

LÁPIZ

Nº 1

PROCEEDINGS FROM THE
2013 LAPES SYMPOSIUM

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*latin
american
philosophy of
education
society*

Lápiz, Proceedings from the 2013 LAPES Symposium, No.1, 2014, ISSN (2374-2402 print) ISSN (2373-9150 online) is a free annual publication of the Latin American Philosophy of Education Society currently housed at Columbia University.

Lápiz (2374-2402 print) is an annual publication of the Latin American Philosophy of Education Society.
Phone (347) 967-8764;
info@lapes.org

ISSN (Print) 2374-2402
ISSN (Online) 2373-9150

lapes.org

Acknowledgements

Special thanks to the wonderful people at CSER (Center for the Study of Ethnicity and Race at Columbia University), Frances Negrón-Muntaner, Josephine Caputo, and Teresa Aguayo, who not only fund us, but truly support us in our journey into Latin American Philosophy of Education. To all our authors, thank you for contributing your time, patience and knowledge in making the first edition of our journal a reality. We would also like to thank Eduardo Duarte for believing in our endeavor and not only cheering us on, but actually enabling us to grow. And finally, David T. Hansen for his constant support and help.

Sponsoring Organization

Funded by CSER (Center for the Study of Ethnicity and Race at Columbia University).

Printed in Mexico.

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→ The order of the articles in this journal was determined by the order in which they were originally presented at the 2013 Symposium. The articles' spacial relation to each other in print mimics the original temporal relationship. The epilogue also follows this rationale as it was presented to an audience months later at another LAPES event. In order for the reader to appreciate this spacial-temporal quality we have included under the title of each article the date and time of their presentation.

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**EPILOGUE
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Eduardo Duarte

Pollito: chicken, gallina: hen,
lápiz: pencil y pluma: pen.

-Mexican children's song

NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

*Es el tiempo de borradores, de escribir, borrar y volver a escribir, de ensayar.*¹

Lápiz sounds very much like LAPES. And we chose this word as the title of our journal because we appreciated this phonetic likeness. It was not until much later in the process of creating and working with the texts presented here that the image of writing with a pencil unveiled itself as a wonderful metaphor for our endeavor.

Imagine a child learning how to write his name. He rehearses it time and time again. He holds a pencil. He writes his name on the picture he just drew. Oops! The 'n' he traced looks too much like an 'h'. So he goes back, and tries to write again. Children aren't the only ones who make good use of pencils. Architects, engineers, and mathematicians use them all the time. Poets, teachers, and students often use the pencil instead of the pen, an artifact which leaves more permanent markings, to experiment with ideas, verse, problem solving. Pencils afford us the luxury of experimenting or trying out, of rehearsing, over and over again. Marks left in pencil seem to invite essaying. No answer written in pencil need ever be final. For LAPES, the image of the pencil represents endless questioning and rehearsing of answers. In other words, it adequately represents our intention to philosophize.

Sincerely,
Cecilia Diego

1 → Walter Omar Kohan, *El Maestro Inventor*. Simon Rodriguez, 66. "It is the time of first drafts, of writing, erasing and re-writing, of rehearsing."

INTRODUCTION

Jason Thomas Wozniak
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In the pages that follow the reader will encounter a question and five responses to it, generated roughly over a six month time period. The papers collected here are initial attempts at addressing the question “What is Latin American Philosophy of Education?”, a question which is meant to always be asked again, and taken up from different perspectives at different times, in different locales, by different people. Beginning with our first volume, it is the hope of the Latin American Philosophy of Education Society (LAPES) that our journal *Lápiz* becomes a hospitable “site” where the question(s) about Latin American Philosophy of Education (LAPE) can find a home, a place to settle and be ruminated on, by diverse groups of people, from diverse walks of life.

It seems more appropriate to introduce the reader to the origin of the question which led to the creation of this volume, as well as the process by which the responses to this question came to be included here, instead of introducing the articles through lengthy summation. The articles speak for themselves, and put on the table a whole new set of questions concerning LAPE which undoubtedly will call the reader into thinking about education in novel ways.

LAPES was founded in the late (North American) summer of 2013 with the belief that the English speaking world needs to be introduced to, and in discussion with, LAPE in more significant ways that it has been in the past, and is currently. But despite either having lived in Latin America for significant amounts of time, or being originally from the region, and even though all the founders of LAPES have worked within the field of education in Latin America as theoreticians and practicing teachers, none of us would feel comfortable declaring with any certainty what LAPE is. Most of our initial conversations about LAPE therefore, were filled with a lingering doubt: Just what is it that we are talking about when we talk about LAPE? It seemed only natural then that our first annual symposium address the question to which this volume is devoted.

With little expectation or desire to find one definitive answer to

our lingering question, we convened our first annual LAPES symposium in late 2013 at Columbia University in New York City. The symposium featured what we hope become trademarks of the manner in which LAPES conducts research. Symposium sessions were structured to allow time (each presenter was given two hours of presentation and discussion time) for the slow process of simultaneous philosophizing and community building. What we tried to cultivate at our symposium, and what we wish this journal will foster, is what many in the Philosophy for Children field in both Latin America and abroad refer to as “communities of inquiry.” During our symposium authors presented, audiences questioned, and collectively we inquired into LAPE through extensive dialogue and debate. It is our hope that this current volume prolongs these debates and nurtures further philosophizing amongst communities of inquiry engaging with philosophy of education questions.

If one thing is made clear in this volume of *Lápiz* it is that even though we may not know how to answer the question we ask, we do know that asking the question is generative. Inquiry into this question engenders discussions and debates too often ignored, and long overdue, in the English speaking philosophy of education community. Simply by asking the question, “What is Latin American Philosophy of Education?” for example, we broach the supposition that philosophy of education comes from somewhere, but also that ideas about education travel in time and space in non-linear, and often circular, manners. The articles collected here address this “somewhere.” Philosophy of education may be produced in localities, for instance, though it is not necessarily delimited by those localities, as Alcoff reminds us. Rocha proposes that philosophy of education may come from a particular culture’s folkloric phenomenology. Philosophy of education may come, if we concur with Lopez, from the anthropological machine which imposes education on colonized peoples. And we should also remember, as Mendieta suggests, that philosophy of education is not just a product of place, but is also periodized. Finally, it could be that philosophy of education’s locality originates from a “collision zone”, as Duarte argues in the epilogue. The contributors to this journal thus put on the table ways of thinking situational philosophy, folkloric phenomenology, the an-

thropological machine's ties to colonization, an often neglected philosophy of education cannon, and "originary" thinking, through the lens of LAPE.

It should be reinforced that the papers presented here bear the marks not only of the authors who composed the works, but also the traces of the questions and conversations that enriched two days of intense discussion on LAPE. We can only hope that our authors' contributions, and the marks and traces made on these contributions by our symposium's participants, are the first of many brushstrokes which illustrate an ever changing LAPE kaleidoscope receiving its contours and colors from diverse communities of inquiry in Latin America, and around the globe.

FROM COLONIAL TO DECOLONIAL PEDAGOGY: FROM SAHAGÚN TO FREIRE ¹

Eduardo Mendieta
State University of New York, Stony Brook

ORIGINALLY PRESENTED
November 1st, 2013 at 11 a.m.

I should begin this essay—and I italicize the word to underscore the fact that it is a first attempt—by confessing that I am no expert on “Latin American Philosophy of Education”. I did write an article on liberation pedagogy, but that was a very circumscribed article.² I am thus a novice among novices. What I do have is some knowledge of the history of Latin American philosophy, in particular the philosophy produced in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. I accepted the invitation to speak at the inaugural symposium of the Latin American Philosophy of Education Society in order to challenge myself to do some additional research. What I am about to present here, then, is less a formal essay and more a research agenda.³ Since we are at the beginning of an enterprise, it makes sense to sketch a map of the territory to be covered. This tentative map will have to be revised in light of the ground covered as we proceed. I will divide the essay in two major sections. In the first, I will offer a chronology or periodization of the evolution of Latin American thinking about education.

- 1 → I would like to express my deepest gratitude to the organizers of this First Annual Symposium of the Latin American Philosophy of Education Society: David Backer, Ana Cecilia Galindo, Melissa Rodriguez, Arianna Stokas, and Jason Wozniak. I would also like to thank Rochelle Green and Allison Merrick for their invitation to give a keynote address at the Third Annual Phi Sigma Tau Awards and Induction at the University of Arkansas, Little Rock, where I had the opportunity to talk about these ideas again and to get very useful feedback. Finally, I also want to thank and acknowledge the comments, suggestions and reactions from the three anonymous reviewers of an earlier draft. I tried to incorporate as many of their recommendations as I could without doing too much violence to a text that is still very incipient and exploratory.
- 2 → Eduardo Mendieta, “Educacion Liberadora” in Guillermo Hoyos Vásquez, eds. *Filosofía de la Educación—Enciclopedia Iberoamericana de Filosofía* (Madrid, Trotta, 2008), 341 - 355.
- 3 → An indispensable resource has been the work I helped co-edit with —CONTINUES

As I proceed with this periodization, I will highlight some key figures, which I would have wanted to discuss in greater detail if I had had more space. In the second section I will foreground some themes that I will suggest are unique to and distinguishing for Latin American philosophy of education.

PERIODIZING LATIN AMERICAN PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION

I identify at least seven periods in the history of the evolution of Latin American philosophy of education. What follows is a brief discussion of each period.

1 / PRE-COLOMBIAN OR PRE-CONQUEST

We need to begin by acknowledging that Latin American philosophy of education is older than 500 years, as it has its roots in the pre-Colonial, pre-conquest time. Before Christopher Columbus discovered America many autochthonous peoples with highly advanced civilizations lived in the continent: The Aztecs, the Incas, and the Mayans. We have fairly substantive records from the Aztecs and Incas. For instance, we can approach Nahuatl pedagogy through the works of Miguel León-Portilla (1926-), in particular his still indispensable *La filosofía náhuatl estudiada en sus fuentes*, which was translated as *Aztec Thought and Culture*.⁴ Chapters four and five

Enrique Dussel and Carmen Bohórquez, *El Pensamiento Filosófico Latinoamericano, del Caribe y 'Latino'* - (1300-2000) (México, D.F. Siglo XXI, 2009). In this volume, the essay "La filosofía de la Pedagogía" by Jorge Zúñiga Martínez was extremely useful. I have also used the marvelous two volume anthology ed. Adriana M. Arpini, Clara A. Jalif de Bertanou, *Diversidad e Integración en Nuestra América: Independencia, estados nacionales e integración continental (1804-1880)* vol. I (Buenos Aires: Editorial Biblos, 2010), and Adriana M. Arpini, Clara A. Jalif de Bertanou, *Diversidad e Integración en Nuestra América: De la modernización a la liberación (1880-1960)* vol. II (Buenos Aires: Editorial Biblos, 2011).

- 4 → Miguel León-Portilla, *Aztec Thought and Culture: A Study of the Ancient Nahuatl Mind* (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma, 1963). León-Portilla's work is indispensable to any kind of research agenda on the world views, literature, poetry, law for the Aztecs and Mesoamerican Amerindians in general.

of this classic are particularly significant because León-Portilla describes Nahua philosophical anthropology, and consequently, the Nahua views about pedagogy. With respect to the Incas, we have the *Comentarios Reales de los Incas* of Garcilaso de La Vega, el Inca (1539-1616).⁵ The first part of this work is particularly important as it offers an analysis of the structure of the Inca state, as well as extensive discussions of Inca society and culture. These primary sources need to be complemented with the study of Fray Gerónimo de Mendieta's (1525-1604) *Historia eclesiástica indiana*⁶, and Fray Bernardino de Sahagún's (1499-1590) *Historia general de la cosas de Nueva España*.⁷ The sixth book of Sahagún's History is full of treasures about Nahua philosophy, in particular morality and pedagogy.

2 / CONQUEST AND EVANGELIZATION

The period of the conquest and evangelization needs to be studied not only because of its dark underside, but also for some of the fascinating pedagogical experiments that were undertaken, which had some positive consequences. To this period belongs the founding of the *Colegio Imperial de Santa Cruz de Tlatelolco* in 1536, where the children of the Aztec nobility were sent to study. There they learned Nahuatl, Latin, Greek, Hebrew and Spanish. They also learned about their culture as well as that of Europe. This school aimed to prepare Indian clergy but also statesman that would represent the Aztecs before Spanish culture and conversely, Spanish culture before the Nahua culture. The *Colegio de San Ildefonso* was founded in 1551, and became a major educational institution for Aztec nobility as well as the new Criollo elites. This school still exists in the heart of Mexico City, not far from *el Zócalo*. Other important educational institutions from this period are the so-called *República de hospitales*, or *hospitales* established by Vasco de Quiroga (1470-1565), where indigenous people pursued their education in

5 → Garcilaso de La Vega, El Inca, *Comentarios Reales de los Incas* (México, D.F.: Editorial Porrúa, 2006).

6 → Fray Gerónimo de Mendieta, *Historia eclesiástica Indiana* (Madrid: Atlas, 1973).

7 → Fray Bernardino de Sahagún, *Historia general de la cosas de Nueva España* (México, D.F.: P. Robredo, 1938).

the traditions of their culture, along with evangelization. Some key figures of this period are Sahagún, Vasco de Quiroga, Bartolomé de las Casas (1484-1566), Juan Baltasar Maciel (1727-1788) and José Agustín Caballero de Rodríguez (1762-1835). Sahagún and Las Casas are particularly important because they took it upon themselves to document indigenous culture as faithfully as possible in order to better understand how to create cultural bridges between Amerindian and European cultures. In fact, much of what we know today about the ethics, politics, and economics of the indigenous peoples of the Americas we owe to the work of the Dominican, Jesuit, and Franciscan priests who set out to evangelize the new world. This evangelization, as genocidal as it turned out, was also a process of the self-education of European colonizers about the cultural accomplishments of Amerindians.

The work of Las Casas is an unexplored mine of knowledge about the indigenous cultures of the period. We know Las Casas primarily through his *Brevísima relación de la destrucción de las Indias* but Las Casas produced many other treatises on what would be the proper way to evangelize the Amerindians. I want to bring to your attention his incredible *De unico vocationis modo* (1537)⁸, in which Las Casas rejects the use of all violence as a means to evangelize and in essence develops a rationalist and enlightened pedagogy that values the religious views of Amerindians. True evangelization can only happen through rational assent, but in order to bring this assent, reasons have to be provided in terms that are intelligible to Amerindians.⁹

3 / COLONIZATION AND SCHOLASTICISM

For the most part, the period of evangelization and conquista was followed by about two hundred years of colonization and what I called scholasticism, because once Spanish and Portuguese

8 → Bartolomé de las Casas, *The Only Way* (New York: Paulist Press, 1992).

9 → See Gustavo Gutiérrez, *Las Casas: In Search of the Poor of Jesus Christ* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1993).

power was imposed and the Jesuits were expelled, there began the imposition of scholastic methods of education following European models. The early cosmopolitan and dialogic efforts to educate the Amerindians were abandoned for the model of cultural imposition—here it would be relevant to note that these cosmopolitan and dialogic efforts may have been eclipsed during this period, but they certainly have remained enduring themes across the history of philosophy of education in Latin America. Most of the teachers in the newly established universities were of European extraction and most of the books produced in the *Nueva España* aimed at replicating and reproducing European knowledge in the New World. I used the qualifier most because there is an exception, Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz (1651-1695), a self-taught scholar of Christian theology, a major poetess, and also an untapped source of thinking about education, especially as it pertains to Amerindians and women. Over the last half a century, fortunately, there has been a serious effort to recover her work and undertake major studies of the different dimensions of her original thinking.¹⁰

4 / LIBERAL AND CATHOLIC

What I called the “Liberal and Catholic period” corresponds to the period beginning in the nineteenth century with the process of independence from Spain. This is the period of the development of Latin American nations with their respective political and cultural traditions. Thus, this is the period in which the colonial education system gets to be either dismantled or marginalized. Evidently this was a difficult task because most of the education at the time was led by the church and religious orders. Therefore one of the key tasks of this period was the development of a secular schooling system. Some key figures of this period are Félix Varela Morales (1788-1853), who wrote *Educación y patriotismo*, an important text that had influence

10 → See Octavio Paz, *Sor Juana, or, the Traps of Faith* (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1988), especially the “Epilogue: Toward a Restitution”.

throughout Latin America.¹¹ We also have José María Luis Mora (1794-1850), who wrote *El clero, la educación y la libertad*.¹² To this period belongs Andrés Bello (1781-1865), one of the most influential Latin American educators of all time.¹³

Along with Varela, Bello essentially produced the manual for the development of a distinct Latin American philosophy of education that linked literacy, oratory, to public deliberation and civics. In general, the pedagogues of this period argued for the right to public education. The task of forging a new nation that would sever all links of material dependence from Spain, and especially sever all chains of mental slavery, required that education be a right of citizens, and not a privilege of a particular class, or economic status. The new democratic nations, with their newly minted constitutions, required that patriotic and public education of civic virtue be combined with moral education. Someone who is often forgotten from this period is Simón Rodríguez (1771-1854), who was Simón Bolívar's (1783-1830) teacher, but who also saw the need to reform the Spanish language as a precondition for the development of civic spirit and public culture that would support the development of patriotism and political autonomy. The task of forging a sovereign people required the formalization of a public language; literacy was indispensable to the emergence of a deliberating public, which would lead to a sovereign nation.

5 / POSITIVISM AND THE RISE OF THE CIENTÍFICOS

The period I have called “Positivism and the Rise of the *Científicos*” already tells us what it is. To call this a “positivist” period, however, may be misleading, because it makes it sound as though what happened was the mere importation of Auguste Comte's (1798-1857) philosophical doctrine of positivism, when

11 → Felix Varela Morales, *Educacion y Patriotismo* (La Habana: Publicaciones de la Secretaría de educación, Dirección de cultura, 1935).

12 → Jose Maria Luis Mora, *El Clero, la educación y la libertad* (México: Empresas Editoriales, 1949).

13 → See Andrés Bello, *Selected Writings* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997). This volume, part of the extremely useful Library of Latin America, edited by Jean Franco, contains an excellent selection of Bello's writings on education.

in fact Latin American positivism was an acculturation of French ideas.¹⁴ In any event, Latin American positivists had great impact, particularly in Mexico and Argentina. They guided the modernization of the recently established nation states. Their impact was most noticeable in the modernization of the administrative aspects of the Latin American states, and above all in education. They took up the task of Bello, Varella and Rodríguez and applied to them a “scientific” approach. This meant that schools would educate not only in civics, morality, and history, but also in the natural and social sciences. School had to become more than colleges for loyal citizens. Political autonomy also required a scientific mentality—that is a mentality that demands empirical evidence and that would analyze social problems and challenges as scientific problems. Los científicos were in fact social engineers. A key figure of this period was Gabino Barreda (1820-1881), who wrote *La educación positivista en México*.¹⁵ We also have Eugenio María de Hostos (1839-1903), Justo Sierra (1848-1912), José Varona (1849-1933), José Ingenieros (1877-1925), who had a positivist stage that gave way to a socialist and latinamericanist stage—incidentally, Ingenieros wrote *El hombre mediocre*, which can be read as a positivist pedagogical text.¹⁶ We also have Juan Bautista Alberdi (1810-1884), who was instrumental in the establishment of the modern Argentinian—and Latin American in general—university. Alberdi was also one of the precursors of what we can call a self-avowed Latin American philosophy. We cannot of course fail to mention Domingo Faustino Sarmiento (1811-1888), who is known for his *Facundo o Civilización y barbarie*¹⁷, but who also wrote an important pedagogical treatise titled *De la educación popular*.¹⁸ Barreda and Hostos are unique because they forcefully argued that

14 → See my essay, “The Death of Positivism and the Birth of Mexican Phenomenology” in Gregory D. Gilson and Irving W. Levinson, eds., *Latin American Positivism: New Historical and Philosophic Essays* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2013), 1-12.

