Neo-ethnic Self-Styling among Young Indigenous People of Brazil: Re-Appropriating Ethnicity through Cultural Hybridity

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Abstract

This article examines a conspicuous, vastly disseminating cultural practice among the young Indigenous people of Brazil to hybridize their ethnic motifs with global fashion in order to classify their glocal mode of being. Young Indigenous subjects generally perceive the modal practice to be ethnically appropriating in their own generational right. Through ethnographic observations coupled with theoretical reflections on cultural hybridity, the authors will highlight how neo-ethnic fashion enables initially marginalized category of Indigenous ethnicity to be brought to public attention on a global scale. Neo-ethnic self-styling operates as a means to re-appropriate heritage in trans-traditional ways at a time when ethnicity itself is increasingly becoming a globally trendy subject. Social networking service plays a crucial role in disseminating the phenomena across different ethnic groups.

Keywords: neo-ethnic fashion, indigeneity, cultural hybridity, Indigenous people of Brazil, postcolonialism.

Auto-estilização Neo-étnica entre Jovens Indígenas do Brasil: a reapropriação da etnicidade por meio do hibridismo cultural

Resumo

Este artigo examina uma prática cultural conspícua e amplamente disseminada entre os jovens indígenas do Brasil para hibridizar seus motivos étnicos com a moda global, a fim de classificar seu modo glocal de ser. Os jovens indígenas geralmente percebem que a prática modal é etnicamente apropriada em seu próprio direito geracional. Através de observações etnográficas, juntamente com reflexões teóricas sobre o hibridismo cultural, os autores destacarão como a moda neo-étnica permite que uma categoria inicialmente marginalizada de etnicidade indígena seja trazida à atenção do público em escala global. O auto-styling neo-étnico opera como um meio de reapropriar o patrimônio de maneiras trans-tradicionais, numa época em que a própria etnia está se tornando cada vez mais um assunto globalmente na moda. O serviço de rede social desempenha um papel crucial na disseminação dos fenômenos entre diferentes grupos étnicos.

Palavras-chave: moda neo-étnica, indigeneidade, hibridismo cultural, povos indígenas do Brasil.

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Introduction

We wish to address an emergent, wide-spreading cultural phenomenon of ethnic self-ornamentation, which we call "neo-ethnic self-styling" or "neo-ethnic fashion" alternatively, so as to discuss traditional styles of ethnic embodiment vis-à-vis cultural appropriation.

In the light of Kaja Silverman's remark that clothing "draws the body so that it can be culturally seen, and articulates it as a meaningful form" (1986: 145), and critically applying Homi Bhabha's (1994) notion of "cultural hybridity," signifying the productivity of colonial power, its shifting forces and fixities, as well as the strategic reversal of such a power and identification through disavowal (1994: 111), we are commissioned to uncover the motives behind neo-ethnic self-styling, as well as the purpose (if any) of such an embodiment. Fashion (popular style) itself is a site of cultural, class, gender, and ethnicity contestations (Steele 2005: xv-xvi). By combining theories on fashion, body and cultural empowerment with ethnographic observations as well as interviews, we argue that neo-ethnic fashion enables its enactors to play with global/local and colonialist binaries that signify the classification of ethnicity.

This new Social Networking Service (SNS)-promoted trend is a collectivizing practice conducted by and for young Indigenous people from various ethnic backgrounds to publicly empower themselves by means of the hyperbolic mode of self-styling. SNS enables a new connectivity among the neo-ethnic practitioners who, albeit from different ethnic communities, mix their rooted positionality in Brazil with Indigenous multiplicity assembled by transnational cyber networks. More significantly, the phenomena of neo-ethnic styling make visible the tensions between indigeneity, as it is expressed by native practitioners, and indigenism, or the ongoing treatment of Indigenous people in our supposedly postcolonial world order. In the paper, we use the term "postcolonial" as little as possible because, as our own work demonstrates, postcolonial may be used as a historical reference but the history of colonialism is far from over. It is important to remember that although we focus in this article on ethnic self-styling, ethnic manifestations are not just simply questions of fashion, and have emerged through tense complex and conflictive processes in which ritual performances and the use of cultural ornamentations make up a critical political component of empowerment and affirmation of alterity as shown, for example, in the collection of essays on ethnicity politics and cultural reelaboration in the Northeast of Brazil, organized by Pacheco de Oliveira (1999).

In an anthropological overview of the world through a dress, Hansen, for instance, draws on Zorn's (2004) research of the Sakaka, an Andean group in northern Bolivia, to argue that the complex dress styles of the Sakaka, financed mostly by migrated members of the group, "comprise a distinctive Indigenous fashion system, a self-conscious choice in the face of white and mestizo control of the Bolivian state" (2004: 374). SNS adds an entirely new dimension to Indigenous fashion semiotic: a group of authors have shown how "electronic empires" of communication technologies at the same time enable media imperialism and empowerment (see also Thussu 1998). We integrate such a point with Comaroff and Comaroff's (2009) pioneering study on ethnic fashion and body-styling that suggests the need to generate a new "ethno-episteme" that "inscribes things ethnic, simultaneously, in affect and interests, emotion and utility and fashions cultural identity both as a consumable object of choice and self-construction and the manifest product of biology, genetics, and human essence" (2009: 1).

Today, the globally penetrated commodification of culture is more than a manifestation of the modern "march of the market, where otherness is *merchandized to and by alienated actors*" (2009: 22, emphasis added). Ethnicity is now "ontologically both ascribing and instrumental, innate and constructed, or blood and choice, as the ethno-commodity flows in the market as the blending of authenticity and replication, the material and the immaterial, the cultural and the economic, or the private and the public" (2009: 46). Comaroff and Comaroff list plenty of examples from Africa to demonstrate that the logic of modern circulation of capital and commodities, which emerged with the "Age of Expansion," was the rationale for those native African merchants to commodifying their "third world ethnicity." This seems to hold especially true today when, paradoxically, heterogeneous ethnicities are being accepted and promoted as individual cultural expressions of the globalized world, but remain defined by the capitalist logic, or the homogenizing force of the market. Hansen (2004) and Rabine (2002), on the contrary, understand African fashion as a semiotic system that comprises both economic and symbolic exchange, "imbuing the products with meaning" through artisanal production that emphasizes aesthetics and creativity rather than uniformity and standardization (Hansen 2004: 377). Importantly, this artisanal production falls outside the institutional framework. Hansen argues, "Conventional analytical dichotomies of traditional/modern, African/Western, and local/global fall short in capturing the many diverse influences on contemporary style dynamics in Africa" (ibid).

