



Black Bodies, Black Rights: The Politics of Quilombolismo in Contemporary Brazil

Elizabeth Farfán-Santos

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Under a provision in the Brazilian constitution, rural black communities identified as the modern descendants of quilombos—runaway slave communities—are promised land rights as a form of reparations for the historic exclusion of blacks from land ownership. The quilombo provision has been hailed as a success for black rights; however, rights for quilombolas are highly controversial and, in many cases, have led to violent land conflicts. Although thousands of rural black communities have been legally recognized, only a handful have received the rights they were promised. Conflict over quilombola rights is widespread and carries important consequences for race relations and political representations of blackness in twenty-first century Brazil.

Drawing on a year of field research in a quilombola community, Elizabeth Farfán-Santos explores how quilombo recognition has significantly affected the everyday lives of those who experience the often-complicated political process. Questions of identity, race, and entitlement play out against a community's struggle to prove its historical authenticity—and to gain the land and rights they need to survive. This work not only demonstrates the lived experience of a new, particular form of blackness in Brazil, but also shows how blackness is being mobilized and reimagined to gain social rights and political recognition. *Black Bodies, Black Rights* thus represents an important contribution to the rapidly growing interdisciplinary field of Afro-Latino studies.

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