15 → Gabino Barreda, *La educación positivista en México* (México, D.F.: Editorial Porrúa, 1978).

16 → José Ingenieros, *El hombre mediocre* (Buenos Aires: Ramon J. Roggero, 1949).

17 → Domingo F. Sarmiento, *Facundo o Civilización y barbarie* (Caracas: Biblioteca Ayacucho, 1977 [1845]).

18 → Domingo F. Sarmiento, *De la educación popular* (Cámara Chilena de la Construcción.; Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile.; Chile. Dirección de Bibliotecas, Archivos y Museos, 1896).

the development of public morality and civic virtue should follow from the education of reason. For both authors, virtue is determined by reason. Thus a people could not be oriented towards proper moral and civic attitudes unless their ability to reason on their own had been properly developed. The científicos influenced the anti-clericalism of the new Latin American states. Their anti-religious stance, which meant to break the chains of fideism and religious fervor, turned into derision and denigration of popular culture and religion. A brief passage from Hostos, will give readers a sense of what these científicos thought about the importance of education:

The institution in which moral consciousness is to be formed is the school, for this is the “foundation of morality.” This, in the pedagogical sphere, has as a postulate the formation of men of conscience, who are what the fatherland [patria] and humanity, or the family of nations, need. To accomplish this, the school has to educate reason, the emotions, and the will. These last two are delimited by reason. Thus, in order to educate reason, the school has to fulfill three conditions: 1) *to be fundamental*, in as much as it provides the coordinated fundamentals of every truth that is known, 2) *it cannot be sectarian* and it has to be independent of every type of dogma, and 3) *it has to be edifying* since the school has to educate in light and continuous anticipation of its proper moral objective, and of the goal it has in the life and humanity of the child. The child is the promise of man, and man the hope of some part of humanity. The school has as moral goal the preparation of consciences.¹⁹

As a counterpoint to the Latin American positivists, we have José Enrique Rodó (1871-1917). He is best known for his *Ariele*²⁰, which became the founding document of Latin American modernism, one that should also be read as a pedagogical text, if only because it argues that Latin Americans, because of their mixed Mediterranean and historical backgrounds, have a distinct cosmopolitan orientation that

19 → Eugenio María de Hostos, *Moral social. Sociología* (Caracas: Biblioteca Ayacucho, 1980), 225. My translation. Italics in the original.

could be a counterpart to what Rodó controversially named Anglo-American crass materialism.

6 / POPULAR AND NATIONAL INTEGRATION

The period follows from the presuppositions of the positivist period. While the positivists were radical and revolutionary in their early stages, as is evidenced in Barrada and Hostos' work, their followers became dogmatic technocrats who belittled the people. It is in part in reaction to their technocratic and oligarchic character, in particular with respect to their views about education, that a group of thinkers arose to advocate on behalf of a philosophy of education that took popular culture and needs seriously. The most eloquent of these was of course José Vasconcelos (1881-1959), who became the first Mexican minister of public education. He was also rector of the *Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México*. His most important work on education is *De Robinson a Odiseo* (1831).²¹ Vasconcelos is associated with the birth of *el indigenismo*²² and the Mexican muralist movement. However, it should be noted that Vasconcelos' indigenismo is more related to mestizaje or criollismo than what we associate with indigenismo today. Still, Vasconcelos should be studied, along with Barreda, Hostos and Bello, as one of the great philosophers of education in Latin America. He hoisted the científicos on their own petard when he demonstrated that the Mexican people could not be properly educated when most of them remained illiterate and very few of them had access to any form of schooling. He thus undertook, inspired by the early educational movements of the evangelization period, the project of bringing teachers to the providences. It was this

20 → José Enrique Rodó, *Ariel* (Madrid: Cátedra, 2000 [1900]).

21 → José Vasconcelos *De Robinson a Odiseo* (España: Aguilar, 1931).

22 → *Indigenismo* was the name of the movement at the turn of the twentieth century in Mexico that aimed to reclaim and valorize the indigenous sources of Mexican culture. *Indigenismo* argued that Mexican cultural identity could not dispense with its Native American sources. Criollismo and Mestizaje are positions that claim that Mexican culture is the product of both the assimilation of the Spanish and Portugues with indigenous cultures. Mestizaje says that the Americas are product of racial mixing that has given birth to a 'cosmic' race, i.e. an ethnic-racial group that is neither solely indigenous nor solely Spanish. See Luis Villoro, *Los grandes momentos del indigenismo en México* (México, D.F.: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1996 [1950]).

national effort at alphabetizing a mostly indigenous population that attracted the attention of John Dewey (1859-1952), who visited some of the ambulatory schools established to accomplish this national project of literacy. Dewey, it merits noting, came to Mexico not as authority to profess or teach from a pedestal. He came as a “learner” himself.

Another important figure of this period is Alfonso Reyes (1889-1959), who was, along with Alberdi, one of the key figures in what we can call Latin American philosophy. With Martín Luis Guzmán (1887-1976) and José Vasconcelos, Reyes established *El Ateneo de la Juventud*, an organization that then inspired the *Hiperión* Group that went on to shape figures like Leopoldo Zea (1912-2004), Emilio Uranga (1921-1988), Jorge Portilla (1919-1963), Luis Villoro (1922-2014), and Octavio Paz (1914-1998).²³ To this period and group of figures we need to include Silvio Zavala, not only because of the work he did in establishing and formalizing the *Colegio de México*, but also because of the pioneering work he did in rescuing Amerindian thought, in particular legal and political thought. Finally, we should not neglect Samuel Ramos (1897-1959), who was a member of *El Ateneo*, and a major philosophical figure that introduced hermeneutics, social psychology and existentialism to the analysis of *lo mexicano*. His work *El perfil del hombre y la cultura en México*²⁴ can be read as a pedagogical treatise, and he meant it as an educational document about the future of the Mexican people. It is a piece that influenced Octavio Paz (1914-1998) and Carlos Monsiváis (1938-2010).

Someone from this period who should be rescued for our endeavor is the first winner of the Nobel Prize for Literature from Latin America, Gabriela Mistral (1889-1957). While she is mainly known as a great poetess, she also contributed to the pedagogy of the nation, with a particular attention to Amerindians and women, earning her the title “The Schoolteacher of America.”²⁵

- 23 → For a very useful overview of this group, see Carlos Alberto Sánchez, *The Suspension of Seriousness: on the Phenomenology of Jorge Portillo* (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 2012), chapter 2.
- 24 → Samuel Ramos, *El perfil del hombre y la cultura en México* (Mexico: Espasa Calpe Mexicana, 1968).
- 25 → Licia Fiol-Matta, *A Queer Mother for the Nation: The State and Gabriela Mistral* (Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 2002). See also the introduction by Jaime Quezada to Gabriela Mistral, *Poesía y Prosa* (Caracas: Biblioteca Ayacucho, 1993).

7 / PEDAGOGY OF LIBERATION

The last period that I want to briefly discuss brings us to our most recent times. This is the period I have called the “Pedagogy of Liberation.” It is a period that corresponds to the Cold War, and the development of Latin American alternatives between Soviet style communism and North American Capitalism. This period also corresponds to the crisis of what we can call Criollo democracy—by which I mean a democracy of racial elites and the marginalization of racialized minorities, the rural and urban poor—and the rise of the National Security State, which led to two decades of military dictatorships throughout Latin American countries. We could say that this period carried even further the pedagogical philosophy of the popular and national integration period, as now the issue was the integration of not simply ethnic groups, but also social classes. Additionally, this period corresponds to the time when Latin American nations were undergoing some of the most rapid processes of demographic growth, urbanization and de-ruralization. Thus, whereas at the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century, the challenge was the integration of the peasant sectors into the nation by means of literacy, now the challenge was the integration of the newly urbanized poor.

I will be brief in the following description because I think most readers are familiar with the figures that are associated with this period. Obviously, we have Paolo Freire (1921-1997) and Ivan Illich (1926-2002), but we should also include Darcy Ribeiro (1922-1997), who published *La universidad necesaria*²⁶, and Adriana Puiggrós (1941-), who published *Imperialismo, educación, y neoliberalismo en América Latina*²⁷. Someone who is often not read in this context, but who should be, is Enrique Dussel (1934-), who wrote *La pedagógica latinoamericana*²⁸, which is integral to his liberation philosophy project. I would also argue that among these liberation pedagogues we

26 → Darcy Ribeiro, *La universidad necesaria* (México, D.F.: UNAM, 1982).

27 → Adriana Puiggrós, *Imperialismo, educación y neoliberalismo en América Latina* (México, D.F.: Paidós, 1994).

28 → This is available online at: <http://biblioteca.clacso.edu.ar/subida/clacso/otros/uploads/20120423090342/historia.pdf>

include Ernesto Che Guevara (1928-1967), who wrote on the forging of the socialist man, the construction of the *Nuevo Hombre*, which was the task of the revolution, involved a new education. In fact, the Cuban revolution itself became a pedagogical laboratory. I would also argue that we include Alejo Carpentier (1904-1980) as a source of Latin American philosophy of education, because of his extensive ethnographic work on the African roots of Afro-Caribbean culture, in particular music and language, as well as the urban and cultural history of La Habana, one of the urban jewels of the Caribbean, in particular, and Latin American in general.²⁹

Evidently, there is also all the work that liberation theologians developed over the decades of the sixties, seventies, and eighties that not only assimilated the work of Illich and Freire, but also contributed its own insights from the religious pedagogy to a pedagogy of liberation. Here we should mention Ernesto Cardenal (1925-), *El evangelio en Solentiname*³⁰ and Juan Luis Segundo's (1925-1996) *El dogma que libera*.³¹

Before I turn to the next section, I must note that the evolution of Latin American philosophy of education has been punctuated by the dramatic events that have led to the forging of Latin America itself as a group of nation states that have struggled with their colonial past, while also retrieving their indigenous-Amerindian roots and including and acknowledging the transplanted cultures of Africa, as it has assimilated waves upon waves of European immigrants. This historical overview should have revealed that we have a very substantive corpus of pedagogues that we can begin to study within their respective periods and as forgers of a distinct Latin American philosophy of liberation: Sahagún, Morales, Mora, Bello, Barreda, Hostos, Vasconcelos, Sarmiento, Alberdi, Caso, Ramos, Reyes, Freire, Riberio, Dussel, Che Guevara, to name some of the most prominent.

KEY THEMES

29 → See Alejo Carpentier, *Music in Cuba*, edited and with an introduction by Timothy Brennan, and translated by Alan West-Durán (Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 2001), and Alejo Carpentier, *El amor a la ciudad* (México: Alfaguara, 1996).

30 → Ernesto Cardenal, *The Gospel in Solentiname* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2010).

31 → Juan Luis Segundo, *The Liberation Of Dogma: Faith, Revelation, And Dogmatic Teaching Authority* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1992).

In the prior section I offered a chronology of the development of Latin American philosophy of education. In this section, I am interested in answering the question: what makes Latin American philosophy of education distinct from, let us say European or North American philosophy of education? I will argue that Latin American philosophy of education is unique in that it has a unique focus and substance, consequence of having to address the enduring challenges of the region. This philosophy of education is also the result of the reflection of Latin American peoples and nations in their process of forging and development into multicultural, multiethnic, polyglot, democratic nation states. Let me offer a list of what I take to be identifying themes of the tradition.

01

Multiculturalism. Both vertical and horizontal, or synchronic and diachronic racial, ethnic, religious, cultural differences go deep into the nation, but extend also across time. We have to begin with the differences among the many pre-Columbian Amerindian groups (Aztecs, Mayan, Incas), but also their different levels of development (highly developed cultures as opposed to nomadic tribes dispersed over large and isolated territories). These differences then were compounded by the different waves of colonizers and European waves of immigration. We can argue that questions of cultural diversity have been at the heart of the formation of Latin American cultural identity, and thus this has been a crucial issue for all Latin American pedagogy.

02

Multilingualism. A contrast may be made with the United States' relationship to English, which it received from England in what one could call its almost modern version (the version we now write and talk in), whereas Latin America developed at the same time that Spanish began to be formalized as a modern secular language. What this means is that the forging of Latin American identity was imbricated with the struggle to define and shape Spanish as a national language. It

is interesting that 1492 marks both the so-called discovery of the New World and the formulation by Antonio de Nebrija (1441-1522) of a grammar of Castilian. Again, a contrast may be established between the United States and Latin America with respect to the survival of Amerindian languages. While most indigenous languages have disappeared from North America, with some rare exceptions, throughout Latin America many indigenous languages are still spoken and they remain living tongues, which are gaining speakers, not losing them. The waves of European immigrants to Latin America not only brought European languages, but also their tongues and accents percolated into different national accents and lexicons.

03

Racial and cultural domination. It is an understatement to claim that Latin America was forged in the crucible of racial formations. The history of Latin America is the history of racial oppression, as well as of racial liberation. Latin American philosophy of education has had to confront both the failure to address the endurance of racial oppression, while also celebrating, preserving, and archiving the cultures produced by resistances against racial oppression and struggles of racial liberation.

04

Nation building and the forging of citizens. The long path to modernity and modern nation states in Latin America has left its indelible register in the many waves of debate and reflection about the interdependence between education and the development of a democratic and sovereign nation committed to civic virtue and just freedom. Evidently, themes 3 and 4 are not unique or distinct to Latin American nations. All nations born on the crucible of conquest, colonization, and slavery have had to deal with these challenges. The United States itself has faced these issues. What makes them unique in the Latin American context is the ways in which indigeneity and

race have had a more lasting impact, and there have been so many different approaches and confrontations with them throughout Latin American history.

05

The challenges of the separation of Church and State. Latin America is generally identified with deep popular Catholicism, but at the same time, the process of nation building was marked by tensions with the church. Here the work of liberation theologians is particularly important as they have provided some of the best historiography on the fraught Church-State relationship in Latin America.

06

Imperialism and Neo-Imperialism. Latin America has been defined by its anti-colonial, anti-imperialistic struggles, and these struggles have left their deep scars and memories in the canons that come to be used in schools. These struggles, it could be said, have imposed a pedagogical imperative on most Latin American philosophy of education, namely the imperative that education, which is disserving of such name, is at the service of overcoming and dismantling cultures of dependence and liberation from the complex of mental and cultural inferiority.

07

Finally, I would argue that what makes Latin American philosophy of education unique is that it has from the outset, as far back as Sahagún and Las Casas, been about elaborating, unmasking, problematizing what I would call—paraphrasing Anibal Quijano (1928-)—the coloniality of knowledge. By this I mean that there is no knowledge or way of transmitting that knowledge that is not implicated in the perpetuation of some colonial, racial, imperial privilege. This means that Latin American philosophy of education is marked by a hyper-reflexivity about its concepts, aims, tools, archives, and efficacy. This hyper-reflexivity is captured in the title of one

of Freire's most influential works, *Pedagogía de la liberación*, which should be read in a double sense of a pedagogy at the service of liberation and a pedagogy for the liberation of pedagogy itself. Consequently, what marks Latin American philosophy of education is that it has always been guided by a concern with liberation and mental emancipation.

As I stated at the outset, this essay is an attempt to begin to offer a chronology and map of the territory made up by over five hundred years of thinking and philosophizing about education in Latin America. I hope to have highlighted some key names and themes that may inspire others to follow the lead. There is much work to be done. ■

THE EMPIRE OF THE WRITTEN WORD: MODERNITY, HUMANISM, AND COLONIZATION ¹

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ORIGINALLY PRESENTED

November 1st, 2013 at 2:30 p.m.

ORIGINAL TITLE

The Art of Distance: Notes on a Poetics of Transmission

It has often been stated that modernity can be characterized as having placed human beings, with all their intellectual and productive potentialities, center stage, transforming these potentialities into a foundation that holds, orders, and justifies the world that surrounds us. During this modern era, consciousness became the first and most solid piece of evidence, from which it was possible to construct a system of objects and relations: that is, a world. The plot of the world's adventures and misadventures, of its advances and setbacks, of its stumbles and detours, took the name of history. We have become so accustomed to these ideas that it is increasingly difficult to perceive what they encompass or presuppose, at least till the end of the nineteenth century, when such ideas began to fade.

THE ORDER OF THE HUMAN

“When a people create their shrines, they trace their inner itinerary in the idol, in the stone, in the plain or in the hill. Faith manifests itself as a shrine and leaves behind a sort of residue. It is as if it externally fixed eternity that a people found in their own soul”.² The young modern nation states erected these singular types of shrines in the form of patriotic monuments in public spaces during the nineteenth century; these shrines became idols of a

1 → Translated by Cecilia Diego, Jazon T. Wozniak, and David Backer. The full Spanish version is available at lapes.org.

2 → Rodolfo Kusch, *América Profunda*, 84.

Unless otherwise noted, all translations are our own.

society that substituted the state for god but could not, however, for that reason, stop imprinting its inner order in the world and fixing its soul in rock or bronze.

The city of Rio de Janeiro, then capital of Brazil, had its first modern monument—built in 1867 in honor of a Don Pedro—located in the then Praça da Constituição (today Praça Tiradentes). The idea to erect a monument to the founder of the empire was conceived in 1824 and approved a year later. However, work on the monument suffered delays due to political disputes that broke out shortly after. Nevertheless, the idea was kept alive and on the seventh of September of 1854, the Municipal Chamber of Rio (Camara Municipal), in an extraordinary session, approved a project to “levantar na Praça da Constituição da Corte e Capital do Império do Brazil uma estátua à memória de S. M. I., o sr. D. Pedro primeiro, imperador e defensor perpétuo do Brazil”.³ The winner of an international public contest, Brazilian artist Joao Maximiliano Mafra, was chosen for the project, and a Parisian firm—called Luis Rocket—was hired to cast the bronze. Work on the base of the monument started on October 12th, 1855 and the pedestal and statue arrived from Havre to Brazil—upon the French galley *Reine du Monde*—on October 19th, 1861. The statuary Rocket arrived on November 17th and the monument was erected on the 1st of January of 1867 with a ceremony commemorating the placing of the first stone.

Construction of the monument paralleled, with surprising fidelity, the construction of the modern Brazilian state and its most important institutions, including national educational institutions. Such is the case of the First Normal School, baptized *Instituto de Educação Professor Esmael Coutinho*, inaugurated April 4th, 1835 and located in the neighboring city of Niterói, as well as the then *Imperial Colégio de Pedro II*, inaugurated in 1837, on the birth date of the child-emperor.

As Kusch states, shrines merely imprint onto a given geographical point a people’s spiritual order at a specific moment of their history. For example, the first patriotic monument of the

3 → [...] construct in the Praça da Constituição of the Court and Imperial Capital of Brazil a statue in memory of Don Pedro Primero, Emperor and perpetual defender of Brazil.

