

Decolonizing the mind

9

Anti-Cartesian Meditations and Transmodernity

*From the Perspectives of
Philosophy of Liberation*

By Enrique Dussel

Editors: Alejandro A. Vallega and Ramón Grosfoguel

Anti-Cartesian Meditations and Transmodernity

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Alejandro A. Vallega and Ramón Grosfoguel

Editor's introduction

Anti-cartesian transmodernity

From Philosophy of Liberation Towards Plurivalent World Philosophies

Alejandro A. Vallega and Ramón Grosfoguel

Author of more than 50 works, Argentine-Mexican philosopher of liberation Enrique Dussel (1934 -) is one of the major figures in the development of world philosophies. He is one of the founders and the most recognized member of the group that begun philosophy of liberation in the early seventies in Argentina. He is also one of the major figures in the development of the theology of liberation in Latin America. His development of an ethics that arises from the poor and oppressed, his rereading of Marx, and his contribution to decoloniality in contemporary philosophy are but a few of his major philosophical achievements. Therefore, it is surprising that up to this point few of his works have become available to the English speaking public, and even the translation of his major work *Ethics of Liberation* (1998) only came some fifteen years later.¹ Dussel's work is generally seen in the English speaking world as related particularly to Latin American concerns such as: the social and political revolutions in Latin America in the Seventies, the birth of the theology of liberation, and the role in Latin America of pragmatism and neo-Marxist theory. However, as the present volume reveals, the scope of Dussel's work is much larger as it points to a reconfiguration of the very way one understand the task and history of philosophy, ultimately offering a work necessary and pressing for today.

In these essays, chosen and gathered by the Dussel himself under the title *Anti-Cartesian Meditations*, the Mexican-Argentine philosopher shows that today philosophy is not only possible and necessary but that when one begins to think beyond Western European and North American modernity and post-modernity, philosophy is alive and in touch with the concrete lives of distinct peoples throughout the world. This sense of philosophy as plurivalent is a turn towards liberation, the liberation of philosophical thought from its Western demarcations. This turn requires a radical change, a shift in our consciousness's orientation, a shift in the very way we situate ourselves and our thinking in the world today. This volume engages this transformative thinking by taking concrete steps towards a thought distinct from the Western tradition; and in doing so it inaugurates spaces for new philosophical world dialogues. In order

to introduce these *Anti-Cartesian Meditations*, first we will have to situate this volume with respect to Dussel's general project of a philosophy of liberation, some of his earlier works, and in light of his critical encounters with some of the major figures in Western philosophy. Therefore the introduction is divided in two sections, the first deals with some of the main philosophical encounters with the tradition and contemporary Latin American and Latino philosophers behind the development of Dussel's thought. The second, presents these *Anti-Cartesian Meditations* in their introduction of a plurivalent and decolonial thinking.

I. The Philosophy of Liberation: Some Introductory Remarks

In chapter one of the present volume Dussel offers a kind of genealogy of his ethics of liberation in the form of a conceptual autobiography. We will take some of his remarks as a point of departure. As Dussel indicates, his early philosophical education is already marked by Latin America's economic, political, military, and cultural dependency. As the Argentine-Mexican philosopher explains, for most Latin American thinkers the origins of philosophy were (and for many still are) Greek and Modern (with the Enlightenment and the ideals of the French revolution), and therefore the beginning of philosophy was in both counts Western. Moreover, the horizon of philosophy followed the same path in its being grounded on the Western canonical tradition. This is also the case in terms of philosophy's new developments, which, no matter how critical, for the most part answer to the tradition, operate within its formal requirements, and follow the lineages given by it. In other words, "there existed no possibility whatsoever of a Latin American philosophy."² But already in 1957 through his journey to Europe, Dussel discovers that indeed, he is not European. This only prompts the guiding question of what it means to culturally be Latin American. Dussel begins to find an answer by seeking a place outside of the philosophical tradition within which he had learned to think. He travels to Israel and begins to develop a sense of history and

culture from the Hebrew perspective, or in other words, in contrast to the Hellenistic tradition as understood by the Western European and North American tradition. While in Israel (1959-1961) he works and lives together with Palestinians giving him an important critical experience to deepen his "critical semitic thinking" (understood for Dussel in a broad sense beyond the Jewish tradition). This shift of perspective, always from the Latin American periphery, results in Dussel's radicalization of semitic thought's critical categories (as found in the prophets of the Christian, Islamic and Jewish traditions, such as Egypt/Dessert, Pharaoh/Slaves, Totality/Infinity, etc.

His inquiries into the cultural sense of being Latin America go further in the early Sixties when he comes to know the work of Paul Ricoeur in Paris, since 1961. Through his reading of Ricoeur's works and his studies with the French philosopher at the Sorbonne, Dussel is struck by Ricoeur's sense of a cultural hermeneutics. For Ricoeur culture is understood as the valorative-mythical content of a culture and this occurs through the configuration and development of identities through mythical narratives.³ This insight leads Dussel to develop a hypothesis for the study of Latin American history that situates Latin America by looking at a kind of proto-history.⁴ This proto-history situates Latin America within the process of human development beginning from the *homo* species, through the Neolithic and Paleolithic periods, and the migrations of peoples "from Mesopotamia and Egypt to India and China, and of the early *homo sapiens* through the Pacific."⁵ This reconstruction of Latin America recognizes encounters with the Indo-European, the Euro-Asiatic (among them Greeks and Romans), and the encounter with the Semites (mostly from around Arabic desert).⁶ Ultimately, Dussel's cultural-historical thesis traces the "ethical-mythic-nucleus" that will pass through the Byzantine and Muslim worlds to its arrival to the Iberian Peninsula, this path he calls "the other source of Latin American proto-history."⁷ As is evident, already at this early point in Dussel's work one finds that the horizon of the philosophy of liberation is not Latin America, but the histories, peoples, and myths that have been excluded or only recognized in terms of secondary roles in the development of the Western historical

tradition. Already in the mid-Sixties Dussel calls for a plurivalence that may reorient our sense of history and ultimately humanity. In recognizing Latin America's proto-history Dussel points to the Amerindian non-Western origins of distinct identities that arise in ethico-mythical configurations of human life.

Dussel's view beyond Western history is accompanied by a profound awareness of the problem of political, economic, military, and cultural and colonial dependency on Western hegemonic power suffered by non-western countries around the world. This basic insight behind philosophy of liberation answers to the work on economics and world sociology by the Argentine economist Raul Prebisch and by American sociologist Immanuel Wallerstein.⁸ The latter's world-system-theory recognizes worldwide structures of domination and exploitation that underlie Western capitalism at home. As Wallerstein's theory shows, capitalism does not support itself by virtue of the exploitation of workers and the production of capital in their own national contexts. Rather in the modern world the imperial and capitalist powers sustain a living standard for people within their countries by exploiting the labor of those beyond their national, social, political, and cultural frontiers. Taken in the form of a world-system this means that the world is split between, on the one hand, a centralized system that accumulates capital and, on the other hand, those who work for it but are systematically oppressed, exploited, and excluded, outside the center. This economy of accumulation of wealth in the metropolitan centers and exploitation of labor in the periphery is repeated at the local level in all systems, as is clearly the case for example in those countries founded by colonialism. This awareness of the system of exclusion and exploitation, together with the dependency of those peoples and countries exploited become a founding point for the philosophy of liberation. As Dussel puts it, ultimately against the possibility of developing ways of thinking beyond Western history and its hegemonic power, we encounter the problem of the reduction and erasure of people's lives, cultures, and any possibility of developing philosophical thought under an economy of "domination and exploitation."⁹ Under this economy appear three explicit and necessary

moments for the philosopher of liberation: (1) The realization of one's situation as peripheral, in the sense we have discussed here; (2) the critical destruction of the structures that situate one in such position; and, (3) the opening of a new thinking that articulates the existence of the excluded by new means (an articulation that is always from the periphery). In 1977 Dussel writes in his *Philosophy of Liberation*:

It appears possible to philosophize in the periphery... only if the discourse of the philosophy of the center is not imitated, only if another discourse is discovered. To be different, this discourse must have another point of departure, must think other themes, must come to distinctive conclusions by a different method.¹⁰

As Dussel indicates in chapter one of *Anti-Cartesian Meditations*, he finds a path for the critical destruction or appropriation of the western tradition in Heidegger's hermeneutical and transformative reading of it.¹¹ In his lectures from Mendoza, 1968, Dussel finds the possibility of a recovery of a sense of culture beyond dependency in Heidegger's fundamental analysis of *Dasein's* being in the world.¹² He also sees in the German philosopher's thought a path towards reengaging the mythical cultural narrative in the sense of a historical sense prior to historiography. Finally, he finds in Heidegger's project of an appropriative *de-struction* of the history of Western philosophy elements that will be useful for the destruction of the Western colonialist systems of oppression.¹³ At the same time, Dussel is critical of Heidegger's philosophy since it still remains Eurocentric. This is particularly the case because in ignoring the concrete experience of need that accompanies *Dasein's* distinct being in the world Heidegger's thought remains indifferent to singularity in its distinct configurations, and in doing so affirms the kind of senseless violence perpetuated by the West in its indifferent use of the oppressed and in the colonial development of a dependent periphery. In other words, in not moving from the analysis of *Dasein* to the concrete lives of *Dasein*, Heidegger repeats the Western abstracting gesture towards the human, and ultimately remains deaf to the other, and therefore deaf to the

periphery, the damned. Dussel's criticism follows the development of the idea of "autrui," alterity, in Emmanuel Levinas. This leads us to Levinas's pivotal role in Dussel's development.¹⁴

Dussel's move beyond phenomenology (Heidegger) is documented in a collection of essays published in 1973 that covers his work from 1962 up to that point.¹⁵ The collection is titled: *América Latina: dependencia y liberación*, (*Latin America Dependency and Liberation*). Dussel's critical shift is clear particularly in the section titled: "Nuevo Momento (1971)" (The New Moment (1971)).¹⁶ According to Dussel himself, the change comes at the end of the Sixties. Three principal elements involved in this shift are: First, in 1968 the "Cordobazo" occurs. In this occasion in the capital of the province of Cordoba in the central interior of Argentina a group of students and professors stopped the military take over of the university. Dussel takes this event as a paradigm of the possibilities opened by the student movements of sixty-eight. The second element we have already noted above, Dussel's encounter with "Dependency Theory." And last, and certainly not least, he reads Levinas' *Totality and Infinity*,¹⁷ also participates in a seminar with Levinas in Louvain in 1972.¹⁸

Levinas' thought has a strong impact on Dussel in that what before was a people in search of their cultural identity comes to be recognized in its distinct situation and cultural undergoing as "the other." Dussel follows Levinas in his critique of the history of Western philosophy as the history of a totalizing ontology, a totalization that now appears in its limitations when confronted with the face of the other. Latin American culture is not only an exploited and oppressed culture but **it is a culture** of the oppressed, it is the culture of the other that in spite of its subjugation has a life of its own, a life and history outside the ruling system. Against the totalizing thought of Western ontology appears the other, with its real life, a life that will call into question the center's claim to ethical ends and its sense of justice. As noted above, Dussel's reading of Levinas leads him beyond Heidegger. And yet, Levinas' thought will also prove limited for Dussel. As Dussel sees it, Levinas articulates otherness as an abrupt break with the ontological totality that orients Western thought and that situates all senses of

being within its system of meanings. As Dussel puts it in *Método para una filosofía de la liberación* (*Method for a Philosophy of Liberation*):

“Levinas always speaks of the other as the absolute other. He tends towards equivocity. Besides, he has never thought that the other could be Indio, African, or Asian.... not even Levinas has been able to transcend Europe. We are the ones born outside, we have suffered it. Suddenly poverty becomes wealth!...”¹⁹

The emphasis here is not on local identity but on the actual experience of existing in sheer exteriority, and the creativity that this may mean from beyond and yet toward the radical transformation of the system. Here Dussel radicalizes the concept of “exteriority” to produce a philosophy, ethics, and politics of liberation from the “relative exteriority” of the system; something Levinas never imagined and was unable to produce.²⁰

The unfolding of a sense of alterity that situates the periphery is accompanied by Dussel’s development of a thinking he calls “anadialectic” or “analectic.”²¹ As he explains in his *Philosophy of Liberation*, the term literally sets out a plan before us: “*ana*” means from exteriority, “*dia*” unfolding, and “*logos*” figures the comprehension of a new horizon.²² Thus, the aim of liberation philosophy is to unfold the comprehension of a new horizon from a distinct exteriority. As Dussel sees it, all philosophical thought that has been genuine arises in relation to the center but with a view to an exteriority that places thought always beyond the center: “*The philosophy that has emerged from the periphery has always done so in response to a need to situate itself with regard to a center and a total exteriority [ante el centro y ante la exterioridad total].*”²³ For Dussel the implications of thinking in light and from total exteriority go to the core of what is understood as philosophy. Thinking in light of total exteriority is the way original or authentic thought has always occurred, even in its “Western” beginnings: as a thinking over-against the violence of the center but from a periphery opened in its total exteriority.²⁴ Dussel writes: “*Only those who can interpret the phenomena of the system in*

*the light of exteriority can discover reality with great lucidity, acuity, and profundity.*²⁵ Thus, a situated thought for Latin America and for philosophy of liberation in general would have to set out from its concrete situation and in recognition of its total exteriority or alterity.²⁶ In the conscious undergoing of sense in light of specific exteriority such thought would open to other ways of being beyond those imposed by the tradition. The point here is that the consciousness of exteriority figures the possibility for radical concrete transformation, i.e., not transformation in the sense of a preservation of the already existing forms of power and representation, but in the concrete response to the need for the development of political institutions and ethical principles that will respond to the need of the lives of the excluded and oppressed. A fundamental corollary is that, when considered in terms of this transformative tension in which thought arises, the ethical is clearly seen as the event of the other's interruption (the periphery) of the system at the center. In other words, it is the other's concrete demand on the operative system of power that gives occasion for an ethical humanity.

This transformative force, no longer merely excluded, occurs in the recognition of the force of the concrete life of the excluded. Here one finds a freedom that brings with it a world that is not only a presence of the other to the system but a liberated moment out of exteriority, in exteriority, and for exteriority. This is not just the moment when the other appears to challenge the totality, but with this appearing an ontological displacement has occurred: The appearing of the other goes beyond appearing to mark a movement- a moment when exterior peripheral life rises forth in its creativity.²⁷ This emphasis on the creative force of life in total exteriority serves as the opening for another series of encounters that frame the development and project of philosophy of liberation as understood and unfolded by Dussel. The force of life drives Dussel's rereading of Marx, as well as his debates with K-O. Apel, Jurgen Habermas, and Gianni Vattimo.

To speak of analectic thought, of exteriority and periphery, is not to abandon reason. On the contrary: There is a logic to domination as well as to liberation, and Dussel finds the logic of liberation beyond

Hegel's dialectic, and Western onto-theology, and phenomenology, and beyond both contemporary propositions towards understanding exteriority through either discourse and interpretation, or by going beyond rationality through various forms of deconstruction of the discursive consciousness. We find this sense of the logic of exteriority in Dussel's rereading of Marx beyond eurocentrism.²⁸ A brief synthesis of Dussel's reading of Marx in the first volume of his *Política de la liberación. Historia mundial y crítica* (*Politics of Liberation. World History and Critique*) (2007) may give an idea of the central point.²⁹

As Dussel sees it, for Hegel, or for the Eurocentric or Hegelian reading of Marx, capital has its value out of a dialectic totality and towards the establishing of a totality, ultimately controlled by the product or surplus value. The moving principle of capital is the work of the worker taken into the thin air of surplus value, through the alienation of labor. But in his reading of Marx Dussel shows that the value of capital arises from a sheer negativity that does not get produced by the dialectic movement. We are speaking of a positive occurrence that is not the work of the worker but the being of the worker before being interpreted as negativity or a matter of production-labor in and for the system. In other words the origin of value is not work or capital but the ungrasped nothing before and after life has become value-work. Dussel writes: "Only out of the positive sense of living work (which includes the corporeality and dignity of the living person) may we now understand the sense of the first negation, as condition for the possibility of capital."³⁰ In other words, before the capitalist system and totality of being there is the concrete living corporality, life. And it is from such distinct life that a critique of all systems may set out, i.e., if this life is heard and articulated. To say it in terms of the metaphors of Marx, capital requires a sacrifice, and the living corporality is sacrificed to the fetish, the false god that is the exchange value of capital.³¹

This attentiveness to life is the turn to the other in his/her distinct situation, the situation in exteriority of the oppressed, excluded, and exploited, the poor that concretely do not have to eat, the bereft of all means who can only await their imminent death. This emphasis on the living circumstance of the other as the guiding principle for

philosophy grounds Dussel's major work, *Ethics of Liberation: In the Age of Globalization and Exclusion*, as well as his three volumes of the *Politics of Liberation*.³² The issue of the human life is significantly apparent through Dussel's long dialogue with Jürgen Habermas and Karl-Otto Apel, an engagement that will lead to the writing of the *Ethics of Liberation*.³³ The dialogue begins with the fall of the Berlin wall in 1989, at the moment when Europe finds itself exposed to its otherness and at the same time to a change that will put into question the possible grounds for a universal ethics. In Habermas and Apel, Dussel finds the attempt to find a philosophical discourse that may ground an ethics that recognizes the other and that does so in awareness of the exclusions suffered throughout history to date. However, both German philosophers offer an ethics grounded on a communicating community that grounds all ethical claims. For Dussel the history of the other, the periphery's history is one that has never been part of the communicating community, but rather has been always excluded from it. Thus, to ground ethics on communication prior to any ethical claim would mean shutting down ethics from its very source, namely from the claim made on the communicating community by the excluded. As Dussel sees it, prior to the communicating community appears the living community. This differentiation also leads Dussel to his critical engagement with the hermeneutical claims to an ethical openness out of a linguistic-only context of interpretation, as made in different ways by Paul Ricoeur and Gianni Vattimo.³⁴

An important corollary to this emphasis on the human life is the question of life as the very ground of any ethics with a claim to goodness.³⁵ Still in debate with Habermas and Apel, Dussel questions their attempt to recognize the particular or distinct situation of ethical claims from a universal speech act. For Habermas and Apel two different kinds of claims may be recognized. One is the discourse of justification, which refers to the theoretical conceptual principles that ground an ethical claim. The other level is that of the discourse of application, which refers to specific historical situation. For Dussel, this differentiation remains insufficient, in as much as the particular situation only appears in light of an already operative ethical view. In

short, the differentiation does not overcome the hegemonic position that decides before engaging the reality of the life of the excluded. But however critical of the work of Habermas and Apel Dussel might be, he finds in them a positive and crucial move away from the abandonment of the idea of a universal ethics, a negative move Dussel sees to occur with deconstruction and post-modern movements in philosophy. Dussel's *Ethics of Liberation*, his major work, is guided precisely by this task of finding a universal foundation for any claim to goodness. A claim may be universal if it begins from the suffering of the other, and when that living fact puts the already operative ethical claims to goodness in the standing system into question. Again, it is in our exposure to and with the life of the poor, the oppressed, the exploited, that we become ethical. This is why in his introduction to his *Ethics of Liberation* Dussel mentions along with Apel and Habermas his dialogue with Hinkelammert's ethics of life.³⁶

Before moving to the present volume, a last set of encounters must be underlined, one of the series of encounters that looks ahead towards the pluriversal philosophy for which the present volume argues. This occurs with Dussel's critical engagements with philosophers from Latin America, Latin American philosophers working in the United States, and Latino philosophers in the United States. Although most of the texts from Latin America Dussel engages (many by major Latin American philosophers) have not been translated into English, at least we must mention their names and pertinence to the development of Dussel's thought. First of all, Dussel continues to work along with those who founded the philosophy of liberation at the beginning of the seventies.³⁷ Second, Dussel's work does not only develop along the lines of dependency theory and world-system-theory, but he finds an intensification of these problems in the development of the theory of "coloniality" by the Peruvian philosopher Aníbal Quijano.³⁸ Quijano has shown that in Latin America colonialism does not end with the revolutions of the 19th century. Rather, the structures of power developed during the Latin American colonial period and the epistemic spaces sustained by them remain operative to date. Thus, rather than speaking of colonialism and post-colonialism

in the Americas, we now may give a direct and specific critique to the systems of coloniality in their operative forms today. Dussel has also received significant and direct criticism from the Colombian philosopher Santiago Castro-Gómez, who, using Foucault's thought as "a tool box," puts into question the philosophy of liberation by taking seriously the implications of deconstruction for any universal claim.³⁹ A third figure is Walter Mignolo, whose work on the "colonial difference" develops further the problem of the coloniality of power, while at the same time bridging Dussel's philosophy of liberation and the work of the subaltern studies group. This is a group that also works out of issues raised by poststructuralist thought, particularly in literature, and that, coming out of such an outlook, also questions the limits and possibilities that the social sciences have in terms of attempting to think and give articulation to Latin American life.⁴⁰ With the term "colonial difference," Mignolo insists on redrawing the space of difference *as* difference in order to make explicit the exclusions and oppression of the ongoing coloniality that remains to our times, while also setting free the very space of difference to be rearticulated as that, a plurivocal pluricultural space of encounters and configurations of lives that are no longer silently or explicitly excluded, exploited, and left to die.⁴¹

In the United States one finds a number of crucial exchanges that influence Dussel's work and take it in various directions. In his engagement with Dussel's work, the Puerto Rican sociologist Ramón Grosfoguel has emphasized the problem of coloniality, the limits that such structures of power put on philosophy of liberation, and the need for decoloniality in order to make possible Dussel's project. As Grosfoguel states:

Transmodernity is the Latin American philosopher of liberation Enrique Dussel's utopian project to transcend the Eurocentric version of modernity. As opposed to Habermas's project, where what needs to be done is to fulfill the incomplete and unfinished project of modernity, Dussel's transmodernity is the project to fulfill the 20th century's unfinished

and incomplete project of decolonization. Instead of a single modernity centered in Europe and imposed as a global design to the rest of the world, Dussel argues for a multiplicity of decolonial critical responses to Eurocentered modernity from the subaltern cultures and epistemic location of colonized people around the world.⁴²

In his book *Against War*, Nelson Maldonado-Torres, the Puerto Rican philosopher and cultural theorist, offers a clear analysis of the western world's foundation on war as the form that guides any sense of existence.⁴³ His analysis begins from Dussel's insights into the primacy of war in Western consciousness and goes on to take the issue of an ethics of liberation directly into the question of the globalizing operation of the coloniality of power and the urgent need for a decolonial thought. Maldonado-Torres recognizes the philosophical implications of such struggle and coins the extremely helpful term the "coloniality of being," in order to indicate the dismissal of colonized subjects from the realm of human life that occurs under Western hegemonies and the ongoing structures of coloniality.⁴⁴ Besides having translated and edited a volume in English of the debates between Dussel, Apel, Ricoeur, Rorty, and Taylor, the Colombian-American philosopher Eduardo Mendieta has made clear Dussel's importance in relation to pragmatism and also on the question of the theology of liberation.⁴⁵ Furthermore, in developing his philosophical work Mendieta has also begun to articulate the relationship between Latin American philosophy and Latino-Latina philosophy in the United States. Ofelia Schutte has questioned the philosophy of liberation with respect to issues of feminism, while Linda Alcoff has contributed to a wider debate that includes gender and race.⁴⁶ The Chilean philosopher Alejandro Vallega focuses on an aspect of Dussel's work that remains to be written, namely on the crucial question of aesthetics in the philosophy of liberation. As Vallega sees it, in order to begin to think in exteriority and in light of life, in order to develop political institutions and ethical principles that respond to life, one will have to undergo a transformation in one's sensibilities and dispositions, a

transformation aesthetic rather than only at the level of experience (the fact of life), institutions, principles, or concepts.⁴⁷

If one returns to chapter one of *Anti-Cartesian Meditations* it is clear that Dussel has also developed his thought in light of many other discourses, histories, cultural narratives, and lives throughout the world previously excluded by traditional philosophy. Besides the central influence of Frantz Fanon, one must at least begin by mentioning Arab philosopher, Mahomed Abed Yabri A., the African philosopher Fabien Eboussi'Boulaga, and his participation in so many dialogues through the borders of East-West and North-South divides.⁴⁸ But this leads us to consider briefly the work the reader holds on his/her hand.

II. Anti-Cartesian Meditations: Philosophy as Pluriversal Trans-modern Thought and as the Task of Decoloniality

A. Anti-Cartesian Meditations and Transmodernity

In *Anti-Cartesian Meditations and Transmodernity* Dussel shows how Western modernity, including its critiques (through post-modernity), sustains itself through the exclusion of its very origins and of those peoples, cultures, and lived ideals that from beyond the Western tradition have contributed historically and existentially to its formation.⁴⁹ At the same time this mechanism of exclusion is repeated over the lives and peoples that today offer alternative ways of taking philosophy further beyond its present configurations of existence and its limits. This recovery and turn towards liberation occur as Dussel takes us back to the thought from below and exterior to the Western tradition: it is the excluded, the oppressed, and the silenced- their thought, that offer fertile grounds for the recovery of the fecundity of effective philosophical thought. On the one hand, the term *Transmodernity* indicates the geo-conceptual relocation of the beginnings of modern philosophy. Here philosophical thought is resituated beyond the Western myth that understands all philosophy

as inherently Western i.e., born in Ancient Greece and culminating with modern rationalism and its postmodern critiques. Neither Modern nor Post-modern, Transmodern thought transgresses this myth by showing how Modern philosophy begins with Islamic, Jewish, African, and American philosophies and with the development of coloniality, i.e., with experiences, lineages, and ideas appropriated and/or excluded thereafter by Europe and, after, by North America (as these powers come to see themselves as the origin and center of reason, knowledge, and the only possibility for understanding the senses of humanity.)

Dussel calls the thought behind this shift *Anti-Cartesian*. That this thought is Anti-Cartesian does not mean that it is anti-philosophical, nor that it calls for abandoning reason for irrationality. On the contrary, Dussel's *Anti-Cartesian Meditations* aim at the recovery of rationality in its most concrete and effective sense, for the sake of the reconfiguration of the ideas of humanity, freedom, liberty, and dignity. Dussel's meditations challenge Western modern rationalism and its exclusion and appropriative ways of understanding the world and peoples distinct from it. In contrast to the Western rationalist construction of an hegemonic system sustained by the domination and exploitation of peoples, lives, and "mother earth" (translation of Aymara language "*Pachamama*" which is not equivalent to the Eurocentric concept of "nature"), Dussel recognizes and shows the irrationality of Western hegemonic powers. This occurs as Modern Western thought is traced back to the histories and lives of those excluded and oppressed, those wretched lives that in their bare reality appear as a profound questioning of Western modern thought and as a call for another way of understanding the ethical character of human existence viewed in its larger sense. One must keep in mind here that this questioning does not arise as a call from "the other" (genitive) of the Western philosophical tradition. Rather, it arises from the peoples of the peripheries, from the unexpected, out of distinct exteriorities capable of exposing the limitations of contemporary Western thought and its history and traditions. Indeed, by speaking out of those experiences from below, Dussel recovers a fundamental exteriority in

light of which hegemonic Eurocentric conceptual knowledge comes to be questioned and as a result becomes the occasion for the birth and reconfiguration of our operative philosophical concepts and structures of knowledge. To say it in another way, Dussel's tracing of the dark side of modernity not only opens contemporary philosophy to its histories but to possibilities for thought and for understanding the human that have remained for the most part buried until now.

As we saw in the first part above Dussel's philosophical work ranges from a philosophical reading of theology, ethics of liberation, commentaries of Marx unpublished manuscripts, critical engagements with many Western philosophers to his most recent political philosophy called politics of liberation. His formation in World History, Theology, Philosophy, Marxism, and Political Economy allows him to make connections and links that most Western philosophers are unable to do. Moreover, Dussel is also well read in "non-Western" epistemologies and cosmologies and this allows him to open inter-epistemic conversations and dialogues where most Western philosophers are simply lost. His philosophy of liberation provides a new form of thinking about universalism that he calls transmodernity as a pluriversal project. Transmodernity (beyond modernity and postmodernity) departs from a decolonial recognition of the epistemic diversity of the world. He makes a call to move beyond the mono-logic and monoculture of the West where universalism is simply a form of provincialism towards a multi-epistemic and pluricultural world where pluriversality replaces universality.

His work represents a life commitment to the decolonization of the world in its multiple dimensions: decolonization of knowledge, power, and being. He is the most important living decolonial philosopher of the world today. Indeed, his decolonial philosophy is a response to structure of domination and exploitation such as Imperialism, Capitalism, Patriarchy and Eurocentrism. Dussel's work is influential today not only among critical thinkers and intellectuals in all parts of the world but specifically on decolonial movements in the Third World and in the centers of empires. Indeed, those working in decolonial movements of racial/colonial subjects in Western Europe

and the United States read Dussel's work as a fundamental source of decolonial critique.

B. Themes and Chapters

The seven chapters that compose this volume mark with sharp clarity and directness some of the primary paths, issues, and positions in philosophy of liberation today. Chapter one recognizes the cultural colonialism suffered by Latin America and articulates the path for a decolonization through the recovery, affirmation, and development of the cultural alterity of postcolonial peoples.⁵⁰ As Dussel shows, it is through the interruption of cultural colonialism (and its perpetuation through the mechanisms of coloniality [Quijano]) and the liberation of those bonds that a path towards a multicultural and engaged critical intercultural dialogue may occur. In chapter two Dussel enacts this shift towards the recognition of cultural alterity by giving a critique of Cartesian or Western modernity. Dussel resituates modernity through three anti-discourses: 1. The historical exposition of the Jesuit education that underlies Descartes' thought, and links him directly to the Americas; 2. The discussion of Bartolomé de las Casas' critique of European world-empire; and, lastly (3) with a beautiful exposition of the rational and articulate account of the Inca world that Felipe Guamán Poma de Ayala offers in response to the brutality and destruction brought about by the Conquistadors. Step by step - slowly through the essay, Dussel resituates our point of departure for philosophical thought and broadens our possibilities for understanding modernity and its philosophical configurations.

Chapter three addresses the concrete question of the possibility of a social-political sense arisen from the excluded and oppressed. Dussel situates this possibility not in the discourse of fraternity that sustains already operative structures of power and exclusion, but rather in the arising of another sense of order and law from a sense of solidarity shared by the excluded and oppressed.

The next chapter (four) develops this political issue by recognizing in the "Liberatory event of Paul of Tarsus" a philosophical Messianic

moment of self-affirmation that belongs fundamentally to the excluded and oppressed. Dussel inserts the discourse of liberation directly in contemporary contexts by addressing some of the crucial interpretations of the Messianic in the history of modern Western and post-modern thought, namely, M. Heidegger, Derrida, A. Badiou, S. Žižek, W. Benjamin, J. Taubes, Hans-Georg Agamben, and F. Hinkelammert.

In chapter five Dussel gives a careful analysis of the meaning “populism” distinguishing it from the “populist” movements lead by political interests exterior to the people and their possibility of liberation. Here Dussel engages a central issue for the philosophy of liberation, namely the possibility of referring to the people as the basis for the creation of normative representational political mechanisms. As Dussel explains populism may point in its more efficient sense to the people, i.e., to those agents who out of politico-popular participation are able to give form to new participative institutions, at all levels of political structures. He closes this recognition of the concrete people who stand on the verge of liberation by leaving open the question of the form of leadership such new politico-popular configurations will require.

Chapter six confirms the resituating of the modern project through philosophy of liberation, and its commitment to the concrete political situation of the excluded and oppressed. However, this time Dussel engages the post-modern discourses that have taken form around and towards Latin America. Dussel writes, philosophy of liberation “is itself a post-modern movement” but then concludes, “a post-modern movement *avant la lettre*, a truly transmodern movement that appreciates postmodern criticism but is able to deconstruct it from a global perspective in order to reconstruct it according to the concrete political demands of subaltern groups.”⁵¹ In other words, while bringing the reader back to a more general consideration about the place from which Latin American thought may arise, in this chapter, in light of the concrete issues developed in previous chapters, he now distinguishes philosophy of liberation from postmodern discussions in and about Latin America by pointing to the concrete political

demands of subaltern groups that situate philosophy of liberation.

The closing chapter (seven) calls the reader back to the central and pluriversal task of philosophy of liberation in its transformative and global sense. As Dussel concludes in the final page of the chapter:

For a long time, perhaps for centuries, the many diverse philosophical traditions will each continue to follow their own paths, but nonetheless a global analogical project of a *trans-modern pluriverse* (other than universal, and not post-modern) philosophy appears on the horizon. Now, “other philosophies” are possible, because “another world is possible” –as is proclaimed by the Zapatista Liberation Movement in Chiapas, Mexico.⁵²

As these words indicate, whatever the present introduction intimates, what ever we have said, is but a preface to the work to be done. This work ultimately will require constant analogical encounters, that is, a continuous and vigorous dialogue out of an in light of distinct peoples’ needs, experiences, memories, and lives. It is this space of dialogue and encroachments that awaits us in this work. In terms of Dussel’s language, we are speaking of entering a space in which world philosophies become sites for the articulate and effective occurrence of what he has come to name *the goodness claim* each life makes on reason, the claim of distinct lives to their culture, freedom, and dignity, lives which in being heard also will give philosophical thought direction and actuality.

Prologue

Enrique Dussel

This volume contains works written after Volumes I and II of the *Politics of Liberation*, and given their variety should not be read as a group of themes that develop towards maturity in Volume III.⁵³ The present work is rather a systematic work that subsumes the ethical principles expounded in the *Ethics of Liberation*.⁵⁴ Some of the works included here were delivered in 2011 under the Albert Magnus Professorship at the University of Cologne, Germany; others resulted from participation in various philosophical events and from requests for articles in various journals.⁵⁵ Gathering them in this volume makes possible to get a clear idea of themes developing through these dialogues and disputations in the Latin American, North American, European, African, and Asian scenes. The interlocutors are various but the issues circle about similar questions that slowly deepen. Therefore, these are the fruit of oral confrontations with thinkers, rather than being mere reactions to works already written and already settled. Therefore, these are product of a critical thought without precedent, which arises from the very novelty of many people's (*pueblos*) actual history. Thought arises in concrete reality and opens paths towards the unexpected, towards what is not yet thought- new.

The first work, "Transmodernity and Interculturality," concerns the question of the end of modernity and of the beginning of a New World Age. It is a working hypothesis developed in a seminary dictated in Germany and organized by Raúl Fornet-Betancourt, professor of philosophy in Bremen, in 2004. It offers a critical engagement with postmodernity as modernity's last facet.

The second article, originally titled "The Anti-Discourse of Modernity,"⁵⁶ is a kind of response to Jürgen Habermas, and in general to European and Anglo Saxon philosophy, which only consider the critiques of modernity made by the same European or North American

moderns, ignoring the critiques from the colonial periphery. That colonial periphery constituted by modern Europe as a fundamental moment of its very essence, and which was constituted *before* the philosophical origin of modernity usually situated in the person of René Descartes, whom already counted with a philosophical and geopolitical centrality grounded on the XVI century. Thereby, also taking for granted a critique done in that space *exterior* to Europe, that is to say, in the recent Latin American Continent.

The third contribution, originally titled, “From Fraternity to Solidarity (Beyond Nietzsche, C. Schmitt and J. Derrida),” was read in a commemorative symposium in the occasion of the centenary of Immanuel Levina’s birth, at Jerusalem University in 2006, divided the numerous audience in two parts: those who consider Palestinians as the Levinasian “other,” and those who interpreted the thesis I presented as a critique of a type of Sionism that is not prophetic Judaism. The significance of this piece, however, can illuminate situations in which the other (he or she) is negated wherever may be in our violent planet, torn apart by a fraternity exercised between dominators insensible to responsible solidarity with those who find themselves outside the world.

The fifth article, originally titled, “Critic of the Law and the Legitimacy of the Community of the Victims (Pablo of Tarso as a Critical Political Philosopher),” was a presentation in the School of Philosophy of the Methodist University of Sao Paulo in 2008.⁵⁷ The question raised by Alan Badiou gained much momentum for contemporary political philosophy, although in Latin America it had been developed already before and in another context in political theology in the tradition of liberation.

The sixth work, originally titled “Philosophy of Liberation before Postcolonial, Subaltern, and Postmodern Studies,” was a paper delivered at a congress on Latin American philosophy in Bogotá, Colombia, in 1999. This work shows that what we call today the “epistemological decolonization” of all of the social sciences in Latin America begins to be considered at the end of the 60’ in the XX century; as is also the case beginning from philosophy itself (as did

originally the Philosophy of Liberation since that period, i.e., before “orientalism” (E. Said in 1977), “postmodernnity” (Lyotard in 1979), although at the same time as Guha in 1973 in India).

The seventh work, “A New World Age in the History of Philosophy,” was presented as a plenary session about “The History of Philosophy” in the XXI World Congress of Philosophy in Seul, 2008. The paper was delivered in front of a large audience of colleagues, mostly Asian, it awoke much interest, and atypically, met with a lengthy standing ovation.

I think that this group of collaborations aims to present the theme of the “decolonizing of philosophy,” and of epistemology in general, which can be useful to the North American reader unfamiliar with this contemporary school of critical thought.

Enrique Dussel

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1. *Transmodernity and Interculturality: An Interpretation from the Perspective of Philosophy of Liberation*

1. In search of self-identity: from Eurocentrism to Developmentalist coloniality

I belong to a generation of Latin Americans whose intellectual beginnings are situated in the 1950s, after the end of the Second World War. For us, in the Argentina of that era, there was no doubt that we were a part of “western culture.” For that reason, some of our subsequent categorical judgments are a natural expression of someone who opposes himself.

The philosophy that we studied set out from the Greeks, in whom we saw our most remote lineage. The Amerindian World had no presence in our studies, and none of our professors would have been able to articulate the origin of philosophy with reference to indigenous peoples.⁵⁸ Moreover, the ideal philosopher was one who was familiar with the precise details of classical western philosophers and their contemporary developments. There existed no possibility whatsoever for a specifically Latin American philosophy. It is difficult to evoke in the present the firm hold that the European model of philosophy had on us (since at that moment in Argentina, there was still no reference to the United States). Germany and France had complete hegemony, especially in South America (although this was not the case in Mexico, Central America, or the Hispanic, French, or British Caribbean).

In cultural philosophy, there was reference to Oswald Spenger, Arnold Toynbee, Alfred Weber, A.L. Kroeber, Ortega y Gasset or F. Braudel, and later William McNeill. But this was always in order to comprehend the Greek phenomenon (with celebrated works such as *Paidea* or W. Jaeger's *Aristotle*), the debate about the Middle Ages

(since the revalorization authorized by Etienne Gilson), and the understanding of Western (European) culture as the context in which to comprehend modern and contemporary philosophy. Aristotle, Aquinas, Descartes, Kant, Heidegger, and Scheler were the key figures. This was a substantialist view of culture, without fissures and chronological from East to West, as required by the Hegelian view of universal history.

With my trip to Europe – in my case, crossing the Atlantic by boat in 1957 – we discovered ourselves to be “Latin Americans,” or at least no longer “Europeans,” from the moment that we disembarked in Lisbon or Barcelona. The differences were obvious and could not be concealed. Consequently, the problem of culture – humanistically, philosophically, and existentially – was an obsession for me: “Who are we culturally? What is our historical identity?” This was not a question of the possibility of describing this “identity” objectively; it was something prior. It was the existential anguish of knowing oneself.

In Spain as well as Israel (where I was from 1957-1961, always in search of an answer to the question of what it is to be “Latin American”) my studies steered me toward challenging this mode of questioning. But the theoretical model of culture would inevitably continue to be the same for many years still. The impact of Paul Ricoeur’s classes, which I attended at the Sorbonne, and his oft-cited article “Universal Civilization and National Culture,”⁵⁹ responded to the substantialist model, which was moreover essentially Eurocentric. Although “civilization” still did not have the Spenglerian connotation of a moment of cultural decadence – denoting instead the universal technical structures of human-instrumental progress as a whole (whose principal actor during recent centuries had been the West) – “culture” nonetheless constituted the valorative-mythical content of a nation (or a group of nations). This was the first model that we used during those years in order to situate Latin America.

It was from this “culturalist” perspective that I began my first studies of Latin America, hoping to discover the place of the latter in universal history (à la Toynbee), and discerning new depths inspired

primarily by P. Ricoeur (as previously mentioned), but also by Max Weber, Pitrim Sorokin, K. Jaspers, W. Sobart, etc.

We organized a “Latin American Week” in December of 1964, with Latin American students that were studying in various European countries. It was a foundational experience. Josué de Castro, Germán Arciniegas, François Houtart, and many other intellectuals including P. Ricoeur⁶⁰ articulated their perspectives on the matter. The theme was “achieving awareness” (*prise de conscience*) of the existence of a Latin American culture. Rafael Brown Menéndez and Natalie Botana disagreed with the existence of such a concept.

In the same year, I was in the process of publishing an article in the journal Ortega y Gasset in Madrid,⁶¹ which contested the “historicist reduction” of our Latin American reality. Against the revolutionary, who struggles for the future “beginning” of history; against the liberal who mystifies early nineteenth-century national emancipation from Spain; against the conservatives who, for their part, mythologize the splendor of the colonial era; against the *indigenistas* who negate everything that followed the great Amerindian cultures, I proposed the need to reconstruct - in its integrity and within the framework of world history - the historical identity of Latin America.

These philosophical works corresponded to a period of historico-empirical research (from 1963 onward) that paralleled (through funding that I was awarded in Maguncia over various years) the thesis in Hispano-American history that I defended at the Sorbonne (Paris) in 1967.⁶²

A course in the History of Culture at the Universidad del Nordeste (Resistencia, Chaco, Argentina)⁶³ gave me the opportunity to survey the panoramic of “world history” (in the manner of Hegel or Toynbee), in the context of which I sought to “situate” (the location of) Latin America through a reconstruction (a Heideggerian “de-struction”). The product of that course, *Hypothesis for the Study of Latin American within World History*,⁶⁴ attempted to elaborate a history of cultures that sets out from their respective “ethico-mythical nuclei” (the *noyau éthico-mythique* of P. Ricoeur). In order to engage in an intercultural dialogue, it was necessary to begin by conducting an analysis of the

most remote “contents” of their mythical narratives, of the supposed ontologies and the ethico-political structure underlying each of the cultures in question. There is a tendency to quickly theorize such a dialogue without a concrete understanding of the possible themes of such a dialogue. For that reason, that *Course of 1966*, with an extensive methodological introduction, and with a minimal description of the “great cultures” (taking into account, criticizing, and integrating the visions of Hegel, N. Danilevsky, W. Dilthey, O. Spengler, Alfred Weber, K. Jaspers, A. Toyenbee, Teilhard de Chardin, and many others, and with reference to the most important contemporary world histories) allowed me to “situate” Latin America, as mentioned, within the process of human development since the origins of the *homo* species, through the Paleolithic and Neolithic ages, and up to the time of the West’s invasion of America.⁶⁵ From Mesopotamia and Egypt to India and China and across the Pacific, one finds great Neolithic American cultures (a source of Latin American “proto-history”). The confrontation between sedentary agricultural communities and the Indo-Europeans of the Euro-Asiatic steppes (among them the Greeks and Romans), and between these latter and the Semites (mostly from the Arabian desert), provided me a key to the history of this “ethical-mythic nucleus,” which had passed through the Byzantine and Muslim worlds, arriving at the Romanized Iberian Peninsula (the other source of our “Latin American proto-history”).

In March of 1967, returning to Latin America, when the ship passed through Barcelona, the editor of *Nova Terra* hand-delivered to me my first book: *Hipótesis para una historia de la iglesia en América Latina* (*Hypothesis regarding the history of the church in Latin America*). In this work one could see, at the religious level, the basic contours of a philosophy of culture for our continent. This small work “would make history,” because it offered the first reinterpretation of religious history within the context of a global cultural history. In the historiographic tradition, the question was formulated as follows: “What were the relations between church and state?” Now, on the other hand, it was defined in terms of: “The cultural clash and the position of the church.”⁶⁶ The crisis of emancipation from Spain, enthroned until

1810, was described as “the passage from a *model of Christendom* to that of a *pluralist and secular society*.” In this work we can already see a *new cultural* history of Latin America (not only of the church), which was no longer Eurocentric but still “developmentalist.”

This is why, when I gave the speech “Culture, Latin American Culture, and National Culture” at a conference at the Universidad del Nordeste on May 25th of 1967,⁶⁷ it was like a *Manifesto*, a “generational take of consciousness.” Rereading it, I find sketched out many issues that, in one way or another, would be modified or expanded over the next thirty years or more.

In September of that same year I began giving semester-long courses in an Institute based in Quito (Ecuador), where I was able to posit the full breadth of this new reconstructive vision of the history of Latin American culture in the presence of over 80 participants from almost every Latin American country (including the Caribbean and American Latinos). The impression that I caused in the audience was immense and profound - disquieting for some - and in the end, inspiring in all the hope for a new interpretive era.⁶⁸ In a course given in Buenos Aires in 1969,⁶⁹ I began with “Toward a Philosophy of Culture,”⁷⁰ a question which culminated with a section entitled: “The Achievement of Latin American Consciousness,” which was perceived as the cry of a generation:

It is commonplace now to say that our cultural past is heterogeneous and at times incoherent, hybrid, and even in a certain way marginal in comparison to European culture. But what is most tragic is when the very existence of such a culture is ignored, since what is relevant is that, at any rate, there exists a culture in Latin America. Although some may deny it, its originality is evident, in art, in the style of life.⁷¹

As a professor in the National University of Cuyo (Mendoza, Argentina) I let flow this very same historical reconstruction, and did so in a strictly philosophical way. This took the form of an anthropological trilogy (in questions such as the conceptualization of the body-soul and the immortality of the soul; or the spirit-flesh,

person, resurrection, etc.) always bearing in mind the question of the origins of “Latin American culture.” These works were published as *El humanismo helénico* (*Hellenic Humanism*),⁷² and *El dualismo en la antropología de la cristiandad* (*The Dualism in the Anthropology of Christianity*).⁷³ This final work concluded the *Course of 1966* – which had only covered up to fifth-century Latin - Germanic christianity – by dealing with Europe’s relationship with and expansion into Latin America. I reconstructed anew the history of different Christianities (Armenian, Georgian, Byzantine, Coptic, Latin-Germanic, etc.), as well as describing in other later works the clash of the Islamic world with Spain (between 711 and 1492).⁷⁴

The obsession was not to leave aside any century without being able to integrate it into a view of World History which would allow us to understand the “origin,” “development,” and “content” of Latin American culture. Both existential demands and a (still Eurocentric) philosophy led us to search for a cultural identity, but it was there that a rupture began to appear.

2. Cultural core and periphery: the problem of liberation

Since the end of the 1960s, as a fruit of the emergence of *critical* Latin American social science (particularly “Dependency Theory”⁷⁵), as well as the Emmanuel Levinas’ lecture *Totality and Infinity*, and perhaps initially and principally as a result of the popular and student movements of 1968 (worldwide, but fundamentally in Argentina and Latin America), a historical rupture was produced in the field of philosophy and consequently in philosophy of culture. What had been previously considered the metropolitan and colonial worlds were now categorized (through the still developmentalist terminology of Raul Presbisch of the CEPAL) as “core” and “periphery.” To this, we should add an entire categorical horizon originating in *critical* economics, which demanded the incorporation of social classes as intersubjective actors to be integrated into a definition of culture. This was not merely a terminological question but a conceptual one, which allowed for the rupturing of the substantialist conception of culture and for the

discovery of fractures (internal to each culture) and between them (not only as an intercultural “dialogue” or “clash,” but rather more strictly as *domination* and *exploitation* of one culture over others). It was necessary to take into account on all levels the asymmetry of the actors involved. The “culturalist” stage was over. Thus, in 1983, in a chapter entitled “Beyond Culturalism,” I wrote:

From the structuralist view of culturalism, it was impossible to understand the changing situations of hegemony, within the well-defined historical blocs, and in respect to the ideological formations of diverse classes and factions [...]. Moreover, culturalism lacked the categories of political society (in the last analysis, the state) and civil society.⁷⁶

Latin American philosophy - like the *Philosophy of Liberation* - discovered its cultural conditioning (since it understood itself *from the perspective of* a determinate culture), but moreover it was articulated (explicitly or implicitly) from the perspective of the interests of determinate classes, groups, genders, races, etc. Location⁷⁷ had been discovered and was the first philosophical theme to be addressed. Intercultural “dialogue” had lost its simplicity and came to be understood as over determined by the entirety of the colonial era. In fact, in 1974 we initiated an intercontinental “South-South dialogue” between thinkers from Africa, Asia, and Latin America, whose first meeting was held in Dar-es-Salaam (Tanzania) in 1976.⁷⁸ Those encounters gave us a new and immediate panorama of the great cultures of humanity.⁷⁹

This new vision of culture emerged at the last of these meetings, which took place at the University of El Salvador in Buenos Aires, at which point the Philosophy of Liberation was already fully in development.⁸⁰ It represented a frontal attack on the position of Domingo F. Sarmiento, an eminent Argentinean educator and author of *Facundo: Civilización o barbarie*. For him, civilization meant North American culture and barbarism was represented by the federal *caudillos* that struggled for regional autonomy against the port of Buenos Aires (the transmission belt of English domination). My critique was the

beginning of a de-mythologization of the national “heroes,” who had conceived the neocolonial model in Argentina which had already begun to run out of steam.⁴¹ An “imperial” culture (that of the core), which originated with the invasion of América⁴² in 1492, confronted the “peripheral” cultures in Latin America, Africa, Asia, and Eastern Europe. The result was not a symmetrical dialogue, but rather one of domination, of exploitation, of annihilation. Moreover, the elites of these “peripheral cultures” were educated by the imperialists, and therefore, as Jean-Paul Sartre wrote in the preface to Franz Fanon's *The Wretched of the Earth*, echoed what they had learned in Paris or London. Enlightened neocolonial elites were so loyal to the empires that they distanced themselves from their own “people” and used them like hostages for their dependent politics. Therefore, there were asymmetries of domination on the world map:

- a. a western, metropolitan, and Eurocentric culture (the civilization of Ricoeur) that dominated and sought to annihilate all peripheral cultures; and
- b. postcolonial cultures (Latin America from beginning of the nineteenth century and Asia and Africa following the Second World War) which were themselves split between
 - i. groups associated with the current empires, “enlightened” elites whose authority required them to turn their backs on their ancestral regional culture; and
 - ii. the popular majority, settled in their traditions, which they defended (often in a fundamentalist manner) against the imposition of a technocratic, economically capitalist culture.

Philosophy of Liberation, as a *critical* cultural philosophy, needed to generate a new elite whose “enlightenment” would be integrated with the interests of the *social bloc of the oppressed* (Gramsci's *popolo*). For that reason, we spoke of the “liberation of popular culture”:

“There is, firstly, a *patriotic revolution* of national liberation, secondly, a *social revolution* that liberates the oppressed classes, and thirdly, there is a *cultural revolution*. The last of these operates on the pedagogical level, the level of the youth, the

level of culture.”⁸³

That peripheral culture – oppressed by the imperial culture – should be the point of departure for intercultural dialogue. We wrote in 1973:

The culture of cultural poverty, far from being a minor culture, represents the most uncontaminated and irradiative core of the resistance of the oppressed against the oppressor [...] In order to create something new, one must have a new word that bursts in from the exteriority. This exteriority is the people itself which, despite being oppressed by the system, is totally foreign to it.⁸⁴

The “project of cultural liberation”⁸⁵ arises from popular culture, although thought through the Philosophy of Liberation in the Latin American context. We had overcome culturalist developmentalism that believed that a traditional culture would be able to transition into a secular, pluralist culture. However, it was still necessary to radicalize our misguided analysis of “the popular sector” (*lo popular*) (the best), since it is in the womb of the latter contains the nucleus that would harbor populism and fundamentalism (the worst). Another step would be necessary.

3. Popular culture: not merely populism

In an article published in 1984,⁸⁶ I again needed to clarify the difference between a.) the “people” (*pueblo*) and “the popular sector” (*lo popular*); and b.) “populism,” which has taken various forms: from “Thatcherite populism” in the United Kingdom - as suggested by Ernesto Laclau and studied in Birmingham by Richard Hall - through the contemporary incarnation of “fundamentalism” in the Muslim world, a “fundamentalism” which is equally present, for example, in the North American Christian sectarianism of George W. Bush.

In that article we divided the material in four sections. In the first section,⁸⁷ we reconstructed our positions since the 1960s showing the need to overcome the limitations of reductivism (of ahistorical

revolutionaries, or of the liberal histories of hispanic-conservatives or *indigenistas*), and we reconstructed Latin American cultural history within the framework of world history (from Asia, our Amerindian component; the Asian-Afro-European proto-history through hispanic Christianity; colonial Christianity though postcolonial and neocolonial “dependent Latin American culture”). The whole project ended with a project for “a popular, post-capitalist culture”⁸⁸:

*When we were in the mountains – wrote Tomás Borge about the campesinos – and we heard them speak with their pure, clean hearts, with a simple and poetic language, we understood how much talent had been lost [by the neocolonial elites] throughout the centuries.*⁸⁹

This required a new point of departure for the description of culture *as such* – the subject of the second section.⁹⁰

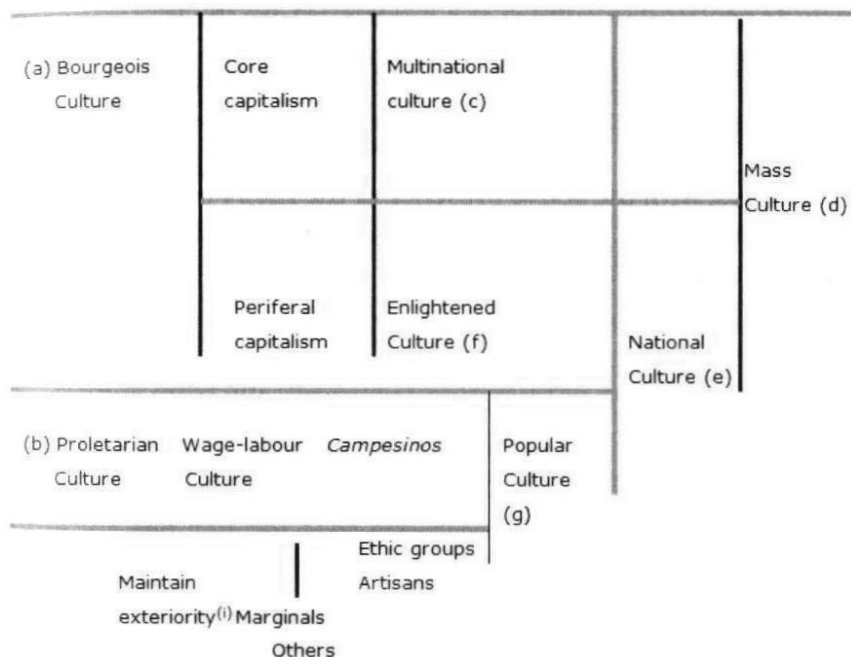
Through a careful and archaeological rereading of Marx (from his early works in 1835 to those of 1882⁹¹) we showed that all culture is a *mode* or a system of “types of *work*.” It is no coincidence that “agri-*culture*” means, in a strict sense, “*work of the earth*,” since the etymological root of “culture” comes from the Latin “cultus” in the sense of sacred consecration.⁹² Both *material* poetics⁹³ (the physical fruits of labor) and *mythical* poetics (symbolic creation) are forms of cultural *pro*-duction (putting the subjective – or better yet the intersubjective and communal – *outside*, objectively). In this way we recuperated the economic (without falling into economism).

In a third section,⁹⁴ we analyzed the various, newly-fractured moments of a post-culturalist or post-Spengerian understanding of cultural experience. “Bourgeois culture” (a, below) was studied in its abstract relation to “proletarian culture” (b), and the “culture of the core countries” was analyzed in relation to the “culture of the peripheral countries” (in the order of the global “world-system”). Moreover, “multinational culture or cultural imperialism” (c) was described in relation to the “mass or alienated culture,” (d) which was globalized, and (e) “national or populist culture” was integrated with the “culture of the enlightened elite,” (f) and it then counterposed to

“popular culture,”⁹⁵ or “resistance through cultural creation” (g).

Evidently, this cultural typology, and its categorial criteria, would presuppose a long and critical "epistemological struggle" proper to the new social sciences of Latin America and Philosophy of Liberation. We had already achieved these distinctions long before, but now they took a more definitive shape.

Diagram 1



(i) Keep in mind that cultural groups (indigenous, lumpen, marginal, etc.) are located "outside" of the capitalist order but inside or in the womb of the people (pueblo).

In 1977, in the third volume of *Para una ética de la liberación latinoamericana* (*Towards an Ethics of Latin American Liberation*), we had written:

*Imperial culture*⁹⁶ (with universal claims) is not the same thing

as *national culture* (which itself is not identical to the popular sector), nor is it the same as the *enlightened culture* of the neo-colonial elite (which is not always bourgeois, but is always oligarchic), nor is it the same as *mass culture* (which is alienating and unidimensional, in the core as well as in the periphery), nor is it the same as *popular culture*.⁹⁷

And we added:

Imperial, enlightened, and mass culture (within which we can include proletarian culture as a negativity) are the imperative internal moments in the dominant totality. However, *national culture* is still wrong despite its importance [...] *Popular culture* is the key moment for [cultural] liberation.⁹⁸

In the 1980s, with the active presence of the FSLN in Nicaragua and many other events in Latin America, creative culture was conceived of as “popular revolutionary culture”⁹⁹:

Latin American popular culture – we wrote in the 1984 article mentioned – can only be elucidated, decanted, and authenticated in the process of liberation (economically from capitalism, politically from oppression), establishing a new democratic type, thereby representing cultural liberation, taking a creative step along the path of the historico-cultural tradition of the oppressed, the current revolutionary protagonists.¹⁰⁰

In that era one spoke of the “historical subject” of revolutionary culture: the “people” (*pueblo*) as the “social bloc of the oppressed,” when it recovered the “subjective consciousness” of its historico-revolutionary function.¹⁰¹

This notion of popular culture was not populist. “Populist” indicated the inclusion within “national culture” of the bourgeois and oligarchic culture of the elite, as well as the culture of the proletariat, of the *campesino*, of all the inhabitants of the soil, organized under a State (designated “Bonapartism” in France). The popular, on the other hand, was an entire social sector of the nation, insofar as they were exploited

or oppressed, but who moreover retained a certain “exteriority,” as we will see later. This sector is oppressed in the state system, but maintains its alterity, difference, and freedom in those cultural moments scorned by the oppressor, like folklore,¹⁰² music, food, dress, and festivals, the memory of their heroes, their emancipatory moments, their social and political organizations, etc.

As one can see, the monolithic substantialist conception of *a single* Latin American culture had been left behind, and the internal cultural fissures grew thanks to that very same cultural revolution.

4. Modernity, the globalization of western culture, liberal multiculturalism, and the military empire of the “preventative war”

Although the question had been glimpsed intuitively since the end of the 1950s, there was a gradual theoretical shift from a.) the obsession with “situating” Latin America within world history – which demanded a total reconstruction of that vision of history – to b.) calling into question the *standard* vision of that universal history (common to the Hegelian generation) that had “excluded” us, since the “eurocentrism” of the latter constructed not only a distorted interpretation¹⁰³ of non-European cultures, but also--and this conclusion was unpredictable in the 50s and had not been expected *a priori* - an equally inadequate interpretation of its own western culture. “Orientalism” (a defect in the European interpretation of all cultures east of Europe, as Edward Said shows in his famous 1978 text, *Orientalism*) was a defect connected to and simultaneous with “occidentalism” (the misguided interpretation of Europe’s own culture). The hypothesis that had permitted us to reject the idea that there was no Latin American culture now enabled us to discover a new *critical* vision of both peripheral and even European culture. This task was undertaken almost simultaneously in all areas of peripheral postcolonial culture (Asia, Africa, and Latin America), although unfortunately to a lesser extent in Europe and the United States.

In effect, beginning with the “postmodern” problematic about the

nature of Modernity - which is still, in the final instance, a “European” vision of Modernity - we began to notice that what we ourselves had called “postmodern”¹⁰⁴ was something distinct from that alluded to by the Postmodernists of the 1980s (or at least their definition of the phenomenon of Modernity was different from the understanding I had developed through my works that sought to situate Latin America in confrontation with a modern culture as seen from the perspective of the colonial periphery). For that reason, we saw need to reconstruct the concept of “Modernity” from an “exterior” perspective, that is to say, a *global* perspective (not provincial like the European perspective). This was necessary because “Modernity,” in the United States and Europe, had (and continues to have) a clearly Eurocentric connotation, notorious from Lyotard or G. Vattimo through J. Habermas, and in another, more subtle manner even in I. Wallerstein, who we identify with a “second Eurocentrism.”

Focusing on this line of argument allowed us to glimpse a problematic and categorial horizon that relaunched again the subject of culture, only this time as a critique of “liberal multiculturalism” (in the manner of John Rawls, for example, in *The Law of Peoples*), and also as a critique of the superficial optimism of the ostensible ease with which some suggested the possibility of multicultural communication or dialogue, ingenuously (or cynically) presupposing a symmetry between participants which is nonexistent in reality.

This was no longer a matter of “locating” Latin America. It was a matter of trying to “situate” *all of the cultures* that today *inevitably* confront each other in all levels of everyday life, from communication, education and research, to the politics of expansion, and cultural or even military resistance. Cultural systems, minted throughout the millennia, can be torn apart in decades, or develop through confrontation with other cultures. No culture is assured survival in advance. All of these issues are of increasing importance today, a crucial moment in the history of cultures of the planet.

In our vision of the course *Hypothesis for the study of Latin America within Universal History*, and in the initial works of that period, I tended to portray the development of each culture as an independent

or autonomous whole.¹⁰⁵ There were “contact zones” (like the Eastern Mediterranean, the Pacific Ocean and the Euroasiatic steppes from Gobi to the Caspian Sea), but I explicitly attributed the unfolding of the “world-system” to the moments of the Portuguese expansion into the South Atlantic and toward the Indian Ocean, or to Spain's “discovery of America,” or to the first between the great, independent cultural *ecumenes*¹⁰⁶ (from Amerindia, China, Hindustan, the Islamic world, Bantu Cultures, Byzantine and Latin-Germanic cultures). This theory would undergo a radical modification due to A. Gunder Frank's proposed “five thousand year world-system” - which immediately imposed itself on me because it mirrored my own chronology - which changed our panorama. If there existed firm contacts in the steppes and deserts of Northeastern Asia (through the so-called “silk route”), it was above all the region of old Persia – first Hellenized (around Seleukon, not far from the ruins of Babylon) and later Islamicized (Samarkand or Bagdad) – that served as the axis around which the Asiatic-Afro-Mediterranean world turned. Latin-Germanic Europe was always peripheral (although in the South it carried some weight due to the presence of the ancient Roman empire), but was never the “center” of that immense continental mass. The Muslim world (from Mindanao in the Phillipines, Malaka, and Delhi, the “heart” of the Muslim world, to the Magreb, Fez in Morrocco, or the Andalucia of Averroës' Cordoba) was a much more highly-developed mercantilist culture (scientifically, theoretically, economically, and culturally) than Latin-Germanic Europe after the catastrophic Germanic invasions¹⁰⁷ and the Islamic invasions that began in the seventh century. *Against* to Max Weber, we must recognize the great civilizational difference that existed between the future European culture (still underdeveloped) with respect to Islamic culture through the twelfth century (the Turkish-Siberian invasions would later cut short the great Arabic culture).

In the west, “Modernity,” which was initiated with the *invasion* of America by Spain - whose culture was inherited from the Mediterranean Muslims (around Andalucia) and the Italian Renaissance (through the Catalan presence in southern Italy)¹⁰⁸ - is the geopolitical “opening”

from Europe to the Atlantic; it is the unfolding and control of the “world-system” in a strict sense (through the oceans, and no longer the slow and dangerous continental caravans), and the “invention” of the *colonial system*, which over 300 years would progressively shift the politico-economic balance in favor of the peripheral and isolated old Europe. This was all, moreover, simultaneous with the origin and development of capitalism (which was mercantile in its initial stages, based only upon the primitive accumulation of capital). That is to say: modernity, colonialism, the world-system, and capitalism were all simultaneous and mutually-constitutive aspects of the same reality.

If this is the case, *then Spain was the first modern nation*. This theory runs contrary to all interpretations of modernity as originating in central of Europe and the United States, and is even contrary to the opinion of the great majority of contemporary Spanish intellectuals. However, it asserts itself upon us with increasing force in proportion to the discovery of new arguments. In effect, the First Modernity, the Iberian Modernity (from 1492 through approximately 1630), which came to have Muslim tinges through Andalucia (the most educated area of the Mediterranean¹⁰⁹ during the twelfth century), was inspired by the humanist Italian Renaissance. This tendency was firmly implanted by the “Reform” of Cardinal Cisneros, by the university reform of the Salamancan Dominicans (whose Second Scholastic school was not merely medieval, but in fact “modern”), and in particular, a little later, by the Baroque Jesuit culture that in the philosophical figure of Francisco Suárez inaugurated, in a strict sense, modern metaphysical thinking.¹¹⁰ *Don Quijote* is the first modern literary work of its type in Europe, whose characters have each foot in a different world: in the Islamic south and in the Christian north, in the most advanced culture of their era and in emergent European modernity.¹¹¹ The first syntactic theory of a romance language was the guide to Spanish (Castilian) grammar edited by Nebrija in 1492. In 1521 the first bourgeois revolution, in Castile, was put down by Carlos V (the commoners fought to defend their urban charters). The first global currency was minted with Mexican and Peruvian silver, which passed through Sevilla and eventually accumulated in China. This was

a pre-bourgeois, humanist, mercantile Modernity, which initiated the expansion of Europe.

It was only the *Second Modernity* that developed in the United Provinces of the Lowlands, which had been a Spanish province until the beginning of the seventeenth century¹¹²: this was a new stage of Modernity (1630-1688), now properly bourgeois in its own right. The *Third Modernity*, which was English and then later French, extended the earlier model (initiated philosophically by Decartes and Spinoza, unfolding with more practical coherence in the possessive individualism of Hobbes, Locke, and Hume). With the Industrial Revolution and the Enlightenment, Modernity reached its fullest development, and at the same time colonialism was strengthened through Northern European expansion, first into Asia and later into Africa.

Modernity, like the “world system,” is five centuries old, and both were coextensive with European domination of the world, a Europe which has represented the “core” since 1492. For its part, Latin America was a constitutive moment of Modernity. The colonial system could not be feudal - a central question for social sciences in general, as demonstrated by Sergio Bagú - but was instead peripheral to the modern capitalist world, and thereby to the modern world itself.

In this context, we mounted a critique of the ingenuous position that imagined intercultural dialogue as a possible - and in part idealized - multicultural symmetry in which communication between rational beings would be possible. “Discourse Ethics” adopted this optimistic position. Richard Rorty, and to some extent A. MacIntyre, demonstrated the complete incommensurability of an impossible communication, or at least its extreme difficulty. In any case, they dispensed with the situatedness of cultures (without naming them concretely or studying their history and structural content), failing to recognize the asymmetrical that resulted from their respective *positions* in the colonial system. Western culture, with its obvious “Occidentalism,” has positioned all other cultures as primitive, pre-modern, traditional, and underdeveloped.

Upon delineating a theory of a “dialogue between cultures,” it may

seem that all cultures exist under symmetrical conditions. Or, that through an *ad hoc* anthropology, the task of neutral observation (or in the best cases, “engaged” observation) of primitive cultures can be achieved. In this case there exist superior cultures (of academic “cultural anthropology”) and “the others” (the primitives). In both extremes there are the developed, symmetrical cultures and “the others” (that cannot even be situated asymmetrically due to the unsurpassable cultural abyss separating them from the former). Such is the case of Durkheim and Habermas. In the face of anthropology’s observational perspective, there can be no cultural dialogue with China, India, the Islamic world, etc., because they are neither enlightened nor primitive cultures. They are “no man’s land.”

These cultures – neither “metropolitan” nor “primitive” – are being destroyed by propaganda and the sale of merchandise, material products which are always cultural (like drinks, foods, clothes, vehicles, etc.), while on the other hand there is an ostensible attempt to preserve these cultures by valorizing in isolation folkloric elements or secondary cultural moments. A transnational restaurant chain can subsume in his menus a plate typical of a specific to a culinary culture (like Taco Bell). This passes for the “respect” of other cultures.

This type of altruistic multiculturalism is clearly formulated in John Rawls’ “overlapping consensus,” which requires the acceptance of certain procedural principles (which are inadvertently and profoundly culturally western) by all members of a political community, while at the same time permitting the diversity of cultural (or religious) values. Politically, this presupposes that those who establish the dialogue accept a liberal, multicultural State, overlooking the fact that the very structure of this multicultural State – as institutionalized in the present – is an expression of western culture and restricts the possibility for the survival of all other cultures. Surreptitiously, a cultural structure has been imposed in the name of purely formal elements of coexistence (which were an expression of the development of a determinate culture). Moreover, this liberal State is founded upon an economic structure of transnational capitalism, invisible to its defenders, that has only smoothed out unacceptable anti-western differences in “incorporated”

cultures thanks to the previously-mentioned “overlapping consensus” (which results from a prior hollowing-out of the critical anti-capitalist elements of those cultures).

This sort of sterile multicultural dialogue (which also frequently takes place between universal religions), becomes in certain cases an aggressive cultural politics, such as Huntington’s call, in *The Clash of Civilizations*, for the defense of western culture through military means, particularly against Islamic fundamentalists, under whose soil (they forget to mention) exist the greatest petroleum reserves in the world (and without referring to the presence of a Christian fundamentalism on a comparable scale, especially in the United States). Again, they fail to mention that “the fundamentalism of the market” - as George Soros calls it - serves as the foundation for an aggressive military fundamentalism, taking the form of “preventative wars” which are disguised as cultural confrontations or the as expansion of democratic political culture. In this way, we have passed from a.) the claim of a symmetrical multicultural dialogue to b.) simple suppression of all dialogue and the forced imposition of that same western culture through military technology (at least this is the pretext, since we have suggested that it is merely about the fulfillment of economic interests, such as the role played by petroleum in the war in Iraq).

In their work *Empire*, Negri and Hardt maintain a certain postmodern perspective on the globalized structure of the world-system. It is necessary to place prior to any such vision an interpretation which allows for a more dramatic understanding of the present conjuncture of world history, under the military hegemony of the North American State, which - as *home-State*¹³ for the largest transnational corporations, is slowly, as when in the Roman Republic Caesar crossed the Rubicon - is transforming from a *republic* into an *empire*, a post-Cold-War domination that sets its sights on unipolar control of global power. To what is multicultural dialogue reduced in such a situation, if not to a certain naïve recognition of the asymmetries between participants? How is it possible to imagine a symmetrical dialogue given the near impossibility of seizing the technological instruments of a capitalism based in military expansion? Will everything be lost, and will the

imposition of an Occidentalism (identified more and more by the day with the “Americanism” of the United States), erase from the face of the earth all of the universal cultures which have been developing over the last few millennia? Will English be the only remaining classical language, imposed upon humanity which, under such a weight, will forget their own traditions?

5. The transversality of transmodern intercultural dialogue: mutual liberation of universal postcolonial cultures

Thus we arrive to the most recent stage of development (which as always had been anticipated in earlier intuitions), beginning from the new hypotheses of André Gunder Frank. His *ReOrient: Global Economy in the Asian Age*¹¹ (and the more complex argument put forth by Kenneth Pomeranz in *The Great Divergence: China, Europe and the Making of the Modern World Economy*¹²) which again allows us to open up a broader critical problematic, which should take up again the interpretative keys to the problem of culture that we discovered in the 1960s. We are now able to introduce a new theoretical proposition – which we call the “Trans-modern” – and which constitutes an explicit overcoming of the concept “Post-modernity” (since the latter *still represents a final moment of Modernity*).

This most recent working-hypothesis can be formulated in the following, heavily simplified, manner: Modernity (capitalism, colonialism, the first world-system) is not contemporary with European hegemony, which functioned as the “center” of the market with respect to the rest of the cultures. The “centrality” of the world market and Modernity are not synchronous phenomena. Modern Europe became the “center” *after* it was already “modern”. For I. Wallerstein, these phenomena are coextensive (this is why he delays Modernity and its centrality in the world market until the “Enlightenment” and the emergence of liberalism). In my view, the four phenomena (capitalism, the world-system, colonialism, and modernity) are contemporary to one another (but they respond to the “centrality” of the world market). Today, then, I should note that until 1789 (to

give a symbolic date for the end of the eighteenth century), China and the region of Hindustan had a productive-economic weight in the “world market” (producing its most important goods, like porcelain, silk, etc.) that Europe was not capable of matching. Europe could not sell *anything* in the market of the Far East, and it has only been able to make purchases in the Chinese market during the past three centuries thanks to Latin America silver (primarily from Peru and Mexico).

Europe began to function as the “center” of the world market (and therefore to extend the “world system” throughout the world) with the advent of the industrial revolution; on the cultural plane, this produced the phenomenon of the Enlightenment, the origins of which, in the long run,¹¹⁶ we should look for (according to the hypothesis of Moroccan philosopher Al-Yabri, who we will discuss later) in the Averroist philosophy of the caliphate of Córdoba. Europe's crucial and enlightened hegemony scarcely lasted two centuries (1789-1989).¹¹⁷ Only two centuries! Too short-term to profoundly transform the “ethico-mythical nucleus” (to use Ricoeur's expression) of ancient and universal cultures like the Chinese and others of the Far East (like the Japanese, Korean, Vietnamese, etc.), the Hindustanic, the Islamic, the Russian-Byzantine, and even the Bantu or the Latin American (though with a different structural composition). These cultures have been partly *colonized* (included through negation in the totality, as aspect A of Diagram 1), but most of the structure of their values has been excluded - *scorned, negated and ignored* - rather than annihilated. The economic and political system has been dominated in order to exert colonial power and to accumulate massive riches, but those cultures were deemed to be unworthy, insignificant, unimportant, and useless. The tendency to disparage those cultures, however, has allowed them to survive in silence, in the shadows, simultaneously scorned by their own modernized and westernized elites. That negated “exterior,” that alterity - always extant and latent - indicates the existence of an unsuspected cultural richness, which is slowly revived like the flames of the fire of those fathoms buried under the sea of ashes from hundreds of years of colonialism. That cultural exteriority is not merely a substantive, uncontaminated, and eternal

“identity.” It has been evolving in the face of Modernity itself; what is at stake is “identity” in the sense of process and growth, but always as an exteriority.

These universal cultures, asymmetrical in terms of their economic, political, scientific, technological, and military conditions, therefore maintain an alterity with respect to European Modernity, with which they have coexisted and have learned to respond in their own way to its challenges. They are not dead but alive, and presently in the midst of a process of rebirth, searching for new paths for future development (and inevitably at times taking the wrong paths). Since they are not modern, these cultures cannot be “post”-modern either. They are simultaneously pre-modern (older than modernity), contemporary to Modernity, and soon, to Transmodernity as well. Postmodernism is a final stage in modern European/North American culture, the “core” of Modernity. Chinese or Vedic cultures could never be European post-modern, but rather are something very different as a result of their distinct roots.

