THEORIZING RACE AND SPACE IN A TRANSNATIONAL CONTEXT

Structure:

Working route: read about India. When ready, write a draft about racial ideology. Start a bibliography just for the Indian case.

1. Intro (3 pages)
2. White Supremacy (5 pages)
3. Mestizaje (5 pages)
4. Biological White Supremacy (5 pages)
5. White supremacy in India (5 pages): Caste and race? Does the caste system implies that India developed a particular racial ideology? How does this racial ideology interact with white supremacy?
6. Conclusion (3 pages)
7. Bibliography (3 pages)

Introduction

This research adheres to the understanding that racism is a European invention instituted through the project of colonialism (Quijano, 1999; Escobar, 2003; Wynter, 2003; Dussel, 2004; Mignolo, 2005; Grosfoguel, 2012), contrary to Euro-centric views that locate the origin of racism during the enlightenment and the emergence of modern sciences, nation-states, and the French and Industrial Revolutions (Dewulf, 2015). This view also tends to limit the understanding of racism to biological and biopolitical approaches (Escobar, 2003; Grosfoguel, 2012). Smedley (1999) goes as far as to situate the origin of racism in 17th century United States, transferring notions of Anglo-Saxon exceptionalism to American exceptionalism. This Euro-centric literature is characterized by brushing aside knowledge produced in the global South and limiting its bibliography primarily to literature generated in English. With a great dose of irony, it could be argued that Anglo-centric work about racism reproduces epistemic racism by reinforcing the knowledge production complex, which tends to ignore research advanced in the global South and other languages than English (Robinson, 2003).

On the other hand, decolonial authors tend to locate the origin of racism much earlier in the 15th century, as a result of Europe's exploration of the Atlantic and Indian oceans, the moment of encounter between Europeans and Indigenous peoples in the Americas, the enslavement of Africans, the expulsion of Jews and Muslims from the South of Europe, and the emergence of the capitalist world system and modernity (Quijano, 1999; De La Cadena, 2000 and 2005; Escobar, 2003; Wynter, 2003; Dussel, 2004; Mignolo, 2005; Grosfoguel, 2012; Restrepo, 2013). These authors favour a more comprehensive interpretation of racism, including religious, cultural, and biological approaches. According to this understanding, racism is a global racial ideology that is foundational to the Americas. However, its relevance is not confined to the past because it has had a remarkable influence through the eras of conquest-colonization, independence, and in the present.

This research explores the processes of racialization that affect internally displaced persons (IDPs), Venezuelan migrants, and Colombian refugees; and the ideologies of racism that dominate across the scales and regions of Latin America and North America. Although attention is given to the local, national and regional scales, the focus is on urban spaces and nations where the populations part of the study are arriving (Pereira, Colombia, and Toronto, Canada). Drawing from Omi and Winant (1994), this study understands the ideology of racism as the hegemonic "way in which society is organized and ruled" to "redistribute resources along particular racial lines" (56), benefiting members of one or more privileged racial groups in detriment of members of one or more oppressed racial groups, which have been deemed racially inferior. An ideology of racism is reproduced in "both social structures and everyday experiences" (Omi and Winant, 1994, 56), this reproduction is what guarantees its permanence. In other words, everyday racism, including racial microagressions and actions that might not seem racist at first sight, and structural racism are both necessary to sustain racism. It requires cooperation as much as power to sustain the ideology of racism. It is

challenging for a member of the society under the dominance of an ideology of racism to escape from it. This difficulty applies to those that benefit as well as those that are oppressed by it because the ideology of racism is part of the way they understand the world and "make sense of the things they do and see -ritually, repetitively- on a daily basis" (Fields, 1990, 110).

This study understands racialization as "the sociohistorical process by which racial categories are created, inhabited, transformed, and destroyed" (Omi and Winant, 1994, 55). Although processes of racialization include all bodies because all humans have been classified in racial categories, it is undeniable that some racial categories are more visible than others. Racial formation is key in the creation of racial categories. It is based on the constant interaction between racial ideology structure and everyday experiences. (Omi and Winant, 1994). This study focuses on the dynamic dimension of processes of racialization and how it determines which bodies are deemed racially inferior and consequently excluded and oppressed within the dominant ideology of racism. A key element is who has power and agency to determine their and others' racial classification. The literature reviewed and research fieldwork indicates that whiteness is left untouched and invisible at the center (Smedly, 1999; Ahmed, 2000; Thobani, 2007, Dhamoon, 2009; Paschel, 2013; Benjamin, 2019). In contrast, other groups are racialized constantly with the strategic use of physical characteristics, culture, language, traditions, religion, ancestry, marriage, relationships, manner of dress, diet, place of origin and residence, gender, class, among others (Backhouse, 1999; Castro-Gómez, 2005; Rappaport, 2014). Racialization processes are about constructing ideas to discriminate individuals and groups of people based on race and building and reproducing white superiority. Everyday discourse, law and policy, the ordering and organizing of space are crucial components of racialization processes. This dynamic causes exclusion of racialized individuals and communities. According to Brahinsky et al. (2014), racial projects "classify and assign social and political meaning to difference," (1139) which

is used to allocate goods, services, and resources. Thus, “[r]acial projects historically have focused on endowing or restricting access to property, social privileges, and access to social and geographic spaces” (Brahinsky et al. 2014, 1139).

This chapter is divided into three sections that address critical theoretical concepts and themes of this research: racial ideology, European colonization, racialization, racial formation, white supremacy, and *mestizaje*. The first part explores white supremacy as the dominant racial ideology globally and how functional was the European colonization of much of the world to establish this ideology. The work of Fanon (1986, 2004), Wynter (2003), Quijano (1999), Castro-Gómez (2005), Grosfoguel (2012), among others, is helpful to understand how white supremacy created a line that divides the world population in conjunction with binaries such as White/racialized, colonizer/colonized, possessor/dispossessed, human/non-human. The second part explores *mestizaje* as a racial ideology characterized by racial fluidity. However, the racial transgressions of *mestizaje* do not undermine racism; instead, they reinforce white supremacy by pursuing whiteness. This section also argues that the colonial enterprises in most of Latin America created middle-ground societies, defined briefly as societies where European colonial powers could not isolate completely Indigenous peoples and *mestizaje* became the dominant racial ideology (Veracini, 2011). *Mestizaje* is a subcategory of white supremacy that responded to a particular context where Africans, Europeans, and Indigenous peoples were in constant contact. The Latin American group Modernity/Coloniality (Quijano, 1999; de la Cadena, 2000 and 2005; Escobar, 2003; Dussel, 2004; Mignolo, 2005; Grosfoguel, 2012; Restrepo, 2013) is crucial to elaborate these arguments.