Brazilian modern state should also be considered a first order document, an exemplary metaphor in which there is an explicit provisionary configuration of the human in a particular period that we call modernity, and in a singular territory that we denominate South America. Hence, in what follows we will linger in a reading of this monumental image. Not only does this monument present a certain idea of the human, but it furthermore explicates the dynamic of its production. What we call the human is in no way a pre-existing reality, something like a substance that would exist independently from the ideas that think it, and the words that name it, but rather a construction, the product of a series of historical and social devices. Through these devices the human becomes thinkable and, so to speak, exists. In this sense we can say that the monument to Don Pedro I is something like the metaphorical translation of an anthropological machine through which the human is invented or produced. With this, I want to underline the fictional character of that which we dub 'humanity' and also draw attention to its strategic function. What follows is thus an invitation to ask, not only what the word "humanity" names, but also, and more specifically, what this word produces as well as its political consequences.

DESCRIPTION OF THE MONUMENT

The pedestal rises upon a granite base. It is octagonal and made of bronze, as is the rest of the monument. Its four principal sides are dressed with indigenous allegories that symbolize the Amazonas, Paraná, Madeira and Sao Francisco rivers. An indigenous man sitting next to a giant anteater and a capibara represents this last river. Another indigenous person, the one representing the Madeira River, is armed with a bow and looks as though he is about to shoot an arrow; at his side are a turtle, a bird, and some fish. The Amazonas and Paraná rivers are depicted by two figures each, one male and the other female. The forest motifs of the Amazonas River have upon their back a sleepy child. His partner rests on the foot of an alligator with a boa, a tiger, a hedgehog, and a bird next to him. In the group that symbolizes the Paraná River one can see a tapir, an armadillo and two large birds. The pedestals are ornamented



↑ *Praça de D. Pedro I* (D. Pedro I Square)
Castro y Ordoñez, Rafael, 1834-1865
Biblioteca Nacional, Brasil. (National Library, Brazil).



↑ *Estátua de D. Pedro I* (D. Pedro I Square)
Castro y Ordoñez, Rafael, 1834-1865
Biblioteca Nacional, Brasil. (National Library, Brazil).

with towered shields that represent the twenty provinces of Brazil, and upon each is a golden star. The coat of arms of the Empire is situated in the highest point at the front of the monument with the following inscription: "A D. Pedro Primeiro, Gratidão dos Brasileiros". Bragantin weapons guarded by golden dragons are found on both lateral sides. Finally, upon the pedestal, rises the bust of the monarch, dressed with a general's uniform, riding a horse, raising his right arm in the gesture of one who presents the Independence Act of Brazil to the world.

The monument presents a particular human-animal relationship, and overlays upon it another relationship of fundamental importance for comprehending the modern spiritual order: the savage-civilized relationship. In the four allegories found on the inferior sides of the pedestal, the relation man-animal has an intimate and harmonious character; the indigenous people are depicted almost as superior animals, slightly situated over the beasts, integrated with nature and maintaining with it a serene relationship. In fact, the indigenous people are placed here as allegories to the four principal rivers and are, therefore, an anthropomorphized translation of nature itself. From a structural point of view, they are found at the base of the monument at each of the four cardinal points, almost fading into the space and elements of the landscape. In these allegories, set at the base of the monument, everything seems to refer to the infinite variety of natural life. Feminine and masculine images, as well as those of adulthood and childhood, are shown. They express the variety and prodigality of the living, with their exuberant and gendered quality; the rivers' fertility, that of the beasts and that of human nature itself, clearly, melted and integrated with the rest of natural life. On the other hand, there is only one figure on the pedestal's cusp, the image of Pedro I, who does not represent nature but its opposite; hence, the entire monument acquires a pyramidal form which gives the ensemble an air of elevation that seems to go from animal plurality to human unity. In the uppermost figure the man-animal relationship works in an entirely different way: there is superiority and lordship but no harmonious integration. The monarch rides a wild horse and, upon it, dominates the entire composition. The monarch is not "with" the horse but

“upon” it, and over the rest of the figures. Nothing permits us to glimpse in the image of the monarch anything other than spiritual life; there is no gesture in the monarch that would allude to nutrition or reproduction. Rather, his stare is distant, his gesture lordly, and this makes us think about ascension, contrasted with the images of the indigenous people, whose gazes are directed at the immediate surroundings or the floor.

The entire monument presents an organic and hierarchical structure where each piece finds its meaning in relation to the whole. Above all, however, it shows itself as a mechanical monument, an emblematic figure of the spiritual itinerary that the occidental spirit traces for itself. In this sense, the monument tells a story— an odyssey of the modern spirit—while conferring a task to itself: that of humanization. The monument puts into play not only its internal structure but, above all, its dynamic. As a modern sanctuary, the monument was constructed in the venue where the cosmogonic and anthropological myth of the nation-state was told.

THE ANTHROPOLOGICAL MACHINE

In a small book titled *The Open: Man and Animal*, Giorgio Agamben has noted that throughout Western history “the human” has always appeared as what cannot be defined, though precisely for that reason, is also incessantly produced by way of constant divisions and articulations.

In our culture, man has always been thought of as the articulation and conjunction of a body and a soul, of a living thing and a *logos*, of a natural (or animal) element and a supernatural or social or divine element. We must learn instead to think of man as what results from the incongruity of these two elements, and investigate not the metaphysical mystery of conjunction, but rather the practical and political mystery of separation. What is man, if he is always the place —and, at the same time, the result—of ceaseless division and ceasurae. It is more urgent to work on these divisions, to ask in what way—within man—has man been separated from the not-man and the animal from

the human, that it is to take positions on the great issues, on so called human rights and values.⁴

Each time we try to define what is human we do so through a curious mechanism that consists of establishing a difference and a distance with relation to that which, in man's interior, is identified as a non-human element (the animal, the instinctive, the corporeal, the natural), in such a way that what is human only appears by contrast, highlighted against a background. This non-human element in man has been the object of rigorous delimitation and exhaustive domain; before it, a supplement which will be identified as that which is specifically human will appear. This supplement is not something positive; it is, first and foremost, a distance in relation to the non-human, an empty supplement. It is as if the human was defined by dominion and the suspension of the 'animality' that inhabits it. Animality is not, therefore, something merely exterior, but resides in the depths of humanity itself: in its interior and in its past. Far from being contrary to the human, animality is the strategic element through which the human can come to exist as such.

By isolating the animal element within man, a barrier is created that, like all barriers, acts simultaneously as a limit and as a passageway, as an abyss, but also as a bridge that communicates and articulates that which it has separated. That is why the division produced is also the tool with which humanity is built as a hierarchically articulated totality. If at first that which is within man is distinguished and separated as that which is animal, and that which is human, it immediately affirms the need for the second to overcome the first and, further on, the need to walk a road that will gradually turn the former into the latter. That road has been given many names, maybe some of the most notable are 'humanization', 'civilizing process', 'public instruction' or, simply, 'education'. Agamben gives this mechanism the name of "anthropological machine," a term he borrows from Furio Jesi, an Italian mythologue, and upon which the Foucaultian idea of device is echoed in a singular manner.

4 → Giorgio Agamben, *The Open: Man and Animal*, 16.

This non-human element (corporeal, animal, natural), which is incessantly separated, is not, as has been said, exterior, but constitutes a type of intimate otherness: the body is not exactly the contrary to the soul, but it is through knowledge and dominion of the passionate, sensitive, and untamed body that man has recognized himself as a spiritual being. Nature is not outside of humanity, but it is in facing the idea of nature that the living human has recognized himself as something more than organic life. Since ancient Greece man has been thought of as an animal, as a living creature. Aristotle defines man as *zoon logon echon*⁵, but it is in relation to the idea of the animal (*zoon*) that human beings have thought themselves rational and speaking. It is thus that humanity's humanity has always depended on the separation and dominion of the animality that inhabits us. This is why the problem of defining the animal and establishing with it a distance has been crucial for the definition of humanity proper. It is important not to lose sight of the fact that 'the animal' too, has always been a human fiction. Nature does not exist for itself, but for culture: in other words, nature is a cultural invention. Beyond that difference it is hard to talk about humanity, for when the measure of the distance between animality and humanity, instinct and rationality, body and thought, is erased, the notion of humanity also vanishes into the air. Therefore, what is important is not to ask what is animal or what is human, but in fact, what is the strategic value of the invention of the modern anthropological discourse? It is precisely this which the monument of the emperor Don Pedro I allows us to think about.

Being human means always being in a humanizing process, and in an open battle against one's own in-humanity. It is in this sense that the monument to Don Pedro I constitutes the expression of a machine capable of producing a continuously renewed movement, an endless desire for humanization. Its strategic value consists precisely in the political capture of an intimate longing we call "being". Being human means always walking towards humanity. Being means 'getting to be', 'wishing to be'. Much more than a

5 → Rational animal or living being endowed with language.

condition, humanity presents itself as work, a perpetual effort to come out of an ever-threatening bestiality. This endless search for humanity has formed our society's moral and political angst. In the West, it has been the moral and political labor par excellence. Human substance is, precisely, that empty center which the machine itself generates and captures. This is also the substance of language, of politics, and of history.

TIME, SPACE AND OTHERNESS: THE ANIMALIZED OTHER

Beginning in the fifteenth century, the European colonial powers began to construct what can be called the "modern colonial anthropological machine" on the basis of the "ancient anthropological machine" whose origins trace back to the classical world, superimposing a new hierarchical distribution of space and time over the now classical hierarchy between animal and man.

Already in his first encounter with the inhabitants of America, Columbus believed that he was witnessing the West of the past. America's lands appeared to him as that lost paradise, the land of origin, the land where the biblical expulsion took place, the original wound that would give rise to the long road back to lost innocence. Columbus believed that he had found in this land humanity's most remote and original past. From this moment on, the Americas became for Europe a land of the future that would lead towards the origin. The ships that for five centuries would cross the sea on their way to the Americas always worked like small time machines. Leaving the metropolis equaled returning to the past.

By superimposing the distinction between the animal and the human over the strategic hierarchy of space and time, the mythical European narrative created a new categorical pair. The archaic and remote are welded with the animal: thus was born the idea of the primitive and the new distinction between savage and civilized. Oddly enough, from its creation, the term primitive has been used to name contemporary peoples, placing metaphorically in the past.

The modern colonial machine came to instill the idea of a gradual and progressive passage that would lead from the animal to

the human— which coincides with the passage from the past to the future, and from ends to a center. This set structure only became possible thanks to the notion of foreign assimilation, constructed by the church from the fourth century. Ivan Illich rightly points out that, for the Greeks, the foreigner could be a guest that arrived from a neighboring polis or a barbarian, who was not, notably, strictly thought of as human. In Rome, the barbarians could become members of the city, but Rome never considered itself as having the obligation or the mission of introducing them into the city. It was only in late antiquity, with the church, that the foreigner became someone who had to be embraced because he was needed. This vision of the foreigner ‘as charge’ became constitutive of Western society.⁶ The notion that the foreigner was an object in need of assistance takes root in the fourth century when the church was attributed a maternal role. This attitude will later take on many other successive forms. In the early middle ages the ancient ‘barbarian’ became the ‘pagan’. Along with the crusades and the encounter with the Muslim world and its resistance to conversion, there appeared the idea of the ‘infidel’, he who not only needs to be baptized, but also made to submit. With the conquest of the Americas the idea of the ‘infidel’ was replaced by ‘the naturals’ as the inhabitants of the Americas were called during that era, marking thus a new character of the educative object of humanism, that would later become, depending on the specific domain where they are studied ‘primitives’, ‘savages’, ‘indigenous’. As the nineteenth century turns into the twentieth century, the figure of the foreigner changes once again, giving place to the category of the ‘ignorant’; and throughout the twentieth century, its most characteristic form will be that of the ‘illiterate’. All these figures share two fundamental characteristics. They are emissaries of the non-human part of man (given that they represent a kind of human in which the animal prevails, meaning the corporeal, the affective, the irrational) and, on the other hand, they portray the geographical ends of the world and its remote past. Thanks to the affirmation of the gradual passage from barbarism to civilization, the American conquest could present itself, from its

6 → Ivan Illich, *Obras Reunidas II*, 58.

beginnings, as a military, political, and moral enterprise. Additionally, the job of exploring and conquering the world could coincide with the moral maxim that led man to know himself and to dominate his own animal instincts. Since then the moral epic of the westerner coincides with his voracious colonial expansion and this narrative is collected in his humanist and universal vocation.

This mechanism always implies the creation of a subtle limit (at the same time minute and infinite), populated by ambiguous and oscillating figures, within which anthropogenesis takes place: the savage, the barbarian, but also, in other domains, women, children, the ignorant, the illiterate, etc. Some of these figures appear at the base of the modern state sanctuary that is the Don Pedro I monument. It is from this non-human background— represented by the monument— which humanism tries to create a distance. However immaturity, femininity, barbarism, ignorance, and irrationality never stop threatening the adult civilized man. The machine functions because man is permanently besieged by un-humanity, and this is why, once again, his virility, maturity, or his condition as cultivated and lettered is presented as a tireless task.

The anthropological machine cannot create the human without simultaneously creating the non-human, it cannot create its own humanity without simultaneously creating the others' (intimate) un-humanity. The mechanism works because the divergence fabricates both sides of the mirror. The mechanism not only produces, so to speak, the otherness of the other, but also an interior otherness: the machine creates that "Other" which inhabits us in the form of concupiscence, irrationality, immaturity or madness. At the political level the machine has not only produced the savage, as an animalized Other that inhabits the confines of the world, but also the idea of an 'ignorant people' that as an inferior savage species, belongs to the territory of the instinctive and irrational. This propensity allows for domination with bread and circus, for his nature imaginatively allocates him in the domains of feeding and of violent and sexual passions of the ungoverned body. That is why the anthropological machine is a colonial machine that acts within each individual, just as it acts inside the modern nation-states and in the imperial game between the world powers and their colonies.

The smallest distance separates the barbarian from the civilized, the child from the adult, the corporeal from the spiritual. The distance is so small that for a moment both margins seem to come together. But at the same time the distance is so infinite that, in reality, it remains absolutely impassable. All of the humanist's pedagogical work depends on the promise—always broken—of breaching it. The transition from the animal to the human, from nature to culture, or from barbarism to civilization is impossible, the effort to surpass these distances is always destined to fail, for the border is constitutively insurmountable; it is an illusion that moves away with every attempt to overcome it. It is precisely on such an illusion that the machine feeds itself. The anthropological machine captures human potential, giving it the shape of an impossible yearning.

It is important to point out that modernity and coloniality coincide, once the idea of conceiving the subject as center of the cosmos, and the idea of ordering time according to the notion of progress, become the base of both phenomena. Often, due to our intellectual habits, we place modernity as a predominantly European problem and coloniality or decoloniality as the problem concerning those people that suffered political and economic domination by the imperial powers. However, on different occasions, modernity has consisted of concepts and social technologies born from the colonial processes that later, applied to internal political reflection, have served to organize the modern states and their ideas of reference. Thus, it is important to point out that coloniality and modernity are two names that illuminate dimensions of the same phenomenon.

Likewise, it is not possible to talk of a modern school without, concurrently, understanding it as a colonial school. And this does not depend on whether or not a school is located in Paris or in Puerto Principe, in Madrid or in Lima. It also does not depend on whether the content taught at the school is ideologically controlled or its' methods alienating. The modern school is colonial because it is built upon an anthropological machine—pedagogy—in which the creation of humanity itself depends on the infinite reproduction of the others' intimate un-humanity, without which the myth of humanization cannot take place.

THE EMPIRE OF THE LETTER

In August of 1492, as Christopher Columbus sailed the Atlantic Ocean bound for the Indies, the humanist and grammarian Antonio de Nebrija presented Queen Isabel la Católica in Salamanca with the first European romance language grammar book. The introduction reads:

Cuando bien conmigo pienso, mui esclarecida Reina, i pongo delante los ojos el antigüedad de todas las cosas que para nuestra recordación i memoria quedaron escriptas, una cosa hallo i saco por conclusión mui cierta: que siempre la lengua fue compañera del imperio i de tal manera lo siguió que junta mente començaron, crecieron i florecieron i, después, junta fue la caída de entrambos.⁷

After these words Nebrija presented a brief tale about the birth, splendor, and ruin of the old empires: Assyrians, Phoenicians, Egyptians, Hebrews, Greeks, and Romans. Nebrija observed that all of them had an infancy tied to orality, and a splendor that coincided with the increasing prevalence of writing. He also observed that their decadence coincided with the decadence of their language. The most advantageous empires in this tale were, for the grammarian of Salamanca, the Greek and Roman empires, whose influence and splendor were more vivid and long lasting. Their strength and influence resulted from the fact that they were the only two that possessed grammatical art. Nebrija proposed to accomplish in Castilian that which permitted Greek and Latin to become imperial languages.

Grammar is thus at the same time a guarantee of splendor and a remedy against oblivion. It guards against the linguistic vicissitudes that Castilian could suffer because of the destructive action of time.

7 → When I think to myself, my illuminated Queen, and put before my eyes antiquity and all the things that were left written for our memory, there is one thing I find as a true conclusion: language was always the partner of empire and therefor both started, grew and flourished together, and, later, together they fell. Antonio de Nebrija, *Gramática sobre la lengua castellana*, 3.

Nebrija's words echo those of the Egyptian god *Theuth*, those that Plato recalls in the *Phaedrus*. Nebrija's Grammar was presented to the Queen as a remedy against oblivion and disaggregation, as a powerful tool for establishing the unity and durability all empires yearn for and need. What the first Grammar in vernacular language aimed for, and recognized, was the necessary relation between government and the order of language, an order that can assure truth and permanence. Truth must, by force, be unifying and constant, just as the empire itself.

*Ésta [la lengua castellana], hasta nuestra edad, anduvo suelta i fuera de regla i a esta causa a recebido en pocos siglos muchas mudanças por que, si la queremos cotejar con la de oi a quinientos años, hallaremos tanta diferencia i diversidad cuanta puede ser maior entre dos lenguas. I porque mi pensamiento i gana siempre fue engrandecer las cosas de nuestra nación i dar a los ombres de mi lengua obras en que mejor puedan emplear su ocio, que agora lo gastan leyendo novelas o istorias embueltas en mil mentiras i errores, acordé ante todas las otras cosas reduzir en artificio este nuestro lenguaje castellano, para que lo que agora i de aquí adelante enél se escriviere pueda quedar en un tenor i estender se en toda la duración de los tiempos que están por venir.*⁸

Therefore, grammar clearly has a prospective character, it not only orders what exists, but also gives the coordinates for that which is to come. Spain (the Kingdom of Castile) was at that time a growing power with an imperial vocation that had just

8 → This [Castilian], till our age, has been loose and without rule and because of this it has changed much in few centuries, if we want to compare today's form in five hundred years, we will find so much difference and diversity as can be found between two different languages. And because my thoughts and will always were to increase our nations' things and give the men of my language work with which they can better spend their leisure, for now they spend it reading novels and stories enveloped in a thousand lies and mistakes, I decided that before all other things I would artificially reduce our Castilian language, so that now and from here on after whatever be written in it can endure in times to come. *Ibid.*, 8-9.

reconquered the Arab territories of the south, and that expanded to, and dominated, other regions of the Iberian Peninsula. The school of Salamanca was setting the scaffolding for international law and structuring the commercial relations of the new empire. Unification and reconquest were a reality. The Kingdom of Castile projected itself upon the world writ large. Grammar was a tool for conquest that came to endorse the empire's expansionist vocation.

