

The Temporalities of Diasporic Heritage in New York

ABSTRACT: Critical approaches to heritage invite reflections on how Portuguese-speaking diasporic communities in the New York metropolitan area articulate forms of community, collective memory, and embodied culture. While the region's Portuguese and Brazilian immigrants and their descendants recognize their shared language through educational and linguistic initiatives, they celebrate their national differences during annual festivals of Portugal Day in Newark in June and Brazilian Day in New York in September. These festivities exemplify the function of heritage as a comment on the past constructed in the present through displays of cultural practices and traditions. To examine the manifestations and repercussions of heritage work among diasporic communities, this article analyzes how Portugal Day and Brazilian Day serve to foster collectivity among immigrant groups on the basis of national affiliations and also commodify their cultures as temporally and/or spatially "other" and, thus, exotic for contemporary residents of the New York area. The performances at Portugal Day and Brazilian Day as "authentic" expressions of national cultures differ, however, especially with respect to temporalities. An interest in preserving cultural traditions from previous centuries permeates Portugal Day, which contrasts with the greater emphasis on contemporary musicians and artists at Brazilian Day. I suggest that these temporal orientations point to different strains of national identity and culture as encapsulated by the concept of *saudade* in Portugal and the idea of Brazil as "the country of the future" and, moreover, the distinct histories of Portuguese and Brazilian migration to the United States.

KEYWORDS: Portuguese and Brazilian immigrants, ethnic celebrations, New York, national identity, cultural heritage

RESUMO: As aproximações críticas ao patrimônio convidam reflexões sobre como as comunidades da diáspora lusófona na área metropolitana de Nova Iorque articulam formas de comunidade, memória coletiva e cultura encarnada. Enquanto os imigrantes portugueses e brasileiros e seus descendentes reconhecem sua língua compartilhada em iniciativas educacionais e linguísticas, ao mesmo tempo as duas comunidades celebram suas diferenças nacionais durante os festivais anuais do Dia Portugal em Newark

em junho e o Dia Brasileiro em Nova Iorque em setembro. Essas festas exemplificam a função de patrimônio como um comentário sobre o passado construído no presente via as exibições das práticas e tradições culturais. Para examinar as manifestações e repercussões do patrimônio entre comunidades diaspóricas, este artigo analisa como o Dia Portugal e o Dia Brasileiro fomentam o sentido de coletividade entre grupos de imigrantes com base nas afiliações nacionais e, ao mesmo tempo, mercantilizam suas culturas como “outras” em termos temporais e/ou espaciais e, por isso, exóticas para os residentes contemporâneos de Nova Iorque. As representações durante o Dia Portugal e o Dia Brasileiro como expressões “autênticas” das culturas nacionais diferem, especialmente com respeito às temporalidades. Um interesse em preservar as tradições culturais de séculos anteriores permeia o Dia Portugal, o que contrasta com a ênfase maior nos músicos e artistas contemporâneos no Dia Brasileiro. Sugiro que essas orientações temporais indicam diferentes variedades de identidade e cultura nacionais como encapsuladas pelo conceito de saudade em Portugal e a ideia do Brasil como “o país do futuro” e, além disso, as histórias distintas da migração portuguesa e brasileira para os Estados Unidos.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: imigrantes portugueses e brasileiros, celebrações étnicas, Nova Iorque, identidade nacional, patrimônio cultural

On a sunny June afternoon, sounds of European and Brazilian Portuguese, Spanish, and English intermingle on the streets of Newark's Ironbound neighborhood as bass drums from a performance of Sport Club Português's Os Tugos boom in the distance. Grills with sardines, cheese, and meats emit smoke and smells that waft through the air, mixing with the distinctive scents of fried Brazilian pastéis and grilled corn. Sipping cold beer, wine, sugar-cane juice, or other drinks, extended families of immigrants who now call the Ironbound home, visitors to Newark, and other residents celebrate Portuguese heritage at the annual Portugal Day. The event occurs on the weekend closest to June 10, the official Day of Portugal, Camões, and the Portuguese Communities. Newark's Portugal Day, which celebrated its fortieth year in 2019, consists of a multi-day festival, with performances and booths selling food, drinks, clothes, and trinkets, or distributing information about local organizations or politicians, and the Sunday parade, according to the event's official website. The schedule features musicians, dance troupes, and other performers that recall folkloric

cultural traditions of Portugal's rural north, the ancestral home of the majority of Portuguese who settled in northern New Jersey.