The final section addresses Canada and North America as a world region where European colonization founded settler-colonial societies and developed a particular version of white supremacy based on science and biology. The arguments developed in this section are based

on the theoretical work of Indigenous, postcolonial, and anti-racist scholars such as Lawrence (2003, 2005), Coulthard (2007), Thobani (2007), Smith (2010), Walcott (2011, 2015), and Simpson (2014), among others. Racism and its ideologies are causally connected with the history of colonialisms. This study joins Morgensen's (2012) call to conduct studies that account for the specificities of particular contexts, rather than applying general theories of racism and colonialism, "[a]ll such theories must be revisited to ask if they erroneously generalise specific colonial situations, and to provincialise all such situations by positioning them comparatively" (5).

The Globalization of Racism

White supremacy is an ideology that maintains the racial superiority of a particular group of people. Even more damaging, according to authors such as Fanon (1986) and Wynter (2003), white supremacy is an ideology that dictates who deserves to be recognized as human and who is not. Fanon (1986) argues that the world is divided between Blacks/racialized people and Whites, "there are two camps: the white and the black" (2). For Fanon (1986), racialized people and White people have a dialectical relation, "White men consider themselves superior to black men […] Black men want to prove white men, at all costs, the richness of their thought, the equal value of their intellect." (3) There is a hierarchy of humanity divided by a line of superiority/inferiority, the specifics of how this hierarchy operates are dictated by the particular history of colonialism of each place. In this understanding, racism/white supremacy, or the line that divides human superiority and inferiority, is not just determined by skin colour; it can be determined by culture, religion, ethnicity, and language, among others. This understanding of racism creates two spaces, a zone of being occupied by those whose humanity is accepted and a zone of non-being inhabited by people whose humanity is not fully recognized (Grosfoguel, 2012). According to

Fanon (1986), racialized people are located in the zone of non-being because their humanity has been denied.

The Latin American group Modernity/Coloniality presents a comprehensive understanding of racism that builds over the analysis of Fanon (1986, 2004) and other decolonial authors. Quijano (1999) argues that racism, as we know it today, started more than 500 years ago with the colonization of the Americas and that it was essential to the consolidation of European identity and modernity (Dusell, 2004). Grosfoguel (2012) locates the origin of racism in Spain when the Catholic monarchy put forward the idea of "*pureza de sangre*" (purity of blood) to exclude Jews and Muslims. In a self-preservation effort, more than 300,000 Jews converted to Catholicism to "purify their blood," avoid the Inquisition and remain in the expanding kingdom (Smedley, 1999). Spain's unification presented traits of the modern nation-state: one people, one identity, one state, one language, one religion. The imposition of this nation-state runs parallel to the encounter of Columbus with the Americas and the so-called Age of Discovery. Therefore, the unification of Spain, Europe's exploration of the world, and the conquest of the Americas would inform each other concerning racism and the construction of the Other. The encounter with Indigenous peoples generated the idea of "*pueblos sin religión*" (people without religion), which should be read as people without soul, "more animals than humans." (Wynter, 2003) This process of dehumanization represents an instance where the quality of humans of many different groups, homogenized under the category of "Indian," was questioned. Spain was at the time the leading European nation, and these arguments would influence the racial ideology of white supremacy.

The debate that followed in Spain after the encounter with the Americas inaugurated two modern trends of racism. On the one hand, biological racism, with Ginés de Sepulveda arguing that "Indians" did not have soul, private property, and trade. On the other hand, cultural racism, with De Las Casas arguing that "Indians" were barbarians, they did not know

God, but their salvation could come with “being civilized” (Wynter, 2003; Grosfoguel, 2012). These discourses persisted and were adapted after the Age of Enlightment, the historic moment where Anglo-centric understandings of racism locate the origin of racism (Smedley, 1999; Dewulf, 2015). The meaning of “not having a soul” moved from religious to biological grounds and became “not having human genes,” while “being barbarians” evolved to “in need of civilization.” (Wynter, 2003; Grosfoguel, 2012) Simultaneously, Africans entered this debate via slavery. After Indians were deemed “innocent” because they did not have the opportunity to learn about the “one and true God”, they were in need of Christianity, Africans were deemed soulless because they rejected the “real God” and were condemned to slavery. At this point, race as a combination of physical and non-physical characteristics that went beyond skin colour came into the debate creating a division between humans and non-humans, where all the subcategories of the Other, whether Jewish, Muslim, Indian, or Black, informed and reinforced distinct, although articulated, forms of racism that deprived them of their humanity (Wynter, 2003; Grosfoguel, 2012; Wirth, 2014). White supremacy is the ideology of racism, the origin from where racism and all its context-specific ideologies depart. If we ask what it is to be human according to the dominant ideology of racism? The answer is to be Western, imitate its cultures, speak its languages, participate in its economy, follow its political models, and learn their knowledge and sciences. Eurocentrism is the answer imposed by European colonialism.

White supremacy has its roots in the colonial era that saw Europe colonizing most of the world and imposing its claim to racial superiority and its culture, languages, economy, politics, knowledge, and science. Quijano (1999) connects colonization, modernity, racism, power, and knowledge. He argues that the global division of power installed during the European colonization of the world persists today with few changes. Europe’s colonial enterprises created binaries such as possessors/ dispossessed, White/racialized,

colonizer/colonized. According to Quijano (1999), colonization also implied a dual process of stealing and denying, taking the knowledge that was useful for Europeans and suppressing the knowledge that was not practical for them, which annihilated entire cultures. This process sought to impose European modernity globally. Quijano (1999) coins the concept of the coloniality of power to denote Eurocentric rationality. Like the development of private property, this rationality builds a relationship between Europe and the rest of the world where the first is a subject/owner and the second is an object/property. According to Walcott (2011), one cannot make sense of the present "without taking into account the context of Western global expansion over the last five hundred years, a period in which Europe reordered the globe under its own terms or ways of knowing as the only legitimate way of being […] and the invention of the modern nation-state in its current liberal democratic form." (15-16) Colombia, Venezuela, and Canada were central to the violent history of conquest, colonization, genocide, and slavery advanced by Europe in the Americas and the formation of nation-states under the European model. The colonial project that established white supremacy as the dominant racial ideology at the global scale was not only imposed through force; it was also made desirable. According to Quijano (1999), "European culture was made seductive: it gave access to power. After all, beyond repression, the main instrument of all power is its seduction. Cultural Europeanization was transformed into an aspiration." (42)

White supremacy is a racial ideology that establishes humans' superiority for those that identify as European descendants/White. This ideology reinforces the supremacy of White bodies through small and big instances of white privilege on the microgeographies of daily life. Quijano (1999) explains that Western domination operates simultaneously at a global scale.

> If we observe the main lines of exploitation and social domination on a global scale, the main lines of world power today, and the distribution of resources and work among the world population, it is very clear that the large majority of the exploited, the dominated, the discriminated against, are precisely the members of the 'races', 'ethnies', or 'nations' into

which the colonized populations, were categorized in the formative process of that world power (42).