Cuando en Salamanca di la muestra de aquesta obra a Vuestra Real Majestad i me preguntó que para qué podía aprovechar, el mui Reverendo Padre obispo de Ávila me arrebató la respuesta, i respondiéndome por mí dixo que, después que Vuestra Alteza metiesse debaxo de su iugo muchos pueblos bárbaros i naciones de peregrinas lenguas, i con el vencimiento aquéllos tenían necesidad de recibir las leyes que el vencedor pone al vencido i con ellas nuestra lengua, entonces por esta mi Arte podrían venir en el conocimiento della, como agora nos otros dependemos el arte de la gramática latina para aprender el latín. I cierto assí es que no sola mente los enemigos de nuestra fe, que tienen ia necesidad de saber el lenguaje castellano, mas los vizcaínos, navarros, franceses, italianos i todos los otros que tienen algún trato i conversación en España i necesidad de nuestra lengua.⁹

The nascent empire thrived in Salamanca through the pen and sword. The governance of language through grammar was one of

9 → When in Salamanca I gave that opus to our Royal Majesty and she asked me how it could be used, the Reverend Father Bishop of Avila interrupted and responded for me saying that, after our Highness puts under her yoke many barbaric peoples and nations of different language with their defeat they will have the need to receive the laws which the winner imposes upon the defeated and with them our language, therefore through this, my Art, they will come to know it, just as now we depend on the art of Latin Grammar to learn Latin. And it is also true that not only our faith's enemies have the need to know about our language, but also the Vizcains, Navarros, French, Italians and all others that have any sort of treatise and conversation with Spain and have a need for our language. Ibid., 10-11.

the first pillars that permitted the conquest of America to be, from the start, a pedagogical enterprise. Two impossible tasks according to Freud, governing and educating, were intertwined from the beginning, and their impossibility was exorcised with blood and fire. In government and education, between them and through them, there arose a war, less thunderous than the one waged with swords, but not less cruel. The echoes of that war still persist today. In Argentina it was still possible to hear them, centuries after, spoken by he who would be the mentor of the Argentinean education system, Don Domingo Faustino Sarmiento, in the old saying *la letra con sangre entra*¹⁰.

However grammar did not only present itself as a valid tool for conquest and the administration of far away lands. As Ivan Illich states, Nebrija proposed to the Queen the fundamental construction of a new social reality which implied submitting her subjects to a completely new type of dependence, inventing thus a new kind of dominion in her own territory. It offered Queen Isabel a tool for colonizing her subjects' spoken language replacing it with a language of the state.

Nebrija sees his Grammar as a pillar of the nation-state. Therefor, the state, from its origin is perceived as an aggressively productive organism. The new state takes away the words with which people live and transforms them into a normalized language which, from that moment on, everyone is obligated to learn according to the instruction level that was institutionally allocated to them. Since then, people will surrender to a language that will be received from above, rather than develop a common language. That step, from vernacular to an officially taught mother tongue is probably the most important event—and possibly the least studied—in the advent of a commercial goods hyperdependent society (...). This is the first appearance of the modern citizen

10 → This is a very popular saying that alludes to reading and writing skills being learnt through corporeal punishment.

*and with him a language provided by the state; neither one has a historical precedent.*¹¹

Henceforth, grammar was destined, not only to expropriate the spoken language of the population of the conquered lands to introduce them into the Spanish cultural sphere, but also to taint vernacular language itself foreign and other. From then on, maternal language, which by definition is learnt spontaneously through coexistence with one's people, could only be learnt "correctly" through the intervention of the state. Necessary mediation of a group of specialists would be imposed between each individual and his own language, and thus was born the modern school. From this moment on, culture would no longer be that which is cultivated in common, but something that is attained through institutionalized teaching promoted by the state.

The church and state worked hand in hand establishing such an institutionalized education. In Illich's opinion, from the fourth century on, the church assumed the image of a mother nursing its people and it was precisely from this maternal image that, starting in the fifteenth century, the new modern state could construct itself. It is also important to note that this same exemplary metaphor is the one that makes the modern state a constitutively colonial state, for it presupposes 'tutelage' and the progressive incorporation of the other.

ORALITY AND WRITING:
THE GRAMMATICAL MACHINE
OF THE MODERNS

If, as Nebrija supposed, grammar is the partner of empire, it is so, because amongst other reasons, throughout the Western tradition, humanity has been conceived as an empire: the empire of the intelligible over the sensitive, of reason over the body, of the human over the animal. In Western thought human evolution coincides with the development of speaking. This is why the question of man's

11 → Ivan Illich, *Obras Reunidas II*, 82.

genesis is bound up in our tradition's tendency to inquire into the genesis of language. Ever since classical antiquity, language has served as a dividing mark between the animal and the human (referring to the species) and the infant and the adult (referring to human development of each individual person). But also, since antiquity language has found itself affected by the mechanism of disjunction, from within which an animal face and a human face can be distinguished. According to a celebrated fragment from Aristotle's *Politics*:

*... and man is the only animal who has the gift of speech. And whereas mere voice is but an indication of pleasure or pain, and is therefore found in all animals (for their nature attains to the perception of pleasure and pain and the intimation of them to one another, and no further), the power of speech is intended to set forth the expedient and inexpedient, and therefore likewise the just and the unjust. And it is a characteristic of man that he alone has any sense of good and evil, of just and unjust, and the like, and the association of living beings who have this sense makes a family and a state*¹².

Coexisting in man are an animal voice, which expresses pleasure and pain, and a human word, whose function is to manifest what is convenient and inconvenient, just and unjust. Once again, in man's interior, an isolated animal region works as a basis, against which man will open a rift. Agamben reminds us that, from antiquity, grammarians opposed the confusing voice of animals to the articulated voice of humans. In Aristotle, what makes the differences between animal *phoné* and human *logos* is that the latter is "articulated" and such articulation in human voice is gathered in the *grammata*, that is, in letters. Therefore, for Aristotle, as for all grammarians of his time, what characterizes human voice is its possibility to be written, as it is formed by *articulus* (fragments) or *quantum* of voice¹³. In other words, if voice

12 → Aristotle, *Politics*, 1253a 7-18.

13 → Giorgio Agamben, *The Open: Man and Animal*, 16.

can be captured in writing it is because it is fragmented. This is a characteristic that opens the possibility for cultural and social life in the *polis*.

If for an instant we once again turn our sight to the monument of Don Pedro I we see that the same hierarchy that governs the piece as a whole is replicated in the sculpture of the emperor: its base is formed by the animal (the horse, traditionally a symbol of verve and courage), the middle part by a man (Don Pedro I's persona), and the highest part, by the written word (the written words of law, for the emperor waves a document of the Independence of Brazil). Therefore, the anthro-po-genetic dynamism we have been referring to is clearly represented in the monument's most important figure: man is represented as a modern centaur, where the exuberant force of the animal instinct and the lucidity of the *logos* (turned into writing) are intertwined in a dynamic tension which modulates 'the human' as a movement of elevation between both.

The written word is presented as the organizing element of the entire monument, in relation to which all the other pieces find their place in decreasing hierarchy. It belongs exclusively to the top figure and it differentiates it from the allegories at the base. Hence, a grammatical machine that orients and determines culture surpasses nature, and the intelligible surpasses the sensitive; the grammatical machine seems to operate in the inner workings of the anthropological machine.

In modernity, the dominion of *logos* over *phoné* acquired strategic relevance, for, if animal voice was already for the Greeks a trait man shared with other living beings, that animal voice, transformed into orality, came to be for the moderns a distinctive trait of primitive peoples. As we have pointed out, the ancient grammarians distinguished human being's articulated voice (*phoné énarthros*), which was also the voice that could be written (*phoné engrámmatos*), and the confused voice, which, on the contrary, was the un-writable voice of the animals, or that part of the human voice that could not be fixed by writing, like whistling, laughter, grunting, or crying. Alphabetical writing, more than anything, produced the illusion that voice can be effectively sustained and contained in writing. This is why, based on their tradition, Europeans associated

voice with peoples without writing, transforming voice into orality, and identifying alphabetic writing with the articulated human voice. The setup was perfect and extremely productive: the animal voice coincided then with the animality of the Native American and African peoples, while the human articulated word became a distinctive trait of the Europeans. With this setup, writing occupied a central role within the new modern anthropological machine. The voice, captured in grammar, took on a humanizing force and mixed it with the process of dominating the conquered peoples. The savage's animality coincided with the un-human interior and inarticulate voice of the modern subject. In this sense, to "dominate the other" was transformed into a synonym for "dominating oneself", dominating one's own instincts, one's own animality. And the written word was the vehicle for such dominion. The basis was set for a social technology that considered conquest and alphabetization, political dominion and moralization, submission and humanization, to be the equivocal. Each acquired the shape of a progressive grammatical articulation differing from the sonorous world of the savages. Sound, body, and animality (instinct) were associated with voice, and voice with a "wild" element, while rationality, spirituality, and writing constituted the essential notes of humanity, and were associated ever after with civilization.

THE GRAMMATICAL INVENTION OF THE OTHER: 'ORIGINAL VOICE' AND THE WRITING OF HISTORY

Written around 1498, Frei Ramón Pané's text is considered, according to specialists, the first European language book written in the New World. The original manuscript, however, does not exist. Researchers know of it because of the Italian translation included in the LXI chapter of Christopher Columbus' "admiral's story" written by his son Fernando. But the original text by Fernando Columbus was also lost, therefore researchers have only had access to the Italian translation by Alfonso de Ulloa, written in 1571.

According to Eliseo Colón Zayas, when including the Other (the indigenous person) within the narrative, Pané fixed the territorial

limits of foreign culture and inscribed it in the European literary tradition that was produced with the fading of the medieval world. Through his writing Pane transformed the Other's word into a useful product for Columbus; let us remember that the text was ordered to be made by the latter. Its translation/inscription was not idiomatic, but strategic. What legitimates this translation is what Pane received through his eyes and ears, comments Zayas, "the eye is at the service of a discovery of the world; it is the tip of the spear of an encyclopedic curiosity, while the ear implies the decipherment of the other's voice, its translation"¹⁴.

The passage from savage orality to writing implies the capture of the indigenous people's space, perceived by the Spaniard as chaotic and atemporal, in European history. "And given that they don't have writing nor letter, they can't notice how they have heard this from their ancestors, and they can't remember what they say, and can't even write in an orderly manner what they are referring to".¹⁵

To make the text work as a machine for capturing foreign space, it is necessary to imaginatively place the other in primordial space, so that the passage from voice to writing can introduce the other into history. This way, Pane utilized an exogenetic Christian tradition to construct otherness in the New World, permitting the strange to be put in an ethical, political, and religious order that permitted its understanding and made the conquest of the other acceptable, which was of course, the expedition's primary interest.

The celebrated dispute amongst philosopher Ginés de Sepúlveda and the Dominican father and bishop of Chiapas, Bartolomé de Las Casas, in 1550 in Valladolid, marks the pinnacle of a discussion that was developing from the start of the conquest and which had the aim of constructing a juridical-moral discourse that would make acceptable to the eyes of Spain the appropriation of the riches of

14 → Eliseo R. Colón Zayas, "Fray Ramón Pane: la escritura y el descubrimiento del otro," in *América Latina: imágenes e imaginário*, coord. Tereza A.P. Queirioz (Rio de Janeiro: Expressão e Cultura; São Paulo:EDUSP), 678.

15 → Ibid., 679. (Our translation)

the newly discovered lands. Also called the “dispute of the naturals,” at the heart of the debate is the image that Spain made for itself as well as others, along with the way in which that image was composed of the desire for riches and the will for dominion of European power in expansion.

Two doctrines faced each other in battle, the first (based on Aristotle and represented by Sepúlveda) conceived hierarchy as the natural condition of human society and defended the inferiority of the indigenous; the second (represented by Las Casas), implored Christian universalism, and affirmed equality as the natural state. A figure appeared, referenced often by both sides of the confrontation, antecedent to what we now denominate infancy. If for Sepúlveda, and the defenders of unequal nature, the indigenous were like children by virtue of their irrationality and immaturity, for Bartolomé de Las Casas and the defenders of equality, innocence and malleability were traits we all shared. The idea of infancy became a key component in the debate that acted as a hinge, permitting the articulation of both stances.

Infancy, like the voice, possesses an ambiguous status, a type of indetermination between identity and difference, between equality and inequality, principal categories that, as Todorov points out, structured the relation with the Other during the American conquest. This intermediate status is given by the fact that children are “one of us”, in the sense that they were born from us and they prolong our own existence, but are at the same time different from us, insofar as they do not speak our language and they are not familiar with our customs. Therefore, halfway between what is ours and what is not, between identity and difference, infancy reveals itself as a key concept in the construction of a new technology of social control: colonialism.

Taken from both the Roman Empire’s juridical structure and Christian universalism, Europe invented colonialism, one of the subtlest social technologies, whose mechanism consists in establishing a differentiated identity that suspends equality in time, denying and simultaneously permitting it. This mechanism was forged by the School of Salamanca around the concept of

“evangelization”. Afterwards, deposed of its religious content, it was adopted by other European colonial powers under the name “civilizing process”.

Affirming that “the indigenous are like children” the Spanish conquistadors legitimized their dominion, transforming dominion into a benefit and inevitable fact. For, when taking the Other as child, it is natural and necessary to exercise over him a power of tutelage, in virtue of which the indigenous people must be trusted to the cares of a Spaniard in charge of making their equality effective. In this way, conquest is made into a fundamentally pedagogic endeavor.

The two positions that were confronted during the first years of the conquest, one that gravitates around equality, as well as one that gravitates around inequality, in the end reconcile in a default image of the Other. The indigenous’ equality is not negated, but suspended in an infinite “not being yet”. In Ginés and Sepúlveda’s descriptions the indigenous lack rationality, the use of writing, and modesty.

*They are more barbarian than one can imagine, because they lack absolutely every knowledge of letter, they ignore the use of money, they usually walk around naked, even the women, and carry bales over their shoulders and backs, as animals, for long tours*¹⁶.

For Sepúlveda, all difference is reduced to an inferiority that shows the indigenous as semi-human, half way between human and animal. In Bartolomé de Las Casas’ descriptions, the indigenous lack wickedness, and the unmeasured ambition and ferocity of the Spaniards. De las Casas tells a tale that presents the indigenous in the image of Adam when he still lived in paradise and therefore still resided half way between man and god.

“The Lucayos...lived...as in the Golden Age, a life of which poets and historians have sung such praise” [...] “To me he looked like our father Adam before the Fall”¹⁷.

16 → Tzvetan Todorov, *The Conquest of America: The Question of the Other*, 188.

17 → Ibid., 197.

THE CONSTITUTIVE AMBIGUITY
OF THE FIGURES OF PASSAGE:
INFANCY AND SAVAGERY

The image of the Other oscillates permanently between two poles—innocence and immaturity—two notes that define childhood and promise to progressively deliver a person from fault, but in reality create and sustain it infinitely. The image allows one to affirm one way or another that, “The indigenous are like children”. They have a soul, but it is a child’s soul, innocent or immature. Children represent a lack which favors the projection and appropriation of the Other in relatively tolerable terms for the European imaginary. Pedagogy, be it in the shape of evangelization or later a form of ‘civilizing’, is the mechanism through which ‘lack’ turns productive in the colonial scheme. Hence, the original inhabitants of America can be angels or demons, but this is irrelevant, for what is most important in the European scheme is that they are not yet anything, and will only come to be by way of progressive assimilation to the conquistadors’ culture. These colonial conceptions made the conquered lands an empty place to project the fears and hopes of the nascent colonial powers.

America was thought of by Europe as a new land, land of the future, an exotic place, exuberant and unmeasured, oscillating always between the barbarous and the savage. It was a Dionysian forest where the civilized world was lost and found systematically. The negation of the Other, or his assimilation in terms of immaturity, were useful to Europe in affirming its identity, experimenting with its potential, confirming its superiority, and projecting in America its utopic search for happiness, its lost origin or its long road to redemption. If Europe thought that it had reached its mature age in modernity, as Kant sustains in his celebrated article titled *What is Enlightenment?*, it was because Europe knew how to build during the two centuries before, a childlike Other against which to recognize itself as an adult, a savage Other upon which to affirm itself as civilized, and an animalized Other over which to construct humanity.

By analyzing a text from Jean de Léry (1578), *Histoire d'un Voyage fait en la terre du Brazil*, Michel de Certeau affirms:

Travel literature is producing an image of the savage as a body of pleasure. Confronting it with Western work, with its actions of producing time and reason, we find, in Léry, a place of leisure and delite, party for the eyes and ears [...] The erotization of the body of the other—of nudity and a savage voice— walks beside the formation of an ethics of production. The voyage, produces a material gain at the same time it creates a lost paradise: a body-object and an erotic body.¹⁸

Infancy as well as the inarticulate voice occupy in modernity a curious role: they are simultaneously what the West desires to recuperate—because it sees in them its origin and salvation— as well as what it fears and tries to maintain under its yoke; they function as a symbol of the most radical otherness and its most intimate being. The figure of the savage incarnates both dimensions: he who does not write, is pure voice, and is closer to life, who is closer to nature; and the infant, who does not talk, and is closer to the origin. Such ambiguity makes itself evident during the enlightenment with the fascination of the figure of the “noble savage” and the enormous influence it had in the development of political and literary utopias. The “noble savage” fascinated Jean-Jacques Rousseau—who highlighted the concept in his opus *Emile* (1762)—as well as Diderot who wrote *l'infant, ce petit sauvage* and thus placed the noble savage in the category with both children and aborigines from the South seas¹⁹. The way in which infancy was conceptualized between the thirteenth and sixteenth centuries corresponds with the emergence of colonial ideologies and models. It is without a doubt revealing to see the indigenous repeatedly compared to children, or to women. Consistently, the indigenous were confused with “the interior other” and “the exterior other”. But it is useless, and makes little sense, to ask if the image of the child was

18 → Eliseo R. Colón Zayas, “Fray Ramón Pane: la escritura y el descubrimiento del otro”, 683.

19 → Steiner, *Después de Babel: Aspectos del lenguaje y la traducción*, 57.

projected onto the foreigner or vice versa, because it is probable that both things happened, for such coincidence permitted conquest to be an educative endeavor and the educative systems to be the new emerging state's form of colonization.

European modernity cannot be understood only through internal causes because there is no human without animality, civilization without barbarism, maturity without the childlike, modernity without primitivism. The definition of being European and its identification with the human in general depended on the possibility of inventing an improperly human Other, an animalized man that would permit modernity to be a modernization and the human a progressive and never ending story. The School of Salamanca had an important role in the gestation of modernity, not only with its contribution to international law and economic theory, but, above all, for its participation in the construction of the image of the animalized Other. The barbarian, the savage, the primitive, the illiterate have always been European characters; characters of a modern-colonial theater in which Europe conceived of itself.

THE PRODUCTIVE LACK

The ambiguity of infancy made it possible to reconcile, in a paradoxical manner, equality and inequality, identity and difference, thus resolving contradictions through an indefinite temporal suspension: the “not yet”. This mechanism not only regulated and administered the distance between Europe and the conquered territories, but it later gave form to the relation between classes within the new emerging national states. Ascending social mobility is the contemporary translation of that same form of temporal dissolution of equality in an interminable educative process. The mechanism of temporal suspension of equality, through which the educative system creates the distance it intends to overcome, was denounced at the end of the 1970s by Ivan Illich in his work on deschooling and, in more recent times, by Jacques Rancière, in his book *The Ignorant Schoolmaster* in 1987.