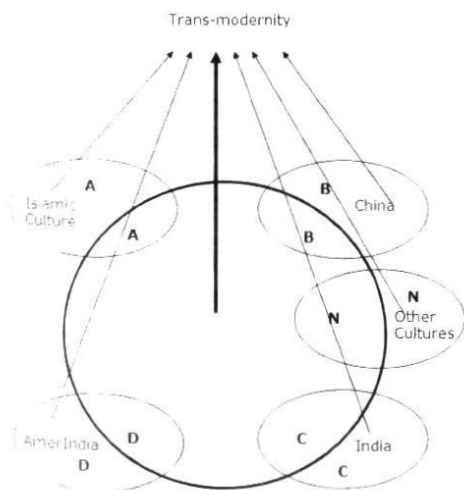
Thus, the strict concept of the “*trans-modern*”¹¹⁸ attempts to indicate the radical novelty of the irruption – as if from nothing – from the transformative exteriority of that which is always Distinct, those universal cultures in the process of development which assume the challenges of Modernity, and even European/North American Post-modernity, but which respond *from another place, another location*. They respond from the perspective of their own cultural experiences, which are distinct from those of Europeans/North Americans, and therefore have the capacity to respond with solutions which would be absolutely impossible for an exclusively modern culture. A future *trans-modern* culture – which assumes the positive moments of Modernity (as evaluated through criteria distinct from the perspective of the other ancient cultures) – will have a rich pluriversity and would be the fruit of an authentic intercultural dialogue, that would need to bear clearly in mind existing asymmetries (to be an “imperial-core” or part of the semi-peripheral “central chorus” - like Europe today, and even more so since the 2003 Iraq War - is not the same as to be part of the postcolonial and peripheral world). But a post-colonial and

peripheral world like that of India, in a position of abysmal asymmetry with respect to the metropolitan core of the colonial era, does not for this reason cease to be a creative nucleus of ancient cultural renewal which is decisively distinct from all of the others, with the capacity to propose novel and necessary answers for the anguishing challenges that the Planet throws upon us at the beginning of the twenty-first century.

“Trans-modernity” points toward all of those aspects that are situated “beyond” (and also “prior to”) the structures valorized by modern European/North American culture, and which are present in the great non-European universal cultures and have begun to move toward a pluriversal utopia.

An intercultural dialogue must be *transversal*,¹¹⁹ that is to say, it needs to set out from a *place other than* a mere dialogue between the learned experts of the academic or institutionally-dominant worlds. It must be a multicultural dialogue that does not presuppose the illusion of a non-existent symmetry between cultures. We will now turn to some aspects of this critical, intercultural dialogue with respect to *trans-modernity*.

Diagram 2: Rough sketch of the meaning of cultural trans-modernity



We will take as the leitmotif of our exposition a philosophical discussion of Islamic culture. Mohammed Abed Al-Yabri, in his texts *Crítica de la razón árabe* (*Critique of Arab Reason*)¹²¹ and *The Arab Philosophical Legacy*,¹²¹ is an excellent example of what we hope to explain. Al-Yabri is a Maghreb philosopher, which is to say that he is from a cultural region which was under the influence of the classical thought of the Caliphate of Córdoba, which began a deconstruction of Arab tradition.¹²² This culminated in an authentic philosophical “Enlightenment,” a direct antecedent of the Latin-Germanic revival of thirteenth-century Paris, and as such represented even a direct antecedent of the eighteenth-century European *Aufklärung* (which was, according to the hypothesis of Al-Yabri, Averröist).

5.1. Affirmation of scorned exteriority

Everything begins through an *affirmation*. The *negation of the negation* is the second moment. How can one negate the disparagement of oneself but through setting-out on the path of the self-discovery of one's own value? This is the affirmation of an evolving and flexible identity in the face of Modernity. Postcolonial cultures need effective decolonization, but for this they must begin with self-valorization.

However, there are different ways to affirm oneself, some of which are misguided. For this reason, beginning with the example suggested in the first place, Al-Yabri criticizes the typical interpretations or hermeneutic “readings” of the Islamic tradition by contemporary Arab philosophy in the Muslim world. The first interpretive strand is that of fundamentalism (the “*Salafis*”¹²³). This interpretation has an *affirmative* intention, like all the rest, since it attempts to recuperate ancient Arab tradition in the present. But for Al-Yabri such a current is ahistorical - merely apologetic and traditionalist. Another interpretative strand is the liberal-Europeanist, which claims to be merely Modern, but in the end negates the past or does not know how to reconstruct it. The third is the leftist interpretation (“*Marxist salafism*”).¹²⁴ The question, considering these three interpretative strands, is: “How [can we] reconstruct our legacy [today]?”¹²⁵

It seems evident that the first step is to study that legacy affirmatively. Al-Yabri, a reader whose mother tongue is Arabic and whose training in Islamic cultural traditions date back to childhood, has an enormous advantage above all the other European and North American specialists who study the Arab world as a scientific "object" and as a "foreign" culture. Thus, he reads the classics, grasps neglected nuances, and he does this through contemporary French hermeneutic philosophy that he, along with all Maghrebs, has studied. In this way he positively expounds the thought of Al-Farabi, Avicenna (Ibn Sina), Avempace (Ibn Bajjah), Averröes (Ibn Rushd), and Ibn Khaldun, but he does so not merely as an ingenuous and apologetic *pure affirmation*.

On the plane of popular culture, another example, Rigoberta Menchú, in *I, Rigoberta Menchú: An Indian Woman in Guatemala*,¹²⁶ dedicates long chapters to the description of the culture of her Mayan village in Guatemala. She begins with a self-valorizing affirmation of herself, and this is the originary (??) reflection upon which she constructs her entire edifice. Against prevalent opinion, it is necessary to begin from the positive origin of one's own cultural tradition.

This first step represents a reminiscence of the past from an identity which is prior to Modernity or which has imperceptibly evolved in the inevitable and furtive contact with Modernity.

5.2. Critiquing one's tradition with the resources of one's culture

But the only way to grow from within one's tradition is to engage in critique from within the assumptions of that same culture. It is necessary to find within one's culture the originary (??) moments of a self-criticism.

It is in this way that Al-Yabri carries out a "deconstruction" of his own tradition with critical elements of the same, and with others adopted from Modernity itself. It is not Modernity that imposes the tools upon the critical intellectual; it is the critical intellectual that controls and directs the selection of those modern instruments that will be useful for the critical reconstruction of her own tradition. In this way, Al-Yabri shows that the "eastern" schools of the Arab world¹²⁷ should initially

confront head-on their primary enemy: Gnostic Persian thought. In a strict sense, the *mu'tazilīs* strictly created the first theoretical Islamic thought (which was anti-Persian), with components of the *Koran*, but which also creatively subsumed elements of Greek-Byzantine culture, with the political aim of justifying the legitimacy of the Caliphate state.¹²⁸ This is how *eastern* traditions were born. However, the Abbasid schools in Baghdad, as well as in outlying regions like Samarkand and Bukhara, as well as the Fatimite traditions of Cairo, with theorists such as Al-Farabi and Avicenna, were inclined toward the Neo-Platonic thought with theological-mystic tinges (like “enlightenment”). On the contrary – and against many historians of Arab philosophy – Al-Yabri teaches that the properly *western* Andaluz-Maghreb philosophy (situated around the great cultural capitals of Córdoba in the north and Fez in the south¹²⁹), represented an original rupture that would have a powerful and lasting legacy. For motives as much political as economic (and here Moroccan philosophy utilizes the critical tools of Modern European philosophy) the Cordoban caliphate, which as we have seen was *western*, broke the theologizing perspective of *eastern* thought, thereby inaugurating a clear distinction between natural *reason* (which achieves knowledge through scientific observation, developing physics, mechanics, and mathematics in a new way), and enlightened reason attained through *faith*. This introduced a distinction between *reason* and *faith*, in which these were neither blurred together nor negated, but rather articulated in a novel way.

It was the philosopher Ibn-Abdun who brought the rationalist orientation of the Baghdad school to Al-Andalus (contrary to the position of Al-Kindi, Al-Farabi, and Avicenna). A second generation, at the beginning of the fifth century of the Hegira (the eleventh Christian century) specialized in mathematics and medicine. The third generation, with Avempace, integrated physics and metaphysics and discarded the neo-Platonic Gnosticism of the *eastern* school, invoking rational Aristotelian argumentation (purged of neo-Platonism).¹³⁰

The Almohads had the following cultural motto: “Abandon the argument from authority and return to the sources.” This was the cultural movement led by Ibn Tumart, during times of great change

and thereby of great political liberty and critical, rationalist impetus. Ibn Tumart criticized analogy, seeing it as a method which moves from the known to the unknown.¹³¹ If Al-Farabi and Avicenna had sought (due to the multiplicity and the political problems of *eastern* thought) to unite philosophy and theology,¹³² Averröes (in the Almohad West) intended to separate them while showing their mutual autonomy and complementarity. Such was the theme of his work *Doctrina decisiva y fundamento de la Concordia entre la revelación y la ciencia* (*Decisive Treatise Determining the Connection Between the Law and Wisdom*), a veritable “discourse on method”: (revealed) truth cannot contradict (rational) truth, and vice versa. In particular, his *Destrucción de la destrucción* (*The Incoherence of the Incoherence*) shows that the arguments with which Al-Ghazali sought to demonstrate the irrationality of philosophy were not demonstrably true or apodictic. Thus Averröes elaborated and expressed the so-called doctrine of “double truth,” so wrongly interpreted in the Medieval Latin World.¹³³ At the same time, the Cordoban philosopher suggested a method through which to interact with *other* cultures:

It is doubtless that we need to make use, to aid our research (a rational study of existent beings), of the investigations carried out by all those who preceded us [i.e. the Greeks] [...] Be that as it is, and since in reality the ancient philosophers already studied, and with greater care, the rules of reason (logic, method), it would be useful for us to lay our hands on the books of those philosophers, so that, if we find everything they say therein to be reasonable, we accept it, but if there is something unreasonable, it can serve us as a precaution and warning.¹³⁴

For this reason, “to adopt the Averröist spirit is to break with the Gnostic, obscurantist, and *eastern* spirit of Avicennes.”¹³⁵ As we can see, Arab philosophy practiced this method that we are describing. It remained faithful to its tradition but it subsumed the best elements of the other culture (as determined according to its own criteria), which were in some aspects more highly developed (for example, in the

elaboration of logical science).

In the same way, Rigoberta Menchú searches for the cause for the passivity and fatalism of related indigenous communities, and initiates a community critique that will bring them to commit themselves to the struggle against the mestizo government and military repression. Thus, the critical intellectual should be someone located “between” (in-betweeness^{1,36}) the two cultures (their own culture and Modern culture). This is really the issue of the “border” (the “frontier”) between two cultures as a *locus* for “critical thought.” This theme is explored at length by Walter Mignolo, in the case of the Mexican-American “frontier” as a creative bicultural space.

5.3. Strategy of resistance: hermeneutic time

In order to resist it is necessary to mature. The affirmation of one's own values require time, study, reflection, a return to the *texts* or symbols and constitutive myths of one's culture, before or at least at the same time that one consults the domain of the texts of the modern hegemonic culture.

Al-Yabri shows the error of “some Arab intellectuals, whose relations with the European cultural legacy seems to be more narrow than those that they maintain with the Arab-Islamic legacy, who pose the problem of contemporary Arab thought in these terms: How can this thought assimilate the experience of liberalism *before or without the Arab world going through the stage of liberalism?*”¹³⁷ Abdalah Laroui, Zaki Nayib Mahmud, Mayid Fajri and many others pose the question in this fashion. The real problem, however, is different:

How can Arab thought recuperate and assimilate the rationalist experience of its own cultural legacy and bring it to life again, with a perspective similar to that of our ancestors: to struggle against feudalism, against Gnosticism, against fatalism, and to install the city of reason and justice, a free Arab city, democratic and socialist?¹³⁸

As one can observe, a project of this scope requires tenacity,

time, intelligence, research, and solidarity. It requires the long-term maturation of a new response in *cultural resistance*, not only to the elites of other cultures, particularly those that are dominant, but also against the Eurocentricism of elites in peripheral, colonial, and fundamentalist cultures.

Rigoberta Menchú shows, for her part, how the community, upon gaining critical consciousness, reinterpreted traditional Christianity in order to justify the community's struggle of against the domination of the militarized white elites in Guatemala. This represents a new hermeneutics of the constitutive *text* of the cultural life of the community (since the symbolic level is fundamental for Amerindians, which integrates Mayan with Christian/colonial sources).

5.4. Intercultural dialogue between critics of their own culture

This intercultural dialogue is neither only nor principally a dialogue between cultural apologists that attempt to demonstrate to others the virtues and values of their own culture. It is, above all, a dialogue between a culture's critical innovators (intellectuals of the "border," *between* their culture and Modernity). It is not a dialogue among those who merely defend their culture from its enemies, but rather among those who *recreate it, departing from the critical assumptions* found in their own cultural tradition and in that of globalizing Modernity. Modernity can serve as a critical catalyst (if it is used by the expert hand of critics of their own culture). But, additionally, this is not even the dialogue between the critics of the metropolitan "core" and the critics of the cultural "periphery." It is more than anything *a dialogue between the "critics of the periphery,"* it must be an intercultural South-South dialogue before can become a South-North dialogue.

This sort of dialogue is essential. As a Latin American philosopher, I would like to begin a conversation with Al-Yabri beginning from the following question: Why did Islamic philosophical thought fall into such a profound crisis after the fourteenth century? This cannot be explained merely by the slow and growing presence of the Ottoman Empire. Why did this philosophy enter the blind alley of fundamentalist

thought? It is necessary to lend a hand through a broader world-historical interpretation in order to understand that the Islamic world, after having been the “key” to contact with the “ancient world” (from Byzantium, and to a lesser degree Latin-Germanic Europe, to Hindustan and China), would slowly but inevitably be left *outside* the central zone of contact with other universal cultures by the constitution of an ocean-based world-system under Spanish and Portuguese domination. The loss of “centrality” (and with it, “information”), the relative impoverishment (even if only for the inflation of silver due to the extraction of massive quantities from Latin America), as well as other non-cultural and non-philosophical factors, plunged the Arab world into “peripheral” poverty. This led to a political factionalism and isolationism that “tribalized” it, disintegrating into destructive separatisms the ancient regions once unified by law, religion, science, commerce, and the Arab language. This philosophical decadence was only a moment in a broader civilizational decadence, of the economic, political and military crisis of a world transformed from “core” to “periphery.” It is therefore necessary to link, for example, the history of the Islamic world with the nascent “world system,” with Latin America and with the growth of European Modernity, which through 1800 was, in cultural terms, as important as Hindu-Chinese culture. In the nineteenth century, that is to say after the industrial revolution, this would even allow the “colonization” of the Arab world. Cultural “coloniality” is expressed philosophically as philosophical decadence. Salazar Bondy posed a similar question in 1969: “Is it possible to think philosophically and creatively from the position of colonial being?”¹³⁹

In the case of Rigoberta Menchú, the most productive dialogue was realized between the critics of different communities, and between those of the indigenous communities and critical elements of the mestizo world and of hegemonic Latin America. Menchú was transformed into an interlocutor of many voices, of many claims, by feminists, ecologists, antiracist movements, etc.

Intercultural dialogue brings about a transversal and mutual cross-fertilization among the critical thinkers of the periphery and those from “border” spaces, and the organization of networks to

discuss their own specific problems transforms this process of self-affirmation into a weapon of liberation. We should inform ourselves and learn from the failures, the achievements, and the still-theoretical justification of the creative processes in the face of the globalization of European/North American culture, whose pretense of universality must be deconstructed from the optical multi-focality of each culture.

5.5. Strategy for trans-modern liberation growth

A strategy presupposes a project. We have defined the “*trans-modern*” project as a liberation intention that synthesizes all that we have discussed. In the first place, it suggests the affirmation, the self-valorization of one's own negated or merely devalued cultural moments which are found in the exteriority of Modernity, those still remaining *outside* of the destructive consideration of that ostensibly universal modern culture. Secondly, those traditional values ignored by Modernity should be a point of departure for an internal critique, from within the culture's own hermeneutical possibilities. Thirdly, the critics, in order to be critics, should be those who, living in the biculturality of the “borders,” can create critical thought. Fourthly, this means a long period of resistance, of maturation, and of the accumulation of forces. It is a period of the creative and accelerated cultivation and development of one's own cultural tradition, which is now on the path toward a *trans-modern* utopia. This represents a strategy for the growth and creativity of a renovated culture, which is not merely decolonized, but is moreover entirely new.

The dialogue, then, between the critical cultural innovators is neither modern nor post-modern, but rather in a strict sense “*trans-modern*,” because, as we have shown, the creative force does not come from the interior of Modernity, but rather from its exteriority, or better yet from its “borderlands.” This exteriority is not pure negativity. It is *the positivity rooted in a tradition distinct from the Modern*. For example, for the Indigenous cultures of Latin America there exists an affirmation of Nature that is completely distinct and much more

ecologically balanced, which today is more necessary than ever, given that capitalist Modernity confronts Nature as something exploitable, marketable, and destructible. The death of Nature is the collective suicide of humanity, and yet this globalizing modern culture learns nothing about Nature from other cultures, which are apparently more “primitive” or “backwards” according to developmentalist parameters. This ecological principle can also integrate the best of Modernity (and it should not refuse all elements of Modernity from the perspective of a pure, substantialist cultural identity), in order even to construct scientific and technological development that emerges from the very experience of Modernity.

The affirmation and development of the cultural alterity of postcolonial communities (*peoples*), which subsumes within itself the best elements of Modernity, should not develop a cultural style that tends towards an undifferentiated or empty globalized unity, but rather a *trans*-modern pluriversality (with many universalities: European, Islamic, Vedic, Taoist, Buddhist, Latin American, Bantu, etc.), one which is multicultural, and engaged in a critical intercultural dialogue.

2 *ANTI-CARTESIAN MEDITATIONS: On the Origin of the Philosophical Anti-Discourse of Modernity*

This chapter is consciously and explicitly polemical.¹⁴⁰ It is polemical toward the disparaging belief in the existence of a “South of Europe” (and thereby Latin America), a belief that has been epistemically *constructed* by the Enlightenment from the center and north of Europe since the middle of the 18th century. The Enlightenment *constructed* (in an unconsciously deployed *making*¹⁴¹) three categories that concealed European “exteriority”: Orientalism (described by Edward Said), Eurocentric Occidentalism (fabricated by Hegel among others), and the existence of a “South of Europe.” This “South” *was* (in the past) the center of history around the Mediterranean (Greece, Rome, the Spanish and Portuguese Empires, not to mention the Arab world of the Maghreb, already discredited two centuries prior), but was already at that moment a cultural leftover, a cultural periphery, because for the 18th-century Europe of the Industrial Revolution, the entire Mediterranean was the “old world.” In de Pauw’s phrase: “Africa begins at the Pyrenees,” and the Iberian Americas, evidently, were situated as colonies of the already semi-peripheral Spain and Portugal. With that, Latin America simply “disappeared from the map and from history” until today, the beginning of the 21st century. The goal of this work - which will certainly be criticized as “pretentious” - is to attempt to begin reinstating these Americas within global geopolitics and the history of philosophy.

1. Was René Descartes the first modern philosopher?

We will begin with an enquiry into one European history of philosophy of the last two centuries. Such histories indicate not only the time of events but equally their geopolitical position. Modernity

originates - according to the common interpretation that we will attempt to refute - in a "place" and in a "time." The geopolitical "displacement" of this "place" and this "time" will mean equally a "philosophic," thematic, and paradigmatic displacement.

a. Where and when has the origin of Modernity been situated?

Stephen Toulmin writes:

Some people date the origin of modernity to the year 1436¹⁴², with Gutenberg's adoption of moveable type; some to A.D. 1520, and Luther's rebellion against Church authority; others to 1648, and the end of the Thirty Years' War; others to the American or French Revolution of 1776 or 1789; while modern times start for a few only in 1895 [...] ¹⁴³ Modern science and technology can thus be seen as the source either of blessings, or of problems, or both. In either case, their intellectual origin makes the 1630s the most plausible starting date for Modernity.¹⁴³

In general, and even for J. Habermas,¹⁴⁴ the origin of Modernity consists of a "movement" from South to North, and from the East of Europe to the West between the 15th and 17th centuries, which is approximately the following: a) from the Italian Renaissance of the *Cuattrocento* (not considered by Toulmin), b) the Lutheran reform in Germany, and c) the scientific Revolution of the 17th century, culminating in d) the bourgeois political Revolution in England, North America, and France. Note the curve of the process: from Italy, to Germany, to France, and toward England and the United States. Well, we need to refute this "enlightened" historical *construction* of the process at the origin of Modernity, since it represents an "intra" European, Eurocentric, self-centered, and ideological view, from the perspective of the centrality of Northern Europe that has prevailed since the 18th century, dominating even up to our own days.

Glimpsing the origin of Modernity through "new eyes" requires that we situate ourselves *outside* Germano-Latin Europe and see

it as outside observers ("engaged," clearly, but not the "zero point" of observation). So-called *medieval* or *feudal* Europe of the *Dark Ages* is nothing more than a Eurocentric mirage that was not self-discovered since the 7th century to be a *peripheral*, *secondary*, and *isolated* civilization, "cloistered" and "besieged" by the Muslim world, which had been more developed and connected with the history of Africa and Asia up to 1492. Europe had to interact with the great cultures of the eastern Mediterranean, which since 1453 - the seizure of Constantinople - were definitively Ottoman. Europe was "shut in" since the 7th century, which prevented - despite the efforts of the Crusades - any contact with the most weighty elements of the culture, technology, and economics of the "Old World" (what we have deemed the "3rd Stage of the inter-regional, Asiatic-Afro-Mediterranean system"¹⁴⁶).

We have studied this geographic-ideological relationship in various works.¹⁴⁷ To sum up the state of the question: Europe *was never the center of world history* until the end of the 18th century (let's say until 1800, only two centuries ago). It comes to be the center as an effect of the Industrial Revolution. But thanks to a mirage - as we have said - *the entirety of prior world history* appears dazzled by Eurocentrism (Max Weber's position) as though it had Europe at its heart. This distorts the phenomenon of the history of Modernity. Let's look once more at the case of Hegel.

In all of his *University Lectures*, Hegel espouses his subjects against the *background* and horizon of a certain specific categorization of world history. In his *Lectures on the Philosophy of History*,¹⁴⁸ he divides history into four moments: "the Oriental world,"¹⁴⁹ "the Greek world," "the Roman world," and the "Germanic world." Here we can see the - completely Eurocentric - schematic significance of this ideological construction; and what's more: it is Germano-centric from the North of Europe (since the negation of the South of Europe had already occurred). On the other hand, the "Germanic world" (he doesn't say "European") is itself divided into three moments: "the Germanic-Christian world" (ruling out the "Latin"), "the Middle Age" (without being situated geopolitically in world history), and "the modern age."

And the latter, in turn, has three moments: “the Reformation” (a Germanic phenomenon), “the constitutional reform” of the modern state, and “the Enlightenment and Revolution.”

In his *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion*,¹⁵⁰ again, Hegel divides history into three moments: a) “Natural religion” (comprising “primitive,” Chinese, Vedantic, Buddhist, Persian, and Syrian religions); b) “the religion of spiritual individuality” (Jewish, Greek, Roman), and, as its culmination, c.) “absolute religion,” (Christianity). The Orient is always propaedeutic, infantile, providing the “first steps.” The “Germanic world” (Northern Europe) is the end of history.

In his *Lectures on Aesthetics*,¹⁵¹ in another way, Hegel considers history to be the “development of the ideal of particular forms of artistic beauty” in three moments: a) “symbolic art forms” (Zoroastrianism, Brahmanism, Egyptian, Hindu, Mahomedan, and Mystic Christian art); b) “classical art forms” (Greek and Roman); and c) “the Romantic art form.” The latter is divided in three: a) that of primitive Christianity; b) the *caballeresco* of the Middle Ages; and c) that of the “formal autonomy of individual particularities” (which, as with the previous cases, deals with Modernity).

But nothing is better for dealing with our subject than the *Lectures on the History of Philosophy*.¹⁵² These begin with a) “Oriental philosophy” (according to the recently-constructed “Orientalism”), including Chinese and Hindu philosophy (Vedantic in Sankhara, and Buddhist in Gautama, among others). Hegel then passes to b) “Greek philosophy” (without dealing with Roman philosophy). This is followed by c) the “philosophy of the Middle Ages” (in two moments: a) “Arab philosophy,” which includes Jews, and b) “Scholastic philosophy” which culminates with the Renaissance and the Lutheran Reformation¹⁵³). Finally, he arrives at c) “Modern philosophy” (*Neuere Philosophie*). Here, we should pause. Hegel suspects some questions but doesn’t know how to sufficiently rationalize them. He writes of Modernity:

The human being acquires confidence in himself (*Zutrauen zu sich selbst*) [...] With the invention of gunpowder¹⁵⁴ individual

enmity disappears in warfare [...] Man¹⁵⁵ discovers America, its treasures and its people, he discovers nature, he discovers himself (*sich selbst*).¹⁵⁶

Having said this with regard to geopolitical conditions outside Europe, Hegel closes himself into a totally Euro-centered reflection. He thus attempts, in the first pages on Modern Philosophy, to explain the new situation of the philosopher toward socio-historic reality. His negative point of departure is the Middle Ages (for me, the “Third Stage” of the inter-regional system). “During the 16th and 17th centuries is when *true philosophy reappears*.”¹⁵⁷ In the first place, for Hegel this new philosophy unfolds: a) There is, on the one hand, a *realism* of the experience, which opposes “knowledge and the object over which it falls,”¹⁵⁸ having a source a₁) as observation of physical *nature*, and another, a₂) as *political* analysis of the “spiritual world of States.”¹⁵⁹ On the other hand, there is b), an *idealist* direction, in which “everything resides in thought and Spirit itself is the entire content.”¹⁶⁰

In the second place, Hegel details the central *problems* of the new philosophy (God and his deduction from pure spirit; the conception of good and evil; the question of freedom and necessity).

In the third place, he occupies himself with two historical phases. “a) First, the reconciliation is announced of those contradictions under the form of a few attempts [...] still insufficiently clear and precise; here we have Bacon [born in London in 1561¹⁶¹] and Jacob Boehme.”¹⁶² Both are born in the second half of the 16th century. “b) Metaphysical reconciliation. Here the authentic philosophy of this age commences: it begins with Descartes.”¹⁶³ Let’s think about what we have shown thus far.

In the first place, evidently, Hegel introduces Jacob Boehme (born in Alt-Seidenberg in 1575) who is a German, the mystical and popular thinker of the “Germanic interiority, representing an amusing and nationalist folkloric note; but nothing more. In the second place, although he attempts to speak of “historic-external factors of the life circumstances of philosophers,”¹⁶⁴ he doesn’t go beyond indicating sociological aspects that make the modern philosopher not a monk

but a common man of the street, one who “is not isolated from the rest of society.”¹⁶⁵ In no way does he imagine - in his Northern-European ignorance - the global geopolitical cataclysm that had occurred since the end of the 15th century in all cultures on Earth (in the Far East, Southeast Asia, India, Sub-Saharan Africa, and Indigenous North America, from the European invasion of the “fourth continent”).

It is within this provincial, Eurocentric view that Descartes appears in the historical discourse of Hegel as he who “initiates the authentic philosophy of the modern epoch” (*Cartesius fängt eigentlich die Philosophie der neueren Zeit an*).¹⁶⁶ We shall look into the question more closely.

b. Descartes and the Jesuits

René Descartes was born in France, in La Haye en Touraine in 1596, and died in 1650. That is to say, he lived during the beginning of the 17th century. An orphan shortly after birth, he was educated by his grandmother. In 1606, he entered Jesuit school in La Flèche, and it was there that - until 1615 - he would receive his only formal education in philosophy.¹⁶⁷ In other words, Descartes leaves home at ten years old, and the Jesuit priest Chastellier was like a second father to him. The first philosophical work that he would study was the *Disputationes Metaphysicae* by Francisco Suárez, published in 1597, a year after Descartes' birth.

It is known that the Spanish Basque Ignacio de Loyola - who is born almost at the same time as Modernity, in 1491, a year prior to Columbus's “discovery of the western Atlantic”; and dies in 1556, forty years before Descartes' birth - a philosophy student in Paris, founded schools to provide a philosophical education for clerics and young nobles or those from the well-to-do bourgeois classes. In 1603, the Jesuits were called by King Enrique - after having been expelled from France in 1591 - to - found the school of La Flèche in 1604, which was housed in an enormous palace on four square hectares donated to the priests by the King himself. The education provided, according to the Council of Trent - which “modernized,” by rationalizing, all

aspects of the Catholic Church - was completely "modern" in its *ratio studiorum*. Each Jesuit constituted a singular, independent, and modern *subjectivity*, performing daily an individual "examination of conscience," without communal choral hymns or prayers as was the case with medieval Benedictine monks.¹⁶⁸ Put differently, the young Descartes needed to withdraw into silence three times a day,¹⁶⁹ to reflect on his own subjectivity and "examine" with extreme *self-consciousness* and *clarity* the intention and content of every action, the actions carried out hour-by-hour, judging these actions according to the criterion that "man is raised to praise, revere, and serve God."¹⁷⁰ These examinations were a remembrance of St. Augustine of Hippo's *exercitatio animi*. It was a daily practice of the *ego cogito*: "I have self-consciousness of having done this and that"; all of which dominated the subjectivity in a disciplined manner (even prior to the Calvinism that M. Weber proposes as the capitalist ethic). These studies were extremely methodical:

They shall not study from textbooks or imperfectly the principal faculties, first they should go into their foundations, giving time and competent study [...] The faculties that all should ordinarily learn are: letters of humanities, logic, natural philosophy, and provided the necessary supplies [aparejo], some mathematics and moral, metaphysics, and scholastic theology [...] Without such study there should be an hour every day to debate whatever faculty is being studied [...] There should be public debates every Sunday after dinner.¹⁷¹

Hence the Young Descartes, from 1606 to 1611, would have engaged in the *lectio*, *repetitiones*, *sabbatinae disputationes*, and at the end of the month, the *menstruae disputationes*.¹⁷² In those exercises, students read Erasmus, Melanchthon, and Sturm, and texts by the "Brothers of the common life," although the most frequent was the Spanish Jesuit F. Suárez (who was alive during the time that Descartes studied philosophy and would only die in 1617, when Descartes left the school). He had therefore begun his properly philosophical education with the *Logic* (in approximately 1610, after his classical studies in Latin). He

studied it in the *consecrated* text used by all European schools of the Company, of which there were innumerable editions all over the old continent, from Italy and Spain to Holland and Germany, and also at that time in France. This was the *Logica mexicana sive Commentarii in universam Aristotelis Logicam* (Köln, 1606, the year in which René entered school at La Flèche) by the *Mexican* philosopher Antonio Rubio (1548-1615). “Who would have thought that Descartes studied the *hard part* of philosophy - the *Logic*, the *Dialectic* - in a book by a *Mexican* philosopher! This constitutes part of our argument. In 1612, he was introduced to mathematics and astronomy, as part of the curriculum we have seen. He would be occupied with metaphysics (Suárez’s *Disputationes Metaphysicae* is the first work that Descartes’ read according to his own confession, and as we have seen above), and the ethics during the years 1613 and 1614.

As we will see later, this work by Suárez - anticipated by suggestions by Pedro de Fonseca in Coimbra, as we will explain later - is not at this point a commentary on Aristotle’s *Metaphysics*, but rather the first *systematic* work on the subject (which would anticipate all ontologies of the 17th and 18th centuries, like those of Baumgarten, Leibniz, or Wolff, and those to which they referred explicitly).

At all moments of the “Cartesian argument,” one can observe the influence of his studies with the Jesuits. From the radical reflection of consciousness on itself in the *ego cogito*, to the “salvaging” of the empirical world through recourse to the Infinite (a question dealt under this name in Suárez’s *Disputatio* 28), demonstrating its existence in an Anselmian manner (a question dealt with in *Disputatio* 29), in order to on this basis reconstruct a mathematically-known real world. This *method* - which took mathematics as its model - was one of the subjects that were passionately debated in the halls of the Jesuit schools. Such schools, as is evident, come from Southern Europe, from Spain, from the 16th century, from the Mediterranean as it dumps into the Atlantic. Shouldn’t the 16th century, then, have some philosophical interest? Is Descartes not the fruit of a *prior* generation that prepared the path? Were there not *modern* Iberian-American philosophers before Descartes, who opened up the problematic of

modern philosophy?

c. Descartes and the Augustinianism of the *ego cogito*. The modern “new paradigm”

The subject of the *ego cogito*¹⁷⁴ has its Western and Mediterranean antecedents, although this does not undermine in any way its *novelty*. The references to Augustine of Hippo are undeniable, although Descartes occasionally tried to seem to not have been inspired by the great Roman rhetorician from Northern Africa. And nor did he admit the influence of Francisco Sánchez, or anyone else. In effect, during his time Augustine argued against the skepticism of the academics; Descartes against the skepticism of the libertines. To do so, he referred to the indubitable character of the *ego cogito*.

The subject always returns to *self-consciousness*, a philosophical question that also referred to a classic Aristotelian text from the *Nicomachean Ethics*, which would inspire Augustine, and later, among others, R. Descartes:

There exists a faculty by which we feel our acts [...]. He who sees feels (aisthánetai)¹⁷⁵ that he sees, he who hears [feels] that he hears, he who walks [feels] that he walks, and so in other things we feel (aisthanómenon) what we bring about. Because of this we can feel (aisthanómeth') what we feel (aisthanómetha) and know (noômen) what we know. But we feel and we think because we are, because to be (eînai) is to feel and to think.¹⁷⁶

We are dealing, then, with the phenomenon of “self-consciousness,” that should be defined according to Antonio Damasio as a “feeling”¹⁷⁷ neurologically linked to speech centers.¹⁷⁸

For his part, and in an analogous way, Augustine had written in the *De Trinitate*:

Yet who ever doubts that he himself lives, and remembers, and understands, and wills, and thinks, and knows, and judges? Seeing that even if he doubts, he lives...¹⁷⁹

Concerning these truths I do not fear any argument from the academics who say: What if you are mistaken? For if I am mistaken, I am.

This is why Mersenne, having scarcely read Descartes' *Discourse*, warned his friend of the similarity of his text with that of Augustine in *De civitate Dei*, book XI, chapter 26. Descartes responds that it seems to him that Augustine "has taken the text in a way other than the one I give it."¹⁸ Arnauld reacts in the same way, referring to the previously mentioned text *De Trinitate*. Descartes would later, in his responses to the objections raised against the *Meditations*, suggest still another text.¹⁹ We could say, then, that Descartes had certainly read and been inspired by Augustine, which doesn't take away from the new and profound meaning of his argument - one which not only refutes the skeptic, but bases subjectivity on itself, an intention completely absent in Augustine, who had to base it on God, and moreover this was never a solipsistic subjectivity in the case of the Carthaginian. This new foundation - sensed in the ontological experience of 1619 alongside the Rhine - still needed register itself within the Augustinian tradition:

Augustine's method is of the same nature as Descartes' [...] Because [Descartes], as a mathematician, decides to set out from thought, [and] will no longer be able, as a metaphysician, [to?] set out from a thought other than his own. Because he has decided to go from thought to the thing he will no longer be able to define his thought other than by the content that said thought exhibits to the intuition that learns it [...] A metaphysic of the distinction between body and soul had in Augustine a powerful support [...] as with] the proof of the existence of God [...] that] San Anselmo had deemed necessary to modify and simplify [...] being] the only escape offered to Descartes.¹⁸⁸

So Descartes took mathematics - on Francisco Suárez's third level of abstraction²⁰ - as the prototypical mode for the use of reason. He discovered thus a *new philosophical paradigm*, which while known

among earlier philosophy, had never been used in such an ontologically reductive way. The metaphysic of the individual, modern *ego* - the *paradigm of solipsistic consciousness* (as K.-O. Apel would say) - began its long history.

d. *Ratio mathematica*, epistemic rationalism, and subjectivity as foundation for the political domination of colonial, colored, female bodies

Anthropologically - which is to say ethically and politically - Descartes faced an aporia that he would never be able to resolve. On the one hand, he needed the *ego* of the *ego cogito* to be a soul independent of all materiality, all extension. The soul was, for Descartes, a *res*, but a “thing” which was spiritual, immortal, a substance separate from the body:

[...] I have thereby come to know that I was a substance (substance) whose essence in its totality or nature consisted only in thinking, and that, to be, needed no place, nor did it depend on any material thing. Such that this I (moi), that is, my soul (*âme*), as a result of which I am what I am, was totally distinct from the body, and was even easier to know than that body, and that even if that body didn't exist my soul would not cease to be everything that it is.¹⁸⁵

After the appearance in 1637 of the *Discourse*, and later of the *Meditations*, Arnauld felt that Descartes “attempted to prove too much,”¹⁸⁶ since by categorically affirming the independent substantiality of the “soul” (*res cogitans*), it was then impossible for him to unite that soul with an equally substantial body (*res extensa*). Regius, more clearly, showed that the only solution that remained for him was the *accidental* unity (*per accidens*) of soul and body.

Descartes therefore needed to assert the substantiality of the soul in order to have all of the sufficient guarantees for skeptics of the possibility of a *mathesis universale*; of a certainty without the possibility of doubt. But in order to be able to include the problem

of feelings, imagination, and passions, he needed to define how **the** body (a quasi-perfect *machine*, consisting only of *quantity*) **could** come to be present in the soul. Moreover, after the existence of **God** was ensured - through a purely *a priori* Anselmian proof - he **then** needed to be able as well to access a real, physical, "external world." The body was the necessary mediation. Hence Descartes fell into a circle: to open himself up to an *external world* he needed to be able to assume the *union* of body and soul; but the *union* of body and soul was based on the assumption of an *external world* opened up to **us** by our feelings, imagination, and passions, that have been put into question by the *cogito*. Gilson writes:

From the moment at which Descartes decides to unify the soul and the body, it becomes difficult for him [...] to distinguish them. Not being able to think them except as two, he must nevertheless feel them as one.¹⁸⁷

Thinking the body as a machine without quality - purely quantitative - an object of mathematics, mechanics - complicates Descartes' hypothesis with regard to two objections. The first: how can a physical machine *communicate* with an immaterial substance? The hypothesis of the "animal spirits" (transported in the blood) that unite with the body in the "pineal gland" was not convincing. The second: how can the passions *move* or *withhold* the cognitive activity of the soul? As hard as Descartes tries he can never show that the passions, linked to the body, connect to the soul and the cognitive activity that moves it. Moreover, since the body is a purely quantitative machine, and the passions would necessitate a qualitative organism, they themselves remain totally ambiguous.

That pure machine would not show skin color or race (it is clear that Descartes thinks only from the basis of the white race), and **nor** obviously its sex (he equally thinks only on the basis of the male sex), and it is that of a European (he doesn't sketch nor does he refer to a colonial body, an Indian, an African slave, or an Asian). The quantitative indeterminacy of any *quality* will also be the beginning of all illusory abstractions about the "zero point"¹⁸⁸ of modern

philosophical subjectivity and the constitution of the body as a quantifiable commodity with a price (as is the case in the system of slavery or the capitalist wage).

2. The crisis of the “old paradigm” and the first modern philosophers. The *ego conquiro*: Ginés de Sepúlveda

But prior to Descartes the entire 16th century had passed, a period which modern, central-European and North American philosophy attempts to ignore up to the present. In effect, the most direct way of providing a basis for the praxis of trans-oceanic colonial domination - a coloniality which is simultaneously the very origin of Modernity, and as a result a world-historical novelty - is to show that the dominant culture grants the benefits of civilization to the most backward (a “stupidity” that Ginés will call *turditatem* in Latin and I. Kant will deem *unmündigkeit*¹⁸⁹). This argument, which lies beneath all modern philosophy (from the 16th to the 21st century) is put forward masterfully and with great impact for the first time by Ginés de Sepúlveda (+1573), a student of the Renaissance philosopher P. Pomponazzi (1462-1524), in the Valladolid debate beginning in 1550, promoted by Carlos V (1500-1558) in the manner of the Islamic Caliphates to “reassure his conscience.” This was an “Atlantic” dispute - no longer “Mediterranean,” between Christians and “Saracens” - which sought to understand the ontological status of the “Indians.” These were “barbarians” different from those of Greece, China, or the Muslim world, that Montaigne - with a profoundly critical implications - defined as cannibals (or indigenous Caribes¹⁹⁰), that is, those “we can call barbarians with respect to *our rules* of reason.”¹⁹¹ Ginés writes:

It will always be just and in conformity with natural law that such [barbaric] peoples be subjected to the empire of princes and nations that are more cultured and humane, so that by their virtues and the prudence of their laws, they abandon barbarism and are subdued by a more humane life and the cult of virtue.¹⁹²

This is a reworking of Aristotle, the Greek philosopher of slavery in the eastern Mediterranean, but one now situated on the horizon of the Atlantic Ocean, which is to say, one with global significance:

And if they reject such an empire, it can be imposed on them by way of arms, and such a war would be just according to the declarations of natural law [...] In sum: it is just, convenient, and in conformity with natural law that those honorable, intelligent, virtuous, and human men dominate all those who lack these qualities.¹⁹⁴

This tautological argument - which is such because it sets out from *the superiority of its own culture* simply because it is its own - will be imposed throughout all of Modernity. The content of other cultures, for being different from one's own culture, is declared non-human, as when Aristotle declared Asians and Europeans to be barbarians, because the only "humans" were "those residents who lived in the [Hellenic] cities."¹⁹⁴

The most serious part of this philosophical argument is that just war against the indigenous peoples is justified for the very fact of having impeded the "conquest," which to the eyes of Ginés is the necessary "violence" that needed to be exercised in order to civilize the barbaric, because if they were civilized there would no longer be any cause for just war:

When the pagans are no more than pagans [...] there is no just cause to punish them, nor to attack them with arms: such that, if some cultured, civilized, and humane people are found in the New World, that do not adore idols, but instead the true God [...] war would be unlawful.¹⁹⁵

The cause of just war was not being pagans, but being uncivilized. So the cultures of the Aztec Empire, of the Mayans, or of the Incas were not an indication for Ginés of high civilization. And, on the other hand, the ability to find another people who might adore "the true God" (who was European, Christian) was an absurd condition. For that reason, the war of conquest against "backward" peoples was

tautologically justified, but always through an argument that included the “developmentalist fallacy”:

But look how much they fool themselves and how much I disagree with such an opinion, seeing on the contrary in these [Aztec or Inca] institutions proof of the coarse and innate servitude of these men [...] They have [this is true] a republican institutional structure, but no one possesses anything as their own,¹⁹⁶ not a house, not a field at their disposal to leave in their will to their heirs [...] subjects of the will and caprice [of their bosses] rather than their own liberty [...]. All this [...] is an absolutely clear indication of the submissive and slavish mindset of these barbarians.¹⁹⁷

And he concludes cynically by showing that the Europeans educate the indigenous peoples in “the virtue, the humanity, and the true religion [that] are more valuable than the gold and silver”¹⁹⁸ that the Europeans brutally extract from the American mines.

Once the justice of European expansion is proven to be a civilizing task, emancipating those living in barbarity, the rest - armed conquest, the plunder of the gold and silver mentioned, the abstract declaration of Indians but not their cultures as being “human,” a political structure in which power resides in colonial institutions, the dogmatic imposition of a foreign religion, etc. - is justified. Earlier, Juan Mayor (1469-1550), a professor in Paris, a Scottish Scotist, had written in his *Comentario a las Sentencias* in reference to the American Indians: “those people live bestially (*bestialiter*) [...] and so those who first conquer them will rule justly over them, because they are *slaves by nature* (*quia natura sunt servi*).”¹⁹⁹

The entire argument is based politically - in the final instance - on the right that the King of Spain had to such colonial domination. In book I, title 1, law 1 of the *Recopilación de las Leyes de los Reynos de las Indias* (1681) we read: “God our Master in his infinite mercy and goodness has given us without us deserving it such a large part in the *Dominion of this world* [...]”²⁰⁰ This concession granted by the papal bull *Inter caetera* of 1493 and signed by the Pope served as a political

(and religious) justification, but not a philosophical one. As a result, the argument offered by Ginés was necessary and complementary.

There is a final argument that I would like to recall, and it is the following: "The second cause is to exile unspeakable stupidities [...] and to save from great injury the many innocent mortals that these barbarians sacrificed every year."²⁰¹ That is to say, war was justified to rescue the human victims offered up to the gods, as in Mexico. We will see later the surprising response from Bartolomé de las Casas.

3. The first *early modern academic-metaphysical* philosopher: Francisco Suárez

The impact of the modern invasion of the Americas, of the European expansion to the western Atlantic, produced a crisis in the old philosophical paradigm, but without yet formulating another, *entirely new* one - as Descartes, setting out from 16th-century developments, would attempt to do. It bears mentioning that 16th century philosophical production in Spain and Portugal was linked on a daily basis to Atlantic events, with the opening of Europe to the world. The Iberian Peninsula was the European territory that most lived the effervescence of the unexpected discoveries. News arrived constantly from the overseas provinces, from Spanish America and the Philippines to Spain; from Brazil, Africa, and Asia to Portugal. Philosophy professors in universities in Salamanca, Valladolid, Coimbra, or Braga - which, since 1581, functioned as a single university system due to the unity of Spain and Portugal - had students who arrived from or set out for those territories, and the subjects related to those worlds were worrying and well-known to them. No European university north of the Pyrenees had such a *global experience*. So-called "Second Scholasticism" was not a simple repetition of what had already been said in the Latin Middle Ages. The irruption into the universities of a completely *modern* religious order - but not simply through being influenced by Modernity, but instead through being *one of the intrinsic causes of that very Modernity*²⁰² - the Jesuits drove the first steps of a modern philosophy in Europe.

The philosophical thought of the new *modern* order that was the Jesuits, founded in 1536, is of interest to any history of Latin American philosophy, since they arrived in Brazil in 1549 and in Peru in 1566, when the conquest and colonial institutional order had been definitively established in the Indies. They no longer called the established order into question, turning their attention instead to the two "pure" races on the continent: the Creoles (children of the Spanish born in the Americas) and the indigenous Amerindian population. Race, as Aníbal Quijano has shown, was the habitual mode of social classification in early Modernity. Mestizos and Africans did not have the same dignity. As a result, in Jesuit schools and *haciendas* there were African slaves who worked so that the benefits could then be invested in missions for Indians.

For its part, on the Iberian Peninsula there was a simultaneous development, because in reality colonial Ibero-America and metropolitan Spain and Portugal constituted a philosophical world, continually and mutually influencing one another. We will see some of those great masters of philosophy of the first early Modernity, who will then open the way to the *second* early Modernity (that of the Amsterdam of Descartes and Spinoza, the latter being a Hispanic or Sephardic Jew even by philosophical training).

In this, we cannot leave out Pedro de Fonseca (1528-1597), as one of the creators in Portugal of so-called *Baroque Scholasticism* (1550-1660).²⁰³ Between 1548 and 1551 he studied in Coimbra, where he began to teach from 1552. His most famous work is the *Commentaries on the Metaphysics of Aristotle* (1577),²⁰⁴ and his writings were published, in many editions (up to 36 times in the case of his commentary on the *Metaphysics*), in Lyon, Coimbra, Lisbon, Colonia, Venice, Mayence, and Strasbourg.

Although not Fonseca's personal work, he educated the team of Jesuits - among them Marcos Jorge, Cipriano Soares, Pedro Gomes, Manuel de Góis, and others - who proposed to completely modify philosophical exposition, to make it more pedagogical, profound, and modern, incorporating recent discoveries, critiquing old methods, and innovating in all subjects. The course went into publication

in 1592, in eight volumes that concluded in 1606, under the title *Commentarii Collegii Conimbricensis*, a fundamental text for students and professors of philosophy alike across all of Europe (Descartes and Leibniz, for example, praised its soundness).

Descartes proposes in his famous work a reflection on *method*. This was the preferred subject of 16th-century Coimbrian philosophers,²⁰⁵ inspired by the problematic opened up by, among others, R. Agrícola (1442-1485), who would influence Pedro Ramo, in his treatises in *Dialectics*, which was where method was studied. Luis Vives (1492-1540) would equally be influential on the question of method, and Fonseca himself, in his famous work *Dialectical Institutions* (1564),²⁰⁶ identified “method” as “the art of reasoning about whatever probable question” (I, 2). After innovative clarifications, Fonseca indicates that “methodological order has three objectives: to solve problems, to reveal the unknown, and the clarify the confusing,”²⁰⁷ using mathematical method as his example, which leads to a *sui generis* “topical-metaphysical essentialism,” which in some ways anticipates Cartesian method.

For his part, Francisco Suárez (1548-1617) - from the same order and with the same renovating impulse - represented the culmination of the work of his predecessors. He was professor in Salamanca from 1570 and also in Coimbra and Rome, and his *Disputationes Metaphysicae* (1597) can be considered the first modern ontology. He abandoned the mode of exposition of the *Commentaries* on Aristotle, and for the first time set forth a systematic book that would mark all later ontologies (we have already mentioned Baumgarten, Wolff - and through his intermediary Kant - Leibniz; but we could add moreover all those from A. Schopenhauer to M. Heidegger and X. Zubiri). He had an exemplary independence of spirit, using great philosophical masters but never confining himself to any one of them. After Aristotle and St. Thomas Aquinas, it was Duns Scotus who most inspired him. Suárez's work is of a systematic order. In the first 21 *Disputas*, he deals with ontology in general, and from the 28th on, as we have seen, he enters into the question of the “Infinite Being” and the “finite being.” The *Disputationes Metaphysicae*²⁰⁸ appeared in 19 editions from 1597

to 1751, eight of these in Germany, where the work replaced for a century and a half the manuals of Melanchthon.

For his originality and possible influence on Descartes, we should also mention Francisco Sánchez (1551-1623), a Portuguese thinker who penned an innovative work entitled *Quod nihil scitur* (*That Nothing is Known*) - which appeared in Lyon in 1581 and was republished in Frankfurt in 1628 - from which it is possible that Descartes took some ideas for his crowning work. In Sánchez's work, the proposal was to arrive at a fundamental certainty by way of doubt. Fundamental science is that which can prove that *nihil scimus* (we know nothing): "Quod magis cogito, magis dubito" (the more I think, the more I doubt). The later development of such a science should be, firstly, *Methodus sciende* (the method of knowing); then, *Examen rerum* (the observation of things); and thirdly, *De essentia rerum* (the essence of things). As a result, although "scientia est rei perfecta cognitio" (science is perfect knowledge of things), in reality this is never achieved.

Similarly, Gómez Pereira - a Sephardic Jewish convert born in Medina del Campo, and later a famous doctor and philosopher who studied in Salamanca - wrote an autobiographical scientific treatise (like the *Discourse on Method*) under the strange title *Antoniana Margarita, opus nempe physicis, medicis ac theologis....* There, after he puts in doubt all certainties like the nominalists, we read that: "Nosco me aliquid noscere, et quidquid noscit est, ergo ego sum" (I know that I know something, and he who is capable of knowing something, therefore that is me).²⁰⁹ In the philosophical environment of the 16th century a certain skepticism toward the old would open the doors to the new philosophical paradigm of 17th-century Modernity.

The influence of these authors from the South in Central Europe and the Low Countries was decisive at the beginning of the 17th century: they ruptured the structure of the old (Arab-Latin) paradigm (of the Middle Ages).

4. The first philosophical anti-discourse of *early* Modernity. The critique of the Europe of the World-Empire: Bartolomé de las Casas (1514-1566)

Although he came prior to the other thinkers explained above, we have left the philosophical position of Bartolomé de las Casas (1484-1566) for last in order to show with greater clarity the difference between his and other positions. Bartolomé represents the *first head-on critic of Modernity*, two decades after its birth. But his originality is not to be located in *Logic* or *Metaphysics*, but rather in *Ethics*, in *Politics*, and in *History*. It all begins on a Sunday in November 1511, when Antón de Montesinos and Pedro de Córdoba launched in the city of Santo Domingo the first critique of the colonialism inaugurated by Modernity. On the basis of Semitic texts (from *Isaiah* and *John* 1, 23) they exclaimed: “*Ego vox clamantis in deserto* [...] *I am a voice* [...] *in the desert of this island* [...] you are all amid mortal sin, and in it you live and die, for the cruelty and tyranny that you use toward these innocent victims.”²¹⁰ This is an accusative *ego clamo*, which criticizes the new established order; an *I criticize* in the presence of the *ego conquiro* that inaugurated Modernity:

Are they [the Indians] not men? Do they not have rational souls? Are you not obligated to love them as you love yourselves? [...] How can you be in such a deep dream and so lethargically asleep?²¹¹

The entirety of Modernity, during five centuries, would remain in this state of “lethargy” of *ethical-political consciousness*, as if “asleep,” without “feeling”²¹² toward the pain of the peripheral world of the South.

Only three years afterward, and not unrelated to this critical irruption in Santo Domingo, but now in 1514 in Cuba, in the hamlet of Sancti Spiritus, and three years before M. Luther put forward his theses in Erfurt and Machiavelli published his *Il Principe*, Bartolomé de las Casas clearly grasped the meaning of this critique. When Europe still had not awoken from the shock provoked by the *discovery* (for

Europe) of an entire New World, Bartolomé had already begun his *critique* of the negative effects of this modern process of civilization.

In a strictly philosophical and argumentative manner, Bartolomé refutes, a) the claim of the superiority of Western culture, from which the barbarism of indigenous cultures was deduced; b) with an exceedingly creative philosophical position he defines the clear difference between, b₁) granting the Other (the Indian) the universal claim of his truth, b₂) without ceasing to honestly affirm the very possibility of a universal validity claim in his proposal in favor of the gospel; and finally, c) he demonstrates the falseness of the last possible cause justifying the violence of the conquest, that of saving the victims of human sacrifice, as being against natural law and unjust from all points of view. He proves all this argumentatively in his voluminous works written amid continuous political struggles, on the basis of a valiant praxis and confronting failures that do not bend his will to serve those recently-discovered and unjustly-treated inhabitants of the New World: the Other of this nascent Modernity.

The life of de las Casas can be divided into stages that allow us to discover his theoretical-philosophical development: from his arrival in the Caribbean to the day of his rupture with a life of complicity with the conquistadors (1502-1514). He was a young soldier under Velásquez in Cuba, and later a Catholic priest (ordained in Rome in 1510) on an *encomienda* in Sancti Spiritus, until April of 1514, when he read the text of *Ben Sira* 34, 20-22, in a liturgical celebration requested by governor Velásquez: "To offer in sacrifice that which is stolen from the poor is to kill the child in the presence of the father. Bread is the life of the poor, and whosoever takes it away commits murder. To take away the food of one's fellow man is to kill them; to deprive them of a the salary owed is to spill their blood."²¹³ And in an autobiographical text, Bartolomé wrote:

He began to consider the misery and servitude that those people [the Indians] suffer [...] Applying the one [the Semitic text] to the other [the reality of the indigenous Caribes] he determined within himself, convinced of the truth, that all

that in these Indies was committed toward the Indians was unjust and tyrannical.²¹⁴

And that early philosopher still refers:

In confirmation of which everything he read he found favorable and he was accustomed to say and affirm, that, from the first moment that he began to reject the darkness of that ignorance, he never read in a Latin volume any reason or authority to prove and corroborate the justice of those Indian peoples, and for the condemnation of the injustices done to them, and evils and damages.²¹⁵

From 1514 to 1523 were years in which Bartolomé traveled to Spain, receiving counsel from Cisneros (regent of the Kingdom), and from the King, in preparation for a peaceful community of Spanish farmers who would need to share their lives with the Indians in Cumaná (the first project for peaceful colonization), returning to Santo Domingo after the failure of this plan. The new period (1523-1539) would be one of long years of study for Bartolomé, and the beginning in 1527 of his *History of the Indies* - a book which must be read through the optic of a new philosophy of history - as well as his monumental *Apologetic History of the Indies*, in which he begins to describe the exemplary development and the ethical life of the Amerindian civilizations, against criticisms of their barbarism:

It has been published that they were not people with sufficient reason to govern themselves, lacking humane policies and well-ordered republics [...] For the demonstration of the truth which is the opposite, [innumerable examples] are brought and compiled in this book. With regard to politics, I should say, not only did they show themselves to be very prudent peoples with sharp and notable understanding of their republics [...] prudently governed, well-equipped, and with thriving justice [...] ²¹⁶ All these universes and infinite peoples of all types God made the simplest, without evilness or deceitfulness, extremely obedient and faithful to their natural mas-

ters, without quarrels or tumult, that there are in the world.²¹⁷

He thereby proves that they were in many ways superior to the Europeans, and certainly from the ethical perspective of strict fulfillment of their own values. It is for this reason that they cannot handle - and bursts in an immense cholera - the violent brutality with which the modern Europeans destroyed these "infinite peoples":

Those who have passed through there, who call themselves Christians [but are not in fact] have had two general manners and principles, in eradicating and scraping off the face of the earth those pitiable nations. The one, through unjust, cruel, and bloody wars. The other, after all those who would be able to yearn or long for or think of liberty had died,²¹⁸ all those who could escape the storms they suffer, as is the case with all natural masters and men (because commonly wars only leave women and the young alive), oppressing them with the harshest and most horrible servitude in which man or beast could ever be put.²¹⁹

In 1537 - a century prior to Descartes' *Discourse on Method*²²⁰ - Bartolomé writes in Latin *De unico modo* (*Concerning the Only Way of Drawing All Peoples to the True Religion*), and with this work in hand undertook peaceful preaching among the indigenous people who would later receive the name of Vera Paz in Guatemala. Of that part of the book that has reached us (only chapters five to seven),²²¹ what most calls the attention is the theoretical power of the author, his enthusiasm for the subject, and the enormous bibliography that must have been at his disposal in Guatemala City at that time. It is a breathtaking intellectual work. With exacting logic, with an extraordinary knowledge of Semitic texts - from the Greek and Latin tradition of the Church Fathers and Medieval-Latin philosophy - with an imperturbable sense of distinctions, he proceeds by wearing down arguments with a profuse quantity of citations, such that even today he would be envied as a detailed and prolific writer.

Bartolomé was 53 years old, with a population of conquistadors

against him, and an indigenous Mayan world he didn't know concretely by respected as equals. This was a manifesto of intercultural philosophy, of political pacifism, and a sound and anticipatory critique of all "just wars" (like that justified by John Locke) of Modernity (from the conquest of Latin America - which extended afterward through the Puritan conquest of New England - Africa and Asia, and the colonial wars right up to the Persian Gulf War and the Iraq and Afghanistan wars of our own times). It would be useful for European and North American leaders to re-read this crowning critique at the very moment of the *critical* origin of modern thought.

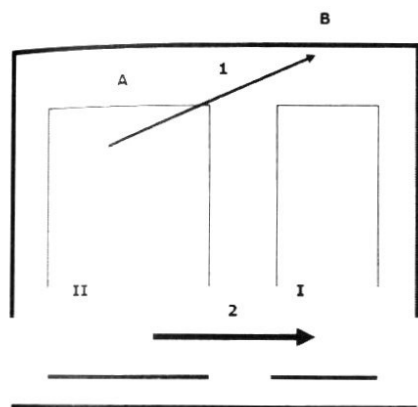
The central argument is formulated philosophically in the following way:

The understanding voluntarily knows when that which it knows is not immediately manifested as true, being as a result necessary a prior reasoning in order to be able to accept that what is at stake is the case of a true thing [...] proceeding from a known thing and another unknown by way of the discourse of reason.²²²

To accept what the Other says as true entails a practical act, an *act of faith* in the Other that intends to say something true, and this "because understanding is the beginning of the human act that contains the root of freedom [...]. Effectively, he reasons that all freedom depends on the mode of being of knowledge, is because the understanding only understands to the degree that the will desires."²²³ Having come some centuries before discourse ethics, Bartolomé recommended for this "to study the nature and principles of rhetoric."²²⁴ That is to say, the *only* way to attract members of a foreign culture to a doctrine unknown to them is - applying the art of persuasion ("a persuasive mode, by way of reasons in terms of understanding, and *gently attractive* in relation to the will"²²⁵) - to count on the free will of the listener in order that, without coercion, they might rationally accept the reasons given. It is clear that fear, punishment, the use of weapons and warfare, are the furthest possible thing from this sort of possible acceptance of argumentation.

Bartolomé is clear that the imposition of a theory onto the Other by force, by arms, was the mere expansion of “the Same” as “the same.” It was the dialectical inclusion of the Other in a strange world, as an instrument, alienated.²²⁶

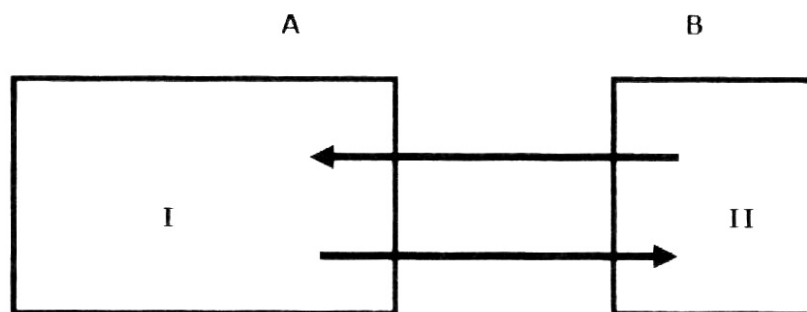
Diagram 3: *The Violent Movement of the Expansion of Modernity*



Clarifications of the figure: I. Indigenous World. II. Modern European World. A. European ontological horizon. B. Horizon of the inclusion of the Other in the project of the modern-colonial World-Empire. 1. Violent act of modern expansion (the conquest, which situated the indigenous world I as a *thing*, an *objectum dominatum*).²²⁷ 2. The act of domination by the modern over the peripheral world.

To the contrary, Las Casas proposes a double act of faith: a) in the Other as other (because if the equal dignity of the Other is not affirmed and if one does not believe in its questioning then there is no possibility of rational ethical agreement); and b) in the assumption that the Other will accept the proposed new doctrine, which also demands an act of faith from that Other. For this it is necessary that the Other be free, that it *voluntarily* accept the reasons proposed to it.

Diagram 4: *The Movement of Faith in the Word of the Other as Responsibility to the Other*



Clarifications of the figure: Firstly: I. Christian World (Las Casas). II. Indigenous World. A. Ontological horizon of the Christian. B. Alterity of the Other. 1. Appeal of the Other to indigenous justice. 2. Faith of Bartolomé in the word of the Other (the revelation of **their** other culture). In the second place, if the situation were inverted now, I would be the indigenous world and 1 the rational interrogation **by** Bartolomé de las Casas. That interrogation should have been followed by argumentation, whose *reasons* would - through the “gente motion of the will”²⁸ - allow the Other (the indigenous) (arrow 2) to accept **the** proposals of those who did not use weapons to propose Christianity (II: Bartolomé de las Casas).

Having practiced the peaceful method of indoctrinating **the** Mayans in Vera Paz, Bartolomé sets out for Spain, where thanks **to** many struggles he achieves the promulgation of the *New Laws of* 1542, which gradually eliminate the “*encomiendas*” throughout **the** Indies. This is a period of many argumentative writings in defense **if** the Indians: Modernity’s Other. He is named Bishop of Chiapas, **but** is forced to resign shortly thereafter in response to the violence **of** the conquistadors (not only against the Mayans, but also against **the** Bishop himself).

From 1547 he is based in Spain, but still crossing the Ocean **on**

several occasions. It is there that he drafts the majority of his mature works. In 1550 he confronts Ginés de Sepúlveda in Valladolid, in *the first public and central philosophical debate of Modernity*. The perennial question to Modernity will be: What right does Europe have to colonially dominate the Indies? Once this subject is resolved - one refuted convincingly by Las Casas, but which fails categorically in the modern colonial praxis of the absolute monarchies and the capitalist system as a world-system - Modernity will *never again*, up to the present, ask existentially or philosophically for this right to dominate the periphery. Rather, this right to domination will be imposed *as the nature of things* and will *underpin* all modern philosophy. Put differently, modern philosophy after the 16th century will be developed with the obvious and hidden - but never *rational* - need (because it is impossible and irrational) to provide an ethical and political foundation for European expansion, which doesn't contradict the imposition of said domination as an incontrovertible *fact* of having built a global system on the basis of the continuous exploitation of the periphery. The *first modern philosophy of early Modernity* still had a restless conscience toward the injustice committed, and refuted its legitimacy.

It is for this reason that we would like to return to two rational arguments that prove the injustice of the colonial expansion of Modernity. Refuting the false argument that the idols revered by the indigenous peoples could serve as cause for a war to exterminate them. Bartolomé argues the following:

Since they [the Indians] take pleasure in insisting [...] that, in worshipping their idols, *they worship the true God* [...] and despite the assumption that they have an erroneous consciousness, until the true God preaches to them *with better and more credible and convincing arguments*, above all with examples of Christian conduct, they are, without a doubt, *obligated to defend the cult to their gods and their religion and use armed force* against any who attempts to deprive them of that cult [...]; they are thus obligated to battle against them, kill them,

capture them, and exercise all those rights which are the corollaries of a just war, in accordance with the law of peoples.²²⁹

This text demonstrates that there are many philosophical levels to analyze. What is essential is to grant the Indians a universal truth claim (since from their perspective, “they worship the *true* God”), which doesn’t mean that Las Casas himself would not have the same claim (since Las Casas believes that theirs is an “erroneous consciousness”).

Las Casas grants such a claim to the Indians because they have not been given “credible and convincing arguments.” And since they have not been provided with such arguments, they have every right to assert their convictions, defending them to the point of the possibility of a just war.²³⁰ In other words, the proof offered by Ginés is inverted: it isn’t that their “barbarism” or their false gods justify a just war against them, but rather quite the opposite, that the fact of having “true gods” (until the opposite is proven) is what gives them reason to declare a just war against the European invaders.

The argument reaches the paroxysm of confronting the most difficult objection for a Christian, one proposed by Ginés, who justifies the war conducted by the Spanish in order to save the lives of the innocent victims of human sacrifices to the Aztec gods. Las Casas reasons in the following way:

Men, according to natural law, are obligated to honor God with the best means at their disposal and offer them the best things as sacrifice [...] However, it is up to human law and positive legislation to determine what things should be offered to God; the latter already confided in the entire community [...]. Nature itself dictates and teaches [...] that in the absence of a positive law ordering the opposite even human victims *should* be sacrificed to that God which, true or false, is *considered to be true*, so that by offering him the most precious thing, they show themselves to be especially thankful for so many benefits received.²³¹

Once again we can see, as always, that by granting the Other the

claim to truth - "false, considered [by them, until the contrary is proven] to be true" - Bartolomé arrives at what we could call "the maximum possible degree of *critical* consciousness for a European in the Indies." This was still not the *critical* consciousness of the Indian herself, but the argument is so original that he would later confess that "I had and proved many conclusions that *no man before me had ever touched upon or written*, and one of these was to not oppose the law or natural reason [...] of offering men to God, false or true (holding the false as true), in sacrifice."²³² With this, he concludes that the effort of Ginés to justify the conquest in order to save the human victims of sacrifice not only does not prove what it proposes to, but rather demonstrates that the indigenous - by considering these sacrifices to be the most honorable to offer, according to their beliefs (which have not been refuted with convincing arguments) - have the right, if prevented by force from carrying out such sacrifices, to engage in war, in this case a "just war," against the Spanish.

In terms of Political Philosophy, moreover, and a century before T. Hobbes and B. Spinoza, Bartolomé de las Casas defines his position in favor of the law of the people (in this case the Indian people) against the prevailing institutions, and even the King himself, when these fail to fulfill the conditions of legitimacy or respect the freedom of members of the republic. On the occasion in which the *encomenderos* in Peru wanted to pay a tribute to the King for practically appropriating forever the services of the Indians, Bartolomé wrote *De regia potestate*, which should be considered alongside his *De thesauris* and the *Treatise of Twelve Doubts*. In the first of these works, he tells us:

No king or governor, however supreme, may order or mandate anything concerning the republic to the harm or detriment of the people (*populi*) or subjects, without having had their consensus (*consensus*) in licit and due form. Anything else would not be valid (valet) by law [...] No one can legitimately (*legitime*) [...] cause harm of any sort to the freedom of their people (*libertati populorum suorum*); if someone were to decide against the common utility of the people, without enjoying

the consensus of that people (*consensus populi*), such decisions would be null and void. Freedom (*libertas*) is the most precious and admirable thing that free people can have.³²

This threatened the King's claim to exercise absolute power. Las Casas understands clearly that the seat of power resides in the people, among the subjects - not merely between the kingdoms that signed the pact with the King or Queen of Castile - and as a result the legitimacy of political decisions was based on the prior consensus of the people. We are in the first century of *early* Modernity, before the consolidation of the myth of European Modernity as the obvious and universal civilization that exercises power according to universal law over the colonies and the globe (Carl Schmitt's *ius gentium europium*), a myth definitively fetishized in Hegel's *Philosophy of Law*.³³ As Bartolomé de Las Casas explains:

All infidels, of whatever sect or religion they were [...] with regard to natural or divine law, and that which they call the law of peoples, justly have and possess dominion over their things [...] And also according to the same justice they possess their principalities, kingdoms, states, ranks, jurisdictions, and lordships. The regent or governor cannot be other than he who the entire society and community chose in the beginning.³⁴

The Roman Pope and the Spanish Kings - under the obligation to "preach the gospel" - granted a "right over things" (*iure in re*),³⁵ that is, over the Indians. But Bartolomé again writes that said right *only* operates *in potentia*, needing the intervention of a consensus by the indigenous to operate *in actu*. Since such consent has never existed, the conquest is illegitimate, and so he correctly concludes that:

Hence the King, our lord, is obligated by the threat of being denied salvation, to restore those kingdoms to King Tito [as a surviving Inca was called], the successor and heir of Gayna Cápac and the other Incas, and grant him all force and power.

We are dealing with the most rationally argued work of early Modernity - the first *modern* philosophy - which meticulously refuted the proofs that had been given in favor of a justification for modern Europe's colonial expansion. We are dealing, as we have tried to show, with the *first anti-discourse of Modernity* (an anti-discourse that was itself philosophical and modern), inaugurating a tradition within which there would always be representatives during the entire history of Latin American philosophy throughout the five following centuries.

This critical philosophical anti-discourse offered by Las Casas would be used by the rebels of the Low Countries (Holland) to emancipate themselves from Spain in the early 17th century; it would again be re-read during the North American Revolution, the independence of the Latin American colonies in 1810, and in other processes of profound transformation that took place on the continent. Politically defeated, his philosophy would nevertheless radiate outward up to the present day.

5. The critique of Modernity from “radical exteriority.” The critical anti-discourse of Felipe Guamán Poma de Ayala

But the *maximum universally-possible consciousness* is the critical consciousness of the indigenous people themselves, those suffering modern-colonial domination, those whose body receives the trauma of the modern *ego conquiro* most directly. For this, nothing could be better than the touching account - the anti-discourse of Modernity properly speaking - of one Guamán Poma de Ayala. In this case, it is the victim himself who utters the critique. We will attempt to track the arguments that Guamán Poma erected against the first early Modernity.

There were three moments in which the indigenous communities suffered increasingly the process of modern-colonial domination. In the first, indigenous people suffered the horrors of the conquest, and those communities that managed to survive were enclosed within

the *encomienda* system and the *mita* mining system; institutions that were the object of Bartolomé de las Casas' frontal critique. In the second, after the so-called "Junta Magna" of Felipe II convoked to unify colonial policy, and which is headed by the Viceroy of Peru Francisco de Toledo, the messianic utopias of the Franciscans and of those struggling in favor of the indigenous communities receive the frontal shock of a new colonization project (1569). At that point a new and directly anti-Las-Casian strategy is decided upon. The counter-argument within modern rationality was orchestrated during the government of the - decidedly Eurocentric - Viceroy, who entrusted (it seems) to his cousin García de Toledo the task of writing the *Parecer de Yucay*,¹⁸ in which he attempts to demonstrate that the Incas were illegitimate and tyrannical, and that as a result the Europeans were justified in carrying out the conquest and "sharing out" of the Indies, to emancipate them from such oppression. Sepúlveda's position had been modified, but regardless, in practice, it would be imposed as a hegemonic argument. From the economic-communitarian reciprocity of the great indigenous cultures we pass to despotism; there had been a demographic catastrophe - in certain regions only one third of the population had survived - and indigenous people had abandoned their communities to wander the Viceroyalty (these being the *yanas*, from which we get the name Yanaconas), for among other reasons not having paid tribute now demanded in silver coins.¹⁹

In the third moment, under the *hacienda* regime, the *mita* system of mining, the payment of tribute in silver, and the "reductions" (of various types), the indigenous peoples ended up definitively subsumed within the structure of domination of colonial society. We would like, therefore, to situate the *critique* offered by Guamán in this third moment.

We will pause to discuss a dramatic account, a critical protest against the nascent modern colonialism, a final effort to save what could be salvaged of the *old order* that prevailed under the Incas, the incredible work of Felipe Guamán Poma de Ayala. *El Primer Nueva Corónica y Buen Gobierno* - *The First New Chronicle and Good Government*, which sets out from experiences probably collected between 1583 and

1612, but written as late as 1616²⁴⁰ - is a “testimony” of the *critical interrogation* of Modernity’s Other, a perspective unique in its genre, since it allows us to discover the authentic hermeneutic of an Indian, from an Incan family, written and illustrated with a splendid semiotic capacity, with an inimitable mastery.

Guamán Poma, more even than the case of the Inca Garcilaso de la Vega, since he was an indigenous person with a command of the Quechua language and the traditions of his oppressed people, demonstrates aspects of the everyday life of the indigenous community prior to the conquest and modern colonial domination.²⁴¹ In effect, Guamán Poma produces an interpretative synthesis, a *critical* narrative, which contains an ethic and a political view rooted in a “localization” of his perspective, an extremely creative perspective that takes its central situation in terms of space and time. First of all, he argues:

Consider²⁴² that the Indians of the time of the Incas were idolaters like the gentiles and worshipped the sun the father of the Inca and the moon their mother and the stars their brothers [...] With all this they kept the commandments and good works of the mercy of God in this kingdom, which Christians now do not keep.²⁴³

He thereby adopts the modern Christian perspective that will be critiqued, as part of a rhetorical strategy which makes his proposals more acceptable. From this perspective he sketches the *past*: it was idolatrous, this is true, but they fulfilled ethical obligations similar to the Christian “commandments.” The only difference is that the Indians did indeed fulfill these obligations, whereas the modern European conquistadors did not. That is, Guamán will show with reasons the *contradiction* in which Modernity lives. The domination praxis of the Spanish Christians themselves is thereby critiqued on the basis of their own sacred text: the Bible. This is a closed argument that demonstrates the performative contradiction of Modernity in its totality.

We want to make clear, then, that Felipe Guamán distinguishes between the belief that we could call theoretical (or “cosmovision”) and practice or ethics properly speaking. In the time of the Incas,

these people were idolaters according to their cosmovision (from the perspective of Christian dogma), but they “kept the commandments” in their ethical behavior, “which [European] Christians now do not keep.” In other words, the indigenous people were, practically, and even prior to the conquest, better “Christians” because of their practices than the Spanish Christians of “the present.” Guamán’s entire *Chronicle* is an argument against the Modernity contributed by the Spanish conquistadors in the name of the same Christianity that they preached.⁴³ Like the Creoles, the already-Christian Indian Felipe Guamán thinks that it wasn’t the Spanish that brought Christianity,⁴⁴ and this allows him a hybrid understanding of time and space fitting for his syncretic narrative. He unifies the Incan and Christian visions into a “grand narrative” (more than merely fragmentary like postmodern narratives) on the basis of the oppressed existence of the Indians, “the poor of Jesus Christ.” He thereby shows that he possesses his own understanding - one which is Indian, American, and which sets out from the poor, oppressed, colonial, peripheral - of Christianity itself:

I say truly that God became man and true God and poor, that if the majesty and light he brought there was anyone who would not adhere to it, then the sun he produced would not be seen⁴⁵ [...] And hence he ordered that they bring *poverty so that the poor and the sinners might come together and speak*. And hence he ordered the apostles and saints that they be poor and humble and charitable [...] This I say certainly, counting on my poverty, placing myself as poor among so many animals that eat the poor, they ate me as they eat the others.