And at a local scale, even to the point that racialized bodies have internalized this domination, "the relationship between the European –also called 'Western' –culture, and the others, continues to be a colonial domination [...] a colonization of the imagination of the dominated" (Quijano, 1999, 42).

Racism (understood as white supremacy) and capitalism share the same origin; they both emerged in the colonial era. Colonialism was the period of capitalism's original accumulation (Wolf, 1993), and capitalism, in this stage, built the foundations of white supremacy over the different peoples that Europe was encountering during the exploration of the world (Robinson, 1983). Salazar (2002) presents the idea that one of the cradles of capitalism was the mining city of Potosí in today's Bolivia. The development of this extractive capitalist economy followed the production of the silver mines, it started in the mid 16th century, reached its peak in the 17th century, and collapsed by the end of the 18th century, just about the time that Eurocentric views of modernity located the origin of capitalism in the North of Europe. The emergent capitalist economy of Potosí combined different forms of labour: Indigenous slave labour under the *Mita* system -a system that rotates Indigenous tribute labour from surrounding communities under Indigenous authority, African slave labour, and wage labour under the *Minga* system -originally a system to coordinate collective work for the well-being of the whole community or society (Salazar, 2002). This organization of labour introduced one of the critical elements of capitalism, the freedom of labour. This element was so influential in Potosí that non-Indigenous bodies participated in the wage-labour market of the *Minga* system along with Indigenous workers. Even Indigenous bodies that worked under the *Mita* system (free voluntary labour) contracted their labour in the *Minga* system during their resting days of the week (Salazar, 2002). Smedley (1999) presents an interesting analysis of the connection between white supremacy and capitalism in the Southern United States.

Smedley (1999) argues that the White colonial elite divided the masses of poor along racial lines to prevent the development of class conscience among the working class from all races.

> Class divisions diminished in the minds of poor whites and they saw themselves as having something in common with the propertied class, symbolized by their light skins and common origins in Europe. With laws progressively continuing to reduce the rights of blacks and Indians, it was not long before the various European groups coalesced into a white "racial" category whose high-status identity gave them access to wealth, power, opportunity, and privilege (Smedley, 1999, 695).

The Coffee Region in Colombia and Toronto, Canada, have particular racial dynamics at the local, national, and regional scales, although they both share white supremacy as the dominant racial ideology at the global scale. However, these two nations and their corresponding world regions present particular racial ideologies. Colombia and Latin America are dominated by *mestizaje*, while Canada and North America are dominated by a version of white supremacy where science and biology have been historically the dominant factor. White supremacy was imposed via colonizations, a concept that must be plural when addressing spaces that respond to different colonial projects. In Canada and North America, the colonial project created settler-colonial societies, while in Colombia and Latin America created middle-ground societies (Veracini, 2011). These specific colonial projects demanded specific racial ideologies. Settler-colonial societies use white supremacy openly, while middle-ground societies use *mestizaje* as their racial ideology. These two ideologies have distinct characteristics such as the fluid and static understanding of race, but they both share the belief in the superiority of whiteness.

Veracini (2011) explains that "settler colonial orders often replace previous colonial regimes, denouncing already established and mutually constructed 'middle ground' traditions (when indigenous people possess enough power to force non-indigenous interlopers to accommodate some of their social and cultural practices)." (5) The main difference is that in North America, European settlers built societies where indigeneity and blackness were excluded, in the case of Indigenous peoples, even separated geographically as much as

possible from colonized spaces. In Latin America, European settlers did not manage to impose a “settler-colonial order” completely, as they never subsumed “mixed settler/indigenous life […] into the ‘settler’ or the ‘indigenous’ category” (Veracini, 2011, 8). It rather evolved from a “middle ground tradition” that strengthened the *Mestiza* category, which was constructed over the heritage of Indigenous, Afrodescendants, and Europeans, even though it privileged the European ancestry, while racializing and discriminating Indigenous and Afro-descendants. This is the historical background of *mestizaje* as a racial ideology.

White supremacy divided humans into races that dictate superiority and inferiority. These racial categories have the power to form an individual’s and group’s identities, but they are also under a constant tension between their static and fluid character. Riley and Ettlinger (2011) offer two interpretations of racial formation in their study of racism. One framework is named “interpellative” and sees racial identity as static and permanent. The other is called “agentive” and understands racial identity as fluid and mutable. Veninga (2009) emphasizes the agentive character of racial identities using the concept of “slippage,” defined as a body performing a different race than it has been classified, as an act of resistance to racialization and subjectification. This performance is an act that produces and transforms the meaning of race in everyday life. Many subaltern groups oppressed by racial categories adopt practices identified with whiteness as a survival strategy, an intentional and selective process that can help them to improve their chances in life without denying their identity and culture. There is a constant tension between the static and fluid dimensions of racial identity. One adverse reaction to the fluid character of racial identity that emerge from an essentialist point of view, is the denial of an individuals’ capacity to perform actions and roles ascribed to another racial group and pointing to those that do not conform to the racial norms as disloyal to the racial group in which they have been classified (Gutiérrez, 2015). This denial constitutes another

form of racial oppression because, in most cases, the target of these critiques are precisely racialized subjects trying to escape their racial confinement, which includes their bodies, cultures, and specific geographic locations.

White supremacy as a racial ideology has a geographic dimension. Fanon (2004) refers to the division between racialized and non-racialized spaces as the "compartmentalized world." Although Fanon (2004) refers specifically to colonial spaces, his words have explanatory power on a global scale. As Fanon (2004) writes, the "world is divided in two, is inhabited by different species [...] it is clear that what divides this world is first and foremost what species, what race one belongs to. In the colonies, the economic infrastructure is also a superstructure. The cause is effect: You are rich because you are white, you are white because you are rich." (5) Studies about orientalism, understood as a discourse that builds the identity of Europe and its people as a "civilized" continent in a dialectical relation with the "Orient" (Said, 1978), and tropicality -understood as a discourse that similarly constructs the identity of Europe, and by extension Europeans and its descendants that inhabit "the temperate world", as "moderate and hard-working", in opposition to the peoples that inhabit the "tropical lands". In short, a discourse that establishes a form of environmental Eurocentrism. (Clayton and Bowd, 2006)- have addressed the spatial division between racialized and non-racialized geographies. This division overlaps with the separation between the global North and the global South at the global scale. At the national scale, this division corresponds to a separation between rural peripheral areas and urban centers (Castro-Gómez, 2005; Gutiérrez, 2019), or reserve and off reserve in the Canadian context. Research in urban studies has also addressed the geographic dimension of white supremacy, demonstrating a repetitive pattern where racialized bodies are confined to spaces of neglect and exclusion, while whiteness dominates in spaces of privilege (McCaan, 1999; Nelson, 2000; Keil and Harris, 2006; Veninga, 2009, Shabazz, 2015).

Racialized people are confined to the "tropics" or rural areas, and they are seen as out of place in urbanized Colombia.