The void that opens through the “not yet” is made of negativity and delay. He who is educated must comprehend that his “being”

consist in a “not being yet” and that his being will only effectively be when he manages to get to the other side of the bridge that connects his ignorance and the knowledge he was promised. However, the bridge is uncrossable and thus his existence is trapped in deferment without remedy. Education is transformed into an interminable process, an un-kept promise. The colonial anthropological machine welded with the productive power of delay, thus oriented desires, and transformed them into voluntary subjection. There are no handcuffs more powerful than the invisible and interminable hope of those who suffer and look for meaning in that suffering. In modernity this yearning/desire is called “progress” and upon it the most sophisticated form of social subjection has been built. Of course the problem is not hope, but rather its capture, and the way to capture it is confused with humanity itself.

The devices continuously migrate, they are contagious, they are advantageous and adapt to new needs. In the constitution of the new national states, the colonial device, forged during the conquest, was slowly absorbed, just as the figures of the child and the savage were superimposed and mixed slowly during the debates that accompanied the conquest. During the nineteenth and twentieth centuries a new figure was born and with it the illiterate that would soon occupy its place next to the savage and child, building a sort of interior savage.

As we have seen, since antiquity the passage of the confused voice of the animal to the articulated word of man was possible thanks to the written word as intermediary, and that passage, as can be read in Aristotle, opens the space for politics; but never before had the relation between the written word and politics been so explicit as it was with the creation of the nation states onward. To know how to read and write became an indispensable requisite for the exercise of suffrage. The democratizing processes of the entire twentieth century involved massive literacy campaigns. Reading and writing became the doorway to the effective exercise of politics through the vote. Writing was identified with the place of the state, with the public, and fundamentally, with the law. Beginning in modernity the law stopped being regulated by custom

and was transferred gradually to writing. For a great majority of the Latin American population the written word is not the synonym of literature, but of law and power. The written word is not the medium of poets— whose tradition is still unified with orality— but the specific medium of those who govern.

Nation states put the anthropological machine to use in creating an opposition between an ignorant people and an intellectual elite. The same mechanism of temporal suspension operated here, according to which political equality stayed suspended in an infinitely prolonged “not yet”. Between the illiterate and the literate a distance was created and administered by the state under the name of universal schooling which was graded, free, and compulsory.

THE MODULATION OF INDIVIDUALS, STATES AND TERRITORIES

The border established by the anthropological machine exists equally within individuals, within emerging national states, and between the colonial powers and conquered territories. In the individual, the division separates animal instinct from rationality, the interior form from the exterior animal, the nutritive soul from the rational, the animal voice (which lives in us as sobbing, laughter, shouting, grunting) from the rational word; in the nation states, the division separates the savage or primitive peoples, those dominated by orality, by passion, by excess, by exuberant vitality from the rational colonial powers. According to the political division promoted by the modern anthropological machine, the rational dominion man exercises upon his passions equals the educational influence the elite must give to the people, and the tutelage the colonial powers must exercise over the conquered territories; moral, educational, psychological and political make up one philanthropic, humanist, and civilizing project. This structure that simultaneously modulates and organizes the empire over subjectivity, society, and territory, is already present in Plato's *Republic*, where as we have seen, social health and the health of the individual depend on the correct hierarchical order of the soul. Only when the soul is concupiscent, dominated by the popular litters (the artisans), when

the irascible soul is dominated by the intermediary litters (the army), and when this will submits to the rational soul, dominated by the superior social litters (the philosophers), is it possible to attain a just order. In the same way, the modern anthropological machine makes enlightenment and humanization coincide with the dominion of the savage that inhabits each individual, in the state, and in the conquered states.

It follows that humanization would only be possible through the invention of foreign and personal in-humanity that permits the passage and confers upon the anthropological machine its dynamic and productive character. The interiorized Other is the “necessary” residue that the machine produces in its process of generating humanity. The educational system, related to the modern machine, cannot complete its humanizing and civilizing task without producing at the same time an un-human Other, or, better said, at the same time, inventing (presupposing) the ignorant and alienated masses as its counterpart.

It is always possible to fall into animality, it is always possible to fall into femininity, into immaturity, into temptations of the flesh or the brutal instinct proper to the inferior classes or primitive groups. There exists always a suspicion which burdens the individual of not taking enough distance between the material and animal.

The modern anthropological machine extracts its dynamism from the mediation between the barbarous and the civilized, and a distance must first be created in order for that to happen. This mediation implies the grammatical articulation, that is, a disjunction of the human voice in fragments called phonemes that can be represented through graphic symbols (letters), and rearticulated according to a combined system that follows its own specific rules. When the movement of distinction and composition is given in language it takes the name of grammar, when it is given in thought, it is called logic. In this way humanization is grammatically captured and determined, and it is implied that the possibility to build a systemic path with access to the human, something like a humanizing method, exists. To learn how to read and write means, on one hand, to learn how to think correctly, and on the other hand, to learn to adequately interpret the world. The mediation of the

distance that separates the savage and passionate voice from the written, civilized, and rational word is also a path that crosses from ingenuity to criticism, from deception to truth. That is why the anthropological machine implies the idea that it can teach one how to think well and, through thinking well, it can create a more just society. Reading and writing correctly will help one to think correctly, and thinking correctly will help one to act in a rational and just way. Grammatical mediation implies something like a rational literacy that is also a political literacy and the modern educational system presents itself, according to the colonial-grammatical machine, as a device for the production of rational and democratic individuals. But such construction presupposes the infinite and imaginary reproduction of an emotive mass, an ignorant and passionate people whom are subject to the animal voice and disordered affects. Hence the frequent accusations of populism tied to the government of the savage and ignorant people, given that the illustrated elite conceive the latter as the rational manipulation of popular effects.

Within the limits the modern colonial machine draws, the lucid and democratic educator must necessarily presuppose a lack in the other, a weakness, immaturity, or ingenuity, that can be transformed into virtue, into knowledge, into critical judgment. If the educator cannot imagine an inferior Other, he cannot make him an object of his generosity and beneficial influence. Equality needs to be promised, but never realized, for the mechanism extracts its force from the desire to have equality and not from attaining it.

Thus, the modern anthropological machine is a machine of desire totally coherent with the system of production, circulation and mercantile consumption. As Foucault affirms, if capitalism has shown itself effective and resistant (in spite of all the misery it has produced) it is because it exercises its power in a positive way, not only reprimanding, but also, and especially, creating lack and desire, that is to say, modulating time as procrastination (“not yet”) and thus producing an infinitely renewable desire (“but maybe one day...”). Cultural consumption for example, is not radically different from any other type of consumption. To desire material goods or a desire to be cultured, critical, or educated are not very different desires. The machine works by producing desire for objects, for

prestige, for power, for new experiences, emotions, virtues, truth, or beauty. The important technique for the machine is that it infinitely reintroduces the lack, the promise, in order to administer yearning.

A set of questions is thus imposed upon us: is it possible to educate without belittling he who will be educated? I am not referring to education as training in a certain art, but rather education in the sense humanism has adopted for that term. Is it possible to educate without creating a fault in the other that would make intervention beneficial and necessary? How can we think of an education that does not imply the infinite reproduction of an inferior other? To conceive of this new education we will possibly need to abandon the idea that humanity until now has served as a lighthouse in educative processes, that is to say, abandon the idea that humanity is that which remains both intimate and a foreign un-humanity which is to be dominated and overcome. This would imply also abandoning the idea of a progressive conquest of humanity. Transcending the limits of modern education means thus, to dissolve, at the same time, its lights and shadows, abandoning both the ideal of the lettered, rational and conscious man, as well as the existence of a supposed affective disorderly mass ignorance. What is left to discover is the meaning that could be attributed to the word education under these conditions. ■

*EDUCACIÓN DE
CARNE Y HUESO,*
EDUCATION OF
FLESH AND BONE:
VARIATIONS ON A
FOLK MELODY

Samuel D. Rocha
University of British Columbia

ORIGINALLY PRESENTED
November 2nd, 2013 at 11:00 a.m.

ORIGINAL TITLE
Educación de carne y hueso, Education of Flesh and Bone

Sube conmigo, amor americano.
(Pablo Neruda, "Alturas de Macchu Picchu")¹

QUESTIONS AND CLAIMS, SAYING

The organizing question—i.e., the question that organizes this symposium of talks and essays—is a serious and difficult one. *What is Latin American philosophy of education?*² This question, taken prima facie as a propositional claim, presupposes at least two wholes ('Latin America' and 'philosophy of education'), a series of parts ('Latin,' 'America,' 'philosophy,' and 'education'), and the possible relationships between them, all leading, eventually, to the meaning of the question. This rather tedious opening gesture should not be misunderstood. To consider the propositional linguistic content of the organizing question is meant to not only say what is most obvious. More importantly, it is also to *show* the

1 → Pablo Neruda, Nathaniel Tarn (trans), *The Heights of Macchu Picchu: A Bilingual Edition* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1967), 38.

2 → In some respects, this question and its resulting thoughts are mirrored in two articles by Claudia Ruitenberg: "Introduction: The Question of Method in Philosophy of Education," *Journal of Philosophy of Education* 43, (3), 315-323 and "'Plays Well with Others': the engagement of philosophy of education with other educational research," *Theory and Research in Education* 2014, (12), 88-97.

linguistic and analytic limits of understanding the question in purely propositional, linguistic terms.

As an alternative to this analytical approach, I would like to pose a series of questions that themselves ask questions about the organizing question that might more rigorously reveal the sort of response (albeit a response that does not quite give an authoritative *answer*) that this question, on my reading, seems to be hoping for. This is to say that I do not read this question, against all possible claims to the contrary, as an “open question.” While the question is certainly not presumptuous (i.e., it doesn’t have a prefabricated answer) and while the possible responses are surely many and complex, I want to take the question not as being “open,” but instead as a question asked in “good faith,” with at least *aspirational* expectations. There is something cynical about the concept of an “open question” (and the liberal value of openness in general) if by ‘open’ we mean something like a tolerance for nihilism, an absence of hope for something to emerge instead of nothing. I would hope that the question is not so much open as it is asked as an offering: the act of donation that does not presuppose a gift. A *generous* question, but a real question all the same, with aspirations of a response. In this aspirational spirit, I would like to rehearse and rephrase the question, as a musician might prepare and perform a melody, with some possible variations and responses.

Consider the following variations: What are the conditions for the possibility under which a Latin American philosophy of education might emerge as possible or real in a serious way that is not trivial? Furthermore, we might begin by asking another preliminary question implicit in this question: Is there a distinction to be made between a Latin American *philosopher* of education and Latin American *philosophy* of education? (Which also asks whether there is a difference that makes a difference between *philosophers* and *philosophy*?) This, of course, further implies whether there is a serious difference between a Latina (the person) and Latin America (the continent)? Is the question of personal and communal ethnic identity coextensive to the reality of what Latin America is?

These questions are certainly not open, and may in fact be closed in the most literal and practical sense of the term: they are

strategically intended to operationalize the organizing question in such a way that certain claims might emerge and others be excluded by strict necessity. (These claims also orbit a more general concern I have about the field of philosophy of education, if there is such a thing, that I am importing into my own reading of this question about *Latin American Philosophy of Education*.)

Here are a few of these claims:

01

There *is* a distinction, albeit a difficult and messy one, between philosophy and philosophers, just as there is a distinction between a history of philosophy and a philosophy of history. The former is historical, the latter philosophical.

02

The “Latin American philosopher” presupposes a descriptive notion of what and who a Latin American is. This question seems to be addressed, primarily, in *Latino/a Philosophy*, a particular ethno-philosophy, which offers a particular reading of the philosophy of race. Jorge Gracia’s work here seems apropos (e.g., his “familial-historical view”).

03

Insofar as the terms ‘Latin American philosophy of education’ describe something that has an original offering to make, distinct (but perhaps not mutually exclusive) from the “Latin American philosopher of education”, then it seems intuitive to expect that the offering be, in some relevant sense, both necessary and sufficient—which is to say, distinct from descriptive concerns of the philosophy of race and *Latino/a Philosophy*. Otherwise, we might ask why entities are being multiplied without necessity and, more alarmingly, the issue risks becoming purely semantic.

Before we move any further I should note that a similar analysis could be done to philosophy of education, and the field itself, in my view, often seems to ignore the rigor of this line of thought when

it thinks about what, exactly, the terms ‘philosophy of education’ describe. Suffice it to say that if philosophy of education is merely an area of applied epistemology or psychology, or a theoretical/methodological wordbank for people doing social scientific research, for immediate schoolroom use, then we might as well just call it *that* and not pretend that philosophy of education has anything *philosophical* to do with education or that *education* is anything more than schooling and credentialing. This is, of course, to say that insofar as schooling is equated with education—or, to put it another way, insofar as philosophy of education would not be able to survive the death of school—then there was probably nothing there to begin with.

Returning to the question at hand, the distinction between a Latin American (philosopher) and Latin American (philosophy) reveals that we are left with a new question that is at least as important as the question of the philosophy of race, yet it emerges as a necessarily different question: What is Latin America? In other words, how can we proceed to imagine a Latin American philosophy of education if there is no descriptive notion of Latin America? What is required, it would seem, is not so much an ethno-philosophy as much as a new continental philosophy, a philosophy that reflects the continental reality of Latin America in the way Continental philosophy (or German Idealism, and other ready comparisons) captures something about the continent of Western Europe.

One objection and reformulation would be to reject the distinction between the Latino/a and Latin America—regardless of the distinction between philosophers and philosophy—and assert that Latin America is simply the sum of its Latin American parts. But this, I think, would be to miss the poetic heart of the matter. Latin America, I want to claim, is not merely a collection of Latin Americans, a demographic and geopolitical herd—*una bola de Latinoamericanos*—in the same way that philosophy of education is hopefully not merely a collection of philosophers who have things to say using the term ‘education.’ This unqualified, and vulgarly quantified, approach loses the mystery and enchantment of the continental question, “What is Latin America?”

My sense is that we do not know what Latin America is any

more than we know what a Latin American is, exactly—and, for that matter, we do not know what philosophy or education or philosophy of education are with sense of clarity or consensus—but we can proceed, with a healthy degree of reverence and caution, by relying upon a concept of Latin America that is grounded in its art. This anthropological approach is what I am calling “folk phenomenology” with the reduction being the “folkloric reversal.” This is a turn from aesthetics to art, from theory to practice, to enable the practice of theory. It is problematic in some ways, as all forms of phenomenology ultimately must be, but it does have some distinct advantages for clarifying the question “What is Latin American philosophy of education?” For one, it grounds the strategy of thought within a rigorous analysis of the things—*cosas*, *cositas* y *cosotas*—and refuses to accept a definition in the place of a description. Instead it is to favor a partial description, but one that can be judged in a very ordinary but fundamental way.

The remainder of this essay, then, will rehearse two pieces of art that seem to be significant not only in their descriptive value, but, also, in their ability to suggest a distinct notion of education that is Latin American in the continental sense. In other words, I am making the claim, through variations on the organizing question, that if a Latin American philosophy of education does not create a new sense of what education is and might be and become, then, we are probably wasting our time—or at the very least in violation of the maxim of Occam’s Razor—and might do more good to take up questions of the philosophy of race and Latino Philosophy instead. Latin American philosophy of education, within my reading of the artistic selections to follow, is no less than a notion of education that is anciently located in the known and unknown art of Latin America—and, perhaps most notably, the fact that such art still informs Latin America in a powerful way to this day—that offers a new poetic imaginary, especially when compared to the concept of education within the Anglo-European conversation, including the one that so often seems to inform discussions of education (e.g., as schooling pure and simple) in Latin America.

Again, after *saying* it is now time to *show*, to imagine a Latin American philosophy of education *en vivo*, an education of flesh

and bone. I will now attempt a performative investigation that is Latin American in less, and therefore more, than name only. *Latinoamericano* in the flesh need not become ideologically individualistic nor ignore the spirit. These are not racialized or ethnic discourses, but actual, embodied things from which follows (1) a tragic sense of nostalgia and (2) a notion of love that, together, anchor a preliminary picture of education that is quite different from, and entirely strange to, the predominant notions of education that come to us from Anglo-German-Greek [et al.], European liberal and neoliberal notions of education—from teleology of *paedia* to the formation of modernist *bildung* (and the folklore of the *bildungromans*) to the present-day econometrics of learning: *educación de carne y hueso*, education of flesh and bone.

ART, SHOWING

In what follows are two forms of art, a song and a stanza of poetry—(1) “Canción Mixteca,” written in 1912 by José López Álvarez, and (2) a stanza from “Para Que Tu Me Oigas” in *Veinte Poemas de Amor y Una Canción Desesperada* (1924), by Pablo Neruda—followed by some brief and preliminary meditations.³

01

*Canción Mixteca*⁴

¡Qué lejos estoy del suelo donde he nacido!

How far I am from the ground upon which I was born!

inmensa nostalgia invade mi pensamiento;

immense nostalgia invades my thoughts;

y al verme tan solo y triste cual hoja al viento,

and upon seeing myself alone and sad, like a leaf in the wind,

- 3 → One might be led to believe that this is an interpretive or hermeneutic exercise. This would be a mistake. I will not attempt to present an expository reading of the selections, but, instead, allow them to inspire thoughts from themselves as things. As I will say again: Let the arts—and art itself—speak for themselves.
- 4 → I am quoting this song from memory, as all folk songs are quoted. The translation is my own.

quisiera llorar, quisiera morir de sentimiento.

I'd wish to cry, I'd wish to die of sentiment.

¡Oh Tierra del Sol! Suspiro por verte

Oh land of the Sun! I breathe to see you

ahora que lejos yo vivo sin luz, sin amor;

now that far I live without light, without love;

y al verme tan solo y triste cual hoja al viento,

and upon seeing myself alone and sad, like a leaf in the wind,

quisiera llorar, quisiera morir de sentimiento.

I'd wish to cry, I'd wish to die of sentiment.

Inmensa nostalgia (immense nostalgia): nostalgia for nostalgia.

It is one thing to long for home, that Odyssean longing of the West, but it is quite another thing to long for the ability to long for home in the first, and last, place. This is perhaps difficult to understand for anyone who has a home or has had one, but so many people in Latin America (and, in a more radical sense, Latin America itself) lack the essentialist colonial or indigenous consolation of home. A mestizo—or any such some-such—might long for something at least once removed from nostalgia: the nostalgia for nostalgia, the longing for the longing for home. The desire remains, but the erotic force is, paradoxically, made stronger in absentia. As the desire for home is put at a distance, it becomes more intimate and shows an excess foreign to Odysseus' journey back to Ithaca. Here, within the erotic structure of nostalgia for nostalgia, and all desire for desire, the journey cannot go backwards. Nostalgia for nostalgia cannot long for the past; it is to long for the future. Nostalgia for the future begins, perhaps, with nostalgia for nostalgia.

This “nostalgia for nostalgia” is radically different than the two forms of nostalgia that occupy the present educational imagination. For instance, to show the nostalgic uniformity among those with strong political commitments, isn't the distinction between the Right and Left in the West simply a matter of degree and dating of an identical nostalgia? The Right longs for the 1950's (or whatever fantasy they find convenient) while the Left longs for '68. Reproductions of this sterile nostalgia can be understood, I think, as a principle logic of the colonial motivation to create a “new world” in the exact image of the old.