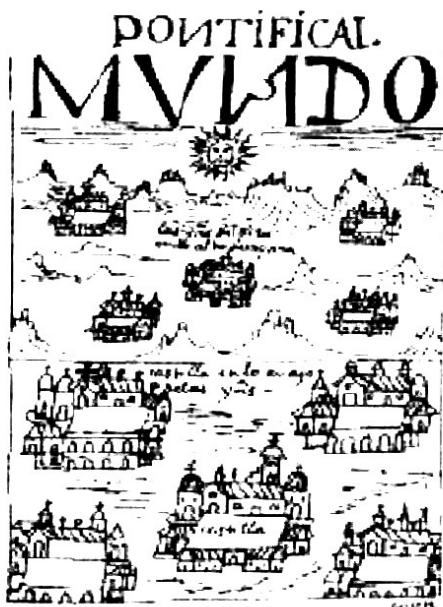
This entire interrogative account is constructed, normatively, from the horizon of the dialectic that is established between, a) the “*poverty, humility, and happy equilibrium of the satisfaction of primary needs*” of all in the late Incan community, against the “*wealthy, arrogance, and infinite and unsatisfied longing*” of gold and silver, the idols of nascent Modernity. This is a categorical critique of Modernity on the basis of the world that preceded it; on the basis of an ecological utopia of ethical-communitarian justice, where there existed “good government”

and not violence, theft, filth, ugliness, rape, excess, brutality, suffering, cowardice, lies, “arrogance”... death.

Guamán's *Chronicle* is divided systematically into three parts. In the first part he illustrates - with many informative novelties and using the Quechua language - the cultural-political order that existed prior to the conquest: the *ex quo* utopia. The second part describes the atrocities of Modern colonial domination on the great Incan culture, comparable in its splendor to the Roman, Chinese, or other empires celebrated as examples by European moderns. In the third part, which always begins with “*conzedérese*” (i.e. exhorting the reader to consider, ponder, analyze, and take into consideration from ethical consciousness), Guamán establishes a face-to-face with King Felipe II of Spain, to explain to him possible solutions to the disaster of colonial disorder in the Indies. This work was written a century after Machiavelli's classic work *Il principe* (written in 1517 for an Italian *condottiero*), but it has a global rather than a provincial Italian significance; and some forty years before *Ming-i tai-fang lu* (*Waiting for the Dawn*) by Huang Tsung-hsi (1610-1695), a Chinese political text written in 1663 giving recommendations to a young Manchú prince.

In the first part, Guamán Poma demonstrates a *suigeneris* integration of chronological modern and Incan traditions, but under the framework of the dominant logic of the “five [classic] ages” of the Aztec, Mayan, or Incan worlds. Hence he sets out from the Judeo-Christian Old and New Testaments and a European historical perspective, but he progressively links up with the historical chronology of the Incas in unexpected ways. The “First world” (like the first sun of the Aztecs and Mayans) is that of Adam and Eve²⁴⁸; the “Second world” is that of Noah; the “Third world” that of Abraham; the “Fourth Age of the world” that since “King David”²⁴⁹; the “Fifth Age of the world,” which within indigenous cosmovision represents the current order, begins with “the birth of Jesus Christ.”²⁵⁰ And this is followed by the history of “Popes” Saint Peter, Damasus, John, and Leo.

At this point in the narrative - which was up to this point purely European - the story is interrupted with an exemplary illustration:



The Pontifical World (*Pontifical Mundo*)

The Indies of Peru in the heights of Spain (*las Indias del Perú en lo alto de España*)

Castile below the Indies (*Castilla en lo avajo de las Indias*)

Castile (*Castilla*)²⁵¹

Poma's drawing gives us a spatial imaginary "above," with the mountains as horizon and the sun (*Inti*) in the sky, this is Peru, with Cuzco at its center with its "four" *suyos* (four regions according to the four cardinal points). "Below" is Castile, in the center, also with "four" regions. Here Incan spatial logic is used to organize the modern European world.

Immediately thereafter Almagro and Pizarro appear with their ships, and arriving from Europe they now locate the story in Peru.²⁵² Now located in Peru through this act of the "irruption" of Modernity, the story in the *Indies* paradoxically, only now and for the first time - and without an Incan description of the origin of the cosmos, which betrays a certain degree of modern influence in this "Christianized" Indian - does the narrative of the "five ages" or "generations" of Amerindian myth begin,²⁵³ expressing thereby an entire complex discourse indicating the particular way in which Guamán Poma structures his hybrid "cosmovision." In effect, the story has various levels of depth, its own bipolarities, and extremely rich signifying structures.

In the first place, everything begins anew with the “five generations” of indigenous peoples (beginning with the “four generations” from *Uari Vira Cocha Runa* to *Auca Runa*).²⁵⁴ With the Incan Empire as the “fifth,”²⁵⁵ Guamán then describes the twelve Incas, beginning with *Capac Ynga*. But it is interesting to note that in the reign of the second Inca, *Cinche Roca Ynga*, the two stories - the modern and the Incan - become linked, thereby placing the Incas on the same level as the Roman emperors. Guamán locates in that period the birth of “Jesus Christ in Bethlehem,”²⁵⁶ and shortly thereafter Saint Bartolomé the apostle appeared in Peru installing the “Carabuco cross” in the province of Collao, testifying to the tradition of Christian preaching in the era of the apostles.²⁵⁷ This method of unifying chronologies - that of modern, Western culture with that of the Incas - shows us a particular sort of historical account, that of the “meaning of history,” exemplars that teach us to attempt comparisons on the centro-peripheral *khrono-topos*, with the periphery “above” and not “below,” and where the South is the point of “localization” of discourse, the *locus enuntiationis*.²⁵⁸

Guamán then describes the facts, on the basis of the *dual* principle - of all cosmovisions in the Americas from Alaska to Tierra del Fuego - since after describing the Incas, he now needs to deal with the twelve “Coyan queens and ladies,” wives of the Incas²⁵⁹; the fifteen “captains” of the Empire²⁶⁰; and the four first “queen ladies” of the four parts of the Empire.²⁶¹ Here we can see that both the “Incan Coyas” and the “queens” of the four regions demonstrate the clear presence of women within the Andean cosmovisión: always alongside the male (the Sun), we find the woman (the Moon).

Having finished the long list of principal figures, Guamán describes a collection of ordinances, orders, and laws promulgated by the Incas,²⁶² like an Incan version of “Hammurabi’s Code,” but much more complete than the Mesopotamian version, at least in terms of its more varied subject matter. The authorities of the Empire “rule and give orders” from Cuzco to the various regions, provinces, peoples, communities, the diverse governing, accounting, administration, and military structures, dealing with the construction of aqueducts

and roads, of temples, palaces, and houses. These laws govern principal and secondary priests, auxiliaries, celebrations, rites, **cults**, traditions, gods (*huacas*); the entire manner of organizing agriculture, harvesting, taxes, the distribution of lands; as well as the ethical codes of the family, marriage, education, judges and trials, and the bearing of witness, all of which demonstrate the political complexity of the Incan civilization.

He then describes the obligations of males according to ages (which are referred to as “streets”).²⁶³ He discusses the sick and those hindered from working (called the *uncoc runa*):

The blind married the blind, the lame with the lame, the mute with the mute, the midget with the midget, the hunchback with the hunchback, the cracked nose with the cracked nose [...]. And they have their farm land, houses, inheritances, and help from their service and thereby there was no need for hospitals²⁶⁴ nor alms with this sacred order and policy of this kingdom, as no kingdom in Christendom or among infidels has had or could have no matter how Christian [they might be].²⁶⁵

In effect, when a male child was born in the Incan Empire he would be granted a parcel of land, which if he were not able to work another would do it in her place for her “nourishment and sustenance.” Upon death, this land would be redistributed. By right of birth the child was given not a certificate or a document but rather *the mediation necessary to reproduce her life until death*. It is this sort of institution that Guamán refers to as nonexistent in the modern system of civilization.

These same ages (“streets”) are similarly described for women.²⁶⁶ Activities or tasks are also explained month-by-month.²⁶⁷ Guamán explains the system of gods (“idols”), rites, sacrifices,²⁶⁸ witchcraft ceremonies, fasts, penitences, funerals; those of the “Coya nuns” (the vestal virgins of the Sun).²⁶⁹

This is all followed by a “Chapter on Justice,”²⁷⁰ containing the “punishments” that the Inca applied to those who did not follow their ordinances. There were caves (*zancay*) where poisonous animals would

devour alive the enemy (*auca*), traitor (*yscay songo*), thief (*suua*), adulterer (*uachoc*), warlock (*hanpioc*), or those gossiping against the Inca (*ynca cipcicac*), etc. There were also lower prisons, floggings, hangings, and the hanging of the guilty by the hair until death, etc.

There were also great celebrations,²⁷¹ sacred as well as profane, “love songs” (*haray harau*),²⁷² with beautiful music and dance from all regions of the empire. He describes the massive palaces - always accompanied by impressive illustrations - by city, the large merchandise depots, the statues, the Incan trails, the types of gifts. Finally, Guamán describes some political functions²⁷³: the viceroy (*Yncap rantin*), the mayor of the court, the greater sheriff, the magistrate (*tocricoc*), administrator (*suyucoc*), messengers (*chasqui*), and the “boundary placers” (*sayua cchecta suyoyoc*) who confirmed the land that each held, that of the Inca, and that of the community. Moreover, he goes to some length explaining the royal roads,²⁷⁴ the hanging bridges, etc., and concludes discussing the secretaries of the Inca, the accountant and treasurer (with his *quipoc*: a text written in knotted cords, with which he carried out measurement and memorized numbers, taxes, debts, etc.),²⁷⁵ inspector, and royal counsel.

This testimony concludes its first part with an interrogation:

Christian reader, you see here the entire Christian law.²⁷⁶ I have not found the Indians to be as careful with gold or silver, nor have I found anyone who owed one hundred pesos, or a liar, or a gambler, or anyone lazy, or a male or female prostitute [...] You say that you must redeem yourself; I don't see you redeeming yourself in life or death. It seems to me, Christian,²⁷⁷ that you are all doomed to hell [...] In arriving in this land, it was then against the poor Indians of Jesus Christ [...] As the Spanish had idols as written by the reverend father friar Luys de Granada [...], the Indians like barbarians and gentiles wept for their idols when they were smashed in the time of the conquest. And you have idols on your haciendas and silver from the world over.²⁷⁸

This was a fierce critique of the new fetishism of modern capitalism,

which would sacrifice the humans of the South and nature to a **new** god: the increase in the profit rate (capital). Guamán sees this **and** describes it clearly.

In the second part of his *magnum opus*, Guamán **begins**, systematically, to show the Christianity that is preached **and the** perverse praxis of early Modernity. This is a most ruthless, ironic, **and** brutal description of the violence of the first expansion of **modern** Western culture. He begins the story with the question the Inca Guaina Capac puts to Candia, the first Spaniard to arrive to Peru:

And he asked the Spaniard what it is that he ate; he responded in the Spanish language and with gestures indicating that he ate gold and silver. And [Ancina] gave large quantities of gold dust and silver and gold plates.²⁷⁹

From that point onward, it was all an anxious search for “**gold and silver**”: “They all said: Indians, gold, silver, gold, silver from **Peru.**” Even musicians sang the ballad *Indians, Gold, and Silver* ~:

And as a result of this gold and silver part of this kingdom is already depopulated, the poor Indian peoples for gold and silver. ~ [...] That is how the first men were; he did not fear death through interest in gold and silver. But it is those of this life, the magistrates, priests, and encomenderos. With the avarice of gold and silver they are going to hell. ~ [...] How the Indians wandered lost without their gods and aucas and their kings, their great masters and captains. At this time of the conquest there was neither God of the Christians nor King of Spain, nor was there justice.²⁸³

The primitive accumulation of capital - of Modernity itself - **had** begun its destructive expansion as a predatory world-system. **After** the initial chaos and violence begins the period of “good government” - which Guamán writes with irony - beginning with Viceroy Mendoza, since he writes:

[...] Poor useless and pusillanimous idiots were the Spanish, as arrogant as Lucifer. From Luzbel Lucifer, the great devil,

was made. That is how you are, that I fear that you want to hang yourselves and take off your own head and dismember yourselves and hang yourselves like Judas and throw yourselves into hell. What God orders, you want to be more. If you are not king, why do you want to be king? If you are neither prince nor duke nor count nor marquis nor knight, why would you want to be? If you are a commoner [*pichero*] or a shoemaker or a Jew or Moor, do not rise up and disturb the land, but instead pay what you owe.²⁸⁴

Guamán discovers the process through which the *ego conquiro* - this expanding, self-centered subjectivity - passes, wildly overcoming all limits in its arrogances, until it culminates in the *ego cogito* based on God himself, as his own mediation to reconstruct the world under his control, at his service, for his exploitation, and among these the populations of the South.

And Guamán progressively describes one by one the public offices and how they *oppress, rob, punish, and violate Indian men and women*, such that “they lose the land and the kingdom will end up empty and uninhabited and the king will be very poor.”²⁸⁵ And since the first period of the presidents and magistrates of the “very Christian”²⁸⁶ Audiences, “it has never been found that they have ruled in favor of the poor Indians. They come first to burden the Indians even more and to favor the neighbors and the rich and the miners.”²⁸⁷ Guamán feels particularly scandalized by the way in which the authorities, and even the Spanish residents and slaves, use the wives of the Indians, since “they keep stealing their *haciendas* and fornicate with the married women and deflower the maidens. And as a result they find themselves lost and become prostitutes and give birth to many little *mestizos*”²⁸⁸ and the Indians do not reproduce.”²⁸⁹ The Spanish - and especially the “*Christian encomendero* of the Indians of this kingdom”²⁹⁰ - are criticized for their actions, which show special sadism, since “they punish the poor of Jesus Christ in the entire kingdom.”²⁹¹ Guamán thereby dismantles one by one the injustices of the entire colonial political and economic order of Modernity. The Church does not

escape his accurate, ironic, and acute criticism either.²⁹² He collects still more documents regarding the various “treaties” and “sentences,” to give examples of the unjust oppression that is practiced on the Indians.²⁹³

Regarding the Indians that collaborated with the conquistadors, he termed them “*mandoncillos*,” or “little bosses,” who often without being from Inca families pass for nobles for the simple fact of ruling in the name of the Spanish. There were Incas, “principal” leaders, who had under their orders a thousand tributary Indians (*quranga curaca*), or five hundred, or a “greater boss” with one hundred, or a “little boss of fifty Indians,” or of only five or ten.²⁹⁴ There are also those *curacas* who run mines and stores. There were exploiters, thieves, “drunks,” liars, “fakers,” highway bandits, “who steal the *haciendas* of the poor Indians.”²⁹⁵ As always, this is followed by a list of “women, queens, and Coyas,” the wives of the “little bosses,” which he calls “madam,” or “*doña*.”²⁹⁶ To top it all off, the Christian Indians put into power by the Spanish, the collaborators, whose role is to impart “justice”²⁹⁷ given the generalized corruption - which was not permitted during Incan times - do not always fulfill their functions.

Finally, Guamán confronts the Indians themselves, those poor members of the population:

If the priests of the doctrines and the mentioned magistrates and encomenderos and Spanish would permit it, there would be saints and great lettered and very Christian men [among the Indians]. But said officials all obstruct this with their treatment.²⁹⁸

That the Indians remain good and “political” they owe more to the memory of their old customs and despite all of the extortions that the conquistadors exercise on them. Modernity, in this case, is the cause of corruption and destruction. Now, Guamán describes the beliefs, “from below,” from the indigenous peoples (as previously he had described the gods and the *uacas* of Incan times): from crucified Christ, the Trinity, Saint Mary and other saints, purgatory, devotions, baptism, and alms. Despite so many truths, the communities were

now full of poor who were begging for alms (there didn't exist the possibility for beggars, as we have seen, during Incan times):

For this, the inspectors of the holy mother Church are guilty of not visiting the poor, sick, crippled, lame and one-handed and old and blind, the orphans of all peoples.²⁹⁹

This shows great misery among the Indians, a misery impossible in the times of the Inca. The situation of the Indian had visibly worsened with the presence of Modernity. Hence appeared the "Creoles and Creole Indians, Indians born into this life of the time of Christians," who are easily corrupted because they have lost their community; they become *yanaconas*,³⁰⁰ drunks, cocaine addicts, and "the most Christian, even if he knows how to read and write, carrying the rosary and dressed like a Spaniard, with a collar, appears holy, [but] when drunk talks to demons and reveres the *guacas* [pre-Columbian tomb]."³⁰¹ As a result, there is no shortage of "Indian philosophers, astrologers that know the hours and Sundays and days and months, years, to sow and collect the foods every year [...]"³⁰² Our critic ends his description of the lamentable state of the Indies by indicating that, "he the author walked in the poor world with the rest of the poor Indians to see that world and manage to write this book and chronicle, to serve God and his Majesty and the good of the poor Indians of this kingdom."³⁰³

In the third part, from the utopia of the past³⁰⁴ and the negativity of the disastrous present, Guamán now imagines a future project of "good government," from the utopian future horizon of the "*City in the sky* for the good sinners"³⁰⁵ and of the "*City of Hell*"³⁰⁶ [...for] the avaricious, ungrateful, lustful, arrogant, punishment for the arrogant sinners and the rich who fear not God."³⁰⁷ The argument occupies the first part ("Consideration of the Christian of the world that God exists [que ay Dios]"³⁰⁸). Here Modernity is located "in hell."

This is followed by the "question chapter"³⁰⁹ where he argues within a densely rational political logic, confronting a critical reader regarding the gravest problems that he has progressively discovered in the colonial world of Modernity, narrated in his *Chronicle*. He places questions in the mouth of the Spanish King, hurled at the "author"

(Guamán), which deserve to be dealt with individually, but for limits of length, we cannot discuss them here. Finally, he sadly describes “the world [to which] the author returns,” his poor point of departure, the people “of the poor of Jesus Christ,” after they have passed more than thirty years, the time in which he traveled all over Peru, to inform the King of Spain and propose corrections for such disorder. These possible “corrections” are deemed “Considerations,” and like all of Guamán’s work, these proposals are framed within a horizon that derives its meaning from a profound cosmic wisdom, setting out from the beginning: “God created the sky and the whole world and all that is in it.”³¹⁰ Then, he divides time into ten ages with “Peru” - neither Modernity nor Judeo-Christianity - as its axis. These include the already discussed ages - from the Uari Vira Cocha to the Auca Runa - the fifth of the Incas; the sixth of the *Pachacuti Ruma* (the age in which everything was turned “upside-down” and “stood on its feet”: here we are dealing with a cosmic revolution prior to the conquest); the seventh, which refers to this very “Christian conquest of the *runa*,” the Indians; the eighth that of the wars between the conquistadors in Peru; the ninth that of “Christian justice, well-being” (read this expression in an ironic sense), of the first colonial era; and the tenth, the imposed colonial order.

Guamán begins from the framework of the origin and the process of the “universe” (*pacha*) with a first “consideration”: the service to the “wandering and sick poor people” which fulfills “the old law and God’s law,”³¹¹ with the *corpachanqui* (“You must give them lodging!”). “Works of mercy” are the final criterion of Guamán’s argument: compassion toward the weak, the sick, the poor. In this ethical and political demand the “old law” of Peru and the best of Christianity - as reinterpreted by our “author” - coincide. Effectively, Guamán had a messianic interpretation of Christianity, an explicit anticipation of *Liberation Theology*:

Jesus Christ died as a result of the world and man. He suffered tortures and martyr [...]. He walked this life *poor, persecuted*. And after the day of judgement he will come [...] to *pay the*

*despised poor.*³¹² [...] The first priest on earth was God and live man, Jesus Christ, a priest who came from heaven poor and loved the poor man more than the rich. It was Jesus Christ living God who came to take souls and not silver from the world [...] Saint Peter [...] left everything to the poor [...] And all [the apostles] were poor and asked not for a salary nor rent nor looked for haciendas.³¹³

In sum:

He who defends the poor of Jesus Christ serves God. This is the word of God in his gospel and defending the Indians of your Majesty serves your royal crown.³¹⁴

Moreover, he advocated structuring institutions with a certain degree of unity, since in the earlier times, everything was understood because it was under the paternal power of *a single Inca*, while in the disorder of colonial Modernity “there are many *Incas*: the *Inca* magistrate, his twelve assistants are *Incas*, the brother or son of the magistrate and his wife and scribe are *Incas* [...]”³¹⁵ It was also necessary to be conscious of the fact that, with the presence of the Europeans, everything got worse for the Indians: “consider that the Yndians [now] have many lawsuits [pleyto/pleito] in this life. *In the time of the Yncas there were none.*”³¹⁶

But the most significant political argument for “good government” consisted in the “restoration of power” to the Incas:

What you need to consider is that the whole world belongs to God and hence Castile [is] of the Spanish and the Indies belongs to the Indians and Guinea belongs to the blacks. That each of these is legitimate owners, not only by law [...] And the Indians are then cultural owners of this kingdom, and the Spanish natural [owners] of Spain. Here in this kingdom, they are strangers, *mitimays*.³¹⁷

On the basis of the Incan understanding of global geopolitical spatiality, Guamán attempts to justify his project by counting

strategically on the support of the Spanish King. Just as in the past the Inca Empire had been the “center” of the universe (*Pacha*), its “Navel” (*Cuzco*), from which the “four parts” of the world extend outward (in the direction of the four cardinal points, as in China or among the Aztecs in the “altepetl”³¹⁸), taking the shape of a “cosmic cross”; so too he now proposed, extrapolating from these imaginary geopolitical structures in a more global world, situating King Felipe of Spain in the “center,” with his “four parts” or kingdoms (the Incas, who reestablished power over all the Americas; the Christians around Rome; the Africans of Guinea; and the Turks up to Greater China).³¹⁹ Guaman speaks of a “monarch of the world” with “four” kingdoms (a globalized projection of the Inca Empire), but at the same time he proposes - as did Bartolomé de las Casas - the restoration of the autonomy of the Incas, even if this be “under the *world hand*”³²⁰ of the Spanish King: “Because he is Inca and King, so that some Spaniard or priest does not need to enter because the *Inca* was owner and legitimate king.”³²¹ A project of future political liberation is clearly in sight, our present “second emancipation” (the first was partially completed in 1810), the second includes the emancipation of the indigenous peoples, announced by Evo Morales in Bolivia, an Aymara rather than a Quechua like Guamán.

Were such a “restitution” impossible, it was necessary to think of a multitude of measures, on all levels of the administrative, political, ecclesiastical, military, sexual, and educational structures, etc., that Guamán sets himself to describing with infinite patience in these “considerations.” As an example let us look at one final quotation:

Consider that the magistrate enters saying: “I will do justice for you,” and steals. And the priest enters: “I will make you a Christian. I will baptize you and marry you and teach you,” and he steals and pulls to pieces and takes away wife and daughter. The *encomendero* and other Spaniards say: “Justice, let it serve the King because I am his vassal.” And they rob and pilfer whatever one has. And even worse are the Indian [*caciques*] and bosses; they tear everything away from the

poor and unfortunate Indians.³²²

Adorno and Horkheimer in San Diego did not express as clearly this darkest face of Modernity, not in their *Dialectic of Enlightenment*. As a result, after these dramatic “considerations,” Guamán passes to the second of fifteen organized points that the “author” puts in the mouth of King Felipe. The second of these reads:

“Tell me, don Felipe Ayala, in that time, how were there so many Indians in the times of the *Inca*?” I tell your Majesty that in those times the only king was the *Inca* [...] But one lived in the law and commandments of the *Incas*. And since there was a king, they served restfully in this kingdom and multiplied and had their *haciendas* and food to eat and children and wives of theirs.³²³

In the fifth question, the King inquires:

“Tell me, author, how will the Indians become rich?” You must know your Majesty that they need to have communal *haciendas* that they call *sapci*, sowing corn and wheat, potatoes, peppers, *magno*, cotton, vineyards, handicrafts, dying, *coca*, fruit trees.³²⁴

“Good government” would consist - by members of Modernity - and would be completely summarized by, “all Spanish living like Christians.”³²⁵ But if this were to occur in Modernity as such it would collapse, there would be no accumulation of wealth in the core. So we see that Guamán, like Karl Marx, organizes his argumentative strategy according to the same principle as the critic from Trier: to place he who claims to be a Christian in a clear performative contradiction between his perverse actions and the ethics dictated by Christianity itself.³²⁶

What world did the “author” discover upon returning to his people?:

Having served your Majesty for thirty years, he found everything ruined, entering his houses and fields and pastures. And

he found his sons and daughters naked, serving Indian commoners [*picheros*]. And he did not recognize his children and nieces and nephews and relatives because they had become so old; they appeared eighty years old, all pale and thin and naked and barefoot.³²⁷

And this is not all, since his work, his *Chronicle*, would end up entombed in a European library in Copenhagen until 1908. The world of the poor “Indians,” the “poor of Jesus Christ” in full-blown Modernity, would have to wait centuries for justice to be done...

6. Conclusions

We could still consider the thought and wisdom of the indigenous people of the Americas themselves, who were not impacted by Christianity (as was the case with Guamán Poma). They represent a critical “future reserve” as a result of their radical exteriority, but here we will leave off to not go on at great length.³²⁸

Felipe Guamán Poma de Ayala appears to have completed his *Chronicle* in 1616. One year earlier, the young René Descartes abandoned his nearly 20 years of study in the Jesuit school at La Flèche. No one knew or could have known about this original philosopher of an entire peripheral and colonial world founded by Modernity. Descartes’ future *ego cogito* would constitute a *cogitatum* which - among other *beings* at its disposition - would situate the corporality of colonial subjects as exploitable machines, like those of the Indians on the Latin American *encomienda*, *mita*, or *hacienda*, or the African slaves on the “big house” of plantations in Brazil, the Caribbean, or New England. Behind Modernity’s back these colonial subjects would have their “human being” taken away from them forever, until today.

If the suspicion that we have attempted to introduce were true, it would shed significant light on new investigations regarding the meaning of philosophical Modernity. If Modernity does not commence philosophically with Descartes, and if he should be considered instead as the great thinker of the *second moment* of early

Modernity - when the concealment, not of Heideggerian “being” but rather “colonial being,” had already occurred - then an entire process of *philosophical decolonization* needs to be undertaken. 17th-century Holland centered on Amsterdam, that of the East Indian Company, would be a world which emerged after the crisis of the 15th-century Spanish Kings and the empire of Carlos V (Wallerstein’s world-empire), which opened up to Europe the broad horizon of the first, colonialist, capitalist, Eurocentric, modern *world-system*. The 1637 of the publication of the *Discourse on Method* in the Low Countries - from an order already dominated by the triumphant bourgeoisie - would not be Modernity’s origin but rather its *second moment*. The solipsistic paradigm of consciousness, of the *ego cogito*, inaugurates its overpowering, crushing development through all later European Modernity and would be modified many times, in Hume, Kant, Hegel, J. P. Sartre, or P. Ricoeur.

In the 20th century this Modernity would be radically critiqued by E. Levinas who, setting out from the fifth of Edmund Husserl’s *Cartesian Meditations*,³²⁹ attempts to open himself to the Other, and also to the other of European Modernity... but still within Europe. The Jewish holocaust would be, anyway, an irrational, intra-European disaster, far from the Enlightenment, as discussed by Adorno and Horkheimer. However, neither Levinas himself, nor any of the three generations of the Frankfurt School, manage to overcome Modernity, since they failed to recognize the coloniality of the exercise of Western power. Levinas remains inevitably Eurocentric, despite discovering the irrationality of totalizing modern subjectivity, since he could not situate himself in the exteriority of metropolitan, imperial, and capitalist Europe.

3. *From Fraternity to Solidarity - (Towards a Politics of Liberation)*³³⁰

My aim in this chapter is to explaining a *material* category from the horizon of a *Politics of Liberation* that we are elaborating. It will provide an example of a theme that would require much more space for its full development.³³¹ The following pages represent then some suggestions regarding the question.

1. An enigmatic text of Nietzsche

Nietzsche, as usual, is a genius whose pre-conceptual intuitions exceed his own capacity to express in an analytic manner whatever is indicated in a poetic aesthetic manner. He often gives an exposition of an experience that certainly surpasses the words aiming at philosophical univocity. In his collection of adages, *Human All Too Human*, after reflecting on the difficulty of “friendship” (*Freundschaft*), he puts forth an adage full of suggestions:

[...] Perhaps to each of us there will come the more joyful hour when we exclaim:

[a.1] *Friends* [A.1], *there are no friends!* [A.2], [a.2] thus shouted the dying sage;

[b.1] *Foes* [B.1], *there are no foes!* [B.2], [b.2] shout I, the living fool.³³²

[...] Vielleicht kommt jedem auch einmal die freudigere Stunde, wo er sagt:

Freunde, es gibt keine Freunde! So rief der sterbende Weise;

Feinde, es gibt keinen Feind! ruf ich, der lebende Tor.³³³

The text has two moments, the first on “friendship” [a], and the second on “enmity” [b]; each with two components; the first consists in the well-known Aristotelian expression [a.1], to which Nietzsche adds an opposing dialectic (friend/enemy) of its own, outside of the Aristotelian or Hellenic context [b.1], which has, as we will see, many

cultural origins and derives from diverse philosophical currents. But, above all, and in the second place, Nietzsche enriches the adage with another moment that sounds like a commentary that proposes “who” announces the contents of the first part [a.1 and b.1], which disconcerts, which provides the key to the enigma [a.2 and b.2], and which will be the theme of my commentary (in §3 of this chapter).

Without getting to the bottom of the question yet, Nietzsche suggests, or so the tradition shows it, that it is very difficult (qualitatively and quantitatively) to have a *true* friend [a.1], especially given the proverbial solitude of philosophy that is hard to please in its eccentric, solipsistic reflections, and (in the case of Nietzsche) given his exaggerated (perhaps unhealthy) requirements about the qualities necessary for “the friend” (since Nietzsche in his time had no close friend), and given also that his odd life involved no effort to form friendships as a condition of enjoyment. His *skholé*, insofar as it involved masochism, frequently needed romantic pain to generate his strokes of brilliance. The “friend” was a characteristic for he mobs, the “masses” the happy one: ideal of the herd (*Der Glückliche: Herdenideal*) [...]. How can one pretend that one has aspired to happiness?³³⁴

The second moment [b.1] is the more interesting. What does Nietzsche mean when he says that “there are no enemies”? Certainly this is not something we find in the classical Hellenic-Roman tradition, but it only occurs in the Semitic-Christian-Occidental tradition that tries to reverse that earlier tradition. In what sense is “enmity” broken up by the exclamation that “there are no enemies”? It is evident that Nietzsche, the *critic*, who “annihilates values,” thought himself the “enemy” of vulgar society, of the herd, of the prevailing Judeo-Christian “asceticism” – as the one who reverses the reigning values. He, the “Antichrist,” is the enemy of modern society and his friends are the enemies of the common people. But the critique is a return to the origin, to the ontological foundation of “distorted” values. But his “madness” is not as radical as the one we will seek to realize.

Perhaps the more disconcerting opposition is that which is established between “the dying sage” [a.2] and “the living fool” [b.2]. But we leave this for later.

Moreover, this text is the key to the work of Jacques Derrida, in his book *Politiques de l'amitié* (*Politics of Friendship*).³³⁵ How does Jacques Derrida interpret this?

2. Fraternity and enmity. The reflection of Jacques Derrida

In the above named work of Derrida, *Politics of Friendship*, he assumes the task to think “politics,” from a horizon that surpasses the *rationalistic* Neo-Kantian tradition in the fashion of political philosophy (from John Rawls to Jürgen Habermas, to name two extremes). Instead of speaking of practical-political reason, of the contract, or of discursive “agreement,” though without rejecting them, Derrida attempts to establish the *political* from the affective bond, from the pleasurable dimension of the impulses; neurologically it would be to pay attention to the limbic system more than to the neocortical.³³⁶ It is not a *formal*, procedural consideration, but rather runs across the *contents* of human political life, the drives, the virtues; that is to say, the *material* aspect of politics.³³⁷ The unity of the political community is not reached *only* by agreements starting from reasons, but *also* by friendship that unites citizens in a political whole. At bottom Derrida pursues the deconstruction of the concept of *fraternity*, a postulate of the French Revolution, yielding as fruit a baroque work with a thousand creases. I think, however, that Derrida gets caught between these folds and in the end gets lost between them. “The sword is bent,” (Wittgenstein would say) before its time because, though Derrida appreciates E. Levinas very much, he never, I think, managed to understand him, and this deconstruction demonstrates it.

In effect, everything occurs within the ontological horizon – with *two* antithetical *poles* – but it never manages to get beyond the said horizon toward the metaphysical or ethical limit that from a *third pole* would give us the ability to find the solution to the double aporiae presented with grand erudition (according to the same possibilities of interpretation of the “fool of Turin”³³⁸). The work is a dialogue with Carl Schmitt, through Nietzsche, when, Derrida, upholding as a horizon the tradition of the treatises on friendship beginning with Aristotle,

approaches various ways of treating the theme of “friendship” (or “enmity”), which determines the different ways of understanding *the political*, having as a permanent reference the Nietzschean aporiae.

Beginning with the *Prologue*, however, the question is raised about what would “then be the politics of such a *beyond* (*au-delà*) the principle of fraternity.”³³⁹ But this “beyond” would be “enmity,” that which surpasses the horizon of the political field as such. The State, as a general rule, refers itself to the family, and this to “fratriarchy” – the brothers who sacrifice the originary father of S. Freud – for “life.” “At the centre of the principle, always, the One does violence to itself, and guards itself against the other”³⁴⁰; in this consists “the political crime,”³⁴¹ on the other hand, an inevitable crime within the Derridean or Nietzschean dialectic.

Carl Schmitt wants to return to *the political* its strong sense, *material* (as *will* and not as a pure liberal legality), and for this he opposes to “friendship” “enmity,” remaining permanently though in a *political* horizon. This is an enmity that is not a mere physical, warlike, total *crime*. The difference between the “*political enemy*” – that one yet finds *within* fraternity – and the “*complete enemy*” – who is *outside of the political* – is the theme to be clarified. That is to say, is a certain enmity possible (*ontical*: $\alpha.2$, in *Diagram 5*) from within the horizon of a friendship (*ontological*: $\beta.1$) that includes it? Is *the political* still possible in the face of an enmity ($\beta.2$) that is situated *beyond* the *ontic* friend ($\alpha.1$) and the *ontic* enemy ($\alpha.2$)? An *ontological* friendship admits the other (the *political enemy*), at a first level, since it is *within* the fraternity, and, at a second level, it no longer admits such an enemy who is *outside of the horizon of ontological* fraternity. Let us observe the expression: “[A.1] Friends, [A.2] there are no friends!” One possible interpretation is that the first “friends” [A.1] means all of those who are encountered *within* ontological fraternity, the political community as a *totality* (within the political horizon as such); the second “there are no friends” [A.2] refers to *ontic* enemies (still within the political horizon) based on an *ontological* fraternity that allows a certain enmity (of the political opponent) within the political field as such.

Diagram 5: Diverse levels of opposition

a.1. *Ontic* friendship a.2. *Ontic* enmity

β.1. *Ontological* friendship (fraternity) β.2. *Ontological* enmity

Ontological Order (Totality)

The first aporia [a] – with respect to the second: “Foes, there are no foes!” [b] – is traditionally interpreted as the contradiction of a criticism of those who ought to be friends (*Friends!*) [A.1] that they are not *true* friends [A.2]. With respect to this interpretation as a private relation (“my closest friend”), the “best friend” refers to all fellow humans, to those who are joined together with each other in familiarity, to the fraternal community of those who are nearby. In the tradition it is interpreted that the exclamation “there are no friends!” [A.2] refers to the impossibility of the “perfect friend,” because perfect friendship is only for the gods, which is to say, is empirically impossible. This is friendship in the Modern sense, where individuality gains importance. Though still it is “friendship” cultivated by the sages who retreat into a community (as in Memphis, Egypt) outside of the city in order to contemplate divine things. This is the *philia* that unites the souls of sages (beyond simple *éros*). Derrida devotes chapter 1 to this theme.

For the classical age, for Plato, Aristotle, or Cicero, “friendship” was not only intimate or private, but rather it was always situated in the political horizon, and this still is the perspective of C. Schmitt, whom Derrida follows. He treats “political friends”, who maintain a certain public, not private, fraternity, and for whom it might be said that this does not mean “friends” - in the private sense. What is certain is that the text permits many possible interpretations (that perhaps sophistically pleases Derrida).

Moving forward in his reflection, in chapter 2, Derrida now

unfolds the second aporia that permits him to confront Nietzsche's texts. "Foes, there are no foes!, shout I, the living fool". However, in a way a bit precipitately the second moment of the aporiae [a.2 and b.2] appears, especially in the second statement: "shout I, the living fool." It seems, though, that he does not point out that the question ought to have been analytically divided. First one would have to analyze the question of "enmity" (before "friendship"), in order later to reflect upon the: "thus shouted the dying sage" [a.2] and the "shout I, the living fool" [b.2]. Derrida works out the second statement, now that "madness" is a theme already treated by Nietzsche:

That one must be mad, in the eyes of the *metaphysician*³⁴² of all ages, to wonder how something might rise up out of its antithesis; to wonder if, for example, truth might be born of error [...] Anyone who merely dreams of such a possibility immediately goes mad: this is already a fool.³⁴³

In that sense Nietzsche is a "fool" who still innovates in the present, that is to say, who is "living," but always from within the same *ontological* horizon, which cannot be put in question as it is. In some way he is the "*complete* enemy," but not as the one who declares war, but as the one who *totally* criticizes merely *ontic* enmity. This "madness" of the critic is equally a "responsibility": "I feel responsible towards *them* (the new thinkers who are coming), therefore responsible before *us* who announce them"³⁴⁴ – comments Derrida. He continues treating these themes in chapter 3: "This Mad *Truth*: the Just Name of Friendship."

In chapter 4 he refers directly to Carl Schmitt.³⁴⁵ He takes up the suggestion to construct a politics from the "will," as an ontological "decision" that criticizes liberal "depolitization" of the mere "state of law" or pure legal reference to the State. Politics is a drama which establishes itself in the first place, in the Latin contradiction between *inimicus* and *hostis*; in Greek between *ekhthrós* and *polémios*. The *amicus* is opposed to the *inimicus* (*ekhthrós*) or the "private rival," even though inadvertently reference is made to a text from the other cultural tradition (Judeo-Christian³⁴⁶), as we shall see later.

For his part, Plato, in the *Republic*, in book V, distinguishes war to

the death, properly speaking, against the barbarians (*pólemos*) and civil war between the Greek cities (*stásis*). Likewise, Schmitt in the end has three types of enmities: two types of enmity that we have called *ontic* [α.2], still split into a “private rivalry” [B.1] and a “public antagonism” or politics, properly speaking, [B.2] (*stásis*), both of which are opposed to “complete enmity” [β.2] from which one declares war to the death - moving out from the “political field” and penetrating the “military field” properly so called.

Fraternity (from *phratría*) is based in an “equality from birth” (*isogonía*), in a “natural equality” (*katá phúsin*), which determines “equality before the law” (*isonomía katà nómon*). The *philía* of the indicated *isonomía* is the political friendship, *fraternity*, which is bound to *demokratía*.

In chapter 5 he addresses “absolute enmity” (*hostis, polémios*) or the war to the death. As much in “political antagonism” as in “absolute enmity” there is always a reference to an “ontology of the *human life*,”³⁴⁷ because the indicated dramatic character of the political lies in the perpetual possibility of the loss of life. After all since every citizen is a possible antagonist in politics (in the second sense indicated, B.2), there is always the risk of physical death. In this case, one would have to indicate that it is human life itself that is the ultimate criterion which establishes the possibility to discern between friend/enemy: the enemy is the one who can place life in jeopardy up to the limit of murder.³⁴⁸ Schmitt, the same as Schopenhauer, Nietzsche, or Freud, all take their start from human life, and from it they discover the importance of Will, and from there they discover the possible material, affective, drive-directed foundation of politics.

It is worthwhile here to make a detour and add a comment. In all of these thoughts, there always exists an affirmation of a certain implicit vitalism (that has been distilled from the reactionary elements of right, referring me always to Marx or Freud). The fundamental *material* question of human life continues to be of importance in the reflection of Derrida:

Schmitt [...], who names this putting to death unequivocally.

He sees in it a sense of ontological origination (...) that one must recognize in the words *enemy* and *combat*; but first of all and on the backdrop of a fundamental anthropology or ontology of *human life*: it is a *combat* (...), and every person is a *combatant* (...) says Schmitt [...] This does not so much mean that the being-for-death cannot be separated from a being-for-putting-to-death or for-death-in-combat.³⁴⁹

It is a politics founded in life, but, like all thought of right (including Heidegger), it is a life “for death.” It is the danger of death that constitutes the political field as political, and therefore enmity is more essential than fraternity (as friendship). Further, we must remember that if the power of the community is the positive *power*,³⁵⁰ the political field is the domain where strategic actions are deployed and political institutions are organized to achieve the reproduction and amplification of life, and not its contrary. Its contrary, death, recalls the vulnerability of politics, its limit, the fetishized *potestas* as domination. Inevitable yes, but it is not essential because it is inevitable. In the Schmittian pessimism, as in Machiavelli, Hobbes and so many other modern thinkers, all of this derives from “hostility”:

Just as *hostility* is entirely dependent on the real possibility of this putting-to-death, so also, correlatively, there is no friendship independent of this deadly drive [...] The deadly drive of the friend/enemy proceeds from life, not from death, not from some attraction of death by death or for death.³⁵¹

One seeks to affirm life, but always through the detour of death, and one does not succeed in constructing the categories beginning with the fundamental category (the power of the community as a *power* of life, positively). *Fraternity* makes itself impossible as a starting point. The starting point is *enmity*, because it is “by beginning with this extreme possibility [friendship vs. enmity] that the life of the human being acquires its specifically *political* tension.”³⁵² The political acquires its concept in this tension between life and death, between friendship and enmity. *Fraternity* only fulfills the first moment, but

not the second, as a tension always in danger before death, which like a sword of Damocles constitutes the (modern) political field as such.

In classical Greek philosophy one spoke, also, of a *virtue* or *habit* that makes the citizen tend to or desire to give to all other participants of the political whole that which corresponds to them according to their right (and not according to a selfish inclination): *dikaíosúne*. In German Christianity, one expressed the same by the adage *Justitiam ad alterum est*.³⁵³ The evolution of this concept of justice, which would take a long time to trace,³⁵⁴ would show us that it has not lost its actuality if it could be understood as a certain discipline of desiring subjectivity that allows one to place at the disposition of the other members of the community common goods, over which the power delegated to the State as an institution ought to be exercised in such a way that there is an equitable distribution of the means for the reproduction and amplification of the life of all citizens. A *political claim of justice* points to the ultimate term of this question. The classics divided justice into three types: a) legal justice that is inclined to the fulfillment of the laws (it would be a discipline of the citizens in the “state of law”); b) justice which directs from the part to the whole, or productive justice, in which the members of the society tend economically to work for the ability to count on having the goods necessary for the reproduction of life; and, lastly, c) distributive justice, from the whole to the part, by which the institutionalized community allows citizens to participate in the common goods of the whole – it is to this which the utilitarianism of J. Bentham pays special attention. All this is part of that which ought to be treated regarding the material aspect of politics, the problematic that ought to be actualized, and surely something of this was of use for the classical discussions.

One would still have to hold clearly, definitively, that the decisive, conclusive moment and the end of the fulfillment of the material principle of politics is *satisfaction*, or more exactly the consummate consumption (the expression is of value). When the living corporal subjectivity physically subsumes and absorbs the material satisfier, the real thing, it *transforms* it into its own body. To give “bread to the hungry” (from the *Book of the Dead* in chapter 125, which has Osiris

as a member of the court in the “final judgment” of the goddess *Ma'at* - the later Greek *Moirai* - as fulfillment of an exigency of justice *beyond* the mere positive law of the pharaonic economic system of the Nile) *becomes for the ingestion really the corporal subjectivity* of the citizen: “subjectivation of objectivity” Marx wrote correctly:

In the former [the production], the producer reified himself (*versachlichte*); in the latter [the consumption], the thing he produced personifies (*personifiziert*) itself.³⁵⁵

This “personification” of the produced material thing (in the ecological, economical, or cultural sub-spheres) is the fulfillment *by its material content* of the happiness of the citizen, the fundamental finality of politics. This is still the *truth* of utilitarianism, inasmuch as happiness is the verification or subjective resonance of corporeality reconstituted in its vitality and felt as pleasure, enjoyment. Politics does not hold feeding only as a *condition* (Aristotle placed, in this sense, agriculture as the condition of the possibility of the existence of the *polis*), but as an accomplishment of the essence of politics in so far as it effectuates *reproductive* action (permanence) and amplification (development) of human life (now that in the cultural level the possibility of the quantitative and qualitative deployment of life does not have limits and can always *improve*: endless creation of new human necessities and therefore a demand for new production toward , future, more excellent *satisfactions*). *Material* political reason discovers the *practical truth* of physical and cultural reality as much as it is manageable; the fraternal unifies wills materially, but, in the end, in order to be able to live fully the *contents of human life*. We have thus described the *material* moment of the political *common good* (the objective of the *political claim of justice* and the finality that precedes and directs political practice), and this material moment also calls for a formal democratic *legitimacy*, and, lastly, a real *factual possibility* to complete all its minimum components.³⁵⁶

We turn then, after this commentary, to the work of Derrida.

To distinguish between the “political opponent” (B.2 of α.2) and the “complete enemy” (β.2) is to be able to distinguish between *the*

political (fraternal “antagonism”) and *the military* (pure “hostility”). The political becomes apparent within *fraternity* in antagonistic tension, within the fraternity that impedes murder - which signifies the discipline of knowing how to exercise *isonomía*. But it requires of itself a greater dramatic character than the depoliticized reference to an indifferent system of law with which it is necessary to comply externally and legally. Therefore, the mere liberal “state of law” can be put in question as a “state of exception”³⁵⁷: which thus would additionally show the Will to be prior to the Law.

In chapter 6 he deals with *the political* in the situation of armed struggle.³⁵⁸ It would seem to be located, like the Spanish resistance to the Napoleonic invasion at the beginning of the nineteenth century, between the “political opponent” and the “complete enemy.” “Revolutionary war” or “subversive war”³⁵⁹ is clearly not elucidated, since Schmitt, as well as Derrida, lacks sufficient categories (as we will see later), and therefore such war is often taken for “the most unfortunate tragedy of fratricide.”³⁶⁰ Everything concludes completely only in face of the evidence of the confrontation of “*true* brothers [against] *true* enemies” while one wonders in doubt: “On biblical or Hellenic ground?”³⁶¹

It is here where, without more prelude, Derrida moves additionally to the second moments (a.2: “the dying sage”, and b.2: “the living fool”) without taking advantage of its reference.³⁶² He ought to have wondered: Why discuss a “dying sage”? Derrida never explains this fact well. In reference to the second moment (b.2), it remains hidden and without solution in all the work of Derrida, since he does not explain clearly why it is *living madness* to decree that the aforementioned enmity has ceased existing. From what horizon does enmity disappear and the enemy become transformed into the “friend”? This enigma does not have a solution for Derrida (because he does not even discover it as an enigma).

In the same way, he “leaps” abysmally to another completely distinct tradition, the Semitic, bringing with it a collation texts of highest complexity (which would require other hermeneutic categories than those used up to that moment) and this even though the quotations

are never hermeneutically explained (quotations that, paradoxically, form a part of the best of Nietzsche's *verbal expressions* of great beauty, but perhaps still incomprehensible for Nietzsche). These Semitic texts (now that the poetry of Theodor Däubler³⁶³ has its roots in Hebraic lineage) refer to the second aporia of the Nietzschean enigma [b]. This text cited by Derrida, similar to that of Nietzsche, opposes friendship to enmity (in contrast to Aristotle who only speaks of friendship), but it treats an amazing statement, that goes far beyond the same Nietzschean text. He puts it this way:

Cursed is the one who has no *friends*, because his *enemy* will take a seat on the tribunal to judge him. Cursed he who has no *enemy*, because I will be, I, his *enemy* on the day of final judgment.³⁶⁴

Derrida (and likewise Nietzsche) circles around this question so enunciated, but, I repeat, he cannot resolve it. The other text, that only refers to enmity, unthinkable for Aristotle, and that Nietzsche expresses in the second aporia [b] of his statement, is encountered again within the Semitic tradition (so detested by Zarathustra):

I have heard you say: *Love your neighbor and hate your enemy*.
But I tell you: *Love your enemies*.³⁶⁵

We cannot follow "the goings and comings" of Derrida in chapters 7 to 10, where he treats the positions of other authors such as Montaigne, Augustine, Diogenes Laertes, Michelet, Heidegger, etc. The question remains posed, in its foundation, in the fact that *fraternity* in the political community is impaled upon a contradiction that fractures it: the line passes between friend/enemy. It is not the complete enemy, the *hostis*; it is only the *inimicus* in the public sense (the Greek *stásis*) of fraternity, within the Whole of the community. But this fragmented fraternity, in addition to being defectively *phallo-logo-centric*, has nothing to do with *sisterhood* (sisterhood with the sister) but rather patriarchal *fratrocrazia*.

Wishing to think the Nietzschean enigma, Derrida gets lost, does not clarify, gets bogged down, does not advance:

That saying which Aristotle often repeated is, then, indeed one of someone who is saying – his last will and testament – already speaking from the place of death. A testamentary wisdom to which must be opposed, even at the price of madness, the exclaiming insurrection of the living present. The dying person addresses friends, speaking of friends to them, if only to tell them there are none. As for the living person, he addresses enemies, speaking to them of enemies, if only to tell them there are none. The dying person dies, turning towards friendship; the living person lives on, turning towards enmity. Wisdom on the side of death, and the past came to pass: the being-past of the passer-day. Madness on the side of life and the present is: the presence of the present.³⁶⁶

He does not clearly demonstrate the meaning of “wisdom,” why it confronts “death,” and why friendship dwells in that horizon. Less still does he demonstrate of which “madness” he is speaking (as a negation of wisdom in the face of death, and therefore of the other wisdom in the face of life, distinct from that of which Nietzsche speaks), and why in the horizon of “living” the enemy disappears. All this remains in an intelligent, suggestive shadow, but this does not resolve the enigma.

The deconstruction of Derridean *fraternity*, which nevertheless can be useful to us as a first ontological moment (not being able to radicalize the negativity and less to advance the subsequent positive construction), unfolds, as we have said, opposing Schmitt, therefore:

Let the political itself, the being-political of the political, arise in its possibility with the figure of the enemy. This is the Schmittian axiom in its most element form. ‘The political itself, the being-political of the political, arises in its possibility with the figure of the enemy. It would be unfair, as is often done, to reduce Schmitt’s thought to this axiom, but it would nevertheless be indispensable to his thought, and also to his decisionism, his theory of the exception and sovereignty. The disappearance of the enemy would be the death knell of the political as such. It would mark the beginning of depoliticiza-

tion (*Entpolitisierung*).³⁶⁷

It is evident that Schmitt, as also Nietzsche, Derrida, and Modernity in general, understand political power as *domination*, and the political field is structured by a “Will to Power,” which orders this field on the basis of forces organized by the sole criterion of friends versus enemies. It will be necessary to overcome this radically.

3. Solidarity: Beyond fraternity

We must proceed by analytically resolving each one of the steps in order to be able to reach better precision.

In the first place, the first aporia [a] is encountered in that which we wish to designate an “ontological order” - like the “world” of M. Heidegger in *Being and Time*. The “friend” and the “sage” are placed within the horizon of the “understanding of being,” as in the illuminated space in the middle of the forest when the woodcutters have cut a good number of trees (the *Lichtung* of the Black Forest around Freiburg). The “friend” in *fraternity* [a.1] is the one who lives the unity in the Whole (of the family, of the political community). In this sense friendship is nonetheless ambiguous: a member of a “band of thieves” is able to love with the love of friendship (with mutual benevolence) and to struggle for the common good of the band. The totality remains affectively united for *fraternity*, but this has no other measure than the grounds of the whole: being not only understood but also equally desired. Therefore, the exclamation of “Friends!” [A.1] refers to those who are joined and who can receive nonetheless the inevitable reproach from the one who searches for “perfect friendship” to verify that “there are no friends” [A.2]. We have not moved beyond the ontological order.

In the same way, in the second moment [a.2], the one who “understands being” is the sage, the one who knows the totality. He has the farsightedness of the system; he relies on the triumphant tradition, that of the past. The future will be a repetition of what is already achieved. Wisdom is contemplation of “the Same,” it is not

novelty, it approximates death. The ontological sage is always “facing death” (in Heidegger, in Freud, in Schmitt). The death of each one permits the permanence of being in the unity of the community for *fraternity*.

In the second place, the second aporia [b] is obligatory within the horizon of “being.” “War (*pólemos*) is the origin of all” said Heraclitus.³⁶⁸ How is it that “being” is able to be determinate if it does not take account of the original “opposite”: “non-being”? Friendship is unthinkable for ontology without enmity. This perfectly explains the Hellenic position, and equally that of Carl Schmitt, in the exclamation of the first moment: “Foes!” [B.1]. Up to this point everything turns in accord with Greek and Modern *ontological logic*.

But there soon appears a discordant, incomprehensible, unexpected moment: “there are no foes!” [B.2] Because if “there are no friends” [A.2], then inevitably “there are foes.” But if there are not enemies either, then one falls into an irrational cul-de-sac without any exit from the domain of ontology. In effect, that “there are no foes” dislocates ontology, contradicts the position of Heraclitus and of Schmitt. If there are no “enemies” there is no wisdom (which stands out from “being” in the face “non-being”), nor is there being-for-death,³⁶⁹ and not even *fraternity*, because this supposes the unity of the community against the stranger, the other, the *enemy* (*hostility* in ontology is the other side of *fraternity*). How has it occurred to Nietzsche to place this negation in opposition to friendship? From what tradition does this disconcerting intuition arise?³⁷⁰ Derrida cites – in a sense contrary to the thought of Nietzsche³⁷¹ – a text of the *Semitic* tradition that begins to weaken “enmity,” but this supposes a complete collapse, a radical overcoming of ontology, a going *beyond* “being.” The text starts by affirming *fraternity*, but concludes by diluting *enmity*; at the least it opens a door for its annihilation:

“You have heard it said: [α.1 and β.1]³⁷² *Love your neighbor* (*plesíon*) and [α.2 and β.2] *hate your enemy* (*ekhthrón*) [i]. But I tell you: *Love* (*agapâte*) *your enemies* [ii].”³⁷³

This negation of the negativity of the “private *rival*,” of the “political

opponent” and of “absolute *hostility*” (of the enemy to death in war), means that the “ontological order” [i] is transcendend as such, and therefore the experience of the “enemy” occurs (the Samaritans were enemies of the Jews, though of a second level, in [α.1], as “antagonistic” brother *within* the people of Israel) on the basis of a type of *supra-fraternity*,³⁷⁴ of “love” (*agápe*) in that which Other is constituted *on the outside* of its ontical-ontological function as “enemy,” from a trans-ontological, metaphysical, or ethical order, in which “enmity” has been dismantled.

In the Semitic world³⁷⁵ an ethical experience unknown in the Greco-Roman world appears, and it is constituted *philosophically* in the quasi-phenomenological analysis of E. Levinas in the Modern-Western tradition. The “neighbor” of whom he speaks in the cited text is the one who is revealed in “proximity” (*face-to-face*, in Hebrew: נַפְשֵׁי [panim el panim]), that is to say, the immediate, the non-mediated, as in the nudity of the erotic contact of the “mouth-to-mouth”: “who kisses me with the kisses of his mouth.”³⁷⁶ This experience of “subjectivity-to-subjectivity,” of living corporalities “skin-to-skin,” as an *originary philosophical category*, does not exist in Greco-Roman or Modern thought. In the *midrash* of the founder of Christianity called by the tradition that of the “good Samaritan,” the Samaritan is called “good” because he establishes this *experience* of the *face-to-face* with those robbed, injured, or abandoned *outside the path* (*outside* of the ontological Totality). For the Samaritan the “neighbor” is thrown *outside* the path, into Exteriority: the Other. And we must not forget that the Samaritans were the “enemies” of the tribe of Judah.

Like *philosophy*, effecting a political hermeneutics of a symbolic text,³⁷⁷ I will take this *midrash* as an example of a narrative or ethical-rational tale³⁷⁸ constructed by this Semitic master in the face of the question: “Who is my *neighbor*?”³⁷⁹ which could be better translated as: “Who is he who confronts the Other in the *face-to-face*?” or even: “Who establishes the subject-subject relation as *proximity*?”³⁸⁰ In the face of this question, that subtle, *methodical* expert in *critical* ethical-rational *categories*, answers it, structuring a narration with pedagogical intention, which contains the “story” of a socio-political tale.

On the road “a man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho and some bandits attacked him.” The hermeneutic situation departs first of all from the “established system,” “totality” (the Jewish political system, the road) and a victim (“attacked him, stripped him, pounded him with sticks”). There was the victim of the attack “on the side of” the road, of the order, of the system, in the “exteriority” of the political, established, legitimate totality. With a profound, *critical* sense, that does not exist in the “myth of Plato’s cave,”³⁸¹ this *rabbi* (*methodical* master of *critical* rhetoric) makes *the most prestigious of the social and political order* of Israel first pass along the road: “a priest passed,” one who was going to the temple in fulfillment of the Law. And in a critical, ironic, brutal way it is expressed that the victim interpellates the “scribe” (jurist): “seeing him, he took a detour and passed him by.” The totalization of the Totality, of the system in which he finds himself, formally fulfilling the Law, impedes him from *opening himself* to the socio-political exteriority of the victim.³⁸² For better provocation still, (much more than the Nietzschean Zarathustra), the story turns to the tribe of Levi, *the most venerated by the Jerusalem elite*: “a Levite did the same,” that is, one who also ought to fulfill the Law. That is to say, the sages, the best, the legalists, the most venerated of the system could not assume responsibility for the victim, for the Other. The legitimate horizon of the reigning system clouds their minds or impedes them from taking a step “outside” of it, outside of the Law (since one can end up being impure and this would keep them from fulfilling their required worship). The despised according to the table of values of the positive system, the one who was *outside* the Law, a Samaritan (a barbarian for a Greek, a Gaul for a Roman, an infidel for a Medieval Christian or a Mahommedan, a slave or an Indian in early Modernity, a *lumpen* proletarian in capitalism, a Sunni in Iraq for a marine, etc.) further the irony, the scathing critique, the subversive intention of values: “upon seeing him, he felt *solidarity* for him,³⁸³ approached him and bound up his wounds [...]”. These texts have not been taken seriously by *contemporary political philosophy*, neither in the United States nor Europe. However, it is the most revolutionary thought that we have been able to observe in the history of Western politics,

impossible for Greek or Roman politics even to think.

The concept of *plesiós* (the nearby one or the “near” one, neighbor), or *plesiázo* (to come near or “to be made near”), in Greek does not indicate adequately the Hebrew reduplicative of “face-to-face” (*paním elpaním*). In this case, it is the empirical immediacy of two human faces confronting each other, which, when it “is revealed” in the suffering of the victim,³⁸⁴ to that degree appeals to *the political responsibility for the Other* and requires the overcoming of the horizon of Totality (the “going outside of the path” that has been established).

This ethical-political position is not a stoic therapy³⁸⁵ of the desires in order to reach subjective peace (for nothing else like *apátheia* is *ataraxía*), but rather the simple and direct “public-political therapy from the point of view of the Other” (“he bound his wounds, pouring oil and wine in them”); so life goes for the one who dangerously risks getting involved for the Other.

The foundational categories of a *critical* politics are then two. [i] The “established order” (“of this world”: *ek toutou tou kósmou*), Totality, as what is presupposed in order to be deconstructed; and [ii] the horizontal transcendence of historical temporality as political exteriority, future in time (“I do not belong to this world”: *oúk eimi ek tou kósmou touton*)³⁸⁶: Exteriority. The “Law” structures the “established order” (“this order” or “world”) and is necessary. But when the “Law” kills it is necessary not to fulfill it, because the *spirit*³⁸⁷ of the law is life. Abraham had to kill his son Isaac – in accord with the practice of the “Law” of the Semites and with the strict practice in the Phoenician towns of Tyre and Carthage³⁸⁸ – but Abraham himself, evading the law for love of his son (*Anti-Oedipus*), searches for a way to replace him with an animal (according to an interpretation of one Jewish tradition, in which Jeshua was included, in opposition to the dogmatic position of the priests of the temple who affirmed that Abraham *perhaps* killed his son to fulfill the Law and who were the enemies of Jeshua). Before the authority of the “Law,” Jeshua accuses the very court that judged him:

If you were sons of Abraham you would comport yourselves

like him. On the other hand, you are trying to kill me [...] Abraham did not do this³⁸⁹ [...] Do we not have reason to say that you are a Samaritan?³⁹⁰ [exclaimed the members of the Sanhedrin...] I am not crazy³⁹¹ [the accused defends himself].

The “Law” gives life when the order is just. When it represses the possibility of novelty the Law kills. Therefore, that which is constructed from the challenge of victims who interpellate from the exteriority [ii] (proving by its mere socio-political existence the injustice of “this world” [i], the established order), from the project of a new order that “is not of this world” (that is historical, really possible, more just: it is the postulate that Marx explains in the economic field as a “Reign of Liberty,” and that Kant explains as a “regulative idea” in his “ethical Community”³⁹²) is beyond the Law that kills. Jacques Lacan introduces the theme by making the Law in some way the equivalent of the *Ueber-Ich* (superego), when in his Seminar on *The ethics of psychoanalysis*³⁹³ he explains:

In effect, with the reservation of one very small modification – *Thing* in place of *sin* –, this is the discourse of Paul with regard to the relations of the Law and sin, *Romans* 7:7. Beyond what is thought in certain media of these sacred authors, it would be mistaken to believe that the sacred authors do not have a good reading.³⁹⁴

This has produced recently in political philosophy a rereading of Paul of Tarsus,³⁹⁵ which allows us nonetheless to invert the interpretation now in fashion. In general it is understood that the Law, as formal obligation, denies *desire*, and in the degree to which this desire presses to fulfillment *sin* appears, which Bataille takes as a foundation of eroticism (as occurs in the enjoyment of the transgression of the Law). Nonetheless, with Hinkelammert, I feel obliged to interpret the relation of Paul of Tarsus in an inverted way. The fulfillment of the Law produces death, for example of Steven in Jerusalem, because he was stoned for not having fulfilled the Law – and Paul looks after the clothes of the murdered. It is the Law that required Abraham *to kill*

his son. Paul, in fulfilling the Law persecuted the Christians; that is to say, the Law produced death. It was thus necessary, in the name of Life, not to fulfill the letter of the Law that kills (but to fulfill its *spirit*). The death that produces the Law, when it has become fixed, entropic, is oppression of the dominated. In this way, to free oneself from the Law is to affirm Life, or, better, to affirm a Law of Life – that supposes the transformation of the formalist fulfillment of the Law. The Life of Nietzsche is the originary life of the system itself, it is never the Life of the oppressed, of the excluded, of the victim, of the weak in the exteriority of the system dominated by “the Aryan warrior.”

In the same way we can now point to the essence of *solidarity* (beyond the mere *fraternity* of the Law, in the system as totalized totality as domination). In effect, the “Enemy!” [B.1, α.2, or β.2] can be the mere “enemy” of the “friend” in and of the Totality [i] (be it ontic, functional, or ontological). But for “the Other,” that which situates itself beyond the flourishing system, in its Exteriority [ii], this “enemy” is not *his* enemy. In the *Code of Hammurabi*, which is constituted from the horizon of a Semitic metaphysics,³⁹⁶ which is not that of the Roman law as studied by G. Agamben, because it is so complex and critical, it is expressed:

So that the *strong* do not oppress the *poor*, in order to create justice for the *orphan* and the *widow*, in Babylon [...] Let the *oppressed affected* in a process come before my statue of the King of Justice and *be made to read*³⁹⁷ my *written stele*.³⁹⁸

The “enemy” of the “strong” is the *poor*, insofar as they are potential possessors of the goods of the strong, given the state of necessity in which they find themselves. The *orphan* is the competitor of the proper son; the *widow* is the enemy of the one who desires to appropriate the goods of her deceased spouse – that is the theme of the *Code of Hammurabi*. That is to say, the “enemies” of the dominators of the system, of totality [i], are not necessarily the “enemies” of the dominated, of the oppressed, of the excluded [ii]. These, the excluded and dominated, cry out now comprehensibly (but they are discovered neither by Nietzsche nor by Derrida): “Enemies [of the system], there

are no enemies [for us]!, because we ourselves are the enemies of the system!"

Diagram 6: The two orders of fraternity and solidarity

face-to-face	
Face-to-Face	
Totality (the Same, the Law)	Exteriority, the Other, Life
Ontological	Ethical-metaphysical
order	order
of	of
<i>fraternity</i>	<i>solidarity</i>
(equality	(alterity
liberty)	(operation)
"flesh" (<i>sarx</i>)	"word" (<i>logós</i>)

Now the cited text of Derrida is completely cleared up, since he himself does not achieve clarity in his commentaries. Now we have equally two moments; but he introduces in the first [1] the opposition *friend-enemy* (and not only to the friend as in [a.1]); and, in the second, he distinguishes between two types of enemies [2]:

[1] Cursed he who has no *friends* [1.a], because his *enemy* seats himself in court to judge him [1.b].

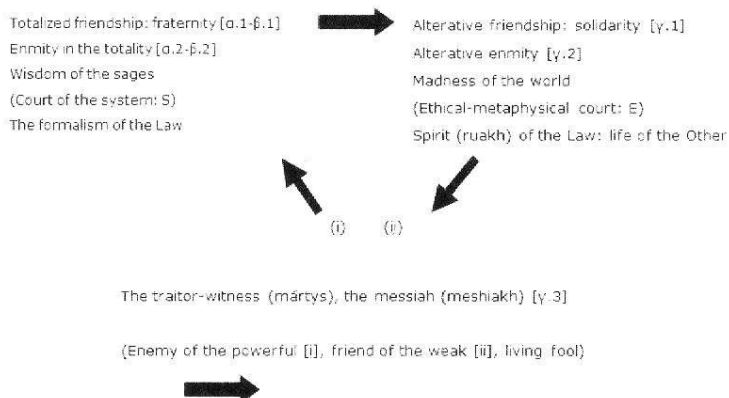
[2] Cursed he who has no *enemy* [2.a], because I will be, I, his *enemy* on the day of final judgment [2.b].

The first moment [1] treats the totalized order of the *flesh* [i]. From the point of view of the flourishing morality, one has to have *friends* in order to have a defense, possibilities of success, when one is surrounded by intrasystemic *enemies* [1.b], in an empirical judgment.

The second moment [2] is upsetting for the ontological order: the one who has not known how to have enemies is cursed [2.a]. But, what class of *enemies* is this? Now it treats those *enemies* which are caused by one's *solidarity* by one's trans-ontological friendship with the poor, the orphan and the widow, with the Other, with the unprotected in inhospitable rough weather, in Exteriority of power [ii], of the Law, of wealth... The one who establishes the relation of *solidarity*, who is cordial with the miserable (*miseri-cordia*, compassion) surpasses the *fraternity* of friendship in the system [$\alpha.1 - \beta.1$ in i] and endangers herself in opening herself to the wide field of Alterity that originates because of a pre-ontological "responsibility for the Other."³⁹⁹ Metaphysical or ethical *solidarity* is prior to the deployment of the (ontological) world as a horizon wherein one "decides" to help or not the Other. But the one who helps the Other, in an *empirical* realization of *solidarity*, does not avoid that the fact that she was always already *responsible for the Other* before. The one who does not help him betrays that *pre-ontological responsibility*. In a way there will then be an *a priori pre-ontological solidarity* and a *trans-ontological empirical* effecting of the solidarity it makes concrete: "Give bread to the hungry" (from the Egyptian *Book of the Dead*).

In the system, the face for the Other presents itself *before the court* of Law of this system, which always declares it guilty (because of defending the *enemy* of the system). The defense of the defenseless, because of *solidarity*, leaves the tutor of the orphan as *responsible before this court of the system and as occupying the place of the victim (by substitution) in his defense; she is his witness (martús): she gives the testimony of the innocence of the Other*. The former *enemies* of the one responsible in solidarity are not now her *enemies* [$\gamma.2$], and her former *friends* [$\alpha.1 - \beta.1$] in the system (when they were exploiting in *fraternity* the poor, the orphan, and the widow) are now her new *enemies*. Now her new *friends* have been won for a new type of friendship: *solidarity* with the Other, with the oppressed, with the excluded [$\gamma.1$].

Diagram 7: Friendship, Enmity, Fraternity, and Solidarity



He who was a *friend* [α.1-β.1] held the poor, the orphan and the widow, as his *radical enemies* [γ.2]. It is now a different *enmity* from the mere enmity in the system [α.2-β.2]. The enemy in the system can be a competitor in the marketplace, an opposing political party, and even a foreign enemy in war. But all those *enemies* affirm *the Same* [i].

On the contrary, the poor, the exploited, the excluded *support* the system from below. It is those who, if they withdraw, the system falls to pieces. They are the *radical enemies* of the system in alternative exteriority [γ.2]. Now, the one who has negated the enmity of former enemies, exclaims: “Enemies? [of the dominant perhaps, but, for the victims, among themselves] there are no enemies!” (transforming the statements [B.1] and [B.2]). The exploited and excluded who were from the start the *enemies*, are not now *enemies*: the opening in solidarity to the Other dismisses the former *enmity* for an *alternative friendship: solidarity* [γ.1]. Upon establishing *solidarity* with them now, the situation with respect to former friends of the dominant system has been transformed into something distinct: now this one is a *traitor* who deserves to be judged as guilty [S], and for a greater contradiction in the court which intends to condemn this one, he or she must *testify* in favor of the Other (the *enemy* of the same court),

taking, on the day of judgment, interior to the system, the place of the Other, of the exploited, of the accused whom he or she now defends and for whom he or she *substitutes*.

Whereas the judge of the transcendental [E]⁴⁰⁰ or ethical-metaphysical tribunal, curses, criticizes all those who have not made themselves *enemies* within the system [2.a], who are the *enemies* of the poor and oppressed (and who are the dominators of the system); *enemies* who “throw themselves on top of” “the one who is in *solidarity* with the Other, with the exploited and the excluded. The one who has not transformed former friends in the system into enemies, shows that he or she continues considering as enemies the poor, the Other, and in this it is manifest that he or she is a dominator. And therefore he or she will be declared guilty on the day of transcendental ethical-political justice: “I will be, I, your *enemy* on the day of final judgment” [2.b]. As we have said, the “final judgment” of *Ma’at* is the metaphor of “ethical-political conscience *in solidarity*” which has for its universal criterion the requirement of the negation of enmity towards the poor (“Give bread to the hungry”); the poor who is always a latent *danger* for the rich, the powerful, the order strengthened “with its blood” (in Judaic or Aztec metaphors). The “myth of Osiris,” celebrated in African Memphis (twenty centuries before the ontological “myth of Prometheus” chained to the Totality), and even its corollary (the “Adamic myth,” which Paul Ricoeur studies in his work *The Symbolism of Evil*, in times that I took his classes from the beginning of the 60s in The Sorbonne of Paris) lie at the origin of the ethical *critical* myths of the ancient Mediterranean, from whence proceeds Athens and Jerusalem.

The court of the system [S] judges according to the formalism of the Law⁴⁰¹ of totality [i]. The other ethical-metaphysical, transcendental, or alterative court [E], judges critically from the life of the victim, that is to say, according to the criteria of the oppressed and excluded, and therefore founds the new and future system of law [ii]. Before this ultimate court (which is the critical consensus of the community of the oppressed and excluded; it is the *plebs* which amounts to the *consensus popoli* of Bartolomé de las Casas⁴⁰²), “on the day of final

judgment” (which acts as a *postulate* which establishes a criterion of orientation, logically thinkable, but empirically *impossible* to realize perfectly, and which since the beginning has exercised its function in all acts of justice that are fulfilled according to the requirements that the necessities of the Other, of the poor, of the orphan, of the widow establish), the traitor is very similar to the one Walter Benjamin describes as the one who irrupts in the “now-time” (*Jetzt-zeit*) as the “*meshíakh*.”⁴⁰³ The messiah is the cursed and the traitor⁴⁰⁴ from the point of view of former friends in the dominant system: the messiah has turned into their *enemy*, not an ontic one [α.2], but an enemy much more radical still than Derrida’s “absolute or ontological enemy” [β.2] (the barbarian on whom one has made war to the death). It is Miguel Hidalgo, whom a court with a majority of *criollos* (white Mexicans) condemned to death (for having raised up an army of Indians and slaves) in 1810. The Other is the “radical enemy” [γ.2] because the Other demands of the system, of the totality [i], a complete inversion of its sense: the Other is the metaphysical enemy; the Other demands the transformation of the system *as totality*.

I think that now it is understood of whom it is said, “Cursed is he who has no *enemy*!” [2.a]. That one is cursed in the eyes of the Judge who judges on the basis of the Alterity of the poor, of the Other, simply because the cursed one has lived in complicity with the system, exploiting and excluding “the poor, the orphans, and the widows”, the Other. This cursed one does not have to have been persecuted and does not have to have had enemies; it is the sufficient *sign* (that one should be judged) to have negated *solidarity* and to have maintained oneself in the dominating *fraternity*. And because this cursed one has done nothing for the weak, then he or she will be judged as guilty before the ethical-metaphysical alterative court of history.

This introduces the last theme, perhaps as unclear in Nietzsche as in Derrida. It treats the second moment [b.2] of the second Nietzschean aporia: “Shout I, the living *fool*.” Here, moreover, enters the entire essential theme for the philosophy of all times.

It treats of the opposition between the “wisdom of the sage” (*sophía tón sóphon*)⁴⁰⁵ as being-for-death (wisdom in the dominant system,

that is to say, “wisdom of the *flesh*”⁴⁰⁶ [sophía sárxha])⁴⁰⁷ [a.2], and the “critical knowledge,” that is “*madness* for the system” (morá tóu kósmou)⁴⁰⁸ as being-for-life [b.2]. The messiah of W. Benjamin was the “fool” before the wisdom of the system. In all the commentary Derrida never gives a clear explanation of this dialectical opposition. I think that now we have sufficient categories to understand the question.

9 The “consensus of the excluded” [ii] is “wisdom” as exteriority (*lógos, dabar*).⁴⁰⁹ When that critical consensus forms—the consensus that delegitimizes the “state of law,” which as the Will of the oppressed (in a “state of rebellion”) puts in question the same “state of exception” (of C. Schmitt), where the word critically breaks in upon the prevailing system of domination: the “word [ii] made flesh [i]”⁴¹⁰ (enters into the Totality, the *flesh*, deconstructing the system of domination). The *meshíakh* of W. Benjamin now justifies with an anti-systemic wisdom (“madness” of the Totality), against the “wisdom of the sages,” the former *friends*, a new wisdom, namely that of the *enemies* of the system in their liberating praxis, those who are no longer the *enemies* of the *meshíakh*.

Hidalgo, one of the priestly class, of the white race and in the position of dominator, struggles against the same elite to whom he had belonged, in a war for anti-colonial Emancipation. His reasons sounded to the ears of his former *friends* (the Viceroyal authorities who persecuted him militarily, the bishops who excommunicated him, and the *criollos* who condemned him to death) as senseless *madness*, unjustified rebellion, betrayal of the *lese majesté*. The empirical fact involves the death of the innocent one, of Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla, who, taking *solidarity* as presupposed, discovers himself as already always responsible for the Other, and he is the *fool* hostage in the hands of the system. To this event, the death of the innocent guilty of *solidarity*, E. Levinas gives the name of the revelation in history of “the glory of the infinite” – a theme about which we argued for a long time with A. Putnam in the professor’s dining room of Harvard University at some time.

We treat here, then, a central moment of *Politics of Liberation*, namely, the moment in which the community of the oppressed and

excluded, the *plebs*⁴¹¹ (*messianic people* in W. Benjamin's sense⁴¹²), from the exteriority of the system of power of those who "order ordering" (as the ELZN, the Zapatistas, express it), tend to constitute *from below* an alternative Power, that of the new people (*populus*), constructed from the "madness" of a dominating system. The wisdom of the critical sage, *popular wisdom of those "from below,"* has been able to unfold, to express thanks for its previous subjective "liberation" against the system of domination on the basis of the power of *solidarity*, love, friendship for the poor, the orphan, the widow, and the stranger. Such wisdom is already suggested by the *system of law* that includes its contradiction (the victims of the Law), exemplified in the *Code of Hammurabi*, that Semitic king of Babylon, a city whose ruins are near the present Baghdad, destroyed by the barbarians at the beginning of the twenty-first century, *enemies of all the wretched of the Earth*.

