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NEWSLETTER ON HISPANIC/LATINO ISSUES IN PHILOSOPHY

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Hispanic/Latino Issues in Philosophy

Bernie J. Canteñs and Carlos Alberto Sánchez, Co-Editors

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FROM THE EDITORS

This issue of the *Newsletter* opens with Oscar R. Martí's "Reading Carlos Vaz Ferreira." A noted philosopher and historian of Latin American ideas, Professor Martí provides a clear and succinct account of Carlos Vaz Ferreira's philosophy and "philosophical style." Martí paints a portrait of a versatile philosopher of existence immersed in empiricism but skeptical about empiricism's reach, since, as Martí notes, "reality is too complex to systematize or force into verbal schemata." The language of metaphysics, it turns out, "interferes with our perception of reality." Martí's essay is both an in-depth critical assessment of Ferreira's philosophy and an encompassing overview, which should be of interest to both novice and scholar of Ferreira's philosophical work.

Next, Professor Amy A. Oliver expounds Vaz Ferreira's philosophical views on feminism. Professor Oliver argues that Ferreira advocates for an affirmative or corrective feminism, a more progressive position than feminism of equality. Oliver notes, "The only acceptable feminism, for Vaz Ferreira, was corrective, based on the idea that society must compensate physiological injustice given that it will never be possible to equalize it and that it would be counter-productive to attempt to do so." Oliver goes on to present Vaz Ferreira's view of genuine feminism through his critique of the views of both the anti-feminists and feminist movements of his time. This essay should serve not only as an excellent resource for obtaining a greater understanding of Vaz Ferreira's philosophical views and his social-political activism, but also an impetus to new insights and research into this area of his philosophical works.

Omar Rivera's "Toward a Future Andean Technology (From a Tentative Phenomenology of Inka Stonework)," looks at Incan ("Inka") stonework, specifically the walls of the fortress of Cuzco in Peru, as objects whose real, original, meaning has been covered over by colonial (Eurocentric) conceptions of art, science, and technology. Rivera's aim in this unique and excellent example of phenomenology at work is to strip away the Eurocentric conceptions of the stonework, conceptions which represent the stonework as a technology rather than a "work of art" or an extension of the environment—or as something else entirely. Appealing to Heideggerian phenomenology throughout, Rivera argues that what is revealed in the unraveling of the meaning of Incan stonework actually points to the limits of phenomenology itself, since phenomenology, Heideggerian or otherwise, fails to properly capture what is truly given in this case. Overall, this is an engaging and rich essay which we are sure will provoke further discussion on both the extent of the totalizing reach of Western rationality and, also, on the limits of phenomenology itself.

This issue of the *Newsletter* includes two annotated syllabi for Latin American philosophy courses. The first is for *Introduction to Latin American Philosophy* by Mariana Alessandri. Alessandri's course presents a well-organized and coherent survey of Latin American philosophy. It begins with Julio Cortazar's "Axolotl" and covers the conquest, the movements of independence, Europeanization of Argentina, Cuban independence, civilization vs. barbarism, racial issues in Latin America, social justice issues in Latin America, the issue of authenticity of Latin American Philosophy, Liberation Theology, and other related and relevant topics. The second syllabus is for *Specter in Latin American Philosophy: Chicana and Latina Feminist* by Cynthia Maria Paccacerqua. This course provides an interdisciplinary approach that demonstrates a creative program and methodology for formulating courses related to Latin American philosophy. Paccacerqua's reading list illustrates the diversity, variety, and range of disciplines the course encompasses. For instance, it includes classical thinkers such as Simone De Beauvoir, Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, and Michel Foucault. It also includes works of contemporary feminists such as Linda Alcoff, Ofelia Schutte, Chela Sandoval, and Paula Moya. In addition, it also includes classical Hispanic/Latino authors such as Octavio Paz and Jose Vasconcelos. "We hope that these syllabi will prove to be helpful resources not only for the novice Latin American philosophy instructors but also for the more experienced ones.