Castro-Gómez (2005) explains that the knowledge of coloniality (Quijano, 1999) developed a "racial science" in Latin America that claims neutrality and universalism (De La Cadena, 2000, 2005). Different technologies were used in this emergent "racial science", such as the taxonomy that classified different races in the *casta* system -defined briefly as a hierarchical racial structure created by Europeans to privilege whiteness while oppressing blackness, indigeneity, and other mixtures in between (Friedemann and Arocha, 1986; Wade, 1993; Martínez, 2008; Catelli, 2012) and the discourse of tropicality. The Colombian version of this spatial discourse, classified individuals and groups, assigning moral and physical characteristics according to a region, latitude, and altitude, adapting European ideas of environmental determinism and climatic racism (Wade, 1993; Castro-Gómez, 2005). Tropicality is a crucial concept in Colombia's racial ideology, but its premises are not confined to Colombia. Tropicality's ideas, mainly the geographical exclusion from urban spaces of Indigenous peoples, resonate in Canada, where Indigenous people are imagined as belonging to reserves, located mainly in remote rural areas (Gill, 2002). These imaginary geographies that confined racialized people to specific spaces produce a circular logic of confinement, where a space is racialized because the people who inhabit are racialized bodies, and individuals are racialized because they live in a racialized space (Lipstiz, 2007), are another instance where the absurdity of racism is revealed. The Colombian territory is located entirely between the Tropics of Cancer and Capricorn, which constitutes the tropical region of the world. In other words, all Colombians, independently of how the identify racially, or the racial classification they have been subjected to, live in the tropics. Indigenous peoples in Canada populated the whole territory before colonization, and they were forced to move into the reserves by the colonial project. Even under extreme circumstances of exclusion and

forced displacement, Indigenous peoples have sustained a historical presence in all urban spaces in Canada. Beyond the absurdity of racial ideologies, the spatial division between racialized and non-racialized territories has very concrete consequences. Racialized people's existence is challenged when they try to transgress racial borders at every scale constantly.

***Mestizaje*: Racial fluidity and Racism.**

According to Smith (1996), *mestizaje* has at least three different but related meanings. First, *mestizaje* corresponds to social and biological processes that create a group of people of mixed heritage; second, *mestizaje* is understood as the identification of an individual or community with the *mestizo* identity at the communal or national scale. This meaning is immediately connected with the third one, *mestizaje* is a political discourse that identifies the political, cultural, and racial character of *Mestizas*. In this study, *mestizaje* is given an additional meaning, it is understood as the dominant racial ideology in Colombia. The origin and history of *mestizaje* started with the violent moment of encounter and the construction of racial hierarchies in Latin America. Racial categories were built into the *casta* system. This hierarchical racial structure represented European anxieties about miscegenation and the need to construct and regulate changing racial borders by pathologizing them (Castro-Gómez, 2005; Catelli, 2012; Rappaport, 2014). The racial categories created by the *casta* system were not static across space; their meaning changed between the metropole and the colonies. For example, in Spain, religion was the main factor for acquiring *pureza de sangre* (blood purity) certificates that recognized whiteness, while in the Americas, race was more relevant (Castro-Gómez, 2005; Rapapport, 2014). The process of *mestizaje*, understood as social and biological processes that create a group of people of mixed heritage (Smith, 1996), was manipulated by the colonial White elite using the *casta* system to create racial categories that were fundamental to the social and political structure that guaranteed and reproduced White power and supremacy (De La Cadena, 2000, 2005; Gould, 1996; Hale, 1996). Economically,

politically, and socially, the *casta* system responded to the need to classify, order, exploit, and control people in order to tax and maintain power relations and social hierarchies reproduced through access to particular spaces, education, and professions. Culturally, it represented racial anxieties and obsessions with whiteness and whitening (Castro-Gómez, 2005; Catelli, 2012; Rapapport, 2014).

Mestizaje became Latin America's racial ideology due to the emergence of *Mestiza* people as the predominant demographic group of Latin America (Wade, 1993). *Mestizas'* primary advantage over the Indigenous population was its spatial mobility. Consequently, many Indigenous people started to embrace a *mestiza* identity, or more precisely, identify with it. This identification must be understood as a strategic action to escape the constraints imposed on Indigenous groups as socio-political units. In some cases, this identification can be understood as a form of denial of Indigenous identity, but it cannot be reduced to that (Salazar-Soler, 2002; Castro-Gómez, 2005; Catelli, 2012). A crucial aspect of this dynamic is that middle-ground societies are as interested in Indigenous labour as they are on Indigenous land, contrary to settler-colonial societies, whose primary goal is to appropriate Indigenous land (Coulthard, 2007, 2014). While Indigenous labour was tied to the land, in many cases as slave labour, *Mestizas* could leave Indigenous territories and perform wage labour in the cities (Rapapport, 2014). This spatial mobility responded mainly to processes of urbanization, industrialization, and education. The agency of Indigenous people who reclaimed a *Mestiza* identity can be framed as process of *mestizaje* from below, understood as "a *mestizaje* that is not defined by the state but claimed and remade by Indigenous people." (Alberto, 2021, 239).

Rapapport (2014) explains that it is more accurate to speak of identifications than identity concerning racial categories in the colonial era because the same individual could claim different racial identities through their life (De La Cadena, 2005). The ambivalence of the *Mestiza* category implied that they did not compose an ethno-cultural, collective, and

sociological group with privileges and responsibilities such as Indigenous nations, but simply a category of identification that was pretty loose and named many people that could not be denominated otherwise. In this sense, it was an inclusive category that people classified in different races could identify with (Rapapport, 2014). This identification of ordinary people with the category of *mestizaje* was socially accepted and became a central aspect of the ideology of *mestizaje*, which in turn was fundamental to develop nationalist discourses and modernizing narratives in Latin America.

Castro-Gómez (2005) argues in his research about race, science, and the Enlightenment in *Nueva Granada* (the name of the territory that comprises Colombia before independence from Spain) that the imaginary of whiteness was an essential aspect of coloniality and modernity in Latin America. Although he clarifies that whiteness was more than skin colour, it was also related to religion, clothing, heritage, behaviour, and knowledge production (Castro-Gómez, 2005; De La Cadena, 2000, 2005; Catelli, 2012; Rapapport, 2014). Racial classification was a determining factor in an individual's social position. Being able to perform whiteness, which included practicing Catholicism, probing Spanish heritage, dressing and behaving as Spanish, was a guarantee for receiving White privileges, such as access to public office, the Church hierarchy, intellectual work, and the right to wear particular clothing, while racialized people could only perform manual labour (Castro-Gómez, 2005; Catelli, 2012; Rapapport, 2014). There were tensions within the category of whiteness. Latin American nations' independence struggles were led by the White *Criolla* elite, who, despite being the direct descendants of Europeans, did not have access to some positions of power reserved exclusively for Spaniards due to their place of birth.