And with Nietzsche, against Nietzsche, we can exclaim at the end that only when those "condemned" *enemies* of the dominators of the world free themselves, then, and only then "there will come the more joyful hour."

It is still worth one last reflection on a work that has lasted four hundred years (1605-2005). In *Don Quixote de la Mancha*, the first novel of *Modernity* according to literary critics, the "Cide Hamete Benengeli, *Arabian* and Manchegan author," whispered into the ear of Miguel de Cervantes,⁴¹³ that don Quixote disappears in readings of fiction, and that "for these reasons *the poor knight lost his judgment* [...] staying awake to understand them and to get to the bottom of their meaning, though Aristotle himself would not have unraveled them or understood them."⁴¹⁴ And it is thus that he fell into *madness*.

In chapter xxii of the First Part, "Of the liberty that gave Don Quixote to many unhappy people,"⁴¹⁵ it is recounted that some soldiers and twelve prisoners "strung together as links in a grand iron chain" came down the path bound for the galleys, those who were "*subjugated people of the king*." About which Don Quixote asks: "Is it possible that the king *uses force* on no people?" And worriedly he reflects: "However it might be, these people, though they are conducted along, come *by force*, and not of their will. –Thus it is– says Sancho. –Then, in this

way— says his master [Quixote] — here one captures *the execution of my office*: to maintain one's force and to succor and to attend to the *miserable*." Sancho remarks that "justice [...] is the same king."⁴¹⁶

Quixote brings it about that the soldiers allow him to ask each one about "the cause of his disgrace." After lengthy questions and answers exchanged with each one of the prisoners, Quixote concludes:

Everything that represents itself to me now in memory [thanks to the tale of the criminals] [appears] in such a manner that it is speaking to me, persuading me, and even forcing me to show you the effect for the sake of which *heaven hurled me to the earth* and compelled me to make my profession in the order of the knight that I profess, and I took a vow in this profession to favor *the needy and those oppressed* by the greater ones.⁴¹⁷

Quixote, throwing himself against the soldiers, freed the prisoners. One of the liberated, thanking the bold madness⁴¹⁸ of the knight, exclaims: "Our lord and *liberator* [...and not] to think that we have to return now to the *fleshpots of Egypt*, I say, to take up our chains and to set out on the path [...toward the ancient prison]."

The author of *Don Quixote de la Mancha*, that great critic of the system of his time, shows the injustices at the very beginning of Modernity through the *madness* of that apparently anachronistic knight. It was a way of showing the *madness* of *solidarity* in front of the fraternal rationality of the established order!

4. *The Liberatory Event in Paul of Tarsus*

With the following discussion we hope to rethink a very timely subject for political philosophy in recent years. For epistemological reasons, however, we must deal in a different way with some themes common to the philosophy currently in vogue in Europe and the United States.

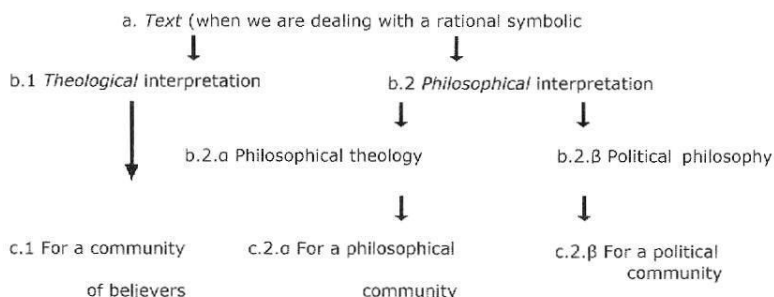
Today, political philosophy has unexpectedly taken up a subject which had been ignored since the Enlightenment. Kant himself, in *Religion Within the Limits of Pure Reason*,⁴¹⁹ addressed the subject with some degree of precision. In *The Conflict of the Faculties*, he distinguished clearly between the tasks of the Faculty of theology and the Faculty of philosophy.⁴²⁰ In his time, the great university *Faculties* (or disciplines) - both those of Latin-Germanic Europe and those in the Byzantine and Muslim worlds - had always consisted of theology and law. It was only with the Enlightenment that the *Faculty* of philosophy (and above all with the Humboldt's founding of the University of Berlin) would gain the status of the *fundamental* Faculty within the university. In an *Appendix*⁴²¹ to chapter 1 of the latter work, Kant sketches out the *conflict* between the Faculties of theology and philosophy as a question of "interpretations." For the philosopher from Königsberg, "the biblical theologian is, properly speaking, he who is learned in the Scripture (*der Schriftgelehrte*) of the Church's faith,"⁴²² while with regard to Scripture (or the "Bible") the philosopher "is he who is learned in reason (*der Vernunftgelehrte*) . . . based on the internal laws that can be deduced from the very reason of each human being."⁴²³ And after an extensive argument he concludes that, "this is how one must conduct all *interpretations of Scripture* (*Schriftauslegungen*)"⁴²⁴ - that is, of the texts of Judeo-Christian Scripture (and the same could be said of the Egyptian *Book of the Dead*, the Indian *Upanishads*, the corpus of Buddhist texts, the Islamic Qur'an, or other texts considered sacred, and often held to be direct revelation, by their respective communities). Within the

structure of the university, scripture resides within the Faculty of theology (in Germano-Anglo-Saxon universities at least, because in Latin Europe these faculties would disappear from public universities for well-known historic reasons). Within the Faculty of philosophy - since the Enlightenment - one could teach with reference to texts consisting of extensive, symbolically-based rational narratives like Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey* or Hesiod's *Theogony*, which are religious texts "full of gods," but which were nevertheless considered suitable for philosophical interpretation. On the contrary, it was strictly forbidden to philosophically use or interpret texts from the Judeo-Christian Bible such as *Exodus*, the *Gospel of John*, or Paul of Tarsus's *Epistle to the Romans*, as though these were intrinsically theological.

The present task is to haul out these moth-eaten symbolic narratives (considered "theological" by enlightened Jacobin secularism) which are housed and studied in the Faculty of theology, and to situate them for the first time within the Faculty of philosophy as well. This would entail subjecting these texts to a *hermeneutics*, a "strictly *philosophical*" interpretation. And yet, going beyond Kant's meditations on the subject, we wish to clarify the question in a different and more precise manner.

In the first place, a) since they belong to everyday languages of the past, these symbolic, religious, and even in some cases mystical texts, ought to be defined as: "*symbolically-based* rational narratives," in the sense that they constitute *myths*, as Paul Ricoeur defines the term.⁴²⁵ These narratives, in the second place, can undergo a double-hermeneutic or interpretation: on the one hand, b.1) *theological*, that is, and as Kant indicated, executed from a position of subjective conviction (what we could call "religious faith"), and c.1) with reference to a religious community (what Kant calls a "Church"). Or, on the other hand, b.2) *philosophically*, to take up these symbolically-based rational texts or narratives toward the goal of discovering their full rational meaning and the implicit theoretical-universal categories embedded within them (what Kant terms "concepts established through reason"⁴²⁶), a process which occurs c.2) with reference to a secular community.

Diagram 8: Various Methods of Interpreting a Rational Symbolic Narrative



In our case, then, we are dealing with the *philosophical interpretation* (b.2) of a *text* (a.) as an activity in relation to a political community (c.2.β), dealing specifically with the *categories* used implicitly by the everyday rational narrative constructed on the basis of *symbols* (that is to say, which hermeneutically has a *double-meaning* with respect to possible semantic references).⁴²⁷ This interpretation still needs to be distinguished from what Kant calls “philosophical theology”⁴²⁸ (which is the so-called “Theodicy”) (b.2.a). We will term it more precisely - correcting the ambiguous common use of the term “political theology” - a *philosophical-political interpretation of symbolically-based, rational texts or narratives* (b.2.β) (religious or not), and whose target audience is the political community.

The expository strategy of this article will have two parts. In the first, I will clarify a critical position toward the debate surrounding Saint Paul as interpreted within a *Politics of Liberation*, taking advantage of all the positive and recoverable elements with which the subject is dealt by contemporary political philosophers. In the second part, I will present critically the positions of other fashionable philosophers, indicating both agreements with and critical dissidences toward the thesis proposed in the first part. In general, and to foreshadow my argument, we will see that all interpretations of the texts - with the exception of those originating in peripheral countries, as we will see - tend not to link the hermeneutic process with the concrete political-

economic reality of the exclusionary globalized system of the time, thereby exposing in their proponents various degrees of “idealism,” indifferent to the terrible global situation.

This subject was instigated at the suggestion of Carl Schmitt and his “political theology,”⁴²⁹ on the basis of a reflection upon the work of Th. Hobbes. We must specify the question from the outset. Hobbes, in *Part III* of his famous *Leviathan*, according to the distinctions proposed above, engages in a strictly “theological interpretation” (b.1), that is, a “political theology” that takes up the Scripture no longer as a philosopher but as member of a community of believers, because the Hobbesian text is written for this historical Christian community. This he clearly indicates:

But in that I am next to handle, which is the Nature and Rights of a *Christian Commonwealth*,⁴³⁰ whereof there dependeth much upon Supernaturall Revelations of the Will of God; *the ground of my Discourse* must be, not only the *Naturall Word* of God,⁴³¹ but also the *Prophetically*.⁴³²

Hobbes then indicates explicitly that his will be the “Prophetically” discourse of a believer, which would nevertheless also make use of “feelings and experience,” and “our natural reason” (and as a result his text is already a *theological* [b.1] construction) setting out from “this Scripture, out of which I am to take the Principles of my Discourse”(a.)⁴³³. Schmitt indicates that the philosophy of modern law (b.2.β) takes elements of theological constructions (b.1), without warning that to do so involves passing to a different level. There are other cases in which there is a direct passage from the early everyday symbolic texts of Western culture - which were frequently religious (a.), as in all other cultures of the epoch - to a political philosophy. Such is the movement of C. Schmitt - as we can see in the dramatic dialogue before his death with J. Taubes - who takes Paul’s *Epistles* as the inspiration for his political doctrine of the “*katégón*,” passing from Paul’s rational symbolic narrative (a. in *Figure 1*) to his political philosophy (b.2.β). We, on the other hand, should follow a more precise itinerary.

That is, we will take the *symbolic narratives* (a.), which should not be worked hermeneutically *only* within the Faculty of theology (b.1), locating these instead within the Faculty of philosophy (b.2), to engage in the philosophical-political interpretive task (b.2.β) of a *Politics of Liberation*, a task which is strictly *philosophical*. This is not a philosophical recovery of theology, but rather a recovery for the sake of philosophy of foundational texts which *implicitly contain critical categories* which gave rise to a culture (that of Eastern and Western Christendom, including Modern Europe), and can be constructed as *critical philosophical categories* of great relevance for our present moment. To repeat: there would be critical categories and methodological distinctions *implicit* in these in these *symbolic rational narratives* - with their everyday language, expressed in the religious sphere (in the case of our study) - that can be abstracted from their religious environment and univocally or analogically *fixed* or determined in one of the meanings of the symbolic text. This specific philosophical determination (which does not yet entail the *double-meaning* of the symbol) is the task of political philosophy (b.2.β) with reference to a secular political community (c.2.β). All this has led to abundant *confusion* as to how these questions are dealt with from Hegel to Nietzsche, passing through M. Heidegger, and including the majority of contemporary political philosophers!

The case that we want to tackle, then, is that of a Saul (Paul's given name), a Jew, a Pharisee from the school of Gamaliel in Jerusalem, a Roman citizen, in the generation that followed that of Jeshúa ben Josef,⁴³⁴ the founder of Christianity.

1. Paul's political categories as implicitly philosophical

In the first place we would like to indicate the hermeneutic categories according to which we will *philosophically* read the *Epistles* of Paul, which we understand to be symbolically-based rational narratives addressed to communities of believers - religious believers, at the time - representing a critical diagnosis with a view to a *political-religious praxis which produced a radical transformation* (*Veränderung*) of the

given historical order.

1 Recalling what many contemporary philosophical interpreters of the *Epistles* forget, these writings must be situated in the *political economic* context of the Roman Empire during the stage of the consolidation of the structure of slave-based domination and an oligarchy marked by tragic inequalities, which awoke an immense clamor among the growing majority of oppressed and exploited masses, reduced to withstanding indescribable suffering: "Humanity watches impatiently (*apokaradokía*) waiting for what it is *to be children of God* to be revealed" (*Romans* 8, 19).⁴³⁵ The *Epistles* constitute a response to this clamor for universal political and economic justice. In her *Contra toda condena. La justificación por la fe desde los excluidos*,⁴³⁶ Elsa Tamez, a Costa Rican specialist on the subject, shows us the way.

1 In effect, the situation of injustice upon which the Roman Empire was constructed was far more serious than what is revealed by an institution of Roman law like the mere *homo sacer*.⁴³⁷ Saul was a Jew, a tolerated *ethnicity* (enjoying certain rights) in the Empire, from a commercial transit city in the eastern Empire (Tarsus), in the diaspora, which is to say primarily urban religious communities dispersed since the Babylonian exile. These communities were heavily exploited by special tributes (the *laographia*) which were applied to those not of Roman origin. Paul, from a family of artisans, learned the manual trade of weaver and supplier of shops (*skenopoios*), working with his hands day and night, living always as a poor among the poor. He was jailed several times in Philippi, Caesarea, and Rome; he faced tribunals in Thessaloniki; he was imprisoned in Ephesus. He lived the violence, torture, and humiliation typical to slaves. Although likely a Roman citizen, he received the *summum supplicium* (the death penalty). This dominated life was suffered within a militarily, politically, and economically domineering Empire. Since the death of Caesar Augustus (29 C.E.) the urban prosperity of the Empire rested on a horrific system of slavery, in which the majority of the population of the Empire were slaves, poor freed slaves, or farmers smothered by countless tributes that were, in practice, converted into a position of servitude or semi-servitude. Roman civilization leaned strategically

upon the inexpugnable efficiency that its legions enjoyed at the time, as military organizations of unmatched strategic effectiveness at that moment. Wars of colonial domination were vital to providing the Empire's slaves, who constituted the booty of all expansive military actions. The patricians appropriated the fertile fields, the new provinces, and the *ager publicus* of the exploited peoples. After the Romans, the local elites were the beneficiaries of newly conquered territories. Few citizens qualified as such: only the rich, those discharging high public offices, well-known military leaders, and members of the famous *ordines*, whether senators, equestrians or decurions. As a product of the legislative genius of this *sui generis* Empire, *Roman Law* sought to justify the validity of this coercive structure with clearly defined duties (posts) and rights. Differences in *status* were thereby guaranteed, legitimizing the power exercised by the *honestiores* (a minority) over the *humiliores* (the immense majority). To be a slave, *servus sine dominio*, meant quite simply not to be subject to rights: unable to marry, unable to have a family or goods; unable to serve as a creditor, debtor, or to prosecute a trial. The possessor of the slave could sell it, to give it as a gift, to punish it, or to kill it, and female slaves suffered even more indignity, humiliation, exploitation, and violence.⁴³⁸

It was from the perspective of this massive suffering by the carnal, living subjectivities of the Imperial multitudes that the Pauline *Epistles* were written, directed toward "ethical communities" (as Kant would call them⁴³⁹) so that they might gain a critical intersubjective consciousness and act accordingly (a theoretical proposal in function of a liberatory, critical, and transformative praxis). Paul sets out from a Semitic anthropological understanding completely distinct from the Greco-Roman view. The human being is not a divine soul (*psykhé*), which is singular, ingenerate, and immortal, fallen into a body (*soma*).⁴⁴⁰ For Paul, as for the Semites and Egyptians (and also for the *Synoptic Gospels* and the *Gospel of John*), the human was categorized as a "flesh" (in Greek: *sárka*) or as a "psychic or mental body" (*soma psychikós*).⁴⁴¹ This was an intersubjective anthropological category showing the situation of the human "outside the Alliance":

Thereby the resurrection (*anástasis*) of the dead (*nekrón*) [...] is planted in a *psychic body* and reborn in a *spiritual body* (*sóma pneumatikón*) [...] It is written: the first man, Adam, was a living soul (*psykhikón zóan*); the last Adam is a *vivifying spirit* (*pneúma zoopoioún*) [...] I affirm, brothers, *flesh* (*sárx*) and *blood* (*haíma*) cannot inherit the Kingdom of God (*I Corinthians* 15, 42-50).⁴⁴²

Here we have two anthropologies - the Greco-Roman and the Semitic-Egyptian - standing in contradiction to one another. The philosophically implicit categories are clear. For the Greco-Roman rational symbolic narrative (a. in Figure 1) and its corresponding philosophies (b.2), matter or the body functions as the principle of determination and of evil; the soul is immortal.⁴⁴³ For Semites and Egyptians, the human is unitary, it is flesh (*basar* or *sóma psikhikós*) and it dies. There is a first death (that of the first Adam) that leaves flesh with (psychic) "life" but without salvation, isolated, with no choices, no hope, no community, no salvation. That flesh enters intersubjectively into an alliance, a contract, a testament (in Hebrew: *brit*), from which a first rebirth (resurrection) can take place: this is the "spiritual body" (*sóma pneumatikós*).⁴⁴⁴ We will soon see the meaning, by contradiction, of the two orders, *eones*⁴⁴⁵ between the "Law" and the "spirit" in the Paul of the Epistle to the Romans.

We are dealing, then, with two orders, two levels, two worlds: the "kingdom of this world" (with its "prince," its "dominators," and its "angels") and the "Kingdom of God" (which similarly has its "apostles" or "envoys" to militantly fulfill a historic-political action). We are therefore confronting two categories that we can construct in an explicitly philosophical manner: one, a) which indicates the "order of the flesh," or the prevailing Totality,⁴⁴⁶ insofar as it claims to be a closed, self-referential Totality and constitutes, moreover, the given; another, b) that of the "order of the spirit," that we could call, with E. Levinas (while modifying his meaning) the trans-ontological sphere, Exteriority or the meta-physical, but which is situated as a concrete community of Others beyond the prevailing, coercive Totality (the

sóma pneumatikós). Now, we are dealing with philosophical categories in sensu stricto, which will allow us to interpret the Epistle to the Romans in a very different manner from what tends to be the case in contemporary European and U.S. political philosophy.

In effect, Paul's *Epistle to the Romans* represents a *critical* culmination of Semitic, Jewish thought in the Roman Empire. It is no less than a rational symbolic narrative launched against the Empire *in its very essence*: it shakes the very foundation upon which the *legitimation of the Roman State* in its totality rested. But, at the same time, this was also a critique of other groups within the Jewish tradition from which the new "messianic"⁴⁴⁷ community was slowly *differentiating* itself. In the third place, the document opposed a certain form of legalism of "Judaizing" groups of the primitive messianic ("Christian") community that failed to grasp the novelty of the new position of the founding group. This does not contradict the fact that for J. Taubes and an entire contemporary Jewish tradition Paul is incorporated within a strictly Jewish horizon. Indeed, what we want to indicate here is that, being *in all aspects Jewish*, Paul (on the basis of the "event" of Jeshúa ben Josef and his apostles, without any rupture, but with complementary differences: a true "subsumption": *katargéin*) is the creative genius of the formulation - for the new "messianic" community - of a diagnostic and a political strategy that this community would follow within the conjunctural "situation" of the Empire and against various Jewish groups, giving the expansive "messianic" community overwhelming *results*, the fruit of a political decision, a singular practical judgment. This represented, politically, a continuation of the critical tradition of the Semites, the Jews, but also entailed the opening of an untraveled path, something not clearly indicated among contemporary political philosophers. This is why there has been a failure to sufficiently value its current impact in the context of a civilizational crisis similar to that which Paul himself confronted, but which today appears ever more immense in the so-called globalization that marks the end of the Modernity we are suffering.

The *Epistle* to the "messianic" community of the Imperial headquarters essentially tackles the question of the insufficient

legitimacy of the praxis and institutions of the Empire and diasporic Judaism, with their unitary criteria of Roman *Law* (lex) or the *toráh* of the Jewish people, which had in the post-Babylonian-exile diaspora become the foundation of rabbinical communities due to the remoteness, and the later destruction, of the sacerdotal institution of the Temple of Jerusalem. This Law had become fetishized.

The *Epistle*, according to the *philosophical* interpretation we propose, deals with six fundamental themes (all of which revolve around the fourth): 1) the meaning of the *justification* or the final criterion of the historical legitimation of praxis, the agent, and institutions; 2) the very concept of Law as foundation of the *first* prevailing order (eón); 3) the *collapse* of the Law due to its insufficiency, its fetishization; 4) the *new* justificatory criterion; 5) the messianic community that bursts in at the time of liberatory praxis (“messianic Now-Time”); thereby 6) creating a *new* order beyond the Law. Here we have a sketch of the themes, the diachronic moments - of the *two eónes*, with their temporalities and the passage (*Übergehen*) from one to the other - and the essential categories which will be mobilized by a *Politics of Liberation*, which remains impossible for the merely ontological tradition of Greco-Roman philosophy or Modernity from Hobbes onward to recognize. Contrary to what Taubes claims, this is a profoundly dialectical narrative that we feel has not been seriously taken into account, perhaps as a result of the social-democratic orientation of many European philosophers, or perhaps since they lack the solvent of political creativity that has been experienced in Latin America since the end of the 20th century.

In the first place, the *Epistle* speaks at the outset of *justification* (Rm 1, 17), a concept that will need to be clarified. The word “justification” (*dikaíosune*)⁴⁴⁸ comes from “justice” (from the Greek: *díke*, and the Hebrew: *tsadik*).⁴⁴⁹ “To justify,” or to declare that an actor or the praxis for which she is agent is just, requires various moments: 1) obviously an actor that is producing an act, which 2) according to some criterion or foundation, 3) is judged by a court or observer, which 4) assigns to the actor or her act the character of “just” or “righteous” (and thereby worthy of reward), or on the contrary the character of “unjust” (and

thereby guilty and deserving punishment). The *justification* is, properly speaking, the fourth moment, that of the subsumption of the concrete (the actor or the praxis) to the universal (the criterion according to which the evaluative judgement is based). This subject refers us to the myth of Osiris, of the final Judgement of the *Ma'at* in Egypt - which is repeated in the Jewish and Christian traditions - in which the dead are *judged* for their works, according to which they have either fulfilled divine mandate (the *Law*) or not. Salvation or resurrection of the dead in Egypt is the effect of a positive *justification*; that is, the judged has avoided the obstacle posed by the judgment in being characterized as *just*. He or she has been *justified*. "It is not enough to know the Law to be just (*dikaioi*) before God, one must act on the Law to be justified (*diaiothésontai*)" (Rm 2, 13).

In the second place, the Epistle deals with the meaning of the Law. The Law is the criterion held as valid for all, for "justification" (of the agent and her praxis). From the ancient Egyptian goddess *Ma'at* to the *nómos physikón* of the Greeks, to Roman Law or the Jewish *toráh*, the Law operates as a fundamental imperative. This is why "the function of the Law is to give *consciousness* (*epígnosis*)⁴⁵⁰ of sin" (Rm 3, 20). Or, alternatively, the Law determines a limit or *framework* (as Rosa Luxemburg would say) for the will, as a criterion to be able to judge by differentiating what is just (and fulfills the Law) from what is perverse (because it violates the Law). Without this *framework* good cannot be discerned from evil, and as a result there exists no moral consciousness of one or the other (that is, of moral error).

On the other hand, the Law presupposes: a) a time *prior* to its dictation, a time of chaos beginning with the "sin of the *first* Adam" (which is also metaphorically the time of Egyptian slavery); b) another time of hope, corresponding to Abraham (the time of the *first* Alliance); and c) the time properly speaking of the the *first* Law, pronounced by Moses out of Egypt and in the desert, that of the order which still prevailed in Paul's time. It is with Moses that we have what A. Badiou might call an "event" in reference to the ontological order, but beyond Badiou we must consider this moment as the "*first* event," the foundational event.⁴⁵¹ Notice that we must begin to engage in a

diachronic description of *two* events, in the dialectic of *two* times, which has frequently gone unnoticed for many interpreters of the text we are analyzing. There is a *before* and an *after* which are essential for the *Politics of Liberation*. The *Law* plays its function in a *first* moment that must be overcome, without which everything loses its meaning. To summarize what we have accomplished up to this point, we could say that, in effect, the *Law* is the criterion or foundation for the *justification* of the praxis carried out in any given, prevailing order.

In the third place, the legitimacy of the *Law collapses*. This is a first dramatic, critical, and novel moment in the *Epistle to the Romans*, the *negative* moment, one which could be interpreted as anarchist (or certainly one which leads toward anarchy), thereby constituting the political moment *par excellence* which will permeate all later critical traditions (and leftist traditions since the 18th century). While the *Law* is the criterion of justification for actors and praxis within the prevailing order, it can nevertheless become fetishized and corrupted, falling into contradiction with even itself, and thereby producing its own collapse. How does Paul explain this negativity? From what sort of situations can the very foundations of the system be called into question?

In order to be able to negate the *Law*, this *Law* would first need to have the pretension of functioning as the absolute reference for justification. This is what we mean by the fetishism of the *Law*, and it appears when this *Law* is affirmed as the *single* and *ultimate* foundation of said justification: it becomes absolutized, self-referential. This occurs when the *Law* is situated above *Life itself*. Franz Hinkelammert, writing with reference to the *Gospel of John*⁴⁵² in his book *The Cry of the Subject*,⁴⁵³ describes how Jeshúa ben Josef healed a blind man on Saturday (a day on which, according to the *Law*, no work should be done), for which he was reprimanded by the observers of the *Law*:

Jesus transgressed the law. He does this to cure a sick man. The law should not impede human life. Those who oppose him, do so in name of obeying the law. Jesus reproaches those demanding the fulfillment of the law for the sin of not helping

one's fellow man.⁴⁵⁴

For the founder of Christianity, the *new* criterion⁴⁵⁵ is Life, which in turn provides the *ultimate* foundation for the Law. Life is the *content* of the Law; its *inversion* is what Jeshúa and Paul of Tarsus criticize. Paul argues in various ways that the Law is ambiguous, showing firstly the impossibility of its perfect fulfillment:

I did not know what desire was until the Law told me: *Thou shalt not desire*⁴⁵⁶; at which point sin, taking this commandment as its basis, provoked in me all sorts of desires (*Rm* 7, 7-8).

These passages have been commented upon by J. Lacan⁴⁵⁷ and S. Žižek, but they must be situated within the effort to prove that the Law cannot serve as the *final* criterion for justification because, in this case, no one could possibly be deemed righteous. "The Law is holy and the commandment holy, just, and good, but although good in itself it became death for me" (7, 12). Perfect fulfillment of the Law is impossible, such that everyone is left definitively without any possible justification. Not only this, but moreover, the Law in its fetishized state demands such a degree of application that it can even produce death.

In effect, Paul knew very well the repressive power of the Law, since he had heard Stephen's speech in Jerusalem before he was killed:

"They killed those who announced the coming of the Righteous, [Stephen exclaimed,] and you have now betrayed and murdered him. You, who received the Law by mediation of the envoys and have not observed it." ... The witnesses, leaving their hats at the feet of a man named Saul, set to stoning Stephen... Saul approved the execution. (*Acts of the Apostles* 7, 52-8, 1)

This all coincides with the passage in the *Gospel of Luke* 24, 26: "Did not the *meshíakh* have to suffer all this to demonstrate his glory?" Here, *dóxa* indicates precisely the "glory" of the *meshíakh* in its full revelation, in the manifest presence that would dismiss any

pretension of the Law as ultimate foundation. If the Law killed the Righteous, this revealed to the new messianic community in the very act of the murder on the cross the corruption, the fetishism of the Law, and with this the community was liberated from the Law and denied it the power of serving as the basis for justification.⁴⁵⁸ How could human beings be deemed just or unjust if the law itself had become *unjust*? As Hinkelammert says of the act according to which the death of Jeshúa ben Josef was justified:

Now Jesus attacks head-on: "If you [the members of the tribunal, the Law] were the children of Abraham, you would fulfill the work of Abraham. But you are trying to kill me, who has told you the truth I heard from God. Abraham did not do this. You do the same as your father [...] You have Satan as your father and want to carry out the desires of your father" (*John* 8, 40-44).⁴⁵⁹

In effect, Abraham, *against the Law* of the Semitic people who sacrificed their firstborn sons, did not sacrifice his son Isaac (thereby constituting an anti-Oedipal situation). To be descended from Abraham is to know that there are occasions in which it is not necessary to obey the Law when Life is at risk. The prevailing orders (be they those of the Romans, Jews, or legalist Christians) could not call the Law into question as the single criterion for justification. Paul, alongside Jeshúa ben Josef, placed Life and *emunáh* above the Law.

Now I believe that the decisive moment of the Pauline argument can be grasped, and it is to be found in reference to the question of the *new* justificatory criterion. Therefore, and fourthly, Paul clearly states: "This is our thesis: the human being is *justified* by *emunáh* [in Greek *pístis*], independent of *the work of the Law*" (*Rm* 3, 28). This statement is the origin of all transformative - and even revolutionary - imperatives, one which radically transmutes the categorical framework of all political philosophy of the past twenty centuries (something impossible for the Greeks and Romans). This is the focus of the *Epistle to the Romans*, which deals in the last instance not with the question of the Law, but with the problem of the *new* justificatory criterion (which, in turn, is

to be understood according to the *subsumption* [katargéin]⁴⁶⁰ of the old Law to the *new* Law⁴⁶¹).

To respect the Law as the ultimate foundation for justification is like “putting oneself at the disposition of someone, obeying them like a slave; [and in fact in this obedience] one is a slave” (Rm 6, 16). One is an enslaved member of the Totality of the prevailing coercive system. A. Gramsci would say that, under the hegemony of the Law, it is the dominated who grant *consensus* to the ruling class. On the other hand, their *critical dissensus* destroys the possibility of constructing a legitimate hegemonic project: it attacks the foundation.

Only now can we tackle the concept of *emunáh*. To simply say “faith” - and considering the interpretive superpositions of the last twenty centuries, which have ended up burying the term’s meaning - is to commit a serious error. Moreover, applying the hermeneutical method which passes from the metaphor, or the rational symbolic account, to its categorical content, this question demands sufficient creativity to discover new semantic layers. As we have repeated many times, the traditional justificatory method was the Law. Now, the messianic community, the *remainder*, discovers a new source of legitimation. We propose that this be understood - for political philosophy, transferring the symbol - as the *new critical consensus* of a messianic community confronted with the collapse of the Law. The messianic community, the *people*, confronting the immense power of the (Roman) Empire, the temple (of Israel), and tradition (maintained by new Christians unable to overcome their ancient rites, customs, sacrifices, etc.), nevertheless dared to confront these powers from the *certainty* of possessing a conviction that can transform reality in its totality. That certainty - that *critical* consensus of the community itself - is what is called *emunáh* in Hebrew or *pístis* in Paul’s Greek, and which could be described as the enthusiastic certainty of the *critical* community (whose source is to be found in the people itself),⁴⁶² and which could be translated as a mutual *confidence* that is continuous through time as the intersubjective fidelity of the members of such a community, convinced of their responsibility to create a new agreement, contract, Alliance, or Testament. This new agreement

would legitimize or *justify* (“judge as just”) the fearless praxis of the extreme danger of “messianic time” (of W. Benjamin⁴⁶³) as a source for the legitimation of the *future* system. (And here we part ways with Agamben, as we will see below.) I believe that this is how political philosophy should understand “justification *by faith*.”

In a political speech, Fidel Castro once exclaimed the following: “By *people*, we mean [...] when [a group] believes in something and someone, above all when it believes sufficiently in itself” – in other words, when it believes itself capable of being the collective actor responsible for creating a new and more just political system.⁴⁶⁴ This *belief*, this *faith*, this *confidence*, this intersubjective *fidelity* is a *new* source of *justification*, and it is self-referential. This is no longer the *justification according to the Law* which has ceased to be valid (for example, the *Laws of the Kingdoms of the Indies* of 1681 for New Spain in the process of independence), but rather a new *justification according to the faith* “of” the people “in” that same people, which is self-affirmed as an agent of historical transformation. (Or even revolutionary transformation were this necessary, as for example the creative event giving rise to the future and new legality of the 1814 *Constitution of Chilpancingo* for independent Mexico.)

Yet there remains a symbol whose meaning should be clarified. Paul writes:

Now,⁴⁶⁵ on the other hand, by dying to what had bound us we were free before the Law and we can serve (*douléuein*⁴⁶⁶) in virtue of a new *ruakh* in Hebrew; *pnéuma* in Greek], and not an old code (Rm 7, 6).

That “spirit” indicates the beginning of the second *eón*, beyond the Totality of the Law. This is once again the enthusiasm, the mutual solidarity⁴⁶⁷ of the “rescued,” the “redeemed,” those “liberated”⁴⁶⁸ from the oppressive slavery of the Law.

But we still need to attempt to clarify a concept disputed by C. Schmitt and J. Taubes. We refer to the historical category of the *katékhon*, with which Paul expresses the force which *holds back* the full realization of “*anómia*,” the moment in which the legal system

- reaching its self-referential or fetishistic culmination - kills the righteous (or the innocent) in the name of legality. This is the moment in which the contradiction of the Law is revealed, which is to say that it marks the end of the self-justification of the prevailing system. In order to avoid reaching this moment, it is necessary to “reform” all that is reformable to give more life,⁴⁶⁹ more time, as a prolongation of the prevailing system so that it does not become clearly repressive in its own eyes. When what “holds it back” is annihilated, the system plunges, revealed in all its evil.⁴⁷⁰ It is the moment of *anomía* in the time of the Law (the *legal* killing of innocents in Iraq or *extra-legal* torture in Guantanamo, which nevertheless appears *ad intra* a cynical legalism), which unleashes the second *anomía*, that of the *meshíakh*, which in no longer being able to respect the Law, rises up in rebellion, overthrowing it. This irruption of “Now-Time” begins the agonic task seeking to found a just system, passing in extreme cases to even the complete destruction of the unjust order (as in the case of social and political revolutions).

In the fifth place, and faced with the *anomía* or the moment of the final repression of the repressive system, we see the emergence of those who decide to live in freedom: “Now, by dying to what had bound us we were free before the Law” (Rm 7, 6). Who are those who are freed from the *old* system’s Law? This is where the entire question of the *meshíakh* - and the messianic *people* (which is nearly redundant, since the *people* is messianic or it isn’t a people at all) - emerges.

Those who confront the Law - a law which has collapsed in the eyes of the “messianic” community - are those who abandon the mere “everyday *time* of the Law” (*khrónos*) and burst into another world, another *eón*, from the Exteriority of the Law, from those held to be nothing. This explosive, *creative entry from the nothingness* of the system, gives rise to a different kind of *time* (*kairós*). Now the messianic moment manifests itself, “in the Now-Time” (*to kairós*)⁴⁷¹ of the “*second event*” - with respect to what is now relegated as a *first* ontological “event” in A. Badiou’s terms - messianic *time*, the time of danger, the time in which all of the functions that were carried out under the old Legal order (of the repressive system) are carried out

as if they weren't the same,⁴⁷² because now their meaning has radically changed. Before they reinforced the system and were legitimized by it. Now they become *critical* of the system (even if they represent the same praxis: eating, being married, being a soldier), because that praxis is *oriented toward* [*se endereza a*] another project (that of the collapse of the system, as negativity, toward the construction of a future and more just system, as positivity). In this *time* of danger, Miguel Hidalgo y Portilla, a Mexican-born European and integrated member of the clergy, and the whole *people*, would become the liberators of Mexico. This is the *time* of G. Washington, of Mao Zedong, and of Evo Morales. This is the moment at which M. Hidalgo sounded the bell of his church, not to announce the customary liturgical celebration (the colonial *khrónos*), but rather to convene an army to battle against the Spanish oppressors, abandoning his everyday life in that *Now-Time* (*kairós*) and transcending himself toward a *different* horizon. This is the very same messianic time (theorized in a secular manner by W. Benjamin), around which the most original categories of a critical and liberatory politics must be constructed.

Those responding to the *call* of the anointed (the *meshíakh*: Miguel Hidalgo, for example) now constitute a community which “splits off” from Israel as a whole, which for political philosophy refers to the mere “political community” in general as a *Totality*. In the *symbolic* categories of the Pauline (and Jewish) narrative, this is the “remainder” (*leimma* in Greek; *she'ar* in Hebrew):

In the *Now-Time* there is left a remainder, chosen by grace. And if this is gratuitous, then the works [of the old system] are no longer of value, because that which is free would cease to be so. What follows? That Israel⁴⁷³ did not achieve what it sought; the chosen [the new, messianic community] did, while the rest have been blinded, as was written: *God blinded their spirit, he gave them eyes not to see and ears not to hear* (Rm 11, 5-8).

The “scission” (*aforismós*), consequently, divides a Part from the Whole, a Part which is also itself partly outside the Whole, an

oppressed Part at the heart of the political community now gains a creative presence such that it maintains a degree of *exteriority*: the *plebs*. This *plebs* constitutes, moreover, the origin of a future *populus* suggested by E. Laclau, and that *populus* represents the community within a new order as a Whole, expressed in the symbolic narrative as a struggle to arrive at the *Promised Land*, “where milk and honey flows” as the Sandinista hymn goes). G. Agamben rightly emphasizes:

At a decisive instant, the elected people, every people,⁴⁷⁴ will necessarily situate itself as a remnant, as not-all [...] The remnant is the figure, or the substantiality assumed by a people in a decisive moment, and as such is the only real political subject.⁴⁷⁵

Those who remain within the old system (colonial New Spain for Hidalgo) do so as fetishists (*eyes that do not see, ears that do not hear*), unable to understand the *new creative event*. This is no longer a founding event (that of Hernán Cortés who organized New Spain as a colony), but the birth of a new system (independent Mexico). The original community (all of Israel) has divided. Some remain faithful to the old *truth* of the Law, slaves to it (the Spanish realists and their collaborators); others form a “remainder” in the danger of the “remaining time” (*I Corinthians* 7, 29). The ruling class, as Gramsci would say, becomes a coercive and repressive class, the Law kills the just that rise up in rejection of the established consensus. The prevailing hegemony, the “kingdom of this world” in all its rigor disintegrates. The “*called*” (from which we get “church,” *ecclesia*, from *klao*) and the “*chosen*” are now a splintered part of the nation as a whole. In this way, a “people” is born (*laos* in Greek; *ham*): “I will call them my *people*, those who are not my *people*” (*Rm* 9, 25).⁴⁷⁶ Hence the entire categorical problem of the *people* in political philosophy can be found within the symbolism of Pauline messianism: the central collective act in the historical creation of the new.

This praxis of those who throw themselves into the struggle for the *new* is seen, by “the wisdom of the world,” by the law, as “madness.” A *critical* political philosophy, then, understands that it will be paradoxical and incomprehensible for the system that it leaves behind

(the colony of New Spain seen from the metropolitan monarchy):

We put forward a *knowledge* [*sophían* in Greek; a new epistemology], but not the knowledge of this world [the Law] and nor of the rulers who follow from the present time [...]; this no ruler in present history has come to understand (*I Corinthians* 2, 6-8). For this reason God was kind enough to rescue [to redeem, to liberate] those who *believe* (*pistei ontas*) in the *madness* that we preach (*Ibid.*, 1, 22).

The wisdom of the messianic proposal (of M. Hidalgo or Evo Morales) to confront the Power of Imperial Law is *madness* for the old system (which draws its legitimacy from the *Laws of the Kingdoms of the Indies*, or the recommendations of the World Bank), but not for the messianic *people*, or indeed any *people* (Mexican or Bolivian).

Paul can therefore be found underlying certain essential *critical* categories which would later be employed (and frequently inverted) by the political philosophies of Byzantine and Latin Christendoms, of the Islamic world, of Modern Europe (including Marxism) and of contemporary political theories. He would be the dwarf moving the pieces on the chessboard of these cultures, just as W. Benjamin believed (according to G. Agamben's suggestive interpretation, which we will discuss below).

2. The political categories of Paul of Tarsus as interpreted by M. Heidegger, A. Badiou, S. Žižek, W. Benjamin, J. Taubes, G. Agamben, and F. Hinkelammert

Let us approach the subject through some existing interpretations of Paul's symbolic narrative from the perspective of political philosophy.

a) It is well-known that the young *Martin Heidegger* (1889-1976) dedicated the years of 1920-1921 to *University Lectures* on Paul of Tarsus, which would prove determinant for the category of *facticity* on which his *Being and Time* (1927) would be based, and while this is not strictly a work of political philosophy, it can serve as a useful

introduction to our subject. Here we can see clearly the Heideggerian methodological intention - correct, as far as I am concerned - and which is of interest for our exposition:

It is necessary to determine the meaning of words of the lecture's announcement preliminarily. This necessity is grounded in the peculiarity of philosophical concepts.⁴⁷⁷ [...] In the following, we do not intend to give a dogmatic or theological-exegetical interpretation, nor a historical study or a religious meditation, but only guidance for phenomenological understanding.⁴⁷⁸

Which is to say that Heidegger would extract the *implicit philosophical concepts* (or *categories*, level *b.2* in *Figure 1*) from the factual-everyday narrative of Paul's texts (level *a*) for his own ends. He would interpret phenomenologically the "factual experience of everyday life," which constitutes the existential horizon according to which the *Epistles* are written, with the latter thereby being considered as rational, symbolically-based narratives. And on this level Heidegger distances himself from Martin Luther (in the insistence that "we need to liberate ourselves from Luther's point of view"⁴⁷⁹), by advancing an existential approach to Paul from Paul himself, while attempting to prevent this interpretation from objectifying *modern* experience.

Heidegger engaged in some methodological clarifications that gesture toward *Being and Time* - which A. Badiou also takes advantage of - such as the concept of "factual life experience" as an ontological departure-point. This "experience" is differentiated from other possible positions within the world, such as for example philosophical thought or scientific explanation.⁴⁸⁰ Diverging from Troeltsch, Dilthey, Windelband, Rickert, Scheler and others, he describes the "historical" being in which we find "Concern of Factual Dasein [Being-there]."⁴⁸¹ He defines the "situation" as "something that belongs to *understanding* in the manner of enactment, [and] does not designate anything in the manner of an order. [...] We cannot *project* a situation into a particular field of being, nor into *consciousness*."⁴⁸² Once equipped with some *methodological* and *categorical* advances, Heidegger goes on to interpret

“Paul’s experience.” This is an existential-philosophical reflection, not political philosophy; moreover, while it is eschatological, it does not discover the subject of “messianism” (which W. Benjamin along with G. Scholem glimpsed in the work of Rosenzweig). Furthermore, Paul’s “world” is simply an independent ontological sphere, and not woven as the antithesis of the “world of the Law” as the horizon to be abolished and assumed (subsumed). What it lacks, then, is the dialectic character of the interpretation we are seeking.

It seems strange to us that Heidegger begins his interpretation with the *Epistle to the Thessalonians*, a text loaded with eschatological tension, with its temporality stretching tautly toward the future (*Sein-können*).⁴⁸³ The question is: “How is the *world shared with others* given to him in the *situation* of epistolary redaction?”⁴⁸⁴ The response can only be partial, because “we do not know the *world* around him” in a perfect sense.⁴⁸⁵ In any case, the effort is to “put oneself” into his world with the best possible information in order to discover the *meaning* of what confronted him every day. It is interesting to note that Heidegger, as he tends to do, begins to “work the words” in their capacity of signifiers, passing to their etymological origin and relating them to one another. Upon reaching *Thessalonians* 5, 1, he comes across the expression: “About *time* [everyday: *khrónos*] and the *time* [messianic: *kairós*] [...] of the *Day of the Lord* [*heméra Kyríou*] will arrive like a thief in the night. But for Heidegger this lacks any special messianic meaning. He refers back to this subject later, when he says that: “To the Christian only his *tò nûn* [the *Now*] of the complex of enactment in which he really stands is to be decisive, but not the anticipation of a special *event* that is futurally situated in temporality.”⁴⁸⁶

We similarly read that

from this complex of enactment with God arises something like *temporality* to begin with. II. Thess. 2:6-7: ‘*kai nûn tò katékho*’ [and you know what is *now* restraining him] [...] Theodoret, Augustine, and others see in *katékho* the precipitous order of the Roman Empire, which *suppresses* persecution of Christians by Jews.⁴⁸⁷

It is therefore worth indicating that the future philosopher of Freiburg was also preoccupied with Paul from a *philosophical* perspective, but one which was largely *phenomenological* rather than leading toward any kind of *political philosophy*. Furthermore, his reflections do not constitute a messianic interpretation, which is visible in the non-tension between the *world* of everyday life under the Law and the *new world* that originates in its critique.

b) Let us now touch on some points in *Alain Badiou's* (1937-) discussion of the subject, recalling that we have already dedicated some pages to the subject previously.⁴⁸⁸ We will take into account what we said there, touching now only on a reading of *Saint Paul: The Foundation of Universalism*.⁴⁸⁹

For Badiou, the case of Paul is a “pretext,” that is, it is an example to help better understand his own theory of the “subject” on the basis of the “event” (which constitutes a response to the crisis of the “historical subject as the proletariat” essentialized in certain *standard* Marxisms). The space for the articulation of the two terms (subject/event) - on which we agree - is “militancy” as an epistemological location,⁴⁹⁰ a *singular* experience from which a *universalism* is opened up⁴⁹¹ (with which we disagree). Badiou has been building slowly on this theme during the course of nearly forty years,⁴⁹² but this remains a “politics of *emancipation*” which is very different from our “politics of *liberation*.” It is necessary from the being to clarify two methodological presuppositions. The first, with regard to the relationship between philosophy and the Pauline text itself. The second, the absence of categories which transcend a monadic ontology (i.e., the lack of the *third* dialectical moment of the political process, which was explained perfectly by Paul but unrecognized by Badiou).

With regard to the first point, Badiou tirelessly affirms that his is not the same sort of access to the text that a “religious believer” could have, but rather an exclusively philosophical one (which I believe to be correct). But this does not mean that we can objectify Paul’s position as an “anti-philosophical” one (Badiou attempts to demonstrate this, for example, with his failure at the Areopagus⁴⁹³). But this is because he understands his philosophical task as one of desacralization, and as the

negation of religion as such (failing to distinguish desacralization from de-fetishization, as we will see). If we bear in mind the distinctions we have already formulated, we can clarify these confusions. *Paul's text* is a symbolically-based *rational* narrative (not irrational, as Badiou believes, seemingly aligning rationality with modern or Greco-Roman ontological experience). Since Badiou rejects hermeneutics, it is impossible for him to clarify the “double” meaning of the symbol in Paul's everyday text in order to thereby decant its *implicit* categories. I think, on the contrary, that the task is to enable the symbol to pass (level *a* of *Figure 1*) to the level of a *strictly* conceptual philosophical discourse (2.b).

The second, and more serious point, is that Badiou moves *solely* on the ontological level, that of the Totality which is given or called into question (from the perspective of an abstract, singular, idealist subject, with no relation to the *situation*, to memory, to history, or to the socio-economic and political conditions of the Roman Empire and the rabbinical Judaism of the diaspora). Paul is a good pretext to demonstrate the “conversion” as the “exception” which emerges from nothingness and has as a project the “vacuum” which is progressively filled in “fidelity” to a *purely* subjective “truth.”⁴⁹⁴ For us, on the other hand, Paul is materially inserted into a world of slaves and deep structures of imperial domination, against the unjust legalism in fulfillment of the Law, in order to irrupt *communally* (as a “remainder”) into the Empire, into rabbinical Judaism, and into “messianic” groups, against those like Peter, who want to obey both an already subjectively-abolished Law and the *new law* of the critical consensus of the same community, the *people*, established by *emunáh* (which has nothing to do with “faith” as Badiou explains it, in its inverted and fetishized contemporary meaning). Badiou finds himself with no dialectical “exit” to overcome the trap of the prevailing Totality (and even less so if it is thought from the perspective of the ontology of “*mathémata*”) through an empirical, historic, conditioned militant community that “*rises up*” (*is raised from the dead*).⁴⁹⁵ The community thus *materially* affirms the negated life of the slaves, the oppressed, the excluded, etc. (that is, agreeing with Marx's position), and *formally*

as a new “justification” or legitimacy, and which has “hope” (ἐλπίς) in a more just future. “To leave” the system (“this world”) and “rise up” (rise from the dead) was the “messianic” act of irrupting from a concrete *situation* into empirical history as a precise, collective act: the “Now-Time” that *reverses the reversal*. Without this “third term” - the “spirit,” the *new, future Totality*, the postulate based in the pardoning of sin⁴⁹⁶ - nothing in Paul can be understood. And Badiou does not have a *third* dialectical term (exteriority or the ethical, metaphysical transcendence suggested by E. Levinas, although it is impossible to derive *political* conclusions from the latter).

It is correct to say, in this case, that “the subject does not pre-exist the event,”⁴⁹⁷ but not that “truth is entirely *subjective*.”⁴⁹⁸ The messianic act (to speak like W. Benjamin) emerges as an “event,” but not as the “first” (which is the only one that Badiou considers), but rather as the *second* “event.” The *first* event, during the first *eón* - from the *sin* of Adam to hope and the *first* Alliance with Abraham - culminates in the Law promulgated by Moses in the Sinai. It constitutes the given, prevailing Totality, explained in the “Architectonics” of the *Politics of Liberation*. The *second* event (which we now propose through Badiou, beyond Badiou) is the *pardon of the sins* of the *second* Adam and the *new* Alliance, both achieved by Jeshúa ben Josef. After the messianic act, the *old* “privilege” of the chosen People of Israel loses its exceptionality, since the *old* Law becomes more of a burden than an advantage. The new *choice* is not a privilege, but a responsibility. But it is no longer *particular* to the single chosen people, but is also available to the “*goím*,”⁴⁹⁹ to all nations. It is not *singularity* that attains *universality*, as Badiou would argue.⁵⁰⁰ It is a concrete and historical messianic *community* that breaks down the walls of the ontological horizon of the *Being of the world* (of the Empire, of the temple, of the Law, etc.) and launches a “truth-process,” yes, but one with a completely different density than the “truth” of the *modern* subject that Badiou still hopes to recover.

Truth is played out in time as a “process,” as “fidelity,”⁵⁰¹ not as freedom attained, but as liberation, that is, as a process. But this process cannot be “indifferent to the state of the situation,”⁵⁰² but rather

must be precisely linked to and rooted in that situation. The subject Badiou is proposing for us - one “unconditioned” by “conversion” - is frankly anti-Pauline (and furthermore, anti-Marxist). The relativity of determination is one thing, but the total indeterminacy of the irrational origin of the “convert” (as Badiou explains), is another. In the Second and Third *Theses on Feuerbach*, Marx reminds us:

The question whether objective truth can be attributed to human thinking is not a question of theory but is a *practical* question.⁵⁰³ [...] The [naïve] materialist doctrine that men are products of circumstances and upbringing, and that, therefore, changed men are products of other circumstances and changed upbringing, forgets that it is men who change circumstances [...]. The coincidence of the changing [*veränderte*] of circumstances [Badiou’s state of the situation?] and the transformation of human beings themselves [“messianic” action?] can be conceived and rationally understood only as *transformative practice* [*umwälzende Praxis*].⁵⁰⁴

But that “transformation” (on the economic, political, pedagogical, religious, or aesthetic levels, etc.) is neither singular, nor unconditioned, nor solely subjective. It is a “truth-process” as “fidelity,” but one which is *real* and *objective*. Paul demonstrated this *objectivity* without detaching it from “messianic” subjectivity (which is *transformative*, and not merely *reformist*).⁵⁰⁵

c) For his part, Slavoj Žižek, in *The Puppet and the Dwarf: The Perverse Core of Christianity*, advances (in his customarily suggestive but unsystematic manner, making precise understanding difficult) a Lacanian interpretation with a Hegelian and Marxist horizon. His existential location, on the geographic periphery of Europe (his native Slovenia), partially explains his return to Eurocentric positions, evident among other things in arguments that reflect his recent transition to *radical Christian orthodoxy*.⁵⁰⁶ This can be seen in his use of the text *Orthodoxy*, written by the subtle, intelligent, and paradoxical conservative Catholic G. K. Chesterton.⁵⁰⁷

J. Lacan alluded to our subject in a session of his *Seminar on The*

Ethics of Psychoanalysis, and felt the need to make use, as one might suppose, of Chapter 7 of the *Epistle to the Romans*, confronting the psychoanalytic paradox Paul presents:

Is the Law the Thing [*Ding*]? Certainly not [Lacan exclaims]. Yet I can only know of the Thing by means of the Law. [...] But even without the Law, I was once alive. But when the commandment appeared, the Thing flared up, returned once again, I met my death. [...] some of you at least will have begun to suspect that it is no longer I who have been speaking. In fact, [...] this is the speech of Saint Paul on the subject of the relations between the law and sin in the *Epistle to the Romans*, Chapter 7, paragraph 7. Whatever some may think in certain [Jacobin] milieux, you would be wrong to think that the religious authors aren't a good read. [...] The dialectical relationship between desire and the Law causes our *desire* to flare up only in relation to the Law, through which it becomes the *desire for death*.⁵⁰⁸

This chapter of the Pauline text refers to the *impossibility* of fulfilling the Law due to the very tendencies of human finitude. By this Paul seeks to suggest that those who justify the rectitude of their action according to the Law will always be condemned in the end, because it cannot be obeyed *perfectly*. *Death* is sin, the death of the worthiness of promised happiness. The way to avoid the *death of desire* is to situate this desire in another *place*: as desire and “messianic” hope, in a *different* time and field. This is no longer the (contradictory) field of the “works of the Law,” but the “messianic” field of *emunáh*, where “justification” does not refer to the *perfect* fulfillment of a Law but instead to the “faithful” (again, *emunáh*) compromise to a *responsibility* in the agony of the *deconstruction* of the order of the Law (which produces the death of those opposing it: like “the righteous crucified”) and the *construction* as a *people* (the “remainder”) of a *new*, future order, the “*new Jerusalem*” of the book of *Apocalypse* (also adequately translated as *Revelation*). In this case, we have taken Paul out of the realm of *psychoanalysis*, which can fall into a certain psychologizing

subjectivism in its interpretations, in order to move him into the more objective realm of *politics*. (This is not to deny, however, the possibility of epistemologically keeping him at the level of psychoanalysis.)

Žižek is like a fish in water in the discourse of Lacanian subjectivity, which is partly compensated by the objectivity of his Marxist-Hegelianism.⁵⁰⁹ Within philosophy of religion (which can be *therapeutic* like Chesterton's or *critical* like Paul's) his thesis of the coincidence of materialism and Christianity has already been explicitly argued by Ernst Bloch.⁵¹⁰ But Žižek rightly offers a "materialist" element (which I understand as a final reference to the factual, concrete human Life of those who "are hungry") for the Pauline question we are dealing with that we need to incorporate into the debate: "to become a true dialectical materialist, one should go through the Christian experience,"⁵¹¹ whose central "kernel" is "subversive," but which at the same time has a "perverse" aspect consisting in the need for treason: that of Judas. (And here Žižek comes very close to the position of the Gnostic *Gospel of Judas*.) As a result of this treason, the *meshíakh* can manifest his glory and "rescue the multitude."⁵¹² As Isaiah sings in the fourth "Poem of the Servant of Yahveh":

Through the suffering of his entire being, he will see the light and will be satisfied; in his pain my righteous servant, he will justify the multitude [...]. He has borne the shortcomings of the multitude (53, 11).

The "servant" (*hébed*, in Hebrew) "rescues" ("redeems") the slaves, the people, from the slavery of the Legal system: "In this way he will astonish the multitude of the *go'im*" (52, 15).⁵¹³ Žižek rightly opposes a legalist view of the meaning of the death of *Khristós*,⁵¹⁴ but he only partially outlines the alternative view (thereby maintaining the thesis of the "perverse kernel"). In this case, everyone would have *participated* in his death at the hands of the Law and would therefore be free. But it would seem that this "participation" is something metaphysical (in the sense of some Hellenized Church Fathers). What is lost is the meaning of the *empirical* death - of "Christ's death as such"⁵¹⁵ - which seems to have no importance for Žižek. If on the other hand we understand the

empirical death of the righteous man, according to his own people's eyes (those of the "messianic community," the "remainder"), as a *critical consensus* on the need to overthrow the Law (as *emunáh*), this materialistically destroys the *apparent* justice of the Law - the *first*, prevailing Totality - since it is understood that this death also kills the Law. In the messianic community and messianic *time* all have been sinners and all have been pardoned, and there is now no difference between Jews and *go'im* (the non-Jewish nations): all are in debt to *grace* (recovered innocence), but all are *chosen* in the *responsibility* of the militant compromise to the new task *beyond* the horizon of the Law (the *new*, future Totality). Žižek does not have access to this possibility, because he dialectically lacks the *second* Totality, the Alterity which maintains *Exteriority* vis-à-vis the Legal system. He lacks the creative political reconstruction of ethical institutions of E. Levinas, although he continuously touches on the subject.

Judas was not necessary, and nor was his treason. The death of the *meshiakh* was not necessary, since those in charge of the Law had received the Light of the message.⁵¹⁶ But having closed the doors leading out of the system, those in charge of this system murdered the righteous innocent. This is the divine moment when human being can face God as an Other, God, to complete his work and demonstrate his perfection, can shout against Gnostics and Leibniz: "Evil exists!, *ergo* it is possible for the perfect Being who has engendered so much glory to exist as well!"⁵¹⁷ The *first* Totality fell in the *adikía* (the final time of repression and death against those who cease to grant consensus to domination), and as a result, the system (the *flesh*) does not allow power to "accumulate" at the base. It eliminates the "teacher" (*rabi*, as they called them), in an effort to eliminate *criticism*, but in so doing the Law decrees its own collapse. Therefore, the death of the *meshiakh* could not be desired, much less decreed by the Father. This was the deed of the Law, of its fetishized power, of the "princes of this world" (*Mark* 10, 42) at the beginning of its end. The disciples and the "messianic" community were *born* in the contemplation of that death of the righteous innocent at the hands of the Law which thereby lost its "foundation." The Law, as a justificatory system, grants

legitimation, which is to say that it is *based* on the *consensus populi* (as Bartolomé de las Casas would define it). Upon losing that consensus the Law *collapses*, and Paul describes this in a precise manner: “Being of a divine nature [like all human beings...] *alienated himself* and came to be a *servant*, one of many [...] being faithful until death, and even death on the cross. [For this reason he was praised as] Jeshúa, the *meshíakh*” (*Philippians* 2, 6-11). This a materialist interpretation of the meaning of the death of the *meshíakh* “as such,” and his death has a central meaning for the message, but not within a psychologized, intimate hermeneutic which might think that mere pain can lead to one’s salvation. This is masochism (by the believer) or sadism (by such a God). Perhaps there is no “perverse kernel of Christianity.” Perhaps there is instead a central kernel in Christianity that is woven around the *paradigm of the Exodus*.⁵¹⁸

Žižek speaks of “love” in Paul’s *Epistles*.⁵¹⁹ However, he does not distinguish clearly between *éros* (desire) and *philia* (Greco-Roman friendship) on the one hand, both within the order of the Law, and *agápe* (ἀγάπη in Greek) on the other, which is proper to the “messianic” community. *Agápe* is a love for the Other as other, a love based on responsibility for the full realization of the Other, a love of *service* and availability which surpasses mere *fraternity* (as the friendship of the community under the Law). It represents *solidarity* with “the widow, the orphan, the poor, the foreigner” since the times of Hammurabi; solidarity with the weak, the oppressed, and the exploited. Greco-Roman ethics under the Law had no understanding of this ethical-trans-ontological affectivity, that along with E. Levinas we could term *metaphysical desire* (*désir métaphysique*).⁵²⁰ This is love, which in effect is not “internal,” but rather intersubjective, historical, and politically subversive, and solidifies the messianic “remainder,” giving it the necessary courage to confront the danger: “We the strong must bear the weaknesses of the weak and not seek that which pleases us. Let us achieve *the satisfaction of the Other* for their good, looking toward the constructive. Nor did the *meshíakh* seek his *own* satisfaction” (*Rm* 15, 1-2).

d) *Walter Benjamin* (1892-1940) allows us to see certain traces of

his interest in Paul, as he specifically derives from the latter his concept of *messianic* time. This concept must be linked with the following enigmatic expression: “The authentic conception of historic time rests entirely on the image of *redemption* (*Erlösung*),”⁵²¹ which can provide for us the key to his complex and difficult thought. Michael Löwy writes:

Utopia, anarchism, revolution and messianism combine alchemically and join with a neo-romantic cultural critique of ‘progress’ and purely scientific/technical knowledge. The past (monastic communities) and the future (anarchist utopia) are directly associated in typically romantic/revolutionary terms.⁵²²

Benjamin belongs to a generation of young assimilated Jews which emerges around the so-called First World War, thanks to a movement which is launched by, among others, the old Hermann Cohen (1842-1918), who had retired in 1912 from the neo-Kantian University of Marburg, dedicating himself to rethinking the experience of his Jewish community in Berlin. Franz Rosenzweig himself (1886-1929) attended Cohen’s *Lehranstalt*, and his work *The Star of Redemption*⁵²³ is certainly inspired by Cohen’s book *Religion of Reason Out of the Sources of Judaism*.⁵²⁴ Cohen theorizes Judaism through a neo-Kantian philosophical lens; Rozenzweig would do so through the Hegelian tradition, which would later be more comprehensible for Marxists like Benjamin or Heideggerians (like E. Levinas). The “world” (*Welt*) or Totality would be Rosenzweig’s meta-category that would need to be overcome.

In effect, this foundational text by Cohen attempts to think, from the perspective of neo-Kantian philosophical culture, the generative kernel of the Jewish experience. It is interesting to observe that Cohen’s exposition is very similar to the framework that Rosenzweig would develop in his work, which was written after having read Cohen’s still unpublished text in Berlin. We can say that its essential structure consists of four central categories. Cohen begins with a) idolatry⁵²⁵; “from which” the possibility of surpassing this experience emerges as

the task proper to Judaism. This overcoming has a dialectic; it passes b) from the *creation*,⁵²⁶ c) to *revelation* (where he lingers for several long paragraphs),⁵²⁷ in order to culminate d) in reconciliation through *redemption*⁵²⁸ (at which point he describes the content of Jewish life in great detail until the end of the book). This constitutes a reflection by a believer with significant philosophical education, such that he poses the questions at the heights of the most demanding of academic cultures. He says little of Paul, and what little he does say is generally negative:

Distrust of the value of the law was aroused principally by Paul, and it has been kept alive through his criticism and polemics [...]. To begin with, Paul's own example reveals how difficult it is to leave the moral law undamaged [... For him] moral law would be not only superfluous but, even more, damaging. Paul's intention is to disparage the law [...] because he wants to establish faith in salvation [redemption] [...] as the only basis for human morality.⁵²⁹

At this point his interpretation is a traditional one. Cohen refers to the *meshiakh*,⁵³⁰ but it is not a fundamental category within his argument. However, it is necessary to note that Cohen has a special sensitivity for the *economic-material* level (and this attitude will not appear with the same vehemence later). He writes, for example:

The Messiah [...] is the representative of suffering [...]. Poverty is the moral defect of previous history. [...] The Messiah is seized by the distress of mankind in its entirety [...] He is diseased and weak [...] riding upon an ass.⁵³¹

The principle of "justice" (in Hebrew *tsadakah*) refers fundamentally to the slave and her liberation (on payment of a ransom or redemption), to the worker and her just wage, to property what must be dissolved and returned to the community every seven years; etc. Therefore, "the entire Torah is a remembrance of the *liberation* from Egyptian slavery, which, as the cradle of the Jewish people, is not deplored, let alone condemned, but celebrated in gratitude."⁵³² *A Politics of Liberation* sets

out from precisely this type of critical category.

Gershom Scholem (1897-1982) recommended to Benjamin that he read Rosenzweig's book, which had just appeared in 1920.⁵³³ Benjamin was part of the Jewish "youth movements" in 1913 when he met Scholem.⁵³⁴ Both were assimilated Jews who did not practice their religion, and the speech which the young (21 year old) Benjamin gave shows his attitude: his argument was criticized by the most resolute among the Zionists. Benjamin was an assimilated Jew but never a Zionist, which led to him not seriously studying Hebrew (perhaps out of an *enlightened* philosophical resistance) nor leaving for Israel as his close friend Scholem did. He understood messianism but not explicitly as a believer, because he decided to remain within European intellectual circles (even if these comprised an unrecognized and strange spectrum). Though not an atheist he was a decided Marxist, at least during the second part of his life; this would not make him trustworthy for party-members, whom he considered joining. In the end, however, and for the same reasons that he did not travel to Israel, he did not want to be an unconditional militant. He was a neo-romantic as were so many studied by M. Löwy,⁵³⁵ with no intention of operating in concrete, day-to-day politics. On this past point he followed the reflections of H. Cohen:

The universalism of messianism is the consequence of the anomaly between state and people in the history of Israel.⁵³⁶

[...] Another riddle is explained through this contradiction.

The *state* had to perish; the *people*, however, had to remain.⁵³⁷

This Jewish anarchism would enter into crisis with the Zionist appearance of the State of Israel, and much more with the outbreak of the infernal hunting of Palestinians, a genocide similar to the Warsaw Ghetto (which we are still living today, January 4th 2009, with the destruction of the 5,000-year-old community of Gaza).⁵³⁸

Benjamin says little explicitly about Paul of Tarsus, but if we follow the lead of G. Agamben's well-founded suspicions, we can nevertheless say that Paul's explicit absence does not mean that he is not a fundamental presence.⁵³⁹ All signs point us toward the enigmatic

passage at the outset of his *On the Concept of History*, in which he describes the presence of a dwarf hidden under the chessboard, who moves the pieces but remains unseen. He concludes:

One can envision a corresponding object to this apparatus in philosophy. The puppet called “*historical materialism*” is always supposed to win. It can do this with no further ado against any opponent, so long as it employs the services of theology, which as everyone knows is *small and ugly and must be kept out of sight*.⁵⁴⁰

Agamben asks himself unexpectedly: “Who is this hunchback theologian, so well hidden by the author in his theses that not a single person yet has identified him?”⁵⁴¹ And I ask myself: Why is it that this *dwarf* and indeed *theology* itself, “must be kept out of sight”? And furthermore: Why appeal to a theology that is considered “small and ugly” by the Jacobin Enlightenment, which removed such texts from the Faculties of Philosophy, as we mentioned above? Benjamin, an unorthodox neo-romantic who is equally unorthodox in his Marxism and materialism, does not want to deny his Jewish origin, but rather interprets his people as a *culture* - which is enough for him as a philosopher and art critic - more than as a religion or a secularized religion, as Scholem affirmed. Therefore, in the intellectual circles in which he hopes to gain influence he hides these sources, presenting them instead as enigmas to be resolved. Agamben, I believe, is correct.

This subtle argument is based on indirect insinuations. At the end of the second thesis, we read:

For it has been given us to know, just like every generation before us, a *weak* messianic power (*eine schwache messianische Kraft*),⁵⁴² on which the past has a claim. This claim is not to be settled lightly. The historical materialist knows why.⁵⁴³

Agamben suggests that Paul dealt with this question in *II Corinthians* 12, 9-10, when in Luther's German translation the following is written: “power (*Kraft*) is fulfilled in weakness (*Schwache*).” Moreover,

following J. Taubes, Agamben indicates that in the *Political-Theological Fragment* Benjamin is referring to the *Epistle to the Romans*, because of its content (however inverted) and the presence of the concept of the “fleeting,” the “ephemeral” (*Vergänglichkeit*), used on three occasions at the end of the text in question.⁵⁴⁴

Also, the concept of “image” (*Bild*) that Benjamin employs refers to Paul as well. Agamben shows that the “typological relation”⁵⁴⁵ (of a past event that announces and is taken up in messianic *Now-Time*) was expressed in Luther’s German with the term “*Bild*” (image),⁵⁴⁶ and is especially present in Thesis V:

The true picture (*Bild*) of the past *whizzes* by (*huscht*). Only as a picture, which flashes its final farewell in the moment of its recognizability, is the past to be held fast. [...] For it is an irretrievable picture of the past, which threatens to disappear with every present, which does not recognize itself as meant in it.⁵⁴⁷

Moreover, as we read, it “passes suddenly,” rapidly; this is another reference to *I Cor* 7, 29-31: “Time has become shorter [...] and so the *figure* of this world *passes*.”

The entire Pauline influence is synthesized in the discovery of “*Now-Time*” (*Jetzt-Zeit*), which is a literal translation of the Greek expression that we have already transcribed above; *hò nūn kairós*, frequently found in the *Epistle to the Romans*, and which Benjamin expresses in Thesis XIV: “History is the object of a construction whose place is formed not in homogenous and empty time,⁵⁴⁸ but in that which is fulfilled by *Now-Time*.⁵⁴⁹ For Robespierre, Roman antiquity was a past charged with this *Now-Time*, which he exploded out of the continuum of history.”⁵⁵⁰ This is the messianic time that we have been discussing in all the authors considered above. It is from this messianic time of the now, the present, that we have the capacity to read moments in the past which had the same messianic density. It is from the danger of the messianic compromise that we can understand and recover those moments in the past fulfilled according to the same attitude. Agamben closes his discussion with a passage by Benjamin:

The read *image*, that is, the image in the now of recognizability (*Erkennbarkeit*), bears to a high degree the marks of this critical and dangerous (*gefährlichen*) moment which is discovered beneath all reading.⁵⁵¹

When, in *Now-Time*, someone like Evo Morales reads the sacred texts of the consecration of ancestral Aymara authorities at the “Sun Gate” in Tihawanaku, these ancient texts are “recognizable” to him (in all their significance) from the danger of the *now* of challenging the white *criollo* and *ladino* customs which have predominated for five centuries. The past, which lies hidden, which can disappear without a trace, and which soon passes, is re-called, revived in the messianic *now* of the Bolivian cultural revolution.

Benjamin wrote, as we have quoted, that “the authentic conception of historic time rests entirely on the image of *redemption* (*Erlösung*).” What could such a proposition mean? We have already seen the importance of redemption in H. Cohen and F. Rosenzweig, and Paul uses the term frequently. In its original Greek form, “redemption” refers to the manumission of the slave, the paying of a ransom in exchange for the slave’s freedom. Redemption refers, therefore, to the “*liberation* of the slaves.” As a result, *critical* politics, a politics of *liberation* (or *redemption*) sets out from the moment in which a part of the political community (the “remainder,” the “people” as *plebs*) has been “rescued,” or in Paul’s language: they are not held responsible for errors (*amartía*) or the guilt of having committed them. Pardon opens up a regime of gratitude. The “people” finds itself freed, rescued from the “slavery of sin,” from the Law. This state of recovered innocence is the effect of “redemption,” of the “ransom.” The Egyptian slave stands up and sets out on a path. Paul speaks repeatedly of the ἀπολύτρωσις (in Greek, *apolytrosis*; “redemption,” “liberation”) which comes from λύτρον (*lytron* in Greek; in Hebrew: מִקְדָּוֶה, the rescuer, the liberator). Now we will see how this category will be used in critical political philosophy.

e) *Jacob Taubes* (1923 -1987) is in a completely different situation from those discussed up to this point. At the end of the 20th century,

Taubes has lived through the experience of the Holocaust and the foundation of the state of Israel. What E. Levinas believed would signify the end of the crisis of Jewish assimilation through the creation of a state ended up producing an inevitable crisis. Jews were now living the same contradiction that Christians had suffered in the 4th century. The Davidic state, founded by Zionism, was no panacea. Judaism needed to ask itself once again about its own meaning. Taubes, moreover, is a political philosopher who maintained a respectful friendship with C. Schmitt in post-war Germany (which seems incomprehensible). His 1987 Heidelberg seminar on Paul of Tarsus is especially significant. Taubes describes Paul, a diasporic Jew, as one who acts and thinks from a strict Jewish tradition without, however, sparing the critique he would make (in spite of himself) of the sin of the Jewish people. In so doing - as a Jew showing his own people how they had fallen into the desertion of their God so often predicted by their prophets - he situated himself within the best tradition of Israel. This is a *Paul who is Jewish*, perfectly Jewish, but who supports a new *messianism*, and this is the basis of his "Christianity" (a term what he never used in its current sense). Taubes is not interested in the figure of Jeshúa ben Josef, as he calls him (a name we have adopted), and in this the position of F. Hinkelammert is very much the opposite (as with others who have dealt with the subject in Latin America).

As a student of G. Scholem, Taubes has a special relationship with Benjamin (whom he nevertheless criticizes), and he even joins in a creative and respectful dialogue with the right-wing Catholic Schmitt. Taubes' first-hand knowledge of the academic atmosphere of Germany, the United States, and Israel, does not prevent him from ironically critiquing their institutions. The work we will discuss here is a passionate one.⁵⁵² Its intuitions, based on extensive research, are the most original existing on the subject, including those we have considered already. However, from the beginning we would like to mention a suspicion that allows us to enunciate a position that could be called "with Taubes, beyond Taubes." Referring to Bloch and Benjamin, he writes the following:

I don't like the mystical tone of their Marxism [...], within which, in my opinion, there remains no space for religious experience. [...] Of course, I understand what Ernst Bloch and Walter Benjamin hope to do: [en planos de] trivialization, it is being repeated on the Catholic and Protestant left and it is echoed in the Christianity of the popular church in Latin America. But despite the spiritual effort that Bloch and Benjamin make on the terrain of the concept and the image, there remains a hiatus [hiato] that can not be overcome in a Marxist fashion.⁵⁵³

This is a passing phrase, but we are grateful to him for making it explicit, because it allows us to see his *Eurocentrism*, his disdain for and neglect of Latin American thought - he would benefit from reading the work of Michael Löwy, at least - and his inability to understand Benjamin's discussion of "materialism." (Coming from someone like F. Hinkelammert, this discussion gains a degree of authority that Benjamin, like Taubes, would never have managed to achieve, because he lacked a *precise, in-depth* reconstructively-oriented study of Marx's entire body of work, as we ourselves have undertaken to do.) Let us return to the subject at hand.

In the first place, since Paul had never been to Rome, the *Epistle* is sent to an unknown "messianic" (*Christian*) community, the majority of whom were *proselytes*.⁵⁵⁴ But at the same time it would seem as though Paul needed to justify himself to members of the community who demanded proof of his authority, since he was not among the "twelve." As a result the *Epistle* is exceedingly argumentative, setting out from the ancient traditions of the Jewish people. He needed to attract the community's attention through his knowledge of the Law. But at the same time, he also needed to use weapons of argumentation, because the *Epistle* is a formidable indictment of the prevailing Power, insofar as it aims to give the *messianic* community a strategy to use within the very heart of the immense Empire founded on (justified by) the *Lex Romana*. Politically, Paul showed that the law had ceased to serve as the criterion of "justification." This attack is aimed, as we have already

said, against Roman Law, against the Jewish *Torah*, and against the orthodox formalism of the ambiguities of some Judaizing members of the “messianic” (*Christian*) community. Taubes’s Paul is wholly Jewish, and so needs to prove to the Jews why, despite having been chosen - and without God denying that choice - they can nevertheless lose the privileges of the Alliance due to the sin committed by Israel. Being chosen was not a privilege but a responsibility. Due to their betrayal, God now chooses the *go'im*. But at the same time God is counting on the people of Israel, because it is from among their ranks that a *faithful remainder* will be chosen, and from them, all of them Jews, that there will be an opening to the non-Jewish nations: a *new* people that is transformed from the remainder of a people and a “non-people” into “my people.” The choice of nations occupies chapters 2-7 of the *Epistle*. But Taubes is especially interested by chapters 9-12, and this is the subject of his discussion with Carl Schmitt in 1970. A central point is the following:

*I have reserved for myself seven thousand men who have not knelt before Baal.*⁵⁵⁵ And the same in the *Now-Time*, there remains a freely chosen *residue*. And if it is free (*khariti*) it is not based on works (*érgon*), otherwise the free (*kháris*) would cease to be such. What follows? That although Israel did not achieve what it sought, the [newly] chosen achieved it (*Rm* 8, 4-8).