Finally, this issue includes a book review of Nelson Maldonado-Torres' *Against War: Views From Underside of Modernity (Latin American Otherwise)* by Jesus Hernandez Ramirez.

ARTICLES

Reading Vaz Ferreira

Oscar R. Martí

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A scholar interested in one of the many Latin American philosophical traditions could well start with Carlos Vaz Ferreira (Uruguay, 1878-1958). A well regarded and prolific philosopher, Vaz Ferreira's output consists of articles, books, and university lectures dealing with issues such as feminism, freedom of the press, professional ethics, land reform, university governance, etc., all collected in the *Obras* (25 volumes). His most important philosophic works are *Conocimiento y acción* (1908), *Moral para intelectuales* (1909), *Lógica viva* (1909), and *Fermentario* (1938)—many still in print, though not translated. While the lack of English translations

is unfortunate, scholars somewhat familiar with Spanish would have little difficulty following his clear, straightforward, jargon free arguments. However, reading him is like looking at a Dalí or a Bosch painting; things are not what they seem to be, and philosophers trained in the Anglo-American traditions might misjudge his thought as simplistic, lacking rigor or philosophical substance. All the standard concepts of the philosopher's tool box—philosophizing, doubt, belief, skepticism, experience, thinking, logic, morality—are present but their use is different enough to need elucidation. Else, a reading of Vaz Ferreira would fail to meet expectations and leave the reader with more questions and fewer answers.

Philosophy is, for Vaz Ferreira, the effort to understand the nature of language, thought, reality, and action. Philosophical problems originate when we try to come to grips with the conflicts and paradoxes that emerge from that reflection—puzzlements that defy straightforward answers. So we try to clarify them by formulating and reformulating them, and in the process often add obfuscations, confusions, fallacious or specious arguments, which, in turn, lead to arbitrary reinterpretations, to closed systems of thought and narrow-minded attitudes, and to a break in communication that prevent us from philosophizing. Such inadequate philosophies are to be avoided for their nefarious consequences: “Who is more confined? A humble prisoner in a narrow cell but with a view of the fields, the sea, the sky and the unlimited horizons, or the pope in a vast palace, opulent but ending in a wall?... Indubitably, this last situation favors the tendency to believe oneself infallible.”¹

For Vaz Ferreira, the proper task of the philosopher is to bring clarity to the issues by first avoiding systems of thought where everything is fixed, where necessary consequences are deduced from principles and of categories at odds with everyday experience. Take any philosophical problem; rethink the experiences that originally gave rise to its puzzlement, and start reexamining it anew.² This is the way he usually presents his thinking: as fragments, aphorisms, short meditations, where he avoids presenting general theses or over-arching systems. The accent is on form, on philosophical arguments. He analyzes the issues, makes all the relevant distinctions and clarifications, outlines pros and cons, tests the validity of arguments, points out where mistakes have or could have occurred and suggests where one has, or could have, improved, always careful not to force beliefs nor advocate persuasive pragmatisms. Only then can we break with the spell of the original puzzlement; only then can we see the road traveled, assess the progress, and try new formulations. As for actually offering solutions to philosophical problems, we cannot do any more “because we do not know anything more; to promise anything else one would have to be a genius or an ignoramus.”³

At first glance this approach to philosophy is similar to Socrates' treatment of unexamined opinions. For Socrates, philosophy begins by breaking down unquestioned beliefs, received views, sacred cows, in order to admit that perhaps we really do not know anything. Once such admission is made, a dialectical process begins and a new philosophy is built on the ruins of the old. Vaz Ferreira, however, refrains from taking the second step. What he is interested in are the confusions that happen when important distinctions are ignored—in the reformulation rather than the solution of problems. Philosophic problems must be clarified, their logic shown faulty or confused—else we are working with pseudo-problems. Only after such necessary clarification, maybe other forms of philosophizing could be tried.