Catelli (2012) uses the concept of *Criolla* agencies to address the initiatives that the *Criolla* elite adopted to establish itself as the dominant group in society. Catelli (2012) argues that the *casta* system in place during the colony was used to establish the racial superiority of

Criollas over racialized bodies (Castro-Gómez, 2005; Catelli, 2012; Rapapport, 2014). Simultaneously, *Criollas* used the discourse of *mestizaje* to connect themselves to an ancestral indigeneity and rescue some cultural elements of Afrodescendants and other subaltern groups that would become part of the emerging national cultures and identities. This strategic actions positioned *Criollas* as the "rightful" leaders of Latin American nations (Wade, 1993; De La Cadena, 2000, 2005). *Mestizaje* as a nationalist discourse was dominated and mobilized by White *Criolla* elites from the moment of independence (Wade, 1993; Smith, 1996). Similar to the role of Whites in settler-colonial societies, where they seek to become the natives of the land (Morgensen, 2012). *Mestizaje* is revealed as a contradictory racial ideology that denied Indigenous presence to deliver the land to White *Criollos,* while at the same time it appropriated Indigenous and Black *Cimarrones* (maroons) anticolonial struggles to claim that the nation was the product of *Criollos* heroic resistance against foreign invaders (Gould, 1996).

There is an interesting discussion about *mestizaje* and its relation to racial identity's static or fluid character. The history and essence of *mestizaje* indicate that it has been a racial ideology that allows race fluidity. This characteristic is reflected in the present. Different factors such as gender, class, clothing, place of birth, and education, among others, can allow an individual to trespass racial borders and perform a different race than it has been assigned. Rapapport (2014) highlights some interesting gender dynamics concerning the performativity of race during the colonial era. She argues that *Mestiza* women were more likely to be accepted as White Spanish and members of the colonial elite, while *Mestizo* men were relegated to inferior racial and class positions. This gender difference was connected to another racial/gender dynamic. Indigenous males were feminized; they were "like females" who could not defend themselves from conquest and colonization. Females were apt for *mestizaje*, reproducing a pattern that started with *La Malinche* and her "*hijas de la*

chingada",[1] which in turn accentuated the loss of manhood of Indigenous males. In most cases, Indigenous women were forced to participate in these acts of emasculation. However, in some instances, they adapted to the racial ideology of *mestizaje* by rejecting Indigenous partners and selecting light-skin partners that were a pathway to whitening (Gould, 1996).

In the present, the place of birth and residence, class and economic status, education, accent, relationships, and clothing, among others particularities, affect the way people are classified racially. In previous research about internalized racism among *Mestizas* (Gutiérrez, 2015), I observed that individuals could be classified into different racial categories depending on the characteristics mentioned above. For example, an Afrocolombian man born in Chocó, a region located on the Colombian Pacific coast and rainforest, a space marked as racialized by the discourse of tropicality, was racialized differently from one born in Medellín, Colombia's second major city. The Afrocolombian born in Chocó was subjected to more intense forms of racial discrimination, while the second could "pass" as a non-racialized body in different contexts and circumstances thanks to his place of birth, education, class, friendships, and marital relationship. Something as simple as clothing allowed a person to trespass a racial border at least temporarily. In the same research, an Indigenous woman shared situations where she could pass for a *Mestiza* when she was not dressed in traditional indigenous clothes. In other occasions, the same Indigenous woman was the target of racial insults when dressing in traditional indigenous clothing. *Mestiza's* clothing made her "normal," part of the ideal bodyscape and racial imaginaries of inclusion in the Colombian nation (Ahmed, 2000).

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[1]Mexican author Octavio Paz argues that all *Mestizas* are "*hijas de la chingada*" [children of the one that was fucked] (1981, 83). According to Paz, *Mestizas* are the children of the male Spanish European *conquistador*/settler/rapist and the female Indigenous slaved/dispossessed/raped. *La Chingada* is *La Malinche*, a Nahuatl woman enslaved and exploited as an interpreter and as a sexual object by Hernán Córtes, the leader of the Spanish *conquistadores* that took over the Aztec Empire in the early sixteen century. *La Malinche* is the symbolic mother of all *Mestizas* (Anzaldúa 1999). She is an archetype representing the gender violence inflicted over a whole continent, and *mestizaje* results from an imposed openness through conquest and violation.

The instances were the Indigenous woman and the Black man from Medellín were able to "pass" for non-racialized bodies are exceptions, but they occur (Gutiérrez, 2015). In these cases, markers such as education, profession, class, place of birth, living in an urban setting, accent, friends, romantic partners, and clothing are all characteristics that can locate racialized subjects in a blurred space within the racial spectrum. The markers pointed above are constitutive of racial formation in the microgeographies of daily life, they are "racially coded characteristics" that positioned "race as common sense" (Omi and Winant, 1994, 60). Despite these exceptions, most interviewees in that research agreed that class could be changed over time if they managed to improve their economic status, but they could never change their race. This affirmation is not a contradiction with the experiences of racial ambiguity that they shared. It is complementary; it means that racialized people can receive racial privilege when they can perform whiteness, but it does not mean that they would never be subjected to racism over their lives, nor that they have complete agency about how they are perceived and classified in the racial spectrum. They might have moved the line that separates the zone of being from the zone of non-being temporarily, but they have not erased it permanently.

Mestizaje's fluid character has been criticized for its whitening dimension (Wade, 1993; Moreno, 2010). Whitening practices in the Colombian context echo Thobani's (2007) analysis of immigrants' assimilation into Canadian multiculturalism. In the Colombian case, it is the racialized subject within the nation that has to conform to the ideal body of the nation by performing whiteness. There is a complex contradiction within this idea. Although they constitute the majority of the Colombian population, *Mestizas* are forced to pursue and in some cases perform whiteness while being excluded at the national and international scale from this category of racial privilege. Another instance where *mestizaje* exhibited openly its connection with white supremacy, was during the rise of eugenics, defined briefly as "the science of improving human stock" (Carter, 2009, 467), in Latin America in the early 20th

century. At the time, the white *Criolla* elite promoted the migration of White Europeans to Latin American nations with the objective of whitening Latin American societies. Colombian did not manage to attract as many European migrants as other Latin American nations, such as Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Mexico, and Venezuela, among others, and in consequence was not very successful with its eugenics' project (Wade, 1993). *Mestizas* exclusion from racial privilege is due to the ascendance of white supremacy as a racial ideology. Thobani (2007) explains that "the colonial encounter was structured as a racial one: the violence necessary to bring into being the colonial order fashioned and propagated a racial order. It organized privileges, rights, and entitlements of juridical subjects through a race status." (38) The caveat is that while this race status has been more fluid in Latin America's *mestizaje*, it has "actuated as essential and immutable" (Thobani, 2007, 38) in North America's white supremacy.