Taubes demonstrates that the possibility of God rejecting the people and breaking the Alliance has always been present for Israel. An original element of his interpretation lies in situating the *rite* as his explanatory moment (so prevalent today in the indigenous communities of revolutionary Bolivia, in Zapatista Chiapas, or in the Jewish tradition). The text of the *Epistle to the Romans* was written with the purpose of explaining the situation celebrated in a Jewish festival, the “Days of Awe” of *Yom Kippur*: for centuries Jews have implored God to pardon their sins, and thus prevented him breaking the pact, the Alliance, because of their inevitable infidelities. Paul’s responds: “Enough!” The measure has been fulfilled; the line has been crossed:

he who preached “*metanoia*” (conversion) has been murdered. The death of the Righteous, the *meshíakh*, under the Law, has destroyed that Law’s very meaning.

Thus three legal instances collapse: the Roman Empire, the temple and the synagogue, and the norms that the Judaizing Christians attempted to impose on the new *messianic* community. Now as always, “justification” refers to the *emunáh*. The promise was made to Abraham because he had *emunáh*, before the Law even existed. This attitude (*emunáh*) only bursts forth in history, in *Now-Time*, when the “remainder” appears as a *messianic* actor, constituting itself as a community receiving the “spirit” (*pneuma*). Here Taubes reviews the meaning of the concept of “spirit” from Aristotle to Hegel,⁵⁵⁶ in order to say - synthesizing his position, almost in passing - that “*pneuma* [is] a force that transforms a people.”⁵⁵⁷ Once the people, arising from this “spirit” (which I will philosophically call a “critical intersubjective consensus,” and which in a precise manner constitutes a people *as people*, the “remainder” - the *plebs* - in rupture with the divided political community), begins its historic-messianic task, it will bear the events of the world of the first *eón*, under the Law (the Roman Empire, Israel, etc.) “*as if they did not*” now have the capacity to give existence meaning: “So, from now on, [...] let those who suffer [do so] *as if they did not*, and those who enjoy, *as if they did not*” (I Corinthians 7, 29-31). This would constitute, in Taubes’ interpretation, the meaning of Benjamin’s *nihilism*. In Latin America, someone like Evo Morales, for example, dresses like a *campesino* despite being president, because he lives *as though he were not* president of the traditional bourgeois system, since in *messianic time*, the time of the continued *danger* of being murdered by the oligarchy (and the intelligence service of the United States: this is not metaphorical!), the president is a servant of the people in the delegated exercise of *obediential power* (as he himself has called it).⁵⁵⁸

The interpretations that Taubes puts forth of the positions taken toward Paul of Tarsus by C. Schmitt, Hans Blumenberg, and even Freud and Nietzsche are of great interest to us. (In this last case the metaphysician of the “eternal return” must have believed himself the

“Anti-Paul,” since he thought Jeshúa was a vulgar idiot, meaning that it would not have been worth it to be the “Anti-Christ”.)

The richness of Taubes’ book is inexhaustible, and we will bear it in mind throughout our *Critique of Bourgeois Political Philosophy*,⁵⁵⁹ as Marx would have called it, had he written a treatise on politics rather than critical economics. Our final thesis can be synthesized in two extreme positions proposed by the editors of this valuable book (alongside a third, which I believe remains necessary):

But while Taubes (and Paul⁵⁶⁰) derive from this the conclusion that there are no legitimate political orders whatsoever (but only legal orders) - this point of view regards itself as “negative political theology” - Schmitt retains the postulate of the representative political order, which draws its legitimacy from the divine sovereignty which it has made manifest. Only the truth that has been revealed as God’s will is capable of founding an authority that demands obedience.⁵⁶¹

The first position (a) sounds like anarchy and approximates E. Levinas’ interpretation of politics. The second, on the other hand, (b) is better understood as a traditionally right-wing position, holding that all power comes from God and is delegated to authorities. By contrast, I follow Paul and think (c) that the doctrine of “justification by *emunáh*” opens the door to power emerging from the *people* itself receiving the “spirit”; a “spirit” which represents the messianic consciousness of the community of the New Alliance and receives a new promise insofar as it faithfully reconstructs the Kingdom of God, where justification sets out from the consensus of the people as “children of God” and not as “slaves” under the Law. In this context, Paul employs a strange concept: “they received a spirit which *transforms them into children* (ἰσθαι) and they can shout: ¡Abba! ¡Father!” (Rm 8, 15); “because all those who allow themselves to be carried by the *spirit* of God are *God’s children*” (Rm 8, 14). In the middle of the Empire, the slaves in their quarters and those oppressed under the Law, heard a message that came from below, from the poor and weak, the humbled and suffering: “We are all God’s children!”; “God is our father,” who forgives us and

calls us to responsibility to Others. The *meshíakh* is each and every one, those who risk themselves beyond the Law to walk on the water of obedience to the law as a “Law of love.” We will see the significance that these phrases take on in F. Hinkelammert’s discussion of the topic through Karl Marx, in a way that might scandalize Taubes.

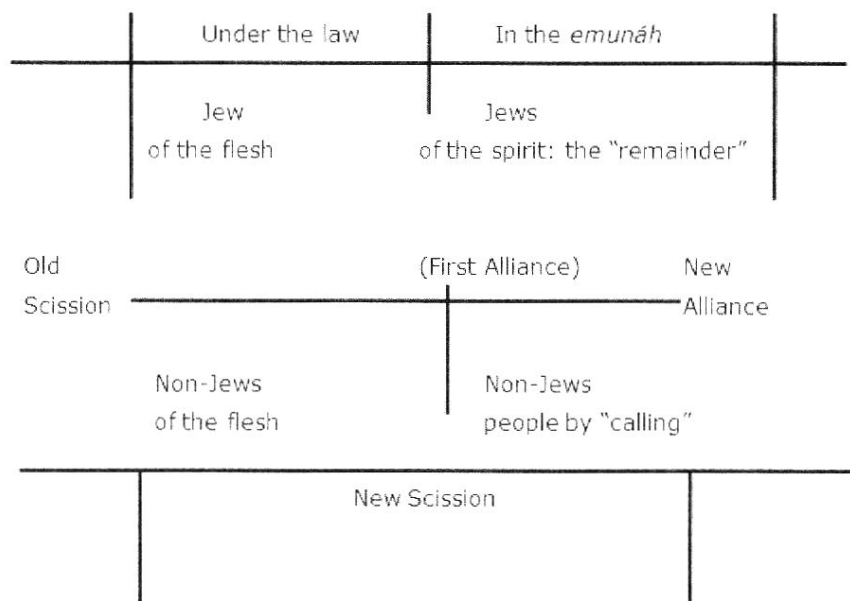
f) Giorgio Agamben’s book *The Time that Remains: A Commentary on the Letter to the Romans*⁵⁶² is the fruit of what is perhaps the most specialized investigation of our subject, and is therefore full of suggestiveness and relevance for the present. Agamben achieves a great deal of precision and clarity regarding some elements of Paul’s thought debated in philosophical circles in the United States and Europe. His book consists of six great “days,” which we will consider one by one.

The first “day” travels through a demonstration of the “messianic” significance of Paul’s *Epistle*. In the second, the central theme is the Greek word *kletós*: the “calling” or “vocation” from which *ekklesía* (those messianically “called together”) is derived. The “calling together” to form part of the messianic community overcomes, absorbs, absolves, *subsumes* the function previously fulfilled within the order of the Law. This is where the “as if not” begins to function: to be a slave as if one was no longer a slave. That is, the slave of a Roman lord *begins to live the experience* of being free, like unknown “children of God.” “*The messianic vocation is the revocation of every vocation.*”⁵⁶³ In the case of someone like Evo Morales, his previous “vocation” or “occupation” as a shepherd or a coca farmer gives way to a new and total responsibility, and he confronts the danger (more than just the threat of assassination) of being president: but he is president (under the Law as head of state with many privileges and benefits) *as if he were not*, in his simplicity, poverty, humility, and horizontal commitment to the indigenous peoples, etc. What Benjamin describes as every event’s reference to *redemption* also attests to this new world opened up by the messianic “calling” which is related to the act of paying the ransom which frees the *subject* from her prior function under the Law. In this new state, members of the messianic community make “use” (from the Greek *chrêsis*) of the goods at their disposal, but purely as mediations in

view of the messianic responsibility of service to indigenous peoples that have been oppressed for centuries. In this sense the *proletariat* - in its original, pre-Marx meaning - indicates that summoned totality. (In German, this would be the *Stände*, that is, all the popular strata as a whole, which must be distinguished from a specific social "class," even the working class).⁵⁶⁴

In the third "day," Agamben occupies himself to the concept of *aphorisménos* (in Greek ἀφωρισμένος, in Hebrew *parush*)⁵⁶⁵: that which is *separated, set aside, split, divided*. Paul knew that the Law *separated* Jews from non-Jews (the *goîm*). But from the convocation to the formation of part of the messianic community - the *new people* - another type of division occurred. The old "wall" dividing Jews/*goîm* was overcome, but a new division appeared between Law/Spirit or Law/*emunáh*.

Diagram 9: The New Messianic Scission and the New Alliance⁵⁶⁶



What is interesting about this *new scission* is that it divides the Jewish community into two moments: those who remain faithful to the Law as the ultimate justificatory criterion (according to the *flesh*), and those who now adhere to the *new criterion*. This is *emunáh*, no longer the “flesh” (of the old Alliance), but rather the “spirit” (in Hebrew *ruakh*), Israel’s “remainder,” the root of the new *people*. As Agamben writes:

A fundamental chapter in the semantic history of the term “people” thus begins here and should be traced up to the contemporary usage...⁵⁶⁷ [...] *At a decisive instant, the elected people, every people, will necessarily situate itself as a remnant, as not-all.*⁵⁶⁸

Here it would seem that Agamben loses his footing. In regard to the “whole/part” question that so interests J. Taubes, Agamben claims that the people is “neither the all, nor a part of the all, but the impossibility for the part and the all to coincide with themselves or with each other.”⁵⁶⁹ It would seem he has lost his compass by not understanding that the “all,” *all* of Israel (which is for us the “political community” of the *Architectonic of a Politics of Liberation*) splits, shedding a “part,” the “remainder” (or the originating kernel of the *new* messianic community or “*my-people*”), which in turn is not “yet” an “all”: the new future order. So that calling this original messianic community (“part” of Israel) the *plebs* (as Agamben argues M. Foucault suggests) - which will in the future become the community of the *New Alliance* (the “all” of the “called,” *ekklesia*: the *populus*) - does not entail any difficulty if situated *diachronically*. But this is precisely what Agamben opposes: “the [Pauline] remnant no longer consists in a concept *turned toward the future*, as with the prophets.”⁵⁷⁰ Without looking toward the future we can understand nothing.

The fourth “day” is perhaps the most interesting, dealing as it does with the whole problem of various “times” and their qualifications. There exist *two* types of “time,” and there are likewise two levels (*eones*) of each, the second being inaugurated by “messianic time.” For Agamben (see *Figure 3*) the two times are: A) everyday “time”

(like that of W. Benjamin) and B) messianic time, which inaugurates C) “eschatological” time or that which opens upon eternity.⁵⁷¹ It seems as though Agamben has lost the historical-political meaning of messianic time. He is correct to say that what is decisive here is “that the *plērōma* of *kairoi* is understood as the relation of each instant to the Messiah.”⁵⁷² But this does not mean that it is an *individual*, discrete, chaotic experience that exists outside *historical time*. The messianic “event” is communal, pertaining as it does to a messianic community, within historical time (the everyday time of *khronos*), *bursting in* as an *other time* (like *kairós*), and not merely in the present or the past: it certainly recalls all that “Now-Time” has announced (the “images”), and it saves, within that memory - which situated the new moment within messianic history - the victims of the past. It is the *redeeming* act, that which pays the *ransom*, not only of the past (by memory) and the present (by putting the messianic community into action, as real collective actors) but also in view of the future (“all” Israel, the *populus*). It is in that messianic enthusiasm (with the “spirit”) that the *meshíakh* manifests, who can be a “teacher” or “every one” of the members of the community.

In this case the “everyday time” of the Law (A) receives the impact of the messianic community in the “Now-Time” (B) that establishes an *other time* (which will in the end be a *khronos*) (C), which will be “held back” by the *katégon* (D) up to the final moment (E). Agamben opposes this “traditional” view. But it is not traditional and furthermore recovers the future (utopia, political postulates, concrete projects, and gives way to *hegemony*).

Diagram 10: The Two Times and Two Eons

For G. Agamben: A _____ B _____ C

(A: the creation; B: the messianic event; C: the *eschatón*)

_____ C _____ E

For us: A _____ B' _____ D

(A: *khronos*; ascending arrow B': messianic event (*kairós*); C': *eschatón*;
D: *katékho*; E: the End (*parousía*)

[The first of these recreates Agamben's formulation (2005, p. 63)—Tr.]

The messianic event *subsumes* (in the concept of *katargéin*)⁵⁷³ the Law (A), negates it with its *time* and its *eón*, but *surpasses* it (ascending arrow B') and *establishes* it on another level (C'), but this is no longer the same history (ABC is not the same as AB'C', since they do not pertain to the same level or horizon; a qualitative leap has taken place).

But the suspension of the Law in the messianic event is not a “state of exception,” because the latter is in the final instance a reference to the Law, since in lifting the “state of exception” the “rule of law” returns; rather, the messianic suspension of the Law constitutes an authentic “state of rebellion” with no return. This “state of rebellion” is followed by a *new eón* (C'), a new time, with the dictation of an- *other*, alternative and more just law (one which completes the old Law). This is not a mere inversion or restoration, but the “redemption” which establishes a *new* order, one which would not, however, represent the Eschatological Kingdom (the postulate of a classless, stateless, propertyless society, etc.) but instead a time (Paul could still not imagine the many times of future *empires*, but could only think of the Roman empire and a *parousía* in the near future) in which the Law (often) will become “ineffective” (*katargéin*) and the *anomías* (when each Legal system becomes coercive and terminally repressive) will be “held back” (the *katégeón*) until unleashed again (killing the future

meshíakh, all the *mesías* in history). These final reflections are clearly no longer those of Agamben, but rather our own, and we therefore see the possibility of thinking a politics which begins from Paul.

The sixth “day” deals with the whole question of the *emunáh* (or *faith*) and in connection the subject of the *new “brit”*. The pardoning of sins by the *mesíakh* is foregrounded rather than the sin of Adam. The new Alliance with the messianic community - with the “non-people” now “my-people” - confronts the Alliance with Abraham. And the Law of Moses, which kills when fetishized, is surpassed by the new law of freedom, of life, of faith, of love, of the new eon, one which rescues and redeems. The process of a politics of redemption (or liberation) progressively appears in the transition, the *Übergang*, from *Architectonic* to *Critique*, from the *Totality* to the *Exteriority* (and the *new, future Totality*). “Liberation” is critique, is redemption, is recreation of a new praxis and of new political systems based on *critical consensus*, on community “faith,” on the collective actor of the *new politics*: the *people*. In the “Now-Time” of the political process developing at the outset of the 21st century in Latin America, a *Politics of Liberation* recalls past messianic acts (volume I), analyzing the structure (as Paul Ricoeur’s “long route”) of politics in everyday and abstract time (volume II), in order to make a “tiger’s leap” to the present and the profound revolution underway (in this, volume III).⁵⁷⁴

g) Now we will finally touch on an author who is different from all those discussed above: *Franz Hinkelammert* (1931-).⁵⁷⁵ He has the advantage, with respect to those thinkers discussed previously, of being an excellent economist and unparalleled in his knowledge of Marx, being philosophically educated and for many years surrounded by a group of liberation theologians (having begun his education in the latter discipline with the Lutheran Marxist professor H. Gollwitzer in Berlin). His *enunciative location* is the peripheral, post-colonial, Latin American world, and he has been committed to the most advanced of popular movements since the 1960s. None of the authors discussed above brings together such a breadth of qualities. And to distinguish him still more, instead of dealing exclusively with Paul of Tarsus, Hinkelammert takes as his reference the *Gospel of John*

and *Revelation*, thereby invalidating von Harnack's hypothesis of the distance separating Jeshúa ben Josef from Saint Paul (a view to which Taubes and many others also subscribe). In *The Cry of the Subject*, Hinkelammert indicates methodologically an aspect to which we have already referred:

I take the *Gospel of John* as a text which speaks about a reality [...] The text is not [only] *theological*, but instead interprets reality in light of a tradition, for which the theological represents an integral part [...] However, for the reflection of our present in its history, in its genesis, texts like the *Gospel of John* have been immunized by being declared *theological* texts [...] In declaring our founding texts to be theological, we surround them with an impenetrable taboo. The fact that these are our founding texts transforms them in our central taboo and our history becomes a great enigma [...] In this sense I would like to deal with the text of the *Gospel of John* as a founding text of our culture.⁵⁷⁶

The theses arising from Hinkelammert's reading of these texts is much different from all those carried out by the previous authors. What he proposes is the following:

I would like to demonstrate that the *Gospel of John* is a text which has been *inverted* as a meaningful whole throughout the course of later history [...], the same has occurred with Paul's central works.⁵⁷⁷

For Hinkelammert⁵⁷⁸ the central moment of the *Gospel of John* plays out in the trial of Jesus between *John* 18, 12 and 19, 22. The rest is either preparatory or corollary. The pivotal moment is the death sentence itself: "You are children of Abraham [Jesus proclaims before the judges], complete the works of Abraham. But you are trying to kill me [...]. Abraham did not kill [Isaac]" (*John* 8, 39-40). Abraham loved his son's life, but Semitic law at the time ordered him to kill his first-born. For the love of life, Abraham did not obey the law. Jesus, too, cured the sick on a Saturday, when the law prohibited work.

Interpreted in this way, the Abrahamic myth was an “anti-Oedipus” more radical than any that psychoanalysis was ever able to analyze. Hinkelammert comments:

Jesus seems to interpret this [Abrahamic] myth differently and in this way recovers the original meaning of the text. Abraham freed himself from the law; he realized that the law required a murder and discovers a God whose law is the law of life. Abraham converts and is liberated. He does not kill, because he realized that freedom is given to not kill, not his son, nor others. Abraham, free thanks to the law, liberated himself in order to become an Abraham free before the law, with his refusal to kill as the root of his liberty. In this sense we can understand what Jesus says: *You are trying to kill me. Abraham did not kill.*⁵⁷⁹ [...] Jesus always makes judgements on the basis of liberation and toward the recovery of the *living subject* before the law.⁵⁸⁰ [...] Jesus universalizes in the *living subject* a needy subject who rebels against obedience to the law [as the only justificatory criterion], insofar as that law destroys life. This subject and her demand can appear insofar as the law has been transformed into law as [fetishized] normative obedience [...] In the presence of this tautologization of the law a universal subject appears, not merely any concrete subject. Jesus vindicates this *subject*.⁵⁸¹

Up to this point we are more or less in agreement with the philosophers discussed above, although with severely different nuances. But now Hinkelammert follows his argument, and shows the inversion of the inversion of the law produced by Jesus and his follower Paul. *The sin*, the single and fundamental one, is not concrete and differential disobedience of some aspect of the law, but rather the judgment of sin in the final instance solely and exclusively as “transgression of the law.” For Jesus, when the law denies life one must know how to deny the law. But this principle - subversive toward the Empire and the formalism of those in power in Israel - will be subverted over time, a subject which Hinkelammert deals with in his fourth

chapter: "The Christianization of the Empire and the Imperialization of Christianity."⁵⁸² Greco-Roman thought cannot reverse itself, since it is and has always involved grounding power vis-à-vis slaves, women, barbarians, etc. in a despotic manner. Christianity, on the other hand, gives voice to the Other, to the oppressed, to the poor, to slaves. But since the 4th century, there emerges in "Christendom"⁵⁸³ the "Law of Christ" as that which governs the Church and the Empire; a new fetishization has occurred (in moment C' of *Figure 3*), a new historical order of the law, a theoretical "Platonization" of Christianity:

The basis for the opposition is the relationship of the reason for his death by the law. Jesus, according to *John*, is condemned by the law, and fulfills the law in his death. As a result his entire death turns on the scandal of the law. The innocent dies for a law [...] and in his death fulfills the law. The interpretation of the death of Socrates is the opposite. The judges distort the law, it is not the law that condemns him, but instead the bad judges who abuse the law. The death of Socrates confirms the law; the death of Jesus creates the scandal of the law.⁵⁸⁴

In the new imperial order, that of Byzantine and Latin Christendom, this critical demand was unacceptable, unbearable. Christian law and order needed to be imposed as the foundation for all justification. Hinkelammert cites a text by Saint Bernard of Clairvaux, preaching the crusades:

And the soldiers of Christ fight confidently in God's battles, without any fear of putting themselves at risk of death and killing the enemy. For them, to die or to kill for Christ does not imply any criminality at all and carries with it great glory.⁵⁸⁵

The *enemies* are now those who oppose the Sacro Roman Empire organized by the Franks. The poor who rise up in peasant wars (also condemned by Luther and Calvin), the feminists who were massacred in the persecution of movements of "witches," the heresiarchs who criticize church injustices, those who take up the banners that the Christians had hoisted against the Roman Empire now become the

persecuted, the burned, the tortured, those murdered in the name of the Law of Christ. And these would later be the Jews, freethinkers, and communists, etc. Christ himself, whose name was for many centuries Lucifer (he who bears light), is sent to hell.⁵⁸⁶

In Hinkelammert's sixth chapter, "Cynical Capitalism and its Critique: Ideology Critique and the Critique of Nihilism,"⁵⁸⁷ he surpasses by far W. Benjamin's "intuitions" regarding the "materialism" of messianism. Here Hinkelammert, with a strict understanding of Marx's thinking, dismantles the cynicism of capitalism through the inversion of the Christianity of Jesus and Paul, when he writes:

The neoliberal transformation of liberal (and neo-classical) economic theory leads to a theory which no longer speaks of reality. It speaks only of the *institution* of the market, without the slightest reference to concrete reality [...]. Seen from the perspective of neoliberal theory, human beings do not have needs [...]. At root, they are walking wallets with a computer for a compass to calculate profit maximization [...]. This is an angel who has been seduced by the splendors of *this world* and who groans for a return to his pure state. This is *homo economicus*.⁵⁸⁸

This is the perfect fetishism of the legality of the market, of the law, of the system as a Totality, Paul's *sôma psykhikós*, the "sin of the flesh" as the absolutization of the law (in this case, the "law of the market"). The formalism of legality undermines the materiality of human life. Debts *must* be paid, even if the debtor dies impoverished.

In his most recent work, *Hacia una crítica de la razón mítica. El laberinto de la Modernidad*,⁵⁸⁹ Hinkelammert critiques the final horizon of the fetishization of the law (but equally of the *episteme*, of politics, of Modernity). He finds inspiration in a passage by Marx from the 1844 "Introduction to the Critique of Hegel's *Philosophy of Right*":

The *critique of religion* leads to the doctrine of the *human being as the supreme essence for the human being*, and consequently to the categorical imperative to undermine all rela-

tions in which the human being is a humiliated, subjugated, abandoned, and worthless being.⁵⁹⁰

Paul's "critique of the law" is a moment of the "critique of religion" begun by Jesus, as a critic of the temple of Jerusalem for its corruption and sacrificial doctrine, for its law that had fallen into fetishized formalism, for interpreting Israel's chosen status as a privilege while forgetting its injustices, and most importantly for not having exercised this chosen status as a responsibility to the poorest, widows, orphans, and other peoples. If anyone began a *critique of fetishized religion* it was Jesus and his follower Paul. Hinkelammert explains that at the base of this fetishization lie certain myths, which survive in all cultures as well as in Modernity. Marx confronts and critiques these. Hinkelammert shows us how Jesus began this de-mythologization by proposing new foundational myths. Human rationality always needs such myths, and not only is it the case that they are not opposed to empirical science, but the latter always inevitably presupposes such myths (and we must not forget that the project running throughout Hinkelammert's work is one of *epistemological critique*⁵⁹¹). As we are unable to deal with the subject exhaustively here, we will merely suggest some elements of the argument to conclude this aside.

Lying beneath and serving as the foundation for the rebellion of the oppressed and slaves who constituted the *messianic* community that dismissed the law as a final justificatory criterion, we find the *self-affirmation* of the excluded and oppressed as possible *creators*] of such daring: rebellion against the Empire, the temple, the Law. Hinkelammert discusses this subject in the two texts we are discussing:

At the origins of Christianity lies this *subject*,⁵⁹² Jesus, who in the *Gospel of John* says: *I have said: You are gods* (John 10, 33). [...] he awakens a *subject*, which before was sleeping or buried. Paul comes to the same conclusion. According to him there is no longer *Jew nor Greek; neither slave nor free; neither man nor woman* (Galatians 3, 28). The fact that we are dealing with a needy and bodily subject is expressed through

faith in resurrection, first of Jesus and later of everyone. [...] It is through this *subject* that we can understand the phrase of Ireneo of Lyon [frequently repeated by Mons. Romero, murdered in 1980 by the military in El Salvador]: *Gloria Dei, vivens homo*.⁵⁹³ God himself becomes a collaborator and accomplice of this project of the *subject*, a co-conspirator. It is in this that the rupture consists.⁵⁹⁴

When the oppressed and excluded mythically affirm themselves as “children of God” (or as Marx formulates it: “the human being is the supreme essence for the human being”) they can rebel against the emperor himself, whose exclusive title was that of “child of the gods.” This self-affirmation from the horizon of the myth is the very emergence of the *subject* as collective author of a new history. Confronting the abstract and destructive myth of Modernity, of linear and quantitative *progress*, and knowing that “myths create categorical frameworks for thought faced with the contingency of the world,”⁵⁹⁵ the philosophical-political categories that can be made explicit (from the symbolic level of mythical narratives) from what Paul proposes enjoy a great deal of currency in the critique of the myths and discourses which justify coercive institutions, unjust social laws, and the order organized according to the logic of capital which is imposed as the prevailing Law on the basis of fetishized Power:

The God of Power becomes Satan [...] This is God in a *state of exception*.⁵⁹⁶ This is the God of Reagan, of Bush, even of Hitler [...] This is the Power into which all constituent power, as constituted power, can fall. This is what Saint Paul refers to when he says that *the sin acts behind the law's back*. [...] This is a God present in Power, and as a result, a God whose presence is inverted, in this false, deceptive, and even idolatrous sense. [...] In contrast,] on the basis of the human being as *subject* a different God appears. This is the God of human *redemption*, of complicity. The God who is an accomplice to human liberation. This is an absent God, whose absence is present. This is a God who is not to be seen in a mirror, and as a result, not

to be seen inverted.⁵⁹⁷

Before concluding, we would like to recall a messianic event which bears all the characteristics noted by Agamben and Hinkelammert. In a passage we can read the following:

He was given a scroll [...] where it is written: “The *spirit*⁵⁹⁸ of the Lord is over me and has *anointed me*⁵⁹⁹ to give the good news to the poor. He has *sent me*⁶⁰⁰ to announce *freedom*⁶⁰¹ for the oppressed, and sight to the blind,⁶⁰² to proclaim the *redemption*⁶⁰³ of the captive.” He rolled up the scroll [...] and told them: “*Today, in presence,*⁶⁰⁴ this passage has been fulfilled” (*Gospel of Luke* 4, 17-20).

We are dealing with full awareness of the messianic moment *par excellence* to which Paul does not cease to constantly refer, however indirectly. This was the *explosion* of the singularity of the *subject* that begins the movement - this is the function of leadership - and moves the *remainder*, the initial kernel, to summon a new *people* (*plebs*) that will send the Roman Empire and Israel into upheaval. Beginning with Badiou, Benjamin or Taubes, this *subject* has been put forth as a foundational figure of a *critical* political philosophy.

5. *Five Theses on "Populism"*⁶⁰⁵

The following pages take up the topic of phenomenon of "populism" through five theses. This phenomenon has become a current issue given the existence of Latin American governments that, with the exception of Mexico and Colombia, have elected presidents from the center-left in the latest elections since the year 2000. A certain weariness of the neo-liberal models applied by the elite, as well as the verification by the popular masses of the negative effects of the "Washington Consensus," have promoted movements and decisions judged as "populist" by conservative groups or interests from *within* Latin America or from *without* - that is, from the United States or Europe.

Thesis 1. The historic "populism" of *yesterday*. An adequate categorization of a legitimate process⁶⁰⁶.

The Latin American juncture between the two so called 'world wars' (1914-1945), and blatantly since the economic crisis of 1929, produced a geopolitical change of great impact in Latin America. The British hegemony (1818-1914) is challenged by the North American economic and military power, a power that would replace the United Kingdom from 1945 on as a hegemonic power. The 'world wars' amounted, with immense costs never seen before in world history, to more than forty millions deaths for the sake of the capitalist hegemony.

The so called "Latin American Populism" (whose classical epoch must be situated since the Mexican Revolution in 1910 or since the popular elections movement lead by H. Irigoyen in 1918 in Argentina, until the coup against J. Arbenz in 1954 - a little more than forty years), which was mistaken by a theoretical dogmatism for an European "Bonapartism"⁶⁰⁷, is the result of this concrete geopolitical situation. Since the beginning of the so called first world war (which was not a 'world' war, given that a great part of Asia, Africa and Latin America

did not intervene) the domination by the center of the colonial or post-colonial periphery (of Latin America) had to diminish its exploitation, since the center found itself engaged in a brutal battle for hegemony. This became the opportunity for the slow and frail origin and growth of a certain industrial bourgeoisie and of a working class, which was the product of a nascent and always dependent late coming industrial revolution. In certain more urbanized countries in Latin America (around Buenos Aires or Cordoba, Sao Paulo or Rio, Mexico or Guadalajara, etc.) industrial enterprises were born which produced goods that were difficult to import given the war among the northern countries. G. Vargas, L. Cardenas, J.D. Peron among others, were the leaders of these processes of “social contract,” where a weak national bourgeoisie grew simultaneously to a working class and to the organization (in Mexico, for example) of the peasants. General confederations of businessmen, of workers and of peasants, revealed the organized irruption of a new political, economic, social and cultural constellation, which was named “populism.”

This categorization was not negative. Rather, it attempted to show the fact of a hegemonic political project (insofar as it met the requirements of the majority of the population, including the bourgeois industrial elite). With the support of a state that had relative autonomy from the dominant classes, this project affirmed a certain nationalism that protected the national market. The weak, nascent capitalism had then certain protected limits with respect to the use of energy (hence the nationalization of oil, gas, mines, electricity, etc.) and customs advantages within the national market. This was the stage of the greatest economic growth in Latin America in the 20th century. It was also the era in which governments were effectively elected by the massive presence of the people in clean elections. Even the social block of the oppressed made itself present on the basis of a democratic stance, a phenomenon that would have no comparison in the whole of the 20th century (with the exception of the revolutionary processes which we will mention later). For this reason, names like L. Cardenas or J. D. Peron, although ambiguous, are difficult to erase from popular memory.

This same phenomenon was also happening in other regions of the world's periphery. Kemal Ata-Turk in Turkey, the nationalist movement of Abdel Nasser in Egypt, the Congress Party in India or the Sukarno Party in Indonesia, showed analogous circumstances.

Thesis 2. The “pseudo populism” of *today*. Pejorative epithet as a conservative political critique without epistemic validity.

The historical “populism” of the 20th century is in no way comparable to what today certain conservative and dominant groups denominate “populism” or “radical populism.” With the latter, these groups pejoratively try to deny legitimacy to certain social-political phenomena in the contemporary juncture of the beginning of the 21st century.

Indeed, the United States, since the beginning of the so called “Cold War,” needed a little less than ten years to organize its hegemony over the “free” world against the Soviet Union (an unforeseen effect of the intra-bourgeois wars). In the West, its old enemy in Europe, Germany, was strengthened through the “Marshall Plan” against the new enemy: the Soviet Union. In the East, the old enemy, Japan, was re-organized against the new enemy: China. Having finished the task of organizing its hegemony over the North, the United States noted that in the South regimes swarmed with nationalist aspirations, regimes that, although being capitalists, confronted the United States in the *competition within the capitalist world market* where the bourgeoisie of the North battles that of the South. As it was to be expected, the North, without compassion, violently obliterated these peripheric “bourgeoisies” that attempted to have a place in the world market. The North American bourgeoisie, through the Pentagon, launched a war⁶⁰⁸ of competition (the “competition” within the market where one bourgeoisie dominates and extracts surplus value from the other). This war was manifest first of all in Guatemala, in 1954, against Jacobo Arbenz’s capitalist project of national emancipation, a project that attempted to give greater income to the workers of the United Fruit

Company as a way to strengthen the Guatemalan internal market, in order to allow for a nascent industrial revolution - this project was not at all socialist⁶⁰⁹. But in the war of the competition between the northern bourgeoisie with the southern one, the Latin American one, there was no proportionality in the power of the contenders. One after the other the projects of the historical "populism" of the 20th century were destroyed. In this way the governments of J. Arbenz, G. Vargas, J. D. Peron, Rojas Pinilla, Perez Jimenez, etc. were destroyed. Regimes categorized as "developing" were established instead (since 1954).

The "Dependency Theory" formulated these events showing that the *transference* of the surplus value of the peripheral capitalism's global capitalism to the global capitalism of the center (the main mechanism of this transference, since the decade of the 1980's, is the payment of an inflated external debt, which was to a large extent conceived anti-democratically and hidden from the Latin American people)⁶¹⁰ must be covered up ideologically through an economic theory built *ad hoc* by the United States and Europe. This economic theory (denominated by CEPAL the "Developmental Doctrine") suggested, since the end of the 1950's, the "opening of borders" to the most advanced *technology* and to the *capital* from the center in order to substitute imports. This produced the phenomenon of what later would be known as "Transnational Corporations." The truth is that the "developmentalism" failed because it was only the "mask" of the expansion of the capital from the center, of the domination of the Northern bourgeoisie over the periphery; of the center that destroyed and absorbed national capital and that weakened the peripheral bourgeoisie. This task was brought to fulfillment by the dictatorships for national security (from the coup directed by Golbery in Brasil in 1964 to the first formally democratic presidential elections in Brasil or Argentina in 1983), when the masses, which had in some ways tasted the fruit of the economic-political development of "populism," were once again oppressed on the basis of a discipline made necessary by the logic of the "development" of capital. These dictatorships made possible a new era for the existence of a peripheral capitalism that augmented the transference of surplus value to the center.

The implementation of *formal democracies* after the dictatorships (1983-2000) signified a political “opening” of public life that was not terrorized by military repression. This constituted an atmosphere of apparent freedom, which enabled the consolidation of the conscience to pay back the large external debt. This debt, which was initiated by the military governments, would be inherited by the “democratic” governments. Such governments, as “democratic,” justified to the popular conscience the duty to pay the debt while the military dictatorships were losing credibility. In other words, the debt had been legitimized. These formally “democratic” governments would slowly turn orthodoxically neoliberal (the prototypical examples of these are the governments that privatize the public goods; such governments as that of Carlos Menem and Carlos Salinas de Gortari). In this way the “great narrative” (ignored by post-modern philosophy) of the neo-liberal theory was put into practice. This is expressed in the “Washington Consensus,” which presses for a total opening of the markets in the face of a supposedly unavoidable economic, cultural and political globalization - the articulation of this is formulated in the left by A. Negri and M. Hardt.⁶¹¹

By this moment, the category of “populism” had completely changed its meaning. A semantic slippage had taken effect - a political and strategic re-definition of the term. Now “populism” means any social or political measure or movement that opposes itself to the tendency for globalization as it is described by the basic theory of the “Washington Consensus.” This theory justifies the privatization of the public goods in peripheral states, the opening of markets to the products of capital from the center, and denies the prioritization of the requirements and needs of the majority of the population; a population impoverished by the political measures adopted by the military dictatorships (until 1984 approximately) and whose condition has worsened lately by decisions about structural reforms dictated on the basis of the criteria of a neoliberal economy - which would be in force until 2008 in Mexico, constituting a shameful anachronism, if not a suicidal one. In the middle of this “Night of History” in Latin America, the uprising in Chiapas in January 1994 signified a beam of

dawn amidst darkness.

In other words, all the political and popular movements since 1999 (taking as a point of reference the promulgation of the 'Constitucion Bolivariana' in Venezuela) that oppose the neo-liberal project would be marked as "populist." In this sense, the proper social sciences should reject the use of this term, because it does not fulfill the semantic clarity of being a denomination that has an epistemically precise content. This term is simply an insult, a masquerading ideological enunciation, utilized to sophistically confuse an opponent. It is clear that its use happens almost unanimously in the media that serves the peripheral and central capital as well as theories built *ad hoc*. This term is continuously used by politically dominant groups, groups that oppose the popular movements which battle against the theory and practice of the "Washington Consensus." Today critical popular and political movements are judged negatively as "populist", just as in the past the historical "populism" of the 30's was criticized as military "dictatorships" (such as the ones of G. Vargas, L. Cardenas or J. D. Peron).

The meritorious work by Ernesto Laclau, *On Populist Reason*⁶¹², as well as all the theoretical work of this author, attempts to rescue the *positive* sense of the denomination "populist" on the basis of a theory of hegemony through which he vindicates political reason insofar as it either is "populist" - that is, it responds to the requirements of the consensus of the majority - or it is not properly *political* reason. That is to say, political reason is always populist reason and nothing else.

It is here that a new problematic begins, and we are on our way to the third thesis of this contribution.

Thesis 3. Re-signification of the political category "people": the "popular" is not the "populist" (neither *yesterday* nor *today*).

The strict question of contemporary Latin American *political philosophy* consists in asking whether one could distinguish between the "populist" and the "popular;" between "populism" and "people."

Everything begins with the question: What is denominated by “people”?, or, more simply “What is “people”?, the other questions depend on the clarification of the latter. On my behalf, I have tried to distinguish both words (“populism” and “people”) since the end of the 60’s. With respect to this issue, we have maintained a polemic that for the most part has not been noted by the Social Sciences. I will try again to distinguish these ambiguous terms, since they have a “double meaning.” Both “populism” (even when it was adequately used in the historical “populism” since the 30’s) and the political category (central to a politics of liberation) “pueblo” must be clarified. This would allow, as a corollary, to distinguish between the “populist” and the “popular” - a distinction that E. Laclau is wary to propose. This would be a thematic that could be denominated as “the popular question” - in the traditional sense of the great “questions” that have been tackled by historical Marxism.⁶¹³

Effectively, the prior question, then, is to ask about the meaning of the *political category*, in its everyday use denominated “people,” and to *construct* it precisely and explicitly as a theoretic-political, philosophical “category.” The “category,” which is a hermeneutic instrument, always has a “content” (we could say a “concept,” following Marx). This classical thinker clearly tells us:

“Every economist [we could say at this point, applying this text to our topic: *political philosophers*] falls into the same mistake: instead of considering the surplus purely as it is [we could say: the category *pueblo*], they consider it through the particular forms of gain [we could say: they use it in its derived *forms* of *populism* and *popular*].”⁶¹⁴

It is a matter, then, of not falling into the “confusion” (that is, to use many terms with the same meaning) of identifying the content of the words “populist” with “popular,” and “popular” with “pueblo.” Just as Marx needed *two* different words (which were confused in the prior political economy: *profit* and *surplus value*) to express “two” different meanings (while before both terms shared “one” meaning), we will now use “three” words to distinguish three different concepts, which were previously *confused*.

Let’s begin with the philosophic-political *category* “people.” In a

recent work, we have tried to synthesize the question.⁶¹⁵ The “people” cannot be confused with the mere “political community”, as an undifferentiated whole of the population or of the citizens of a state (the *potestas* as an institutional structure in a given territory)⁶¹⁶, as an intersubjective reference to a current political and historical order. The *concept* “people” - in the sense that we are trying to bestow upon it - originates in the critical moment in which the political community splits, when the “historical bloc in power” - for example, the nascent national bourgeoisie of the Latin American historical populism after the 30’s - does not constitute a *leading* class anymore (or a group of classes or of sectors of a class). Antonio Gramsci would say:

“If the dominant class has lost consensus (*consenso*), it is no longer a *leading* (*dirigente*) class, it is only a *dominant* class, holding only a coercive force (*forza coercitiva*), which indicates that the large masses have departed from the traditional ideology, not believing anymore in what they used to believe”⁶¹⁷.

Applying the Gramscian categories to the case of historical populism, and also to the dictatorships of national security (since 1964), we could say that in the decades after the 30’s the governments of G. Vargas, L. Cardenas or J. D. Peron controlled the “historical bloc of power” exercising its power as a “*leading* class” through its nascent industrial bourgeoisie. They had the consensus of the majority of the population (the other components of this collective agent being the working class, the peasants, the small nationalist bourgeoisie that managed the state bureaucracy, the army when it has a popular origin, sectors of the church, etc.) because they had a *hegemonic* project. Once the fall of these governments was accomplished through military coups orchestrated in Washington, the transnational nascent bourgeoisie, the developmentalist bloc and, even more, the military men of the dictatorships, or of the authoritarian or conservative governments without military dictatorships (like the Colombian, Mexican, Venezuelan, etc. governments), stopped being a *leading* class and transformed themselves into *dominant* classes or sectors. In other words, when the *consensus* was lost (through which the power of the “historical populisms” had been hegemonized, obtaining a

sustainable obedience) the people had to be repressed, a people that had begun to be conscious of itself (consciousness of being people) in the prior populist stage (amidst all the ambiguities that this implies, as we will see). The repressive bloc transformed itself into a “*dominant class*” without consensus, falling into a growing “crisis of legitimacy”, since hegemony had been lost.⁶¹⁸

The *concept* of “people” appears phenomenally (that is, it makes itself “present” or “appears” to the political conscience of the public-ontological sphere of the same oppressed collective actors) in such a double crisis of legitimacy and hegemony. When A. Gramsci describes the *people* as the “social bloc of the oppressed” (opposed to the “historical bloc in power”), he is describing the question in a precise and unexpected way. In a presentation to the Movement Without Land of Brasil (in the school Florestan Fernandes) we heatedly discussed the issue in 2007. The *political* category “people” cannot be confused with the *economic* category “class” (not even with the *working* “class”). The working class is the group of the subjects of the “economic field” that are *subsumed* by capital transforming them into wage laborers that actually produce (materially and formally) the surplus value of the goods. The “*political* field” has to be distinguished from the “*economic* field” - the confusion of both fields is one of the deficiencies of a certain extreme, economicist, left. The *categories* of a “field” should not be attributed to, nor lightly and superficially used in, another field, even if they always determine (in their own way, *materially* and economically or politically and *formally*) those of the other field. The “working class” is an essential *economic* category of capital, a category that, when it enters the *political* field, could or could not come to play a function of little or large importance, depending on the economic or political development of the juncture in the analyzed case. In this way, J. C. Mariátegui showed in the 1920’s in Peru that the *political* popular collective agent that could attain a hegemonic project was the indigenous population (*economically* being unessential to abstract capital), rather than the nonexistent working class (not even the peasant class in its strict meaning), since industrial capitalism practically did not exist in Peru. On the contrary,

the originary indigenous “pueblo” was the hegemonic reference of the Peruvian politics of the moment. Mariátegui was labeled as “populist” by the orthodox Marxists that founded the Peruvian Communist Party (just as Marx was labeled as “populist” by Vera Zasulich or Plejanov, since Marx sided with Danielson and his friends in Russia on the issue of the *obshina*)⁶¹⁹. Moreover, these orthodox Peruvians confused the populism of the *periphery* of the capitalism between the wars with the bonapartism of the 19th century and with the European Fascisms of the 20th century - a double theoretical mistake caused by the lack of a strict determination of the *category* of “populism” in the Latin American *peripheral postcolonial* capitalism posterior to the 30’s, an issue that Marx suspected in his theory of the transference of surplus value between nations, but one that he could never tackle adequately⁶²⁰.

Certain contemporary extreme orthodox marxisms continue to designate the “working class” as the ultimate historical subject of all transformative (rather than reformist)⁶²¹ or revolutionary political process. “In the abstract” and in the strict “*economic camp*” (which is the level in which Marx situates himself epistemologically in his published work *Capital*), the working class is, conjoined with the bourgeois class, the essential constitutive component of capital, and its intervention (for example, in an uninterrupted strike) would be definitive for the destruction of capital. In other words, it would be the ultimate instance of the economic social praxis. However, in some historical junctures, in a “*concrete*” level and in the “*political field*,” the working class cannot be this last instance, not even an essential point of reference. In the revolution as Mariátegui conceived of it in Peru, in the Chinese or *Sandinist* Revolution, in the Bolivian revolution led by Evo Morales in Bolivia, etc., the working class did not play the role of a “historical subject” in these historical junctures. The truth is that the “people” was *always, concretely, historically and politically*, the collective agent⁶²² (not necessarily directed by a working class, or a peasant class as in China, or by an elite of the small bourgeoisie in the peasant class, as in the Sandinist Revolution, etc.).

The *political* category of “pueblo” constitutes, then, a new theoretical

object in the Latin American political philosophy. For its *construction* one could count on categorical distinctions that are applied to other topics. For example, if one would speak of “class in itself” or “class for itself”, or “*consciousness* of the working class,” one could envision what could be meant by “people in itself” or “people for itself,” as much as a “consciousness of the people” from the “*historical, popular memory*” that transcends the capitalist system (since the memory of the working class cannot transcend the 16th century or even a little earlier, because before that there was no capitalism nor working class). For example, the working class in France could appear since the 16th century or a little earlier, but the French “people” was already Gallic against the Roman Empire, it was the servant of the medieval feuds, it is the peasant or working class in modern capitalism. Fidel Castro, undoubtedly a socialist, can speak of J. Marti as a hero of the “Cuban people” - without having been Marxist, nor socialist, nor working class. The heroes of a “people” politically cross through the “economic” modes of production, although they certainly receive the corresponding material determinations, in the long span of “political” history.

The people, the social bloc of the oppressed and excluded, can transit for centuries within a “state of rights” of *passive obedience*, in the face of an apparent legitimacy (since the three types of legitimacy described by Max Weber are only *apparent*), of a consensus that the political community lends to the historical bloc in power as the leading class. When this “people” (the aforesaid bloc of the oppressed) becomes a “people for itself,” or takes on the conscience of being a “people,” it abandons the passivity of the obedience that is the accomplice of the concealed domination of an hegemony that in truth does not meet its needs, and enters into a state of rebellion - a slow process that can last decades if not centuries. The dissent of the “people”, the result of taking on conscience of unfulfilled material needs, begins to organize itself. The so called “new social movements” are popular groups that manifest in the political (ontological) field the presence of not only unfulfilled *material* needs, but also of the same needs *formulated* explicitly and linguistically as demands - an aspect well described by

E. Laclau. Demanding is not the same as need: there is no demand without need. A demand is the *political* questioning of a social need in the *economic* field. Need is the *material content* of the political protest. The *social* movement is, moreover, the first *social* ⁶²³institutionality, which could cross the threshold of the *civil society* (the expanded state for Gramsci) and also the threshold of the *political society* (the state in a restricted sense). All social movements manifest some living corporeal determination of the intersubjective human subject that is negated in its fulfillment as a particular need. Feminism tells us about domination (negativity) in the determination of gender as machismo, and about its overcoming. The demanding movement of the non-white races fights against racial discrimination. The movement of the elderly rise against the “adult-cracy” as the productive criterion of capital, the same as the youth and the children. Indigenous people demand their originary culture - as an economic, political, religious, linguistic, etc., system. The working and peasant class equally affirm their right to full participation in the economic production, overcoming the system set up on the extraction of surplus value. Etc. etc.

All social movements, the Difference, do not add up to the population that constitutes the people. The people is much more, but these movements are the “people-for-itself”, they are the “conscience of the people” in transformative political action (in some exceptional cases, revolutionary). Anyway, they are the active interstitial fabric that *unifies* and allows for presenting itself as a *collective agent* in the political field to the “social bloc of the oppressed and excluded,” which is always the majority of the population.

This irruption, as a “state of rebellion” (which puts into question the Schmittian⁶²⁴ “State of Exception”, like when the Argentinian pueblo “leaves in the air” the “state of exception” dictated by F. de la Rúa and impeaches him as president on December 21st, 2001), is the volcanic manifestation in the political field of the “people as people” - J. J. Rousseau would say, as *potentia*⁶²⁵. This reminds us that the only site of *political power* is the very political community. But when this “community”⁶²⁶ gives way to the “people” - which E. Laclau suggestively denominates as *plebs* - it opposes itself to the “anti-people”, that is,

to the minority that exercises fetichized power⁶²⁷. "People" would be then the collective act that manifests itself in history in the processes of crisis of hegemony (in this sense, also of legitimacy), where the material conditions of the population reach unbearable limits, which demands the emergence of social movements that serve as catalysts for the unity of the whole of the oppressed population, the *plebs*, a *unity* that is constructed around an analogic-hegemonic project which progressively includes all of the *political* demands articulated on the basis of *economic* material needs. All of the theoretic discussion is focused today on how this *hegemonic project* is constructed or, even better, an *anti-domination* project that would impose itself as *hegemonic*, when the pueblo (the plebs) is able to exercise power as a new historical bloc in institutional power (the *potestas*⁶²⁸).

We propose an equidistant and complex solution in response to (i) the position that *one* demand would turn equivalential (of E. Laclau) - having been in its origin *one* differential demand of a movement, filling progressively the "significant vacuum" (which concretely would be represented in some way by a leader) - assuming as well in its process the remaining differential demands of the other movements (through which the vacuum would again be emptied), and to (ii) the sheer need of the translation of the diverse differential demands by an uninterrupted dialogue between the movements, a need which, however, is endangered by the hegemonic universal of Laclau in the face of which the critical postmodernism of de Boaventura de Souza leaves us without strategic unity. In the former, one falls into an equivalential univocity with the advantage of the proposal of a necessary strategic unity (Laclau); in the latter, one falls into a skeptical equivocity, although respectful of the Difference (B. de Souza). In our solution, the hegemonic project which assumes the demands of the Different social movements, which are particular (and should be so), must effectively enter into a process of dialogue and translation. In this way, the feminist understands that women, who are affirmed by this movement, are at the same time the most discriminated against (the women of color), the most exploited economically (the working women), the most socially excluded (the marginalized single mother),

etc. In the same way, the one who demands the equality among races discovers that the workers of color are the most unfairly treated, that racism crosses through all of the remaining social movements. A transversal comprehension begins to construct a hegemonic project where all the movements include their demands. But such an inclusion is not based on the supremacy of one movement over the others (not even the demands of the capitalist working class), a temptation in Laclau's proposal; nor is it the impossibility of a unifying project, a temptation in de Souza's proposal. The project would be analogical: assuming moments of similitude (not of a universal univocal identity, as in Laclau) and allowing for analogical distinctions particular to each movement (against the impossibility of unity as in de Souza). This is a question of analogic logic (which we have denominated the analectic method proper to a Philosophy of Liberation, about which we cannot expand here but which I hope to take on extensively in the near future⁶²⁹).

In this sense the "people", being a "part", represents the whole, since "the people is (...) the central protagonist of politics, and politics is what impedes the crystallization of the social in a full society" writes Laclau referring to the position of J. Ranciere⁶³⁰, and criticizing those of S. Zizek and A. Negri - the latter discards the concept of "people" for that of the "multitude," issues that we cannot take up here.

In this way the "popular" is what is proper to the "people" as *plebs*, as collective agent (not as a substance that moves through history metaphysically as a "a historical subject", omnipotent and infallible demiourge, of certain cuasi-anarchist orthodoxies of the extreme left).

While the "populist", in the valid sense of the "historical populism" of the decades posterior to the 30's, is the *confusion* between the proper of the "people" as we have started to define it ("social bloc of the oppressed") and the sheer "political community" as a totality. All of the Cuban, Argentinian or Mexican community is considered as the Cuban, Argentinian and Mexican "people" by populism, including classes, sectors of classes and groups that constituted the historical bloc of power which was necessary to depose. The 'people' is *confused*

in this way with the 'nation' (all of the population *born* in a territory and organized under the institutional political structure of the state, a political community).

The "popular" and the "people", on the other hand, are not the totality of the political community, but are a *sector* of the population that Agamben denominates as "the rest"⁶³¹ in his suggestive work *The Time that Remains*. The "people" would rescue, redeem the whole community (confused and divided), it would save the 'patria', the *populus* as a futural project (in the symbolic level of J. Lacan), even against the wish of the masters.

Thesis 4. The power of the people, institutions of participation and democracy.

The question can be formulated in a few words. The organization of political communities of millions of people by means of direct democracy being impossible, there was a need since millennia - at least since the large cities in the Mediterranean and Mesopotamia around 3000 b.c. - of instituting structures of representation. The *potentia* or the political power *in itself* of the political community is the institutions (the *potestas*) which allow for the *delegated* exercise of an indicated power. The delegation of power creates its own proper set of problems, the most serious: the slow distancing of the representant from the represented and its subsequent fetichizing. The one who exerts the power as delegate affirms itself as the very self-referential site of political power, defining it as a legitimate domination that gains the obedience of the citizens - in Max Weber's description. The political community as the originary site of power is transformed into the passive object of a consensus as obedience to the authority of the one to which power had been invested originarily through delegate representation. The delegate becomes the one who exercises the monopoly of power and the represented ones have lost all of their attributes.

For sure, the community of citizens creates the representative institutions, from the municipality or the county, to the province

or regional state, to the national territorial State or to international organisms. These representative institutions, managed by political parties, can turn into organisms for the domination of the citizens, which express their will only every four to six years confirming through universal vote the candidates which the political parties (and actual powers) have previously elected in an elitist manner, without the democratic participation of the community. In this way we reach the circle in which Latin American politics finds itself, after the democratic "opening" posterior to the fall of the military dictatorships since 1984, where the political parties monopolize the political life falling into a profound corruption - the first being to unconsciously situate the site of power in its governing will, forgetting that the ontological site of power is the people.

Hannah Arendt remembers that Thomas Jefferson, way before the Paris Commune, was obsessed with an issue: "the division of counties [municipalities] into districts"⁶³². Jefferson thought that the "elemental republics" should allow for the citizens in the every day world to habitually gather in the districts (which would be the soviets of the October Revolution and which today we would call the neighborhood, the town, the base community, the "cabildos" of the Bolivarian Constitution of 1999 in Venezuela, every organization under the municipalities), just like A. Toqueville had described within the utopic communities of the Pilgrims or of the founding fathers. These are self-managing communities, of direct democracy, which would assume everyday responsibilities:

"Jefferson knew very well that what he proposed as the salvation of the Republic signified effectively the salvation of the revolutionary spirit in the republic" - comments Arendt. All of his explanations of the revolutionary system begun with the reminder of the role carried out by the small republics with the 'energy which animated our revolution in its origin' [...] On this basis, he would trust on districts [communities under the counties or municipalities] as the instrument to attain that the citizens continue doing what they had shown to be able to do during the years of the revolution, that is, to act responsibly and to participate in political matters"⁶³³.

Jefferson is referring to the problematic that we have sketched in this work. That is to say, to the revolutionary moment of the colonial political community, which had remained unified under the directive of the historical English metropolitan bloc in power exercising authority with the consensus of the colonizers, and which separated itself through the emergence of a North American *people* that generated a new hegemonic project that unified the revolutionary will, and from its dissent took on a fight of liberation against the British Crown. This intervention of the people, which situated as its enemies the colonizing English and the colonial collaborators, as the surge of a politically active *plebs*, could, as the independent Republic was institutionalized, lose its politically creative, permanent, responsible, conscience. The *people* as *plebs* fell asleep as a new *populus*, as a political community that turned passive, obedient to the new historical bloc in power: the nascent industrial bourgeoisie, in the North, and the slaving oligarchy, in the South. Jefferson tried to maintain, in front of the institutions of representation, the presence of the originary experience of the participative democracy. He failed.

In the same way Lenin, in the beginning, gave “all the power to the *soviets*,” to the communes, to direct popular democracy. It was total chaos. It moved from one extreme to the other. The NEP was “all the power to the institutions directed by the Bolshevik party.”

The issue is, then, how to *articulate* the representative institutions (always in a process of transformation or perfection) around political parties and around the three already existing powers (executive, judicial, legislative) through new participative institutions that allow, beyond parties and from the very base, for a real actualization, with direct democracy in the small communities of the *people*, of the *hyperpotentia*⁶³⁴ or of the *permanent exercise through time* (without having to wait the punctual intervention every four or six years through the confirmation of a representative *already elected by others*⁶³⁵) of the popular will. The “cabildos,” the districts, the neighborhood communities, the towns, etc., would be organizations under the municipalities (adding to a few thousand citizens) gathered in even weekly meetings, where the citizens would assume responsibility, with

assigned resources and being judicially founded in the Constitution and the corresponding laws, for issues such as the security of the community, the distribution of water and sewage, the education of the youth, the embellishment of places, the responsibility for health, the cooperatives of consumption and even production, etc. That is to say, the effective exercise of political power would *descend* from the municipality to the community at the very base.

From these millions of organisms where direct democracy would be carried out, as through polling stations (for example, in Mexico there are 130 thousand within the national electoral register), the *participative* political life would be transformed into the everyday activity of the citizens. Moreover, they would be coordinated in webs within the municipalities, within the provinces, until reaching presence in the national state. This web of webs would constitute the *Power of citizenship*⁶³⁶, which would oversee the other powers (executive, judicial, legislative). The *participation* would be in this sense permanently guaranteed in the political community of an active and critical consensus, which would oversee the *representation* of professional politicians organized in political parties.

If new transformations were to be added to these participative institutions, such as revoking referendums, the possibility that the citizens (in certain proportion) could present projects of law, etc., would take away from *representation* its stiff bureaucratism and would speed up the participation of citizens. Of course one would always have to consider governability and stability in the exercise of power delegated to representation, but one would have to choose a fair mean between the revocation of mandates and governable stability.

Without representation, participation falls into an ungovernable chaos: "All the power to the *soviets*!" Without participation representation turns stiff, it is fetichized, corrupted: "All the power to the monopoly of political parties!"

It is necessary to invent a new articulation between open representation, revocable, overseen by a real democracy, and the direct participation of citizens - permanent, responsible and constitutional - as the exercise of power of the people.

Thesis 5. Democratic demands for the exercise of leadership.

Now we will situate ourselves decidedly at the level of political praxis, in the sphere of strategic action as such. Politics can be described as having three levels: the level of normative principles (C), of institutions (B) and of political action as an agonic activity, but distinct to war (A)⁶³⁷. In this sense Fidel Castro expressed himself in the following way:

“We understand as *people*, when we speak of *fight*, the great irredentist mass [...], the one that wishes great and wise transformations in all orders and which is decided to achieve them, when it believes in something or someone, above all when it believes sufficiently in itself.”⁶³⁸

The reflection is *strategic* political, because it situates itself at the level of *fight*. In this agonic level, it is not only theory is necessary but also *faith*, the *belief* as subjective conviction that allows itself to be opposed to the unjust “state of rights.” One must believe in the postulates (the kingdom of freedom, the dissolution of the state, the society without classes, etc.), but also in *someone*. The people can be convinced rationally of a political plan, but subjectively it must objectify someone, in her honesty, integrity, courage, wisdom, in order to give her the mandate of taking charge of the responsibility of a shared attainment of the strategic goal agreed upon. A pact of mutual collaboration is established in a *people that sufficiently believes in itself*. And this is because in the fight, in war, instantaneous, difficult and complex decisions must be made frequently. Karl von Clausewitz describes this as follows:

“If we observe in ample form the four components of the atmosphere in which a war develops - danger, physical effort, incertitude and chance - it would be easy to comprehend that a great moral and mental force is necessary for its advance with security and success in this disconcerting element, a force that historians and chronicle writers of military successes describe as energy, firmness, constancy, strength of spirit and character”⁶³⁹.

In other words, and in Gramsci's words:

"Marx and Machiavelli. This argument can give way to a double task: a study of the relations between them, as theoreticians of *militant praxis and of action*"⁶⁴⁰.

This task situated in a strategic level, without theoretic intention, is interested in giving birth to a political party "that strives to found a State"⁶⁴¹. The "organic intellectual," who cannot be without charisma, is conceived in the complex encounter of: a) the party militant, b) the organizer as a political leader, and c) the one who has the capacity to formulate theoretically and organizationally the strategic steps in the short term (the tactical) and, above all, in the long term (the properly strategic).

In general, Latin American political philosophy, which comments on European or North American authors, has as a reference the political orders established with a "State of Rights." It is not a matter of the organization of *new* movements, of the responsibility of establishing profoundly transformed political systems. For this reason, there is no reflection on the theme that the very N. Machiavelli clearly proposed:

"Moreover, to turn to those who by their own *virtu*, and not by *chance*, have become princes, I say that the most notable ones are Moses, Ciro, Romulus, Theseus and other similar ones"⁶⁴².

It was not a matter of giving counsel to an established prince, who had inherited traditional power. On the contrary, it was a revolutionary situation, where a new order had to be established. Machiavelli does not situate himself in the institutional level (*B*) (for this purpose, he dedicated his work: *Discourse on the first decade of Titus Livius*), but in the strategic level (*A*), and in the beginning moment of the creation of something without precedent. In this moment of fight - and the Latin American people situates itself in a fight against the effective powers of the center, neo-liberal capitalism, and against the intrinsic oligarchies - a dialogue is established of double complicity between leadership and the people:

"the people [...], seeing that it cannot resist the great ones, increase the reputation of one of them, and makes her a prince in order to be,

under her authority, protected [...] She attains the principality with popular favor, finds herself alone and has around her very few or no one that are not ready to obey. Moreover, one cannot with honesty satisfy the great ones without injuring the others, but one could satisfy the people because the end of the people is more honest than that of the great, since the latter wants to oppress and the former to not be oppressed”⁶⁴³.

Taking away from this text everything that is paternalistic and aristocratic, it is understood that leadership is invested of authority by the same people that need certain direction. But, at the same time, it imposes conditions of fidelity (in the sense of what we have called “obediential power”⁶⁴⁴) on the fights of the people. The people create the myth of leadership, it needs it, it supports it, it directs it, and it can suffer a great disillusionment.

The strategic postulate should strive for the dissolution of all leadership, of all avant-gardism. A people that fully exercises a horizontal, self-referential, autonomous, self-determining, participative democracy, does not need but a weak leadership. However, in the moments of great transformation, more so in revolutionary processes, the mutually enriched dialectic of leadership and people *for itself* is necessary, a dialectic that grows in the slow exercise of the symmetric participation of all of its members: democracy as the foundation of legitimacy - above the “state of rights.”

This issue of the existence of leadership in popular political movements would have to be described first as a syllogism. A) The *universality* would be present in the undivided political community still in the time of consensus, in the classic exercise of power of the historical bloc of political parties. B) The *particularity* would consist in the people in the transformative act (even revolutionary), in the social movement or in the base political community (that would be the messianic moment of W. Benjamin). C) The *singularity* exercised by the leadership (the Moses of Machiavelli), in dialectic function with the other moments. These moments mutually determine each other and complement one another, each playing necessary political functions.

Effectively, in history, peoples were never without leadership (since the indicated and mythical figure of Moses in the exalted narrative of Erns Bloch in *The Principle of Hope*). There has been no historic revolution without leadership: S. Bolivar, J. de San Martin or M. Hidalgo in the first Latin American emancipation of the 19th century; Lenin in the Russian revolution in October, Mao Tse Tung in China, Fidel Castro in Cuba, L. Cardenas in Mexico, the Sub Marcos in Chiapas, Evo Morales in Bolivia, etc. However, little or nothing has been meditated theoretically about this unavoidable practical-political function. I think it is necessary to reflect on this topic.

The dangers to avoid are the extremes. A) The *avant-garde* leadership in the right (authoritarian, as Hitler and Mussolini) or in the left (as the Central Committee: the “democratic centralism” and the dictatorship of the proletariat”), or B) the spontaneous populism criticized by F. Fanon (now with a disparaging denomination) which attributes to the people a strange omniscience on the basis of which it cannot make political mistakes. This is the question of the relation between theory and praxis, between the masses and the “organic intellectuals” (such as Gramsci enunciated it), a question of great importance in the actuality of Latin America in the beginnings of the 21st century, since the progressive center-left emerging governments (although not revolutionary in the classical sense, anti-neoliberalists but not anti-capitalists), always have a visible leadership in the persons of N. Kirchner, Tabare Vasquez, Luiz Inacio “Lula” Da Silva, Hugo Chavez, Evo Morales, Rafael Correa, Daniel Ortega, Colom and many others.

Leadership is necessary in certain political junctures. In Chinese political philosophy, Huang Tsung-si (1610-1695) wrote a strategic work under the title: *Awaiting for the Dawn* (Ming- i tai-fang lu)⁶⁴⁵. It would be like Machiavelli's *Prince* but in a completely different situation. In this case, the Chinese political philosopher equally awaits a strong leadership that could re-orient a corrupt empire, which has over 150 million inhabitants. The works of the European philosophers of the same age would look like provincial reflections of peripheric thinkers. Nevertheless, this leadership would not find support in the

critical consensus of the people, democratically, but it would descend from top to bottom, re-organizing society like in the time of the originary "Three Dynasties":

"In ancient times everybody who is under the sky were considered; the lords and princes were like servants. The prince spent her life working for anybody who was under the sky. Now the prince is the master, and all of those under the sky are her servants"⁶⁴⁶.

This articulates precisely the sense of an "obedential power" as it is postulated in the case of the just prince, and of its corruption in the posterior tradition. In every sense, the exercise of leadership was authoritarian, oligarchic, paternalistic. There were no, as it can be supposed, possible democratic demands.

On the contrary, it is a matter of correctly defining the importance and necessity of leadership in situations of profound political change, in certain cases revolutionary change. In these situations the social movements and the popular masses could symbolically invest an *aura* on certain leaders, an aura built by the very people for its protection, demanding obedience from the consensus of movements and of the people, a consensus expressed in their democratic organizations upon which leadership is to be articulated. If the leadership becomes autonomous and pretends to identify its own will with the site of political power, one falls into profound corruption. If the leader remains faithful to the service of the people providing unity, creativity, trust, patience, her function becomes necessary.

May be no *virtue* - in Machiavelli's sense - is more laudable in leadership than the "firmness [as] the will's capacity of resisting the blow; [than the] constancy of resistance with respect to duration"⁶⁴⁷. Lula was defeated many times as candidate to the presidency; Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador visits one by one the 2500 municipalities after the fraud suffered in 2006; for decades the Sub Marcos resists in the Chapaneca jungle the persecution on the part of the oligarchy and the military. These are leaderships that show - democratically articulated, in suffering - strategic intelligence and disciplined obedience, the fulfillment of the material requirements of the collective agent in an ultimate situation: the people in a "state of rebellion."

Conclusion

“Populism” as a term that means the phenomena of the regimes that originate since the Mexican Revolution in 1910, and which expand themselves since 1930 in Latin America, is a valid denomination. (Thesis 1).

On the contrary, the pejorative epithet “populism” - an epithet used to disparage those who oppose the “Washington consensus,” neo-liberalism, and which refers to popular neo-nationalist Latin American governments that protect the national wealth, governments which have taken place since the end of the 20th century - must be ignored in the social sciences (Thesis 2).

On the other hand, one must distinguish clearly “populism” (in the sense of Thesis 1), from the “popular” and from the “people”, categories that must be constructed more fully, but not abandoned as complex (Thesis 3).

Articulated next to the question of the “people” one finds the question of the exercise of “popular power,” as a political system that creates new participative institutions at all levels of political structures, in Civil Society and in the politics of the state, and constitutionally. The real democracy is linked to the effective organization of politico-popular participation (Thesis 4).

Finally, one must reflect, and theoretically integrate, the question of leadership - in order to avoid the traditional avant-gardism or the charismatic dictatorship, as much as certain populist spontaneity (now in its negative sense but with a different use than that of Thesis 2) - showing its importance and necessity, and explaining at the same time the democratic demands of its exercise (Thesis 5).

I have presented these five theses for discussion, with pretense of the truth (that is to say, with conscience of its fallibility), but knowing that only through debate they could attain the sufficient pretension of validity.

6. *The "Philosophy Of Liberation," The Postmodern Debate, and Latin American Studies*

The operative theoretical framework that was constructed in the late 90s, as much within Latin America as by Latin American scholars in the United States (philosophers, literary critics and anthropologists, as well as historians, sociologists, etc.), has diversified and acquired such complexity that it has become necessary to map a topography of these positions in order to deepen the debate. In other words, the perspectives, the categories, the planes of "localization" of subjects within theoretical and interpretative discourse have changed so much that it has become difficult to continue the Latin American debate without a preliminary understanding of its theoretical and conceptual basis. The old Latin Americanism ("Latin Americanism 1") seems to have become a museum-object rather than an obligatory point of reference in any discussion. In this chapter we will briefly look at the said topography on the debate, knowing that it is only "one" possible interpretation of the field. This is just a point of departure to illustrate the terms of the debate.

1. **"Latin American Thought": From the End of the Second European-North American War**

In the mid 1940s, towards the end of the second European-North American War, a group of young philosophers (such as Leopoldo Zea in Mexico, Arturo Ardao in Uruguay, Francisco Romero in Argentina ... etc.) went back to the problematic debate of "our (Latin) America" ("Nuestra América"), which had begun in the nineteenth century with Alberdi, Bello or Martí or in the early part of the twentieth century with Mariátegui, Vasconcelos, and Samuel Ramos among many others. In response to North American "Panamericanism" there emerged

an interpretation of Latin America that was distinct and not to be confused with the "Ibero-Americanism" of Franco's Spain.

The members of the "institutionalized" academic philosophy - in the pre-war era - according to periodization proposed by Francisco Romero, had begun to forge contacts throughout the Latin American continent. They sought to understand the "history" of Latin American thought, that was forgotten thanks to all of the focus placed upon Europe and the United States. Leopoldo Zea's *America en la Historia* (1957) is an example of the ideas of this era. The theoretical framework of this generation was influenced by philosophers such as Husserl, Heidegger, Ortega y Gasset, Sartre, or historians such as Toynbee. They revisited the heroes of the emancipation from the beginning of the nineteenth century (so as not to recover the colonial era), in order to rethink its ideal of freedom with respect to the United States, which had established its hegemony in the West since 1945, at the beginning of the Cold War. Contemporaneously in Africa, P. Tempels published *La philosophie bantoue* (1949). In Asia and India, M. Ghandi was rediscovering "Hindu thought" as an emancipatory catalyst of the British ex-colony. The era culminates around 1968, a time of great political uprising for students and intellectuals (marked by the 1966 Cultural Revolution in China, which is echoed in the "May Movement" of 1968, in the Vietnam War demonstrations in the United States, in Mexico's Tlatelolco and in the 1969 "Cordobazo" in Argentina).

2. Modernity/Postmodernity in Europe and the United States

In the 70s the "atmosphere" of European philosophy begins to change. The student uprisings have exhausted a portion of the left (which has in part abandoned the Marxist tradition), while others have become bureaucratized (constituting "standard" Marxism, including Althusserian "classism"). The gradual emergence of a critique of universalism and dogmatism from non-traditional positions begins. Michel Foucault, who was a protagonist of movements that took place in Nanterre in 1968, posits a critique of the metaphysical

and ahistorical positions of standard Marxism (the proletariat as a "Messianic subject", the idea of history as a necessary progression, the concept of macrostructural power as the only existent power, etc.).⁶⁴⁸ In France, Gilles Deleuze⁶⁴⁹, Jacques Derrida⁶⁵⁰ or Jean Francois Lyotard, Gianni Vattimo⁶⁵¹ in Italy, (all of them with very different viewpoints), rose up against "modern reason", a concept that Emmanuel Levinas approaches through the category of "Totality" (in *Totalidad e Infinito*, published in the phenomenological collection by Nijhoff, Nimega). The work of J. F. Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition* (1979), reads like a manifesto. In the third line of the "Introducción" he states that "The word is in current use on the American continent among sociologists and critics", and indicates that: "It designates the state of our culture following the transformations which, since the end of the nineteenth century, have altered the game rules for science, literature, and the arts. The present study will place these transformations in the context of the crisis of narratives." (Lyotard 1984, xxiii)⁶⁵²

From Heidegger, with his critique of the subjectivity of the subject, and even more from Nietzsche, with his critique of the subject, of current values, truth, and metaphysics, the "postmodern" movement is not only opposed to standard Marxism, but also demonstrates that universalism has the same connotations of epistemological violence that we find, on a larger scale, in modern rationality (Dussel 1974). In contrast to the unicity of the dominant being, the concepts of "Différance", multiplicity, plurality, fragmentation, as well as the process of deconstruction of all macro-narratives, start to develop.

In the United States, Fredric Jameson's *Postmodernism or the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* (1991) outlines a new stage in this process. As for Richard Rorty, he is, in my opinion, a more anti-foundationalist and skeptic intellectual, who only collaterally could be considered part of the "postmodern" tradition.

In Latin America, the reception of the postmodern movement emerges in the late 1980s. The edition of H. Herlinghaus and Walter, *Postmodernidad en la periferia: enfoques latinoamericanos de la nueva teoría* (1997)⁶⁵³, and the articles compiled by John Beverley and José Oviedo, *The Postmodernism Debate in Latin America* (1993)⁶⁵⁴ include

a wide range of contributions to this topic, the earliest dating from the mid 1980s.

In general they give evidence of a generation that is experiencing a certain "disenchantment" at the close of an era in Latin America (not only with populism, but also with all of the promise stirred by the Cuban Revolution since 1959, confronted by the fall of Socialism in 1989). This generation makes the attempt to confront the cultural hybridity of a peripheral modernity that no longer believes in utopian change. They seek to evade the simplification of the dualities of center-periphery, progress-underdevelopment, tradition-modernity, domination-liberation, and they operate, instead, within the heterogeneous plurality and the fragmentary and differential conditions that characterize urban, trans-national cultures. Now it is the social anthropologists (particularly Garcia Canclini's *Culturas Híbridas*, 1989) and the literary critics that are producing a new interpretation of Latin America (see Follari 1991, Arriarán 1997, and Maliandi's critique 1993).

I believe that the work of Santiago Castro-Gómez is of great interest since it represents a good example of a postmodern philosophy produced from Latin America.⁶⁵⁵ His criticism is geared against progressive Latin American thought, in contrast to Adolfo Sánchez Vázquez, Franz Hinkelammert, Pablo Guadarrama, Arturo Roig, Leopoldo Zea, Augusto Salazar-Bondy, etc.⁶⁵⁶ In all of these cases, including my own, the argument is always as follows: according to Castro-Gómez, these philosophers, under the pretense of criticizing modernity, in not being conscious of the "localization" of their own discourse, and for not having had the Foucauldian tools to undertake an epistemic archaeology, which would have permitted a reconstruction of the modern theoretical framework, have in one way or another fallen back into modernity (if they had strayed from it). To speak of the subject, of history, of domination, of external dependence, of the oppression of social classes, using categories such as totality, exteriority, liberation, hope, is to fall back into a moment that does not take seriously the "political disenchantment" that has impacted current culture so deeply. To speak in terms of macro-institutions such

as the state, the nation, the city, or about epic heroic narratives, results in the loss of meaning of micro, heterogeneous, plural, hybrid and complex realities. According to Castro-Gómez: *"The other of totality is the poor, the oppressed, the one who, by being located outside the system, becomes the only source of spiritual renewal. There, in the exterior of the system, in the ethos of oppressed societies, people have values that are very different from those that prevail in the center. .. With this, Dussel creates a second reduction: that of converting the poor in some kind of transcendent subject, through which Latin American history will find its meaning. This is the opposite side of postmodernity, because Dussel attempts not to de-centralize the Enlightened subject, but to replace it by another absolute subject."* (1996, 39-40)⁶⁵⁷

What Castro-Gómez does not state is that Foucault criticizes certain forms of the subject but re-legitimizes others; he criticizes certain forms of making history departing from a priori and necessary laws, but re-emphasizes a genetic-epistemological history. Often Castro-Gómez is seduced by the fetishism of formulaic thought, and he does not take into consideration that a certain criticism of the subject is necessary in order to reconstruct a deeper vision of it: one must recognize that it is necessary to criticize the external causes of Latin American underdevelopment in order to integrate it into a more comprehensive interpretation, that it is necessary to not dismiss micro-institutions (forgotten by the descriptions of the macro) in order to connect them to these macro-institutions, that Power is mutually and relationally constituted between social subjects, but that, in any case, the Power of the State or the Power of a hegemonic Nation (such as the United States) continues to exist. When one criticizes one unilaterality with another, one falls into that which is being criticized. From a panoptical postmodern criticism some critics return to the claim of universalism that was characteristic of modernity. According to Eduardo Mendieta, *"Postmodernity perpetuates the hegemonic intention of modernity and Christianity, by denying other peoples the possibility to name their own history and to articulate their own self-reflexive discourse."* (in Castro-Gómez and Mendieta 1998, 159)

In Europe, on the other hand, a certain universalist rationalism

such as that of Karl-Otto Apel or Jürgen Habermas, which distrusts fascist irrationalism (of the German Nazi era), posits that the objective is to "complete the task of modernity" as a critical/discursive and democratic form of rationality. The intent is to defend the significance of reason against the opinion of skeptic intellectuals, such as Richard Rorty. To sum up, in the North the debate was established between the pretense of universal rationality, and, on the other hand, the affirmation of difference, that is, the negation of the subject, the deconstruction of history, progress, values, metaphysics, etc.