Vaz Ferreira's philosophic style (*style* rather than *method*), is flexible enough, not just for philosophical problems, but for

political, legal, and social ones as well—fields in which an overwhelming amount of individual cases demands the use of conceptual analyses.⁴ This procedure does not degenerate into casuistry because of his commitment to empiricism: We must constantly refer back to experience to make sure we do not misinterpret or distort it. By experience he means concrete, living and fluid awareness, thinking and sensing, before it is distorted by language or logic. We think and then, as we express our living thoughts in language, we apply linguistic and logical constraints. Living thought—thought in its pre-verbal plasticity—is the rich source from whence our ideas come. Vaz Ferreira calls it “psiqueos” or “ferments,” and coins the verb “psiquear” to refer to the mental activity itself.⁵ This is a kind of spontaneous thinking at its most unclear and amorphous, before language has imposed its limitations. It encompasses doubts, hesitations, and contradictions—a kind of thinking peculiar to the philosopher or scientist when they give free rein to their imagination and speculate about reality. The task of the philosopher is to capture it fresh, without regard for logical rules or verbal schemas. “Thought, when crystallizing, can gain (clarity, exactitude, fulfillment, applications, and so on) and can lose (spontaneity, sincerity, life, interest, fertility, and so on) and often it gains and loses at the same time. To conclude that the ferment is always preferable to the finished product is an exaggeration and misrepresentation. Yet, at times it would be preferable if the reader knew thought in the two states.”⁶

Vaz Ferreira believes that traditional metaphysics have been, by and large, fully developed systems of thought, precise like geometry and claiming clarity and certainty.⁷ This is true of the metaphysics of Aristotle, Descartes, Leibniz, even Kant. If traditional metaphysics seeks to discover a transcendental reality, Vaz Ferreira's conception of metaphysics deals with the way these ideas of reality arise in a philosopher's mind. His metaphysics, instead of being, say a system of propositions about being *qua* being, consists of “psiqueos,” of those thoughts that give rise to traditional metaphysical statements. These “psiqueos” are not propositions since they make no truth claims—not even claims of coherence or consistency. And his metaphysical statements—those sentences that appear in his philosophical works—are not propositions either, for they refer to—rather, express—“psiqueos.”

The claims of traditional metaphysics Vaz Ferreira regards as impossible. Reality is what it is: we perceive it as it is perceived.⁸ To an idealist propositions about reality and perception are synonymous propositions; to a realist, they are independent of each other. Vaz Ferreira cannot adopt idealism, for he sees them not as one or two propositions but as “psiqueos.” And he cannot adopt realism because reality is too complex to systematize or force into verbal schemata. Categories, abstract concepts, verbal schemata all interfere with our perception of reality.⁹ We see opposites where there are neither opposites nor middle terms; we force categories where there are no boundaries. Language distorts facts, and our task is to state them and be aware of the shortcomings of our formulations.

Experience and thinking is a purely psychological concept with epistemological consequences: a denial of abstractionism, of generalizations, theories, idealizations, or intellectualisms. Yet, Vaz Ferreira's empiricism is also a guarded position since he warns us of the illusory power of experience: Though it is claimed experience teaches people, in reality it seldom does.¹⁰ When it shows something contrary to their accepted beliefs, they refuse to make the connection, or perceive it as unrelated, or confuse its import; and this is never truer than in the social or political arena. “By reasoning, humanity learns very little, but from experience it learns nothing.”¹¹ Still, he feels that

empiricism is the most reasonable position; one should just be aware of its inadequacies, of its dangers.

