walcott, 2019). In other words, the Canadian census is one beastly arm of the multicultural racial project because it codifies Eurocentric understandings of race, which are rooted in colonial antagonistic logics, by asking racial questions that make previously contested, unstable, and fluid categories of race and ethnicity, such as Latin American, appear natural and immutable. Codification of symbolic

boundaries surrounding ethnorace contributes to the hardening of symbolic boundaries into semi-permeable social boundaries and assists Canadian social institutions and actors in determining who is a part of the White centre and who is not, when stratifying society along ethnoracial lines (Lamont & Aksartova, 2002; Thompson, 2016).

Ethnoracialization: Producing difference from above

Multiculturalism's codified ethnoracial categories have become cemented within Canada's social fabric and are a part of the country's social, political, economic, and cultural milieu (Bannerji, 1993; Thobani, 2007; Walcott, 2019). As a result of this ubiquity, codified ethnoracial categories have become diffused throughout transnational spaces and shape people who live in Canada's understanding and perception of heterogenous migrants, such as CSA migrants. I propose the ubiquity of multiculturalism's racial schemas and ethnoracial categories results in its inevitable frottagery with *mestizaje's* racial schemas that CSA migrants bring to the country. However, the inherent mistranslations that result from frottage ensures a variety of outcomes can occur during multiculturalism and *mestizaje's* intimate encounters and thus racial enactment are rarely directly emulated by Canadian social institutions and social actors, and CSAs. Instead, racialization processes become twisted, reshaped, and transformed into an ethnoracialization process that racializes CSAs' ethnicity into homogenizing ethnoracial categories to fit into Canada's ongoing antagonistic racial, ethnic, gender, sex, and class hierarchies. So instead of being homogenized and classified as brown bodied *Mestizo/as* under *mestizaje's* rubric, CSAs are cast coterminously as brown-bodied Latin Americans, Latinos, Hispanics, or Spanish-speakers and their indigeneity and blackness is further hidden, obscured,

and subsumed; and sometimes in the case of blackness completely divorced and ejected into a separate category. For instance, Smith (2005) conducted an ethnographic study of Mexicans living in New York City and found that many Spanish-speaking Puerto Ricans hold Black phenotypes and despite identifying as Latino they experience anti-black racism and often are perceived and defined as Black peoples by their fellow CSAs as well as by the wider American public. Thus, we can see blackness' ejection sustains CSAs' antagonism that makes Black peoples Latin American people's foil by continuing to ensure their social death (Cahous, 2018, 2019; Smith, 2005; Wilderson, 2020).

I turn to Ginieniewicz's (2010) for another example, he explored CSAs' political representation and legibility in Toronto. One of his participants stated "*I think that, for the average Canadian, Latin America represents one country composed of 22 provinces. That is the general perception that Canadians have of Latin America. Therefore, we cannot request 22 political spaces*" (p. 270). Thus, we can see how some CSAs approach the Latin American category with ambivalence in their simultaneous use of the Latin American label while also pointing out that national divisions exist within the Latin American category. Put differently, CSAs adhered to the Latin American category created by the Canadian census in order to remain legible in Canada's political sphere, but also felt the need to point out how this ethnoracial category obscured and subsumed the many nationalities that fell under this homogenizing category. A further interrogation of Ginieniewicz's (2010) findings hints at further divisions within the community, but falls short of considering how pre-and post- migration racial schemas impacted CSAs' political incorporation. Through the insights obtained by Ginieniewicz (2010) and Smith (2005) I show how the Canadian government used the census to transmogrify

Mestizo/a, Indigenous, and Euro-descendent bodies into Latin American brown bodies and thereby pushing their Indigenous ancestry/ further into the past and continuing the concealment and denial of any Black heritage. Transmogrification enables Canada's social institutions and social actors to place the CSAs they define as Latin American into a single distinct ethnoracial container to be managed by the Canadian 'multicultural' state in relation to other homogenized migrant groups to ensure the ongoing power of the White settler majority and the hemisphere's Settler-Savage-Slave racial frame. Thus, the we can further see the contours of the community emerging in a way that parallels *mestizaje's* cross-border securement, subsumption and denial strategies. That is, White, 'almost White', and Brown bodies are placed into the Latin American ethnoracial categories, but their racial and ethnic differences remained ignored, while Indigenous peoples are forgotten and Black peoples are cast away to remain CSAs' foil (Loveman, 2014).