A few miles away, across the Hudson River in midtown Manhattan, on the Sunday of Labor Day weekend, streets are again overwhelmed with conversations and music in Portuguese. Now the distinctive rhythms and sounds of various forms of Brazilian Portuguese dominate as Brazil's yellow-and-green jerseys and flags substitute the red-and-green Portuguese ones that crowded the streets of Newark months earlier. Similar smells of fried pastéis and grilled meats and cheeses drift through the crowds, joined by the palm oil used to prepare *acarajé* and the aromas of other Brazilian treats like *coxinha*, *pão de queijo*, and *feijoada*. Spreading over twenty-five blocks around 46th Street's Little Brazil, Brazilian Day is promoted as the largest Brazilian celebration outside of Brazil. With performances by well-known musicians and a festive atmosphere recalling Carnival, the event attracts crowds of Brazilians who live in New York and neighboring states, busloads from immigrant communities in Massachusetts, Florida, and Texas, and other tourists and community members. The event, which celebrated its thirty-fifth year in 2019, marks both the unofficial end to summer in the United States and the commemoration of Brazil's Independence Day on September 7. The music blasting from the main stage favors currently popular styles of *sertanejo*, *forró*, funk, and *samba-reggae*, as well as celebrated samba performers, rock groups, and singer-songwriters.

These festivals represent articulations of cultural heritage by the two national groups, Portuguese and Brazilian, that mainly constitute the Portuguese-speaking diasporic communities in the New York metropolitan region. Both events construct a vision of national identity and culture through food, music, dance, and goods. Dislocated from places historically associated with Portuguese and Brazilian heritage, these immigrant groups and their descendants emphasize select objects and practices as essential to the expression and preservation of their culture via Portugal Day and Brazilian Day. The celebrations help to build community among immigrants through language and culture as they promote a particular vision of Portugal and Brazil in greater New York as commodities in the circuit of international and ethnic festivals. In these street-festival constructs of national culture, Portugal emerges primarily as a rural country of folkloric traditions guided by a deep sense of *saudade*, whereas Brazil exudes a festive energy that coincides with its label as the country of the future.¹ While the differences in the festivals reflect distinct constructions of national identity, they also point

to the disparate experiences of Newark and New York as part of a shared metropolitan area. As a city still marked by the extensive repercussions of the 1967 race riots, Newark remains in the shadow of neighboring New York, a larger and more prosperous global city. Disparities in scale and visibility between Newark's Portugal Day and New York's Brazilian Day correspond, in part, to the specific profile of each city within local and global spheres.²

In spite of these differences in scope, both events contribute to the celebration and reification of the communities' intangible cultural heritage, which UNESCO defines as "the practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills—as well as the instruments, objects, artefacts and cultural spaces associated therewith—that communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals recognize as part of their cultural heritage" (UNESCO 2003). Forms of intangible cultural heritage include performing arts, oral traditions, rituals, and festive events, which manifest in Portugal Day and Brazilian Day as food, ranchos folclóricos, samba, and other rhythms and dances. Rather than remain frozen in time and space, these practices adapt to new surroundings yet maintain a discursive claim to cultural "authenticity." Rodney Harrison highlights the complex temporality of heritage, which "is formed in the present and reflects inherited and current concerns about the past" (2013, 14; original emphasis). In other words, heritage develops as the present creation of an imagined past. For Portuguese and Brazilian communities in Newark and New York, constructing a collective past via music, dance, and food at their annual festivals involves returning to distinct moments in national and diasporic histories and reflecting on the current realities of each nation and their immigrant communities. As celebrations that have responded to shifting tastes and demographics over the past four decades, Newark's Portugal Day and New York's Brazilian Day exemplify the living nature of intangible cultural heritage as learned from previous generations and, in the words of UNESCO, "constantly recreated by communities and groups in response to their environment, their interaction with nature and their history" (UNESCO 2003). While performers and vendors likely learn their rhythms, movements, and recipes from previous generations and will pass this knowledge on to the next, they also transform inherited forms of music, dance, and food to reflect the evolving preferences and needs of Portuguese and Brazilian communities in greater New York.

Critical heritage studies, as I propose in this article, serve as a generative lens to examine the confluence of national and diasporic identities, linguistic

expressions, immigrant traditions, and cultural commodities at play in Portugal Day and Brazilian Day. In moving the discussion beyond a focus on material objects and buildings, recent approaches to heritage consider the role of intangible culture, public spaces, and nature both within and beyond the confines of nation-states or international bodies like UNESCO. This outlook invites a deeper analysis of how Portuguese-speaking communities in New York and its environs engage with visions of the past in the present to articulate distinct forms of community, collective memory, and embodied culture. Before delving into a more detailed study of Portugal Day and Brazilian Day, I provide a brief overview of Portuguese and Brazilian immigration to the region. With this background in mind, I turn my attention to the festivals and examine them as articulations of imagined pasts in the present. I conclude by considering how expressions of Portuguese and Brazilian diasporic heritage intersect with commercial interests in the production and circulation of ethnic others for residents of the New York metropolitan region.