3. The Emergence of Critical Thought in the Post-Colonial Periphery: The Philosophy of Liberation

In 1970 Ranajit Guha⁶⁵⁸ initiated a theoretical transformation that would later serve as the foundation of "Subaltern Studies". Through a "situated" reading of Foucault, and coming from a previous position of standard Marxism, Guha begins to deviate from the trodden paths of the past toward the study of mass popular culture and the culture of groups or subaltern classes in India. This movement is, later on, enriched with the participation of intellectuals such as Gayatri Spivak (1987, 1988a, 1993), Homi Bhabha (1994)⁶⁵⁹, Gyan Prakash, Dipesh Chakrabarty and many others. All of them are informed by the epistemologies of Foucault and Lacan, without abandoning Marxism. Now equipped with new instruments of critical analysis, they could engage in issues of gender, culture, politics and critiques of racism (racismo)

In *Orientalism: Western Conceptions of the Orient* (1978) Edward Said posits a critical analysis of European studies on Asia. With respect to Africa, Tempels' position is criticized three decades after his work is published, in P.Hountondji's *Sur la philosophie africaine: critique de l'ethnophilosophie* (1977). I would like to suggest that throughout the periphery (Africa, Asia and Latin America) there began to emerge critical movements that utilized their own regional reality as a point of departure, and in some cases a revitalized Marxism as a point of theoretical reference.

I estimate that the Philosophy of Liberation in Latin America⁶⁶⁰, which also emerged around 1970 (at roughly the same time that the first works of Guha emerged in India), and which was likewise influenced by a French philosopher, in this case Emmanuel Levinas, is framed by the same sorts of discoveries. Nevertheless, these discoveries may be misinterpreted if the originary situation is not taken into account and, consequently, the theoretical perspective is distorted. The Philosophy of Liberation was never simply a mode of "Latin American thought", nor a historiography of such. It was a critical philosophy self-critically localized in the periphery, within subaltern groups. In addition, for more than twenty years (since 1976 in some cases) it has been said that the Philosophy of Liberation has been exhausted. Yet it seems that the opposite is true, since it was not until the late 1990s that it was actually discovered and further delved into in order to provide a South-South -and in the future a North-South- dialogue.

The originary intuition for the Philosophy of Liberation = a philosophical tradition that (in contrast to other movements in the fields of anthropology, history, and literary criticism) was influenced by the events of 1968 - emerged from a critique of modern reason - the Cartesian subject on Heidegger's ontological criticism - which in part permitted it to sustain a radical critical position. It was also inspired by the Frankfurt School (Horkheimer, Adorno, and especially H. Marcuse's *Unidimensional Man*), which illuminated the political meaning of said ontology, allowing it to be more thoroughly understood (including the Heideggerean position in its relation to Nazism). In *Para una de-strucción de la historia de la ética* [1969] (1974), I quoted the following text from Heidegger: 'What do we mean by world when we talk about the darkening of the world? The worldly darkening implies the weakening of spirit itself, its dissolution, consumption, and false interpretation. The dominant dimension is that of extension and numbers [...] All of this is later on intensified in America and Russia.' (Heidegger 1966, 34-35). And I concluded by stating that it is necessary to say, "*No to the modern world whose cycle is done, and yes to the New Man that today lives in the time of his conversion and transformation (Kehre).*" (Dusse1974, 126, n. 170).

But at the same time it was through works such as those of Franz Fanon's *The Wretched of the Earth* that we became positioned on the horizon of the struggles for liberation in the 1960s. In Argentina at that time the masses battled against the military dictatorships of Onganía, Levingston and Lanusse. As philosophers and scholars, we assumed critical and theoretical responsibility in that process (Dussel 1994c). We endured bomb threats, expulsion from our universities, our countries, and some (like Mauricio López) were tortured and assassinated. Theoretical and practical processes were highly articulated. Critical categories began to emerge in response to modern subjectivity. Historical access was fundamental for the destruction of Modernity. The genealogy of modern categories was being undertaken from a global perspective (metropolis/colony). In situating our discourse from within the World-System (which neither Foucault, Derrida, Vattimo, nor Levinas could really access) we discovered that the "I" used by the Emperor King of Spain to sign his documents in 1519 was the same "I" used by Hernán Cortés when he said "I conquer" in 1521, long before Descartes produced his "Ego Cogito" in Amsterdam in 1637. It was not merely a matter of exploring the epistemologies of France's "Classical Age", but rather of considering how Modernity has developed in the world for the past 500 years.

The "myth of Modernity" (Dussel 1992), that is, the idea of European superiority over the other cultures of the world, began to be sketched out five hundred years ago. Ginés de Sepúlveda was certainly one of the first great ideologists of "Occidentalism" (the eurocentrism of Modernity) and Bartolomé de las Casas the creator of the first "counter-discourse" of Modernity, established from a global, center-periphery perspective.

The "excluded", the individual "being watched" in the madhouses and "classical" French panoptical prisons, had long before been anticipated by Indians who were "watched" in the "reservations" (reducciones) and "excluded" from the Latin American towns and doctrines since the sixteenth century.⁶⁶¹ The blacks, who were watched in the "sensala" next to the "casa grande," already existed in Santo Domingo by 1520, when the exploitation of gold in the rivers had

ended and the production of sugar began. Levinas "Other" - which, in my 1973 works, having carefully read Jacques Derrida, I termed "distinto" (because "difference" was defined as the counterpart of "identity"⁶⁶²) - is, in general or in abstract terms, what Foucault calls the "excluded" and the one "being watched" when making reference to the insane who is kept in the madhouse or to the criminal who is kept in prison. To see in "exteriority" merely a modern category is to distort the meaning of this Levinasian critical category, which in the Philosophy of Liberation is "reconstructed" - though not without the opposition of Levinas himself, who was only thinking of Europe, without even noticing, and of the pure ethical "responsibility" for the Other. The Philosophy of Liberation soon deviates from Levinas, because it ought to consider, from a critical standpoint, its responsibility regarding the vulnerability of the Other in the process of constructing a new order (with all of the ambiguities that implies). The philosopher of liberation neither represents anybody nor speaks on behalf of others (as if this were his sole vested political purpose), nor does he undertake a concrete task in order to overcome or negate some petit-bourgeois sense of guilt. The Latin American critical philosopher, as conceived by the Philosophy of Liberation, assumes the responsibility of fighting for the Other, the victim, the woman oppressed by patriarchy, and for the future generation which will inherit a ravished Earth, etc. (that is, it assumes responsibility for all possible sorts of alterity). And it does so with an ethical, "situated" consciousness; that of any human being with an ethical "sensibility" and the capacity to become outraged when recognizing the injustice imposed upon the Other.

To "localize" (in the sense of Homi Bhaba) its discourse has always been the intent of the Philosophy of Liberation. It sought to situate itself on the periphery of the World-System from the perspective of dominated races, from the point of view of women in a patriarchal system, from the standpoint of disadvantaged children living in misery.⁶⁶³ It is clear that the theoretical tools ought to be perfected, and for that, the postmodern approach needs to be taken into consideration. But the Philosophy of Liberation also assumed the categories of Marx, Freud, the hermeneutics of Ricoeur, the ideas of Discursive Ethics,

and all of the other movements that could contribute categories that are useful but not alone sufficient for formulating a discourse that could contribute to a justification of the praxis of liberation.

If it is true that there is a Hegelian story, an all encompassing and Eurocentric "master narrative," it is not true that the victims only need fragmentary micro-stories to represent them (see Dussel 1992, chapter 1). On the contrary, Rigoberta Menchú, the Zapatistas, black Americans, Hispanics living in the United States, feminists, the marginalized, the working class of global transnational capitalism, etc. need a historical narrative to reconstruct their memories and make sense of their struggle. A "struggle for recognition" of new rights (as Axel Honneth would put it) needs organization, hope, and an epic narrative to yield new horizons. Despair makes sense for a while, but the hope of humanity, its production, reproduction, and development is a "Will to Live" - which Shopenhauer - though not Nietzsche - was opposed to

The simplistic dualisms of center-periphery, development-underdevelopment, dependence-liberation, exploiters-exploited, all levels of gender, class, race that function in the bipolarity dominator-dominated, civilization-barbarism, universal principles-incertitude, totality-exteriority, should be overcome, if they are used in a superficial or reductive manner. But to overcome does not imply "to decree" its inexistence or its epistemic uselessness. On the contrary, Derridian "deconstruction" proposes that a text could be read from a totality of possible current-meanings, from the exteriority of the Other (the latter is what permits deconstruction). These dual dialectical categories should be placed on concrete levels of greater complexity and articulated with other mediating categories on a micro-level. Nonetheless, to assume that there are no dominators and dominated, no center and periphery, etc. is to lapse into dangerously utopian or reactionary thought. The time has come in Latin America to move on to positions of greater complexity, without the fetishism, or linguistic terrorism that, without any particular validation, characterize as "antiquated" or "obsolete," positions that are expressed in a language that the speaker does not like. Class struggle will never be overcome,

but it is not the only struggle, it is one among many others (those of women, environmentalists, ethnic minorities, dependent nations, etc.) and in certain conjunctures other struggles might become more urgent, and of greater political significance. If the "proletariat" is not a "metaphysical subject" for all eternity, this does not mean that it is not a collective or inter-subjective subject any more, one that might appear and disappear in certain historical periods. Forgetting its existence would be a grave error.

4. Latin American Studies in the United States

Over the past three decades, in part due to the Latin American diaspora in the United States that resulted from military dictatorships, and in part due to the poverty in Latin America as a result of the exploitation of transnational capitalism, many Latin American intellectuals (as well as many already integrated as "Hispanics" in the U.S.) have completely renewed the interpretive theoretical framework in the field of "Latin American Studies" (LASA was founded in 1963), particularly within the field of literary criticism, which assumed the study of "Latin American thought," which had been, in previous decades, the terrain of philosophers. This is partially due to the fact that much of the Marxist left, expelled from its positions in Departments of Philosophy, migrated towards Departments of literary criticism, comparative literature, or Romance Languages (French in particular), a phenomenon that contributed to a theoretical sophistication never seen before, neither in the US nor in Europe. The preponderant use of French philosophers (Sartre, Foucault, Derrida, Lyotard, Baudrillard, etc.) is also explained by the fact that this theoretical movement was born in French departments (and not in the usually more traditional and conservative departments of English).⁶⁶⁴

If we then add "Cultural Studies", particularly in the United Kingdom, which also benefit from the contributions of the Latin American diaspora (take for example Stuart Hall, of Jamaican origin, and also the case of Ernesto Laclau), we can see that the panorama has indeed broadened a great deal.

The field of "Subaltern Studies," coming from India as well as from the Afro-American and AfroCaribbean "thought" and "philosophy" which currently are in a process of expansion, allowed for a productive discussion of the innovative hypothesis of post-colonial reason,⁶⁶⁵ which emerged in Asia and Africa following the emancipation of many of the nations on these continents after World War II. But then it becomes evident that "Latin American thought" and the Philosophy of Liberation had already raised many of the questions that comprise the current debate in Asia and Africa. A "Subaltern Latin American Study" returns to many of the topics previously addressed in the Latin American philosophical tradition of the '60s, which has apparently been forgotten (in part because the specialists in literary criticism were not the protagonists in the philosophical discussions of that era).

For this reason, Alberto Moreiras explains the necessity of a critique of the first Latin Americanism (as much of "Latin American Studies" in the United States as of "Latin American thought" on the continent itself), as well as of a Neo-Latin Americanism. The task of the 2nd Latin Americanism would be "to produce itself as an anti-conceptual, anti-representational apparatus, whose main function would be to disturb the tendency of epistemic representation to advance towards its total cancellation".⁶⁶⁶

In response to the interpretation of Said's "Orientalism," a certain "Occidentalism" is also discovered (the modern self-recognition of Europe itself) and consequently a "Post-Occidentalism," theorized by Roberto Fernandez Retamar and Fernando Coronil. According to Coronil, "Occidentalism is thus the expression of a constitutive relationship between Western representations of cultural difference and worldwide Western dominance. Challenging Occidentalism requires that it be unsettled as a mode of representation that produces polarized and hierarchical conceptions of the West and its Others" (1997, 14-15). Coronil's "Post-Colonialism" is thus the sort of trans-modernity that we are proposing in other works. The "Postmodern" is still European, Western. The Post-Occidental or trans-modern goes beyond modernity (and postmodernity) and is more closely related to the Latin American situation, whose "Westernization" is greater

than that experienced in Africa and Asia. Latin America's distant emancipation makes the term "Post-Colonialism" less than adequate to describe its particular condition (Mignolo 1998b).

5. Final Reflections

In the same manner, the group of anti-foundationalist thinkers opposes universal principles, the incertitude or fallibility that are natural to human finitude, which seems to open a struggle for an a priori un-resolvable hegemony.⁶⁶⁷ The Philosophy of Liberation can assess the incertitude of the goodness claim (or justice) of human acts, knowing the unavoidable fallibility of practice, while at the same time being able to describe the universal conditions or the ethical principles of said ethical or political action. Universality and incertitude permit precisely the discovery of the inevitability of victims and it is from here that critical liberating thought originates.

Thus I believe that the Philosophy of Liberation has the theoretical resources to face present challenges, and in this manner to incorporate the tradition of the "Latin American thought" of the 1940s and 1950s within the evolution that took place in the 1960s and 1970s, which prepared it to enter into new vital and creative dialogues in the critical process of the following decades. Along with Imre Lakatos we could say that a program of research (such as the Philosophy of Liberation) is progressive as long as it is capable of incorporating old and new challenges. The "hard nucleus" of the Philosophy of Liberation, its Ethics of Liberation, has been partially criticized (by H. Cerutti, O. Schutte, K.O. Apel, and others), but, in my opinion, it has responded creatively as a totality, thus far.

In fact, we face urgent tasks in the twenty-first century. For over more than twenty years H. Cerutti and other colleagues (some since 1976) have been announcing the exhaustion of the Philosophy of Liberation. Yet the contrary seems to be true. Since the year 2000, new perspectives in the South-South dialogue have begun to emerge, in preparation for a North-South dialogue which includes Africa, Asia, Latin America, Eastern Europe, and all the minorities from the "center". In addition,

we have the "transversal" dialogue of "Difference": the possibility of relating to one another the critical thinking of feminist movements; environmentalists; anti-discriminatory movements focused on different races, peoples or indigenous ethnicities; movements concerned with marginalized social sectors; immigrants coming from impoverished countries; the elderly; children; the working class and migrant workers; the countries that belong to what used to be called Third World; the impoverished nations on the periphery; the "victims" (using Walter Benjamin's term) of Modernity, Colonization, transnational and late capitalism. The Philosophy of Liberation seeks to analyze and define the philosophical meta-language of all of these movements.

All of the above mentioned was in part intuited by the Philosophy of Liberation since its inception, and if not it can at least be gleaned from, incorporated into and reconstructed from its discourse. Nevertheless, and with respect to new epistemic proposals, the Philosophy of Liberation continues to hold its own position, as much in the centers of study in Latin America as in the United States and Europe. In the first place, it is a "philosophy" that can enter into a dialogue with literary criticism and assimilate itself to it (and to all of the above-mentioned movements: Postmodernism, Subaltern Studies, Cultural Studies, Post Colonial Reason, meta-criticism of Latin Americanism such as Moreiras', etc.). As a critical philosophy, the Philosophy of Liberation has a very specific role: it should study the more abstract, general, philosophical, theoretical framework of "testimonial" literature (I prefer to refer to it as an "epic" narrative, as a creative expression related to new social movements that impact civil society). In the second place it should analyze and set the basis for a method, for general categories, and for the very theoretical discourse of all of these critical movements which, having been inspired by Foucault, Lyotard, Baudrillard, Derrida, etc., should be "reconstructed" from a global perspective (since they, for the most part speak in aEurocentric manner). In this process of reconstruction, the need to articulate an intercultural dialogue (if there were one) within the parameters of a globalizing system should be taken into consideration. The dualism

globalization-exclusion (the new aporia that ought not be reduced to a fetishistic simplification) frames the problem presented by the other dimensions.

It would still be possible to reflect upon anti-foundationalism, of the Rortyan sort for example, which is accepted by many Postmodernists. It is not merely a defense of reason for reason itself. It is about defending the victims of the present system, defending human life in danger of collective suicide. The critique of "modern reason" does not allow Philosophy of Liberation to confuse it with a critique of reason as such, or with particular types or practices of rationality. On the contrary, the critique of modern reason is made in the name of a differential rationality (the reason used by feminist movements, environmentalists, cultural and ethnic movements, the working class, peripheral nations ... etc.) and a universal rationality (a practical-material, discursive, strategic, instrumental, critical form of reason) (See Dussel 1998b). The affirmation and emancipation of Difference is constructing a novel and future universality. The question is not Difference or Universality but rather Universality in Difference and Difference in Universality.

I believe that the Philosophy of Liberation was born in this critical "environment" and as a result it has, from the beginning, taken these problems into account with the resources it had and within the limits of its time and historical "location". Meta-categories such as "totality" and "exteriority" continue to be valid as abstract and global references that should be mediated by the microstructures of Power, which are disseminated at every level and for which everybody is responsible.

Towards the end of the 1960s, the Philosophy of Liberation was already a postmodern philosophy emerging from the global periphery. It overcame the limitations of the ontology (the *Überwindung*) inspired by the misery in Latin America and by the Levinasian concept of alterity. It was criticized by standard Marxism, by irrationalist populism, by liberalism and conservatism, by repetitive philosophies (analytical, hermeneutical, academic, etc.), and today by young (Eurocentric?) postmodern Latin Americans, who perhaps have not yet discovered that the Philosophy of Liberation is itself a post-

modern movement *avant la lettre*, a truly transmodern movement that appreciates postmodern criticism but is able to deconstruct it from a global peripheral perspective in order to reconstruct it according to the concrete political demands of subaltern groups.

7. *A New Age in the History of Philosophy: The World Dialogue between Philosophical Traditions*⁶⁶⁸

This chapter explores a theme that I believe should occupy us for a significant portion of the 21st century: Our recognition and acceptance of the meaning, value, and history of all regional philosophical traditions on the planet (European, North American, Chinese, Indian, Arab, African, Latin American, etc.).

This will be the first time in the history of philosophy that these diverse traditions will be open to an authentic and symmetrical dialogue - a dialogue that will enable us to understand many aspects unknown to us, aspects that may be better developed in some traditions than in others. This dialogue will play a key role in unlocking the contents of the daily life of humanity in other cultures, thanks to the enormous machinery of mass media that makes it possible for us to receive news instantaneously of cultures about which we lack first hand knowledge, and will also imply an ethical positioning grounded in the equal recognition of all philosophical communities with equal rights of argumentation. This will make it possible for us to transcend the eurocentrism of Modernity, so prevalent today, which impedes creativity and often obscures the great discoveries achieved by other traditions.

1. Universal Core Problems

When I refer to “universal core problems,” I mean those fundamental questions (of an ontological character) that *homo sapiens* posed upon attaining a certain level of maturity. Once their level of cerebral development allowed for consciousness, self-consciousness, linguistic, ethical and social development (that is, responsibility for their own acts), human beings confronted the *totality of the real* in

order to manage things in such a way as to achieve the reproduction and development of human life in community. Human *bewilderment* in the face of the possible causes of natural phenomena was further compounded by the unpredictability of their own impulses and behaviors, leading to questions regarding “core problems” such as: What are *real things* in their totality and how do they behave? Such questions encompass phenomena ranging from the astronomical to the simple falling of a stone or the artificial production of fire. They also encompass the mystery of their own human subjectivity, the *ego*, interiority, spontaneity, as well as the nature of freedom and the creation of the *social and ethical world*. In the end, they arrive at the question of how we interpret the *ultimate foundation* of everything that is real, and the universe itself? Which in turn leads to the classic ontological question: “Why *being* and not *nothingness*?” These basic “core problems” have inevitably been faced by all human communities since the remotest period of the Paleolithic age; they are among the many possible variations of the *universal* “whys,” and are present in every culture and tradition.

The content and the way of responding to these “core problems” unleashes, impels, and disperses diverse trajectories of *rational* narratives, if by *rationality* we understand simply that reasons have been provided in support of assertions, and that these assertions are intended to interpret or explain phenomena that have “appeared” at the initial level of each of these “core problems.”

2. The *Rational* Development of *Mythical* Narratives

Throughout all of its stages of development, humanity has always and inevitably given linguistic expression to *rational* responses (understood here to mean those that are proffered with some kind of underlying foundation, regardless of its specific character, at least until it is refuted) to core problems such as those described above. This has occurred as the result of a process involving the “production of myths” (*mytho-poiésis*).

The production of myths was the first rational form of

interpretation or explanation of reality (of the world, subjectivity, the ethical practical horizon, and the ultimate reference of reality that is described symbolically). From this perspective myths are symbolic narratives that are not irrational and that do not refer exclusively to singular phenomena. They are symbolic enunciations, and therefore have a “double meaning” that can only be fully elucidated through a hermeneutical process *that uncovers the layers of reasoning* behind them. It is in this sense that they are rational, and that they must be grasped in terms of the extent to which their content has a *universal* significance, given their reference to circumstances that are susceptible to repetition, and constructed upon the basis of *concepts* (cerebral categorizations or cerebral maps that involve millions of neurons and imply the convergence in meaning of multiple and singular empirical phenomena that human beings must confront).

Numerous myths are organized according to their relationship to the *core problems* that I have just highlighted, and have been preserved in the collective memory of communities throughout the world. This was first done through oral tradition, and in written form since 3000 B.C., when they begin to be collected, remembered, and interpreted by communities of sages who had a sense of admiration in the face of reality, in the spirit of Aristotle’s affirmation⁶⁶⁹: “but he who finds no explanation (in what he sees, and turns instead to admiration) [...] thereby recognizes his ignorance. This is why he who *loves myth* (*philómythos*) is akin to he who *loves wisdom* (*philósophos*)”. This is how mythical “traditions” emerge to provide peoples throughout the world with *rational* explanations related to the questions that have always been most pressing for humanity, and which I have defined here as “core problems”. These include peoples as poor and as “simple” in their material culture as the Tupinamba indigenous people of Brazil, who according to Claude Levi-Strauss’ studies, carried out the responsibilities inherent in their daily lives in ways embedded in the complex web of meaning provided by their vast number of myths.

According to Paul Ricoeur, each culture has an “ethical and mythical core”⁶⁷⁰, or “vision of the world” (*Weltanschauung*) that provides a framework of interpretation and ethical guidance for the

most significant moments in human existence. On the other hand, certain cultures (such as those of China, India, Mesopotamia, Egypt, the Aztec or Mexico, the Arabs, the Hellenic world, Rome, Russia, etc.,) as a result of their political, economic, and military hegemony, were able to consolidate geopolitical dominance. These processes endowed them a degree of universality that included the imposition of their mythical structures over those of subaltern cultures. Such patterns of cultural domination are evident throughout multiple periods of historical development.

As a result of these cultural clashes, certain myths will endure in subsequent stages (even in the age of categorical philosophical discourses and of the science of Modernity itself, up to the present). Myths will never completely disappear as long as some of them continue to *make sense*, as Ernst Bloch argues persuasively in his work *The Principle of Hope*.⁶⁷¹

3. The New Rational Development of Discourses with *Philosophical Categories*

We have become accustomed, in the context of explanations of the transition from *mythos* to *lógos*, to understand this process as a leap from the *irrational* to the *rational*, from the concretely empirical to the universal, and from the realm of the senses to the realm of concepts. This is false. They are both rational. Each of the narratives at issues has a certain degree of rationality, but their specific character varies. There is a *progression* in terms of degrees of univocal precision, semantic clarity, simplicity, and in the conclusive force with which their foundations have been laid. But there are also *losses* in multiplicity of meaning when symbols displaced, but which can be hermeneutically rediscovered in diverse moments and places (as is characteristic of mythical rational narratives). For example the Promethean or Adamic⁶⁷² myths continue to have ethical meaning today.

Thus univocal rational discourse as expressed in *philosophical* categories that are capable of defining conceptual content without recourse to symbols (as in a myth) gains in *precision* but loses in terms

of its *resonance* of meaning. All of this nonetheless implies an important civilizable advance, which opens up the possibility of abstraction in modes of analysis. Here, the separation of the semantic content of the phenomenon being observed – the description and precise explanation of empirical reality – enables the observer's *management* to be more efficient in the reproduction and development of human life in community.

In this context, *wisdom* can order the diverse responses to the *core problems* that have been enumerated, and becomes the content of a differentiated social "role" focused upon the clarification, exposition, and development of said wisdom. From the perspective of the sociology of philosophy, communities of philosophers form groups differentiated from those of priests, artists, political actors, etc. The members of these communities of sages take on a ritualized form constituting "schools of life" with a strictly disciplinary character (from the Aztecs *calmécac* to the Athenian *academy* or the sages communities of the city of Memphis in the Egypt of the Third Millennium B.C.), and came to be known as the so-called "lovers of wisdom" (*philo-sóphoi*) among the Greeks. But from a historical perspective the "lovers of myths" were also, strictly speaking, "lovers of wisdom," and this is why those who will later be described as *philosophers* should be described more aptly as *philo-logists*, if *lógos* is understood to mean a rational discourse that employs philosophical categories and no longer has recourse to mythical symbolic narrative, or only exceptionally and as an example of how philosophical hermeneutics holds sway.

This process of leaving behind the purest form of mythical rational expression and stripping away its symbolic content gradually emerged in all of the great urban cultures of the Neolithic. This process gives certain *terms* or *words* a univocal, definable meaning with conceptual content that is the fruit of *methodical* analytical elaboration and is capable of moving from the whole to the parts as it fixes its specific meaning. Key examples of narratives employing *philosophical categories* began to emerge in India (subsequent to the *Upanishads*), in China (from the *Book of Changes* or *I Ching*), in Persia, Mesopotamia, Egypt (in texts such as those described as the "philosophy of Memphis"), in

the Eastern Mediterranean between the Phoenicians and the Greeks, in Mesoamerica (the Maya and Aztecs or Mexican), in the Andean region the *amautas* among the Aymaras and the Quechuas, who gave life to Incan civilization, etc. Among the Aztecs, *Quetzal-coatl* was the symbolic expression of a dual ancestral deity (“Quetzal” referring to the green and red feathers of a beautiful tropical bird as a symbol for divinity, and “coatl” referring to a twin or brother, the “duality”). This is what the *tlamatinime* (“those who know things,” and whom Bernardino de Sahagún called “philosophers”⁶⁷³) described as *Ometeotl* (from the roots in the Náhuatl language *omé*, which means two, and *teotl*, which refers to divinity), leaving the symbol aside. This denomination highlighted the “dual origin” of the universe (instead of the unitary origin characteristic of *to én*, or *the One* in Plato or Plotinus, for example). This indicates the beginning of the transition from symbolic rationality to the rationality of *philosophical conceptual categorization* among the Aztecs, as reflected in the historical figure of the poet and philosopher-king Nezahualcoyotl (1402-1472).

Some authors such as Raúl Fornet-Betancourt in Latin America⁶⁷⁴ concede that philosophy was practiced in *Amerindia* (before the European invasion in 1492) or in pre-colonial Africa, without much elaboration of what he understands to be philosophy. Paulin Hountondji’s⁶⁷⁵ sharp critique of the concept of *ethnophilosophy*, derived from Placide Tempel’s book *Bantu Philosophy*⁶⁷⁶, highlights the need to better define what we mean by philosophy in such contexts, in order among other things to distinguish it from myth.

Nonetheless when we carefully read the first sentences of the *Tao Te-king* (or *Dao de jing*) by the legendary Lao-tze: “The Tao that can be spoken of is not the constant Tao; the name that can be named is not the constant name; the nameless is the beginning of Heaven and Earth,”⁶⁷⁷ we find ourselves confronted with a text that employs *philosophical categories* distant from those of a purely mythical narrative. It is also impossible today to ignore the argumentative density and rationality characteristic of the philosophy of K’ung Fu-Tsu (Confucius) (551-479 B.C.),⁶⁷⁸ and the levels of philosophical development evident in Mo-Tzu (479-380 B.C.),⁶⁷⁹ whose continuous,

even excessive patterns of argumentation criticized the social and moral implications of Confucianism, affirming a universalism with grave political implications, and which was skeptical of rituals and unduly elaborate organizations or “schools.” His contributions are one of the pillars of Chinese *philosophy* that predated the great Confucian synthesis of Meng Tzu (Mencius) (390-305 B.C.)⁶⁸⁰ This *philosophy* spans some 2,500 years, with classics each century, and even during the period of European Modernity thinkers such as Wang Yang-ming (1472-1529), who develops the neo-Confucian tradition that extends all the way up to the present, influencing Mao Tse-tung and playing a role in the emergence of contemporary capitalism in China and Singapore equivalent to that of Calvinism in Europe. There was also Huang Tsung-hsi (1610-1695) a great renovator of political philosophy.

In the same way the philosophies of the Indian subcontinent are organized in terms of the philosophical expression⁶⁸¹ of the *core problems*. We read in *Chandogya Upanisad*:

In the beginning, my dear, this world was just Being (*sat*), one only, without a second. Some people, no doubt, say: In the beginning, verily, this world was just Nonbeing (*asat*), one only, without a second; from that Nonbeing Being was produced. But how, indeed, my dear, could it be so? said he. How could Being be produced from Nonbeing? On the contrary, my dear, in the beginning this world was Being alone.⁶⁸²

Is it not a philosophical discourse?

In Hinduism the concept of *Brahman* refers to the totality of the universe (as does that of *Pacha* in Quechua among the Incas of Peru); *atman* refers to subjectivity, *karma* to human action, and *moksha* to the relationship between *atman* and *Brahman*. It is with these “core” concepts as points of departure that a discourse undertaken by means of philosophical categories begins to be constructed in the fifth century B.C. It is then with Sankara (788-820 A.D.) that the philosophy of the subcontinent achieves a classical level, which it has continued to develop up to the present.

Buddhist philosophy, meanwhile, beginning with Siddhartha Gautama (563-483 B.C.), rejects the concepts of *Brahman* and *atman*, given its assumption that the totality of the universe is an eternal process unfolding in an interconnected manner (*patitya samatpada*). This even more clearly negates the mythical traditions (such as those of the *Vedas*), contributing instead to the construction of a strictly rational narrative, which is not, as in all philosophies, utterly exempt from mythological moments, such as *ensomatosis*, referring to the successive “re-incorporations of souls.”

Meanwhile, Jainism, whose first exponent was Vardhamana Mahvira (599-527 B.C.), ontologically defends the *Tattvartha Sutra* (“no violence, no possession, no determination”) from the perspective of a universal vitalism, which has great relevance to the ecological crisis we face today.

All of this clearly implies that philosophy was not born solely or originally in Greece, nor can it be taken as the prototype of philosophical discourse. This error arises from taking Greek philosophy as the definition of philosophy itself, rather than discover a clear *criteria of demarcation* between mythical and philosophical categorical discourse. This confuses the part with the whole: a specific case does not capture the universal sweep of the definition needed. This does not deny Greek philosophy its historical place among these philosophies, or its continuity with the philosophies of the Roman Empire, which in turn opened a cultural horizon towards the so-called Latin-Germanic European Middle Ages. These will culminate in the European philosophy that laid the foundations for the Modernity produced by the European invasion of the American continent, and the emergence of colonialism and capitalism. The Industrial Revolution at the end of the 18th century (only two centuries ago) will make Europe the central dominating civilization in the world-system, up to the beginning of the 21st century. This domination has obscured and distorted our understanding of history (due to the combined effects of what I have described as hellenocentrism and eurocentrism), and impeded the global perspective necessary to grasp an authentic history of philosophy.

As a Latin American I am convinced that the future development of world philosophy will be jeopardized if we do not clarify these issues by means of a contemporary dialogue between non-Western philosophical traditions and those of Europe and North America.

In this context, E. Husserl's reflection set forth below, and repeated in general by M. Heidegger and throughout Europe and North America, seems so naïve:

Thus philosophy [...] is *ratio* in the constant movement of self-elucidation, begun with the first breakthrough of philosophy into mankind [...] The image of the dawn characterizes Greek philosophy in its beginning stage, the first elucidation through the first cognitive conception of *what is* as universe (*des Seienden als Universum*) [...]⁶⁸³.

In Latin America, David Sobrevilla essentially supports the same approach:

"I believe that there is a general consensus that the philosophical activity of humanity first emerged in Greece and not in the East. In this regard Hegel and Heidegger appear to be correct, instead of Jaspers, who argues for the existence of three great philosophical traditions: those of China, India, and Greece."⁶⁸⁴

The philosophy of the East would be philosophy understood *in a broad sense*, and that of Greece according to much *narrower* criteria. There is a confusion between the origins of *European* philosophy, which may in part lie in Greece, and the origins of *world* philosophy, which has diverse origins, almost as many as there are fundamental traditions of philosophy. In addition it is assumed that this process was linear, following a sequence "from Greek philosophy to Medieval Latin philosophy and from there to their Modern European expressions." But the true historical trajectory was much more complex. Greek philosophy was cultivated subsequently and principally by Byzantine civilization, and Arab philosophy in turn was the inheritor of Byzantine philosophy, and in particular its Aristotelian tradition.

This required the creation of an Arabic philosophical language in the strictest sense⁶⁸⁵.

Latin Aristotelian philosophy in Paris in thirteenth century, for example, has its origin in Greek texts and their Arabic commentaries (translated in Toledo, in Spain, by Arab specialists), and these Greek texts were utilized and commentated by the “Arab Western philosophers” (in the Caliphate of Cordoba, in Spain), continuing the “Eastern” tradition with origins in Cairo, Bagdad, or Samarkand. This produced a Greek legacy profoundly reconstructed from a Semitic perspective (such as that of Arab civilization), and then passed on to Latins and Germanics in Europe. It is ‘Ibn Roshd (Averroes) who marks the origin of the European philosophical renaissance in the thirteenth century.

All of the world’s great cultures have created philosophies as well, with varying styles and characteristics of development, but all have produced (some only initially and others with great depth and precision) *conceptual structural categories* that must be recognized as philosophical.

Philosophical discourse does not destroy myth, although it does negate those who lose the capacity to resist the empirical argumentation inherent in such discourse. For example the myths of Tlacaélel among the Aztecs, which justified human sacrifice and provided good reasons for it⁶⁸⁶, completely collapsed once their impossibility was demonstrated, as well as their lack of practical feasibility.

In fact, mythical elements may contaminate even the discourses of great philosophers. For example, Immanuel Kant argues in favor of the “immortality of the soul” in the “pure practical reason dialectics” of his *Critique of Practical Reason*, as a way of resolving the question of the “supreme Good” (since the soul would receive after death the happiness it had earned in its earthly life). But these concepts of the “soul” and of “immortality” demonstrate the persistence of mythical elements of Indian origin in the Greek thought - elements that came to permeate all of the Roman, Medieval Christian, and Modern European world. The supposedly philosophical proofs provided are in these cases tautological and not rationally demonstrative upon the basis of

empirical facts. This illustrates the unrecognized (and in this case inappropriate) presence of mythical elements in the *best* philosophies. We might also describe them as examples of unintentional underlying ideologies.

On the other hand, the “Adamic myth” of the Hebrew Semitic tradition, which shows that human freedom is the origin of “evil,” and not a deity, as in the Mesopotamian myth of Gilgamesh, is a mythical narrative that can still be interpreted anew in the present, and which resists the rationality of the age of *logos*.⁶⁸⁷ The same can be said of the epic narrative of the slaves led by Moses who freed themselves from Egypt - narratives recovered by Ernst Bloch in his previously cited work.

4. The Domination of Modern European Philosophy and its *Universality Claim*

Beginning in 1492 Europe conquers the Atlantic, which becomes the new geopolitical center of hegemony in the world, replacing the Mediterranean and extending its sweep all the way to the “Arab sea” (Indian Ocean) and the “China Sea” (the Pacific). This becomes the basis of new colonial empires (almost exclusively centered on the American continent between the 15th and 17th centuries), which in turn make it possible for a capitalist civilization to develop. It is in this context that Medieval Latin-Germanic philosophy becomes the core of *Modern European philosophy*, in a manner inextricably intertwined with its political and economic hegemonical claim. I believe that the specific philosophical origin of this process is Bartolomé de Las Casas’s philosophical critique of the new colonial domination in the Caribbean region in 1514, long before that of Descartes’s *Discourse on Method*, written in Amsterdam in 1637. European philosophy was until then singular and *regional* in character, but could now reposition itself in terms of a claim to take on the trappings of *philosophy itself*. It is valid to characterize the domination of European philosophy as *hegemonic* because it imposed its sway on the philosophical communities that had been colonized or reduced to its periphery. It is this economic,

military and political hegemony that makes it possible for *modern European philosophy* to develop in a unique manner, unlike any other in the world during the same historical period. My emphasis here, then, is on exploring possible explanations for this development and its supposedly universality claim.

Modern colonial expansion through the opening of the Atlantic by Portugal to the West of Africa, and then towards the Indian Ocean (which leapt over the “wall” surrounding the Ottoman Empire), and by Spain towards the Caribbean and the American continent, laid siege to the Islamic world from the end of the 1500’s, paralyzing its civilizable and thus, too, its philosophical development. Classic Arab philosophy was not able to survive the crisis in the Caliphate of Baghdad and declined definitively thereafter. The presence of the Mongol Empire similarly destroyed the possibility of new developments in Buddhist and Vedanta philosophies during the sixteenth century. China, meanwhile, began to feel the weight of having failed to complete the Industrial Revolution at the end of the eighteenth century, just as Great Britain⁶⁸⁸ began to experience it fully; by the end of the same century China had already ceased to produce new hegemonic philosophy.

In Latin America the process of the Spanish conquest destroyed all of the most outstanding intellectual and cultural resources of the great Amerindian cultures; subsequently the Spanish and Portuguese colonies of the Baroque period were never able to surpass the achievements of the Scholastics of the sixteenth century Renaissance.

The dominating centrality of Northern Europe as a military, economic, political, and cultural power laid the foundation for the development of its philosophy from the end of the Middle Ages, from the fifteenth century of Nicolas de Cusa (1401-1464) and the Italian Renaissance, with its origins in the presence and influence of the Byzantines expelled by the Ottomans of Constantinople in 1453. This made it possible for its own philosophy to develop and, in the face of the crisis of the other great regional philosophies, elevate its philosophical *particularity* to a *universality claim*.

Modern European philosophy was therefore positioned in such a way as to appear to be the *universal philosophy* - both in its own eyes

and in those of the intellectual communities of the colonial world that lay prostrate at its feet, and philosophically paralyzed. It was situated geographically, economically, and culturally in the *center*, able to manipulate the *knowledge and information* wrested from all of the peripheral cultures within its grasp. These cultures were connected to the center along a link running between the Colonial South and the European metropolitan North, but disconnected from each other, without any South-South relations or alliances possible as yet. These relation will evolve during the Age of European Modernity, cultivating an increasing disdain for their own identities and contributions, which includes forgetting their traditions and confusing the high levels of development produced by the Industrial Revolution in Europe with the supposedly *universal truths in its discourse* – both its content and its methods. This is what makes it possible for Hegel to write:

“Universal history goes from East to West. Europe is absolutely the end of universal history.”⁶⁸⁹ “The Mediterranean Sea is the axis of universal history.”⁶⁹⁰

Similarly, certain European mythic narratives will be confused with the supposedly *universal content* of purely European philosophical rationality. Hegel is also the one who wrote that “the Germanic Spirit is the Spirit of the New World [Modernity], whose end is the realization of the Absolute Truth.”⁶⁹¹ He fails to note, however, that said “Spirit” is regional (European Christian and not Taoist, Vedanta, Buddhist or Arab), nor is it global, nor does its *content* reflect the problems characteristic of other cultures. For these reasons, it does not constitute a universal philosophical discourse, but instead reflects the characteristics of a mythic and provincial narrative. What does it mean in terms of a strictly universal philosophical rationality to speak of the “Spirit of Christianity”? Why not then speak of the “Spirit of Taoism” or of Buddhism or Confucianism? That “Spirit” is completely valid as a component of a mythic narrative with meaning for those who live within the horizons of a regional culture (such as Europe), but not to attribute to it a rational philosophical content with an empirically based universal validity, as modern European philosophy

still claims for itself.

Philosophical eurocentrism is, then, in essence this universality claim of a particular philosophy, many aspects of which may still be absorbed by other traditions. We can assume that all cultures have ethnocentric tendencies, but modern European culture was the first whose ethnocentrism became globalized, with its original regional horizon extended to coincide with that of the emergent world-system itself, as proposed by Immanuel Wallerstein.⁶⁹² But this universality claim falls of its own weight when philosophers of other philosophical and cultural traditions become conscious of their own philosophical history and its grounded implications.

5. Philosophical Universality and Cultural particularity

None of what I have argued thus far negates that it is possible for philosophical discourse to take into account the fundamental “core problems” and attempt to develop responses with universal validity, as contributions that can be discussed by other cultures, since they would involve problems that are ultimately human and thus universal in character. K.-O. Apel’s⁶⁹³ effort to define the universal conditions of validity necessary for a “argumentative discourse” makes it plain that there must be symmetrical possibilities for each of the participants to engage in the process; otherwise, the conclusions of the discussion will not be valid because participants have not participated under equal conditions. This is an ethical-epistemological formal principle (without any content based in any particular material value judgment of any culture), that can be assessed critically by other cultures. Similarly, the fact that there are historical-material and economic conditions grounded in the affirmation and development of human life, which are universally necessary for human existence (since we are subjects in living bodies as suggested by Karl Marx), appears to be valid for all cultures. The formal abstract universality of certain statements or principles, which can be shaped differently at the material level of each culture, does not negate that they can be “bridges” which can make it possible for there to be dialogue and debate between different

philosophical traditions. This meta-philosophy is a product of all humanity, even if it emerges initially in the context of a specific culture, or in some specific tradition or historical period, which might have been able to make greater progress on this issue than others, but from which all the other traditions could learn from within the bounds of their own historical assumptions.

For example, in the tenth century A.D. in Baghdad, mathematics advanced significantly, immediately contributing to a leap in the development of Arab-Aristotelian philosophy and proving useful to other traditions as well. An *absolutely* post-conventional philosophy is impossible (implying no relationship to any concrete culture), but all philosophies, located inevitably in some specific cultural context, are nonetheless capable of engaging in dialogue with others through the prism of shared “core problems” and categorical discourses of a philosophical character, which are universal to the extent that they are human.

6. The New Age of Dialogue between Philosophical Traditions

It has been asserted for too long that this universal function is fulfilled by modern European philosophy. This insistence has obscured many great discoveries made by other philosophical traditions. This is why the great task that lies before us at the beginning of the 21st Century is the initiation of an inter-philosophical dialogue.

First, we must start with a dialogue between North and South, because we will be reminded of the continuing presence of colonialism and its legacies, still with us after five hundred years. This is a multi-dimensional phenomenon that includes economic and political structures and expressions, as well as cultural and philosophical ones. The philosophical communities of the post-colonial world (with their distinct problems and responses) are still not generally accepted, recognized, nor engaged by their counterparts in metropolitan hegemonic communities.

Second (and no less important) is the need to undertake and deepen

permanent South-South dialogue, in order to define the agenda of the most urgent philosophical problems in Africa, Asia, Latin America, Eastern Europe, etc., and discuss them together philosophically. The rules for such a dialogue must be patiently developed.

We must lay the pedagogical foundations by educating future generations in multiple philosophical traditions. For example, in the first semester in the history of philosophy in our universities at the undergraduate level, we should begin with the study of the “First Great Philosophers of Humanity” - the thinkers who developed the original categories of philosophical thinking in Egypt (Africa), Mesopotamia (including the prophets of Israel), in Greece, India, China, Meso-America, or the Incas. In the second semester we should continue with study of the “Great Ontologies,” including Taoism, Confucianism, Hinduism, Buddhism, the Greeks (such as Plato, Aristotle, and up to Plotinus), the Romans, etc. A third course should explore later stages of philosophical development in China (beginning with the founding of the Han empire), later examples of Buddhist and Indian philosophy, Byzantine Christian philosophy, Arab philosophy, the Medieval European philosophy, and so on. **This is how a new generation can begin to think philosophically from within a global mindset.** The same approach should be reflected in the courses specializing in ethics, politics, ontology, anthropology, and even logic (should not we have some notion of Buddhist logic as well?)

Furthermore, we must ask ourselves if other philosophical traditions (beyond those of Europe and North America) have wrestled with questions ignored by our own traditions, even though those traditions might have explored them in different ways, with varying emphases. The differences might provide new perspectives on the particular conditions of the geopolitical environment where they were engaged. There must not be only dialogue between *East* (an ambiguous concept deconstructed by Edward Saïd) and *West* (equally ambiguous)⁶⁹⁴, but also with the world Periphery, because Africa, Latin America, and other regions are until now excluded.

We also need a complete reformulation of the history of philosophy in order to be prepared for such a dialogue. *World*

Philosophy, the pioneering work by the sociologist Randall Collins,⁶⁹⁵ points to key aspects that must be taken into account. His comparative analysis crosses the geography (space) and history (time) of the great Chinese, Indian, Arab, European, North American, and African philosophers, which he categorizes in generations and in terms of their relative importance, although glaring omissions include his failures to devote a single line to five hundred years of Latin American philosophy, and to the nascent philosophies of the urban cultures prior to the conquest. Despite these weaknesses, he provides rich information for further interpretation and gives the philosopher pause, since the author is a sociologist who provides a great deal of material for philosophical thinking.

7. Inter-philosophical Dialogue towards a *Trans-modern* Pluriverse

After a long crisis resulting from the impact of modern European culture and philosophy, the philosophies of other regions are beginning to recover a sense of their own histories buried beneath the hurricane of Modernity. Take the example of a contemporary Arab philosopher, Mahomed Abed Yabri, at the University of Fez in Morocco, a prestigious university renowned for over a thousand years, and city which in the thirteenth century had more than 300,000 inhabitants, and where Moses Maimonides, among others, went to study and teach.

At a **first stage**, in A. Yabri's two works, *The Critique of Arab Reason*⁶⁹⁶ and *The Arab Philosophical Legacy: Alfarabi, Avicenna, Avempace, Averroes, Abenjaldun*,⁶⁹⁷ he begins with an *evaluative assessment* of the philosophy of his Arab cultural tradition. Along the way, a) he rejects the tradition of interpretation prevalent in this historical period (that of the *salafis* or *fundamentalists*), a reaction against Modernity that lacks a creative reconstruction of the philosophical past; b) he rejects of "Marxist *safism*," which forgets its own tradition; and c) he rejects with equal force the liberal Eurocentric tradition that does not accept the existence of a contemporary "Arab philosophy." Instead the author

employs his linguistic skills in Arabic as a native speaker and undertakes original research in the philosophical traditions of the great thinkers of the “Eastern” schools (of Egypt, Baghdad, and towards the East, under the influence of Avicenna) and of the “Western” schools (of the Caliphate of Cordoba, including the Berber regions of Fez) that pivot around the contributions of ‘Ibn Roshd.

At a **second stage** in his exploration, A.Yabri undertakes a critique of his own philosophical tradition by employing the resources of Arab philosophy itself, but also drawing from some of the achievements of modern hermeneutics (which he studied in Paris). This combination makes it possible for him to discover new historical elements in his own tradition, for instance, that the Arab “Eastern” tradition had to contend with Persian Gnostic thinking as a principal rival. Thus the *mu’tazilīs* created the first Arab philosophy: by opposing Persia and at the same time drawing upon Greco-Byzantine philosophy in order to justify the legitimacy of the Caliphate. Subsequently Al-farabi and ‘Ibn Sina (Avicenna), employing neo-Platonic categories, will produce a philosophical-mystical tradition of illumination. While Andalusian-Maghrebi “Western” philosophy, inspired by the scientific empiricism and strictly Aristotelian thought (with the characteristic slogan: “abandon the argument based on authority and go back to the sources” as urged by the Almohade ‘Ibn Tūmert) will produce the great Arab philosopher ‘Ibn Roshd, a true philosophical Enlightenment (*Aufklärung*), which will be the origin of the Latin-Germanic philosophy in 13th Century, which was at the same time the foundational moment of the modern European philosophy. ‘Ibn Roshd perfectly defines what inter-philosophical dialogue should consist of:

Undoubtedly we should build upon and take from the contributions resulting from the research of all who have preceded us (the Greeks, the Christians), as sources of assistance in our process of rational study [...] Given that this is so, and since the ancient philosophers already studied with great diligence the rules of reasoning (logic, method), it will be appropriate

for us to dedicate our labors to the study of the works of these ancient philosophers, and if everything we find in them is reasonable, we can accept it, *and if not, those things that are not reasonable can serve as a warning and a basis for precaution.*⁶⁹⁸

At a **third stage**, that of new creation based upon one's own tradition and nourished by dialogue with other cultures, we should not allow ourselves to be blinded by the apparent splendor of a modern European philosophy that has laid the groundwork for exploring its own problems, but *not* for exploring the problems particular to the Arab world:

How can Arab philosophy assimilate the experience of liberalism before the Arab world has experienced that stage, or without having done so?⁶⁹⁹

One more theme must be addressed at **fourth final stage**. The dialogue that can enrich each philosophical tradition must be carried out by critical and **creative philosophers** in each tradition, and not by those who simply repeat the philosophical theses that are the traditional echoes of consensus. An essential element of such a critical stance is for philosophers to assume the responsibility for addressing the ethical and political problems associated with the poverty, domination, and exclusion of large sectors of the population, especially in the Global South (in Africa, Asia, or Latin America). A critical philosophical dialogue presupposes critical philosophers, in the sense of the "critical theory", which we in Latin America refer to our reality as Philosophy of Liberation.

European Modernity has impacted cultures throughout the world through colonialism (except for China, Japan, and a few others, who were spared direct European rule). It exploited their resources, extracted information from their cultures, and discarded that which it could not absorb. When I speak of *Trans-modernity*, I am referring to a global project that seeks to transcend European or North American Modernity. It is a project that is not post-modern, since post-

Modernity is a still-incomplete critique of Modernity by European and North America. Instead, *Trans-modernity* is a task that is, in my case, expressed philosophically, whose point of departure is that which has been *discarded, devalued*, and judged *use-less* among global cultures, including colonized or peripheral philosophies. This project involves the development of the potential of those cultures and philosophies that have been ignored, upon the basis of their own resources, in constructive dialogue with European and North American Modernity. It is in this way that Arab philosophy, for example, could incorporate the hermeneutics of European philosophy, develop and apply them in order to discover new interpretations of the *Korán* that would make possible a new, much-needed Arab political philosophy, or Arab feminism. It will be the fruit of the Arab philosophical tradition, updated through inter-philosophical dialogue (not only with Europe, but equally with Latin America, India, China, etc.), oriented towards a *pluriversal future global philosophy*. This project is necessarily *trans-modern*, and thus also trans-capitalist.

For a long time, perhaps for centuries, the many diverse philosophical traditions will each continue to follow their own paths, but nonetheless a global analogical project of a ***trans-modern pluriverse*** (other than universal, and not post-modern) appears on the horizon. Now, “other philosophies” are possible, because “another world is possible” – as is proclaimed by the Zapatista Liberation Movement in Chiapas, Mexico.

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Notes

1 *Ethics of Liberation: In the Age of Globalization and Exclusion* Ed. Alejandro A Vallega. Tr. Eduardo Mendieta, Camilo Pérez Bustillo, Yolanda Angulo, and Nelson Maldonado-Torres (Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 2013). Originally published as *Ética de la liberación en la edad de la globalización y la exclusión* (Madrid: Trotta, 1998). See: www.enriquedussel.com

2 Present volume, p.1. Dussel's point echoes Augusto Salazar Bondy's powerful expose of the coloniality operative in the development of Latin American philosophy in his ground-breaking essay, "*The Meaning and Problem of Hispanic American Philosophic Thought*," (in *Latin American Philosophy for the 21st Century*, Ed. Jorge E. Gracia and Elizabeth Millan-Zaibert (New York: Prometheus Books, 2004).

3 For Dussel another major influence from Paul Ricoeur is his *Histoire et verité*. Dussel identifies an earlier version of this essay as a crucial reading that marks his thinking to the late 60's (titled "*Civilization universal et culture national*," published in *Spirit*). (*Filosofía de la Cultura y de la Liberación*, p.11) Dussel finds in Ricoeur's essay the insight that all civilization precludes a cultural life that projects and manipulates the objects of civilization. In other words, meaning comes from living praxis, and the values and symbols that arise in a particular group. Dussel writes concerning Latin America: "a people that comes to think itself, that reaches self-consciousness, the comprehension of its cultural structures, of its ultimate projects, in the cultivation and evolution of its traditions, has its identity with itself" (Present volume, p.76). This means that to think our being-there in its historical authenticity will require engaging the cultural (and religious) structures out of the praxis of the particular culture.

4 Present volume, p.4.

5 Present volume, p.4.

6 Ibid.

7 Present volume, p.5.

8 On the Dussel – Wallerstein dialogue see for example Dussel's "*World-System and Transmodernity*," *Nepantla: Views from the South* ("Durham"), Volume 3, Issue 2 (2002), p.221-244. Also see, Dussel's "*Debate on the Geoculture of the World-System*," in *The World We are Entering 2000-2050*, Ed. I. Wallerstein and A. Clesse. (Netherlands: Dutch University Press, 2002), pp.239-246.

9 *Filosofía de la Cultura y la Liberación*, p.29.

10 Enrique Dussel, *Philosophy of Liberation*, Tr. Aquilina Martinez and Christine Morkovsky (Eugene, Oregon: Wipf & Stock, 1985). Available online from Servicio CLACSO, Consejo Latinoamericano de Ciencias Sociales, 1996/2002. From here on I refer to the work as PL, first indicating the English translation's page number, then the Spanish. PL, 173 ;200. This work is a dense and tight synthetic discussion of

Dussel's thought up to 1977, and it also contains the basic conceptual elements that will be developed in Dussel's philosophy of liberation thereafter.

11 Present volume, p.4. In fact as this text indicates, Dussel is already lecturing on Heidegger two years before in El Chaco in 1966.

12 *Lecciones de Introducción a la Filosofía, de Antropología Filosófica* (Mendoza, 1968), unpublished manuscript.

13 Present volume, p.4. In his Mendoza Lectures (1968) Dussel emphasizes the importance of the shift from the treatment of the human as an entity among other entities in a world that has forgotten the authentic sense of being human, to the human understood in its situated experience as a being that is by "being-there" or being-in-the-world in an authentically historical manner (*Geschehen*). (Mendoza Lectures, 1968, p.76) This authentic being-there means recovering a sense of being that has been forgotten by our involvement with the immediate worldly things and concerns, and with novelty over against a deeper sense of our existence or temporality. This forgetting has covered over the authentic sense of our existence as our openness towards past and future which allows us to claim sense out of a concrete being-there (Ibid, p.77). Furthermore, the forgetting involves a system of knowledge that covers over authentic ways of being human. Therefore, this remembering will require the destruction of the Western ontological tradition, of what Heidegger called the history of Western metaphysics (Ch. V, part ii. *Historia Antropo-lógica*, p.75-80). Here we have the first response to the two leading questions above, the tradition must be destroyed in order to recover our authentic ways of being; and in terms of Latin America, this is the role of the history of Western philosophy, it is that which must be destroyed for the sake of a more authentic historical way of being. As Dussel writes, "Our de-structive task, to annihilate forgetting in order to have the sense of being reappear, must know to choose some fundamental and decisive epochs and moments in history and within cultural horizons that may not be excluded in order for us to arrive at the comprehension of ourselves. This understanding is at the bottom or is the foundation for all authentic thinking, it not only does depend on it my personal project, but equally the collective destiny of "my" people ("my" us) ("*mi*" pueblo, "*mi*" nosotros)... As Latin Americans that we are, we must know to choose the history of the peoples that builds us (the cultures) and in them the essential historical moments" (p.78).

14 The departure from Heidegger may be followed in chapters 21-24 of *Método para una filosofía de la liberación*, 2nd Ed. (Salamanca, Spain: Sígueme, 1974). On Heidegger, Sartre, Zubiri, and Levinas.

15 Dussel's transition from Heidegger to Levinas is rather complex and may be followed in his *Towards an Ethics of Latin American Liberation* (1973). It is here that Dussel articulates his shift from Heidegger beyond Heidegger through Levinas and "the other." In *Towards an Ethics*, the shift happens in chapter three titled "The metaphysical exteriority of the other." The Mendoza course is useless for what is

presented in this volume. (Intro. P.13.) However, the book begins by presupposing the des-truction of the tradition Dussel finds in Heidegger. Thus, the move from ontology to analectic thought happens in light of the task of the destruction of the Western tradition. As Dussel points out, this thought is not only for Latin America but for the Arab world, for black Africa, India, the Asiatic south-east, and China. (intro. P.12).

16 *América Latina: dependencia y liberación*, (Buenos Aires: Fernando García, 1973), p. 67-132.

17 *Filosofía de la cultura y de la Liberación*, (Universidad Autónoma de la Ciudad de México, 2006) p.27. Also see, *Liberación Latinoamericana y Emmanuel Levinas* (Buenos Aires: Bonum, 1975).

18 "Sensibility" and "Otherness" in Emmanuel Levinas," *Philosophy Today* (Chicago) Vol.43, 2 (Summer) (1999), pp. 126-134

19 *Método para una filosofía de la liberación*, 2nd Ed. (Salamanca, Spain: Sígueme, 1974) "El método analéctico" ("The analectic method"), p. 181-183.

20 This point must be emphasized, Dussel's aim is not to abandon ethical principles or the task of constructing political institutions, at the same time he is not interested in mere reforms of the systems of oppression. Rather, Dussel sees the need in such structures conceptual and practical, but also the fact that the institutions must begin to work for people's lives.

21 In the *Método para una filosofía de la liberación* one finds a systematic critical rereading of the history of Western philosophy, as well as the discussion of the steps beyond the Western tradition within Europe. Of critical importance is that at this point appears a critique of "analogical" thinking, from the dialectic totality of traditional ontology under the idea of a logos that represents being by analogy, to an exteriority indicated by the Greek *ana-* or *ano-*, which mean from above and ultimately beyond the rational system that organizes the logic of inclusion of metaphysics.(175-193) This is a fundamental moment for understanding what Dussel will mean by his "analectic" thought or method. The analectic method is already introduced in a lecture given in 1972 at the VIII Panamerican Congress of Philosophy, titled "*The analectic method and Latin American Philosophy*" (Published in *Latin America: Dependency and Liberation* (1973)).

22 PL, 170; 198.

23 PL, 3; 15. "Total exteriority" does not mean a total severing of relations between center and periphery, but it indicates that the center, Western thought, categories, etc., is not ontologically determining of the distinct existences of the periphery. It is a matter of recognizing other beginnings, unthinkable to the tradition.

24 PL, 3-4; 15-16.

25 PL 170; 197.

26 See Dussel's Introduction to the *Philosophy of Liberation* (1977). In this work Dussel begins to develop philosophy of liberation out of the exteriority of the

system. No longer is the thought oriented by a critique of the tradition, but it is about developing analectic thought out of its external concrete situation. Here the categories that orient philosophy of liberation begin to appear.

27 That is, in a moment that is not individual as may be the case in a capitalist-individualist society but of a distinct people, of a community in its distinct lives and in its creative force.

28 We are speaking of Dussel's works on *Marx through the eighties: The theoretical Production of Marx* (1985, on the *Grundrisse*); *The Last Marx* (1988, 1863-1882); *Towards a New Marx* (1990, 61-63 manuscripts). These works culminate in *Marx's Theological Metaphors* (1994). Several essays have also been published in English: "Marx's Economic Manuscripts of 1861-63 and the 'Concept' of Dependency," *Latin American Perspectives* Vol. 17, Issue 2 Post-Marxism, the Left, and Democracy, pp.62-101. "Four Drafts of Capital," *Rethinking Marxism* Vol. 13, number 1, Spring 2001. "Marx, Schelling, and Surplus Value," *International Studies in Philosophy*, Vol. XXXVIII/4, 2006. "The Definitive Discovery of the Category of Surplus Value," in *Politics of Liberation* (2007).

29 *Política de la liberación. Historia mundial y crítica* (Madrid: Trotta, 2007.) (*Politics of Liberation. World History and Critique*.)

30 *Política de la liberación*, p.221.

31 Dussel, Enrique *Las metáforas teológicas de Marx* (Navarra: El Verbo Divino, 1994).

32 *Ética de la liberación en la edad de la globalización y de la exclusión* (Madrid: Trotta, 1998.) *Ethics of Liberation: In the Age of Globalization and Exclusion* Ed. Alejandro A. Vallega. Tr. Eduardo Mendieta, Camilo Pérez Bustillo, Yolanda Angulo, and Nelson Maldonado-Torres (Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 2013). The two volumes of the politics that are already in print are: *Política de la liberación I. Historia mundial y crítica* (Madrid: Trotta, 2007) and *Política de la liberación II, arquitectónica* (Madrid: Trotta, 2009).

33 See, Dussel, Enrique *The Underside of Modernity: Apel, Ricoeur, Rorty, Taylor, and the Philosophy of Liberation*, Ed. and translated by Eduardo Mendieta (New York: Humanities Press, 1996); and, Dussel, Enrique *Thinking from the Underside of History* Ed. Linda Alcoff and Eduardo Mendieta (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2000). Dussel, Enrique. *Apel, Ricoeur, Rorty y la filosofía de la liberación* (México: Universidad de Guadalajara, 1973.) Dussel, Enrique *La ética de la liberación ante el debate de Apel, Taylor y Vattimo con respuesta crítica de K.-O. Apel* (México: Universidad Autónoma del Estado de México, 1998). Dussel, Enrique and Apel Karl-Otto, *Ética del discurso Ética de la liberación* (Madrid: Trotta, 2005). Eduardo Mendieta offers a fine treatment of the dialogues and a general introduction to Dussel in "Politics in an Age of Planetaryization: Enrique Dussel's Critique of Political Reason," in *Global Fragments* (Albany: SUNY Press, 2007), pp.125-140.

34 "Against Gianni Vattimo, who affirms: 'There are no facts, only interpretations!'"

I replied to him in Bogotá: "There are facts, which are always interpreted!" *Política de la liberación II, arquitectónica* (Madrid: Trotta, 2009), p.440.

35 See Mendieta's discussion in "Politics in an Age of Planetarization: Enrique Dussel's Critique of Political Reason," in *Global Fragments* (Albany: SUNY Press, 2007), pp.125-140.

36 See for example: Hinkelammert, Franz. *Hacia la crítica de la razón mítica: El laberinto de la modernidad* (Bogotá, Colombia: Ediciones desde abajo, 2009).

37 Some of the historical publications worth mentioning in terms of the beginnings of the philosophy of liberation are: "*Hacia una filosofía de la liberación*" *Enfoque Latinoamericanos* numero 2 (Buenos Aires: Bonum 1973), the authors include Dussel, Hugo Assmann, Osvaldo Ardiles, Marios Casalla, Horacio Cerutti, Carlos Cullen, Julio De San, Enrique Dussel, Anibal Fornari, Daniel Guillot, Antonio Kinen, Rodolfo Kusch, Diego Pró, Agustín de la Riega, Arturo Roig, and Juan C. Scannone. Also: *Cultura popular y filosofía de la liberación* (Buenos Aires: Cambeiro, 1975). *Revista de Filosofía Latinoamericana: Liberación y cultura*, Tomo 1, Enero-Junio 1975, Número 1. *Revista de Filosofía Latinoamericana* Tomo I, Julio-Diciembre, 1975, número 2. See also the exchange between Dussel and Horacio Cerutti Guldberg: *Filosofía de la liberación latinoamericana* (México: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1983). Also see: *Crítica intercultural de la filosofía latinoamericana actual*, Ed. Raúl Fornet-Betancourt (Madrid: Trotta, 2004).

38 Quijano, Anibal "Coloniality of Power, Eurocentrism, and Social Classification," *Coloniality at Large: Latin America and the Postcolonial Debate* Ed. Mabel Moraña, Enrique Dussel, and Carlos A. Jáuregui (London: Duke University Press, 2008), 181-224.

39 Castro-Gómez, Santiago, *Crítica de la razón latinoamericana* (Barcelona: Puvill Libros, 1996). Castro-Gómez, Santiago *La Hybris del Punto Cero: Ciencia, raza e ilustración en la Nueva Granada (1750-1816)* (Bogotá: Editorial Pontificia Universidad Javeriana, 2005).

40 Mignolo, Walter. *The Idea of Latin America* (London, Blackwell, 2005); *Local Histories/Global Designs: Coloniality, Subaltern Knowledges and Border Thinking* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), and *The Darker Side of the Renaissance: Literacy, Territoriality and Colonization* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1995). For a representative anthology that introduces the work of the subaltern studies group see *The Postmodernism Debate in Latin America* Ed. J. Beverly, J. Oviedo, and M. Aronna (Durham: Duke University Press, 1995). See also the critical essay by Ramón Grosfoguel, "The Epistemic Decolonial Turn," in *Cultural Studies* 21:2, p.211-223.

41 *Local Histories/Global Designs: Coloniality, Subaltern Knowledges and Border Thinking* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000).

42 Ramón Grosfoguel 2008 "Para descolonizar os estudos de economia política e os estudos pós-coloniais: Transmodernidade, pensamento de fronteira e colonialidade

global” Revista Crítica de Ciências Sociais, numero 80 (março): 115-147. The English version of this article can be found in: <http://www.eurozine.com/pdf/2008-07-04-grosfoguel-en.pdf>. On Grosfoguel’s dialogue with Dussel see also his essay Ramón Grosfoguel 2008 “*Hacia un pluri-versalismo transmoderno decolonial*” in Tabula Rasa No. 9 (julio-diciembre): 199-215. http://www.revistatabularasa.org/numero_nueve/10grosfoguel.pdf

43 Maldonado-Torres, Nelson *Against War* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2008).

44 Maldonado-Torres, Nelson. “*On the Coloniality of Being: Contributions to the Development of the Concept*,” Cultural Studies Vol. 21, No. 2-3 March/May 2007, pp. 240-270.

45 See footnote 31. Also, Dussel, Enrique. *Beyond Philosophy: Ethics, History, Marxism, and Liberation Theology* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2003).

46 Alcoff, Linda. *Visible Identities: Race, Gender, and the Self* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005). She coedited with Eduardo Mendieta *Thinking from the Underside of History* (Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield, 2000). Schutte, Ofelia *Cultural Identity and Social Liberation in Latin American Thought* (Albany, SUNY Press, 1993).

47 As Vallega points out, the sense of exteriority and the call for a thought that arises in light of life refer us to the realm of aesthetic experience, in the literal sense of bodily experiences, sensibilities, and disposition through which one finds language, self, world, and others. At the same time, these levels of understanding are overwhelmed by the coloniality of power, being, and thought in its destruction of cultural practices and configurations of distinct identities. Alejandro A. Vallega, *Latin American Philosophy from Identity to Radical Exteriority* (Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 2014), Part I, Ch. 3 and Ch. 4.

48 See, for example, Dussel’s engagement with Fabien Eboussi Boulaga’s *La crise du muntu* in his introduction to the Ethics of Liberation, sections 53-55. Eboussi-Boulaga, Fabien. *La crise du Muntu Authenticité africaine et philosophie* (Paris, Présence Africaine, 1977).

49 See Dussel’s 1492: *The Covering of the Other*. (N.Y.: Continuum Press, 1995). In this work Dussel engages the historical character of the development of the myth of modernity. On the one hand, modernity has an element of rationality that Dussel wants to sustain. On the other hand, this rationality is inseparably entangled in modernity with the irrationality of having rational consciousness serve as a justification for violence (ex: colonialism). The critique of modernity appears as an attempt to expose this irrational element. This critique is not conceptual per se but historical. In short: in order for the modern consciousness to arise as the center it must sacrifice the other lives beyond it and make them its other. This historical recovery of the other figures a path towards what today Dussel calls the philosophy of “Trans-Modernity,” i.e. once the myth of modernity comes undone,

a new philosophy of liberation arises beyond modernity, hence not post-modern but “Trans-modern.” The term also indicates this is not a philosophy that abandons reason; instead it resituates philosophy in terms of the concrete existence of the other.

50 Present volume. 38.

51 Present volume. 341. It should be noted that here appears a double meaning of post-modern. While the term “post-Modern” is associated today with post-structuralism and deconstruction, particularly Derrida and Foucault, Dussel coins the term before post-modern is associated with deconstruction and post-structuralism; and yet, in this quote the two senses are brought together. For a discussion of the relation between Dussel’s thought and deconstruction see Alejandro A. Vallega, *Latin American Philosophy from Identity to Radical Exteriority* (Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 2014), Part I, Ch.4 and Part III, Ch.8.

52 Present volume. 369.

53 *Política de la liberación I. Historia mundial y crítica* (Madrid, Trotta, 2007.) *Política de la liberación II, arquitectónica* (Madrid: Trotta, 2009). Volume I in English: *Politics of Liberation: A Critical World History*, Tr. Cooper (SCM Press, 2010). The synthesis of the three volumes on the politics of liberation appears in *20 Theses on Politics* (Duke University Press, Durham, 2011).

54 *Ética de la liberación en la edad de la globalización y de la exclusión* (Madrid: Trotta, 1998.) English: *Ethics of Liberation: In the Age of Globalization and Exclusion*. Ed. Alejandro A Vallega. Tr. Eduardo Mendieta, Camilo Pérez Bustillo, Yolanda Angulo, and Nelson Maldonado-Torres (Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 2012).

55 Under numbers two and three in the present work. There is a German edition under the title *Der Gegend Diskurs der Moderne* (Turia-Kant, Berlin, 2013).

56 Dictated in Cologne (Germany) in 2011 and published in the German edition cited in the previous note.

57 See a later publication on this theme in Douglas Harink (Ed.), Paul, *Philosophy, and the Theopolitical Vision* (Cascade Books, Eugene, Oregon, 2010).

58 Our province of Mendoza (Argentina), it’s true, was among the furthest southern territories of the Incan empire, or more precisely of the Uspallata Valley between Argentina and Chile, with an “Incan Bridge” and “Incan Trails”, which, in my youth as an Andean expert, I could observe with awe at more than 4,500 meters above sea level. For biographic-philosophical aspects of my generational experiences, see “Hacia una simbólica latinoamericana (hasta 1969),” in my work, *Apel, Ricoeur, Rorty y la filosofía de la liberación*, Universidad de Guadalajara (México), 1993, pp.138-140; and §§ 1-3 in the article “*En búsqueda del sentido (Origen y desarrollo de una Filosofía de la Liberación)*,” in the issue dedicated to my work in the journal *Anthropos* 180 (Barcelona, 1998), pp. 14-19.

59 published in *Histoire et vérité*, Seuil, Paris, 1964, pp.274-288, and earlier, in the journal *Esprit* (Paris) in October. The differentiation between levels of “civilization” – with reference to technical, scientific, or political instruments – from culture indicates what I would call today a “developmentalist fallacy,” as it fails to note that all instrumental systems (especially the political, but also the economic) are already “cultural.”

60 These works were published in *Esprit*, 7-8, (October 1965). I presented an essay about “Chrétientés latino-américaines”, pp. 2-20 (which appeared later in Polish “Społeczności Chrześcijańskie Ameryki Łacińskiej”, in *Znak Miesięcznik* (Krakow) XIX (1967) pp. 1244-1260).

61 “*Iberoamérica en la Historia Universal*” in *Revista de Occidente*, 25 (1965), pp.85-95. At that time, I had nearly completed two books: *El humanismo helénico*, written in 1961, and *El humanismo semita*, written in 1964, and I had the materials for what would later appear as *El dualismo en la antropología de la cristianidad*, which was finally completed in 1968. I had performed a creative reconstruction of what I called a Latin American “protohistory,” that of Christopher Columbus or Hernando Cortés.

62 In contrast to many of those who speak of culture, and of Latin American culture in particular, I had the opportunity over four years to spend long hours in the General Archive of the Indies in Sevilla to study foundational historical works of the scientific-positivist understanding of Latin America in the sixteenth century—the beginning of the colonial period. This filled my brain with an impressive quantity of concrete references from all parts of the Latin American continent (from Mexican California to the South of Chile, since I also immersed myself in documents from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries). For me, to speak of “Latin American culture” was to refer to indigenous peoples, struggles for conquest, processes of indoctrination, the foundation of cities, missions for forced relocation and subjugation of indigenous people (reducciones), the local colonial administrations (cabildos), provincial councils, diocesan synods, the tithes of the haciendas, the payment of mines, etc, etc. See the nine volumes published between 1969 and 1971 about *El episcopado hispanoamericano*, *Institución misionera en defensa del indio* (Colección Sondeos, CIDOC, Cuernavaca).

63 Which took place over the course of four months of feverish work, from August to December of 1966, since upon leaving Maguncia in Germany I would return again at the end of that year to Europe (my first airplane trip over the Atlantic) to defend my second doctoral thesis in Paris in February 1967.

64 available in rotaprint from the Universidad del Noroeste, Resistencia (Argentina), 265 pages. It was published for the first time on CD entitled: *Obra Filosófica de Enrique Dussel (1963-2002)*, available through the internet at www.clacso.org.

65 In reality, I omitted Latin-Germanic Europe, since I had only studied it through the fifth century.

- 66 This is included in a book edited in 1972 (under the title: *Historia de la iglesia en América Latina*, Nova Terra, Barcelona), p. 56.
- 67 This speech appeared for the first time, with that title, in Cuyo (Mendoza), 4 (1968) pp.7-40, and appears in a compilation in Portuguese, under the title *Oito ensaios sobre cultura latino-americana e liberação*, Paulinas, São Paulo, 1997; the last of these appears on pp.25-63. I had included it before, in modified form, in *Historia de la Iglesia en América Latina. Coloniaje y Liberación 1492-1972*, Editorial Nova Terra, 1972, pp. 29-47.
- 68 A synthesis of these courses in Quito appeared later under the title *Caminos de liberación latinoamericana*, vol. I: *Interpretación histórico-teológica de nuestro continente latinoamericano*, Latinoamérica, Buenos Aires, 1972. The revised edition appeared in Spanish as: *Desintegración de la cristianidad colonial y liberación. Perspectiva latinoamericana*, Sígueme, Salamanca, 1978; in English as: *History and the Theology of Liberation: A Latin American perspective*, Orbis Books, New York, 1976; in French as: *Histoire et théologie de la libération. Perspective latinoaméricaine*, Editions Economie et Humanisme-Editions Ouvrières, Paris, 1974; and in Portuguese as: *Caminhos de libertação latino-americana*, vol. I: *Interpretação histórico-teológica*, Paulinas, São Paulo, 1985. Another version was published in abridged form as: *América latina y conciencia cristiana*, Ipla no. 8, Quito, 1970. These were years of great critical and creative intellectual effervescence.
- 69 "Cultura latinoamericana e historia de la Iglesia" in L. Gera, E. Dussel and J.Arch, *Contexto de la iglesia argentina*, Universidad Pontificia, Buenos Aires, pp.32-155..
- 70 *Ibid.*, pp.33-47.
- 71 *ibid.*, p.48.
- 72 Eudeba, Buenos Aires, 1975.
- 73 This text has as its subtitle: *Desde los orígenes hasta antes de la conquista de América*, Guadalupe, Buenos Aires, 1974.
- 74 For example, in the "General Introduction" to the *Historia General de la Iglesia en América Latina*, CEHILA-Sígueme, Salamanca, t.I/1, 1983, pp.103-204. And, in many other works (like in *Ética de la Liberación*, Trotta, Madrid, 1998, [26]; and more extensively in *Política de Liberación* which I am currently writing), I again take up the question of the "foundation" and "development" of Latin-Germanic Christianity (the first stage of Europe, properly stated). See my article "Europa, Modernidad y Eurocentrismo" in *Hacia una Filosofía Política Crítica*, Desclée de Brouwer, Bilbao, 2001, pp.345-359.
- 75 See the history and the theoretical reconstruction of Dependency Theory in my book *Towards an Unknown Marx: A commentary on the Manuscripts of 1861-1863*, Routledge, London, 2001 (published in Spanish in 1988), pp. 205-230. Theotonio dos Santos has recently returned to this theme in his book *Teoría de la Dependencia*, Plaza y Janés, México, 2001, confirming my thesis entirely. From

1975 through the end of the 1990s, Latin American social sciences were becoming increasingly skeptical of Dependency Theory. I demonstrated (in 1988, op.cit.) that the refutation was inadequate and that, thus far, Dependency Theory has been the only sustainable theory. In a polemic with Karl-Otto Apel, Franz Hinkelammert has emphatically demonstrated the validity of this theory.