One danger in this type of philosophizing is the temptation to become a skeptic.¹² Vaz Ferreira is aware of this and makes a distinction between skepticism as a philosophic system and a skeptical mental attitude. The first is to be rejected as a dogmatism of ignorance; the second is really the most frank admission of that ignorance: “*Good skepticism does not inhibit action, but softens it.*”¹³

As a philosophic method, skepticism is a healthy state of mind. It avoids some of the traps and fallacies eclecticism, or other systems, are prone to:

the method I have followed, [is] primarily an expository method, strictly impartial, allowing space to all important theories in spite of the risk of leaving a great many questions unresolved, [and] could be open to an objection: this method, it could be said, must necessarily lead to doubt and to skepticism. ... That fearful doubt is precisely a boon rather than an evil because it is a more neutral state of mind, more legitimate and also more fruitful, when what one is examining are simply more or less insecure interpretations and more or less credible theories.¹⁴

After all, philosophy, for Vaz Ferreira, is not so much a search for truth as it is a serious effort to avoid error. He does not want to repeat the mistakes of the past. Overreacting to dogmatic philosophies—positivism or idealism for instance—can lead to equally dogmatic views. Instead, he seeks a golden mean, a questioning attitude that would avoid philosophical skepticism yet prevent him from closing his mind to other possibilities. Caution, anti-dogmatism, and anti-systematization are efforts to avoid biases, narrow-mindedness or “isms.” But can Vaz Ferreira, or anyone else, keep a questioning attitude yet avoid systematic skepticism? That is, how much does attitude influence the philosophical commitments one makes? It is logically possible to question all beliefs yet reject the systematic doubt. This would be feasible as long as the questioning attitude leads to positive gains, to clarification of views, correction of fallacies, or avoidance of errors. But when this attitude becomes a stumbling block in achieving knowledge, or prevents us from distinguishing right from wrong, the result is no different from systematic skepticism.

To ward off the possibility of systematic skepticism, Vaz Ferreira proposes a methodology of degrees of knowledge: We must learn to grade our beliefs, to distinguish what is known from what is believed and from what is unknown. We must learn to appreciate the different degrees of knowledge: certainty, probability, and possibility.¹⁵ Knowledge is human, hence finite, and cultural, biological, and psychological factors contribute to its acquisition. Reasoning can provide some solutions, more or less. But how are we going to grade beliefs? How can we correctly judge what is certain, what is probable, and what is only possible? Needed is a criterion of correctness, but Vaz Ferreira stands firm against it because it could lead to closed systems. He believes that no formulas or rules are needed in order to grade beliefs, only good sense. This good sense should not be confused with common sense. The latter is the cause of much damage to intellectual progress. In *Moral para intelectuales*, Vaz Ferreira distinguishes several meanings of “good sense” other than common sense.

There is a kind of good sense that is above reasoning; no doubt there is a good sense that is anti-logical, but there is also one that we should call hyper-logical. After the mind learns how to reason and see from every point of view, still there is a sense, a kind of *logical*

instinct, that guides, moderates reasoning, that defends against it, if that is the case and that is indispensable because in almost all practical problems, in almost all real questions, there are problems of degree; there are formulas that, true to a given degree, pass on afterwards into falsehoods, the difficulty being that it is not known when and at what instant...¹⁶

This logical instinct, or good sense, is not to be taken as a substitute for reasoning, but as an addition to it.¹⁷ Nor does it replace experience, but aids it.

When we have seen and weighted by ratiocination the pros and cons found in almost all cases, when we have used all the logic (sound logic) possible, when the question becomes one of degrees, a moment comes in which a kind of instinct, what I call the good hyper-logical sense, is the one that solves for us all the questions in the concrete cases. And it would be good that logic does not deprive men of this form of good sense.¹⁸

The function of this instinct is to help logic rather than to replace it. It works to maintain equilibrium among opposing ideas, prevent fallacies, and so on. This empirical instinct improves when reason provides it with questions for its perusal: “the process of reasoning is completed by the good hyper-logical sense, *controller of reasoning.*”¹⁹