Portuguese and Brazilian Communities in Greater New York

Though the arrival of Portuguese immigrants in Massachusetts dates to as early as the seventeenth century, this group does not become a notable presence in New York until the early twentieth century, during what Leo Pap (1981, 35) describes as the first wave of Portuguese mass immigration, peaking between 1911 and 1920. Following this swell in migration, the Ironbound neighborhood in Newark emerged in the 1920s and 1930s as a Portuguese community with a commercial district along Ferry Street and a population of about six thousand Portuguese, including American-born children, by 1940 (Pap 1981, 88). After this initial period of growth, the number of Portuguese immigrants to New Jersey surged in the 1960s and 1970s due to political and economic changes on both sides of the Atlantic. The 1965 Immigration and Nationality Act in the United States repealed the 1924 Immigration Act's quota system based on national origin and instead gave priority to skilled professionals and relatives of US citizens and permanent residents. This shift in US immigration policy coincided with a period of political instability in Portugal due to the colonial wars from 1961 to 1974 and the end of the Estado Novo's forty-eight-year dictatorship in 1974 (Holton 2009, 156). The vast majority, eighty-three percent, of New Jersey's foreign-born Portuguese population arrived between 1965 and 1980, which made it the state with the fourth largest Portuguese population, behind historic

destinations of California, Massachusetts, and Rhode Island, according to the 1990 census (Holton 2009, 154–55).

Most of the Portuguese settlers in Newark have come from the rural northern states of Minho, Trás-os-Montes, and Alto Douro, the coastal region of Aveiro, or the central area of Viseu, where they worked in agriculture or fishing and had little formal education (Baptista 2009, 177). This profile of Newark's Portuguese community as predominantly continental differs from the prevalence of Azoreans who immigrated to other parts of the United States (Holton 2009, 154–55). The professed values, traditions, and cultures of Newark's Portuguese residents correspond to those associated with Portugal's more conservative and rural north. Kimberly DaCosta Holton (2009, 158–63) identifies family, respect for authority, and celebrating agrarian life as important to the Portuguese in northern New Jersey. Based on oral histories and ethnographic work, Holton suggests that ranchos folclóricos play a central role in attempting to maintain traditional values and pass them on to younger generations. Portugal Day, as I discuss further in the next section, emerges as a public stage for the expression of this imagined ideal of a folkloric Portuguese past. This vision contrasts with the current demographic composition of the Ironbound, which includes Brazilian and other Latin American immigrants alongside the Portuguese community. Lori Barcliff Baptista (2009, 197) astutely synthesizes this disconnection: "While the Ironbound is presently experiencing an influx of immigrants from Brazil, Ecuador, and Mexico, it nostalgically resonates in what performance scholar, Joseph Roach, theorizes as 'collective social memory' as a Portuguese ethnic enclave."

Baptista's observation has become even more palpable on the streets of the Ironbound since her study's publication in 2009. According to estimates from the American Community Survey (US Census Bureau 2010; 2019), 14,161 people in Newark, or 5.2 percent of the population, identified as Portuguese in 2010, while 9,272 people, or 3.3 percent of the population, did so in 2019. Similarly, in 2010, 11,332 people, or 15.9 percent of the foreign-born population, were from Europe and 49,477 (69.2 percent) were from Latin America. By 2019, 9,411 people (10.5 percent) were from Europe and 61,936 (69.2 percent) were from Latin America. Though not broken down by neighborhood to isolate the Ironbound, these statistics record the city's declining Portuguese population and corroborate Baptista's description of new immigrants arriving from Latin America. This demographic change dates to the late 1980s and early 1990s, as reported in a 1995

New York Times article on undocumented immigrants from Portugal and Brazil in the Ironbound (Dunn 1995).³ Whereas Portuguese immigration began to slow with the improvement of Portugal's economy in the late 1980s, Brazil became a country of emigrants, rather than immigrants, for the first time that decade (Castro e Lima and Castro 2017, 13–14). Maxine Margolis locates Newark, with its itinerant Brazilian consulate and its Portuguese-speaking businesses, as a key destination for these émigrés. Brazilians now outnumber Portuguese in Newark, and Brazil ranks third among source countries of the city's foreign-born population (Margolis 2013, 80–81). While Ferry Street's restaurants and cafés suggest a coexistence of Portuguese and Brazilian in the Ironbound, the racialization and the exoticization of Brazilian women reveal a darker underside to this multiethnic milieu (Ramos-Zayas 2009).⁴