76 Dussel, 1983, vol. I, pp. 35-36.

77 Tr: English in original]

78 In subsequent years (and indeed up to the present), we have held encounters in Delhi, Ghana, São Paulo, Colombo, Manila, Oaxtepec, etc.

79 For me, after living in Europe for almost eight years, two years among Palestinians (many of whom were Muslim) in Israel, traveling and giving conference talks or participating in seminars on five occasions in India (among all cultures, the most impressive), in the Philippines three times, in Africa at numerous events (in Kenya, Zimbabwe, Egypt, Morocco, Senegal, Ethiopia, etc.), I had an immediate understanding of the “great cultures” that I have respectfully and passionately venerated.

80 This appeared under the title “Cultura imperial, cultura ilustrada y liberación de la cultura popular,” published in *Oito ensaios sobre cultura latino-americana*, pp. 121-152. This speech was given in front of a crowd of hundreds and hundreds of participants, and openly attacked the military dictatorship. It appeared for the first time at a conference given at the Fourth Academical Week at the Universidad de El Salvador, Buenos Aires, on August 6, 1973; in *Stromata* (Buenos Aires), 30 (1974), pp. 93-123; and in *Dependencia cultural y creación de la cultura en América Latina*, Bonum, Buenos Aires, 1974, pp.43-73.

81 The tumultuous protests of December 2001 in Argentina were the culmination of a long process of the hollowing-out of a peripheral state through three centuries of colonial exploitation, through foreign loans and extraction of agricultural riches since the middle of the nineteenth century, and through the accelerated extraction of the neoliberal model implemented by Bush and Menem. A generation was physically eliminated in the “dirty war” (1975-1984) so that an economic model could be implemented that brought misery to what had been – from 1850 to 1950 – the wealthiest and most industrialized country in Latin America. All of this had been clearly foreseen since the early 1970s by Philosophy of Liberation, following the rightward political shift that removed the Cámpora administration, under the direction of the unconcealable fascism of J.D. Perón from June 1973.

82 [Tr: I retain the accent to emphasize that Dussel is referring to Latin America as a whole, and not the United States.]

83 *Oito ensaios*, p.137.

84 *Ibid.*, p.147.

85 In *Ibid.*, pp.146ss.

86 “Cultura latinoamericana y Filosofía de la Liberación (Cultura popular

revolucionaria: más allá del populismo and dogmatismo),” in *Oito ensaios*, pp.171-231. It first appeared in *Cristianismo y Sociedad* (México), 80 (1984), pp.9-45; and in *Latinoamérica: Anuario de Estudios Latinoamericanos* (UNAM, México), 17 (1985), pp.77-127.

87 See *Oito Ensaio*s, pp. 171ss.

88 *Ibid.*, p. 189ss.

89 “La cultura del pueblo,” in *Habla la dirección de la vanguardia*, Managua, Departamento de Propaganda del FSLN, 1981, p.116.

90 *Oito ensaios*, p.191ss.

91 This was later explored in my trilogy: *La Producción teórica de Marx, Siglo XXI*, México, 1985; *Hacia un Marx desconocido*, XXI, México, 1988 (translated in Italian and English), and *El último Marx*, XXI, México, 1990.

92 Although in reality these are the same things, because upon harming the *terra mater* with the plow, the Indo-european needed a sacred act of anticipated “reparation”: a “cult of terra mater” serving as a condition for the possibility of extracting from it – through work and its “sorrows” (both those of the earth and of humanity) – the fruit, the harvest, human nourishment. This is the dialectic of life-death, happiness-sorrow, nourishment-hunger, culture-chaos. And consequently, of death-resurrection, sorrow-fertility, necessity-satisfaction, chaos-creation.

93 [Tr: Dussel refers to the Greek term *poietiké*.]

94 *Oito ensaios*, p.198ss.

95 See “Cultura(s) popular(es),” a special issue on this subject in *Comunicación y cultura* (Santiago), 10 (1983); Ecléa Bosi, *Cultura de massa e cultura popular*, Vozes, Petrópolis, 1977; Osvaldo Ardiles, “Ethos, cultura, y liberación,” in the collected work *Cultura popular y filosofía de la liberación*, García Cambeiro, Buenos Aires, 1975, pp.9-32; Amílcar Cabral, *Cultura y liberación*, Cuicuilco, México, 1981; José L. Najenson, *Cultura popular y cultura subalterna*, Universidad Autónoma del Estado de México, Toluca, 1979; Arturo Warman, “Cultura popular y cultura nacional” in *Características de la cultura nacional*, IIS-UNAM, México, 1969; Raúl Vidales, “Filosofía y política de las étnias en la última década” in *Ponencias do II Congreso de Filosofía Latinoamericana*, USTA, Bogotá, 1982, pp.385-401; etc.

96 In 1984 we had designated this “multinational culture” in connection with “multinational” corporations, but in reality it would be more appropriate, in 2003, to call it the “dominant culture that is globalizing from the core of Post-Cold-War capitalism.”

97 This text can be found in the volume *La pedagogía latinoamericana*, Nueva América, Bogotá, 1980, p.72.

98 *Ibid.*

99 See Ernesto Cardenal, “Cultura revolucionaria, popular, nacional, anti-imperialista,” in *Nicaráuac* (Managua), 1 (1980), pp.163.

100 *Oito ensaios*, pp.220-221. Mao Tse-tung wrote: “It is imperative to separate the

fine old culture of the people which had a more or less democratic and revolutionary character from all the decadence of the old feudal ruling class [...] China's [...] present new culture, too, has developed out of her old culture; therefore, we must respect our own history and must not lop it off. However, respect for history means giving it its proper place as a science, respecting its dialectical development [...]” (“On New Democracy,” in *Select Works of Mao Tse-Tung*, Foreign Languages Press, Peking, 1967, vol. II, pp.339-384). [available online at http://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/mao/selected-works/volume-2/mswv2_26.htm]. In this short work, Mao distinguishes between “ancient” (antigua) and “old” (vieja) culture; between “dominant,” “current,” “imperialist,” “semi-feudal,” and “reactionary” culture, a culture of “new democracy,” a “culture of the popular masses,” a “national” or “revolutionary” culture, etc.

101 See Sergio Ramírez, “La revolución: el hecho cultural más grande de nuestra historia,” in *Ventana* (Managua), 30 (1982), p.8; and Bayardo Arce, “El difícil terreno de la lucha: el ideológico,” en *Nicaráuac*, 1 (1980), p.155.

102 Antonio Gramsci writes in paragraph 86 or 89, of vol. I of his *Prison Notebooks*: “Folklore must not be thought of as something ridiculous, as something strange that causes laughter, as something picturesque; it must be understood as something relevant and must be taken seriously. In this way learning will be more efficient and formative in terms of the culture of the grate popular masses [cultura delle grandi masse popolari].” (*Quaderni del Carcere*, I; Einaudi Milán, 1975, p.90).

103 In those affirmations that are so evidently true for all Europeans or North Americans that “Europe is the culmination of world history,” or that that history “develops from East to West,” from the beginning of humanity through its full development. See my first lecture given in Frankfurt, published in my book: *Von der Erfindung Amerikas zur Entdeckung des Anderen. Ein Projekt der Transmoderne*, Patmos Verlag, Düsseldorf 1993. Available in English as *The Invention of the Americas: Eclipse of “the Other” and the Myth of Modernity*, Continuum Publishing, New York, 1995.

104 In 1976, before Lyotard, I used this concept in the opening words of my *Filosofía de la Liberación* when I wrote: “Philosophy of liberation is postmodern, popular (of the people, with the people), profeminine philosophy. It is philosophy expressed by (“pressed out from”) the youth of the world, the oppressed of the earth, the wretched of the Earth,” *Philosophy of Liberation*, Orbis Books, New York 1985.

105 Originally published as *Hipotesis para el estudio de Latinoamerica en la historia universal. Investigacion del ‘mundo’ donde se constituyen y evolucionan las ‘Weltanschauungen’* (Chaco: Resistencia, 1966).

106 [Tr: this reference is, literally, to the Greek for inhabited (oixos) spaces (nenon), and rendered in English as anything from “cultural circles” to “regional civilizations.” For an understanding of Dussel’s view of the role of these ecumenes, see the “Appendix” in *A History of the Church in Latin America: Colonialism to Liberation*,

(1492-1979), William B. Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1981, 297-298.]

107 A further explication of what we are discussing can be found in my article: "Europa, Modernidad y Eurocentrismo," in *Filosofía política crítica*, Desclée de Browuer, Bilbao, 2001, pp.345ss. There are translations in diverse languages: "Europa, Moderne und Eurozentrismus. Semantische Verfehlung des Europa-Begriffs," in Manfred Buhr, *Das Geistige Erbe Europas*, Instituto Italiano per gli Studi Filosofici 5, Vivarium, Napoli, 1994, pp.855-867; "Europe, modernité, eurocentrisme," in Francis Guibal, 1492: "Recontre" de deux mondes? Regards croisés, Editions Histoire et Anthropologie, Strasbourg, 1996, pp. 42-58; "Europe, Modernity, and Eurocentrism" in *Nepantla: Views from South* (Durham), Vol.I, Issue 3 (2000), pp.465-478.

108 For intellectuals from Northern Europe and the United States, from J. Habermas to Toulmin, Modernity more or less follows this geopolitical path: Renaissance (East)→Protestant Reform (North)→French Revolution (West)→English Parliamentarianism. Western Mediterranean Europe (Portugal and Spain) is explicitly excluded. This is due to a historic myopia. Even G. Arrighi, who studies Genovese financial capital, ignores that this represented a moment of the Spanish Empire (and not vice versa). That is to say, Renaissance Italy was still Mediterranean (ancient), whereas Spain was Atlantic (that is to say: modern).

109 See the magnificent reinterpretation of the history of philosophy by Abed Yabris's two books: *Crítica de la razón árabe*, Icaria, Barcelona, 2001; and *El legado filosófico árabe*. Alfarabi, Avicena, Avempace, Averroes, Abenjalidún. *Lecturas contemporáneas*, Trotta, Madrid, 2001.

110 Keep in mind that René Descartes was a student at La Flèche, a Jesuit school, and that the first philosophical work that he read was F. Suarez's *Disputaciones metafísicas*. See the historical chapter in the book that I am currently writing entitled *Política de Liberación*.

111 But we should not forget that the medieval gentleman, Quijote, confronts the windmills which are symbols of Modernity (but which originated in the Muslim world: Baghdad had windmills in the seventh century).

112 See the first three volumes of Immanuel Wallerstein's *The Modern World-System*, Academic Press, New York, 1974-1989, vol. 1-3.

113 [Tr: English in original.]

114 University of California Press, 1988.

115 Princeton University Press, Princeton, 2000. In this text Pomeranz proves that until 1800 England did not actually have any significant advantage over the Yangtze River Delta in China, and that after evaluating, with new arguments, the ecological development of the exploitation of the land in both regions, he attributes the possibility of the industrial revolution in England to two fortuitous factors which were external to the English economic system: the possession of colonies and the use of coal. No other factor was responsible for the minimal initial advantage of England over the Yangtze River Delta region which, within a short time, became

enormous. He does not even consider an economic crisis in China and Hindustan. The increasing and anti-ecological use of land in China required a greater degree of peasant labor, which prevented the simultaneous development of a nascent capitalist industry in China (unlike England, which could do so thanks to the factors external to its economic system).

116 [Tr: English in original.]

117 From the French Revolution to the fall of the USSR, which has meant the unipolar rise of the current North American hegemony, after the end of the Cold War.

118 See Section 5, "*La Trans-modernidad como afirmación*," in my article "*World-System and Transmodernity*," in *Nepantla: Views from South* (Duke, Durham), Vol.3 Issue 2 (2002), pp.221-244.

119 "Transversal" connotes that movement from the periphery to the periphery. From the feminist movement to the antiracist and anticolonial struggles. These "Differences" enter into dialogue from the perspective of their distinct negativities, without the necessity of transversing the "center" of hegemony. Frequently, large metropolitan cities have subway services that extend from suburban neighborhoods to the center; however, they do not offer connecting service between the suburban sub-centers themselves. This is an analogy for what occurs in intercultural dialogue.

120 *Icaria-Antrazyt*, Barcelona, 2001.

121 *Trotta*, Madrid, 2001.

122 Arabic, after centuries of translation of the Hellenic philosophical works from Greek, invented an extremely sophisticated technical-philosophical language. For that reason, from Morocco to the Philippines, the philosophy of the Muslim world is called "Arab philosophy," the name of the classic language.

123 *El legado*, p.20ss. To the question of "how to recognize the glory of our civilization, and how to give new life to our legacy," our author responds with a thorough description of the ambiguous, partial, and Eurocentric responses. The "salafies" originated from the position of Yamal al-Din al Afgani (+1897), who struggled against the English in Afganistan. He resided in Istanbul, took refuge in Cairo and eventually fled to Paris. That movement intended to liberate and unify the Muslim world. [Tr: "Salafi" means predecessors or ancestors and refers to an interpretation of Islam which derives from the lives and behavior of the three generations that followed Muhammad.]

124 I have indicated above that my first publication (1965) sought to criticize the interpretations or hermeneutics of the "Latin American issue." All new interpretations grasp consciousness and critique other partial interpretations.

125 *Ibid.*, p.24.

126 tr. E. Burgos-Debray, Verso, London, 1987. Originally published as *Me Llamo Rigoberta Menchú Y Así Me Nació La Conciencia* (Barcelona: Editorial Argos Vergara,

1983).

127 The schools linked to Baghdad are truly *oriental*, closer to the Persian Gnosticism, whereas those linked to Cairo, to the Alexandrian Neo-Platonic tradition, are *occidental* within the Islamic East, as we will see.

128 In a truly original and authoritative manner, Al-Yabri shows that “Greek philosophical sciences” transformed into Islamic “philosophy,” theology, and jurisprudence thanks to four philosophical currents: “The first is that which is represented by Iranian translators and secretaries [...], the eastern (Persian) model of neo-Platonism. The second is that which is represented by Christian doctors and translators that had come from the Persian school of Yundisapur [...which] besides Nestorian teachers lodged a group of teachers from the Athenian school [...] this was the western neo-Platonic model. The third [and most important] current, eastern, was that which was represented by the Harranian translators, teachers, and wise men. The fourth, western, was that which appeared finally with the arrival of the Alexandrian Academy” (Al-Yabri, op. cit., p.177 [Tr: my translation]). The Academy functioned for 50 years in the city of the Sabeans in Harran. This school was fundamental, since it represented a synthesis of Persian, Neo-platonic, and Aristotelian thought (see op cit., p.165)—a question rarely studied outside of the Arab philosophical world, since it requires a bibliography of texts that have not been translated into western languages. The “Brothers of Purity” [Tr: an association of Arab philosophers founded in Syria in the tenth century] depended on the tradition of Harran.

129 Fez came to have over 300,000 inhabitants in the twelfth century.

130 See Al-Yabri, *El legado...*, p.226ss. For Avempace, human perfection did not consist in the ecstatic contemplation of Sufism, but rather in the life of the “solitary man” (who, like a budding plant in the imperfect city longs for the perfect city), and the rational study of philosophical sciences. The act of the “intellect agent” par excellence—the knowledge of the wise—is spiritual and divine. Al-Yabri dedicates several wonderful pages to the theme of Avempace and his treatise on the happiness of the wise, which was inspired by and develops upon the late work of Aristotle. See my article: “La ética definitiva de Aristóteles o el tratado moral contemporáneo al Del Alma” in *El dualismo en la antropología de la Cristiandad*, cited above, pp. 297-314.

131 Al-Yabri shows the remarkable similarities between the basic theses of Ibn-Tumart and Averröes (*El legado...*, p.323ss).

132 That is to say, they confused and blurred the two in several manners, which would prove inadequate for Averröes.

133 The “Latin Averröism” which was present in the schools of art and would decisively influence the origins of experimental science in Europe, was an exception to this.

134 Cit. Al-Yabri, *Crítica de la razón árabe*, pp. 157-158. [Tr: my translation.]

- 135 Ibid., p.159
- 136 [Tr: English in original.]
- 137 Ibid.
- 138 Ibid., p.160
- 139 *¿Existe una filosofía en nuestra América?*, Siglo XXI, México, 1969.
- 140 Translated by George Ciccariello-Maher. This chapter began as a presentation at the Second Annual Conference of the Caribbean Philosophical Association (Puerto Rico, 2005) where I was invited by the Association president Lewis Gordon. I later expounded on the subject with some additional content in a speech given at the 10th Book Fair in Santo Domingo (April 25th 2007), where we also began to prepare the Fifth Centenary celebration of the first critical-messianic scream in Santo Domingo—which in 1511 took the form of Walter Benjamin's Now-Time—against the injustice of the nascent Modernity, of the colonialism inaugurated not only on the American Continent but throughout the periphery of the world-system.
- 141 [Tr: English in original].
- 142 Recalling that the Chinese had empirically and historically discovered the printing press centuries earlier.
- 143 Toulmin, Stephen, 1992, *Cosmópolis*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago; p. 5.
- 144 Ibid., p. 9.
- 145 J. Habermas includes “the discovery of the New World” (Habermas, Juergen, 1989, *El discurso filosófico de la Modernidad*, Taurus, Buenos Aires; p. 15), but in following M. Weber's arguments he is unable to derive any conclusions from this purely accidental indication.
- 146 See Dussel, E., 2007, *Política de la Liberación. Historia mundial y crítica*, Trotta, Madrid.
- 147 Dussel, Enrique, 1995, *The Invention of the Americas*, Continuum, New York. and Dussel, E., 1998, *Ética de la Liberación*, Trotta, Madrid (Introduction); Dussel, E., 2001, *Hacia una filosofía política crítica*, Desclée de Brower, Bilbao (part two); Dussel, E., 2007, *Política de la Liberación. Historia mundial y crítica*, Trotta, Madrid; etc.
- 148 See vol. 12 in Hegel, G.W.F., 1970, *Werke in zwanzig Bände*, Suhrkamp Verlag, Frankfurt, vol. 1-20.
- 149 He already puts forth the ideology of “Orientalism.”
- 150 Ibid., vols. 16-17.
- 151 Ibid., vols. 13-15.
- 152 Ibid., vols. 18-20.
- 153 This means that for Hegel, the Renaissance is still not a constitutive part of Modernity. On this point—but for very different reasons—we agree with Hegel against Giovanni Arrighi, for example. From within his habitually “Eurocentric” perspective, Hegel indicates that: “Although Wycliffe, Hus and Arnold of Brescia

had already set themselves apart from the course of Scholastic philosophy [...] it is with Luther that the movement of the freedom of the spirit originates" (*Lectures on the History of Philosophy*, II, 3, C; Hegel, 1970, vol. 20, p.50). If the Atlantic had not been opened up to Northern Europe, Luther would have been the Wycliffe or the Hus of the early 16th century without any later significance.

154 He seems not to know that gunpowder, paper, the printing press, the compass, and many other technical discoveries had been invented centuries earlier by China. This is the infantile Eurocentrism of pure ignorance.

155 As if the indigenous Americans were not "humans" who had "discovered" their own continent many millennia prior, but instead needed to wait for the Europeans so that "Man" *could discover* the Americas. Such a vulgar ideologeme is not worthy of a renowned philosopher.

156 *Op. cit.*, III, Introduction; Hegel, 1970, vol. 20, p. 62. [Dussel's translation].

157 Ancient philosophy "reappears," albeit with differences, without fully discovering the radical geopolitical turn entailed by Modernity, which is situated for the first time in a world-system that was completely impossible for Greeks and Romans.

158 *Ibid.*, p. 68.

159 *Ibid.*, p. 67.

160 *Ibid.*

161 We should recall the dates, since in his old age he would live into the beginning of the 17th century, having been born 70 years after the beginning of Columbus's "invasion" of the Americas, when Bartolomé de las Casas was approaching death (+ 1566).

162 *Ibid.*, p. 70.

163 *Ibid.*

164 *Ibid.*

165 *Ibid.*, pp. 71-72.

166 Already cited, *Ibid.*, p.70.

167 See Gaukroger, Stephen, 1997, *Descartes. An intellectual biography*, Clarendon Press, Oxford; Cottingham, John (Ed.), 1995, *Descartes*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge (UK).

168 One reads as early as 1538 "of examining the consciousness in that way of the lines" (Autobiography, 99; Ignacio de Loyola, 1952, *Obras completas*, BAC, Madrid; p.109). This refers to a line for each day in a notebook, in which one indicated the errors committed, counting them by the hour from rising in the morning to afternoon and night (three times a day). See *Exercises*, First Week [24] (Ignacio de Loyola, 1952, p. 162).

169 "Use the daily examination of your consciousness" (*Constituciones*, III, 1, [261]; Ignacio de Loyola, 1952, p. 430).

170 *Ibid.*, [23], p. 161.

171 *Reglas de San Ignacio, II. Constituciones de los colegios*, [53-64]; *Ibid.*, pp.588-590.

172 And so it is not strange that Suárez's crowning work would carry the title recommended by the Regla de San Ignacio: *Disputationes Metaphysicae*, and that Descartes himself would himself pen the *Regles sur la direction de l'esprit* (even the phrase "direction de l'esprit" reminds us of the "spiritual directors" of the Jesuit schools). In the *Discours de la Méthode*, II y III, he continues to speak of "rules": "Principales regles de la methode," "Quelques regles de la morale." Souvenirs of his youth? (Vide Descartes, René, 1953, *Oeuvres et lettres de Descartes*, La Pléiade, Gallimard, Paris. Descartes, R., 1996, *Œuvres de Descartes*, ed. Ch. Adam, P. Tannery, J. Vrin, Paris, vol. 1-11.).

173 Although of a Peninsular origin, he arrived in Mexico at 18 and studied all of his philosophy at the University of Mexico (founded in 1553). It was there that he wrote the work which as a result bore the name Mexican Logic (with the title even in Latin). In Mexico he also wrote a *Dialecticam* (later published in 1603 in Alcalá), a *Physica* (published in Madrid, 1605), a *De Anima* (Alcalá, 1611), and an *In de Caelo et Mundo* (Madrid, 1615). Other masters had also studied in the college, like Pedro de Fonseca from Portugal (professor at Coimbra, as we said above, beginning in 1590).

174 The central texts are found in the 4th part of the *Discours* (Descartes, 1953, pp. 147ss), and in the "Second Meditation" in the *Méditations touchant la Première Philosophie* (*Meditationes de prima philosophia*, which in its first French version bore more similarity to Suárez: *Méditations métaphysiques*).

175 This is an act of "sensibility" for the Stagirite, as equally today for A. Damasio, who recalls that the *cogito* is a "feeling" (Damasio, Antonio, 2003, *Looking for Spinoza. Joy, Sorrow, and the Feeling Brain*, Harcourt Inc.).

176 *EN*, IX, 9, 1170 to 29-34. This self-consciousness of human acts was called *synaesthesia* by the Stoics (J. V. Arnim, *Stoicorum veterum Fragmenta*, Stuttgart, 1964, vol. 2, pp. 773-911), and *tactus interior* by Cicero. This is the whole question of "high self consciousness" (Edelman, G. M., 1992, *Bright Air, Brilliant Fire. On the Matter of the Mind*, Basic Books, New York.).

177 Damasio, 2003.

178 See also Edelman, 1992.

179 *De Trinitate*, X, 10, n. 14.

180 *Ibid.*, XV, 12, 21.

181 Gilson, Etienne, 1951, *Études sur le rôle de la pensée Médiévale dans la formation du système cartésien*, J. Vrin, Paris; p.191.

182 "Si non esses, falli omnino non posses" (*De libero arbitrio* II, 3, n. 7). See the edition by Ch. Adam-P.L. Tannery, *Descartes*, 1996, vol. 7, pp. 197ss.

183 Gilson, 1951, p. 201.

184 As early as the *Commentarii Collegii Conimbricensis*, on physics (*In octo libros*

Physicorum Aristotelis), we read about the “tres esse abstractiones...” (Art.3, Proemio; Antonii Mariz, *Universitatis Typographi*, 1592, p. 9): the abstraction of sensible matter (natural philosophy), the abstraction of intelligible matter (metaphysics), and the abstraction of all matter (mathematics). This book discusses the original wisdom “secunum Aegyptios” (*Proemium*, p. 1), prior to falling into an absolute Hellenocentrism, since it was the Egyptians who discovered that the intellection of the universe cannot be reached without “solitudine, atque silentio” (this is the *skholé* that Aristotle also attributes to the Egyptians) (*Ibid.*). Mario Santiago de Carvalho shows that in this course on physics we already find a modern concept of imaginary time (which makes us think of Kant): De Carvalho, M., 2007, “Aos hombros de Aristóteles,” in *Sobre o nao-aristotelismo do primeiro curso aristotélico dos Jesuítas de Coimbra*, en *Revista filosófica de Coimbra*, (2007), 32, pp. 291-308.

185 *Discours*, IV; Descartes, 1953, p. 148; Descartes, 1996, vol. 6, p.33. In the 1598 volume of the *Commentarii Coll. Conimbrisenses*, in *Tres libros de Animae*, ed. by Antonii Mariz in Coimbra, we find a *Tractatus De Anima Separata*, Disp. 1, art. 1 (pp. 442ss), a discussion of the immortality of the soul which could have inspired Descartes. See the article by Mario S. de Carvalho (De Carvalho, Mario, 2006, “*Intellect et Imagination*,” en tiré à part de *Rencontres de Philosophie Médiévale* (Brepols), 11, pp. 119-158) where he notes that, following Pomponazzi y Caetanús, the Coimbrians proposed: “La singularité de l’âme ... ne tient uniquement à son indépendance de la matière, mais aussi au fait d’avoir un activité progredre,” which Descartes would adopt as his paradigm.

186 Gilson, 1951, p. 246.

187 *Ibid.*, p. 250.

188 Santiago Castro-Gómez refers to the *disproportionate* claim of Cartesian thought to situate itself beyond any particular perspective the “zero-point hybris.” Like the Renaissance artist who, on tracing the horizon and the vanishing point in the perspective of all the objects he will paint, does not appear in the painting himself, but is always “he who looks and constitutes the painting” (this is the inverse of the “vanishing point”) and passes for the “zero point” of perspective. However, far from being an uncommitted “point of view,” it is this point that constitutes all commitments. M. Weber—with his claim to represent an objective, “value-free” viewpoint—is the best example of this impossible pretension of the “zero-point.” The ego cogito inaugurates this pretension within Modernity. (Santiago Castro-Gómez, 2005, *La Hybris del Punto Cero: Ciencia, raza, e ilustración en la Nueva Granada*, Editorial Pontificia Universidad Javeriana, Bogotá, Colombia.).

189 And of which what we have deemed the “developmentalist fallacy” consists, in the belief that Europe is more “developed”—as in the “development” [*Entwicklung*] of the concept for Hegel—than other cultures (See Apel, K.-O. y Dussel, E., 2005, *Ética del discurso y ética de la liberación*, Trotta, Madrid, p.107; Dussel, Enrique, 1995, *The Invention of the Americas*, Continuum, New York).

- 190 The Antillean Taínos did not pronounce the “r,” and so “Caribe” and “cannibal” was the same.
- 191 “Of Cannibals,” in Montaigne, M. de, 1967, *Oeuvres complètes*, Gallimard-Pléiade, Paris, p. 208. Montaigne knew very well that if we situate ourselves from the perspective of these “so-called” barbarians, the Europeans deserved to be called “savage” on their part for the irrational and brutal acts that they committed against these people.
- 192 Ginés de Sepúlveda, 1967, *Tratado sobre las Justicas causas de la Guerra contra los indios*, FCE, México, 1967, p.85.
- 193 *Ibid.*, p. 87.
- 194 Aristotle, *Política* I, 1; 1253 a 19-20.
- 195 Ginés, 1967, p. 117.
- 196 Ahead of J. Locke or Hegel, he understands “private property” as a precondition for humanity.
- 197 *Ibid.*, pp. 110-111.
- 198 *Ibid.* On one of Pope John Paul II’s trips to Latin America, an indigenous person from Ecuador presented him with a Bible as a gesture of returning to him the religion that they had claimed to teach the Indians and asked of the Pope that he return the wealth that had been extracted from the West Indies.
- 199 *Mayor*, 1510, dist. XLIV, q. III.
- 200 *Recopilación*, 1943, vol. 1, p. 1^a.
- 201 Ginés, 1967, p.155.
- 202 The Jesuits would quickly come to enjoy a near-monopoly on philosophical education in Catholic Europe, because Protestantism tended to grant greater importance exclusively to theology.
- 203 See, Ferrater y Mora, José, 1963, “Suárez et la philosophie moderne”, en *Revue de Métaphysique et de Morale*, 13 (2), pp. 155-248. Second Scholasticism in its most traditional sense begins with Juan de Santo Tomás and his *Cursus philosophicum* (1648), which at any rate still enjoyed an exceptional degree of clarity and depth, but which would decline with the passing decades.
- 204 We have consulted the *Commentariorum Petri Fonsecae in libro Metaphysicorum Aristotelis*, edited by Franciscum Zanettum, Rome, 1577, with Greek text and Latin translation, as well as simultaneous commentary.
- 205 See Pereira, Miguel B., 1967, *Pedro da Fonseca. O Método da Filosofia*, Universidade de Coimbra, Coimbra., pp. 280ss.
- 206 In Coimbra we were able to consult the *Institutionum Dialecticarum, Libri Octo*, published by Iannis Blavii, 1564. See the 1964 edition by Joaquim Ferreria Gomes under the title *Instituições Dialécticas*, Universidad de Coimbra, Coimbra. It begins: “Hanc artem, qui primi invenerunt Dialecticam nominarunt, postrea veteres Peripatetici Logicam appellaverunt” (cap. 1; p. 1).
- 207 Pereira, 1967, p. 340.

208 We have consulted the *Metaphysicarum disputationem*, published by Koannem et Andrean Renaut, Salamanca, 1597, whose vol.1 includes the first 27 *Disputationem*, and vol. 2 the rest up to 54. (Suárez, Francisco, 1597, *Metaphysicarum disputationem*, ed. Ioannem et Andrean Renaut, Salamanca, vol. 1-2.) The question of “Infinite Being” and “finite being” is discussed beginning in *Disp.* 28, sect. 2, vol. 2, pp. 6 ss., from the “*opinio Scoti expenditur*” (which is perfectly coherent, since it was Duns Scotus who posed the question of the absolute in this way). The problem of the “analogy” is dealt with in sect. 3. To Suárez’s *Dialectic* we should add his *Philosophical Isagoge*, published in 1591 (with a critical reprint by Joaquín Ferreria Gomez published in 1965, University of Coimbra), which also saw 18 editions by 1623.

209 See Bueno, 2005, p.328.

210 B. de las Casas, *Historia de las Indias*, III, 4; Las Casas, 1957, vol. 2, p.176.

211 *Ibid.*

212 Montesinos asks: “Do you not feel it?” (*Ibid.*). The pages that follow from the *History of the Indies* deserve a thoughtful reading (pp. 177ss). This was a moment at which Modernity could have changed its course. It failed to do so and its route was inflexibly fixed until the 21st century. The astonishment of the conquistadors that their every action was unjust and morally-lacking was such that they could not believe it. The discussion was lengthy. The Dominicans had the philosophical arguments; the colonizers their unjust and tyrannical habits. In the end, the latter prevailed permanently, and it was on their basis that Modern European Philosophy was established. From the 17th century on the right of the modern Europeans (and North Americans of the 20th century) to conquer the Planet would never again be discussed.

213 See my comments in Dussel, 2007b, II, 5; pp.179-193.

214 B. de las Casas, *Historia de las Indias*, III, cap. 79; Las Casas, 1957, vol. 2, pp. 356. In Las Casas, B. de, 1957, *Obras escogidas*, BAE, Madrid, vol. 1-5.

215 *Ibid.*, p. 357

216 Bartolomé, *Apologética historia*, proemio; Las Casas, 1957, vol. 3, pp. 3-4.

217 *Brevísima relación de la destrucción de las Indias*; Las Casas, 1957, vol. 5, p.136.

218 Note that Bartolomé is describing the “master-slave dialectic.” He demonstrates, moreover, that the “pacification” of the Indies would only be possible “after all those who would be able to yearn or long for or think of *liberty* had died.” Bartolomé has a clearly anticipated vision of the violence of colonialism.

219 *Brevísima relación*; p. 137.

220 Descartes bases *modern* ontology on the abstract and solipsistic *ego cogito*. Bartolomé, on the other hand, bases the ethical-political *critique* of that ontology on the responsibility to the Other, to whom arguments are due to demonstrate the truth-claim itself. This is a paradigm founded upon Alterity.

- 221 Which come to 478 pages in the Mexican edition of 1942.
- 222 Las Casas, Bartolomé de, 1942, *Del único modo de atraer a todos los pueblos a la verdadera religión*, FCE, México, p. 81.
- 223 *Ibid.*, p. 82. Also *Del único modo...*, ch. 5, 3.
- 224 *Ibid.*, 5; p.94.
- 225 *Ibid.*, 32; pp. 303-304.
- 226 See this question in my Dussel, 1983, *Práxis latinoamericana y filosofía de la liberación*, Nueva America, Bogotá.
- 227 In Descartes or Husserl the *ego cogitum* constructs the Other (in this colonial case) as a *cogitatum*, but the *ego conquiero* had already constituted this Other as a “conquered” (*dominatum*). In Latin, *conquiero* means: to seek out with diligence, investigate with care, and to gather. As a result, the *conquisitum* is that which is diligently sought. But during the Spanish Reconquest against the Muslims, the word came to mean to dominate, subjugate, to go out and recover territories for Christians. It is in this new sense that we now want to deploy the term ontologically.
- 228 *Ibid.*, ch. 5, 1; p.65.
- 229 Las Casas, B. de, 1989, *Apología*, Alianza, Madrid., p. 168.
- 230 If we apply such a clear doctrine to the conquest of New England, and from there forward up to the current war in Iraq, we can see that patriots who defend their land are justified in doing so on the basis of the argument offered by Las Casas. See Dussel, E., 2007, *Política de la Liberación. Historia mundial y crítica*, Trotta, Madrid, p. 299.
- 231 Las Casas, B. de, 1989, *Apología*, Alianza, Madrid, pp. 155-156, 157 y 160.
- 232 “Letter to the Guatemalan Dominicans” in 1563; Las Casas, B. de, 1957, *Obras escogidas*, BAE, Madrid, vol. 1-5, vol. 5, p. 471.
- 233 *De regia potestate*, § 8; Las Casas, B. de, 1969, *De regia Potestate*, CSIC, Madrid, pp. 47 y 49.
- 234 See Dussel, E., 2007, *Política de la Liberación. Historia mundial y crítica*, Trotta, Madrid, § 10.3; pp. 380ss.
- 235 *Tratado de las doce dudas*, first principle; Las Casas, 1957, vol. 5, p. 492.
- 236 Las Casas, B. de, 1954, *De Thesauris*, CSIC, Madrid, p. 101.
- 237 *De Thesauris*, p. 218.
- 238 Beginning on March 15th 1571; *Colección de documentos inéditos para la historia de España*, 1842, t.13, pp. 425-469.
- 239 See Wachtel, Nathan, 1971, *La vision des vaincus*, Gallimard, Paris, pp. 134ss: “La destructuración.” The author shows (in the figure on p. 184) that in Incan times, the ayllu (basic community) paid tributes in work and products to the curacas (caciques, or chiefs) and to the Inca; the curaca paid tribute to the Inca and provided services to the ayllu; the Inca provided services to both the curaca and the ayllu. In the Inca Empire, the wealth remained within a closed circuit. After the conquest, the ayllu paid tributes in silver—and one had to sell themselves for a wage to get it—to

the curaca and to the Spaniard; the curaca paid tribute to the Spaniard and services to the ayllu; but the Spaniard provided no service to either the ayllu or the curaca. Moreover, the wealth of the Spaniard leaves the Peruvian circuit and sets out for Europe. Such a process of colonial extraction of wealth is 500 years old, this being what the now-globalized colonial system consists of, changing mechanisms but not its deeper significance as a transfer of “labor-value.”

240 See Rolena Adorno, “La redacción y enmendación del autógrafo...”, en Guamán, 1980, vol. 1. pp. xxxii ss.

241 See G. Gutiérrez, 1992, pp. 616ss; Subirats, 1994, pp. 141ss; Wachtel, 1971, pp. 245ss, etc.

242 In general, we will leave the originary orthography of Gauman’s Castelian (in order to give a taste of its linguistic singularity), although in some cases we will update it in order to make the reading easier. He re-appears a question: should the English translations keep the originary forms, e.g. “Yndians”?

243 *El Primer nueva Corónica*, 912 [926]; Guamán Poma, 1980, vol.3, p. 854.

244 There are, of course, exceptions: “Consider as wise [...] those holy doctors illuminated by the Holy Spirit [...] like brother Luys de Granada [...] like reverend brother Domingo [de Santo Tomás...] many holy doctors and graduates, masters, bachelors [...] Others [in contrast] who have not even begun to write the letters a, b, c, want to call themselves graduates, dimwit, and fraud, and sign as “don Beviendo y doña Calabaza,” (Mr. Drinker and Mrs. Pumpkin head) he writes with profound humor, irony, and sarcasm (*Ibid.*, p. 855).

245 In the emancipation process of the late 18th and early 19th centuries (as in the case of Brother Servando de Mier in Mexico), not owing “even Christianity” to the Spanish allowed him to deny other benefits that they might have brought to the Americas alongside the conquest and colonial administration.

246 Among Incas, no one was supposed to look at the sun (*Inti*), not even the Inca.

247 *El Primer Nueva Corónica*, 902-903 [916-917]; vol. 2, pp. 845-846. Author’s translation. See also Felipe Guamán Poma de Ayala, *The First New Chronicle and Good Government*. Tr. David Frye (Indiana: Hackett University Press, 2006). Also see The Guaman Poma Website: <http://www.kb.dk/permalink/2006/poma/info/en/frontpage.htm>

248 *Ibid.*, 22 [22]; vol. 1, p. 16.

249 *Ibid.*, s.n. [28]; p. 23.

250 *Ibid.*, 30 [30]; p. 25.

251 *Ibid.*, 42 [42], p. 35.

252 *Ibid.*, 45 [46]; p. 39.

253 *Ibid.*, 48 [48]; pp. 41ss.

254 Guamán, who probably belonged to a pre-Incan provincial aristocracy, idealizes the times prior to the Incas, characterizing the latter as “idolaters.” Perhaps in this

- way, he is able to refute the argument of Francisco de Toledo, the Viceroy, accepting certain critiques of the Incas, but not of the culture of Tawantinsuyo as a totality.
- 255 *Ibid.*, 79 [79]; pp. 63ss.
- 256 *Ibid.*, 90 [90]; p.70. "He was born in the time and reign of *Cinche Roca Ynga* when he was eighty years old. And in the time of *Cinche Roca Ynga*, he suffered martyrdom and was crucified" (*Ibid.*). The birth of Jesus Christ initiated the "fifth age" of the European-Christian chronology, but this was now connected with the Incan "fifth age" at the stage of the second Inca. As the New Testament story indicates: in the time of "Emperor Tiberius..." (*Luke*, 3,1). Guamán Poma is speaking metaphorically: "In the time of emperor *Cinche Roca Ynga*..."
- 257 *Ibid.*, 93 [93]; p.72. This period saw great cataclysms, and it is this reason that the epoch is referred as the era of the *pachacuti* (the transformer of the earth) or *pacha ticra* (the one that turns it on its head) (*Ibid.*, 95 [95]; p.74).
- 258 See Mignolo, 1995, *The Dark Side of the Renaissance: Literacy, Territoriality, and Colonization*, Michigan University Press, p. 5; Mignolo 2000, *Local Histories Global Designs*, Princeton University Press, pp. 51ss.
- 259 *El Primer Nueva Corónica.*, 120 [120]; p. 99.
- 260 *Ibid.*, 145 [146]; p. 122.
- 261 *Ibid.*, 174 [176]; p. 154. There are lists of other "queens" of every region of the Empire.
- 262 *Ibid.*, 182 [184]; pp.159-167. These even include the order: "We order that the lazy and dirty pigs be punished with that the filth of their farm or home or the plates they eat on or from their head or hands or feet be washed and given to them to drink by force in a *mate*, as punishment in all the realm" (*Ibid.*, 189 [191]; p. 164). Hygiene and cleanliness were as important as the triple commandment of: "Do not lie; do not stop working; do not steal!"
- 263 *Ibid.*, 194 [196]; pp. 169ss. Of warriors from 33 years of age on (although these existed from 25 to 50 years old); "of the walking elderly" (from 60 years); from 80 years; of the sick and crippled; 18-year-old youths; 12-year-olds; 9-year-olds; 4-year-olds; children who crawl; one-month-old child. Each age had its rights to begin with, and thereafter also its obligations.
- 264 Michel Foucault would have found this Incan institution interesting.
- 265 *Ibid.*, 201 [203]; p. 177. Similarly, "sick, lame, and blind women, widows, hunchbacked women and midgets, had lands and crops and homes and pastures, that sustained and fed them, and so had no need for alms" (*Ibid.*, 222 [224]; p. 197).
- 266 *Ibid.*, 215 [217]; pp. 190ss.
- 267 *Ibid.*, 244 [246]; pp. 219ss. At the end of the work there is a very valuable description of the "works" properly speaking of peasants (*campesinos*) (*Ibid.*, 1130 [1140]; vol. 3, pp. 1027), where Guamán corrects a bit his first description "from above," from the Incan festivals.

- 268 These were certainly human sacrifices, some of “five-year-old children” (*Ibid.*, 267 [269]; vol. 1, p. 241), others of twelve-year-olds or adults.
- 269 *Ibid.*, 299 [301]; pp. 272ss.
- 270 *Ibid.*, 301 [303]; pp. 275ss.
- 271 *Ibid.*, 315 [317]; pp. 288ss.
- 272 Of which this work has left testimonies which are not found in any other Quechua source (*Ibid.*, 317 [319]; pp. 288ss).
- 273 *Ibid.*, 340 [341]; pp. 312ss.
- 274 I recall in my youth climbing mountains of some 6500 meters in height in Uspallata, in a long valley, and soon we crossed a path that was absolutely straight, to the horizon (perhaps some 30 kilometers). We were told: this is the Incan Road, some 4,000 kilometers from Cuzco. In effect, as Guamán says: “With every league and a half marked with milestones, each road four rods in width and with a straight line of stones placed on both sides, which no kings on earth have made like the Inca” (*Ibid.*, 355 [357]; p.327). I have seen in the Mediterranean the stone roads of the Roman Empire, from the north of Africa to Palestine, Italy, and Spain. None was as “straight” as that of the Incas.
- 275 *Ibid.*, 361 [363]; pp. 332-333, where we can see a sketch of this predecessor of the modern abacus.
- 276 By this he means: one can already see in the customs of the Incas all the beauty and value of the best of the modern Christian ethic, which they preach... but do not obey.
- 277 This is the reproach of a “Christian” Indian.
- 278 *Ibid.*, 367 [369]; p. 339.
- 279 *Ibid.*, 369 [371]; vol. 2, p. 342.
- 280 *Ibid.*
- 281 *Ibid.* This “depopulation” owed to the violence of the conquest, the loss of structures of the Incan agricultural system (e.g., the Incas maintained the aqueducts, up to 400 kilometers in length, in perfect conditions, amid mountains, with stone bridges, etc.; the European colonial world allowed the destruction of the entire hydraulic system, constructed over more than 1,000 years); and especially illnesses unknown to the indigenous race.
- 282 *Ibid.*, 374 [376]; p. 347.
- 283 *Ibid.*, 389 [391]; p. 361.
- 284 *Ibid.*, 437 [439]; p. 405.
- 285 *Ibid.*, 446 [448]; p. 413.
- 286 Note the irony: Bartolomé de Las Casas also said, “they call themselves Christians,” the same that Guamán says here. “Christians from the mouth outward,” but true “demons from the mouth inward,” as with George W. Bush’s proposal to spread “democracy” to Iraq. Modernity is always identical to itself.
- 287 *El Primer Nueva Corónica.*, 485 [489]; p. 453.

288 Guamán is particularly scornful of “mestizos,” whom he deems “mesticillos” [Tr: “little mestizos”].

289 *Ibid.*, 504 [508]; p. 468. One of Guamán’s obsessions is that “the Indians of this kingdom will cease to exist first” (*Ibid.*, 520 [524]; p. 483), since the female Indians are snatched away from their natural partners. Among the miners, the Spanish take “the women of the Indians [...] by] force and take them away [from their husband] and deflower them, and they rape the women of their foremen, sending their husbands to the mines at night or sending them far away” (*Ibid.*, 526 [530]; p. 489). By the way, the suffering of the Indians in the mines, in the *tambos*, would be unimaginable (see pp. 488-505). He further characterizes the Spanish men and women as short, fat, lazy, arrogant, and sadistic in their treatment of domestic Indians (pp.506-515): “Before you are against the poor of Jesus Christ” (*Ibid.*, 543 [547]; p. 515).

290 *Ibid.*, 548 [562]; p. 519ss.

291 *Ibid.*, 552 [566]; p. 523. “And similarly with the women, because they tame them and save them for themselves [taxes and personal services] [...] And they fornicate with the maidens and widows” (*Ibid.*, 556 [570]; p. 526).

292 *Ibid.*, 561 [575]; p.533ss. “The Indian women become whores and nothing can be done. And so they don’t want to marry because they are following the priest or the Spaniard. And so the Indians of this kingdom do not reproduce, but instead *mestizos* and *mestizas* and nothing can be done” (*Ibid.*, 565 [579]; p. 534). The critique of the Church and the clerics reaches p. 663 (702 [716]), being one of the institutions that he specifically focuses on. In a sense, it is only the Franciscans and especially the Fathers of the Company of Jesus who come off well. This demonstrates a long-term hypothesis in the ideological history of Latin America. See 635 [647]; p. 603ss, and something earlier on 479 [483]; p. 447: “If only the clerics and Dominicans, Mercedarians, and Augustinians were like these so-called fathers of the Company of Jesus, who do not desire to return to Castile rich nor to have a hacienda, but for whom wealth is measured in souls!”

293 *Ibid.*, 712 [726]; pp. 670-687.

294 *Ibid.*, 738 [752]; pp. 688ss.

295 *Ibid.*, 791 [805]; p. 736. Guamán belonged to a family of Yarovilcas, local bosses who preyed on the Incas (see *Ibid.*, 1030 [1038]; vol. 3. p. 949). Fake *curacas*, collaborators with the Spanish, had forced them off their lands. It is for this reason that Guamán despised these “little bosses,” *curacas* who were not nobles but “faked it.” On his mother’s side, he might have been linked to a secondary Incan lineage.

296 *Ibid.*, 757 [771]; vol. 2, p. 707ss.

297 *Ibid.*, 792 [806]; pp. 739ss.

298 *Ibid.*, 820 [834]; p. 764.

299 *Ibid.*, 845 [859]; p. 791.

300 *Ibid.*, 857 [871]; p. 803.

- 301 *Ibid.*, 863 [877]; p. 809.
- 302 *Ibid.*, 884 [898]; p. 830
- 303 *Ibid.*, 902 [916]; p. 845.
- 304 There still exists, it would seem, a double-past. There is that of the Inca, which is frequently adopted as a reference-point. But at times we can sense a degree of criticism of Incan domination from the perspective of those regions further from Cuzco (to which Guamán himself belonged), and this is why we read: “The fourth *Auca Runa*, were people of little knowledge but were not idolaters. And the Spanish were of little knowledge but were from the beginning idolatrous gentiles, as were the Indians from the time of the Inca” (*Ibid.*, 911 [925]; vol. 3, p. 854). It would seem that, for Guamán, the greatest development of civilization involved idolatry, which was not the case for the more simple peoples lacking in mutual domination, as were the civilizations prior to the Incan Empire. “The ancient Indians up to the fourth age of the world called the *Auca Runa* looked to heaven [...] The Indians of the time of the Incas were idolatrous like the gentiles and worshipped the sun-father of the Inca” (*Ibid.*, 912 [926]; p. 854).
- 305 *Ibid.*, 938 [952]; p. 88. He writes: “The city of God and of poor men that kept their word.” Into this city, very few Spanish—but all the poor Indians, the “poor of Jesus Christ”—entered.
- 306 Interestingly, he uses the historico-political categories of Augustine of Hippo. See Dussel, 2007, [44-45].
- 307 *El Primer Nueva Corónica.*, 941 [955]; p. 882. Our author comments: “Consider the patience of the Indian men and women in this life of so many evils of the Spanish, the priests, the magistrates and mestizos and mulattos, the blacks, the blacks, the *yanaconas* and *chinchonas* who take the lives and the entrails of the Indians. Consider this.”
- 308 This is the title of the final “Table” (*Ibid.*, s.n. [1186]; vol. 3, p. 1067). This subject is discussed beginning at *Ibid.*, 909 [924]; vol.3, p. 852.
- 309 From *Ibid.*, 960 [974]; p. 896.
- 310 *Ibid.*, 911 [925]; p. 852.
- 311 Once again there is reference to a “law” prior to the Incas: “How the *first* Indians, although the Incas were idolaters, had faith and commandments from their gods and law and maintained and obeyed this good work” (*Ibid.*, 914 [928]; p. 857). Guamán even criticized the Incas from the perspective of these original utopian times, since he himself was not from an Inca family, but rather a nobility dominated by the Incas.
- 312 *Ibid.*, 936 [950]; p. 876.
- 313 *Ibid.*, 962c [979]; p. 899.
- 314 *Ibid.*, 972 [990]; p. 906.
- 315 *Ibid.*, 914 [928]; p. 857.
- 316 *Ibid.*

317 *Ibid.*, 915 [929]; pp. 857-858.

318 See Lockhart, 1992, pp. 14ss: "*Altepetl*." On the "dual" organization in "four" regions of the Inca Empire and the culture of the high plateau more generally, see Pärssinen, 1992, pp. 171ss: "*Principles of the Dual and Quaternary Structures*."

319 "You must consider what great majesty the *Ynga Topa Inga Yupanqui*, King of Peru, enjoyed [... like that enjoyed by] the kings and princes, emperors of the world, as well as Christians like the Great Turk and the Chinese King, Roman emperors and of all Christianity and of the Jews and the King of Guinea" (*Ibid.*, 948 [962]; p. 888). The Inca was a king on the same level of those described by other cultures, and moreover, the "Inca had four kings of the four parts of this kingdom" (*Ibid.*). Our author now proposes a new project: "For being monarch, King Felipe [below whom there would be four lesser kings:] To the first, I offer my child, a prince of this kingdom, grandson and great-grandson of *Topa Ingá Yupangi* [here reproducing a bit the project of Torquemada's *The Indian Monarchy*...]. The second, a prince of the King of Guinea, black; the third, of the King of the Christians in Rome [...]; the fourth, the King of the Moors of the Great Turk, the four crowned with their scepters and fleece" (*Ibid.*, 949 [963]; p. 889).

320 *Ibid.*, 949 [963]; p. 889.

321 *Ibid.*, 916 [930]; p. 858.

322 *Ibid.*, 957 [971]; p. 893.

323 *Ibid.*, 962 [976]; p. 896. "Tell me author, how is it that the Indians now do not multiply and become poor? I will tell your Majesty: Firstly, that they do not multiply because all the best women and maidens are taken by the priests, the *encomenderos*, the magistrates and Spanish, the foremen, lieutenants, and the officials raised by them. And as a result there are so many little mestizos and little mestizas in this kingdom. With the pain of disclosing to you they steal the women from the haciendas of the poor [... The Indian] would rather die than find himself in such pain" (*Ibid.*, pp. 897-898).

324 *Ibid.*, 963 [977]; p. 898.

325 *Ibid.*, 966 [984]; p. 902.

326 Marx's text to which we refer says the following: "To the [Lutheran German] State which professes Christianity as its supreme norm, which professes the Bible as its Magna Carta, we must contrast the Words of the Sacred Scripture which, as such Scripture, is sacred even to the letter [for Lutherans]. This State [...] falls into painful *contradiction*, irreducible on the plane of religious consciousness, when confronted by those evangelical maxims which not only does it not obey, but which it cannot obey" (*On the Jewish Question*, I; Marx, Karl, 1956, *Marx Engels Werke* (MEW), Dietz Verlag, Berlin, vol. 1, pp. 359-360). See Dussel, 1993, pp. 133ss.

327 *Ibid.*, 1094 [1104]; p. 1008.

328 In the second part of my work Dussel, 1965, I have attempted to glimpse the perspective of the Other of the process of invasion and conquest, the origin of the

violent praxis of Modernity.

329 A close reading of this *V Meditation* would be worthwhile, on the “Description of the transcendental sphere of the being as monological intersubjectivity” (§§ 42ss, of Husserl, Edmund, 1963, *Cartesianische Meditationen*, Martinus Nijhoff, Haag, pp. 121ss), in which the philosopher from Freiburg attempt to move beyond the *ego cogito*, when he deals with the question “of the Other” from the perspective of the “common life-world” (*der gemeinsamen Lebenswelt*) (§ 58, p. 162), setting out from the need to “admit that it is in me that the others as others are constituted” (§ 56, p. 156). For his part, Sartre will not be able to completely overcome the aporia represented by “the gaze” (*Le regard*) (Sartre, *L’être et le néant*, III, 1, iv; 1943, Gallimard, Paris, pp. 310ss), through which “the Other” is constituted as an irremediable object. The Other, for its part, similarly constitutes me as an object: “La personne est présente à la conscience en tant qu’elle est objet pour autrui” (*Ibid.*, p. 318).

330 Translated by Michael Barber and Judd Seth Wright, with assistance from Kepa Zubizarreta.

331 This article continues the thematic initiated in my works: “Sensibility and Otherness in Emmanuel Lévinas,” in: *Philosophy Today* (Chicago), Vol. 43: 2 (1999), pp. 126-134; “Lo político en Lévinas (*Hacia una filosofía política crítica*)”, in: Moisés Barroso-David Pérez, *Un libro de huellas. Aproximaciones al pensamiento de Emmanuel Lévinas*, Editorial Trotta, Madrid, 2004, pp. 271-293, and “Deconstruction of the concept of Tolerance: from intolerance to solidarity”, in *Constellations* (Oxford), Vol. 11, No. 3, September (2004), pp. 326-333.

332 Trans. R. Hollingdale, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1986, p. 149. The translator writes: “said” and “say,” but in German it is “rief” and “ruf” which means “to shout.” The Nietzschean text possesses a dramatism that Hollingdale’s translation diminishes. J. Derrida retains this meaning in the French (“s’écriait,” “s’écrit”; see J. Derrida, *Politiques de l’amitié*, Galilée, Paris, 1994, pp. 45 and 68).

333 Friedrich Nietzsche, *Menschliches, Allzumenschliches*, § 376 (Nietzsche, 1973, *Werke in Zwei Bände*, Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, Darmstadt, 1973, vol. 1, p. 404).

334 Nietzsche, *Wille zur Macht*, § 704; Nietzsche, *Gesammelte Werke*, Musarion, München, 1922, vol. 19, p. 151; Spanish ed., *Obras completas*, Aguilar, Buenos Aires, 1965, vol. 4, p. 268.

335 Trans. G. Collins, Verso, London, 1997.

336 See Antonio Damasio, *The Feeling of what happens. Body and Emotion in the Making of Consciousness*, A Harvest Book, New York, 1999; and by the same author, *Looking for Spinoza: Joy, Sorrow and the Feeling Brain*, Harcourt Books, Orlando (Florida), 2003.

337 On the *material* aspect (concerning *content*, *Inhalt* in German) of ethics see E. Dussel, *Ética de la Liberación*, Trotta, Madrid, 1998, chs. 1 and 4. On the *material* aspect of politics see my upcoming work, *Política de la Liberación*, §§ 21, 26 (vol. 2),

33 and 42 (vol. 3).

338 "Shout I, the living *fool*" [a.2]. As will be seen later in my interpretation, being "a fool" means a wisdom that is more than mere "ontological knowledge," and that criticizes that same ontology, but in the case of Nietzsche this critic is like a *pre*-ontological critic still making ontological reference to that which returns in the remote originary, Hellenistic past, whereas that which we propose amounts to a *trans*-ontological limit in reference to exteriority or alterity, which is the proposal indicated by Paul of Tarsus: "madness for the world" (a personage of "fashion," given the works of S. Zizek, A. Badiou, M. Henry, G. Agamben, F. Hinkelammert and others in actual *political philosophy*, and as we will treat him in § 3 of this article). I think that the Nietzschean text that we are analyzing is "beyond" his capacity of interpretation, because I think that that which he announces with genius not even he himself can resolve.

339 Derrida, 1997, Eng. ed., p. viii.

340 *Op. cit.*, Eng. ed., p. ix.

341 *Ibid.*, Eng. ed., p. ix.

342 In this article the concept of "metaphysics" has two completely different senses: first, in its traditional sense and so as Nietzsche here uses it (it is "metaphysics" in a sense that is *ontic* and innocent of a-critical realism); second, in the sense that E. Levinas uses it (where ontology is the order of Totality and metaphysics is of the order of Exteriority), which is metaphysics as *trans*-ontology: *meta*-physics. See Dussel, *Filosofía de la Liberación*, USTA, Bogotá, 1980, 2.4.9: "Ontología y metafísica."

343 Derrida, 1997, Eng. ed., p. 34.

344 *Ibid.*, Eng. ed., p. 39.

345 *Ibid.*, Eng. ed., pp. 83ff. Derrida will produce the work central to this question of C. Schmitt, *Der Begriff des Politischen*, Dunker und Humblot, Berlin, 1993.

346 It is the text of the gospel of *Matthew*, 5:44: "Love your enemies."

347 Derrida, *op. cit.*, Eng. ed., p. 123.

348 See chapter 1 of my *Ética de la Liberación*, Trotta, Madrid, 1998; and chapter 1 of the second part of my *Política de la Liberación*, forthcoming.

349 *Ibid.*, Eng. ed., p. 123.

350 For our part we distinguish between *power* or the "power of the political community *in itself*," the undetermined plurality of wills unified for fraternity and discursive consensus, in fulfillment of the possibilities determined by feasibility. This *power* is determined institutionally as *authority* (all the political institutions), as a delegated exercise of *power*, from the institutions of civil society to the political society or the State, in the Gramscian sense. See this theme in my *Política de la Liberación*, vol. 2, § 14. *Power* can be exercised as when "those who order order obeying" (of the Zapatista National Liberation Front of Chiapas). In this case power is an exercise with a "political pretension of justice." When "those who order order

ordering” against *power*, they weaken the *power from below* for the sake of being able to exercise a despotic power *from above* (it is the corruption of political power as such).

351 *Ibid.*, Eng. ed., p. 124.

352 C. Schmitt, *Der Begriff des Politischen*, Dunker und Humblot, Berlin, 1993, p. 35 (Spanish translation *El concepto de lo político*, Alianza Editorial, Madrid, 1998, p. 65).

353 “Justice says respect for the Other.”

354 The famous work of A. MacIntyre, in the debate about the formalist, analytical, or liberal morality of a North American communitarianism that tries to show the importance of the material (in a restricted sense; see Dussel, 1998, § 1.3), effects that history in the evolution of Anglo-Saxon thought: “So the Aristotelian account of Justice and of practical rationality emerges from the conflicts of the ancient polis, but is then developed by Aquinas in a way which escapes the limitations of the polis. So the Augustinian version of Christianity entered in the medieval period into complex relationships of antagonism, later of synthesis, and then of continuing antagonism to Aristotelianism. So in quite different later cultural context Augustinian Christianity, now in a Calvinist form, and Aristotelianism, now in a Renaissance version, entered into a new symbiosis in seventeenth-century Scotland, so engendering a tradition which at its climax of achievement was subverted from within by Hume. And so finally modern liberalism, born of antagonism to all tradition, has transformed itself gradually into what is now clearly recognizable even by some of its adherents as one more tradition” (MacIntyre, 1988, p. 10).

355 K. Marx, *Grundrisse*, notebook M, Eng. trans. Vintage Books, New York, 1973, p. 91. “In alimentation, for example, one form of consumption, the human being produces his own corporeality (*Leib*)” (*Ibid.*). The English translator confounds “to create” with “to produce”, “object” with “thing”, “objectivation” with “reification” (for this reason I have corrected the defective translation).

356 All of these are themes of our forthcoming *Política de la Liberación*.

357 See G. Agamben, *Stato di eccezione*, Bollati Boringhieri, Torino, 2003.

358 See the work of C. Schmitt, *Théorie du Partisan*, in *La Notion du Politique*, Flammarion, Paris, 1992, pp. 203-320. Although Schmitt and Derrida take revolutionaries as examples, they are not concerned however with the heroes of the colonial periphery in their wars for Emancipation (like G. Washington in the U.S.A., M. Hidalgo in Mexico, or S. Bolivar in Venezuela-Columbia). These examples give more clarity for understanding the “war of resistance” of the Sunni patriots against the “North American invasion” in Iraq, today in 2005.

359 Now it would still be necessary to make a distinction between “revolutionary war” or “emancipatory war” (progressive, democratic) and (fundamentalist) “terrorism,” before the newness of a global “revolutionary war” (with differing interpretations).

- 360 Derrida, 1994, French ed., p. 174; 1997, Eng. ed., p. 151.
- 361 *Ibid.*, Eng. ed., p. 164. That of “biblical” would have to be expressed simply in “Semitic” (on the contrary a confrontation between theology and philosophy has to appear), already that is an opposition between two *culturally distinct* experiences and which claim equal rights to be analyzed heremenutically *by philosophy*.
- 362 *Ibid.*, French ed., p. 190; Eng. ed., p. 165.
- 363 Cited in the work of C. Schmitt, *Ex captivitate salus*, Editorial Struhart, Buenos Aires, s.f., p. 85.
- 364 Cites Derrida, French ed., p. 190; Eng. ed., p. 165. The “final judgment” of *Maat*, as we have already indicated, is an Egyptian theme that precedes the Hebrew references by nearly twenty centuries.
- 365 Cited in Derrida, French ed., p. 317; Eng. ed., p. 285. He cites from the gospel of *Matthew 5:43* (and *Luke 6:26*). This text is already cited in the work of Schmitt, *El concepto de lo político*.
- 366 Derrida, 1997, Eng. ed., p. 51.
- 367 *Ibid.*, Eng. ed., p. 84.
- 368 Fragment 53 (Hermann Diels (ed.), *Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker*, Weidmannsche Verlagsbuchhandlung, Berlin, 1964, vol. 1, p. 162.
- 369 Because “[terrestrial] life is the death of each one [...] Our life comes to us for death” (Heraclitus, fragment 77, Diels, *Ibid.*, vol. 1, p. 168).
- 370 In Nietzsche one can intra-ontologically understand the negation of a certain *enmity*, that of the “strong,” which supports the domination of the “weak” (the Judeo-Christian ascetics, the Semites). This is done in such a way that when the “strong” (the Arian, the warrior, the “originary Greek”) undertake to annihilate the prevailing values, which means an inversion or a constitution of the past vices of the “weak” as if they were positive values, the strong affirm themselves as *friends* to the “strong,” which means the *enemies* of the system (of the “weak”). But the negation of this *enmity* is effected as the affirmation of “the Same,” of the *foundation*, of the being-past of the ancient system. The Modern Western world (of the “weak”) contradictorily calls itself a Greco-Roman inheritance: Nietzsche, by affirming originary *Hellenicity* against Judeo-Christian decadence, does not leave the realm of ontology. It is not a matter of a *solidarity* with the “strong,” now oppressed and needing to be affirmed anew (nor is it a matter of *fraternity*: the “strong” do not need that decadent friendship). It is sufficient to have hate or *enmity* for the “weak” who now masochistically and ascetically dominate against the Life of the “healthy” and “strong” (it is a vitalism of the right, reactionary, pre-fascist).
- 371 For Nietzsche that text manifests that “cowardly humility” of the “weak” that is not able to confront with pride the enemy as an enemy to be conquered. It is an operation of “weakness” before “power,” which does not attack it from the front but by a detour to situate itself in its back, to eliminate it by betrayal.
- 372 See Diagram 1.

373 *Matthew* 5:43.

374 After making the *critique* of enmity *within* the people of Israel, the *critique* of enmity against those *outside* of the people will appear. The *go'im* (non-Jews: Roman pagans, for example) will be invited to form part of the “new people.” It would be negation-overcoming (subsumption) of “absolute enmity,” in a new *universal fraternity* postulated for example, in Kant’s *Perpetual Peace* (every postulate affirms a logical *possibility* and an empirical *impossibility*) for all humanity (beginning with the Roman Empire in the case of primitive Christianity). The *empirical possibility* of the postulate is not found now within the horizon of politics nor of philosophy; it is within an horizon of hope proper to the mythical-religious narrative -as studied by Ernst Bloch in *Das Prinzip Hoffnung*, Suhrkamp, Frankfurt, 1970, vol. 1-3.

375 See my work *El humanismo semita*, Eudeba, Buenos Aires, 1969; *Filosofía de la Liberación*, USTA, Bogota, 1980, 2.4: “Exterioridad” (consult this and other of my works by internet www.clacso.org, virtual library, reading room); and *Ética de la Liberación*, 1998, already cited, chapters 4-6.

376 *Song of Songs* 1:2.

377 The so-called “biblical” or “religious” element of a text, within the Jacobinism of Modern European thought, discredits texts that are “symbolic-narrative” and those on which the philosopher, *as a philosopher*, can affect a philosophical hermeneutic. Hesiod’s *Theogony* is just as much a symbolic narrative as the *Exodus* of the Jewish narrative tradition. As one may see both can be an object of a philosophical hermeneutic. These texts are not *philosophical* for their contents, but for the *mode of reading them*. I would thus like to free myself from the contemptuous epithet that my analysis is “theological” because it takes for its analysis these “symbolic-narrative” texts.

378 This “tale,” which teaches by inventing or taking an example, is designated a *midrash*. It is properly neither symbolic nor mythical, but properly rational, and is constructed on a basis of selecting situations of daily life with pedagogical intention. Plato’s “myth of the cave” is evidently a “symbolic” (or mythical) tale, but the designated “parable (of *midrash*) of the Samaritan” is not since it does not have a symbol or myth. It is an ethical-rational narrative with explicit methodical structure.

379 *Luke* 10:25-37.

380 See in E. Levinas, *Autrement qu'être ou au-delà de l'essence*, Nijhoff, La Haye, 1974, pp. 102ff: “La proximité”.

381 The Platonic “critique” is theoretical: in the cave shadows are seen, not realities; “the many” (*hoi polloi*), the vulgar, confuse them with reality. The wise, the few, the best, leave the cave; it is a politically aristocratic myth. The socio-political tale of the *midrash* of the Samaritan is not mythical, it is socio-political, it is not aristocratic or democratic, it is *critical*; it is not theoretical, it is practical; it is not only ethical, it is socio-political.

382 See the ethical-philosophical sense of this action of a “closing” or a “totalization” of Totality (Dussel, *Para una ética de la liberación latinoamericana*, Siglo XXI, Buenos Aires, 1973, vol. 2, § 21: “El mal ético-ontológico como totalización totalitaria de la Totalidad”; pp. 34ff).

383 The verb (*spangkhnízomai*) used in the Greek text proceeds from the root of the substantive “bowels,” “viscera,” “heart,” and signifies “to be moved,” “to take compassion upon.” We wish to choose this root to express the feeling of “solidarity” (as critical emotivity upset at the suffering exteriority of the victim). It is rather radically different from the mere “fraternity” of Derrida; but neither is it the compassion of Schopenhauer, nor paternalistic commiseration, or superficial pity. It is the *metaphysical desire for the Other as other*.

384 From 1970 we insist in all our works that this experience is always political. See Dussel, *Para una ética de la liberación*, 1973, vol. 1, ch. 3, and subsequently in vols. 2 and 5 it is analyzed as the interpretation of the Other as other, as the person of another class or sex, as new generations, as exploited or excluded fellow citizens, as victim. Furthermore, see Dussel, *Filosofía de la Liberación*, 1977, § 2.6; *Ética comunitaria*, Paulinas, Buenos Aires, 1986, § 4.2; 1995 (all the work considering the Indian as the original Other of Modernity); and also my work *The Underside of Modernity*. Apel, Ricoeur, Taylor and the Philosophy of Liberation, Humanities Press, New Jersey, 1996, especially “The Reason of the Other: *Interpellation* as speech-act” (pp. 15ff); *Ética de la Liberación*, 1998, chs. 4 and 5.

385 See the work of Martha Nussbaum, *The Therapy of Desire. Theory and Practice in Hellenistic Ethics*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1994.

386 The lengthy text to which we are referring is John 8:21-49.

387 Additionally: “spirit” (*pneuma* in Greek, *ruakh* in Hebrew) is of the ethical-metaphysical order [ii], of Alterity.

388 Marx knew this well, and therefore he designated capital as Moloch (a Phoenician god), who needed human victims, the first-born children (like Edgar, Marx’s son, whom he considered “a one more victim more of the idol”) - capital, which returns interest (the most fetishized form, separated from “living work”). The Abrahamic myth has recovered a central place in actual political philosophy, in the work of S. Zizek, although it had such centrality before in the work of Hegel.

389 The dominant Judaism, and then the Christianities, affirmed a sacrificing Abraham (the Father asks for the blood of the Son). “Jeshua, on the other hand, appears to interpret this myth in a different way and recovers in this manner the original signification of the text. Abraham frees himself from the Law, recognizes that the Law requires murder, and discovers the God whose law is the Law of life [...] He does not kill, because he recognizes that liberty does not consist in killing. Then, his faith consists in that: in not being disposed to kill, neither his son nor others. Abraham frees himself before the law, frees himself to be an Abraham free in front of the Law” (Hinkelammert, 1998, pp. 51-52). This interpretation of Hinkelammert’s

is opposed to that of Freud, Lacan, Žizek, and many others.

390 To be a “Samaritan” is, at that time in Israel, to be someone who knows nothing of the Law, and also an enemy of the temple (because the Samaritans pretend that it was on Mount Garizim where one ought to worship God). This shows then the sense of the “*midrash* of the Samaritan,” but also indicates Jeshua’s critical sense when he speaks with the Samaritan woman and exclaims: “The hour is coming when you will worship [...] neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem” (*John* 4:20). Jeshua universalizes the critical defiance of the prophets of Israel, within the whole horizon of the Roman Empire, and beyond (now that their messianic communities had arrived in the Persian Empire and spread to Turkestan and Tarim and as far as Mongolia and China).

391 *John* 8:40-49. Nietzsche writes: “the living fool” (text already cited above). Jeshua was also a “fool” according to the priests of the temple: madness of “this world,” of the established, positive order. This is a critical rationality belonging to the world to come (“I am not of this world”). The ethical-political transcendentality of the category of Exteriority is substantivized by the Christianities (and their modern enemies) as an exclusively religious reign of an ethereal “heaven.” It lost its *rational* exteriority that was critical in the name of a subversive universality. Nevertheless, all the revolutionary movements of the culture called Western, Latin-Germanic, European (and Byzantine, Coptic, Armenian, etc.) emerge from this critical horizon.

392 See *La religión dentro de los límites de la pura razón* (Kant, *Werke*, Suhrkamp, Frankfurt, 1968, vol. 7, p. 760).

393 “*De la ley moral*” (VI, 3; Paidós, Buenos Aires, 2000, pp. 100ff).

394 *Ibid.*, p. 103.

395 See, for example, the works of Giorgio Agamben, *Il tempo che resta. Un commento alla Lettera ai Romani*, Bollati Boringhieri, Torino, 2000; Alain Badiou, *San Pablo. La fundación del universalismo*, Anthropos, Barcelona, 1999; Slavoj Žizek, *El frágil absoluto o Por qué merece la pena luchar por el legado cristiano?*, Pre-Textos, Valencia, 2002; Michel Henry, *Incarnation. Une philosophie de la chair*, Seuil, Paris, 2000; etc. - In reference to the work of G. Agamben, in which he demonstrates a great understanding of Greek and Semitic-Hebraic culture, he shows well the antinomy between “the Law” (*nomos*) and “faith” (*pístis*) (*Nomos*; Agamben, *op. cit.*, pp. 88ff), thinking that “Abramo viene giocato, per così dire, contra Mosè” (p. 89). There is no such an opposition between Abraham and Moses: the Abraham who does not want to kill his son is the Moses who says: “Thou shalt not kill!”. Agamben thinks that this opposition is an internal division of the same law: “si tratta piuttosto di opporre una figura non normativa della legge a quella normativa” (p. 91). But, no! Since Agamben does not distinguish the intrasystemic Law (*nomos tòn ergón*) at the ontological level (of the system) [i] from the extra-systemic opening of the “Law of faith” (*nomos pisteôs*) [ii]—in reference to the text of Paul, *Romans* 3:27 on which the Italian

philosopher is commenting—he falls into confusion. In effect, both “laws” have normativity, but differ in their content: one, obliged according to the requirements of the *fraternity* of the system [i]; the other, obliged according to the requirements of the extra-systemic *solidarity* [ii]. And therefore, he cannot clear up either, for example, the sense of “the messianic power” that founds itself in “weakness” (pp. 92ff). The “power” of the Other in *solidarity* is that which we designate *hypermultipower* in *Política de la Liberación*: the wills unified by a wise madness (the reasons that allow one to be against Habermas, but in consonance with A. Gramsci); the “critical consensus” with strategic feasibility, as a struggle for liberation of the oppressed and excluded (the *enemies* of the system). The “weakness” of that *people* in a process of liberation (like *plebs* that seek to be a *populus*)—the small army of G. Washington in Boston—transforms itself into “power” on the basis of the critical consensus of the new socio-political actors, and, on the other hand, from the crisis of legitimacy (“wisdom of the wise”) of the dominant system. In the end, Agamben remains still trapped in “Roman law.” “Semitic law” (from at least the twenty-fourth century B.C., long before Hammurabi) constructs itself from other *critical* categories that we are philosophically sketching in an introductory manner. In the same way, Alain Badiou (in the *op. cit.*) shows us a Paul whose conversion on the road to Damascus presents itself as the “event” (*événement*: see Badiou, *L'être et l'événement*, Seuil, Paris, 1988) which *opens a new world* (the “universalist Christian world”) that constitutes a new “regime of truth” to which its members keep fidelity. My critique consists in thinking that that “event” is the fruit of a subjective phenomenon lacking real, objective conditions, of oppression and exclusion within the Roman Empire, which will permit not only the “conversion” of Paul but also the acceptance of his “proposal” by the “oppressed and excluded”—“madness” for the dominant of the Empire. The concept of *solidarity* in Paul (*ágape*) distinguishes itself from mere fraternal (*philia*) and erotic (*éros*) “friendship”: it is love as responsibility for the Other, victim of the system. Badiou, suffers from a certain *idealism*, having lost sight of the socio-economic and political conditions of oppression of the Empire. *Solidarity* is *material*: give food to the hungry; cure the wounds of the traumatized; suppose a living corporeality institutionally inscribed in an inevitable system of dominator/dominated, of inclusion/exclusion, of ontological/ethical-metaphysical, of Totality/Exteriority, but situating them always, not exclusively, at an erotic, economic, political, etc., level.

