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## Searching for Identity around the Globe

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*Rick Santos*

## Searching for Identity around the Globe

*poem*

Yes, I was born in this country  
BUT WHAT ARE YOU?  
My parents are Brazilian;  
I am Brazilian

BUT YOU WERE NOT BORN HERE  
WHAT ARE YOU?

I was born in New York  
Soy americano

There is no such a thing as a half-Jew  
Your mother is Jewish, you ARE Jewish  
don't let anybody tell you otherwise

The male God of Catholicism orders you to  
follow you Father's religion  
So, technically (and whether you like it or not)  
You ARE catholic

Caught in between the middle of a war of ideologies  
& identities  
i AM continuously forced to choose one  
inextricable dimension of my?SELF over (an)other.

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Rick Santos

In the middle  
of  
this

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FIRE  
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What can one do?  
Who do i s\_de with?  
Is there a way out?

When I returned to this country  
i had g\_ven up trying to define myself  
And to my surprise  
For the first time in my(?) l\_fe i found a group to belong  
(or better yet, They foun\_g a group to stick me \_n)

□ H\_spanic

At first, not yet used to belonging,  
i tried to excuse myself:  
"Well, I'm actually Brazilian and not really hispanic."

But They refused to hear me  
"Yeah, yeah... brazilian, porto-rican, all the same"

"Get out of Our neighborhoods, motherfucking spics"

"In welfare line all you spics look alike"

"Why don't you go back to where you belong?"

I did NOT get out, though...  
And, for the first time in my lfe, I actually got In  
I learned to belong, to appropriate, and to resist.

Resist being pushed out

Searching for Identity Around the Globe

I learned to fight those who wanted to erase  
and s\_lence me  
I opened my mouth and shouted loud,  
And with my pen, I filled many pages  
I refused to be invisible  
I struck back  
That is how I learned to be  
✠LATINO.