We agree on the significance of pursuing the new ethno-episteme, which raises the issue of ethnic nations in reference to influences of the global market and rightly depict how business-minded natives of the third-world nations managed to "modernize" themselves by capitalizing on their symbolic- and material cultures, as well as their identities. This also concerns the current debates on cultural appropriation which, although not the focus of our paper, featured in our informants' attitudes toward incorporating ethnic motives in their own and their peers' fashion. However, we are uncomfortable with Comaroff and Comaroff's reduction of the subjectivity in the "third world" nations to culture industries that economize on their ethnicity – a phenomenon they named as Ethnicity Inc. Based on our empirical research among the Indigenous youth in Brazil, we wish to offer two original contributions to the better comprehension of ethno-episteme: discussing neo-ethnic self-styling as a form of cultural hybridity, rather than a form of institutionalized exploitation of cultural identity; and exploring the ways that this praxis relates not only to the market and global economy but to the complex and locally-situated sociocultural matrix which enables enactors to simultaneously challenge and depend upon it in making sense of their current Indigenous existence.

To accomplish this, we will treat the body as a system of signs and look at how the semiotics of neo-ethnic fashion is acted out. Such a bodily performance can be best explored through images that the Indigenous subjects of neo-ethnic fashion in contemporary Brazil upload onto the SNS – a defining media-instrument for exploring, exchanging, and disseminating their cultural identity. As Roland Barthes indicates, media-disseminated fashion as a system of signs communicates ideologies, alternative meanings,

and attitudes at the same time (Barthes 1990). We incorporate Barthes' binary framework of fashion, which joins dress (*la langue*) and dressing (*parole*) in order to demonstrate the social role of neo-ethnic fashion, and analyze how its structure is related to the state and postcolonialism (2013: 8). Fashion is not a static system: on the contrary, it interacts and actively produces symbolic messages as much as material forms and contents. One of the most important semioticians of our time, Umberto Eco, argued that, "in imposing an exterior demeanor, clothes are semiotic devices, machines for communication" (1986: 195). We will blend this perspective with a focus on what Goffman (1956) called the presentation of self in everyday life in order to demonstrate that the young Indigenous people of present-day Brazil perform their cultural identities through neo-ethnic fashion, and by doing so, they use their costumes, or "costumized ethnic identities," in order to address the audience's Indigenous expectations – whoever their audience on SNS may be.

The subsequent discussion is developed in reference to ethnographic surveys that spanned over the past three years. We began our observations and interviews on SNS in the fall of 2015, which continue to this day – cumulating data from 106 young Indigenous informants whose age ranged between seventeen and twenty-six, in addition to eleven elders whose age ranged between forty-seven and eighty-three. Based in Brasília, authors conducted ethnographic fieldwork in three different Brazilian communities including Indigenous people from the Xingu and Xokleng between April 2018 and March 2019, while speaking with informants with other ethnic origins and identifications. Pseudonyms are substituted for all of the names of participants who are mentioned in this paper.

Our sampling qualifications for Indigenous interlocutors, mentioned above, do not signify much more than the fact that we managed to encounter and engage in a series of ethnographic conversations with actors of neo-ethnic self-styling with Indigenous heritage and/or identification in the progression of our fieldwork. After all, getting in touch with every "authentic" Indigenous youngster in Brazil and conducting participant observations among more than two hundred of their officially recognized communities, let alone countless number and gradation of mestizos who identify themselves as "Indigenous," were impossible and unnecessary within the context of our research. This is not to say that neo-ethnic fashion is facilitating an omnipresent movement of some kind, but any Indigenous youngster who became interested in neo-ethnic mode of self-stylization through their internet connections could very well pop up at any point as a local subject of the new mode of Pan-Indigenous identification with the potential of self-empowerment.

For us, those interlocutors who responded to our interview invitations reconfirmed that Indigenous identification was recreated by actors from different places, groups, communities, and backgrounds who came together in cyberspace with their demonstrations of neo-ethnic fashion. It was the online network involving neo-ethnic stylization that connected them – regardless of their ancestral origins, where they resided, or how urban/rural-, traditional/modern-, or pure-blooded/mix-blooded they were. What mattered more for these enactors of neo-ethnic fashion was having a constant access to the Internet, and being part of the online media communities, networks, and forums such as Facebook, Line, and Instagram by means of which they could continuously communicate directly or indirectly with each other and, in the process, absorb global trends and inspire their modes of dressing with Indigenous identification of their own. On a global scale, such a new mode of being is not omnipresent, but it is a new kind of connectivity in which one does not need to be everything to be something. This, then, is about power emerging out of nobody, nowhere, but at the same time power coming out of anyone and everyone who possessed a good reason to represent indigeneity.

Can You See My Hybrid Body?

"This is the way our generation of our People do things," explained Josephyi, a male Xingu in his late-teens, as he tried to justify his stance as not breaking the tradition, but reconstructing the tradition in his own manner to suit his generation:

> Every Indigenous thing that I put on is strictly traditional. My Missanga represents our ancestral spirit in a strictly traditional way! My body painting is undistortedly designed, and it represents a snake in our culture! Blending of these designs into the way I dress up enables me to maintain the sense of tradition while having to blend myself with the city way of life, which was imposed upon us by the White people. We didn't choose to be that way, you know!

Marina, a twenty-two year-old female university student from a southern community, offered a similar explanation when she was asked about her feathered earring and beaded bracelet she frequently wore on campus:

> These are markers of my People and my pride. Of course, I wear them to make myself appear fancier, but wearing these together with Western fashion doesn't mean that my identity is Westernized. Even though "fanciness" may be a Western word, the idea is not of the West alone! We have always loved to dress up fancifully in our own way, and if we weren't forced into the Western lifestyle, I am sure that I would be walking around in our own ways of dressing!

Thus, Marina demonstrated fanciness to be the meaningful tie between Western- and native elements in her neo-ethnic styling: ethnic elements in her way of dressing acted as markers of her ethnic identification, while Western counterparts signified the postcolonial condition in which she was situated.

Neo-ethnic fashion typically appears as a blending of Indigenous- and Western elements into one's mode of self-ornamentation. Our informants used specifically terms "Western" and "White" showing, explicitly and implicitly, how they play with Bhabhian dualisms in order to simultaneously challenge and belong – two seemingly contradictory desires in the process of hybridization. For that reason, we adopted our informants' vocabulary and dualistic frameworks throughout our analysis. Indigenous elements may include red- and blue body paintings, feathered earrings, bone-ornamented necklaces, and beaded bracelets. A paste made from seeds of *urucum* (annatto tree) is used to create blood-red body painting, while a paste extracted from *Genipa americana*, is used for dark-blue painting. These ethnic elements are combined with faddish signifiers of Western fashion including hairstyling, facial makeup, and body postures (including camera angle) made to appear sensual, classy, and/or cool (hip). Designer T-shirts are popularly worn, and in many instances these T-shirts bear Indigenous motifs while others signify non-Indigenous patterns (Figure 1).
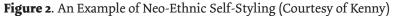
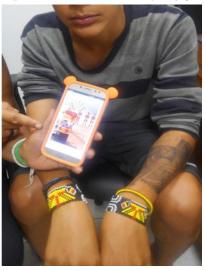**Figure 1**. An Example of Neo-Ethnic Self-Styling (Courtesy of Kamilyi)

In Figure 1, nineteen year-old Kamilyi is wearing a commercialized ethnic-style T-shirt with Indigenous motifs, coupled with a white snail shell necklace and an elaborate, eye-catching feather earring. Her T-shirt is additionally decorated with a dream-catcher as the central piece, alongside red-and-green decorative patterns on the sleeves. Dream-catcher has origins in Native North American cultures and, after being taken as a symbol of unity in the Pan-Indian Movement of the 1960s and 1970s, it became a popular global commodity as one of the most culturally appropriated Indigenous objects – especially by the New Age movement (Snavely 2001). Her pose suggests a sensual selfie with subtle emphasis on her lips, the so-called "duck face photographic pose," although without obvious make up.