Producing difference from below

Tracing the 'idea' of Latin American from below

Currently, people from approximately 20 different Central and South American nation-states with a variety of races, ethnicities, classes, genders, sexes, and legal statuses are living in Toronto, Canada. Beginning with the lead wave, through to the present day migration flows, each new individual, family, and group of CSA migrants bring with them their internalized understanding and perception of *mestizaje's* racial formations and schemas as well as the logics and politics that undergird their unique experience of *mestizaje*. I interrogate how CSA migrants attempt to differentiate themselves in relation to Canada's White majority and find their 'place'

within Canada's antagonistic racial dynamic during their community formation and political incorporation. I show how *mestizaje* and its iterations' underpinning politics and logics collide and rub against multiculturalism's prefigured ethnoracial categories. I focus on how the outcome of these rubbings, irritations, translations, and mis-conversions shapes their experience of ethnicity and race and therefore the contours, cleavages, and sutures of the Latin American community in Toronto, specifically whether they adhere to, remain ambivalent to, or contest these prefigured ethnoracial categories.

I see the contours of CSAs' community beginning to form during the second wave of migration. The second wave coincided with Canada's multicultural turn and the emergence of ethnoracial NGOs that supported CSAs' migration trajectory by helping them navigate racism, but in the process became the face of the emerging CSA community in Toronto (Cahous, 2019). In Toronto, the Centre for Spanish Speaking People (CSSP) and the Hispanic Development Council (HDC) were established with help from government funding (Bernhard, Landolt & Goldring 2009). The CSSP was founded by Spanish women and partially funded by the Communist Party of Spain. Guided by their leftist politics they expressed solidarity with CSA refugees and offered Spanish language supportive services resulting in many CSAs becoming affiliated with the CSSP as service users. While the HDC was founded in 1978 and emerged to become the unofficial lobbying, research, and analysis arm of the CSA community in Toronto (Landolt & Goldring, 2009). The HDC's research and dissemination capabilities provided it legitimacy within the CSA community and in turn non-CSA interlocutors often went to the HDC to learn about and discuss CSA issues (Landolt & Goldring, 2009). I see these NGOs as one of driving forces behind the formation of community's symbolic contours due to their early

adherence to the ethnoracial categories of Spanish-speaking and Hispanic, labels which alludes to Europe's colonialism of CSAs. These contours continued to harden during the late 1980s and the 1990s during the 'Central American wave' which also infused the CSA population in Toronto with further racial, ethnic, and class diversity (Veronis, 2006a). Furthermore, the 'Central American wave' coincided with Canada's neoliberal multicultural turn which shifted CSAs' relationship to one another, CSAs' relationships to CSA NGOs, and CSA NGOs' relationship to Canadian social institutions and social actors (Landolt & Goldring, 2009; Veronis, 2006a). As more CSAs began to live in NGOs' leadership and individual CSA gathered at the 1994-1995 "Latin American Community Encounters" forums. Their discussions surrounded their growing realization that as more CSAs continued to arrive to Toronto, they would need to address their socio-political-cultural-economic integration into Canada by adhering to the prefigured ethnoracial multicultural categories to receive future migrants (Veronis, 2006a).

The 'lead wave', the 'Andean wave', and the 'political coup wave' led these conversations surrounding the need to form a distinct community within Canada's stark White landscape. Veronis (2006a) explains these conversations "led to the emergence of new discourses and practices…to reflect their new relationship to the host society; they felt the desire to become full citizens and to participate equally in all aspects of Canadian life…" (p. 23). In reality, these forums served as a venue for CSAs to discuss their transnational racial optic and their shared feeling of ethnoracial difference which stemmed from their antagonistic relationship to whiteness, BPOC/FNMI as well as their White aspirations. To combat feelings of difference, CSAs drew on their shared language, common geographical origin, and their imagined collective colonial history to argue CSAs had mutual interests and thus needed to foster camaraderie to