396 It would be a good theme for discussion to show how, for example, Leo Strauss (who finds inspiration in Alfarabi, the great Islamic philosopher, who seeks the *conciliation* of philosophy and the *Koran*, but who at the end identifies the *esoteric* of his doctrine with Greek philosophy and the *exoteric* with the narrative of the *Koran*; in Strauss, in the same way, philosophy is the *esoteric* -the rational- and the biblical narrative the *exoteric* -the religious imaginary-) or Hannah Arendt (who in the end continued being a disciple of Heidegger and never went beyond ontology)—both

these did not capture the originality of the Semitic experience (as E. Levinas knew how to explain it).

397 bserve that the reading of this “text” (in the Louvre one finds one of these black stones where this text is written in cuneiform), allows the oppressed to confront the very *content* of the Law, which could be contrary to the distorted *oral* interpretation that the oppressor would be able to make of it had it not been *objectively* expressed *as written*. In this case *the writing* is a condition of the universality of the law in protection of the oppressed. Furthermore, we would be able to make another exegesis of the sense of the “being-written” not coinciding with that of Derrida.

398 *Code of Hammurabi*, ed. of Federico Lara Peinado, Tecnos, Madrid, 1986, p. 43.

399 Before the Other, thrown off the path, subjectivity suffers an impact on its “sensitivity,” in its capacity of “affectivity” in so much as it can be *affected* by a traumatism.

400 *Empirically* that court is the “critical consensus” of the community of the oppressed and excluded (see my forthcoming *Política de la Liberación*, Second part, chapter 5).

401 This is the “Law” that would kill Isaac, but Abraham does not fulfill it; it is that which kills Jeshua. Of this, Paul of Tarsus exclaims that the Law which ought “to give life (*zoë*), gives death (*thánaton*)” (*Romans* 7:10). When Paul says, “You shall not desire” (*ouk epithuméseis*) (*Rom.* 7:8) he does not treat Lacanian “desire” (desire as an impossibility of reaching satisfaction in the object), which opposes itself to the mere “drive” (which reaches satisfaction). Here the “desire of the *flesh*” is exactly “to want to totalize the system” (the fetishization of Totality) in *fraternity*. The Law of the system does not obligate the one who discovers *solidarity*, because that one does not accept the “drives” of the system, the “desire of the *flesh*.” In the system of domination there is not then consciousness of “fault” (*amartía*: sin), which consists in the “negation of the Other.” The totalized formalism of the Law kills: kills the Other; is the desire of the death of the Other. When the “spirit” of the Law reveals itself, formalist law shows all its murderous power (it is the Law which justifies the death of the Other). For its part, the “*désir métaphysique*” of Levinas is not that “desire” of the system (the *fraternity*: the “desire of the *flesh*”), but a “desire for the Other *as other*,” in its Difference (it is, again, *solidarity*): “The metaphysical desire (*désir métaphysique*) has another intention – it desires beyond everything that can simply complete it. It is like goodness: the Desired does not fulfill it, but deepens it” (E. Levinas, *Totality and Infinity*, Duquesne University Press, Pittsburgh, 1969, p. 34).

402 In 1546 this thinker writes, defending the indigenous of Peru, a political historical work: *De potestate regis* (see my *Política de la Liberación*, § 06, [101ff]), where he justifies the illegitimacy of every decision of the King which would be opposed to the *consensus populi*.

403 "History is an object of a construction whose place is not constituted by homogenous and empty time [i], but by a full time, *now-time*" [ii] (*Tesis de filosofía de la historia*, 14; in *Discursos Interrumpidos I*, Taurus, Madrid, 1989, p. 188). And yet: "In this structure is recognized the sign of a *messianic* delay or said in another way: of a revolutionary juncture in the struggle in favor of the past oppressed person" (*Ibid.*, *Tesis*, 17; p. 190). Messianic "time" is the irruption in history of *solidarity*; that is to say, of somebody who is encountered invested with responsibility for the Other who obligates one to work against the current: it is the irruption of the critical "word" [ii] which becomes present in the "flesh" [i]: the system of "unbroken time."

404 Miguel Hidalgo is obligated: either to deny his cause (to be a traitor to his oppressed people), held as a hostage by the Spanish in the Mexico of 1811 (a situation considered by E. Levinas in his second great work of 1974), or to die as a traitor ("of his king and his god"). What made Hidalgo unacceptable is that having belonged to the dominant group (as white criollo and priestly authority before the people) he would have *betrayed* his *friends* (of New Spain, the colony) and would have turned into a *friend* the *enemies* of the colonial system.

405 Paul of Tarsus, *I Corinthians* 1:18. The rest of the texts are from *I Corinthians* 1, 26-2, 14.

406 The Totality, the system, is the "flesh," but inasmuch as it is a subjective, existential, anthropological category. Moreover, the "flesh" is the unitary expression of being human (there is neither "body" nor "soul"; the Greek soul is immortal; the Semitic flesh dies and revives). See Dussel, *El dualismo en la antropología de la Cristianidad*, Editorial Guadalupe, Buenos Aires, 1974.

407 *Isaiah* 29:14. This "wisdom of the system" dominator is then "wisdom of the flesh" (σοφία σάρχα), is "the dying sage".

408 The "world" is also the totality of the system, but as a category that expresses a more objective, institutional, historical level as a structure of political power.

409 This Semitic "dabar," or Greek "lógos," originates in the ancient manifestation of the Egyptian god Ptah, whose "language" (like that of the Semites) was the word as wisdom, the goddess *Thoth*. Egypt is behind Greece and the Palestinians (among whom one finds the Jews, whose Hebrew language was a Canaanite dialect).

410 *John* 1:14.

411 See Ernesto Laclau, *La razón populista*, FCE, Mexico, 2005.

412 Nonetheless, we ought to add to Benjamin two fundamental aspects, not clear in his reliable individualism: a) the *messiah* has a memory of heroic deeds (a memory of the struggles of a people, and for that also *another* history [ii] than the history of unbroken-time [i]); and the messiah b) is a *messianic community* (a *people*), a collective actor of the construction of another future system [ii], beyond the "Egyptian enslavement" (metaphor of the oppressor ontology).

413 The "maimed of Lepanto" pretends as if an author of a *superior culture* to the European, that is to say the Arabic, which proceeds from the black South of North

Africa, from *The Thousand and One Nights*, had dictated his work: “Cide Hamete recounts [...] in this [...] history, that [...]” (Miguel de Cervantes, *Don Quijote de la Mancha*, I, ch. xxii; Real Academia Española, Mexico, 2004, p. 199).

414 *Ibid.*, ch. 1, p. 29.

415 The text in *ibid.*, ch. xxii, pp. 199-210.

416 The text in *ibid.*, p.200.

417 The text in *ibid.*, p. 207.

418 “Pasamonte, who suffered nothing well, being already informed that Don Quixote was not very sane [...]” (*Ibid.*, p. 209), that is to say, was *mad*. Cervantes presents the madness of fiction as the horizon from which is possible the critique of the system, which is accepted likewise as the critique of the clown in the Medieval festivals of the “Christ the Buffoon,” where a critique in a carnival-fashion could be mounted of even the king or bishop in power. Festive catharsis: metaphor of empirical, historical, real revolutionaries. Like the slaves of Brazil who in their ritual dances “struggled like the Lord of the talented,” [here is an] anticipatory symbol of the effective socio-economic and political struggle which will be launched against slavery.

419 Kant, I., 1968, *Werke*, Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, Darmstadt, vol. 1-10: vol. 7, pp. 645ss. (Dussel’s citations.)

420 *Ibid.*, 9, pp. 263ss.

421 I, II (pp. 300ss.).

422 *Ibid.* I, A 44; p. 300.

423 *Ibid.*

424 *Ibid.*, A 70; p. 314.

425 A myth, as Paul Ricoeur has explained, is a symbolically-based rational narrative, whether religious or not.

426 *Ibid.*, A 65; p. 312: “Begriffe der Vernunft,” interpreted through “symbolic representations” (*symbolischen Vorstellungen*). A bit later, Kant adds: “This book [the Scriptures...] can be interpreted (*ausgelegt*) theoretically [...] according to practical, rational concepts” (*Ibid.*).

427 See what I have already indicated in vol. I of my *Política de la Liberación*, (Dussel, E., 2007, *Política de la Liberación. Historia mundial y crítica*, Trotta, Madrid (vol. I), 33-38.) There I discuss the present subject, but with reference to the founder of Christianity, one Jeshúa ben Josef (to call him as he was called by the Semites or by Taubes, Jacob, 2004, *The Political Theology of Paul*, Stanford University Press, Stanford.)

428 Kant, *Religion Within the Limits of Pure Reason*, prologue to the first edition of 1793, BA xvi; Kant, 1968, vol. 7, p. 655: “This [philosophical] theology, insofar as it remains *within the limits of pure reason* and utilizes for its confirmation and the clarification of its theses history, languages, the books of all peoples, including the Bible, but only for itself, without introducing such theses in Biblical theology,” that

is, remaining on a philosophical horizon.

429 See the two volumes entitled *Politische Theologie. Vier Kapitel zur Lehre von der Souveränität*, published in 1922 (Schmitt, 1996), and *Politische Theologie II. Die Legende von der Eredigung jeder Politischen Theologie*, published in 1970 (Schmitt, 1996b). (Schmitt, Carl, 1996, *Politische Theologie. Vier Kapitel zur Lehre von der Souveränität*, Duncker und Humblot, Berlin. Schmitt, C., 1996b, *Politische Theologie II. Die Legende von der Eledigung jeder Politischen Theologie*, Duncker und Humblot, Berlin.)

430 It should be understood that said “Christian Commonwealth,” Anglican to be specific, is already a community of believers, a historical, concrete, and religious Church: the ambiguous Christendom. This is level c.1 of *Figure 1* (see *Política de la Liberación*, I, [39ss]).

431 This would be precisely Kant’s “rational theology” (or Theodicy) as we have seen.

432 Hobbes, *Leviathan*, III, ch. 32 (Hobbes, 1996, p. 255), Dussel’s emphasis.

433 *Ibid.*, p. 259.

434 We will write *Jeshúa* (or *Josef*) with a “j” which in Mediterranean languages (Greek, Hebrew, or Spanish) is guttural (like the Spanish “j” of Arabic origin), but which will be pronounced here like a Latin “i” (*Ieshúa*). On the other hand, for the Spanish “j” we will use the letters *kh* and not *j*. Among Semitic peoples when a male has no descendants his parentage is indicated (son of: ben Josef).

435 The meaning of “being children of God” enunciated for slaves, the oppressed, and the excluded is the moment of the “ransom” (the payment to free the slave: “redemption,” a subject suggested so clearly by W. Benjamin). See Hinkelammert (Hinkelammert, F., 2008, *Hacia una crítica de la razón mítica. El laberinto de la Modernidad*, Editorial Driada, México, pp. 17ss) where he engages in a reflection upon Marx’s text: “The critique of religion leads to the doctrine of the human being as the supreme essence for the human being, and consequently to the categorical imperative to undermine all relations in which the human being is a humiliated, subjugated, abandoned, and worthless being [*ein erniedrigtes, ein geknechtetes, ein verlassenes, ein verächtliches*]” (Marx, Karl, 1956, *Marx-Engels Werke (MEW)*, Dietz Verlag, Berlin, vols. I-XL, I, p. 385).

436 Tamez, Elsa, 1991, *Contra toda condena. La justificación por la fe desde los excluidos*, DEI, San José (Costa Rica), pp. 51-75. This is a very precise commentary on Paul’s *Epistle to the Romans*.

437 Agamben, Giorgio, 1995, *Homo sacer. Il potere sovrano e la nuda vita*, Einaudi, Torino. We need to understand that the fundamental categories of Roman law are not, universally, the same categories of a necessary *Politics of Liberation*. If the *nuda vita* is the initial ontological moment of Roman law this does not mean that it should be used in the same manner today. *Nuda vita* should be instead reinterpreted with reference to another horizon (see *Política de la Liberación*, vol.2, § 14 [250ss]).

- 438 See what we have already said in [33-38] of vol. 1 of *Política de la Liberación*.
- 439 *Religion Within the Limits of Pure Reason*, III, 3, A 130ss, B 129ss; Kant, 1968, 7, pp. 757ss: "The concept of an ethical community (*ethischen Gemeinen*) is the concept of a people of God (*Volke Gottes*) under ethical laws." This is what Hegel, writing to Schelling, would call the "invisible Church."
- 440 See Dussel, E., 1975, *El humanismo helénico*, EUDEBA, Buenos Aires, I, pp. 3ss.
- 441 In general, contemporary philosophical discussions of Paul of Tarsus drifts about in a deep ignorance of the *anthropological* vision of this great militant (who S. Žižek rightly compares to Lenin, although we will show where we disagree with his interpretation later). Years ago, I studied this question *in great detail*. See at the very least Dussel, 1969 and 1974b (Dussel, Enrique, 1969, *El humanismo semita. Estructuras intencionales radicales del pueblo de Israel y otros semitas*, Eudeba, Buenos Aires. Dussel, E., 1974, *El dualismo en la antropología de la Cristiandad*, Editorial Guadalupe, Buenos Aires.). Few among those philosophers discussing such themes at present show sufficient knowledge of these distinctions.
- 442 Against what many have believed since Harnack (who W. Benjamin and many others read) and Nietzsche, this expression is identical to the following: "What has been born of the *flesh* (*sárx*) is *flesh*, and what has been born of *spirit* (*pnéuma*) is *spirit*" (*John* 3, 6).
- 443 This is the subject of my book *El humanismo helénico* (Dussel, 1975).
- 444 The second *death*, the physical, was in turn interpreted not as the devaluing of the body in the impersonal immortality of the soul, but instead as the valorization of the *flesh* as deserving of its resurrection or *personal*, singular reaffirmation, with one's own name (as in the final Judgement of *Ma'at* before Osiris; see my *Política de la Liberación*, vol. 1 [8]). On intersubjective Semitic anthropology, see Dussel, 1969. The later process of confrontation between Hellenic and Semitic-Christian conceptions of anthropology occurs from the first century CE onward (see Dussel, 1974b).
- 445 "Do not conform to this *eón*" (*Rm* 12, 2). On these two orders, ages, or *eónes*, see figure 9 of my book *Twenty Theses on Politics* (2008, p. 79). We are speaking of the *philosophical* categories "Totality" and "Exteriority" in my vocabulary, as will be seen below.
- 446 See M. Jay's work *Marxism and Totality* (Jay, Martin, 1984, *Marxism and Totality*, Berkeley University Press, Berkeley.), as well as all of my works (you can search for this concept using the program "copernic.com" in my books at www.enriquedussel.org).
- 447 From now on, whenever we use the term "messianic" or "messianism" (which originate from "messiah" (*mesías*), with its semantic roots in the Hebrew for *oil*, as he who *consecrates* the *anointed*; in Hebrew: *meshiakh*, מָשִׁיחַ; in Greek: *khristós*, we refer to those who fulfill one of two possible functions: that of king

("Davidic messianism") or that of prophet ("prophetic messianism"). As a result, in Antiochia the community of followers of Jeshúa ben Josef was deemed: *khristianói* (messianics). When we use the word "messianics" between quotes, this should be read "Christians."

448 See in vol. II of my *Política de la Liberación*, [377ss], the difference between foundation, justification, and application (and still a fourth concept could be proposed: the subsumption of an act into a principle, or a principle into a field). Recall Kant's distinction between "reflective judgement" (from the particular to the universal) and "determinant judgement" (from the given universal to the particular); this distinction is clarified in vol. I of my *Política* [172]. Here the justificatory criterion is the universal, and it "subsumes" (*subsumiert*) the particular (the actor or act to be justified). (Kant, UK, B xxvi, A xxiv; Kant, vol. VIII, p.251).

449 The text refers to *tsadik*, according to the following passage: "the righteous [*tsadik*] will live by *emunáh*" (*Habakkuk* 2, 4), and not so much here to the concept of "justification" as *mishpat*.

450 The god Osiris, again, in Egyptian ethical-political myth observed (and was therefore represented by an eye in hieroglyphic texts) all acts, even the most secret, which would be judged publicly in the Final Judgment of *Ma'at*. This is already "moral conscience," an everyday anticipation of such transcendental Judgment.

451 Which we have explained in *Política de la Liberación* at § 15 [262ss].

452 Indicating with this the continuity between the position of the *Gospel of John* and Paul's *Epistles* (against Harnack's claim, which is supported to some degree by J. Taubes), a continuity which in my personal view extends even to *Revelation* (Hinkelammert, 2008).

453 Hinkelammert, F., 1998, *El grito del sujeto*, DEI, San José.

454 Hinkelammert, 1998, p. 27.

455 Which in reality was an old criterion, but one which had been obscured among the Law's many commandments.

456 *Exodus*, 20, 17.

457 Lacan, 1992, *The Ethics of Psychoanalysis*, Norton, New York, pp. 83-84.

458 I have already shown elsewhere the contrast to Greek thought which, for example, in the death of the righteous (Socrates) demonstrates (to his disciples) the injustice of the judges without ever calling into question the very justice of the law. Now we confront a much more radical position.

459 Hinkelammert, 1998, p. 45.

460 See G. Agamben's interpretation (Agamben, G., 2005, *The Time that Remains: A Commentary on the Letter to the Romans*, Stanford University Press, Stanford, p. 99).

461 Dialectically and diachronically, the *old* Law is that of the unjust prevailing political system which will need to be deconstructed and overcome in the *new* future system (with its *new* Law). Evo Morales, for example, inaugurates his delegated and

obediential exercise of power through the proclamation of a *new* Constitution, which derogates the previous one, not merely contradicting it but surpassing it in a *new* form. This is the diachronic political dialectic which is implicit in Paul's rational, symbolic-religious narrative.

462 It is clear that for the symbolic religious narrative the ultimate source was divinity, the eternal Word, which constituted a new intersubjective subjectivity through a gift called *grace*. We need to read these symbolic expressions in light of categorical, philosophical rationality.

463 "The mark of this critical and dangerous moment" (Benjamin, Walter, 1991, *Gesammelte Schriften*, Suhrkamp, Frankfurt, vol. I-VII, p. 578).

464 "La historia me absolverá" (in Castro, Fidel, 1975, "La historia me absolverá," in *La revolución cubana*, Editorial Era, México, p. 39).

465 This is "Now-Time."

466 This concept is rooted in "*doûlos*," servant, slave. It is the praxis proper to the "*hebed*," the *meshíakh*. See my article on the "Servant to Yahveh" (Dussel, 1969, Appendix), which is also liberatory praxis as *labor*, as *service*, *habodá*).

467 *Agápe*, which in the terms "charity" or "love" has lost its powerful original meaning, refers in Greek to this affection, this solidarious fraternity which transcends the "friendship" of the dominators, and which unifies the "messianic" community: "*Agápe* (love) without frictions [...] Do not go backward in your tasks, remain fervent in *pneúmati* (spirit)" (*Rm* 12, 9-11).

468 It is in this precise sense that this is a politics of "liberation," of the "redemption" of the oppressed, the exploited, the excluded. "*Sôma pneumatikós*" refers directly to the rescued human being in a new Alliance (that of the "messianic people"): as when Evo Morales launches a profound transformative process that will culminate in a referendum to approve a *new* Constitution (the law that subsumes the old, expired Law).

469 Here it would be necessary to distinguish between those "transformations" necessary in the creative time of the emergence of the new political system (diachronically, moment A) and even those of classical time (moment B of institutions, see my *Twenty Theses* (Dussel, E., 2008, *Twenty Theses on Politics*, tr. G. Ciccariello-Maher, Duke University Press, Durham, NC.), thesis 17.2) from those "transformations" or mere "reforms" occurring in the period of institutional decadence, which is what is referred to by the subject of the *katégon*, a question which is debated by C. Schmitt and J. Taubes (Taubes, 2004, pp. 107-113).

470 This is something like, for example, when after the end of the Cold War, the United States no longer had anyone to "hold it back"—not Europe, not Russia, no one—and began to launch military interventions which are suicidal for the Empire itself, which fell into a delirium and then into the terrible "financial crisis," the effect of its own immoral contradiction so many times foretold by, among others, I. Wallerstein and myself.

471 This expression “in the now-time,” translated directly as W. Benjamin’s “*Jetzt-Zeit*,” appears frequently in the *Epistle to the Romans*. See for example its use in 3, 26; 8, 18; etc. It expresses within the Jewish symbolic narrative the “Day (of the manifestation) of God,” the *dóxa Theou*.

472 This is the “as if not” (*hos me*) (I Corinthians 7, 29-31) analyzed so well by G. Agamben, 2005, pp. 75ss.

473 In the example of Mexico this refers to the *old* system which has been surpassed. It matters not if this was done by a priest from among the creole elite or a *mestizo* like Morelos y Pavón. A “hero” is determined by their behavior in the new situation, not in the old one. The so-called “bandit” Pancho Villa was able to become a “hero” in the “messianic time” of the 1910 Mexican Revolution.

474 Here G. Agamben makes an essential wager: “every people,” insofar as it “stands up as a people” (as J. J. Rousseau would say), is “the” chosen people.

475 Agamben, 2005, p. 58. And for our purposes this is essential. Here Agamben cites a passage by M. Foucault: “This part of pleb does not represent some exteriority with regard to power relationships as much as it represents their limit, their ruin, their consequence.” I have used concepts similar to those employed by G. Agamben and M. Foucault for more than forty-eight years (see my article written in 1961: Dussel, Enrique, 1969, *El humanismo semita. Estructuras intencionales radicales del pueblo de Israel y otros semitas*, Eudeba, Buenos Aires., p. 156ss; and Dussel, E., 1973, *Para una ética de la liberación latinoamericana*, Siglo XXI, Buenos Aires, vol. 1-2, vol. II, § 63, pp. 64ss), the only difference being that this *plebs* always maintained a certain degree of “exteriority” (*beyond* an intra-systemic, constitutive domination), and from this relative Exteriority the seat of a *new* power can now be affirmed, the “hyper-potentia” (or creative “hyper-power” that constitutes the central thesis of the *Politics of Liberation*). The *people* is discussed in this sense in § 38. See also thesis 11.3 in Dussel, 2008.

476 This is a profoundly revolutionary passage: “kaleso ton on laon mou , laon mou.”

477 Heidegger, 2004, *The Phenomenology of Religious Life*, tr. M. Fritsch and J. Gosetti-Ferencei, Indiana University Press, Bloomington, I, 1, § 1.

478 *Ibid.*, II, 1, § 14 (p. 45).

479 Re-reading Luther’s texts (see for example *Aus der Roemerbriefvorlesung 1515-1516* [Luther, Martin, 1963, *Luther Werke in Auswahl*, Walter de Gruyter, Berlin, vol. I-VII, vol. V, pp. 222ss], or *Aus der Galaterbriefvorlesung 1516-1517* [*Ibid.*, pp. 327ss]) we can see in this great Reformer a rather individualist and subjectivist interpretation, rather than a more “messianic,” intersubjective, and communal view. This leads him to ambiguous formulations, such as when he writes: “Igitur ego ipse mente servio legi Dei, carne autem legi peccati” (*Roemerbrief*, Duodecimum; *Ibid.*, p. 259). In this passage, the “spiritual” is considered as a moment of the “mind,” and the “flesh” as *body*. He thereby eliminates all of the intersubjective and communal

meaning of *messianic concepts*, and “flattens” them as anthropological moments (body-soul, and part of the soul). In this way, “being at the *same time* [*simul*] righteous [as both *spiritual* and as a free gift] and sinner [as *flesh* under the Law]” are not clearly discerned as pertaining to *two different times*. In the *first time* of the Law one is a *sinner* without the possibility of being saved (*khrónos*); in the *second time* (*kairós*), the messianic time of *emunáh*, one is *righteous* (through the intervention of a gratuitous justice in *redemption* [the *ransom* that frees the slave from the Law], because the sins of the *first time* are pardoned insofar as one is committed to the labor of the “dangerous time” of the messianic saga: a transcendental *time* and *space* with respect to the facticity of everyday life under the Law). Regardless, Luther understands well that the *medieval* Church (which was still not “catholic” because “Catholicism” is a *modern* phenomenon, one concomitant with and simultaneous to the “Protestant Reform”) had fallen—as “Latin-Germanic Christendom”—into a system “under the Law” (Augustine’s “City of Cain”; see what we have written in *Política de la Liberación*, vol. I, [66] and [95ss]).

480 *Ibid.*, § 4 (Heidegger, 2004, pp. 9ss).

481 *Ibid.*, 2, § 10 (pp. 33ss).

482 *Ibid.*, II, 3, § 24 (pp. 61ss) [Dussel’s emphasis—Tr.]. It would take a long time, leading us away from our subject, if we were to follow Heidegger’s phenomenological itinerary step-by-step. But in any case, we must mention that in § 22 he clarifies the three fundamental aspects of the “factual life experience”: a) It is a historic situation; b) we must manage to observe the unfolding of the situation, describing the plurality of its moments, reorienting ourselves toward its generative kernel, and describing the rest on the basis of this center, and finally, c) returning to the origin (p. 57).

483 See Dussel, 1973, vol. I, § 4, pp. 47ss.

484 *Ibid.*, p. 114.

485 *Ibid.*

486 *Ibid.*, 4, § 29; p. 81 [Dussel’s emphasis—Tr.].

487 *Ibid.* [Dussel’s emphasis—Tr.]. As we can see, Heidegger echoes this historically-implausible anti-Jewish judgment.

488 See my *Política de la Liberación*, vol. II, § 15 [262ss]. Moreover, one could consult Laclau for a critique of the foundations of Badiou’s interpretation (to which we will return later, in § 37 [of the *Política*—Tr.]).

489 Badiou, 2003, *Saint Paul: The Foundation of Universalism*, Stanford University Press (from the original 1997 French edition).

490 *Ibid.*, p. 31.

491 *Ibid.*, p. 45.

492 Since *Le (re)commencement du materialisme dialectique* (1967), passing through *Théorie du sujet* (1982), *Peut-on penser la politique* (1985), and up to the first volumen of *L’être et l’événement* (1988), and the second in 2006.

493 See the discussion of this subject in Badiou, 2003 pp. 25-50 *passim*. In effect, firstly, when Paul speaks of the “unknown god,” he is listened to attentively, because this is a subject which is *understandable* (from everyday life [level *a* in Figure 1] and Greek philosophy [level *c.2.α*]). But when he speaks of the “resurrection of the flesh” they no longer listen to him, because this is an *incomprehensible* subject for the everyday and Greco-Roman philosophical worlds (not because it is irrational or anti-philosophical). On the other hand, it is a subject which is perfectly *understandable* on both levels within the *Semitic* or Egyptian worlds (and in no way are we introducing the false question of *theology* [level *b.1*], into which many fall, including even J. Habermas and G. Vattimo years ago and many others who think that the phenomenological philosophy elaborated in the *Semitic* experience of E. Levinas, or my own, is *theology*). Stefan Gandler (as well as my very esteemed colleague Bolívar Echeverría, who I appreciate for his knowledge of Marx) also claims that “Enrique Dussel, the ex-liberation theologian” (Gandler, Stefan, 2007, *Marxismo crítico en México: Adolfo Sánchez Vázquez y Bolívar Echeverría*, FCE, México., p. 34) in the end supports the Catholic Church and falls into dogmatism; that is to say, I am accused of engaging covertly in theology. I believe that they have understood little of what I am saying. For his part, Michael Löwy comes to the defense of “liberation Christianity” when he writes: “it seems to me that Stefan Gandler is *mistaken* in considering Samuel Ruíz and liberation theologians to be *committed to the brutal power* of Karol Wojtila” (*Ibid.*, en in the prologue to his book, p. 16) [translated from the Spanish edition—Tr.]. This is still a Eurocentric and modern view of the question, since the popular religious imaginary has not been grasped on the everyday level, on the basis of which it can become philosophy! We should return to the subject at hand.

494 The comparison of Paul with Pascal, Kierkegaard, or Claudel is far from incidental (see *Ibid.*, p. 2).

495 In Hebrew (Aramaic), Jeshúa ben Josef orders a dead girl: “*Talita kúmi*” (Young girl, arise!). For Paul, “death” certainly had many meanings, one referring to those who respected the Law of the prevailing system. For Badiou, death linked to suffering has no meaning, because he believes that the only meaning can be the masochistic view that suffering in itself can save someone. We are dealing with something very different. The “death of the righteous” contemplated by his disciples (or the death of the members of the “messianic” community in the Roman Circus before the multitude of Roman slaves and oppressed) produces the contradiction of the system with itself and dismisses the Law (which kills the innocent); it undermines its “legitimacy,” erasing the subjective adhesion of the members of the system which gives foundation to its normativity in a Law that kills unjustly. “Justification by Law” is swept away by the “death” (of the righteous).

496 The *first* and the *second* terms being dominator and dominated *within* the Totality, the “flesh,” “this world,” “under the regime of the Law.”

497 *Ibid.*, p. 14.

498 *Ibid.*, pp. 14, 29, etc.

499 This concept translates into Greek as *éthne*: “nation,” or in the plural, “the nations,” the pagans, the non-chosen, the not-Israel, those for whom Paul sees the possibility of *dialectical overcoming* (or *Übergehen*, but in this case, strictly speaking, this is ana-lectical rather than dialectical, because it offers *novelty* from the *Exteriority* of Greco-Roman life, the *positive* Semitic experience, that of the slaves and those dominated from *outside* the Empire). This overcoming occurs through the “messianic” community that would dismiss the Empire, the temple, the Law, and the old contradictory customs prevailing within the very same “messianic” community (signified in the figure of “Peter,” who does not dare to disobey the *old* Law).

500 See *Ibid.*, p. 13. It is not *singular* because it is *communal*, as a *people* (the *remainder*), and has negative causal conditions: the suffering of millions of human beings throughout the Empire, and the anguish of the impossibility of fulfilling Israel’s Law.

501 *Ibid.*, p. 15.

502 *Ibid.*

503 *Thesis* 2 (Marx, 1956, vol. III, p. 533). Up to this point we agree with Badiou.

504 *Thesis* 3 (*Ibid.*, 1956, pp. 533-534).

505 See thesis 17.2 in my book Dussel, 2008. This *change* would be a) “reformist” if it intends “to work” within the Law (the “works of the Law” which were perhaps not interpreted in this way by Martin Luther and Karl Barth) which still serves as the foundation of its “justification” (this would be under the mandates of the “flesh,” the Empire, and the legalists among Jews and Christians, or today’s legalists of capital). It would be b) “transformation,” if the criterion for “justification” were, on the other hand, the “critical consensus” of the “messianic” community (an *intersubjective*, *objective*, *historic*, *concrete* consensus which emerges from the reality of suffering which is an effect of *economic*, *political*, *aesthetic*, or *religious* injustice, etc.) but one which maintains a relationship of transcendence with regard to the totality of the system. A movement would be “*free before the Law*” if and when it transcends the order of that Law. It is transcendent but nevertheless conditioned, just as the “situation” determines (but *not absolutely*) the “event” as transformative praxis. It would seem as though Marx wrote this passage with reference to Badiou: “Feuerbach [...] seems obliged [...] to dispense with the *historical process* [...] presupposing an *isolated [isoliert] individual*” (*Thesis* 6; p. 535). Is this not Paul’s *pure subjectivity* which has been individually “converted” according to Badiou’s interpretation? Returning to K. Barth, who especially cites Kierkegaard at the outset of his commentary, “faith” is wagered as an act of the singular: the faith of Paul in the messiah (See Barth, Karl, 1968, *Epistle to the Romans*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, pp. 107ss). We, on the other hand, have proposed a meaning which is communal and constitutes another

form of *emunáh*.

506 See the critique by Nelson Maldonado-Torres (Maldonado-Torres, Nelson, 2005, "Liberation Theology and the Search for the Lost Paradigm," in Ivan Petrella (Ed.), *Latin American Liberation Theology. The Next generation*, Orbis Books, New York), where he attempts to situate Žižek in relation to the argument of John Milbank (Milbank, John, et al, 1999, *Radical Orthodoxy. A New Theology*, Routledge, London), with whom I entered into a dialogue in 2007 at Birkbeck College in London, allowing me to experience his Eurocentric conservatism first-hand. Milbank's view represents a tendency toward recuperating the "Christian heritage"—vis-à-vis secularism and certain form of anti-Christian Judaism—within which we find G. Vattimo as well, which is completely distinct from the Latin American liberation theology movement (and equally distinct from its Islamic, Jewish, Buddhist forms, etc., and from a *Politics of Liberation*) which situates itself (*locus enuntiationis*) in a "messianic" attitude (which is *critical* toward the prevailing order "of the Law") defining the relevant antagonists within the global, national, capitalist, *machista*, racist power bloc, etc. This critical tradition is not interested in recuperating the legacy of Christendom, which with S. Kierkegaard we interpret as the inversion of Christianity. Instead, our interest is to recuperate the Jewish-Christianity of Jeshúa ben Josef, of the Synoptics, of Paul, which was opened *universally* to the *go'im* beginning in the first centuries prior to Constantine, and prior to the "restoration" of the Law as a justificatory criterion with Theodosius (Roman-Christian law: from this moment on it was possible to "kill" in the name of the crucified, and *Lucifer*, Christ, would be sent to "hell"; see F. Hinkelammert, 1991: *Sacrificios humanos y sociedad occidental. Lucifer y la bestia*, DEI, San José. This is why Nietzsche, who in the course of his grandiloquent pirouettes discovers himself to be the anti-Christ, but by objecting to that *Pantokrator*, the Christ-Emperor or the new fetish, he hardly recovers some very deformed attributes of the critical nature of the historical *Khrístós* who was crucified). What is the use of recuperating the heritage of this long *inversion*? It would be better to stand on its feet what the centuries have stood on its head. I don't know if Žižek would agree!

507 Chesterton, G. K., 1908, *Orthodoxy*, John Lane Company, London. Chesterton does not critique the system from the perspective of the oppressed, but rather from the perspective of the past and with an eye toward the revitalization of existing institutions. In one of his books he describes how a subject carefully prepares an attack on a house, and arriving dramatically the night of the events, enters the bedroom of the house to be robbed through a window, and finding a woman seized her and makes love to her passionately, raping her with great pleasure... and it was his wife! The traditional institution had been reaffirmed by the *pleasure* of the affair of his transgression (think of Bataille). It was as though Paul were to confuse the *enjoyment* of the "messianic" risk with the *pleasure* of the pure transgression of the Law. Paul was no hippie, although I do understand, but do not justify, the nihilistic

rebellion of a youth lacking in any feasible, historic project for *transformation*.

508 Lacan, Jacques, 1992, *The Ethics of Psychoanalysis*, Norton, New York, pp. 83-84.

509 In various works (Dussel, 1985, 1985 and 1990) we have attempted to show the major differences distinguishing Hegelian from Marxist discourses. Žižek does not clearly demonstrate this distinction.

510 E. Bloch, in his book *Atheismus im Christentum. Zur Religion des Exodus und des Reichs* (Bloch, Ernst, 1970, *Atheismus im Christentum. Zur Religion des Exodus und des Reichs*, Rowohlt, Hamburg.). If we read carefully V. 32, pp. 157ss: “Paulus, sogenannte Geduld des Kreuzes, aber auch Beschwoerung von Auferstehung und Leben,” we find many elements useful for our subject. Death? Everyone dies, he tells us, but for the disciples of the *meshíakh* Jeshúa, his death on the cross—rather than his preaching or miracles (which did occur)—was what allowed them to understand the “message” of overthrowing the Law. Bloch, a Jewish Marxist, has been reinterpreting Christianity from the perspective of messianic Judaism since long ago!

511 Žižek, S., 2003, *The Puppet and the Dwarf. The Perverse Core of Christianity*, The MIT Press, Cambridge, MA., p. 6.

512 In the *New Testament* we read the following, in the most political passage of all the Synoptic Gospels: “The Son of Man has not come to be served but *to serve* [...] to surrender his life as *ransom (redemption)* for the multitude” (*Mark* 10, 45). See also my Dussel, 2008, *thesis* 4.35.

513 This *universalist* passage is from the Second Isaiah is deeply Jewish, which shows us that the “messianic” Jews (from the movement of Jeshúa ben Josef) coherently extended what was an *old* Jewish tradition.

514 We have attributed this *inversion* of Christianity to Anselm in full Latin Christendom, when the pardoning of sins is rejected, since from the horizon of a sacrificial God, to be righteous one must demand payment for Adam’s *infinite* debt (because it is a debt against the *Infinite*), a debt which is not humanly payable. As a result, the sadistic and Oedipal Father (in contrast to the Abrahamic myth, since Abraham loves his son Isaac and does not sacrifice him, even though this is against the Law) sends his Son to the “butcher.” This entire story, the inversion that is Christendom, Žižek rightly characterizes as “legalistic” (Žižek, 2003, p. 102).

515 Žižek, 2003, p. 102: “Christ’s death as such.”

516 “The true Light, that which illuminates all man, was arriving to the world. It was in the world and [...] the world did not know it [...] and the *dabar* was made *flesh (sarx in Greek)* [the order of the Law], dwelling among us” (*John* 1, 8-14). Here it is necessary to read the work of Michael Henry, a great phenomenologist, Marxist, and scholar of psychoanalysis, *Incarnation. Une philosophie de la chair* (Henry, Michel, 2000, *Incarnation. Une philosophie de la chair*, Seuil, Paris.), and *C’est moi, la vérité* (Henry, M., 1996, *C’est moi, la vérité*, Seuil, Paris.). Or again F. Hinkelammert

(2008) who explains the history of the myth of Prometheus, the mythical narrative which provides the entire categorical framework for so-called western culture, through Marx: "Jesus the man, son of God, by which *all* are children of God" (p. 75). We will return to this question later.

517 The existence of human freedom, which constitutes the apex of being "equal to God" as *Other than God*, must be played out to its final consequences. These consequences—as inevitable negative possibilities—include evil, injustice, the fetishization of systems of injustice, the Law that kills. The Supreme Being would not be so perfect if it had only created puppets with no possibility of being truly *Other than God*, and thereby the cause of evil.

518 I wrote an article on the subject years ago: Dussel, 1987. This will slowly and progressively unfold throughout volume II of the *Politics of Liberation*.

519 For example, 2003, pp. 111-121; 2000, pp. 145-148, in the "disconnection" related to the subject of "as-if-not" (which we will see in G. Agamben); etc.

520 See my article "*From Fraternity to Solidarity: Toward a Politics of Liberation*," in *Journal of Social Philosophy*, 2007, no. 1, pp. 73-93).

521 Benjamin, *Passagenwerk*, Aufzeichnungen und Materialien, N (Benjamin, Walter, 1991, *Gesammelte Schriften*, Suhrkamp, Frankfurt, vol. I-VII, , vol. V/1, pp. 600). "Redemption" also constitutes the central moment of Cohen and Rosenzweig's respective frameworks.

522 Löwy, Michael, 1992, *Redemption and Utopia: Jewish Libertarian Thought in Central Europe, A study in elective affinity*, Stanford University Press, Stanford, CA., p. 97.

523 See Rosenzweig, Franz, 2005, *The Star of Redemption*, University of Wisconsin, Madison.

524 Cohen, Hermann, 1972, *Religion of Reason Out of the Sources of Judaism*, Frederick Ungar, New York.

525 See "The Elements or the Everlasting Primordial World [*Vorwelt*]," Part One (Rosenzweig, 2005, pp. 9ss).

526 In Rosenzweig: "The Path or the Ever Renewed World [*allzeiterneuer Welt*]" (pp. 103ss). It is interesting that Rosenzweig, against Cohen, begins with the subject of Paul as surpassing the pagan "world": "On Belief" (*Ibid.*, pp. 124ss). Subject II, 1, is "Creation [*Schoepfung*]" (pp. 123ss).

527 "Revelation [*Offenbarung*]." This subject in Rosenzweig does not have a messianic meaning (Rosenzweig, 2005, pp. 169ss).

528 Rosenzweig, 2005, pp. 221ss.: "Redemption [*Erloesung*]." Cohen calls more attention to "reconciliation," not showing that the "ransom" (redemption) of the slave occurs first, and the latter then "reconciles herself" with her old master, but under the equality of a *new* system (the "promised Land," the "Kingdom of God" that Cohen but also Rosenzweig and Benjamin summon).

529 *Op.cit.*, cap. 16 (Cohen, 1972, p. 343).

- 530 Cohen, 1972, ch. 13, and elsewhere.
- 531 *Ibid.*, p.264, 266.
- 532 *Ibid.*, ch. 19 (pp. 431) [Dussel's emphasis—Tr.].
- 533 See Scholem, Gershom, 1981, *Walter Benjamin: The Story of a Friendship*, Schocken, New York., p. 101.
- 534 *Ibid.*, p. 3. It bears mentioning that between the two European wars, a youth movement existed not only among Jews, but equally among Christians and Muslims. A. Gramsci refers to Catholic Action in Italy, for example, which was very powerful in Latin America, from Mexico to Brazil to Argentina, existing in parallel to the youth organizations of the Communist Party and the Italian fascist movement. It is out of Catholic Action that worker and university movements would emerge, giving rise toward the end of the 1960s to Latin American Liberation Theology. In Egypt in 1926, a similar democratic and progressive youth movement was organized under the name "Muslim Brotherhood," with a clearly popular political orientation. Abdel Nasser "built himself" on this organization (with more than 3 million members), persecuting it and killing its leaders, which led to the movement's transition toward radical fundamentalism (see the work of Tariq Ramadan and his Egyptian grandfather). In order to understand many aspects of contemporary politics, we must study the "youth movements" that existed from 1920 to 1950.
- 535 Löwy, 1992.
- 536 Cohen, 1972, ch. 13; p. 254.
- 537 *Ibid.*, p. 252 [Dussel's emphasis—Tr.].
- 538 I have written a brief article ("Cuando la Realidad habla más que las palabras") on this terrible subject, which will be published as an appendix to a book entitled *Meditaciones semitas* (Anthropos, Barcelona, forthcoming).
- 539 See Agamben, 2005, pp. 138ss.
- 540 I (1991, vol. I/2, p. 693). [In English at <http://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/benjamin/1940/history.htm> -Tr.]
- 541 Agamben, 2005, p. 138.
- 542 Benjamin types this, spacing out the letters: "s c h w a c h e," which at that time was a way of indicating a word in bold or italics.
- 543 *Ibid.*, II (p. 694).
- 544 Benjamin, 1991, vol. II/1, p.204.
- 545 Agamben, 2005, pp. 73ss: "Typos".
- 546 In *Rm* 5, 14: "This was an image [*Gegenbild* in Luther and Benjamin; τύπος in Greek] of the one to come."
- 547 Benjamin, 1991, vol. I/2, p. 695. With regard to the meaning of this passage I recommend the work by Reyes Mate (Mate, R., 2006, *Medianoche en la historia. Comentario a las tesis de Walter Benjamin: "Sobre el concepto de la historia"*, Trotta, Madrid, ch. 5; pp. 107ss). In order to explain the passage, Mate makes the following comment on Thesis VII: "That present, illuminated not with its own light, but

instead with that which comes to it from the past [writes Mate], *crystallized in images (Bildern) that can be called dialectical. They represent a salvational discovery for humanity*" (Benjamin, 1991, vol. I/3, p. 1248). A Zapatista in the present moment refers to Emiliano Zapata of the past, recalling as living a past messianic time which is actualized in the FZLN action in the present: the "image" of the past reinterpreted from the perspective of the present grounds the messianic condition of the present. A typological dialectical relationship. Zapata is the "image."

548 We would say *hò khronós*.

549 This is *hò kairós*.

550 W. Benjamin, *Op. cit.*, Thesis XIV (p. 701). [English translation modified—Tr.].

551 W. Benjamin, *Das Passagen-Werk*, N (Benjamin, 1991, vol. V/1, p. 578).

552 *The Political Theology of Paul* (Taubes, 2004).

553 [This passage, drawn from p. 168 of the Spanish edition, cannot be located in the English edition, and is therefore translated directly—Tr.]

554 The *messianic* (Christian) communities must be understood within a tradition of Jewish *proselytism*. Normal *proselytism* allows for the *go'im* (non-Jews) to enter the community while becoming "Judaized" on the long run. The originality of this *messianic* Jewish group or *sect* (those called "Christians") is that they conceived of a "new" Alliance, within which the *proselytes* were not required to fulfill the old Jewish rites. Hence a new calendar and new celebrations (*rites*) were born, and given its massive expansion this group left its original Jewish community as an absolute minority, not only numerically, but also in terms of their understanding of the *transformation* of the Greco-Roman world. We must clarify in a categorical manner this *messianism* which has had such significant *political* results, but which Taubes is not interested in analyzing.

555 It will be of the utmost importance for political philosophy to adequately grasp—as a philosophical category—this scission that is produced within "*all [pán in Greek] Israel*" with respect to a "*part [the remainder]* of Israel," a question which Taubes announces as the underlying subject of the first four chapters of the letter *I Corinthians*. A. Gramsci would argue that "the social bloc of the oppressed" splits away from the hegemonic consensus of "the whole political community" under the authority of the "historic bloc in power." In effect, the "remainder" is not a member of the *part* which, controlling the temple, the schools of legal interpreters and Pharisees, would bring the Righteous to the cross. These were the dominant groups. Here we find an entire implicit categorical structure which Taubes himself does not recognize.

556 Taubes, 2004, pp. 38ss, see also 128.

557 *Ibid.*, p. 45.

558 See "Thesis 4" in Dussel, 2008.

559 [i.e., the *Política de la Liberación*—Tr.]

- 560 I don't believe that this is Paul's position.
- 561 Taubes, 2004, p. 139 [This editor's epilogue from the German edition is included as well in both the Spanish and English editions of Taubes' text—Tr.].
- 562 Agamben, 2005 (originally 2000).
- 563 *Ibid.*, p. 23.
- 564 *Ibid.*, pp. 26-31.
- 565 The word "Pharisee" has the same root, *parushim*: those who are *separated*, *pure*, *strict*.
- 566 [This is a modified form of the figure which appears on Agamben, 51, to which Dussel adds the Law/flesh equation as well as the distinction within *emunáh* between spirit and calling (both, for Agamben, rendered "breath")—Tr.]
- 567 *Ibid.*, p. 47.
- 568 *Ibid.*, p. 55.
- 569 *Ibid.*
- 570 *Ibid.* [Dussel's emphasis—Tr.]
- 571 *Ibid.*, p. 69.
- 572 *Ibid.*, p. 76.
- 573 Important for Agamben is the Pauline origin of the concept of "*subsumptio*" (according to the Latin root) or "*Aufhebung*" in German, which has a long tradition in Kant, Hegel, and Marx (Agamben, 2005, pp. 99ss), a question that I have dealt with on many occasions in my work.
- 574 [Dussel refers to the three volumes of his *Política de la Liberación*, from the third of which this essay is drawn—Tr.]
- 575 See the excellent introduction to this author's difficult thought, presented archaeologically, in Bautista, Juan José, 2007, *Hacia una crítica ética del pensamiento latinoamericano. Introducción al pensamiento crítico de Franz J. Hinkelammert*, Grupo Grito del Sujeto, La Paz (Bolivia).
- 576 Hinkelammert, 1998, pp.11-14.
- 577 *Ibid.*, p.18. For Paul, "the principal sin is committed in fulfillment of the law and not in its violation. This dimension disappears and is substituted by the violation of the law as the only sin" (*Ibid.*). "Nietzsche does not perceive—or does not want to perceive—the total inversion of meaning that Christianity suffers upon becoming a Christianity of power" (p. 21).
- 578 See what I have already said on [pp. 35ss] of vol. I of my *Política de la Liberación*.
- 579 Hinkelammert, 1998, p. 46.
- 580 *Ibid.*, p. 48.
- 581 *Ibid.*, p. 72.
- 582 *Ibid.*, pp. 93ss.
- 583 See [33] and [3945].
- 584 *Ibid.*, p. 98. "The death of Socrates devours the death of Jesus. The death of

Socrates is a sacrificial death. It is death on the altar of the law, demanded by and accepted by the law itself [...]. The death of Jesus is a sacrifice by the law, by a law that is fulfilled in front of Jesus who [like Abraham] refuses to obey it; instead he interrogates it in the name of life, toward which the law must function [...]. The law sacrifices him, but Jesus does not sacrifice himself on the altar of the law. Jesus is required to not escape, but to confront the law. But God does not demand this as a sacrifice, doing so instead to reveal what it means when the law kills the innocent in its fulfillment. The death of Jesus is the catastrophe of the law" (*Ibid.*, pp. 104-105). "Socrates is the hero of power [...], Jesus is the paradigm of the relativization of the law in function of the *living subject*" (*Ibid.*).

585 Cited in Hinkelammert, *Op. cit.*, p. 134.

586 See the Third Part of Hobbes' *Leviathan* in order to see the inversion we are speaking of.

587 *Ibid.*, pp. 177.

588 *Ibid.*, p. 188.

589 Hinkelammert, F., 2008, *Hacia una crítica de la razón mítica. El laberinto de la Modernidad*, Editorial Driada, México.

590 Marx, 1956 (MEW), vol. I, p. 385. "[...] *der Mensch das höchste Wesen für den Menschen sei* [...]."

591 See Bautista, Juan José, 2007, *Hacia una crítica ética del pensamiento latinoamericano. Introducción al pensamiento crítico de Franz J. Hinkelammert*, Grupo Grito del Sujeto, La Paz (Bolivia), pp. 103ss. "Hinkelammert considers it fundamental to dismantle the foundational myths of the west, not only because it is these in the last instance that provide grounding for the grand western narrative, but also because if we do not gain a critical consciousness of these myths, we will remain trapped within them" (*Ibid.*). And this applies first and foremost to all the social sciences.

592 Moreover, it is useful to keep in mind the fact that this entire theme is sketched out by A. Badiou and the Althusserians, who wonder how to reformulate the question of the *subject* after the essentialist death of the "subject of history."

593 "The glory of God is that the human being lives."

594 Hinkelammert, 2008, p. 22.

595 *Ibid.*, p. 55.

596 Here we have an inversion of Agamben's proposal. If it is true that the messianic event (*B'* in Figure 3) could appear as a "state of exception," it is in reality something more radical: the "state of rebellion" that suppresses the Law when it kills. On the contrary, fetishized Power continually institutes "government by law" through the "state of exception," but not on the basis of the will of the people but its opposite, the despotic will of the dominator (that of Caesar over the Roman Law of the Senate, which is no longer "dictatorship" according to the Law; Hitler presiding over the weak law of the republic).

597 *Ibid.*, p. 184.

598 In Greek, *pneúma* is used, in Hebrew *ruakh*. Jeshúa ben Josef is reading a passage from the Third Isaiah (*Isaías* 61, 1-3). In the version found in *Luke*, we find reference to the modified translation of the Seventy in Greek.

599 In Hebrew, *mashakh*, in the sense of “consecrating” the *meshíakh*.

600 In the sense of “apostle” (see Agamben, pp. 59ss).

601 In Greek *afésin*.

602 Those who “see” are those who accept the Law; the “blind” are those who do not know it, but “they will see” their contradiction and will be able to cease to obey it.

603 In Hebrew *deror*, which means to pay the “ransom” for the captive, the slave: to liberate her.

604 In Greek *sémeron*. This is, precisely, “Now-Time”: “today” is “now,” and “in presence” is the *kairós* which inaugurates the messianic “event” (*B'* in *Figure 3*).

605 Translated by Omar Rivera.

606 Note this topic in E. Dussel, “Estatuto ideológico del discurso populista”, in *Ideas y Valores* (Bogotá), 1977, 50, pp. 35-69; and again in *Política de la Liberación*, 2007, Trotta, Madrid, pp. 435-463.

607 Without noticing that the French phenomena of the XVIII and XIX centuries cannot correspond to other very diverse phenomena of the post-colonial world and, further, of the XX century. Others, equally in the left, simply confused the Latin American populism with European “fascisms” (Italian, German or Spanish), without noticing again the emancipatory charge of nationalist, anti-imperialist movements (even though they were capitalist).

608 This ‘war’ was first of all a military and anti-democratic war, since the ‘populisms’ were defeated by military coups orchestrated from the United States, thanks to the education of highly ranked Latin American military in strategic schools of the Pentagon in Panama, West Point, etc.

609 Note the article cited in footnote 1, Dussel, 2007, pp. 449-450. The Cuban socialist revolution signified, as well, a process that emerges after the historical populism of the ‘second kind’ (note E. Dussel, “*El populismo latinoamericano (1910-1959)*”, in *Ideas y Valores* (UN-Bogotá), (1977), 50, pp. 35-69; also, in *Política de la Liberación*, 2007, Trotta, Madrid, pp. 435-463).

610 Note Dussel, 2001, *Towards an Unknown Marx*, Routledge, London, Chapter 13, pp. 205ff.

611 It is interesting to note that, in the presidential electoral campaigns in the United States prior to January 2008, politicians spoke of the negative effects of globalization on the United States and proposed a return to a neo-nationalism, criticizing the Free Trade Agreements signed in the previous two decades. Having lost the industrial race against China, the race for the exploitation of oil against Russia and the OPEC, the race for electronic and computational systems against

India; the United States returns to 'protectionism'. This is the way, as we will soon see, in which what has been criticized until now in Latin America as 'radical', neo-nationalist 'populism', is being implemented in the Northern country. But we should not get ahead of ourselves.

612 In Spanish, *La Razon Populista* in the FCE, México, 2005; in English, *On Populist Reason*, Verso, Londres, 2005.

613 In my work, *La produccion teorica de Marx. Un comentario a los Grundrisse*, Siglo XXI, México, 1985, I entitle a paragraph: *La cuestión popular* [the popular question] (pp. 400ff.). I learnedly return to this topic in "Cultura Latinoamericana y filosofía de la liberación (Cultura popular revolucionaria, mas allá del populismo y del dogmatismo)", en *Filosofía de la cultura y la liberación*, Universidad Autónoma de la Ciudad de México, 2006, pp. 251-329. One should note that for K. Marx the category "people" (never *explicitly constituted as a category*) is definitely used, alongside the category "poor" (*puper ante o post festum*), when the masses of servants wondered over Europe *after* having abandoned feudalism and *before* being subsumed by capital. In this "no one's land," Marx cannot use the *economic* categories "servant" or "working class," he rather resorts to the *political* category "people".

614 *Manuscrito de 1861-1863*, MEGA II, 3, P. 333; *Teorías del plusvalor*, FCE, México, 1980, vol. 1, p. 33. Note my work *Hacia un Marx Desconocido*, Siglo XXI, México, 1988, p. 110. Marx adds: "The *confusion* of the economists [consists] in that for them there is no difference between earnings and surplus [for us now: between populism, popular and people], which shows that the have not clearly understood neither the nature of the first [populism and the popular] nor that of the second [people]" (*Grundrisse*, Dietz Verlag, Berlin, 1974, p. 450). That is to say, the concept "people" (phenomenologically deeper) *founds* the concepts "populism" and "popular" (more superficial phenomena), the first one (populism) being its fetichized *appearance*, and the second (the popular) being the *phenomenon* or the undistorted appearing of the people in the political and ontological field.

615 Note *20 tesis de política*, Siglo XXI, México, 2006, *Tesis 11*, pp. 87 ff: "El pueblo. Lo popular y el populismo". It is concerned with a synthesis of paragraph 38 of my work *Política de la Liberación*, volumen 3, still unpublished.

616 Note *Op. cit.*, *Tesis 3*, pp. 29 ff.

617 *Cuaderni del Cacere*, 3, paragraph 34 (Edited by V. Gerratana, Einaudi Editori, Torino, 1975), vol. 1, p. 311.

618 Note the application of the categories that we are trying to constitute in our work *Política de la Liberación*, vol. 2 forthcoming, paragraph 19, [301].

619 Note the topic in the chapter "Del ultimo Marx a América Latina", of my book *El ultimo Marx (1863-1882)*, Siglo XXI, México, 1990 (forthcoming in an Italian translation), chapter 7, pp. 238 ff.

620 Paul Ricoeur, in a discussion we had face to face in Naples in 1991, fell into the same confusion (note my work *La ética de la liberación ante el desafío de Apel*,

Taylor y Vattimo, Universidad Autónoma del Estado de México, Toluca, 1998, in the chapter “Respuesta inicial a Karl-Otto Apel y Paul Ricoeur”, pp. 73 ff).

621 Note the difference in my work *20 Tesis de Política*, *Tesis 17*, 2, pp. 127 ff.

622 The concept “collective agent” attempts to replace the metaphysical concept—in the sense of the post-althusserian school of E. Balibar, A. Badiou, etc.—of the “historical subject”. The “people” is not a “subject”, it is a collective agent, intersubjective. In the Gramscian metaphor “bloc” it is given to understand that it is not as consistent as a “rock” or “stone”, that it can re-fashion itself, grow or diminish, and, finally, dissolve and disappear. We don’t want to say that the bloc is “empty”—as a comrade of the MST once indicated to me—, that would be an undesired reference. We are open to the proposal of a more adequate “metaphor”, meanwhile I stay with Gramsci’s.

623 Note the conceptual clarifications of all of these terms in *20 tesis de política*, *Tesis 7*, pp. 55ff; and in vol. 2 of *Política de la Liberación* (forthcoming), chapter 21.2 [316]. And chapter 22.1 [330].

624 Nevertheless, one should reflect about a work of Carl Schmitt which has not received due attention. The aged German thinker wrote in 1963 a work that referred not only to the Spanish armed people fighting against the Napoleonic invasion at the beginnings of the 19th century, but also to the guerrillas (given that Mao Tse-tung, Ho Chi-min, Fidel Castro and even Che Guevara are explicitly named by Schmitt) of the 20th century. The Partisan Theory (which I find in *La notion de politique. Théorie du partisan*, trans. French, Flammarion, Paris, 1992) asks: “Who could impede the emergence of analogous and infinitely more intense modes, of unexpected kinds of hostilities, where new kinds of *partisan* would be engendered? [...] The theory of *partisan* leads to the concept of the political, above the search for the real enemy, and provokes a new *nomos* in the Earth” (p. 305). In a way, the *partisan* is singularly the origin of the “emergence” of a “people”. They are “opponents” of the established political order, not in a particularity, but in its *totality*: they are dissident political opponents, not merely social or illegal (like the thief) on the basis of the authoritative consensus. Schmitt, however, does not have the categories to explain the birth of this new *nomos*.

625 Note *Tesis 2* of my work *20 tesis de política*, [2.35]; in the *Política de la Liberación*, chapter 14, [250 ff.].

626 Presently, such a “community” is neither pre-modern, nor does it negate “individuality”, it should be, rather, as Marx indicated in the *Grundrisse*, the third stadium that would reach full individuality in full community. Currently there is an anticipation of an “after” to modern-liberal individualism, where “individuality” liberated from the metaphysical isolation in the competition of the market, progresses toward the recovery of a “communitarian” intersubjectivity. This would be the *full singularity* (individuality) in *full community* (in the future), that are being initiated by the very social movements.

- 627 Consider the concept “fetishism of power” in *Tesis 5*, in *20 Tesis de política*, [5. 1ff.]; and in *Política de la Liberación*, vol. 3, chapter 30.1.
- 628 Consider the concept of *potestas* in *Tesis 3* of the book frequently cited.
- 629 In *20 tesis de política*, [9.14] and [11.1]; and in *Política de la Liberación*, vol. 2, chapter 24. 3. B, [372-375].
- 630 *La Razón Populista*, p. 309.
- 631 *Il tempo che resta. Un commento a la Lettera alla Romani*, Torino, 2000, p. 55 ff: “Rest”. Note my work *El humanismo semita*, Eudeba, Buenos Aires, 1969, pp. 157 bff., regarding the “personalidad incorporante” which dialectically signifies a historical person, a community, the *rest*, etc. I investigate this theme in chapter 31, vol. 3 of *Política de la Liberación*: “El acontecimiento liberador” [the liberating event]—beyond A. Badiou. Agamben cites: “In this way, in the time of now [a technical expression of messianic time, explains Agamben] a *rest* has been produced by the action of grace” (*Romans*, 11, 5). “Grace” is, secularized and in political philosophy, the “self-consciousness of the people” (the “people for itself”) which allows it to arrive as a collective agent and as builder of the future history: the critical *consensus* of the people as *dissent* against the old *consensus* determined by an ideology of domination through the repressive praxis of the historical bloc in crisis of legitimacy. We will cover all of these issues in the work *Política de Liberación*.
- 632 Letter to John Cartwright, June 5th, 1824 (cit. H. Arendt, *Sobre la revolución*, 6, iii. Alianza Editorial, Madrid, 1988, p. 257).
- 633 Arendt, *Ibid.*, p. 259.
- 634 Note this concept in the *Tesis 12*, of my work *20 tesis política*, [12. 3]: “If *potentia* is a capacity of the public community, now a dominating one, that has organized the *potestas* in view of its interests and against an emerging people, the *hyperpotentia* is the power of the people, the sovereignty and authority of people emerging in the creative moments of history” (p. 97). It is W. Benjamin’s “Jetztzeit.”
- 635 The constitutional fathers of the United States feared the democracy of the people. For this reason, they came up with a “representative democracy” where the elites (the bourgeoisie and the factual powers) *elected* the candidates that the people confirmed in its sporadic and frequently manipulated interventions called elections.
- 636 The Bolivarian Constitution of 1999 in Venezuela has created this fourth power. The reform to this constitution, which failed at the end of 2007, proposed in the new Article 184 the creation of these organisms under the municipalities, popular “cabildos”, that exercised popular power. In the reform’s text one reads: “Mechanisms will be created through which the popular Power, the states and the municipalities will decentralize and transfer to organized communities, community councils and other entities of the popular Power, services such as: housing, sports, culture, social programs, protection of the environment, maintenance of industrial areas [...], crime prevention and neighborhood protection, building projects [...],

participation in economic processes stimulating the divers expressions of the social economy [...], the creation of organizations, cooperatives and communal enterprises [...]. The organized community would be under that maximum authority of the Asamblea de ciudadanos y ciudadanas del Poder Popular [The Citizen Assembly of Popular Power], which designates and revokes the organisms of communal power in the communities [...]. The Communal Council constitutes the executive organ of the decisions of the Citizen Assembly [...]. The projects of the communal councils would be financed with the resources contemplated in National Fund of the Popular Power". This article, and all of the others in the referendum, were not approved. If the referendum would have been summoned for the approval of this article only, the attempt would have been revolutionary—since the other reforms were secondary.

637 Note this architectonic problematic of politics in my works *20 Tesis de política*, Tesis 6 [6. 01. Ff.], and *Política de la Liberación*, vol. 2, [246 ff.], in particular, chapter 1, paragraph 16 ff.

638 "La historia me absolverá" [History will Absolve me], in Fidel Castro, *La revolución Cubana*, Era, México, 1975, p. 39.

639 *De la Guerra*, I, chapter 3; Colofón, México, 1999, p. 43.

640 *Cuaderni 4*, chapter 10; vol. 1, p. 432.

641 *Ibid.* In this case "the protagonist of this *new Prince* should be the organic intellectuals of the socially oppressed ones."

642 *Il Principe*, chapter 6; N. Machiavelli, *Opere*, Einaudi-Gallimard, Torino, 1997, p. 131.

643 *Ibid.*, chapter. 9; pp. 143-144.

644 Note Tesis 4, in *20 tesis de política*.

645 Note my *Política de la Liberación*, vol. 1, [76 ff.].

646 In the chapter: "Concerning the Prince", in Huang Tsung-hsi, *Waiting for the Dawn: A Plan for the Prince*, Columbia University Press, New York, 1993, p. 92.

647 Von Clausewitz, *Op. cit.*, p. 45.

648 See Foucault (1966,1969,1972,1975,1976,1984,1986). D. Eribon (1989) tells us that, in *The History of Madness*, Foucault shows that the excluded are not allowed a voice (as in his critique of psychiatry), while in *The History of Sexuality* (since *La Voluntad de saber*), the notion of Power proliferates, and the excluded has the last word (against psychoanalysis). His intent is a liberation of the subject arising from originary negation and establishes the possibility of a differential voice. The "order" (the system) of disciplinary discourse (the repressor), exercises a Power that at first either legitimizes or prohibits. Nevertheless, at a later point the "repressed" finds a voice. Foucault is an intellectual of the "differential" whereas Sartre elaborates on the "universal". It is necessary to learn how to connect both tendencies.

649 See Deleuze 1983, 1991, and Deleuze and Guattari 1972.

650 See the early works of Derrida 1964, 1967a and 1967b.

651 See Vattimo 1968, 1985, 1988, 1989a, 1989b and 1998.

652 Welsch shows that the historical origin of the term is earlier (1993, 10).

653 Besides Herlinghaus and Walter's articles, the volume includes essays by José Joaquín Brunner, Jesús MartínBarbero, Nestor García Canclini, Carlos Monsiváis, Renato Ortiz, Norbert Lechner, Nelly Richard, Beatriz Sarlo and Hugo Achúgar.

654 Besides Beverley and Oviedo's articles, the volume includes essays by Xavier Albó, José J. Brunner, Fernando Calderón, Enrique Dussel, Martin Hopenhayn, N. Lechner, Aníbal Quijano, Nelly Richard, Beatriz Sarlo, Silviano Santiago, Hernán Vidal.

655 See Castro-Gómez (1996 and 1997) and *Teorías sin Disciplina* (Castro-Gómez and Mendieta, eds.), which includes contributions by Walter Mignolo, Alberto Moreiras, Ileana Rodríguez, Fernando Coronil, Erna von der Walde, Nelly Richard and Hugo Achúgar.

656 On this issue see Castro-Gómez (1996, 18, 19). It is worth mentioning that both A. Roig and L. Zea are often criticized authors. On Salazar Bondy see Castro-Gómez (1996, 89 and ff.): "Salazar Bondy believes that psychological schizophrenia is just an expression of economic alienation" (Castro-Gómez 1996, 90). Santiago Castro-Gómez has the irritating inclination to simplify the position of others too much.

657 Castro-Gómez does not take into consideration that H. Cerutti criticized my position in the name of the working class (the proletariat as a metaphysical category that I could not accept as a dogmatic concept), and also in the name of Althusserianism, due to the improper use of the concepts of "the poor" and "the people" which, as I will show, constitute a very Foucauldian way to refer to the "excluded" (the insane in madhouses, the criminal in prisons those "Others" that wander outside of the panoptic perspective of the French "totality" in the classic era). Levinas had radicalized topics that M. Foucault approached later on.

658 Guha (1988). As one might suppose, this current is opposed to a mere "historiography of India", traditional in the Anglo-Saxon world. The difference between the two lies in its critical methodology, informed by the works of Karl Marx, Michel Foucault and Jacques Lacan. It is in this aspect that its similarity to the Philosophy of Liberation becomes evident.

659 According to Said (1978), Bhabha's work "is a landmark in the exchange between ages, genres, and cultures; the colonial, the post-colonial, the modernist and the postmodern" and is situated in a fruitful location: the "in between(ness)." It overcomes dichotomies without unilaterally denying them. It operates within tensions and interstices. Bhabha does not deny either the center or the periphery, either gender or class, either identity or difference, either totality or alterity (he frequently makes reference to the "otherness of the Other," with Levinas in mind). He explores the fecundity of "being-in-between", in the "border-land" of the earth, of time, of cultures, of lives, as a privileged and creative location. He has overcome the dualisms, but he has not fallen into their pure negation. The Philosophy of

Liberation, without denying its originary intuitions, can learn a lot, and can also grow. Bahbha assumes the simplistic negation of Marxism, as many postmodern Latin Americans do, falling into conservative and even reactionary positions without even noticing.

660 See Dussel (1996a and 1996b).

661 The panopticon could be observed in the design of clear and square spaces, with the church in the middle, in towns designed with the rationality of the Hispanic Renaissance. At the same time, this rationality managed to "discipline" bodies and lives, by imposing on all individuals a well regulated hourly schedule, beginning at 5am. These rules were interiorized through a Jesuitical "self-examination," like a reflexive "ego cogito" discovered well before Descartes. This was implemented in the utopian socialist reducciones in Paraguay, or among Moxos and Chiquitos in Bolivia, or among Californians, in the North of México (in the territory that is today part of the US).

662 In other words, since 1973, in my book *Para una ética de la liberación latinoamericana* I was speaking of "Différance" as a "Difference" that is not just the mere "difference" in Identity. In *Filosofía de la liberación* I point out on several occasions the contrast between "difference" and "Dis-tinction" of the Other (1977). In all modesty, in the prologue of this book I state (two years before Lyotard) that this is a "postmodern" philosophy.

663 Hermann Cohen explains that the ontic method begins by assuming the position of the poor

664 The situation begins to undergo a radical transformation only when Asiatic, African, and Caribbean intellectuals start thinking about the "Commonwealth", along similar lines as the Philosophy of Liberation.

665 With excellent descriptions, Moore-Gilbert (1997) demonstrates the presence of critical thought within the postcolonial periphery in Departments of English in U.S. universities.

666 See Mendieta and Castro-Gómez (1998, 59-83). "The North American Latin Americanism" practiced within the field of "Area Studies" in United States universities counts on the massive migration of Latin American intellectuals, in a hybrid condition, and inevitably rooted out. Nonetheless solidarity is possible. "The politics of solidarity must be conceived, in this context, as a counter-hegemonic response to globalization, and as an opening into the traces of Messianism in a global world" (Mendieta and Castro-Gómez 1998, 70). The only question, then, would be whether poverty and domination of the masses in peripheral nations does not exclude them from the process of globalization. In other words, it does not seem clear that "today civil society cannot conceive itself outside global economic and technological conditions" (71).

667 This is the position of Ernesto Laclau (1977, 1985, 1990, 1996). An article of mine will soon be published offering a critical account of this crucial Latin American

thinker.

668 This chapter was originally presented as a paper version in the XXII World Congress of Philosophy (Seoul, Korea) (August 2, 2008), in the III Plenary Session on “*Rethinking History of Philosophy and Comparative Philosophy*”.

669 *Metaphysics* I, 2; 982 b 17-18.

670 “Civilization universelle et cultures nacional”, en *Histoire et Verité*, Seuil, Paris, 1964, pp. 274-288.

671 Ernst Bloch, *Das Prinzip Hoffnung*, Suhrkamp, Frankfurt, 1959, vol. 1-3.

672 See Paul Ricoeur, *La symbolique du mal*, Aubier, Paris, 1963.

673 See my book *The Invention of the Americas*, Continuum, New York, 1995, § 7.1. *The Ilatatini*.

674 R. Fornet-Betancourt, *Crítica intercultural de la Filosofía Latinoamericana actual*, Trotta, Madrid, 2004.

675 P. Hountondji, *Sur la philosophie africaine. Critique de l’ethnophilosophie*, Maspero, Paris, 1977.

676 P. Tempel, *La philosophie Bantue*, Présence Africaine, Paris, 1949. See Miguel León-Portilla, *Filosofía Nahuatl*, UNAM, México, 1979.

677 *Sources of Chinese Tradition from earliest Times to 1600*, Columbia University Press, New York, 1999, vol. 1, pp. 79.

678 See *Confucius Analects*, trans. by Edward Slingerland, Hackett Publishing Company, Indianapolis, 2003.

679 See *Sources of Chinese Tradition from earliest times to 1600*, vol. 1, pp. 66 ff.

680 *Ibid.*, pp. 114 ff. See Randall Collins, *The Sociology of Philosophies. A global Theory of Intellectual Change*, The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, Cambridge (Mass), 2000, pp. 137 ff., and 272 ff.

681 See *Sources of Indian Tradition from the beginning to 1800*, Columbia University Press, New York, vol. 1. Also R. Collins, *Op. cit.*, pp. 177 ff. On Japan, *Ibid.*, pp. 322 ff.

682 6. 12-14 (*Sources of Indian tradition*, vol. 1, p. 37).

683 *Philosophy as Mankind’s Self-Reflection; the Self-Realization of Reason*, en *The Crisis of European Sciences*, Northwestern University Press, Evanston, 1970, pp. 338-339 (the § 73 of *Die Krisis der europäischen Wissenschaften*, Nijhoff, Haag, 1962, *Husserliana* VI, p. 273). It is the same text of *The Crisis of European Sciences*, § 8, pp. 21 ff. (German original, pp. 18 ff.). For example, the so call “Pythagoras theorem” was formulated by the Assyrian 1000 B.C (see G. Semerano, *La favola dell’indoeuropeo*, Bruno Mondadori, Milano, 2005).

684 D. Sobrevilla, *Repensando la tradición de Nuestra América*, Banco Central de Reserva del Perú, Lima, 1999, p.74.

685 See for example the *Lexique de la Langue Philosophique D’Ibn Sina (Avicenne)*, edited by A.-M. Goichon, Desclée de Brouwer, Paris, 1938. The 792 different terms analyzed by the editor in 496 large format pages, provide us with an idea of the

“precise terminology” of Arab *falasafa* (philosophy). The final entry is: “792. *Yaqini*: certain, known with certitude, relative to a certain knowledge [...]”, and thereafter follow 15 lines of explanation with the Arabic expressions, in Arabic script, at the right-hand margin.

686 See the subject on Bartolomé de las Casas and the human sacrifices in my book *Política de la Liberación. Una historia mundial y crítica* [*Politics of Liberation. A worldly and critical history*], Trotta, Madrid, 2007, pp. 203 ff.

687 See *La symbolique du mal* (supra) by Paul Ricoeur.

688 K. Pommeranz, *The Great Divergence. China, Europe and the Making of the Modern World Economy*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 2000.

689 Hegel, *Die Vernunft in der Geschichte, Zweiter Entwurf* (1830), C, c; en *Sämtliche Werke*, Ed. J. Hoffmeister, F. Meiner, Hamburg, 1955, p. 243. English version *Lectures on the Philosophy of World History, Introduction: Reason in History*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1975, p. 197.

690 *Ibid.*, p. 210; English, p. 171.

691 Hegel, *Vorlesung über die Philosophie der Geschichte*, en *Werke*, Suhrkamp, Frankfurt, 1970, vol. 12, p. 413; *The Philosophy of History*, Colonial Press, New York, 1900, p. 341.

692 I. Wallerstein, *The Modern World-System*, Academic Press, New York, 1980-1989, vol. 1-3.

693 K.-O. Apel, *Die Transformation der Philosophie*, Suhrkamp, Frankfurt, 1973, vol. 1-2.

694 And what does the West consist of? Is it only Western Europe, and in that case where does Russia fit, which was certainly a part of the culture of the ancient *Eastern* Byzantine Empire? Is its origin in Greece? But this too is problematic because for Greece the rest of Europe was as barbarous as other regions were to the North of Macedonia.

695 See the book of R. Collins quoted *supra*.

696 Icaria-Antrazyt, Barcelona, 2001

697 Trotta, Madrid, 2001.

698 A. Yabri, *Crítica de la razón árabe*, pp. 157-158.

699 *Ibid.*, p. 159.



Decolonizing the mind

Author of more than 50 works, Argentine-Mexican philosopher of liberation Enrique Dussel (1934 –) is one of the major figures in the development of world philosophies. He is one of the founders and the most recognized member of the group that begun philosophy of liberation in the early seventies in Argentina. He is also one of the major figures in the development of the theology of liberation in Latin America. Dussel's work is generally seen in the English speaking world as related particularly to Latin American concerns such as: the social and political revolutions in Latin America in the Seventies, the birth of the theology of liberation, and the role in Latin America of pragmatism and neo-Marxist theory. However, as the present volume reveals, the scope of Dussel's work is much larger as it points to a reconfiguration of the very way one understand the task and history of philosophy, ultimately offering a work necessary and pressing for today.



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