Her photo is completed with many pink hearts, indicating cuteness which, rather than asserting her sweetness in the Western sense of the term, strengthened the contrast between cute decorative elements and her posture which conveyed Indigenous power. At the same time, her neo-ethnic self-styling was much more glocal, with present but subdued elements of her Indigenous fashion: so subtle that it is not readily identifiable as belonging to any particular cultural space. Bearing in mind that our informants make a strong division between the global (Western, White) and the local (their own Indigenous community), using the dichotomy as a strategy for empowerment and resistance, we emphasize that the term "glocal" captures hybridization between universalizing and particularizing cultural movements. Global-local dynamic is neither linear nor unidirectional. The term here also encapsulates the tension between sociocultural centralization and homogenization, and decentralization and heterogeneity. In other words, global and local are in continuous interaction and are mutually transformative. However, our informants took it as a fixed binary with imbued power dynamic that they decided to upset with their fashion.

In the case of neo-ethnic self-styling in Brazil, the dynamic between the identity, body, and fashion demonstrates a revival of traditional culture. While "traditional culture" is fluid, with its own changing temporality and spatiality, for each informant, youngster or elder, "traditional" was a fixed point of reference that they associated with their community. Rendering it into transnational and trans-traditional aspects by the young Indigenous practitioners both depends on and defines the projected cultural identity. A parallel can be seen in the Indigenous political movement in Brazil, to resort to international legislation to defend Indigenous rights, when the state does not respect national legislation for the protection of Indigenous rights.

Whereas Comaroff and Comaroff saw the trend of Indigenous embodiment in Africa as economized fitting into the Exotic, and therefore as the assertion of the global world order by means of self-commodification, we see the emergent neo-ethnic fashion phenomenon in Brazil as a resistance to the dominant economic and political orders. This is evident in the DIY (Do It Yourself) approach of the enactors of neo-ethnic self-styling, as what Brent Luvaas (2012: 4) calls "a rather typical example of the reach and influence of digital culture, global capitalism, and the new creative economy. "By choosing DIY – making and crafting their decorations; clothes and accessories by themselves rather than purchasing ready-made products – young Indigenous Brazilians avoid being "hegemonic devices" (Black 2002: 606) as well as being subjected to imposed cultural constructions while maintaining their status as "cool and trendy."

Figure 2. An Example of Neo-Ethnic Self-Styling (Courtesy of Kenny)

For example, eighteen year-old Kenny shows a serious and defiant facial expression (partly identifiable) with tightly closed lips, as he displays his neo-ethnic style beaded bracelets juxtaposed with ancestral symbols displayed on a smart phone signifying his ancestral affiliation, which apparently inspired his fashion choice (Figure 2). This juxtaposition of Kenny's accessories with the ethnic symbol on a phone screen played the role of legitimizing his fashion choice and establishing a link between his personal ornamentation and the Indigenous legacy that inspired it. By implying that this was his own culture and legacy in this photo, he also conveyed a sense of pride and legitimacy – as one of the principal themes of Indigenous rights movements to invert racist stereotypes and value indigeneity – over what might otherwise be seen as cultural appropriation – a point that was also stated in the display of the Indigenous-pattern body painting on his left arm. While his bracelets, body painting and the screen image were meant to be the focus of the photograph, creating a semiotic of his cultural identification, his sporty hip-grey clothing stood out in contrast to the colorful neo-ethnic accessories, maintaining the glocal dynamic in his self-styling.

On the other hand, there are young Indigenous practitioners of neo-ethnic fashion such as Chica, a self-proclaimed hip-hopper from Amazonia in her mid-twenties, who indicated the symbolic instrumentality of neo-ethnic fashion:

> I'm not as thoughtful as you expect me to be, but I can tell you that I do it because it's there – I mean, like tattoos, you know! I wear them because I am an Indian, and I wear Western clothing and makeup because they are cool and timely! When I combine them together, I can better reach out and represent the voice of those Indigenous members of the audience in a hip way!

She also revealed that her neo-ethnic self-styling, as much as her music, played an important role in generating a new wave of Indigenous cultural appropriation – by and for the Indigenous people at large:

> All of what I do – my clothing, my music, and my performances –allow me to empower myself and the people I represent – our culture, our tradition, and our existence as historically oppressed but equally human beings!

Such a statement reconfirmed the creative effect of DIY ethos: that the ethos provided this artist with a means to re-appropriate the culture of her people, wherein neo-ethnic fashion played a visual part. Through "DIY ethos," as Luvaas (2012: 4) puts it, "we (as in, the global "we" of contemporary consumer capitalism) have crossed the line from a "Read Only Culture" to a "Read/Write Culture" (quoted in Lessig 2009: 28), or from a "sit back and be told" culture to a "making and doing" culture (Gauntlett 2011: 8). DIY ethos thoroughly

pushes into the mainstream the once marginal practices of cutting and pasting, mashing up, and remixing (see also McLeod 2005; Mason 2008). In this shift to a "Read/Write Culture" that we see in the neo-ethnic protagonism, we identify not only an alternative mode of cultural production but an attempt to "costumize" the body to challenge dominant social- and cultural norms, among others. Eugénie Lemoine-Luccioni writes that the human body becomes culturally visible through ornamentation and clothing (quoted in Ryan 2014: 1). Furthermore, enactors of the neo-ethnic fashion use media technologies to recreate and publicize their identities: SNS, mobile phones, and personal computers are essential to their modal presentation.

For Rafael, a twenty-six year-old university student and political activist, neo-ethnic self-stylization clearly signified the current state of Indigenous resistance against the ongoing Brazilian colonial domination, or what he called the "continuously White-supremacist order of the Brazilian nation-state." Indigenous elements in neo-ethnic fashion demonstrated his indestructible will to play his role in preserving ancestral culture, while Western motifs identified his inevitable existence in our contemporary world "endlessly dominated by the White invaders." Hybridizing these two elements further signified his political stance to "stand firmly at the border where two cultures collided, and to fight on behalf of his People against any forms of unjust intrusion." As he elaborated:

> Marching in front of the Congress in the Federal District is one thing, and in doing that I will dress up traditionally. I will take my spear with me and aim at the Congress building to demonstrate my rage against the government, which is ruled by the White people who continue to ignore us, segregate us, exploit us, and even kill us when they think we the Indians of this country stand in the way of their national interests. Elsewhere, I may wear T-shirts, jeans, and caps, but I will never forget to put Indian accessories on me. Those garments produced and marketed by the White intruders constitute the reminder of my mastery of their culture: that I have acquired not their values, but their ways of thinking and doing things to the extent that they cannot fool me and my People! We aren't anymore naked-, wild-, ignorant Indians – as those White politicians and their followers continuously wish to see us and treat us that way!