Though Brazilians, including Sousândrade, Monteiro Lobato, and Hélio Oiticica, have lived in New York in small numbers since the late nineteenth century, a more significant community did not emerge until the 1980s (Moser and Tosta 2011, xv–xxiv, 167–72).⁵ Various factors motivated this increase in Brazilian immigration, most notably high rates of inflation, unemployment, and economic instability in Brazil in the late 1980s and early 1990s. According to Margolis, Brazilian immigrants in New York tend to be middle or lower middle class, fairly well educated, and from urban areas in Brazil, who arrive in the United States as “economic refugees escaping their nation's chaotic economy,” rather than as political exiles (2009, x). Despite their affluence relative to other immigrants, the vast majority of Brazilians in greater New York lack the proper papers to live and work in the United States (ix).⁶ In the New York/New Jersey region, where 16 percent of the estimated 1.3 million Brazilians in the United States currently reside, almost half (47 percent) have arrived since 2000 (Castro e Lima and Castro 53–54, 62, 130, 135).⁷ Brazilian immigrants in this area have settled primarily in New York City, with the largest community in Astoria, Queens, and in cities in New Jersey, including Newark and Elizabeth. New York's Brazilian community is one of the largest in the United States, but, according to the 2000 US census, Brazil did not rank among the top thirty source countries for the city's foreign-born population. In Astoria, while Brazilians accounted for less than four percent of its foreign-born population per the 2000 census data, the Brazilian community has a strong commercial presence with restaurants, bakeries, specialized markets, travel agencies, salons, and boutiques (Margolis 2013, 78–84).⁸ Even though few Brazilians live in Manhattan, Little Brazil continues to host the most prominent Brazilian Day

festival every September. Smaller celebrations unfold on the streets of Astoria and among other pockets of the Brazilian community in the region.

Portuguese and Brazilian communities in the United States share the Portuguese language and also their perceived status as relatively invisible migrants. According to M. Estellie Smith's (1973) assessment, Portuguese Americans were an "invisible minority" due to their lack of civic and political engagement, especially in comparison to the groups of Irish or Italians. As Smith claims, a willingness to work in poor conditions without fighting to participate in decision-making and leadership roles contributed to the invisibility of the Portuguese, which, in turn, protected them from discrimination in employment that other immigrants faced. Holton (2009, 172) posits that Portuguese Americans remain invisible as a result of "scholarly inattention to these communities," an oversight her work begins to correct. Likewise, Margolis (2009, 92–93) draws scholarly attention to the comparative invisibility of Brazilian immigrants, which she attributes to North American ignorance about Brazil's languages and peoples, the lack of a cohesive Brazilian neighborhood, and minimal news coverage of Brazilians. Difficulties in classifying Brazilians within racial and ethnic categories of the US census further hinder their recognition, and official documentation, as a distinct immigrant group (Margolis 2009, 95–100).⁹ The Portuguese language separates Brazilians and Portuguese from their Spanish-speaking neighbors in Latin America and Iberia, and from the US government's category for people of Hispanic origin. Linguistic and other commonalities between Portuguese and Brazilians do not result, however, in a unified vision of Luso-Brazilian identity when these groups reside in the same region or neighborhood. While official channels of the Portuguese and Brazilian consulates and the Instituto Camões work toward a common goal of promoting the Portuguese language and Lusophone cultures, Portuguese and Brazilians living in Newark differentiate themselves via idiomatic expressions, accents, and vocabulary (Ramos-Zayas 2009, 437, 454).¹⁰ Moreover, as I discuss in the next sections, Portuguese and Brazilian communities in greater New York utilize Portugal Day and Brazilian Day to articulate and promote distinct visions of cultural heritage.

Saudade for a Rural Past at Newark's Portugal Day

Portugal Day telegraphs an idea of the Portuguese diasporic community rooted in *saudade*, which Bela Feldman-Bianco (2009, 51) characterizes as "a cultural construct that defines Portuguese identity in the context of multiple layers of

space and (past) time.” This concept relates to individual experiences of emigration and collective forms of memory that coalesce in Newark’s annual Portugal Day. The event commemorates the anniversary of the death of Portugal’s national poet Luís de Camões on June 10, which has been recognized since 1977 as the Day of Portugal, Camões, and the Portuguese Communities, replacing the Estado Novo-era Day of the Portuguese Race. According to Feldman-Bianco, this change in nomenclature indicated a shift in Portuguese identity whereby “the emigrant communities spread around the world replaced the former colonial dominions in the new and expanded construction of a ‘global’ Portuguese nation” (2009, 55). By inaugurating their celebration of Portugal Day in 1979, members of Newark’s Portuguese community participated in this construction of a diasporic identity that, indirectly, lauded Camões and the imperial outlook of his 1572 epic *Os Lusíadas*. Darlene J. Sadlier (2016, 15) situates the legacy of this poem as grounded in “the image of a people on the move, undeterred by seemingly insurmountable forces. This portrait is celebrated to this day and is an indelible part of the national imaginary.”