The critique of whitening takes place in two realms. First, it becomes an abstract dimension in which ethnic groups are losing their cultural practices and adopting Western culture. This anxiety can be explained by taking into account Western's long history of colonization and domination in the Americas (Galeano, 1988; Quijano, 2009) and the extension of these dynamics in the present. Second, in a practical domain, it is concerned with whitening practices in the microgeographies of daily life, such as hair straightening, clothing, and body aesthetics. This preoccupation is immediately related to the discussion about race as static or fluid and anxieties about (re)defining what is acceptable and what is considered a betrayal of the racial category in which an individual has been classified. Racial borders are blurred in Colombia, which, fortunately, makes their regulation a problematic matter. This research has insisted on the fluid character of *mestizaje* as a racial ideology. Afrocolombians, Indigenous, and *Mestizas* transgress racial borders continuously, reclaiming agency while contesting oppressive racial boundaries in the microgeographies of daily life. On the other hand, many of these transgressions do not challenge *mestizaje's* white supremacy; instead,

they reinforce it by aspiring to whiteness. In other words, racialized people in Colombia tried to perform whiteness to access racial privilege, not to dismantle racial hierarchies (Gutiérrez, 2015).

Some academics have idealized *mestizaje* as a racial ideology (Vasconcelos, 1925; Anzaldúa, 1987). This idealization is evident in the concept of the cosmic race (Vasconcelos, 1925). As a nationalist discourse in Latin America, *Mestizaje* has been used to identify the national subjects politically, culturally, geographically, and racially against external forces. First against European empires and later the United States (Vasconcelos, 1925; Paz, 1972; Gould, 1996; De La Cadena, 2005), but this discourse hides internal racial and class differences, while the ruling elites have stayed Europeanized/whitened (Wade, 1993; Smith, 1996). Vasconcelos (1925) developed the theory of the cosmic race in the context of the Mexican revolution. This concept combated racism with racism because it pitted an idealized "*Mestiza* race" that brought together the best of the White, Indigenous and African races against the "Anglo-Aryan race" predominant in the global North. Understanding *mestizaje* as the emergence of a superior race that brings together the best characteristics of different racial groups is highly problematic. It has led to the imposition of *Mestizas* as the ideal bodies of Latin American nations after the independence from European Empires (Vasconcelos, 1925), excluding Afrodescendants and Indigenous peoples from these national projects (Wade, 1993; Gould, 1996; Hale, 1996). Although *mestizaje* vindicates a racial subaltern group at the global scale, its similarities with Arianism are highly problematic (Dewulf, 2015). Smith (2010) presents an additional critique of the concept of *mestizaje* offered by Anzaldúa (1987) because it "situates Indians and Europeans in a dichotomy that can be healed through *mestizaje*. Anzaldúa positions Indian culture as having 'no tolerance for deviance,' a problem that can be healed by the 'tolerance for ambiguity' that those of mixed race 'necessarily possess'" (Smith, 2010, 52). While the fluid character of *mestizaje* might be more tolerant to ambiguity, this

fluidity has not healed the dichotomy between Indigenous peoples and Europeans, it has clearly taken sides in this dichotomy as a variant of white supremacy.

The analysis of *Mestizaje* as a racial ideology must include the emergence and construction of *Mestizas* as a racial and cultural category that many Colombians and Latin Americans identify with, as well as the moments of encounter with all its violence, the colonial project, and the development of racism in the past and present of Latin America. One problem with limiting *mestizaje* to the moment of encounter in the contact zone is that it reduces the discussion and normalizes the position of *Mestizas* within this complex dynamic; it subsumes other racial identities within one single category. Walcott (2015) offers the concept of creolization as an interesting alternative to *mestizaje*. Walcott (2015) addresses the moment of encounter in the contact zone without romanticizing it, instead focusing on "the violent process of becoming through/in modernity," concluding that "the importance of creolization, conceptually, is that it locates our lives, histories, and experiences between brutality and something different –something more possible." (10) More than reducing *mestizaje* to the central role of *Mestizas* in the process that followed the moment of encounter in the contact zone, an analysis of *mestizaje* must address the violence that was central to it, the relations of domination and exploitation that framed it, and even current racial relations that are a consequence of these historical dynamics. This elaboration contributes to discussions about *mestizaje* from the ground and decolonial *mestizaje* because it goes beyond the two axes that sustained it as a racial ideology: the state and white supremacy (Alberto, 2021). This reflection is crucial for comprehending *mestizaje* as a racial ideology and the possibilities of racial justice in Colombia.

Biological Racism or North America's White Supremacy

The racial ideology of North America and Canada is white supremacy, and its colonial project seeks to form a settler-colonial society (Coulthard, 2007; Veracini, 2011; Morgensen,

2012; Simpson, 2014). Lawrence (2003) argues that "the very existence of settler societies is [...] predicated on maintaining racial apartheid, on emphasizing racial difference, white superiority, and "Native" inferiority." (8) North America developed a particular form of white supremacy that incorporates Europeans from different nationalities into the new nation-state (Wirth, 2014) but excludes Indigenous and Blacks through a strict policy of blood quantum and the one-drop rule (Amadahy and Lawrence, 2009). This inclusion/exclusion dynamic is part of the mythical basis for the "First New Nation" (Wirth, 2014, 40). This racial ideology integrated White bodies independently of their nationality, but it only offered exclusion, colonization, slavery, and genocide to racialized bodies (Dewulf, 2015).

One of the goals of settler-colonialism is to transform settlers/White bodies into the native people of the land (Morgensen, 2012), but it is confronted with the dilemma of the Indigenous peoples, "what to do with their souls, their bodies, their culture, and their difference" (Simpson, 2014, 19). Indigenous peoples are subjected to all forms of elimination, including physical (genocide), cultural (residential schools and prohibition of cultural practices), and statistical (blood quantum and other 'scientific measures' to manipulate and reduce the official population of Indigenous peoples). The main purpose of the elimination of Indigenous people is to dispossess and adjudicate their land to White settlers. This elimination does not have to be physical; it can be "arithmetical genocide or statistical extermination" (Lawrence, 2003, 19). The goal is to execute and legitimate the process of land appropriation and privatization by decreasing the official number of "status Indians." Simpson (2014) explains that "settler colonialism is defined by a territorial project -the accumulation of land- […] it is not labour but territory that it seeks. Because "Indigenous" peoples are tied to the desired territories, they must be "eliminated"; in the settler-colonial model, "the settler never leaves."" (19) The process of settlers' nativization is complemented with a strict regime of

immigration and citizenship that regulates the entrance of racialized bodies into the white nation (Lawrence and Dua, 2005).

The ideology of white supremacy in North America has been built in biological terms. Its most prominent feature has been using multiple forms of ‘scientific measures’ to classify people racially, including the systems of blood quantum for Indigenous peoples and the one-drop rule for Black people (Amadahy and Lawrence, 2009). The regulation of indigenous identity presented an absurd intersection of biology, science, racism, and sexism. Blood quantum and patrilineal lineage were used to regulate ethnic membership, imposing gendered violence when granting indigenous status by excluding Indigenous women who married non-Indigenous men and their descendants. Not having status meant not being an official member of a reserve, not having access to its resources and government funds, not being able to participate in an indigenous communal way of life, with all the consequences that this exclusion carries (Lawrence, 2003; Simpson, 2014).