For Rafael the political significance of his neo-ethnic self-styling is a hybridized code of Indigenous resistance against the colonial oppression as represented by the current government as well as the nation-state of Brazil. His juxtaposing of White garments against the naked Indian body highlights the Bhabhian dichotomy played out in the hybridized body semiotic.

In all these cases, fashion transformed from garments in order to cover up one's body to a political statement; a form of protest, agitation, and assertion of one's cultural identity and Indigenous human rights. The hybridization of Western and Indigenous clothing for informants became simultaneously a form of emphatic distinction. Rafael's reference to "White intruders" was clearly anti-colonial while at the same time he acknowledged that his appropriation of Western clothing was, in a Bhabhian sense, empowering him through cultural hybridization. The glocal identity of young Indigenous people in Brazil points to the defining notion in Bhabha's postcolonial theory: cultural hybridity. For Bhabha, the colonial subject inhabits a cultural space – space of utterance and translation, and therefore a transformative space – between two cultures. In this space, the colonial subject gains agency to transform their colonial mode of being by incorporating elements of diversity (Bhabha specifically writes about two cultures – a binary between the colonizer and the colonized). This practice reconfigures the authority and power of the colonizer, and gives visibility, agency and power to the colonized (Bhabha 1994: 58, 111).

Benita Parry, a defining scholar in literature of colonialism, imperialism, and postcolonial studies, and one of the most vocal critics of Bhabha's concept of cultural hybridity, disagrees with Bhabha's optimistic notion of hybridity: Parry claims (2004: 25-26) it diminishes the importance of struggle between the oppressor and the oppressed (among other things) and seemingly neglects the resistance of the colonized.

Spivak, on the other hand, thinks that the colonizer/colonized binary obscures how heterogeneous colonial power can be (1994: 128). While we partially agree with Parry and Spivak on Bhabha's dualistic colonial worldview and acknowledge heterogeneity and transnationality of colonial relations, our informants advise us that, in practice, Bhabhian dualism is a methodology to challenge colonial and neo-colonial regimes of power. The fashion that the youth appropriates is West-centric, according to their own words, and it is a conscious and purposive choice. Especially when our youthful informants demonstrated their native identity versus Brancos ("White people"), they took on this dichotomous distinction to show how they are cleverly and tactically mixing the two incompatible elements into one as a hybrid means to adopt and adapt to the inevitably globalizing world – for which Brancos are to be blamed. In other words, our informants appropriated the dichotomy as a framework to identify and challenge colonial regimes of power, and define their own identity, the history of which they see as inextricably linked with the White people.

Bhabha points out the resistance of the colonizer to cultural hybridity and evaluates that the colonizer is anxiously resisting cultural hybridity because it erases the difference between the colonizer and the colonized, allowing for mingling and mixing into one, hybrid culture. In this regard, Brazil has been contradictory and ambiguous in attitudes to mixing, since mixing is often seen as "bad" as it contradicts ideas about "racial purity." In the case of young, Indigenous practitioners of neo-ethnic fashion in Brazil, we see such configuration in cultural hybridity – reflected in the fact that their fashion is not only Indigenous; that it draws on the world-scale circulation of meaningful forms, and that it fuses, symbolically and materially, global elements and local signifiers.

While Bhabha's ideas provide a lead, we use our ethnographic research to expand and go beyond Bhabha's concept and theorize the neo-ethnic Indigenous fashion in the specific context of contemporary Brazil to demonstrate this point. By fusing symbols of belonging to both cultures through garments, Rafael created a cultural space where he felt he could gain agency and enact resistance against the colonizer. He assumed fashion as an expression of his "mastery of culture" as opposed to "being naked in wild nature," consciously playing with that historically constructed dichotomy through his neo-ethnic glocal self-styling to contest the imposed hegemonies. We are conscious of the cultural and political baggage of the term "global," being aware of the West-centrism and dualism embedded in it and in the term glo-cal. These dualisms, however, our informants use consciously, resonating with Bhabha, who never "meted down" hybridity but rather highlighted the significance of exposing the reversal message through cultural hybridization, which operates as ironization in the very dichotomy set by the colonists, and recognized by the colonized. In this sense, dichotomous distinction is embedded in hybridity and therefore should not be analytically avoided.

Chica, Marina, and Josephyi seemed to be equally aware of the power and responsibility that they gain through their fashion choices. By hybridizing their Indigenous and global identity, they spoke both to their ancestry and global culture. In the previously mentioned critique of Bhabha's postcolonial theory, Benita Parry asserted that imperialism for Bhabha was reduced to a discursive and epistemic moment alone, neglecting material realities: Parry finds Bhabha to be emphasizing disjunction, liminality, and hybridity while turning colonization into an enunciatory struggle that confines postcolonial theory to semiotic terrain" (Robinette 2006: 207). However, in the praxis of neo-ethnic fashion in Brazil we see quite the opposite: a material moment combined with body semiotic in a struggle against the oppression, visible not only in young Indigenous people's strategies, enacted and materialized through fashion on a daily basis, either in collective events or on SNS.

What the young neo-ethnic practitioners challenge is beyond fashion: it speaks to the imposed global world order and definition of civilization: clothed versus naked; fancy versus rough. Marina, for instance, made a poignant remark that Western words and ideas imposed themselves on other cultures, rendering invisible or illegitimate local expressions of the self. For her, "fanciness" became a territory to question the hegemonic norms of the West as she asserted that "fanciness" did not belong to the West alone and therefore

should not erase the alternative modes of being fancy in an imposed cultural and intellectual hierarchy. As our informants pointed out, their bodies and performativity are speaking to modernity, while situating their glocal self-styled bodies in "in-between" spaces of cultural hybridity. When acknowledging that their fashion is an expression against modernity, they do not define modernity as "progress" but as West-centric rationality, industrialization, and the values of civilization and enlightenment, imposed on Brazil's Indigenous peoples through colonization.

(Neo)ethnic Body – (Post)colonial State

Among a national population of around 211 million (2019), the Indigenous population makes up only about 0,47% of the total population of Brazil. This contrasts greatly with other Latin American countries such as Bolivia, Peru, Ecuador and Guatemala where the percentage of Indigenous population is much higher in the national population. Pacheco de Oliveira examines the Indigenous presence in the National Censuses, and comments that "Despite being comparatively of little significance on a numerical scale, the Indigenous presence has a great importance in the formation of the Brazilian State and in the process of the construction of a national identity" (1999: 125-126). Pacheco de Oliveira (1999a) demonstrates that the categories used in the National Census determine the results of the Census, the category "pardo" (brown) having different meanings in different regions of Brazil, including people who might classify themselves as Indigenous or black. The National Census in Brazil thus serves an ideological aim to homogenize Brazilian society, making many Indigenous people invisible. What is clear is that national ideologies about indigeneity strongly influence the public visibility or invisibility of Indigenous people in any nation state (Miller 2003).