The spirit that Camões’s poem embodies is central to the ethos of Newark’s Portugal Day, which celebrates Portuguese Americans as a group that moved away from its rural past and overcame obstacles to live in the United States. Bernardino Coutinho, who founded the festival and directed it for more than thirty years, exemplified this ideal trajectory of a Portuguese migrant. After arriving in Newark in 1967 with scant resources, he worked at an East Orange bakery for five years while he saved enough money to open his Coutinho’s Bakery in the Ironbound in 1973 (*Newark Star-Ledger* 2016). In establishing Portugal Day in the Ironbound, Coutinho and his fellow business leaders honored the role of the Portuguese community in the region as they also aimed to attract people from beyond the neighborhood to their stores and restaurants. From its origins, Newark’s Portugal Day has combined a desire to promote and preserve Portuguese heritage with commercial interests. Portugal Day, which has unfolded on the streets of the Ironbound every June for the past forty years, contributes to the continued perception of the neighborhood as a Portuguese enclave, despite the arrival of Brazilian, Ecuadorian, and Mexican immigrants in recent decades. Baptista attributes this disconnect between the neighborhood’s image and its reality to “how local publics have experienced the Ironbound over the course of the last twenty years through its restaurants and the Portugal Day Festival” (2009, 197).

During the festival weekend, the Ironbound presents images of a rural Portuguese past by means of music, dance, and food. Constructing the past in the present is the task of heritage, but it also suggests the temporal and spatial role of *saudade* in manifestations of Portuguese cultural identity. Given that Portuguese immigrants to Newark often discarded rural, preindustrial trades of farming or fishing for modes of industrial labor in factories or railyards, expressions of cultural heritage at Portugal Day tend to craft an idealized view of the rural past through folkloric music, dance, and dress. The percussion group Os Tugas of the Sport Club Português, for example, illustrate this desire to recreate cultural forms from an imagined rural past in a contemporary urban realm. Founded in 1921 as a social club for Portuguese men in Newark, Sport Club Português now functions as a community organization for all ages and genders that supports the study of Portuguese language, history, and culture. A recent addition to the club's cultural offerings, Os Tugas have performed at Portugal Day and other venues since 2015. Consisting of fifteen to twenty musicians dressed in straw hats and red or green shirts who play drums of differing sizes as they march, Os Tugas bring the percussive traditions of "Zés-Pereiras" from pilgrimages and festivals in the northern regions of Entre Douro and Minho to Newark's streets and stages. The drumbeats reverberate through the crowds gathered near the Portugal Day main stage or along the parade route, but they lack the religious resonances that they have held in northern Portuguese towns for centuries.

A similar spatial and temporal decontextualization unfolds with ranchos folclóricos, which figure prominently at Portugal Day. This revivalist folklore draws on traditions from rural Portugal to put late nineteenth-century dances, songs, and costumes into circulation in twenty-first-century Newark. According to Holton (2009, 158), there were sixteen groups active in northern New Jersey in the early 2000s, each with thirty to thirty-five musicians and dancers. Rather than embark on ethnographic research to inspire their performances, these troupes stage recreations of dances documented in books and other archival materials and performed by groups in Portugal. Holton astutely claims that dancing ranchos "promotes an embodied albeit 'invented' celebration of this rural past" (2009, 163). Inventing tradition, which involves creating the past in the present, is central to the task of heritage in the Portuguese community of greater New York (Hobsbawm [1983] 2006, 1–14).¹¹ Ranchos serve a dual function: on the one hand, they help Portuguese immigrants to "forget their current geographic circumstance" by transporting them spatially and temporally

via memories of summer festas in Portugal's north and, on the other, perform a version of Portuguese American heritage for a diverse public in metropolitan New York (Holton 2009, 167).

With this emphasis on traditional music and folkloric dance, Portugal Day constructs an image of Portuguese identity and culture as entrenched in nostalgia. On the festival main stage in 2019, for instance, seven different groups of ranchos folclóricos performed. According to the event's official website, the schedule also featured Marante, a romantic crooner from Portugal performing with Diapasão; Tiago Marato, a young accordionist from Minho who blends traditional rhythms with more contemporary lyrics; and Luis Neves, whose repertoire includes Portuguese covers of 1970s and 1980s rock ballads. The styles and instrumentation of these musicians evoke a musical past of Portugal and its diasporic community. Alongside folkloric musicians and dancers, these performers contribute to the creation of a collective cultural past in the present. This invention of tradition addresses two distinct publics in greater New York: Portuguese immigrants and their descendants, who long to hear rhythms, genres, and lyrics sung in Portuguese that remind them of their ancestral home, and other community members or visitors who wish to hear and see an "authentic" Portugal in the simulacra of an ethnic festival. Both of these facets envision saudade as essential to Portuguese heritage and, by extension, the cultural identity of Portuguese living in New Jersey.