strengthen their social bonds and support one another (Anderson, 1983). Scholars have differed on what to call this affective sense of relatedness and belonging, many have called it '*Latinidad*' (Mirabel, 2007; Gutiérrez, 2016), while others have called it the 'sense of being brown' (Munoz, 2020). However, *Latinidad* is precisely the essentialist ideology that centers CSAs' colonization by Spanish and Portuguese colonizers (Mignolo, 2005) while 'the sense of being brown' immediately cannibalizes indigeneity and nullifies blackness. For this reason, I subscribe to Veronis's (2006a) notion of a transnational imagined community to account for the transnational nature of this affective sense of relatedness and belonging. I also subscribe to this notion because it also leaves room to recognize Indigenous and Black CSAs within transnational spaces without inherently marginalizing them. That said, the imagined community in Toronto still attempts to obscure and subsume CSAs' premigration racial, ethnic, class, religious, gender, and sex differences that previously divided CSAs and were based on *mestizaje's* politics and logics. The symbolic boundaries that began to emerge from these conversations were not without their cleavages. For instance, the 'Community Workers Conference' recognized that Central Americans had lower educational attainment, lower income levels, and experienced greater poverty in comparison to South Americans in Toronto (Orenstein, 2000; Veronis, 2006a), but, racial and ethnic differences continued to be unrecognized or silenced.

Multiculturalism and Mestizaje's joint project

As these discussions surrounding the need for a 'Latin American community' were ongoing, the Canadian social welfare sector, which provided funding for many CSA NGOs, underwent neoliberal restructuring. Suddenly the state moved away from core funding for

agencies and toward time-limited precarious funding based on an agency's yearly topic-specific proposals (Landolt & Goldring, 2009). In response, NGOs implemented neoliberal managerial practices to handle their decreased funding and their restructured relationship with the Canadian state that required them to prove their worthiness for said funding and compete with other CSA NGOs. This led CSSP and the HDC to compete for funding with other CSA NGOs and subsequently cannibalize smaller nation-based agencies and specialized agencies by beginning offering specialized service agencies (Landolt & Goldring, 2009). Consequently, this neoliberal shift saw NGOs' leadership and by proxy CSA community leadership to become increasingly dominated by middle-aged and older, cisgender, heterosexual men who identified as Latino or Hispanic. By 'leadership' I refer to NGOs' board of directors, executive directors, and management, and long-term paid staff (Cahous, 2019). This 'leadership' garnered favour with government interlocutors at the municipal, provincial, and federal level and claimed to represent the Latin American, Hispanic, and Spanish-speaking community in Toronto. In other words, these men leaned into and adhered to the prefigured Latin American, Hispanic and Spanish-speaking ethnoracial categories when developing relationships with the White male political leaders at various levels of Canadian government (Cahous, 2019). By leaning into these ethnoracial categories these 'leaders' hardened the imagined symbolic boundaries surrounding the 'idea' of who is Latin American, Hispanic, Latino, and Spanish-speaking peoples into semi-permeable social boundaries and distanced themselves from indigeneity and blackness within the community.

These social boundaries continued to be reinforced by local CSA politicians, local CSA businesses, and leaders of local CSA NGOs during their organization of a Canadian Hispanic

Pride Parade in Toronto. Prominent local CSAs' formed the committee which made executive decisions and worked to recruit newly arrived CSA migrants to participate in the parade and in the processes encouraging them to adhere to the Hispanic ethnoracial label (Veronis, 2006b). The Canadian Hispanic Pride Parade mission statement illustrates the parade was created "to preserve vital intergenerational links and to share with all Canadians, our culture, language, typical food and sense of celebration, thus uniting our communities" (CHDP, 2003, as cited by Veronis 2006b p. 1662). Veronis (2006b) explains how Canadian Hispanic Pride Parade served as an example of the CSA community seeking political legibility through cultural celebratory performance. However, by interrogating parade further, I show how prominent CSAs were navigating the frottagery between *mestizaje* and multiculturalism and strategically drew on both projects when attempting to create a politically distinct ethnoracial community, and thus mimicked mestizaje's racial management practices. When reading deeper we can also see prominent CSAs were also using the parade to politically and publicly acknowledge their difference from BPOC/FNMI and thus maintain their ongoing antagonistic relationship to BPOC/FNMI and their attempts to keep their White aspirations alive. However, CSAs also strategically drew on multiculturalism by adhering to the Hispanic ethnoracial label. This label racialized their ethnicity and homogenized their diversity - a racial diversity that was already reduced and made uniform by *mestizaje*. In drawing on both *mestizaje* and multiculturalism we can see how CSAs guaranteed their non-whiteness and instead became transmogrified into Hispanic brown bodies. Further, the disregard for their Indigenous and Black ancestry revealed their continued cannibalization of their indigeneity and their ongoing Black phobia.