In such a sociocultural context, Ramos explores why Brazil's "Indians" receive more attention from the state and media institutions, and have a greater presence in the national consciousness than in any other country in the world, and asks whether this indicates the privileged status of Indigenous communities in Brazil (Ramos 1998: 4). Accordingly, Ramos introduces the idea of "indigenism" as a political phenomenon whereby the Indian peoples are incorporated into the nation-state, but also as the "popular and learned imagery among the national population onto which are carved the many faces of the Indian" (1998: 6). For Ramos, however, the subject of study is not the nation-states' manipulation of the Indigenous ethnicity, but rather the Indigenous communities' self-Orientalizing and the media-Orientalizing for their political ends. She argues: "when Indians seize the notion of "culture," and artefacts of Western thinking about the Other, to further their cause for ethnic recognition and self-determination, they contribute significantly to the design of Indigenism" (1998: 7).

Ramos directs her attention to deliberative practices by the Indigenous people to assert their ethnic identity. In this constant process of Orientalizing and self-Orientalizing as elaborated by Ramos, the dynamic of cultural hybridity does not seem to play out because the boundaries and distinction between the two cultures are firmly set and enacted. In effect, indigenism preserves the status quo in a seemingly indigeneity-positive environment where the institutionalized uses of the projected imagery of Indigenous ethnicity assert the boundary by avoiding hybridization. Naming indigeneity-positive practices as "pulp-indigenism" (1998: 99). Yet, as Ramos herself admitted upon our interview with her, the book was written more than twenty years ago, and her Indigenous subjects are now those elders who, as mentioned in the abstract of this article, wish to conserve tradition as such. Indigenous practitioners of neo-ethnic fashion belong to the younger generations that act out indigeneity, even if they do not necessarily accept the idea wholeheartedly. These youngsters practice a very different form of ethnic expression. Thus, we argue that the appearance of the neo-ethnic fashion movement enables the paradigm shift in the discourse of cultural identity and appropriation in postcolonial Brazil.

As Ramos has so well demonstrated, the Indigenous people of Brazil have in the past mobilized indigenism to pursue their rights as politically visible and empowered subjects. Indigenism has been all-too-long posed upon the Indigenous people for more than five hundred years of colonial history to characterize them at the convenience of dominant interests by the "Brancos." By proclaiming indigeneity, Indigenous people in Brazil can together demonstrate themselves and their properties to the world reflexively in their oppressively integrated and post-colonized (continuously subalterned) current socio-political setting (or the state of being) in Brazilian (and other) nation-states – in tie with Bhabha's indication of how hybridity can speak back to the dominant culture. Although we emphasize Indigenous empowerment through fashion semiotics, we also show that, while neo-ethnic self-styling is an outcome of cultural hybridization, it is necessary to acknowledge that neo-ethnic ornamentation with Western signifiers has a dialectical potential both to reproduce indigenism and cultural appropriation, as well as the power to challenge the global world order by appropriating "universal" signifiers and incorporating them into ethnic fashion. We see this dialectic and fluidity as a fundamental aspect of Bhabha's notion of cultural hybridization, ready to upset boundaries with its inherent multiplicity and ambivalence of cultural semiotics.

Young Indigenous people of Brazil are appropriating their own ethnic culture, reproducing cultural modes of their people, and promoting visibility, and they are also speaking to their Indigenous identity through fashion. Simultaneously, their self-representations incorporate globalist conventions of SNS selfie-culture. They, therefore, hybridize the global order and literally embody the forms of self-representation borrowed from the global, SNS-reliant, representation of the self. They do not do this, however, in an institutionalized way which sets them apart both from Ramos' idea of indigenism and Comaroff and Comaroff's Ethnicity Inc. Instead, the neo-ethnic self-ornamentation enables these young subjects to transcend the borders of the nation-state and directly address transnational cultural space, opening up a space in which the glocal mode of being is configured outside the institutional framework of the nation-state.

Neo-ethnic self-styling is about controlling both input and output: it aims to externalize one's trans-traditional culture as a means of internalizing the global semiotics in neo-ethnic fashion as well as to stop the global semiotics from imposing itself on Indigenous cultural identity. Cultural hybridity, as proposed by Bhabha, exists not only as a space for metamorphosis and mimicry between two cultures, the oppressed and the oppressor, but between the oppressed and the global West-centric structures. The cultural space of hybridization is thus expanded and diversified beyond Bhabha's intra-state situatedness, and locates itself in a more "universal" cultural space.

This observation is similar to Aoyagi and Yuen's (2016) finding in reference to the case of *erokawa* fashion, a phenomenon in contemporary urban Japan where women adopt erotic-cute styles as a way of empowering themselves in the public domain through hyperbolic self-styling (2016: 99). The Indigenous youth of Brazil similarly empower themselves through public transformations from passive objects of colonialism to neo-ethnically self-empowered actors, which we may call neo-ethnic protagonism. SNS provides a public space for the Indigenous youth in Brazil, that enables them to confront the dominant institutional forces that, paraphrased from the *erokawa* case-study, otherwise impose on them a material, relational, and cultural matrix of self-reconfiguration (2016: 107). Body semiotic shows that text, inscribed onto one's body through dress, garments, apparel, and make up, is both discursive and material practice that challenges the dominant oppressive apparatuses.

Observations of selfie images from our 106 informants on their SNS photo albums revealed that these informants combined neo-ethnic self-stylization with alternations between ethnic- and Western modes of dressing in the form of code-switching – wherein strictly traditional mode of self-styling tended to occur on ceremonial occasions, while neo-ethnic- and Western modes of self-styling occurred more privately and on SNS (Figure 3).

Figure 3. Alternation of stylization seen in one- and the same subject (Courtesy of an informant)

In Figure 3, twenty-two year-old Waichi's conscious choices of the camera posture revealed a styled body that conformed with the gaze of the global fashion consumer. In collective, public displays she painted her body and face with pervasive strong body paintings which conveyed a resolute statement of her Indigenous cultural belonging. Her clothing and accessories likewise conveyed a much stronger Indigenous presence.

There is a multitude of ways in which dress could be considered, and has been considered as "an important and necessary social tool that acts as an interface between our bodies and society" (Barnard 2014, quoted in Mackey, Wakkary, Wensveen, Tomico 2017: 2). Mackey et al, for instance, researched ways that wearable computing impacts one's socio-cultural identity and presence (2017). Others looking into how technology changes body through garments, through wearable technologies (Ryan 2014), see not only cameras and cell phones but also make up and clothes as normalized "technological extensions to our biological bodies" following Marshal McLuhan's (1964) study of information technologies (Farren and Hutchinson 2004: 462). In the cyber space of SNS, neo-ethnic fashion is further hybridized through body postures and facial expression – performativity – in front of the camera lens. SNS thus actively contextualizes the presentation of self in such a way that the neo-ethnic Indigenous fashion movement is inextricably embedded in the global socio-technical networks.