Thus, good philosophy is possible only if the philosopher can clear up the fallacies and errors that plague it; that is, if our logic allows it.²⁰ The logic developed to fulfill this desideratum Vaz Ferreira calls “a living logic.” Rather than the traditional logic of the schools, this is an effort to carry out the radical empiricism John Stuart Mill proposes in *A System of Logic*.²¹ For Mill, the validity of the rules or laws of logic are established by appeal to our own experiences. Vaz Ferreira is similarly committed to an empirical logic: All our knowledge is based on facts and observations; this includes logic.²² And because logic begins with ordinary thinking, he also concludes it is psychological.²³

Though Mill and Vaz Ferreira agree that logic reflects the true nature of thought, they differ on what that nature is. Mill, committed to psychological atomism and mechanism, identifies thinking with the syllogism. Logic embodies the canons of rationality and its laws are the laws of thought. But Vaz Ferreira sees thinking as fluid and vital, constantly changing.²⁴ Thought and ordinary language are different, not just in form but in content: Our mental states, as psychological realities, are different from the linguistic schemas in which they are presented.²⁵ And what we express is a small part of what we think, which is, in turn, a miniscule part of what we “psiqueamos.”²⁶ It wavers between confidence and doubts, constantly fluctuating, changing.²⁷ Traditional logic, as Vaz Ferreira perceives it, belies the character of mentation when it imposes its patterns on living thought. Propositions and syllogisms are parodies of thought; they are the result of confusing words with ideas, verbal schemas with the psychic processes they represent. If logic is to be empirical, if it is to be a living logic, it should reflect the true dynamics of living processes. It should be, in Vaz Ferreira’s terminology, a psychology—the logic of psychic processes, one that uncovers the structure of living thought buried below the verbal schemata.²⁸

The function of living logic is not to give theories of validity, or of formalizations of language, but to analyze the most common errors and confusions incurred in everyday thinking:²⁹ “the real confusion, the psychological confusion is not the same we obtain by a thoughtful analysis of the meaning of sentences. The psychological confusion is not superimposed on the logical confusion; the actual confusion is not, generally, the confusion

one would incur if, excuse the paradox, we would be confused the way one is supposed to be.”³⁰

Logic is not the formal study of fallacies, but of their application to life: fallacies like false systematization (the application of rules or procedures to every problem and deriving similar results, yielding an illusory uniformity of reality); false opposition (or taking beliefs, observations, theories as mutually exclusive or mutually exhaustive of reality); and false precision (or imposing mathematical methods to subjects that do not lend themselves to such treatment). These are errors of thinking, not of reasoning, as Mill’s fallacies are. Because they are more subtle and pervasive than the ones found in Book V of *System of Logic*, they are more dangerous. Living logic is an art designed for practical use. For Vaz Ferreira, it is a new way of thinking, more ample and sincere than the conventional forms of philosophic reasoning.

Paralleling the arguments for a living logic, Vaz Ferreira adds a counterpart in the realm of values, a living morality.³¹ For the same reasons living thought cannot be captured by artificial rules and systems, living morality cannot be expressed by injunctions or moral systems—another aspect of the belief that the fluidity of life cannot be systematized. In ethics, the task of the philosopher is to distinguish true from false morality—living morality from those moral systems that try to encapsulate the vitality of life by forcing it into sterile categories and schematisms. One must moralize with feelings, not with words.

Four features characterize Vaz Ferreira’s ethics: moral judgments deal with practical rather than theoretical problems; these judgments are non-systematic; they are ultimately intuitive judgments that require a moral sense; and there is a modicum of moral progress.

First, according to Vaz Ferreira, the aim of morality has always been practical: the examination of moral problems. The philosopher’s task is not to create moral theories, but to help readers better understand their own morality,³² to create a methodology of morals: a clarification of what the problems and dangers are so they can be avoided. These goals are accomplished by pointing to a number of real moral problems and to the fallacies that prevent their clear articulation. There is, for instance, the problem of double standards, the payment of lip service to a theoretical morality having very little to do with conduct, with what actually is or should be done.³³ Or anticipating the problem by looking at only one side of the question—its faults or advantages—and then taking a decision based on this partial view. Moral decisions should be made after looking at as many sides of the question as possible; only then can one reach a fair decision.³⁴ *Moral para intelectuales* is a guide for professionals, such as lawyers, doctors, teachers, who, though trained in a given field, seldom examine the moral problems these fields entail.