New York's Brazilian Day as Festive Projection of the Future

While Newark's Portugal Day, with its support from local businesses and its appeal to residents of neighboring communities, attracts hundreds of thousands of visitors, the festival lacks the prominence and global scale of New York's Brazilian Day. An estimated one million people crowd the streets of midtown Manhattan to attend the annual cultural and commercial event, which receives corporate sponsorships from airline companies Delta and Brazil-based GOL, the Brazilian media conglomerate Globo, and *The Brasilians*, an English-Portuguese newspaper published in New York since 1972, according to the event's website. Given that João de Matos, the editor of *The Brasilians*, produces Brazilian Day, the bilingual periodical advertises and reports on the celebration for months before and after the early September event. The festival commemorates Brazilian independence, primarily for Brazilians in the United States, but it also appeals to other residents of greater New York interested in Brazilian culture. The fascination of

this second group suggests an impulse to consume what Graham Huggan (2001) terms the “postcolonial exotic.”¹² Promotional materials address the festival’s varied publics with the abbreviated moniker BR Day New York and, more importantly, slogans in English (“the green and yellow mood”) and Portuguese (“*ser brasileiro é simplesmente ser*” [being Brazilian is simply being]). In its reference to the colors of the Brazilian flag, the English-language motto emphasizes symbolic expressions of national identity. Wearing green and yellow or, more likely, being surrounded by these colors allows non-Brazilians to be swept up in the feeling of being Brazilian. For Brazilians, the catchphrase in Portuguese suggests that their Brazilian identity does not render them as exceptional others; it is simply one way of being in the world.

These Portuguese and English expressions indicate how Brazilian Day speaks to the needs and interests of Brazilians living in the United States as well as those of non-Brazilians. Similar to Portugal Day, Brazilian Day exists as a fixture in the calendar of ethnic events held annually in the New York area. Its origins in the mid-1980s coincide with the arrival of significant numbers of Brazilian immigrants to the region and to the United States in general. Recognizing connections between histories of Brazil and Brazilian immigration and the development of New York’s Brazilian Day proves critical to understanding how the festival’s vision of Brazil proposes heritage work that is future oriented. Unlike Portugal Day, which conceives of Portuguese identity as a comparatively static articulation of the past, Brazilian Day crafts an understanding of the past in the present that looks toward the future. In other words, the festival constructs an image of the forward-looking Brazil of the 1980s in the contemporary moment. Even though economic instability and extreme inflation resulted in emigrants from Brazil to outnumber immigrants entering the country in the late 1980s and early 1990s, the decade represented a moment of optimism as Brazil transitioned from dictatorship to democracy (McCann 2008).¹³ In subsequent decades, it seemed like Brazil, long considered the country of the future, might finally be on the cusp of achieving its perceived potential (Zweig 1941).¹⁴ Brazilian Day’s expressions of heritage reflect this fascination with Brazil’s future possibilities.

Musicians and artists who perform at Brazilian Day contribute to this image of diasporic cultural heritage as expressing the potential of being Brazilian. Their relative fame also speaks to the heightened commercial interests at stake in Brazilian Day as a street festival and a televised broadcast for Globo subscribers in the United States and Brazil. In recent years, Globo television personalities

Serginho Groisman, Otaviano Costa, Ana Furtado, and Glenda Kozlowski have hosted the New York event, drawing on their experiences as hosts and actors to introduce performers and energize the crowd. By integrating known entities from Globo's programming into the festivities, Brazilian Day addresses the needs of a live audience, who seek entertainment and visceral connections, and a distant public of television viewers, for whom the host generates a sense of familiarity. These masters of ceremonies elevate Brazilian Day's performances from a series of musical acts into a televisual spectacle that celebrates Brazil's intangible cultural heritage for Brazilians and non-Brazilians, whether they are physically present at the event or accessing it through a mediated broadcast from afar.

The performers represent the variety of musical preferences, from sertanejo and pagode to samba-reggae and funk, that Brazilians in both countries hold and that non-Brazilians expect when they think of Brazilian music. In 2018, Brazilian Day featured sertanejo duo Matheus & Kauan, teenage forró singer Eduarda Brasil from Globo's talent show *The Voice Kids*, the 1980s rock band Os Paralamas do Sucesso, funk singer MC Koringa, and reggae singer Toni Garrido from the band Cidade Negra (Widyloar 2018). The lineups from the previous five years have included a similar mixture of musical styles, periods, and commercial successes to craft a soundtrack of Brazil's recent past that reverberates with live audiences and television viewers. This performance of Brazil on a midtown stage finds inspiration in the popular rhythms and beats that have resonated in Brazil and beyond since Brazilian immigrants began arriving in New York in greater numbers in the 1980s. By inventing a shared musical past, Brazilian Day helps immigrants maintain links to their nation and its culture, language, and people. At the same time, the event projects an enticing and diverse soundscape of Brazil for a foreign audience.