How one blends Indigenous elements into their hybrid self-ornamentation may become a matter of serious debates and mutual evaluations between enactors. These may include the issue of cultural appropriation – a cultural politics of exploitation and assimilation of marginalized culture by the dominant culture. Morsiani (2018) and Rogers (2006) propose instead a term "trans-culturation" in which a culture is composed of multiplicity of cultures with hybridity as its essence (Morsiani 2018: 1-2).

During our interviews, most of our informants had something to say about ways other dressers of neo-ethnic fashion ornamented themselves, and their comments often reflected how envious they were about each other. One interview question we posed to all of our 106 informants was whether or not they considered other enactors of neo-ethnic fashion to be potential rivals who competed with their own styles accordingly – to which all responded positively. Ninety-four of these informants confirmed that they were constantly referring to their rivals for hints and inspirations to redesign themselves, and nineteen of them suggested that the modal competition between practitioners contributed to the personal creativity and the overall refinement of neo-ethnic fashion.

When Juan, a twenty-four year-old university student from the state of Santa Catarina, saw an image of Luis (presented anonymously) in his neo-ethnic style, he questioned the propriety and amount of knowledge that Luis had about his ancestors, his People and/or his culture:

To me it is not simply the question of incorporating traditional elements into your fashion, but more the question of how personally qualified you are as their incorporator! Just because one comes from an Indigenous culture doesn't automatically justify this person's ethnic entitlement, right? How much does this young man know about his heritage? Is he recognized by his people to be the authorizer of those ancestral motifs? …In my culture, external applications of ancestral motifs are strictly prohibited, and you don't dare to use these ethnic motifs for your personal interests.

Juan presented himself as more culturally informed and therefore better qualified than Luis in authorizing the authenticity and propriety of his Indigenous motifs, but such a stance of cultural appropriation was apparently more impressionistically professed than factually positioned. In this and other examples, we could see that claims to legitimacy over symbols of indigeneity indicated the claims over a cultural space, both ethnic and global. The dissonance and a strong sense of competition seemed counterintuitive, especially when they were predicated on stereotypes about Pan-Indianism and the natural unity of the Indigenous groups in Brazil that rendered invisible their multiplicity and heterogeneity.

In other words, as the multiplicity of indigeneity cannot be reduced to one monolithic voice, idea or category, as it has been during centuries of colonization, seeing the current neo-ethnic fashion as a homogenous and univocal phenomenon also reduces the representations of indigeneity to a single, easily controllable and easy to demarcate phenomenon that does not threaten the dominant power structure. As Bhabha noted,

Hybrid hyphenations emphasize the incommensurable elements – the stubborn chunks – as the basis of cultural identifications. What is at issue is the performative nature of differential identities: the regulation and negotiation of those spaces that are continually, contingently, "opening out," remaking the boundaries, exposing the limits of any claim to a singular' or autonomous sign of difference – be it class, gender or race (1994: 219).

Yet, these enactors of neo-ethnic fashion also managed to earn a sense of empowerment in the space of cultural hybridity and therefore of redefining the cultural space and the identity of the oppressed against the global culture of the White people.

Colonial Brazil – A Contextual Outline

The Indigenous population of Brazil has been greatly reduced over more than five hundred years of colonization. Estimates of the population before European colonization vary greatly, but there were certainly several million Indigenous persons in Brazil at the time when colonization began in the early sixteenth century. Epidemics of introduced diseases, together with centuries of massacres and slavery expeditions reduced the Indigenous population from several millions to a low point in the mid-twentieth century, estimated to be at the most 99.700, or 0.2% of the national population (Ribeiro, 1979: 431), followed by a rapid recuperation of the populations of some of those Indigenous societies which survived, thanks to greater access to basic medical services, especially vaccinations. Even if Darcy Ribeiro underestimated the size of the Indigenous population in the mid-1950, there has certainly been a very rapid increase over the past sixty years (Censo, IBGE, 2010).

Indigenous people in Brazil today make up more than 240 peoples with different cultures, of greatly varying populations, spread over a country of continental size, many being small groups of people reduced during colonization. Many have been subjected to forced dislocations and forced miscegenation, often biologically and culturally mixed with Afro-descendant slaves, and many have been made invisible as Indigenous people and have been re-identifying as Indigenous, especially over the past thirty years. Since the 1970, the Indigenous political movement, influenced initially by the "Red Power" movement in the USA (Cardoso de Oliveira 2000: 221), and by Indigenous political movements around the world, has significantly changed the situation of Indigenous people in Brazil, after centuries of genocide and ethnocide, with a great increase in

ethnic reaffirmation and Indigenous protagonism, especially since the 1988 Brazilian Federal Constitution, leading to a political reorganization of many Indigenous peoples. These institutional changes, however, did not mark the end of racist discrimination against the Indigenous people, often driven by economic interests in contemporary Brazil.

We shall very briefly highlight the history and context of Indigenous people in Brazil, although a detailed discussion of a very complex phenomenon, undertaken by others – for example, Pacheco de Oliveira (2016); Pacheco de Oliveira & Freire, (2006); Ramos, (1988); Souza Lima, (1995) – is beyond the scope of this article. Historically, attitudes toward Indigenous people have been contradictory and ambiguous. Brazil has presented ambiguous discourses on miscegenation: some being encomiastic, others repudiating it (Baines 2003). However, violent racism has characterized the history of interethnic relations, and centuries of attempts to enslave Indigenous people and wipe out Indigenous societies through integration policies aimed at transforming them into a national slave labor force, which has led to enormous cultural changes.

The nineteenth century figure of the "noble savage," an idealized concept of so-called "primitive man," who symbolizes the innate goodness of humanity not exposed to the corrupting influences of civilization developed historically in European literature. A romantic stereotype projected onto real Indigenous people, it has been used in Brazilian literature, shaping popular ideas about Indigenous people. "Indianism" (in Portuguese: *Indianismo*) was a Brazilian literary and artistic movement that reached its peak during the first stages of Romanticism. It was represented in the nineteenth century literary works of José de Alencar e Gonçalvez Dias. One of its most common manifestations in recent decades has been that of the Indigenous person seen romantically as being a "natural ecologist and conservationist," in attempts to forcibly mold Indigenous people into Western environmentalist ideologies (see also Ramos 1998). Many other racist stereotypes have marked the history of interethnic relations in Brazil, usually depicting Indigenous peoples as "treacherous," "lazy," "violent" and a series of other pejorative qualities which aim to justify the violence perpetrated against them (Luciano, 2006).