To gain further insight into CSAs' internal dialogue regarding their experience of negotiating and navigating their experience of ethnoracialization I turn to Parada's (2012) autoethnography regarding his migration to Canada. He noted upon his arrival to Canada two processes simultaneously began; first his transmogrification into the ethnoracial 'Latin American' brown body and second his experience of *Canadianization.* Parada (2012) defined *Canadianization* as the process by which he, intentionally or unintentionally, adopted the values, behaviors, racial formations, and racial schemas needed to navigate Canada's neoliberal multicultural society. When interrogating Parada's critical self-reflexive thoughts we can see he was struggling to navigate multiculturalism and *mestizaje's* interactions in the transnational space he inhabits. Parada (2012) states,

> I have an amorphous, hybrid, indefinite self in Toronto, and am a *mestizo*… one who belongs, and does not belong, as an identity on the frontier of hybridity in both the south…and in the north…In the case of Toronto, *mestizaje* is the experience of not being white while claiming a rich subjective contextualized reality of otherness. The historical Latin American experience of exclusion and an assumed passivity makes one consciously *mestizo* in Toronto to avoid the obliteration of identity (p. 27).

Parada acknowledged his feelings of belonging and non-belonging in both the south and north stems from multiculturalism and *mestizaje's* racial formations and schemas joint influence over how he sees, understands, and performs his identity and how his body is understood and perceived by the global public. He relied on his transnational racial optic to navigate and negotiate his feelings of racial difference that caused his feelings of amorphousness. But this optic only provided him with the insight to realize he both belongs and doesn't belong to the north and south and instead belongs in-between

within transnational spaces. When reading deeper into his reflexive process, specifically his statement about experiencing the '*historical Latin American experience of exclusion and assumed* passivity' we can see he is alluding to his downward mobility, deskilling, and racism that many CSAs speak about experiencing during their migration trajectory in Canada (Carranza, 2007). Furthermore, Parada acknowledges his racial difference pushed him to become a hybrid by embracing both *mestizoness* and Latin Americanness to avoid '*obliteration*' and to ensure his survival in the transnational spaces he inhabits. Thus, he adhered to Latin Americanness for his body to be understood in the north by White and BPOC/FNMI and he adhered to *mestizoness* to be understood in the south amongst his CSA peers. I extend his insights and argue that many CSAs in Toronto underwent similar feelings of difference and hybridity that pushed them to adhere to the both the Latin American and *Mestizo/a* category to account for their feelings of belonging and non-belonging. By adhering to both categories, CSAs continue to uphold the hemisphere's structure of racial antagonism and cemented their status as a non-White, non-Indigenous, and non-Black within the triadic Settler-Savage-Slave frame and kept their White aspiration alive.

Prominent CSAs' attempt to create a distinct 'Latin American' community did not go without contestation. To explore this contestation I turn to Cahous (2019, 2018) who interviewed grassroots Latinx community workers (LCW), a fifth of which identified as Afro-Latin and Indigenous. The participants in Cahous' (2018) study explained prominent CSAs became regarded as the community's 'leadership', but they were disconnected from the racist and discriminatory realities faced by many CSAs in Toronto. Delia stated,

> They [cis-hetero-male leadership] say they represent us [Latin American communities] but they don't….we have folks in the higher up who are so far

removed from us and just want to eat culture and not engage in actual political, socioeconomic realities of what's happening with the people. (p. 76).

Delia confirms how the community's leadership remains disconnected from the political, socioeconomic, and ethnoracial realities facing the majority of CSAs and have erroneously focused their efforts on conducting neoliberal multicultural acts of cultural performance to remain political legible. For example, they point to leaderships' focus on promoting CSAs' cultural foods, instead of recognizing, celebrating, and centering CSAs rich racial, ethnic, and spiritual diversity and ancestry.