Commodifying Cultural Heritage

Portugal Day and Brazilian Day bookend summer festival season in greater New York as distinct ways of celebrating and commodifying the cultural heritage of diasporic Portuguese-speaking communities. As a festival featuring performances in New York of primarily Brazil-based musicians, Brazilian Day is best understood as a transnational collaboration between New York-based producer João de Matos and Brazil's Globo network with its prominent profile in the global mediascape (Appadurai 1996, 35–37). In contrast, Newark's Portugal Day parade, festival, and road races feature local sponsors, including Lusitania Savings Bank; restaurants and cafés such as Iberia, Seabra Foods, and Teixeira Bakery; media

outlets like the *Luso-Americano* website and Radio Luso-American; and the Lar de Leões soccer club. While SIC Internacional, a transnational television and media corporation based in Portugal, also sponsors the event, it lacks the extensive global reach of Brazilian Day sponsor Globo. Portugal Day displays a relatively local approach to event planning that prioritizes the needs of the Ironbound and its residents as part of the broader Newark community. The commercial interests of the festival's founder Bernardino Coutinho and other local businesses have remained comparatively humble, especially when contrasted with the enterprising producer who built Brazilian Day into a behemoth of corporate sponsorships. As a result, Portugal Day has faced financial difficulties, which led to its cancelation in 2010 and revival the following year under the planning of the União de Clubes Luso-Americanos de New Jersey. In 2015, the non-profit organization Portugal Day Newark took the reins. This organizational history differs from the commercially viable path of Brazilian Day.

Both festivals construct an invented version of Portuguese and Brazilian heritage as part of the Portuguese-speaking diaspora of the New York metropolitan region, but they differ in their mode of commodifying cultural expressions and traditions for these communities and the broader public. Newark's Portugal Day displays a nostalgic version of Portuguese culture for first and second-generation Luso-Americans and other visitors who continue to frame the Ironbound as the locus of the region's Portuguese community, even as the neighborhood transforms.¹⁵ The festival has begun to reflect the changing Ironbound by including Ecuadorian and Colombian food vendors next to booths selling Portuguese staples of sardines and wine. Brazilian Day places a less central focus on the needs of the immigrant communities in greater New York as it offers a celebration of Brazilian music, culture, and food for varied publics of Brazilians at home and abroad, tourists, and other residents of the metropolitan area. In spite of their distinct profiles, Portugal Day and Brazilian Day each aim to address the interests of their specific audiences by displaying diasporic cultural heritage.

These festivals reveal how creating the past in the present can manifest as temporalities that correlate with broader views of national identity and culture. Newark's Portuguese community looks back, both temporally and spatially, with saudade for a rural, pre-industrial Portugal, whereas New York's Brazilian residents envision a past when their nation was about to realize its potential as the perpetual country of the future. These outlooks produce expressions of cultural heritage, namely the supposedly homogenous Portuguese folkloric traditions

and the diverse Brazilian musical expressions, linked to their respective pasts as nations of emigrants and immigrants. The Portuguese impulse to travel and, at times, settle abroad has often generated a more static vision of national identity and culture rooted in an idealization of the past. In contrast, Brazil's history of colonization, slavery, and immigration has resulted in ongoing intersections of people, languages, and cultures. By reenacting these established dynamics annually, Portugal Day and Brazilian Day help to preserve idealized images of national identity and culture closely associated with how these diasporic communities envision their intangible cultural heritage. Although the events have changed over the years to account for shifting demographics and musical preferences, they continue to serve as present constructs of a past era, specifically the nostalgia of Portuguese immigrants in the 1970s and the optimism of Brazilians in the 1980s. In doing so, Newark's Portugal Day and New York's Brazilian Day address the needs of immigrants to concretize collective memories and the desires of people outside the diasporic communities to consume commodified versions of Portuguese and Brazilian cultures.

NOTES

1. Saudade, roughly translated as nostalgia or melancholy, is an "untranslatable" given its philosophical, historical, and literary meanings as "the key feeling of the Portuguese soul" that "proceeds from a memory that wants to renew the present by means of the past" (Santoro 2013, 929). The idea of saudade continues to shape discussions of Portuguese identity at home and abroad.

