

Tracy Devine Guzmán. *Native and National in Brazil: Indigeneity after Independence.* First Peoples: New Direction in Indigenous Studies Series. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2013. 352 pp. \$32.50, ISBN 978-1-4696-0209-7.

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Indigenous peoples in Brazil have been increasingly accepted as an integral part of the nation's historical narrative as well as its evolving cultural mosaic. But popular culture tends either to idealize them or depict them as victims, and few within popular culture seem to allow indigenous thinkers a discursive space within wider national narratives. Tracy Devine Guzmán's latest book, *Native and National in Brazil: Indigeneity after Independence*, provides an intellectual history of portrayals of the indigenous population in works both by natives and non-natives. Her analysis goes beyond pure representation to show how the lived historical reality of Brazil's "*índios*" exists in a dialectical relationship with popular depictions of them. Devine Guzmán showcases her own version of Philip Deloria's concept of "playing Indian" (*brincar de índio*, pp. 18-19), demonstrating the roles that native peoples and images of those peoples played in the national politics of the Brazil in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.[1] Approaching the present, the argument shifts towards how indigenous people themselves seek to change their own circumstances through institutional politics and activism. They claim that concepts of indigeneity affect not only those who claim it, but the whole of the Brazilian populace.

The work begins by posing two questions: how does one define indigeneity and who is defined as indigenous? The myriad answers demonstrate that official definitions have often served to complement the goals of the state, from occupation of territory to consolidation of the national racial identity to serving as a buffer against the specter of communism. The survey closes by problematizing narrow and instrumental criteria and advocating for a multivalent concept of identity. As Devine Guzmán explains, "indigeneity, as reflected in lived experience means different things to different people." Thus, "the concept of indigeneity only holds meaning in the unsettled, oftentimes uncomfortable realm of dialogue and negation," positing indigeneity as a discourse mobilized relative to the individual's situation (pp. 55-56).

Of the cases used to represent the dialectic nature of popular culture, by far the strongest are that of the connection between the opera *Il guarany* (1870) by Carlos Gomes and the Paraguayan War (1864-70), and that between the 1865 novel *Iracema* by José de Alencar and the now infamous marriage of Diacuí Canualo Auite. In the former case, the worldwide acclaim garnered by this opera extolling the apparent nobility and savagery of the Guarani peoples rallied na-

tional sentiment following the conclusion of the bloody and controversial Paraguayan War. The opera and the acclaim it generated distracted from the death of untold indigenous “volunteers” and the forced servitude of survivors. In the latter case—that of the possible marriage between a white functionary of the Indian Protection Service (SPI) and an indigenous woman yet to leave her indigenous community—a debate began on whether such a union was ethical or even desirable. Daicuí was painted as the twentieth-century *Iracema*. In the end, they married, but Daicuí then died of unrelated illness. The debates around the whole controversy pitted the “protection-based mandate [of the SPI]’ [against] the pro-*mestiçagem* citizen-making agenda of the Vargas administration.... [T]he state’s manipulation of Brazilianess had come into conflict with itself” (p. 148). The literary figure *Iracema* was reflected by Daicuí, whose fate challenged the basis of Brazil’s foundational myth of racial mixture. Such examples show indigenous peoples as historically central tools to the Brazilian national project in conflicts both military and cultural without considerations of their relative exclusion from it. In the final chapters notions of sovereignty, citizenship, and political participation are challenged through the figures of an indigenous congressional candidate and organized resistance to the Belo Monte Dam. The book ends with a call to explore not only Brazil’s influence on indigeneity, but also the insistence by indigenous activists that indigeneity has and will continue to influence the trajectory of Brazil in the attempt to gain wider political victories.

Methodologically, Devine Guzmán’s multidisciplinary gives readers a refreshing view of indigeneity by putting works of literature in productive conversation with the historiography of indigenous peoples and their interactions with the state along with more recent events. All this is undergirded by complex theories of identity from anthropology and literary theory. Beyond contributions to the specific literature, this approach

pushes all readers beyond picturesque depictions of indigenous peoples in novels and pushes the *índio* out of the Amazon in the political imagination of readers. Furthermore, Devine Guzmán does not validate literary caricatures, but by using them for what they are, cultural representations, she acknowledges their real power to influence popular perceptions and political decisions. In this way, she forces academics who may consider these fictional narrative ephemeral or ancillary to acknowledge the consistent influence they have exerted on treatment of “Indians” in Brazil for centuries (and perhaps even in present times). On the other hand, for those with little exposure to the study of Brazil, the balance discussed above will serve as a nuanced base for further explorations.

In the same vein, the inclusion of indigenous activism in the work should help bring attention to the paths indigenous peoples seek to forge as they demand more equitable treatment in today’s Brazil. Academic activism of this sort may come across as heavy-handed from afar, but upon further examination it becomes clear that these movements are part and parcel of the trajectory of identity Devine Guzmán outlines earlier in the nation’s history. Moreover, her presentation of their actions, motives, and goals is not overzealous, but often deferential to indigenous voices. Since she points out their historic exclusion from discourses, to highlight newer indigenous voices appears the most logical choice. That said, the indigenous voices she does feature, namely those of indigenous author Eliane Potiguara and indigenous congressional candidate Marcos Terena, seem to come from above rather than below. Freed from the strictures and edicts of a single discipline, interviews or more personal documents would add texture to the arguments made at the macro level. While more cerebral narratives are absolutely necessary for their attempts to shape new paradigms for indigenous realities, one wonders whether the varied views of more quotidian, working-class indigenous experiences

in multiple settings might both test and expand the compendium of identity so expertly argued. Even so, she still accomplishes her goal of showing the incoherence of a purportedly inclusive “Brazilianess” for indigenous people who continue to push for fuller inclusion in all aspects of society.

A masterful balance between representation and reality of the represented, *Natives and National* helps students at all levels plumb the depths of “the indigenous question” with all its distorted answers and responses. It should be included on the bookshelf of anyone interested in indigenous studies or in Brazilian history or literature. The challenge inherent in her conclusions will push scholars to more complex analyses of indigeneity, whether in the past or the present.

Note

[1]. The concept is found in Philip Joseph Deloria, *Playing Indian* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1998).

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