From a historical anthropology perspective which reveals the complexity of the imaginary about Indigenous peoples over time, João Pacheco de Oliveira (2016) examines the diverse constructions made about the Indigenous peoples in the formation of the history of Brazil, thought of through various regimes of memory. The contemporary situation of the Indigenous peoples in Brazil is far from romantic or literary imaginary: it reveals violent racist discrimination. The current president of Brazil, Jair Bolsonaro (in office since 2019) has made many racist remarks about the Indigenous peoples, including that "The Indians are evolving, more and more they are human being like us" (UOL Notícias 2020).[1] In such context, the Indigenous youth is looking for new modes of empowerment and resistance. Some use fashion primarily as decoration, while others see it as a powerful political tool, reclaiming their humanity.

A plethora of ethnographic literature has been produced over the past decades by anthropologists working in Brazil, focusing on Indigenous movements and organizations, rendering important discussions which are beyond the aims of this paper, such as, to name just a few, Maria Helena Ortolan Matos (2006) on the Indigenous political movement, and about women in this movement (2012), Sidnei Clemente Peres (2013), who writes about associativism and the Indigenous political movement, João Pacheco de Oliveira (2011, 2016) who approaches the Indigenous movement from a historical anthropology perspective, and a growing academic literature is available written by Indigenous anthropologists, on the struggle of their peoples, such as Tonico Benites (2018), Luiz Henrique Eloy Amado (2020), and Daniel Iberê (2015) about the violent impacts of large-scale development projects on Indigenous peoples. The Indigenous rights activists such as Alessandra Korap Munduruku are also continuously contributing to these discussions.

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1   "Com toda a certeza, o índio mudou, tá evoluindo. Cada vez mais o índio é um ser humano igual a nós."

In sharp contrast to the literary movement of Indianism, the concept of indigenism has been widely used in Brazil to describe what some people refer to as government and non-government Indian policy, including policies formulated by government bodies, non-government organizations, and religious missions and churches for Indigenous peoples. Alcida Ramos presents a useful definition, starting from a definition by Antônio Carlos de Souza Lima, for whom indigenism is "a set of ideas (and ideals) concerning the incorporation of Indian people into nation-states" (1991: 239). Ramos, referring to Antônio Carlos de Souza Lima's definition of indigenism (1991), emphasizes,

> But we differ from him in that we expand the concept well beyond state incorporation of indigenous people to include the vast realm of both popular and learned imagery among the national population onto which are carved the many faces of the Indian (1998: 6).

In another line of thinking, more pertinent to our specific discussion, the term indigeinity, derived from the term Indigenous,

> has long been used as a designation distinguishing those who are "native" from their "others" in specific locales and with varying scope. In recent decades, this concept has become internationalized, and "indigeneity" has come to also presuppose a sphere of commonality among those who form a world collectivity of "indigenous peoples" in contrast to their various others. The principal institutional home of international indigenism is within the UN system. In the global expansion of indigenist activity, it has become evident that a variety of claims and a diversity of situations are now being related to emergent international conceptualizations of it. There have been acceptances, rejections, and strategic uses of the concept of indigeneity (Merlan 2009: 303).

Merlan adds:

Indigeneity is taken to imply first-order connections (usually at small scale) between group and locality. It connotes belonging and originariness and deeply felt processes of attachment and identification, and thus it distinguishes "natives" from others. Indigeneity as it has expanded in its meaning to define an international category is taken to refer to peoples who have great moral claims on nation-states and on international society, often because of inhumane, unequal, and exclusionary treatment. Within some of these contexts, there were considerable historical similarities of settlement, colonization, and marginalization of native peoples. But indigeneity in the first-order sense of local connections and belonging is a very general concept, with diverse moral shadings, that has been applied much more broadly than to just those we might understand as "indigenous peoples." As a general concept, indigeneity is susceptible to arguments for greater or lesser inclusiveness, with a variety of possible (and often contested) implications (Merlan 2009: 304).

In this paper the term "indigeneity," as an internationalized concept is relevant to discuss neo-ethnic self-styling of young Indigenous people, as it refers to peoples who have "moral claims on nation-states and on international society," (Merlan 2009: 304) from their colonial histories and present-day neo-colonial situations.

Opinions from Elders

While neo-ethnic self-styling is becoming a widespread customary practice for some young Indigenous people of Brazil, allowing these youngsters to enjoy their DIY mode of hybridizing native- and Western fashions in order to creatively decorate themselves on personal bases, elders who care about the conservation of tradition are generally concerned about their potential destructivity. Our interviews with eleven elders revealed that all of them considered neo-ethnic fashion as reflecting the current state of mind of the young members of their Indigenous community: a postcolonial mind-set that can easily deform and alter what has been carefully

preserved and passed down from their ancestors. "It's not the fashion itself," said Kuina, a fifty-seven year-old Xingu leader, but the "attitude of these young people that can easily be distracted from the tradition path" – which was the point agreed by the rest of the elders around him during our interview. He added:

> When we were young, there was no access to global trends. No access to Internet. But now, young indigenous people are surrounded by new communication technologies of the White people, which are captivating their souls and disturbing our traditional way of life. Our children are constantly touching cell phones instead of attending rituals. For these children, cultural heritage is becoming more of a curious display than a natural way of life because they are now more comfortable with the urban lifestyle, which were brought to us by the White people.

Thus, Kuina classified neo-ethnic fashion into the influx of Western culture and stated his concerns about its negative impact on the traditional way of life. When we pointed out that neo-ethnic fashion was not solely "Western" but a creative integration of Western elements with Indigenous fashion, Kuina gave us a wry smile and said that the fashion to him appeared nothing else but "Western" – thus signifying a force of change rather than cultural conservation or re-appropriation.

For another informant, Yati, a Xokleng woman in her late forties, neo-ethnic fashion symbolized the inevitable change of Indigenous lifeway in our contemporary world. Good or bad aside, the postcolonial erosion of Indigenous cultures is accelerating, and she felt that the new hybrid fashion which integrated Indigenous motifs into Western garments represented one of the ways in which young Indigenous people adjusted to their irreversible positioning in a globalizing world. We proposed a view that tradition could be the subject of constant exposition to the outside world, and thus continual change, rather than that of conservation, and asked Yati whether her traditional culture has been changing over time. To this, Yati stated that constancy versus change was not really the point of concern for the kind of problem she and her people were facing on the verge of global influx. As the following excerpt illustrates:

> As our people have been so careful about preserving our tradition – precisely in the way it was handed down from our ancestors – that altering it never came to anyone's mind. Even a slightest change created by an individual had to be acknowledged by everyone in our community, and nobody in my generation thought about freely mingling traditional- and Western elements together in those ways young people are doing in the way they dressed up.

Thus, Yati criticized the general mind-set of young Indigenous people – and the corresponding postcolonial social environment of today – which enabled them to practice the DIY mode of neo-ethnic self-styling. Our young informants had varying understandings of "tradition." Some defined it as heritage, while others as a fixed legacy of their ancestors. No matter what the understanding of tradition, the view all our informants shared was that tradition, whatever that may be, is being invaded by the culture of "Brancos". Seemingly contradicting the purpose of neo-ethnic fashion, this shared understanding in fact reveals the process of shifting from a passive colonial object to an empowered actor; from being inscribed onto to actively, selectively and consciously engaging in the process of inscription.