There was a tipping point in the mid 19th century when Canada’s colonial project could have developed into a middle-ground society rather than a settler-colonial society. The Great Lakes area was populated by *Métis* communities that trespassed racial boundaries, “making it difficult for Anglo settlers to maintain clear boundaries between the colonizers and the colonized” (Lawrence, 2003, 8). The colonial government applied technologies to regulate Indigenous identity to reduce the number of those that could claim treaty rights and accelerate the process of land expropriation and the expiration of the bases for Indigenous treaty rights. This process is essential for capitalism. Simpson (2014) argues that “the modern order itself is entwined with capital as this accumulative and acquisitive force further detaches people from places and moves them into other zones for productivity, accumulation, and territorial settlement.” (18) These technologies of regulation and exclusion have been forced into Indigenous governance by limiting its resources, to the point that reserve’s Band Councils

have assumed the role of policing membership in their communities. The racial ideology behind the "first new nation" was not brand-new. Indeed, blood quantum used modern sciences and biology to reinvigorate the old Spanish concept of *pureza de sangre* (blood purity), which was used to expel Jews and Moors from Spain in 1515, even after many of them had converted to Catholicism to avoid execution and be allowed to remain in the nascent European nation (Wirth, 2014).

This chapter section started addressing the situation of two groups that have been targeted with particular malice by racism in North America. Special attention has been given to Indigenous peoples because of their unique role in Canada's history of colonialism and racism. Nevertheless, this does not mean that Indigenous peoples and Afrodescendants are the only racialized groups that have been oppressed by white supremacy in Canada. Delgado and Stefancic (2012) use the concept of differential racialization to explain how white supremacy in North America racializes non-White bodies differently according to the needs of the dominant group.

Backhouse (1999) studied the Supreme Court debate and decision that concluded that "Eskimos" were "Indians" within the Canadian Constitutional framework on April 5th, 1939. Interestingly, no Indigenous or Inuit were consulted during the discussion of this matter that significantly impacted their lives, as it defined and regulated their identity. This author offers an impressive set of characteristics that have been taken into consideration in processes of racialization within Canadian legislation for Indigenous and Inuit people,

> [L] anguage, customs and habits, mode of life, manner of dress, diet, demeanour, occupation, wealth, voting history, religion, blood, skin colour, head shape, hair texture, thickness of lips, beard characteristics, facial features, teeth size, eye shape and colour, nasal aperture, cranial capacity, stature, intermarriage, adoption, legitimacy at birth, place of residence, reputation, and the racial designation of one's companion (Backhouse, 1999, 55).

As it was explained previously, the use of this combination of characteristics is not new in racialization processes advanced within white supremacy, they all have been used

historically in the construction of the wall that separates humans from non-humans, the line that divides the zone of being from the zone of non-being (Fanon, 1986; Grosfoguel 2012). The following literature review explains briefly how different groups have been racialized in Canada and North America. Although it does not cover every single racialized group in this world region, it provides some examples that are effective to understand how white supremacy oppresses and excludes racialized bodies from the bodyscape of the nation (Ahmed, 2000; Delgado and Stefancic, 2012).

Mawani (2002) offers an analysis of colonial anxieties regarding interracial relations and mixed-race children (Indigenous-European). For Mawani (2002) "[t]he European desire for distinct racial classifications meant that Whites needed to constantly (re)create their own identities and superiority against the bodies of racialized others" (49). These fears could be classified into two realms. First, is the realm of the land, "[s]ince Euro-Canadian rule and the creation of a strong settler society in the province was contingent upon the acquisition and control of land, redefining 'half-breeds' as 'Indians' was an enormous social and political risk" (Mawani, 2002, 65). Second, colonial anxieties emerged from morality/purity of whiteness as "[l]awmakers were deeply preoccupied with racial (im)purity and the ideological and material consequences of miscegenation" (Mawani, 2002, 57). Mawani's analysis emphasizes the power relations behind processes of racialization. Since whiteness is never defined, it must determine indianness in order to recognize what it is not. Mixed-race presented a challenge because it trespassed these racial boundaries, technologies such as the liquor prohibition were simply disciplinary techniques to govern mixed-race movement across indigenous and white space. The consequences of the racialization of mixed-race people are evident today as they are still struggling to reclaim native ancestry and identity. Smedley (1999) refers to this as "the tragedy for 'mixed' people" (696), arguing that mix-race bodies face the dilemma of not having an identity because white supremacy has conditioned it to

belong to one single race. In North America's racial ideology, culture is understood as a biological set of hereditary characteristics. The biological argument is one of the false beliefs of white supremacy as if having a particular culture was part of our DNA, not something socially learned.

McKittrick (2006) documents Canada's participation in the slave trade, despite this nation's claim to innocence in this infamous commerce, where it "is often solely positioned as a safe haven (to U.S. fugitive slaves) and a land of opportunity (for black migrant workers, the Caribbean community, and migrants from the continent of Africa)" (98). The myth of Canadian innocence makes Black bodies and black spaces un-Canadian for those that have been in this territory long before it was a nation and most European settlers arrive, "reestablishing that "black" has never been believably Canadian" (102), and for those that have migrated, "reasserting that black subjects are perpetually and visibly non-Canadian" (McKittrick, 2006, 102). Nelson (2000) studies the erasing of Africville in Halifax, Nova Scotia, during the 1970s. Africville was an urban settlement created by Black loyalists who were initially given unproductive agricultural land at the end of the 18th century. They eventually moved to an empty lot in the city, from where they could access wage labour and practice self-sustaining activities such as fishing and farming. Nelson (2000) describes the destruction of Africville not as a singular event, but as "a process of ongoing eviction, suppression and denial" that "demonstrate[s] the inconceivability of an enduring black presence to a racist society." (164) McKittrick (2006) explains that processes of denial such as the one described by Nelson are the norm in Canada, where "subaltern populations have no relationship to the production of space." (92)

Nelson (2000) introduces a new layer in the analysis of processes of racialization by addressing the construction of the internal other through knowledge-making practices over racialized bodies in space. For Nelson (2000) "the control of space and the control of bodies

through control of space become tools for defining a community's physical and metaphorical boundaries, its character, and how individuals or groups will be determined through such understanding and associations." (167-168) Africville was constructed as a slum as it is surrounded by rail lines, an oil plant storage facility, a bone mill, a slaughterhouse, a leather tanning plant, a tar factory, a foundry, a prison, an infectious disease hospital, and the city dump. Additionally, its houses were left to deteriorate by not allowing its inhabitants to do renovations and access public services such as water lines, sewerage, garbage collection, and police services. Ironically, these poor conditions were used against Africville inhabitants to justify their eviction. Nelson (2000) explains how the space of the internal other is necessary "in order to preserve the purity of dominant, ruling space," (170) but this space of racial marginality has to be central to facilitate the relation with dominant space, still outside "society-community-nation-progress-time-space-history." (172)

Burman (2007) presents an analysis of the racialization of Caribbean women in Canada that evidences how processes of racialization play out differently for women, men, and children within the same racial category, as it is functional for the white settler nation society. According to Burman (2007) "the conditions of inclusion of deportable subjects: the nation-building project needs people who are identifiable at once as deportable and as salvageable or in need of patronage." (179) McKittrick (2006) explains that deportable Black bodies do not have a place in Canada, "the hypervisual black subject is dangerously un-Canadian." (102) On the other hand, the identification of redeemable subjects is necessary to demonstrate the kindness and authority of the host over the white nation.