In many ways the naturalistic Homeric motif of nostalgia was disrupted when the Hellenic idea of temporality met the radical messianic futurism of Judeo-Christianity. Liberation in Latin America is, of course, deeply informed by this soteriological and eschatological nuance, where those who are homeless and disenfranchised find themselves closest to God because of their distance from a material home. This is why the preferential option for the poor in Catholic social teaching, so influential to Liberation Theology, has been so poorly misunderstood by the nostalgic secular Left (and, of course, it goes without saying, the religious Right) and their postmodern cousins who are privileged enough to leave nostalgia behind altogether. But, to reclaim the erotic force of nostalgia for nostalgia, we need look no further than a song of longing, a song that, in the United States, we might call the blues, itself at a doubled distance from its future.

And the blues of nostalgia for nostalgia is rooted in the hopeful despair of tragic love.

02

*Para Que Tu Me Oigas (excerpt)*⁵

Llanto de viejas bocas, sangre de viejas súplicas.

Lament of old mouths, blood of old supplications.

Ámame, compañera. No me abandones. Sígueme.

Love me, companion. Do not abandon me. Follow me.

Sígueme, compañera, en esa ola de angustia.

Follow me, companion, on that wave of anguish.

A weak, tragic, love. Love on waves of anguish. The Western colonial idea of love, going back to the Homeric epic, is one of conquest. *Conquista*. Love conquers all. Here however we find a lover who loves the beloved beyond victory or defeat, through companionship on waves of anguish. This is an *epimethian* lover,

5 → Pablo Neruda, *Veinte Poemas de Amor y Una Canción Desesperada y Cien Sonetos de Amor* (Barcelona: Vintage Español, 2010), 7, translation is my own.

recalling Ivan Illich's final chapter of *Deschooling Society*, where he recalls matriarchal Greece (before the Homeric epic).⁶ In this (Latin American?) version of the myth, Epimethius, against the advice of his brother, Prometheus, marries Pandora, unleashing suffering but also giving birth to hope.

This is the love that cannot be given or taken; it is weaker (and therefore beyond) the logic of exchange, transaction, or even revelation; it cannot be a gift to the beloved before it shows itself as an offering. To *offer*, then, begins with companionship, which does not abandon the beloved in the face of suffering, danger, or the tempest of an offering that never gives. Rather than a triumphant, immune love, that gives rise to the Promethean ethos of colonialism and modernity, tragic love is fragile and prone to sickness, at times defenseless. (This is at least kin to the religious "porous self" that Charles Taylor distinguishes from the "buffered self" in *A Secular Age*.⁷)

There may exist a fragile solidarity in existential sensibility between the student who cannot study, the teacher who cannot teach, the professor who can no longer profess and the postmodern and postcolonial geopolitical and cultural state of Latin America. Whereas "education" is presented by altruists, philanthropists, and bureaucrats as a nostalgic redemption, a force that conquers all through the love of the gift that ignores its ontogenetic offering, the truth of nostalgia for nostalgia and tragic love recovers what has been lost in pedagogy through the mystagogy of revolution. Part of that mystery is itself revolutionary (as opposed to being purely reactionary): the wounds of Christ remain after resurrection and glory. Grace bleeds and laments dance.

EDUCATION OF FLESH AND BONE, *OFFERING*

The *Popul Vuh*, a Mayan creation myth, traces the human person to primordial corn. On Ash Wednesdays, Roman Catholics receive a dab of ashes on their foreheads, accompanied by a

6 → Ivan Illich, *Deschooling Society* (London and New York: Marion Boyars, 2000).

7 → Charles Taylor, *A Secular Age* (Cambridge, MA: The Belnap Press of Harvard University Press, 2007).

reminder of death, an elemental sign that traces them to the dirt of the Genesis creation stories, made real in the grave. There is, of course, an obvious physiological relationship between the human person and the earth, visible after death. Our bodies decompose. Flesh and bone burn.

While the elemental relationship between peoples and their planet is obvious in physiological, gastronomic, and ecological ways—although not obvious enough, seeing how viciously blind we are to it as we pollute and consume it into oblivion—it seems to be less apparent today in terms of our origins.

In the extreme, everything has failed. The problem with ancient mythopoesis—i.e., religious myths and stories—is that they are too culturally selective and ultimately untrue when taken literally and unimaginatively. The problem with modern scientific and logical claims is that they are often even narrower, taking things literally and unimaginatively. The problem with ideology is that it is parasitic, derivative of the previous two, living in the absence of either. We are in a devastating predicament, caught between sentimentalists, rigorists, and nihilists. There is either too little to hold on to, too much, or nothing at all.

The language of crisis has lost its urgency and this may be where the question “What is Latin American philosophy of education?” reemerges in a question asked by a small group of students looking for a home, seeking a place that, in its aspirations and dreams, is more than a racially sensitive support group. Surely, this is not a politically therapeutic query. All the same, I am a Latino—a *Tejano*—with a limited understanding of Latin America, clinging to a Spanish language and some childhood years of borderland living, as I write and publish in English, under an Anglicized name, while expatriating to Canada. There is no doubt that I came to this question for mixed and conflicted reasons.

Philosophy as a consolation, that Boethian preparation for death, has perhaps reached me, too, at a personal and confessional level, even as the facile tendency to Latinize the question strikes me as being more Roman than Latin American. And even as these more intimate realities pierce and tear at the assumptions of the earlier distinctions, the question of what Latin American philosophy

of education is rests on the hope that a continental philosophy of the Americas, rooted in a broad and original content and form, might reclaim an education, both ancient and new, that exists as the offering of the incarnate body, the physical, the mystical, the community of believers, the flesh and bones and wounds and signs and silences that we find in the iconic presence of art when it is allowed to show itself.

Everything that shows itself, offers.

POSTLUDE

*Antigua América, novia sumergida,
también tus dedos,
al salir de la selva hacia el alto vacío de los dioses,
bajo los estandartes nupciales de la luz y el decoro,
mezclándose al trueno de los tambores y las lanzas,
también, también tus dedos,
los que la rosa abstracta y la línea del frío, los
que el pecho sangriento del nuevo cereal trasladaron
hasta la tela de material radiante, hasta las duras cavidades,
también, también, América enterrada, guardaste en lo mas bajo,
en el amargo intestino, como un águila, el hambre?*

- Pablo Neruda, "Alturas de Macchu Picchu."⁸ ■

8 → Neruda, *Heights of Macchu Picchu*, 58.

* My gratitude to the students of the Latin American Philosophy and Education Society, at Teachers College, Columbia University, who initiated this space and conversation, and honored me with an invitation to join them in November and here, now, in print. Special thanks to Jazon Wozniak and Ana Cecilia Galindo Diego, and to the anonymous reviewers of the journal, whose hospitality and feedback was generous and salutary. This essay also benefitted greatly from questions and criticisms posed by the department of Educational Studies at the University of British Columbia at a talk I gave in February 2014, in particular from Claudia Ruitenber and Autumn Knowlton. Thanks, too, to my colleagues and interlocutors on this new and exciting venture, Eduardo Mendieta, Maximiliano Valerio Lopez, Linda Alcoff, and, of course, my very dear friend and colleague, Eduardo Duarte. To one and all: gracias mil.

EDUCATING WITH A [DE]COLONIAL CONSCIOUSNESS

Linda Martín Alcoff
City University of New York

ORIGINALLY PRESENTED
November 2nd, 2013 at 2:30 p.m.

ORIGINAL TITLE
Educating with a Colonial Consciousness: Latin American
Philosophy and its Implications for Education

Growing up in Florida, I remember only one teaching unit concerned with Latin America in 12 years of attending southern public schools. In third grade, we composed a large map of the continent of South America with our ubiquitous and plentiful construction paper on the classroom bulletin board. National borders went unmarked, and hence identifying their names was unnecessary: this was simply a map of “South America.” But what did get marked on this helpful map were the areas of the continent rich in copper, those abundant in tin, and the places one could find lead, zinc, coffee, and, of course, silver. At the age of eight, I was taught the export commodities of South America, and required to memorize them. There was no discussion of the political culture, literary history, religious and artistic traditions, or anything else. Instead, we were treated to an imperialist perspective whose only concern was resource extraction.

Philosophies of education are always informed, overtly or covertly, by such class-based and nationalist projects. Curricula are subject to critical interrogation by competing interests concerning how well they advance these varying, sometimes conflicting, projects. The worst scenario is when the political project putting demands on education remains covert, its perspective cloaked by claims of universalism or neuroscience or political neutrality. Hegemonic projects often attempt to function in this way: as a covert operation.

In this brief essay I want to suggest that Latin American philosophy might provide an antidote to such hegemonic lesson plans as I experienced in Florida. The ever-present linkages of knowledge and power, as well as political philosophy and colonial location, are thematized in this tradition resulting in more overt and reflexive debates over the best education policy given a colonial, and racist, context.

The philosophical work that has been done in Latin America encompasses an expansive heterogeneity in both content and orientation, and yet there can be discerned a running thread of colonial self-consciousness. Against persistent Eurocentric and Anglo dismissals, still ongoing today, Latin American philosophers have had to justify their right, and their ability, to contribute to the normative debates over the good, the right, and the true. This required defense, and concomitant defensiveness, has had the beneficial result of making visible the context in which knowing occurs, and of disabling the usual pretensions, still found in European influenced philosophical traditions, of being able to make transcendent abstractions removed from all concrete realities. Hence, a general approach to knowledge has emerged that renders it self-conscious and reflective about its context and social location. Thus, I will argue that, compared to European and Anglo philosophies, Latin American philosophy has an advanced set of explorations on the topic of contextualization. From here we can consider the implications of this contextualized approach to education at every level.

Such a contextual approach swims upstream of current trends in the global North, even among the left. It is not only imperialist lesson plans and philosophical perspectives that go unmarked, or unlocated, but liberatory ones as well. Today in the midst of worldwide economic catastrophe, some are looking to the discourses of a past era, to the theories and events of positive transformation from the 1960's, among other periods of historical ferment, when ordinary people were able to change the terms of power enlivened by philosophies that declared injustice to be transitory and impermanent, based only in delusions and paper tigers. In these old dreams and old languages, and specifically in the call to reinvigorate class consciousness and put aside our differences, many today find hope. But the old languages often carried a covert Eurocentrism.

The liberatory theories that enlivened the transformative hopes of much of the world developed from the theoretical and practical realities of basically five countries, all from the global North. These theories were born of that local experience, of those movements and their specific challenges. Social conflict was not given a racial or ethnic cast, nor was the international division of labor a central

analytic. Capitalism was not explained as a development out of colonialism, but only as a replacement of European feudalism. As a result, liberatory social theories, including the truly rich resources of the Marxist tradition, developed no theory of race, no conceptualization of xenophobia, no critique of Eurocentrism, no concept of indigeneity, no understanding of the link between colonialism and culture, and no analysis of the ways in which geographical hierarchies affects the making of theory itself.

Most importantly, there was no recognition that theories of justice, of progress, of liberation or of oppression emerge within specific contexts, and that in fact these contexts play a constitutive role in the formulation of theoretical tasks and projects, setting the agenda but also affecting how reasons and arguments were judged in regard to their plausibility, adequacy, even intelligibility. Hence, the theories that emerged in these contexts faced a foreshortened arena of debate.

Unable to ignore or dismiss the thought developing in other continents, and other contexts, the tradition of Latin American philosophy has necessarily had to engage with a larger frame of debate. As a result it has developed in a different way, with a different set of theoretical tasks and projects. Some of these have important implications for the philosophy of education.

Consider first the infamous arguments of Juan Ginés de Sepúlveda to defend the rights of the Spanish Crown to do as they wished in the New World. The debates between Sepúlveda and Bartolomé de Las Casas in Valladolid, though staged between two Spaniards, brought the experiences of colonialism in the New World into a very public discursive arena as grounds for ethical and religious argumentation. Most importantly, Sepúlveda developed his defense of Spain's unilateral rights on the basis of the specific cultural and social identities of the Indians. "I assert that barbarian refers to those who do not live in accordance with natural reason and who have publicly endorsed bad customs, because...they have been brought up as brutes....It is demonstrated by those who have returned from the new world that those men have little mental capacity and fearful customs..."¹ NEXT PAGE Thus, although the Valladolid debate concerned competing definitions of the concept of "barbar-

ian”, it also turned on the specific attributes of specific groups, in particular, the Indians and the Spanish. Bartolomé de Las Casas, in his rejoinder to Sepúlveda, introduced a nascently universalist characterization of human rights, but did so through relativizing the category of barbarian to local conventions.² He allowed that the Indians might look brutish to the Spanish, as Sepúlveda claimed, but this was only because the conventions within which their practices were embedded were strange and unknown to the Spaniards. The context of judgment was here brought into relief.

Sepúlveda’s claims won the day. Though the judges hedged on a definitive ruling, the policies Sepúlveda defended were enacted with little restraint. Ostensibly, this debate turned on general definitions— of barbarism and rights and the doctrine of the Christian mission. But the judgment was made in the concrete case based on particular human groups in particular places, rather than generic, undifferentiated tokens of humanity. The capacity of the Indians for religious and political self-determination depended on their capacities as human beings, in so far as the Spaniards could discern the latter. Importantly, Las Casas raised the epistemic context in which the latter judgment was made.

This, then, presaged the debate over autonomy and the right of self-determination throughout European modernity. Echoing Sepúlveda, the great liberal thinker John Stuart Mill opposed the autonomy of the Indians of the Asian Sub-Continent—the other Indians—on the grounds that, as a people, they were not yet collectively advanced enough to self-govern. The countries and peoples of Latin America, even the criollos and mestizos, continued to face similar judgment from Europeans even after independence movements swept most of the continent of their Spanish overlords by the early 1800’s. All of the great thinkers, from Simón Bolívar himself to José Martí, José Enrique Rodo, José Carlos Mariátegui, Domingo

1 → Juan Ginés de Sepúlveda, “Prologue to the Members of the Congregation,” in *Latin American Philosophy: An Introduction with Readings*, ed. Susanna Nuccetelli and Gary Seay (Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Pearson Prentice Hall, 2004), 40.

2 → Bartolomé de Las Casas, *In Defense of the Indians*. Translated and edited by Stafford Poole, C.M. (Dekalb, IL: Northern Illinois Press, 1999).

Faustino Sarmiento, José Vasconcelos, and Che Guevara, had to respond to claims of the sort Sepúlveda and Mill made against the political aspiration for self-determination. In the writings of each of these thinkers one can see how they engaged with the question of Latin American cultural, racial and ethnic identities and histories.

Through the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, much of the discussions turned on the various methods of advancing, or repairing, the cultural context so that it might 'deserve' self-determination. Conservatives like Rodo argued that more immigration from Europe would be vital to advance the society by augmenting the racial mix, while others, such as Vasconcelos, held that the mix itself rendered Latin America more vital than old Europe. Martí no doubt developed the most radical position: eschewing the need for racial or ethnic improvement of any kind, and rejecting any form of race-based superiority, he instead argued for a political culture that would embrace, include, and come to an understanding of its own peoples, in all their variety and diverse histories.

By contrast, political philosophers in the global north did not need to approach questions of their own autonomy or human rights through explaining and defending their cultural, ethnic, and racial identity. They assumed no need to justify their particularity, improve it, educate it, or validate its position vis-à-vis other great nations of the world. They invented categories such as "class" and "nation" and "public/private distinctions" intended to apply globally. They elaborated a philosophy of universalism with an implicit particularist location, applying its ethical directives quite narrowly, without noting the contradiction.

The philosophy that was developed in the colonized world during the emergence of European modernity did not have the luxury of such universalist pretensions or obliviousness. This provides an avenue into understanding the common threads marking off the tradition of Latin American philosophy. It is true that the category is too impossibly diverse to name any kind of a coherent school: it is too huge, too at odds with itself. And yet the requirement of justifying the right to autonomy in terms of a specific attentiveness to their own particularity led to a general exploration of the relationship between thought and identity, cultural location and philoso-

phy. Because Latin Americans were epistemically dismissed out of hand on the basis of their location, their racial mix, their ethnic, racial and cultural hybridity, their 'pre-modern' culture and religious practices, and so on, Latin American thinkers who wanted to ask philosophical questions, or pose normative arguments were forced to explain and defend their right—indeed, their ability—to do so. The very doing of philosophy required a contextual justification against context-based dismissals; hence, Latin American thinkers were forced to develop a contextual consciousness.

Latin American philosophy's hermeneutic horizon still includes to this day a powerful context of disbelief that had to be overcome. There was no question of not addressing this foreign context of disbelief because (a) it was coming from the powerful metropolitan centers of the modern/colonial world, (b) these were the very intellectual communities that political thinkers in Latin America considered important, if not crucial, interlocutors, and (c) many of the Latin American thinkers were of course a part of the European context themselves, in lineage and education.

Over the last two centuries, this intellectual engagement with Eurocentric hegemony (or what many have come to call "coloniality") thus sparked a rich tradition of work on cultural identity and its relation to normative political theory. Sepúlveda's arguments were themselves normative ones: his descriptions are put forward as a way to justify invasion, conquest, enslavement, and death. Because the Indians were a people beyond reason, with whom one could neither negotiate nor share power, and incapable of self-governance, unilateral action by Spain was justified. This is a logic that remains as powerful as it ever was, applied to many peoples, religions, and nations across the globe. Political rights and treatment thus turns on claims made about specific peoples and cultures. Latin American thought, then, had to engage with the conditions of its own context. Writers could not speak in universal, decontextualized terms, but were forced to speak as Latin Americans, self-consciously *from* Latin America.

Broadly, two general proposals were developed in answer to the question of Latin America's particular genealogy. On the one hand, Juan Bautista Alberdi, Domingo Sarmiento, José Enrique

Rodo (all Argentines), emphasized in various ways the dominance of the European lineage of Latin American culture, and proposed highlighting or expanding this dominance as a means to solve Latin America's inferior status. The theorist and diplomat Juan Bautista Alberdi, for example, forthrightly declares: "The Americas have been discovered, conquered, and populated by the civilized race of Europe...what we call independent America is nothing more than Europe established in America...Everything in the civilization of our land is European."³ Alberdi went on to propose the startling idea that Latin America relinquish autonomy, and spontaneously "offer to civilization (that is Europe) our land." To be clear, such ideas as these are the ideas of criollos, or a class willing to play a comprador role within the global colonial division of labor. In this way this group hoped to ensure their high social status and critical administrative position within neo-colonial conditions, not turning over their nations to foreigners so much as inviting the 'superior' Europeans to lead the way toward progress. Rodo's proposal to promote more immigration from Europe was similarly intended to strengthen this cultural and ethnic strain in Latin American elites, and solidify their comparative ethnic position on the continent.

What I want to call attention to here is that this first proposal for progress was not made on the basis of transcending the particular context of Latin America, or via a claim that they too could partake in the universal rights of Man, but via a claim of location and specific connection—ethnic and historical and genealogical—to a different particular location, and the source of modern civilization: Europe. Alberdi, Sarmiento and Rodo made their arguments in light of identity claims with a consciousness of space and time, not in terms of the Platonic form of justice or of the just society, but grounded in the specific conditions of a continent with a specific mix of peoples at a specific historical moment. The way forward was not to convince the peoples of Latin America to follow a universal ideal of just social development, but to alter the mix of peoples and hence the available skills and dispositions.

3 → In Sussana Nuccetelli and Gary Seay, eds., *Latin American Philosophy: An Introduction with Readings*, 132-133.