When contested, leadership were quick to shut down Indigenous, Black, and Queer CSAs' illumination of the ongoing racist, queerphobic, transphobic attitudes amongst their fellow CSAs and the wider Canadian public (Cahous, 2018). Participants explained leadership weaponized the language of 'unity' to silence claims that racist, queerphobic, transphobic attitudes and behaviors existed amongst the CSAs living in Toronto and labeled Indigenous, Black, and Queer CSAs', and their allies, divisive for bringing attention to these issues. When contemplating their experience of racism and discrimination, one Black participant explained, [when] "*the term Latin American is used, Black and Indigenous peoples are not seen under this label because of the misconception that they have all mixed with Spanish people"* (Cahous, 2018 p. 88). Thus, Black and Indigenous experiences of racism are ignored because they did not 'count' as Latin Americans and thus their experiences of racism and discrimination not require a response from leadership who were focused on the needs of 'true' Latin Americans. When reading into these experiences we can see prominent CSAs' mimesis of *mestizaje's* logics and politics when drawing on CSAs' affective sense of commonality and belonging during their

attempts to form an identity and community that remains politically legible. However, emphasizing the need for unity to transcend racial divisions, once again resulted in the obscurement and denial of indigeneity, an identity that was once celebrated, and blackness. Thus, CSAs' mimetic practices shows that *mestizaje* and its antagonistic baggage continues to suture the 'Latin American' community together while simultaneously being responsible for its cleavages, while Canada's multicultural formations and schemas delineate the ethnoracial community's contours to which CSAs adhere.

Conclusion and future considerations

Throughout this paper I attempted to paint a clearer picture regarding how CSAs' race and ethnicity is transformed by migration and how this transformation shapes the shifting contours, cleavages, and sutures of a transnational imagined Latin American community in Toronto. I demonstrated how the intimate relationship between multiculturalism and *mestizaje* has led these projects to work in tandem to ensure that the ethnoracialization of CSAs in Canada continues to uphold the triadic Settler-Savage-Slave frame that dominates the American hemisphere. Thus, I have shown how Indigenous peoples' continued presence amongst the transnational CSAs' community continues to be ignored and therefore CSAs in Canada and transnationally can continue to avoid any territorial redress. However, the true conclusion of this paper is that CSAs are subjugated by White supremacy, but CSAs are also implicated and complicit in supporting anti-indigeneity, but are especially responsible for perpetuating anti-blackness. It is in CSAs' interests to sustain the ongoing antagonistic sense-apprehensions surrounding the specter of blackness due to the need to use Black peoples as the foil to stabilize

themselves against and thus give form to a coherent identity category they can build a community around. Put simply, CSAs' migration to Canada did not shift their relational and antagonistic paradoxical dynamic to blackness. Thus, the animation of Latin American identity in Canada still depends on the continued concealment and marginalization of CSAs with Indigenous ancestry as well as the disenfranchisement and dehumanization of CSAs with Black ancestry. These acts of violence enable White and Brown CSAs to obtain the power needed to remain coherently on the periphery of whiteness' periphery in hopes of latching on to some element or facet of whiteness in hopes of themselves or future generations crossing over into whiteness.

I conclude this paper with many questions remaining. For instance, if the boundaries surrounding the Canadian Latin American ethnoracial category are semi-permeable, who else is able to freely move across this semi-permeable boundary? Will *mestizaje's* formations, schemas, politics, and logics continue to be transnationally diffused and mimicked by future generations of CSAs living in Canada? Will future generations of CSAs begin to cross the semi-permeable boundary and attempt to latch on to some facet of whiteness and thereby place further distance between themselves and their Indigenous and Black heritage or will the distinct affective sense of belonging and relatedness transcend generational differences and continue to give the life energy needed to animate the Latin American category? What will happen to future Indigenous and Black CSAs? Will Indigenous CSAs living in Canada continue to become subsumed within the Latin American category? Or will Indigenous CSAs attempt to enter in transnational multi-indigenous-nation social movements as outlined by Hernández-Castillo (2016) or attempt to other transnational imagined communities centered in indigeneity, such as the Frente Indigena

Oaxaqueño Binacional? How will future generations of Black CSAs negotiate and navigate their position as the foil of humanity, will they continue to advocate for their belonging to the Latin American community or will they reposition themselves to become absorbed within Black transatlantic diaspora? This paper has attempted to provide insight into how CSAs transnational experiences race and ethnicity, but has left us with more questions than answers.

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