2. It is worth noting that Newark also hosts a Brazilian Day on the first weekend of September, but it pales in comparison to the size, commercial success, and longevity of the New York festival. From 1992 to 2012, the Brazilian American United Association, a Newark-based nonprofit, sponsored the Brazilian Day celebration in the Ironbound district. The festival has continued every year, except 2014, under the organization of José Moreira and Silvana Magda and with support from a range of local businesses (A. Santos 2017).

3. According to an undocumented Portuguese resident quoted in the article, "You see a lot of Brazilians now. They are going through the same phase of the Portuguese thirty years ago" (Dunn 1995).

4. In her study, Ana Ramos-Zayas (2009) contrasts perceptions of Portuguese women as respectable and traditional with views of Brazilian women grounded in "stereotypes of the tropics" as racialized and hypersexualized.

5. Robert Moser and Antonio Luciano de Tosta (2011) outline the history and literature of Luso-Americans in the United States and Canada, with emphasis on Portuguese,

Brazilian, and Cabo Verdean communities. The introductions to the anthology and to the Brazilian section provide a useful overview and chronology of the cultural contributions of these groups.

6. When Margolis completed her ethnography in the early 1990s, 50 percent of Brazilians in New York were undocumented; by 2000, the percentage without papers had risen to 70 percent.

7. Estimates of the Brazilian population in the United States range from 335,608, based on the American Community Survey (ACS) in 2014, to between 800,000 and 1.3 million, according to Brazil's Ministério das Relações Exteriores. The US government tends to undercount Brazilians since they do not easily fit into census categories for race and ethnicity. Moreover, these immigrants often fear or are not interested in filling out census forms. The Brazilian ministry uses remittances and data from consulates and the embassy to calculate its estimate. See Margolis (2009, 6–8) for data from the US and Brazilian governments and a discussion of why Brazilians are comparatively invisible migrants.

8. Margolis (2013) notes that, in recent decades, the Brazilian community has dispersed to other areas in the greater New York region, including Mineola, Mount Vernon, Port Chester and the Catskills in New York State, Long Branch and Riverside in New Jersey, and Danbury in Connecticut.

9. The category of “Hispanic origin” used in the 2000 and 2010 census excludes Brazilians by defining “Hispanic or Latino” as “a person of Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, South or Central American, or other Spanish culture or origin regardless of race.” The 2020 census continued to delimit Hispanic or Latino in this manner but allowed for more flexible means of racial and ethnic self-identification in other questions.

10. Ramos-Zayas (2009) draws a parallel between how Portuguese and Brazilians in the Ironbound employ the Portuguese language and how Mexicans and Puerto Ricans in Chicago mark their differences through their distinct uses of Spanish.

11. Holton (2009) refers to Eric Hobsbawm's concept of the “invention of tradition” as she depicts the key cultural role of ranchos folclóricos among the Portuguese community of northern New Jersey.

12. Huggan (2001) frames the “exotic” as a construct that grants cultural capital to postcolonial writing. He underscores the role of the exotic in helping to legitimize marginal works and to allocate more cultural capital to writers. Though his study focuses on late-twentieth-century global Anglophone literature, the concept of the exotic plays a similar role in the accumulation of cultural capital in forms of embodied performance and intangible cultural heritage. See George Yúdice's *The Expediency of Culture* (2004) for more on the various roles of culture in the current age of globalization.

13. In *The Throes of Democracy*, Bryan McCann (2008) sketches a history of Brazil's present with a focus on possibilities and challenges of transitioning from dictatorship to democracy.

14. Stefan Zweig (1941), the Austrian Jewish writer who lived in exile in Brazil from 1940 until his death in 1942, considered Brazil “the future of our world” and a country worth emulating. Reflecting in on the rise of Brazil during the previous decade, historian Marshall Eakin (2013, 230) claimed that “the time has come to recognize that the country of the future has become the country of the present.”

15. Newark native and Luso-American writer Hugo dos Santos (2017) comments on the shifting meaning of Portugal Day for Portuguese immigrants, their descendants, and the broader Newark community in a post on the Newest Americans website accompanied by colorful photographs. It remains to be seen whether the accessibility of Portugal as a popular tourist destination reconfigures Newark’s Portugal Day and affects how Luso-Americans and other community members experience the celebration.

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KRISTA BRUNE is an assistant professor of Portuguese and Spanish at the Pennsylvania State University. She is the author of *Creative Transformations: Travels and Translations of Brazil in the Americas* (SUNY Press, 2020). Her articles have appeared in, among others, *Luso-Brazilian Review*, *Hispanic Review*, *Translation Review*, *Journal of Lusophone Studies*, and *Studies in Latin American Popular Culture*. Her research has received funding from Fulbright, the Tinker Foundation, FLAD, and the National Endowment for the Humanities.