These evaluations of the Westernized ethnic self-styling by young Indigenous people and their reliance on Internet - and other communication technologies constituted another revealing layer of struggle in the space of cultural hybridity. They projected wishes of elders to annul this hybridizing space altogether and therefore maintain the symbolic boundary used by Indigenous political movements to reinforce their claims, between the urban, White, Global, Modern, and technological on the one side and the traditional, Indigenous on the other. For the elders too, these dichotomies seemed more comfortable than the heterotopias of Indigenous cultures. There seemed to exist anxiety about erasure of the well-established historical subjectivity, or, even worse, of it becoming homogenous with, and unrecognizable from, the modern society dominated by the

White people. The source of the Global, defined hierarchically by a unified set of beliefs and values shared across the planet (Castells 2009: 117), was now predominantly shaped by mass media and communication technologies.

While the young Indigenous individuals tended to see their SNS identity as Indigenous and traditional, the elders saw such identification as a potential threat in the traditional cultural space: its tendency to "unify" at a global scale at the cost of their traditional culture, and its ability to erode social relations through the use of technology. From their point of view, the historical subject became fragmentary in the in-between space through the common understanding of the "correct" way to self-style and thus self-represent.

The Non-Industrial Nature of Neo-Ethnic Fashion in Brazil

In conducting our field research in Brazil, we wondered about the conditional difference between the Comaroffs' commercially ambitious subjects in South Africa and elsewhere versus our subjects in Brazil, for the most of whom commercial homogenization of neo-ethnic fashion was not an active choice since commercialism itself stood in contrast to, thus in conflict with, indigeneity. The DIY mode of self-styling fitted perfectly in the Brazilian setting, making neo-ethnic self-styling a widespread modal phenomenon that nevertheless operated on the principle of self-indulgence. Our interviews, part of which we emphasized above, tended to point out the loose senses of stylistic expression and symbolic competition as mediated through SNS. The presence of well over two hundred different recognized Indigenous societies in Brazil (in addition to unrecognized ethnic groups) may have been another major factor that made any attempts to industrialize neo-ethnic fashion under a unified system of management impossible. Upon asking whether any of our informants ever thought about marketing their neo-ethnic self-styling, none of them provided us with a positive reply. Seven of our 106 youthful informants indicated that the idea of marketing implied commercial monopolization, which was disgusting from the standpoint of indigeneity and would be met with hostile reactions from many native societies.

We thus wish to expand the phenomenology of the neo-ethnic chic as the economized consumable indigeneity to include ethnic fashion movements that are outside the industrial praxis. Whereas neo-ethnic fashion in our case studies is a form of consumption – of DIY materials, garments, accessories, and make up as well as of SNS, it is not an institutionally-shaped form of production and consumption of neo-ethnic indigeneity. Moreover, while this representation of indigeneity might be ethnically, nationally and/or globally bound, its modes of being and purpose are in contrast with, say, the Zulu nation in South Africa, for whom the Comaroffs evaluate that "ethnic incorporation rides on a process of homogenization and abstraction… withdrawn from time or history, congeal into object-form" in order to make them into marketable commodities (2009: 12). Among the neo-ethnic Indigenous youth in Brazil quite the opposite is true: ethnic incorporation is both heterogeneous and locally and historically specific. It is not withdrawn from time or history but critically engages with it through spaces in-between and cultural hybridity. This is apparent from the symbolic/semiotic competition over neo-ethnic self-styling and the practitioners' consciousness about the motives and aims of their praxis.

Whereas *Ethnicity Inc.* focused on critique of the praxis of consumable indigeneity, potentially emptied of their historical legacy, we propose to expand an understanding of this praxis as it unfolds in extra-industrial and extra-institutional frameworks to which SNS flows are crucial. Based on our fieldwork, we propose an alternative to "the intensive marketing of ethnic identity" which, we have demonstrated, does not occur in neo-ethnic fashion of the young Indigenous Brazilians, and which is what Ethnicity Inc. represents. But we agree with the Comaroffs, and our research has shown that re-fashioning identity, re-animating cultural subjectivity

and thereby transforming collective self-awareness has the potential "to forge new patterns of sociality" albeit not "all within the marketplace" as the Comaroffs presume (2009: 26). There is a crucial difference between their South African examples and our own case studies: SNS.

The new techno-social infrastructure allows for reclaiming agency over one's cultural identity and tradition rather than losing agency in the face of market and institutional forces. There is apparently a bottom-up cultural movement of the young generations to utilize techno-social networks to reclaim their Indigenous identity – through modes of self-representation that are beyond even the Indigenous elders' influence and power. They do not speak *for*; they speak *against* while asserting their own, re-invented legacy.

Concluding Remarks

We have shown through our ethnographic observations and theoretical reflections that the practitioners of neo-ethnic fashion in Brazil are symbolically and pragmatically re-fashioning themselves as Indigenous subjects against colonial forces, simultaneously fusing with the Global in order to reposition themselves as both historical subject and contemporary self-aware actor. These enactors of neo-ethnic fashion do so in a non-commercial, extra-industrial way, where self-styling is a tool of reclaiming one's cultural space and therefore any attempts at commodification are perceived as undesirable and even offensive in the identity-building process. Their practices also render them into actors of a new kind of indigenity: DIY indigeinity. Beyond the institutional frameworks of any organization, including their own communities, SNS enables them to play with colonial and civilizational binaries, in an act of self-empowerment in the social space between the state and their Indigenous cultures; and the "universal" world order of the White people. In other words, the young Indigenous people in Brazil hybridize with the world order through their conscious fashion choices, not in an institutionalized or corporate manner, but through a glocal DIY mode of individuated self-representation.

We used Bhabha's concept of cultural hybridity to describe the paradigm shift in the discourse of cultural identity and cultural appropriation in (post)colonial Brazil and define neo-ethnic self-styling as a form of control over flows – of both trans-traditional and global culture – to take, recreate, and reclaim spaces in-between, spaces that are now defined by techno-social networks. SNS, introduced in the postcolonial discourse, shows how young people translate themselves into global circuits of power and claim their voice as the Other not locally but transnationally; not by asserting the boundary between cultures but by blurring it. Such an act of blurring may, however, in fact reinforce the boundary rather than erase it. Elders may perceive this technological- and glocal mode of fashion consumption as steering away from the traditional ways, but to young Indigenous Brazilians it is an alternative, self-made, mode of being Indigenous: that they refuse and are refused acceptance by that world as Indigenous people, due to racism. This is where the glocal self-styling becomes immensely important: it signifies belonging to the world, but in one's own, heterogeneous way – demonstrated by the symbolic competition and multiplicity of forms of hybridity.

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