The major competing trend to these capitulationist views were developed by Simon Bolivar, the Cuban Jose Martí, and the Peruvians José Carlos Mariátegui and Victor Raúl Haya de la Torre, among others. Bolivar's normative political orientation was localist, rather than universal, and this idea is echoed most forcefully in Martí: "To govern well one must see things as they are. The able governor in America is not the one who knows how to govern the Germans or the French, he must know the elements that compose his own country...the government must originate in the country"⁴. This is just to say that there is no single universally valid polity for all peoples, and hence we must take into account the particular characteristics of a people, their needs, and their possibilities. Martí called out "those born in America who are ashamed of the mother who reared them, because she wears an indian apron"⁵. Alberdi's capitulationism may be the self-interested strategy of the creole class, but it may also reflect the general inferiority complex diagnosed by Mexican philosophers Octavio Paz and Samuel Ramos.

To lose our shame, Martí says, "the European university must bow to the American university. The history of America from the Incas to the present, must be taught in clear detail and to the letter, even if the archons of Greece are overlooked. Our Greece must take priority over the Greece that is not ours, we need it more....Let the world be grafted onto our republics, but the trunk must be our own."⁶ As this last and very famous statement makes clear, Martí's is not a narrow nationalism, nor a racial separatism. The world may be part of the curriculum, as long as we make sure our students know their own people, place, and time. In other works Martí made clear his rejection of the idea of biological race, but he also called on all of the Americas to take note of the fact that the actual people living in Latin America include not only Europeans but Africans and native peoples. Only when we acknowledge this will our thought begin to be "American."⁷

4 → José Martí, *José Martí Reader: Writings on the Americas*, Deborah Shnookal Mirta Muniz ed. (New York: Ocean Press), 113.

5 → *Ibid.*, 112.

6 → *Ibid.*, 114.

7 → *Ibid.*, 117.

One can note a third proposal in North America, given that it too experienced, in its intellectual and cultural arena if not its economic one, the sense of an inferiority to Europe. In numerous works from Hector St. John de Crèvecoeur to John Dewey and Arthur Schlesinger, one can find an elaboration of the idea that in North America a new people are being created. De Crèvecoeur was a farmer writing in the 1700s who called upon Europeans coming to the new world to shed their old world identities. He hoped to inspire them to see the new possibilities that immigration could bring, by which they might cast a new shadow, but this would require being able to come together under conditions of equality without the old class lineages. Becoming American required leaving the old world and its old ideas of divine rights and aristocracies behind. Whether Africans and native groups also needed to shed their 'old world ideas' was not discussed. We should note, however, that Crèvecoeur's proposal has often been interpreted more as a project of elimination than of understanding. In other words, the idea is that immigrants should shed their history and culture, a proposal that is not compatible with Martí's idea that we should come to understand the full diversity of peoples here. In the latter part of the twentieth century, liberals such as Arthur Schlesinger echoed this call for elimination in order to repudiate identity politics as a species of old world ideas rearing up once again, replete with what he called their 'tribalisms' and particularist politics. Notice also that for Crèvecoeur, unlike for Martí, there is no real hybridity or amalgam in this hemisphere: one transcends one's history rather than refashions it for a new context. And the peoples who are already found here, or those forced to be here through enslavement, are not included or considered in their specificity as affecting the terms of this transition. Although he criticized slavery and praised many of the practices of native peoples, Crèvecoeur's plan for becoming American was modeled on an experience of voluntary European migration. Non-Europeans must follow the same plan as voluntary immigrants from Europe. Schlesinger's inability to acknowledge the need for a pluralist political culture can be traced to this lineage.

In sum, Latin American philosophy exhibits, I would argue, a colonial consciousness, that is, a reflexivity about the relationship

between the intellectual and cultural productions of Latin America and its location within the global landscape of power and capital. Although, as we've seen, this can produce multiple, and conflicting, political tendencies, I agree with Nelson Maldonado-Torres that there is a potential here for a colonial awareness to fuel a critical decolonial project.⁸ We can follow traces of this development from Las Casas and el Inca Garcilaso de la Vega all the way to the present.

Such an awareness of one's position within the coloniality of power, to use Anibal Quijano's phrase, is not by any means unique in the world, and yet there remains a distinctiveness to the Latin American tradition of thought for the following reason. Unlike any other area of the world, colonized or otherwise, new amalgams of peoples were created in this hemisphere through the specific connections and influences among the indigenous, the Africans, the Europeans, as well as multitudes of peoples from Asia who also populated parts of the Caribbean as well as the western coasts of Latin America. In the northern part of the hemisphere, this amalgam was more often segregated, legally sanctioned, subject to violent reprisal, and usually disavowed even when it did occur. In the southern part of the hemisphere, the new amalgams of people became a central feature of nationalist narratives of legitimation. These new identities have been continually foregrounded, exhaustively catalogued, hierarchically organized, and often instrumentalized in Latin American political thought and discourse, but rarely ignored. Their existence demanded new narratives of identity, history, progress, national unity, aesthetic beauty, and the possibility of universality.

There are a number of ways in which this unique legacy informs philosophy of education. Radical theorists, of course, such as Martí, Mariátegui, Freire, and others, famously called for decolonial educational projects that would dismantle Euro- and Hispano-centrism and enhance the agency of the poor. And yet, even beyond the radi-

8 → For related arguments see Nelson Maldonado-Torres, "Post-continental Philosophy", *Worlds and Knowledges Otherwise*, 1.3 (Fall 2006) and "Thinking through the Decolonial Turn: Post-continental interventions in Theory, Philosophy, and Critique", *Transmodernity: Journal of Peripheral Cultural Production of the Luso-Hispanic World* 1, no. 2 (2011).

cal works, I would argue that the contextual consciousness that can be found in the tradition in general gives support for an educational orientation with a decolonial intent.

Such an orientation would necessarily include the following three important ideas: 1) the critique of assimilation, 2) the inculcation of a contextual self-awareness, and 3) the approach of non-ideal theory. I will elaborate on these below.

THE CRITIQUE OF ASSIMILATION

Assimilation is often assumed to be the necessary price one must pay for advancement in educational achievement. The acceptance of and assimilation to the culture of one's 'host,' and subsequent experience of alienation from one's prior context, whether this happens in the process of migration from country to country or rural village to central school, is taken to be the inevitable price one must pay for advance. It is assumed that education will incur alienation from one's home language, culture, and general way of being in the world. One must learn the common culture, the common canon, and the common dialect in order to achieve social competency and economic success. However, what is "common" is never neutral, and may in fact represent the practices, ideas, and interests of a minority.

If we assume that forcible assimilation is a necessary inevitability, then the painful difficulties of alienation from one's home context are interpreted—by those who must endure these as well as by others—as simply the expected price of travel. But notice that, unlike for Crèvecoeur, Martí's call is not a replacement strategy—wherein one's prior identity, in effect, is replaced by one's new identity—but a localism that calls for coming to an understanding of the peoples in one's locale. To 'graft the world onto our republics', as Martí calls for, is not to repudiate the canons of the larger world, but to situate them in relation to a center that understands its own substantive location. No one can really leave their prior selves, histories and cultures entirely and completely behind: this is the conceit of willful and total self-creation typical of Eurocentric liberalism. Given the impossibility of such transcendent models of selfhood, we must reject the attempt to assimilate our students (or ourselves) in a

manner that requires alienating the existing or prior self. This is simply an unproductive denial of history that can only obscure the present, blocking our ability to understand our society and, indeed, ourselves.

THE INCULCATION OF A CONTEXTUAL SELF-AWARENESS

The ideals of a liberal education aiming for a politically effective citizenship requires a way for students to gain awareness of their agency as individuals but also as thinkers operating within a cultural context. The effort to render Euro-and Hispano-centrism more overt mandates that one's own perspective also be made more perspicacious. Knowledge requires self-knowledge. This is not because we are doomed to a solipsistic perspectivalism, with incommensurable world-views incapable of cross-communication, but because the self, i.e. the local and immediate context, is always a part of what is brought into a new domain.

Any given context has a specific history and set of political conditions, and the context of Latin America, as well as of Latinos in the global north, has a specific context as well, involving specific opponents and obstacles to democratization and progress. Just as importantly, one must come to an understanding of the specificity of others sharing one's location, others who co-habit a community but who also co-constitute one's contextual self. The tradition of Bolivar and Martí in particular provide an antidote to exclusivist nationalist narratives that tell the history of only some groups, highlighting only some lineages, while obscuring others. The point of such education is not, as conservatives claim, to bolster egos and feed narcissism, but to achieve a sufficient level of collective and individual self-knowledge required for democracy. Universals are not sufficient; neither is an account of only part of one's context.

Perhaps most importantly, the purpose of inculcating a substantive, contextual self-awareness is to begin the process of noting what it takes to theorize from this place, and with this place. Toward that end, the following point is critical.

THE APPROACH OF NON-IDEAL THEORY

Related to the need for contextual self-awareness is the idea of what some today are calling “non-ideal theory”⁹. The notion that one can do philosophy in a non-ideal rather than an ideal fashion has only recently come to surface in philosophy in the global North. This is the idea that our aims and values should be rooted not in the abstracted, decontextualized concept of an imaginary just society, using a counterfactual analysis that moves from what is not the case to what should be the case, but in an analysis of the actual non-ideal conditions we currently aim to overcome.

Ideal theories are the mainstay of the European tradition, from Plato to Thomas More, Hobbes, Locke, Kant, and Thomas Jefferson. The ideal approach asks us to imagine a republic on a hill, or a utopia fashioned on an island, without material ties or connections to any specific others. There is no history of exploitation to take into account, no reparations required, no prior obligations incurred by ties of war or conquest or the annexations of lands. The normative aims of ideal theory are thus fashioned as aspirations in a vacuum, necessarily vague, perpetually directed toward the present without concern for past or future. Utopia is thus lifted out of any living context.

In contrast, the non-ideal approach begins with thick descriptions of the present to then develop norms based on realistic possibilities and critical priorities given these current realities. The call for the new republics to be rooted in the specificity of their contexts is an approach to normative politics based on the non-ideal, or the real, rather than the imagined ideal. Aims are then defined as ameliorative, relational, and incremental.

Defenders of the ideal approach argue we cannot even identify the non-ideal without, first, having a clear conceptualization of the ideal. Yet, non-ideal conditions experienced in the first person do not necessarily require universally transcendent conceptual norms to identify the difficulties they impose on everyday life. I can shout in pain without recourse to a normative argument justifying the preference for painlessness.

9 → See Charles Mills, “Ideal Theory as Ideology”, *Hypatia* 20, no.3 (2005), 165-184.

Latin American philosophy of education would inculcate a consciousness of the non-ideal real, that is, the everyday lived experience of the context within which we find ourselves. There is no need to justify either our aspirations or our theory from this derided context, but simply to mine it for insight.

The intellectual basis for the demand to decolonize education has been eroded by skeptical philosophies that have called into question the founding terms of decolonization such as humanism, identity, progress, truth, and liberation. This has been produced in part by an arbitrary foreshortening of the discursive interlocutors, staying close within the five countries dominant in the past. The traditions of Latin American philosophy provide a different starting point and thus a different end-point for education. If knowledge requires self-knowledge then it requires social knowledge and contextual awareness. One needs a reflexive check, and an aware assessment of the constitutive conditions in which one's knowledge occurs, before one can be justified in belief. This requires an understanding of the specific and current formations of social identities, the influence of context, the historical legacy of one's location, and not a quick move to transcend or eliminate or escape. Decolonizing education requires first and foremost a thorough and comprehensive critical analysis of colonialism itself, in all its subtle guises. It then requires an affirmation of the ability to think from, and with, and most importantly, *for*. ■

EPILOGUE

WHAT IS LATIN AMERICAN
PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION?
LA FENOMENOLOGÍA DEL
ORIGINARIO¹

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ORIGINALLY PRESENTED
April 29th, 2014

Philosophical ideas sometimes appear to develop continuously one on top of another, but at other times they disappear to reappear again in the same or different form. They always seem to be 'there,' seemingly waiting to be gathered by a certain type of sustained reflection. However, the reflection does not produce them. Instead, our reflection comes across them being worked on endlessly by social and cultural forces that, like the ocean surf polishing rock and shell, deposit them ashore and draw them back into the depths of reality."²

In the summer of 2001 I wrote a review of Mario Saenz's *The Identity of Liberation in Latin American Thought: Latin American Historicism and the Phenomenology of Leopoldo Zea*, and the excerpt from the book that serves as the epigram for this epilogue also served as the epigram for my review.³ When I wrote my review thirteen years ago my principle point of departure for the review was the 2000 census data that revealed Latinos to be the fastest growing group in the United States. The 2010 census data confirmed that

- 1 → I would like to thank the editors of *Lápiz* (Ana Cecilia Gallindo Diego, Jason Wozniak, and David Backer) for their invitation to write this epilogue.
- 2 → Mario Saenz, *The Identity of Liberation in Latin American Thought: Latin American Historicism and the Phenomenology of Leopoldo Zea*, 2. (Emphasis mine.)
- 3 → Eduardo Duarte, "Review Essay of Mario Sáenz's, *The Identity of Liberation in Latin American Thought: Latin American Historicism and the Phenomenology of Leopoldo Zea*," *Encounter*. Winter, 2001, pp. 51-55.

trend, and also showed that ‘Hispanics’ were the fastest growing ‘home grown’ demographic, i.e., folks with Latin American roots were making the most babies in the U.S. The 2014 re-election of Barack Obama left no doubt that Latinos in the U.S. were not simply the fastest growing demographic, but, more importantly, had become a significant political force, a voting bloc with the power to decide a national election. Back in 2000 I conjectured that beyond the obvious contribution to academic philosophy, Saenz’s book had a much wider context: the ongoing question concerning the identity of Latin America, now complicated by what I described as “the inevitable latinozation of el norte.” I added: “It is not an imaginative leap to suggest that we are witnessing the northward migration of Latin America as a geocultural phenomenon. And like all migratory phenomenon, the extension of Latin America brings along it most fundamental elements, specifically, its perennial struggle to understand itself. In essence, this northward migration is the next big evolutionary moment in Latin America’s attempt to define itself.”⁴

A decade and a half later, as I write this epilogue that feels very much like a sequel to the 2001 piece, the epigram from Saenz’s book has a much more existential import for me; as it indicates the *reappearance* of the question, What is Latin American Philosophy of Education? Powerfully, in a way that has thrown me into an entirely familiar yet under-experienced situation, this question reappears as a sign that points (again) to a path for another possibility for thinking philosophy and education. This question is first and foremost an existential challenge for *ladinos*, especially those of us who have been ‘trained’ by and practice philosophy within ‘Western’ and Anglophone institutions of higher education. As an urgent, pressing existential question that borders on a crisis (in the sense of being a turning point), the question is a sign indicating the possibility of an alternative ontology for thinking, and, thereby reveals another genesis for the educational force that is generated by philosophy.⁵

4 → Saenz, *Identity of liberation in Latin American Thought*, 52.

5 → I have written on philosophy’s pedagogical force in my paper, Eduardo

—CONTINUES

That is, the question points us back to ourselves, first, and then, through ourselves (people of flesh and bones) back to an 'other' ontological ground that has always been and remains since the moment of the original Taino/Iberian encounter. This is the ground where we locate the provenance of thinking now unfolding within the precinct of Latin American Philosophy of Education (LAPE).

~

“me lo llamo yo [mestizo] a boca llena y me honro con él” [I gladly call myself mestizo and feel honored by it]
– Inca Garcilaso de la Vaga (b. Cuzco,1539)⁶

I have appropriated the sign 'ladino' to signify my ontic (existential) situation as a 'mestizo' in almost every sense that term can be used. I am particularly intrigued by ladino because of its genealogy, and also because it is an exotic category within the academic corridors where I move.⁷ In turn, I deploy it because it simultaneously resembles and disrupts the widely circulated term 'latino.' I was inspired to replace 'latino' with 'ladino' when reading

Duarte "Apathetic Reading: Becoming Primed for Originary Thinking," initially written for and presented at the alternative session "Primers, Introductions, and Other Preparations in Teaching Philosophy of Education," *Philosophy of Education Society annual meeting*, Albuquerque, New Mexico, March 15, 2014. Available via academia.edu.

- 6 → Inca Garcilaso cited in Juan Marichal "The New World from Within: The Inca Garcilaso," in Fredi Chiappelli, ed., *First Images of America*. Volume 1. (Berkeley: University of California, 1976), pp. 57-61.
- 7 → I am using 'exotic' in the manner I deployed it in the aforementioned "Apathetic Reading" paper. When discussing what I call the 'domestication' of primary philosophical terms, I delineate the 'exotic' form of such terms as the sign through which the original force of thinking arrives: "'Exotic,' which means out of the ordinary, or strange, comes from the ancient Greek word *exōtikos*, which roughly translates as 'foreign,' and is built upon the root *exō* 'outside.' The feeling of kinship my students experience seeks to render the 'extra-ordinary' language of philosophy 'ordinary,' and thereby to import and place inside their language game words that in fact have no family resemblance to anything circulating in halls of Hagedorn Hall (Hofstra). This move to domesticate happens when they attempt to place the exotic language of philosophy within the apparently secure gates of contemporary schooling, which no one would mistake for a resort, but you get the point I am making."

Laura E. Matthew's *Memories of Conquest: Becoming Mexicano in Colonial Guatemala* Matthews writes: "Over the course of the three hundred years of living in colonial Guatemala the Mexicanos of Ciudad Vieja acquired *overlapping* and often *counterintuitive identities*. They were both indigenous and foreign, Indians and conquistadors. They were *Ladinos* in the early colonial sense of the Spanish term of being Europeanized Indians, but not in the later, racialized definitions of Ladinos as anyone who did not fall under an idealized European-Indian rubric."⁸ The ladino as an ontological site of "overlapping" and "often counter-intuitive identities," and as an 'un-ideal racialized form' is what I'm presuming when I use the term 'ladino.' I'm interested in ladino as a dynamic and unstable signifier that signifies the complex genealogy of the 'mestizo consciousness' (see below reference to Kusch). In this sense, the move from the ontological to the ontic happens via the existential situation of the ladino and can be traced through its genealogy. As for the genealogy, here is a general depiction: "Del latín latīnus ("latino"), ladino es un concepto que puede tener significados muy diferentes.... En América Central, la idea de ladino está vinculada a la población mestiza. El concepto se desarrolló en la época de la colonia para nombrar a quienes hablaban español pero no eran parte de la élite dominante (formada por los europeos y los criollos) ni de las poblaciones indígenas. En Guatemala, los ladinos son reconocidos oficialmente como un grupo étnico que incluye a los mestizos y los descendientes de indígenas que se consideran mestizados desde el aspecto cultural."⁹

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A short paper by Vincente Medina offers a place from which I can make a pivot towards la *fenomenología del originario*. Medina's paper was published, without any intended irony, in October of 1992 in the *American Philosophical Quarterly* with

8 → Laura E. Matthew's *Memories of Conquest: Becoming Mexicano in Colonial Guatemala* (Chapel Hill: UNC, 2012), 6. (Emphasis mine).