These socio-spatial histories and conditions, wherein gender, race, poverty, and deportability intersect with the nation and regional (Caribbean) migratory processes, narrow the inhabitable space of Canada and discipline the subject by circumscribing everyday mobility and micromanaging the criminal deemed reformable. Through spatial confinement, bodies are stabilized to make them less threatening in a reproduction of a certain colonial logic (Burman, 2007, 185).

Black bodies have to endure a tension that oscillates between absence and hypervisibility. The absent is redeemable, while the hypervisible is deportable. But those that can stay are subjected to technologies that keep them in place “the spatialization of the underclass, stereotyping blackness, overpolicing black communities, racial profiling, criminalizing black communities, refusing black Canadian citizenship” (McKittrick, 2006, 101).

Keil and Ali (2006) address the racialization of East Asians during the two outbreaks of SARS respiratory disease in March and May 2004, which killed 44 people. According to these authors, “racialization occurred through the association of the disease with things Chinese, exotic and familiar, that were extraneous to the existing Chinatowns in downtown Toronto and to the formation of new Chinatowns in Toronto’s suburbs, but that were central to tying SARS to Chinese bodies and communities worldwide” (Keil and Ali, 2006, 44). In this case, racialization is a dynamic process that uses events such as epidemics to reinforce white supremacy in a white settler society, “as a biopolitical regulator of a post-national kind to a certain degree […] border control and internal control of infected bodies […] we might need the phantasmagorical construction of the pandemic as part of the biopolitical regime of our time?” (Keil and Ali, 2006, 41). This assessment has gained new relevance during the COVID-19 pandemic between that currently affects the world.

Razack (2007) studies the debate about the implementation of Islamic principles, described as Sharia Law by the Islamic Institute of Civil Justice in 2003 Ontario’s Arbitration Act, which allows “individuals to hire third parties to privately adjudicate their conflicts using any agreed upon rules or laws” (5) and had been used by Jews and other groups. According to Razack (2007), this debate reflected social anxieties about Muslims that have become common since the events of 9/11 in 2001. Razack (2007) attempts to balance the rise of fundamentalism and initiatives that negatively affect women’s situation while recognizing the racist dimension of this debate.

> Strategies to confront violence against women […] fail if they mostly work to install the colour line between modern white subjects and pre-modern non-white subjects, between those who help and those who require assistance. Strategies born of such evangelical impulses seldom undermine the structures and practices that both give rise to and sustain violence against women for the simple reason that such structures are not even acknowledged (Razack, 2007, 4-5).

Razack (2007), similarly to Burman (2007), explains how gender intersects with race in processes of racialization. In this case, female Muslim bodies are used strategically to reproduce the idea that Western culture is superior to cultures where Islam is the predominant religion while reinforcing negative stereotypes about Muslim men and women. The case studies presented by Nelson (2000), Mawani (2002), McKittrick (2006), Razack (2007), Burman (2007), Keil and Ali (2006) exemplify racialization processes advanced within white supremacy in North America. They evidence that racial formation (Omi and Winant, 1994) is a dynamic process. This is the racial ideology that Colombian refugees must face in Toronto.

Conclusion

This chapter begins with a methodological discussion and then proceeds with a discussion on some of the key concepts used in this research such as racism, race ideology, racial formation, racialization, white supremacy, and *mestizaje*. Racism or race ideology is defined as a system that organizes a society on racial terms and divides resources among the racial groups it creates, giving privileges to one group while oppressing and excluding the others. It influences how people think and understand the world, using a combination of force and cooperation to ensure its legitimation and reproduction. Racialization is a central process in race ideology; it is the active process that creates the racial categories based on an absurd and incoherent combination of physical and immaterial characteristics. Racialization is closely connected to racial formation. Everyday experiences and the macro-level structure come together to reinforce racial formation (Omi and Winant, 1994). Racial categorization defines what humans are going to be regarded as superior and, in consequence, receive racial

privilege, and what humans are going to be classified as inferior, being subjected to discrimination, oppression, and exclusion.

Europe's exploration and colonization of much of the world gave rise to white supremacy, the dominant global racial ideology. White supremacy and colonization created binaries such as White/racialized, colonizer/colonized, possessors/ dispossessed, establishing the racial superiority of European descendants and creating a line that divided humans from those whose humanity is questioned. Racism, since its origins, went beyond a biological understanding that was not limited to skin colour; it included culture, religion, ethnicity, language, knowledges, among other characteristics that determined racial superiority/inferiority. Canada and North America are settler-colonial societies and have developed a particular form of white supremacy based on science and biology. Under this racial ideology, culture is understood as part of an individual's race, which is not socially learned because people carry it in their blood. North America's racial ideology incorporates White Europeans from all nationalities, making their race invisible while racializing other groups. Blood quantum and patrilineal lineage were imposed to reduce the official number of Indigenous peoples, which allowed settlers to appropriate their land. Afrodescendants were subjected to slavery and biological racism with the one drop policy, where the trace of any Black ancestor makes people Black automatically. This racial ideology has deep anxieties about mix-people because they are an obstacle to settlers' intentions to control Indigenous land and the purity of whiteness.

Colombia and Latin America are middle-ground societies where *mestizaje* is the dominant racial ideology in many nations. One distinctive aspect of *mestizaje* in Colombia is its racial fluidity. Identification with the *mestiza* category offered the mobility denied to Indigenous and Africans, which compelled many individuals to embrace this category during the colonial era. White bodies enjoyed white privilege, they had access to the best positions in

society, which in turn reinforced white supremacy. On the other hand, racialized people could only perform manual labour. Latin American revolutions to achieve independence from Spain did not transform these racial dynamics; they embraced the racial ideology of *mestizaje* to legitimize White *Criollos'* privileged position and exclude Afrodescendants and Indigenous peoples. Fluidity remains an intrinsic characteristic of *mestizaje*, but because of the influence of white supremacy, the act of trespassing racial borders does not seek to challenge racism; it aims to access white privilege.

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