9 → 'Ladino' genealogy retrieved on April 9, 2014 from <http://Definicion.De/Ladino/>

the title “The Possibility of an Indigenous Philosophy: A Latin American Perspective.”¹⁰ From the onset the paper implodes under the impossible weight of the sign ‘indigenous,’ which Medina raises as a generic category that intends to name the possibility of a school of academic philosophy emerging from the universities located south of the US/Mexican border. The move to call any such school ‘indigenous’ eclipses the traditions of indigenous thinking (Aztec, Incan, Mayan, Taino, etc.) and thereby repeats and regenerates the ineptitude of Columbus. I read his inscription of the sign ‘indigenous’ as an expression of the phantom quality of his thinking, and the dearth of flesh and bones in his writing. Indeed, the so-called ‘controversy’ over “the possibility of an indigenous ‘Latin American philosophy,’” is a contrived debate by members of Anglophone academia, which is to say an exemplar of the methodologies that most of us have been trained in and currently practice. Another example of phantom thinking is the work of Susan Nuccetelli, who offers us a concise and valuable resource with her *Latin American Thought*, but also remains detached and disembodied from the actual existing history that has moved such ‘thought’ into existence. In both cases, there is no reduction, no phenomenological turn to the source of the question that is ‘indigenous’ to the ‘Americas,’ no return to the original ground. The work is *poco profundo*. What is required, instead, is a form of embedded historicism described by Linda Alcoff.

As Marcelo Dascal reminds us, the question of the identity of Latin American philosophy (LAP) is a perennial question. I want to concur, and suggest further that it is the *sine quo non* of LAPE, the propelling force of this educational philosophy. This is why the take-off point for Eduardo Mendieta’s essay, when he identifies himself as a ‘novice,’ is in fact the recurring existential point of departure for LAPE: the being of a novice in the sense of being both a beginner and a beginning, an initiate and initiator; this is the ontological and existential situation of the *ladino* thinker. In some ways, like

10 → Vicente Medina, “The Possibility of an Indigenous Philosophy: A Latin American Perspective,” *American Philosophical Quarterly*. 29:4, October 1992, pp. 375-380.

the writers of poetry and literature taking up “the problem of Latin American expression,” (Carpentier cited in Dascal), the truth is that “quite a few philosophers take their main obligation to be the development of a philosophy that is original in that it stems from and reflects upon what is distinctive in Latin American reality.”¹¹ For me it is precisely this *deseo* (desire) for originality that forces the issue upon us, and it is the very matter of originality that is itself always under debate, which is to say that at its core our taking up of the question always turns on the articulation of what we mean by *indigena/indigenous*. La fenomenología del originario surge de la pregunta original: ¿Dónde Estamos?

Without exaggeration I want to argue that the originary question of Latin American philosophy is the question arising at the origin of the Latin American reality, at the inceptual encounter on the island of Quisqueya between Tainos and Iberians.¹² To borrow a term from Andean/Incan fundamental ontology, the question arises with the formation of the *uma pacha* (original time and place), an ontological ground thrown up as a new range of thinking when the cultural tectonic plates of previously co-existing ‘old worlds’ crashed into

11 → Marcelo Dascal, “Introduction,” *Cultural Relativism and Philosophy: North and Latin American Perspectives*. Edited by Dascal. (New York: E.J. Brill, 1991), p. 5.

12 → Here I am departing from Mendieta’s assertion that “we need to begin by acknowledging that Latin American philosophy of education is older than 500 years, as it has its roots in the pre-Colonial, pre-conquest time.” While I do not disagree that that fundamental sources of LAPE are located in indigenous philosophies, my claim is that these worldviews were *uprooted* from their ‘pre-Columbian’ ground with the formation of ‘Latin America.’ Consequently LAPE originates [is thrown up from] that ground-breaking collision. I wholeheartedly concur with Mendieta that the work of Miguel León-Portilla is indispensable; especially for my project’s *neologismatica*, which relies on gathering the remnants of indigenous philosophy that remain after the collision.

13 → As I was writing this piece and drawing inspiration from Andean/Incan fundamental ontology, specifically from their phenomenology of *enqa* or *sami* (the animating essence permeating all things) as being disclosed originally in the natural world, specifically in the mountains, I could not resist thinking in geological terms. The conceptual *mezcla* I make between the two allows me to describe the originary ground of *ladino* ontology as a mountain range created by something akin in human history to plate tectonics: a convergent plate boundary formed by cultural tectonic plates crashing into one another. This geological event is also called a collision zone, which is the term I am borrowing.

one another. At the summits formed by this cultural collision zone appears the unresolvable, perennial existential question of the ones thrown into existence from that eruption.¹³ The question of the indigena (indigenous philosophy) is thus the question of the *nativo*, the one who is born at that inceptual encounter, and who remains moving there in the heights of this convergent boundary, but also concealed in its caves (*pacarinas*), and drinking from its highland springs (*puqyos*).¹⁴ What we discover through the reduction I am proposing is a phenomenology of originary thinking arising from the originating *huacaslogical* question: ¿Dónde Estamos? (Where are we?). [*'Huacaslogical'* is a neologism that combines the Incan word *huacas* (sacred place) with the Greek word *logos* (philosophical account, wisdom)]¹⁵

The originary *huacaslogical* question propels the question of education as the epic history of the ongoing formation of the 'indigenous' *native*; a history that has given rise to the particular existential situations that we confront with LAP. We make LAPE in order to understand how we have been formed by this originating location. LAPE is a genealogy of the *ladino* happening by way of the *fenomenología del originario*; one that arises from and is put into motion by a specific originary time and place: *uma pacha*.

What I'd like to suggest is that the question concerning Latin American Philosophy of Education turns on what, for a lack of a better word, we should call 'methodology.' And, for the sake of discussion, let this word include all the possible available avenues for undertaking Mendieta's novitiate research agenda, which is another way of indicating the modality of originary thinking as de

14 → John E. Staller and Brian Stross, *Lightning in the Andes and Mesoamerica*. (Oxford: Oxford U, 2013), 22-23.

15 → 'Huacaslogical' is a neologism I have constructed for this project. The category combines the Incan word *huacas* (sacred place) with the Greek word *logos* (philosophical account, wisdom). I want to acknowledge and thank my colleague Tyson Lewis for a lively discussion that helped me find a way to phrase the cartographical turn I am making. When I offered him an overview of this project, emphasizing how it is making a sharp departure from Heidegger's project, Tyson recognized that the shift is one from Heidegger's and existential question of Being, i.e., Who are we?, to my project's question: Where are we?

novo, or from the new (*novus*). *La fenomenología del originario* approaches the question via a hybrid of existentialism and phenomenology because the LAPE question is ultimately part of the process of disambiguation concerning the so-called 'identity' of the 'Latin American philosopher,' which is itself a historical process embedded in and part of the larger iteration of what Walter Mignolo has called "the idea of Latin America",¹⁶ which is itself a process embedded in and part of the larger iteration of whatever we want to call the cultural history that begins with the Taino/Iberian encounter on Quisqueya in 1492 CE.¹⁷

The LAPE question turns on the matter of method because 'method' is always a translation and expression of the way the LAP question – any philosophical question for that matter – is received. For example, in the case of Medina, the question heard as the possibility of "an indigenous 'Latin American philosophy'...is part of a broader and perennial controversy between *universalism*, on the one hand, and historicism on the other."¹⁸ In this sense there is nothing truly

16 → Walter Mignolo, *The Idea of Latin America*. (Oxford: Blackwell, 2005).

17 → A full articulation of this originary moment is not within the scope of this epilogue, which is more of a prolegomenon for the project I am undertaking. What I can say here is that I am not ignoring or being ignorant regarding the itineraries recorded by Columbus, and that my identification of Quisqueya as the principal point of collision is based on his own reckoning with the island that he named 'Hispaniola.' In turn, while the first 'encounter' occurred on the island of Guanahani (San Salvador) the collision zone of the *uma pacha* that gives rise to the question '¿Dónde Estamos?' is identified on the island that Columbus was convinced was the "fabulous island" of Cipangu, chronicled by Marco Polo, and thought to be 1500 nautical miles east of the coast of China. Here I am following Beatriz Pastor Bodmer's framing of Columbus' first journey, and the emphasis she places on Columbus' decision to move on from one island to another until "on January 4, 1493, after exploring Hispaniola for two weeks, Columbus decides he is right in thinking that the island is Cipangu...He thinks he hears the [Tainos] refer to Cibao, a region in the interior of Hispaniola, and although the names are quite different there is no question in his mind that Cibao is the same as Cipangu and that the Indians simply do not know how to pronounce the name of their own island." (pp. 24-25) Bodmer, *The Armature of Conquest*. Translated by Linda Longstreth Hunt. (Stanford: Stanford University, 1992) The key here is the persistence of Columbus' error, which produces the collision with the Taino 'Cibao' (a name for a specific region in the Dominican Republic that persists to this day). It is at this moment that we locate the beginning of the cartographical narrative of place that puts into motion the existential question of Latin American philosophy of education. That question, the originary question ¿Dónde —CONTINUES

'indigenous' (*indigena*) about the question; the question is not heard as *nativo* (native) to the particular history beginning with the original Taino/Iberian encounter, nor as *nacido* (born) from that encounter. On the contrary, the LAP question is reduced to an 'other' history, the one that has produced the so-called 'perennial P (philosophy) question.' With this 'other' history we are thrown all the way back to Parmenides, and onto the two principal paths he identified: being, becoming.¹⁹ Susan Nuccetelli²⁰ more or less takes the same approach when making the distinction between "philosophy in Latin America versus Latin American philosophy," although she does not reduce the historicist side of the distinction to 'liberationists,' 'free-spirited philosophers,' or 'non-serious philosophers,' in the manner of Medina. Rather, she makes a claim I would embrace: philosophy is made up of a history of a plurality of sometimes incommensurable yet fundamental existential questions, which has given rise to a plurality of sometimes incommensurable ways of responding to these fundamental questions. But what neither Nuccetelli nor Medina recognizes is that the manner in which they are taking up the LAP question is both a translation and an expression of how

Estamos?, is taken up by a philosophy that has a kindred spirit in the situation of Plato's fictive xenos who dares to 'overturn' the logic of father Parmenides by thinking the being of non-being. Indeed, the philosophical 'logic' put to work with LAPE is one that can think the being of the non-being that is the Latin American existential situation, the fiction of our lives as neither 'Taino' (indigenous) nor 'Iberian' (colonist). In sum this philosophical project, which takes up the ongoing formation of the ladino, is written by an inherited cartographical imaginary. nb: I want to acknowledge the further clarification of this point happened during the intense discussion that occurred at my presentation of this paper to LAPES on April 29, 2014 at the Center for the Study of Race and Ethnicity, Columbia University.

18 → Medina, *Possibility of Indigenous Philosophy*, 375.

19 → nb: Medina, following Ernest Sosa, traces this history back to the fuzzy named "Platonic tradition." Let me clarify that in contrast to Medina's Sosasian genealogy that has exclusive roots in the history of so-called 'western philosophy,' my own project originates in the collision of the two 'old worlds,' and the subsequent demand for making neologisms that express that event. Thus, the project of la fenomenología del originario is one of responding to the question ¿Dónde Estamos? by making an original philosophical lexicon that synthesizes the remnants and ruins of the broken hegemonies.

20 → Susan Nuccetelli, *Latin American Thought: Philosophical Problems and Arguments*. (Boulder: Westview, 2002)

they are receiving/hearing the question. Both offer a methodology, or form, of LAP without recognizing their work as making such an offering. Hence the phantom, disembodied quality of their thinking and writing. And in both cases what we get when we read their work is a shallow form of LAP that does not in any way sound or feel distinct from AAP (American Analytic Philosophy), or ACP (American Continental Philosophy), which is to say, does not sound or feel as if it is an expression of the struggle of thinking aka dealing with the residual existential perplexity that marks the disambiguation of cultural reality of the 'Americas' since October, 1492.

If methodology represents the translation or expression of the manner in which the LAP question is heard, then each response to this question must be assessed against the originary disambiguation unfolding within the original collision zone. Each project can be understood as marking and then describing that location, and from there we can understand how the originary history is being worked out through specific philosophical projects and the philosophers undertaking them. For example, the groundbreaking work of Rodolfo Kusch and its articulation of "mestizo consciousness," which, as Walter Mignolo describes, emerges "from a body that experiences *existential Americana*." The *body* (carne y huesos) of Kusch's work emerges from the ground of what he names América Profundo, or along the peaks of what I am calling the cultural collision zone: "the existence of a European history as transplanted since its conquest and colonization into the history of América Profundo, a double history at once. On the one hand, Indian memories throughout the Americas needed to be reinscribed in conflictive dialogue and tension with the presence of people of European descent..."²¹ What is crucial here is the recognition through a register of cartographical cultural assessment that the disambiguation of the original encounter is working itself out through a specific logic: the ongoing repetition of the originating collision. In turn, the production of LAPE is both propelled by and offers an account of the dynamic logic

21 → Walter Mignolo, "Introduction," to Rodolfo Kusch *Indigenous and Popular Thinking in América*. Translated by María Lugones and Joshua M. Price. (Durham: Duke University, 2010), p. xiv.

of an anarchic existential situation arising in the collision zone: it is an *itinerate iteration* (an ongoing redescription of the *ladino* arising in this unsettled and seismic cultural location).

The question of being *nativo*, that is *nacido* (born) *en América Profundo*, is the fundamental existential question that arrives to us, first, in the form of the question concerning Latin American philosophy (LAP), and, next, as the question concerning Latin America philosophy of education (LAPE). This existential question of origin (the ontic or existentielle question) that forces itself upon us arises with the birth or beginning of the history that begins with the initial Taino/Iberian encounter of 1492. In sum, *la ontología del originario* is disclosed by the *fenomenología del originario*, which propels the ongoing formation (education) of the *ladino*.

The thinking emerging from this collision zone is retrieved by what Sam Rocha is calling “folk phenomenology”, the reversal that takes us into our bodies, into the lived reality of our cultural selves, into the bodies of cultural expression, the artifacts, the artwork, the body of work, the world that we have inherited, and that has called and chosen us to repair and renew it. In turn, our work, specifically, our philosophical work is, as Leopoldo Zea announced it, the product of people “of flesh and bones struggling in their own circumstances.”²² And this work, or the force of the embodied history that propels it, produces what Rocha has named *educación de carne y hueso*.

As Walter Mignolo has insisted, such thinking is not “alternative, peripheral, subaltern” to the modern Western philosophical subject, but is of “a consciousness-other...constituted by forms of de-colonial consciousness whose horizon is a pluri-versal horizon conceived as transmodernity.”²³ Put otherwise, when we take up the existential question of being *nativo*, *indígena*, we are taken up and put underway on a particular path of learning that forms us as a consciousness-other; and this always happens by way of a return

22 → Leopoldo Zea cited in J.E. Gracia *Latin American Philosophy in the Twentieth Century* (Amherst: Prometheus Books, 1986) p. 219.

23 → Mignolo, *ibid.*

to already existing and specific expressions of this thinking. In turn, the formation is properly an acculturation, a formation that happens via an encounter with the past as a living present that pushes us forward into an intentional future. Of course, because this past is formed by a ground that must be recognized as a site of contradictory and conflicting histories, as Anzaldua²⁴ mapped it so poignantly, we are prudent to move along it in the manner demonstrated by Maximiliano Valerio López, i.e., with a critical awareness of the crouching discourses of humanism that are lurking in the shadows cast by false idols, monuments of a colonial mythology.

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The persistence of an originary ontic reality arises from the specific location of the ontology of the original (la ontología originario); that is, arises from the gap that is opened in human history at the moment of cultural collision, and represents the fissure that marks the fault line of the broken hegemonies left in ruins on either side of the disjuncture. This moment of collision is the accident of history producing the ontology of the original as the condition of perplexity and uncertainty, an an-anarchic modality. For example, if we consider the famous epigram for Heidegger's *Being and Time*, which he borrows from Plato's *Sophist* (244a), we realize the force of Heidegger's project arises from the ontology of the original. The epigram reads as follows: "For manifestly you have long been aware of what you mean when you use the expression 'being.' We, however, who used to think we understood it, have now become perplexed." By turning to the figure of the xenos (the stranger), Heidegger's project is initiated by that point of departure that gives rise to all existential questions: a deep perplexity and uncertainty about the meaning of Being. But Heidegger's project, by turning to a phantom figure from one of Plato's dialogues, is an example of what Sam Rocha calls a nostalgia for nostalgia: a longing for a homesickness that is not authentically his own. (By likening himself to the xenos

24 → Gloria Anzaldua, *Borderlands/La Frontera* (San Francisco: Aunt Lute Books, 1987).

who is raising the originary question, Heidegger is borrowing or appropriating the existential situation of the *xenos*.) Contrary to Rocha, I would suggest that the condition of the one taking up the question of Latin American philosophy of education is marked by a feeling of nostalgia proper, and not a nostalgia for nostalgia, which is a borrowed or appropriated sentiment of longing. For those of us taking up the LAPE question, we find ourselves experiencing an undocumented sentiment of regret, a remorse, a grief for the loss of a memory of the 'old worlds.' From this nostalgia arises the force of the originary ontology as the stranger's space, the existential place in-between the broken hegemonies.²⁵ For me, the challenge of the question, What is Latin American Philosophy of Education?, is first and foremost a challenge of making a discursive cartography, of mapping this collision zone, and, second, of moving onto and into this ground. To name the ontological ground where *ladinos* have been thrown as a 'collision zone' is to recognize the unpredictability of this ground, its seismic activity, and thus to understand it as a dynamic range of originary thinking. This is the *uma pacha* (original time and place) of *ladino* thinking (*la consciencia mestizo*). We are taken up to this range via *una fenomenologia originario*, which also moves and guides us along its peaks and into its caves.

In sum, the LAPE cartography I am announcing is practiced via the following phenomenological reduction: first, to the presence of an originary existentiell ((ontic human reality) persisting in *América Profundo*: *indígena*, *indigeneity* (adj. *originario del país* o lugar del que se trata: *tribus indígenas*); second, through the disclosure/revelation/realization of this originary existentiell an encounter/effacement with the still more originary existentielle, the (ontological) presencing of the pre-subjective/pre-historical *uma pacha*. The reduction reveals the perpetuidad/perpetuity of the *indígena/indigeneity*, the continuity of the force of an original time and place. And the reduction indicates the dynamic play between

25 → I am borrowing the category of 'broken hegemonies' from my grad school advisor, the late Reiner Schurmann. See Schurmann's *Broken Hegemonies*. (Bloomington: Indiana University, 2003)

the ontological and ontic, the originario and the indígena, as one of temporality, location and intentionality: a priority of time, place and the voluntary perpetuation of cultural distinctiveness.

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The question concerning the identity of 'Latin America' has been disclosed to me Ahora! (at this moment) as the question concerning the identity of Latin American Philosophy of Education. Ahora! Saenz's description of the persistent flow of philosophical ideas as appearing, disappearing, and reappearing again in the same or different form represents a clarion call to take up the question concerning Latin American philosophy of education as a call to forge, in the manner of a struggle (pathos), the tools required for making an existential and phenomenological rooted response to the question itself. Put otherwise, I hear the question as demanding the making of an original philosophy that originates from the moment 'we' find ourselves in, the 'moment' where we are found (both located and recollected), the inceptual moment from which we originate, which is the existential moment of el nativo, el origen del ladino arising from the still more original time and place: the uma pacha of the original encounter, the cultural collision zone. ■

"La escritura tiene miedo de cerrar sus manos.
De acomodarse. De sentirse satisfecha.
De darse por terminada."

→ Carlos Skliar, *No tienen prisa las palabras*, 122.

LÁPIZ N° 1
PROCEEDINGS FROM THE
2013 LAPES SYMPOSIUM
WAS PRINTED IN
MEXICO CITY
IN OCTOBER 2014.
IT IS SET IN SUISSSE INT'L
WITH A PRINT RUN OF
TWO HUNDRED COPIES.

lapes.org