The second feature of Vaz Ferreira’s ethical stand is his attitude toward systems: “In general, the tendency to too much systematization in morality falsifies or restricts. Every system has led, and tends to lead, to exclusivist points of view. ... Now, these are systematizations that crystallize our spirit; the ones that deprive us from mobility, the plasticity characteristic of life, of intellectual and moral advancement.”³⁵ Take ethical reductionism, the simplification of moral problems in terms of some determined value or system we feel comfortable with. It has its roots in our inclination toward the advantages systematization offers. When, in *Lógica viva*, Vaz Ferreira examines the fallacies of false systematization, he points to their nefarious effect in ethics. Many philosophers have explained morality in terms of closed, rigorous systems, each one focusing on only one of all possible factors of conduct. Some systems make empathy central, others, pleasure, collective utility,

evolution, etc. Actually, all these factors and many others have value. We must take them all into account if we are to think, not by means of systems, but by ideas. Only then can all moral factors—hypotheses, possibilities, or hopes that relate to conduct—be combined into a living morality. “No one can present it formulated in numbers or letters; but whoever knows how to think that way, without formulas, is the one most likely to feel morality deepest in his soul.”³⁶

In *Lógica viva* Vaz Ferreira tells us we should think with thought rather than with words. In the few published fragments of in *Moral viva*, a work he never completed, he adds that we should feel with our instincts, with our intuitions of the good and the true, rather than with injunctions or moral systems.³⁷ This brings us to the third characteristic of Vaz Ferreira’s ethics: his ethical intuitionism. Taking a broad view of the moral phenomenon, Vaz Ferreira notes a multiplicity of definitions of right or good, of ethical conditions or systems.³⁸ This reminds him to keep a guarded and skeptical attitude toward moral problems. But here, in order to avoid systematic moral skepticism, or even ethical relativism, Vaz Ferreira adopts an intuitionist position by positing a moral sense. We know what is right or wrong, good or bad, by following our moral intuition.³⁹ “One must be aware that the ideal of man should be to feel, not only with reason, but by means of something more delicate still, by a kind of instinct, that which is good and true; it should, let’s say, make our souls be like a sensitive instrument that feels and reveals the good and the true, like a delicate receiver.”⁴⁰

The need for positing this moral sense lies in the character of moral judgments: they cannot be stated without exceptions because they are normative rather than factual. Normative problems require a different kind of approach than factual ones. If factual problems admit of definite solutions, normative problems are questions of pros and cons, advantages and disadvantages, weighing and deciding, admitting possible outcomes, all related, all depending on what the agent perceives, feels, senses. They might not be ideally perfect solutions—rather resolutions.⁴¹ And they involve feelings, experience, intuition, the moral sense, and an element of rationality.⁴² Morality, like logic, is reduced to psychology.⁴³ Otherwise, the alternative is skepticism.

As for moral progress, since there are several possible approaches to ethical problems, Vaz Ferreira feels that there is improvement in broadening the plurality of moral foundations, all legitimate and all equally suited to human affairs.⁴⁴ In the realm of facts we search for non-contradiction. In the realm of values, ideals clash. And there is no guarantee that the ideals we choose will never contradict those already adopted. Morality is conflictive, involving incompatible ideals and opposing principles. It is here that moral progress lies: in adding more and different kinds of ideals to what we already have, in increasing their variety and number, in broadening our choices and sharpening our moral sensitivity.⁴⁵

Vaz Ferreira’s guarded attitude about morals might cause some to dismiss him as but a superficial philosopher. After all, one does not have to be reminded of the conflictive nature of moral issues. What one wants is a way out, some solutions that can be readily applied. Guarded attitudes, in ethics, as well as in metaphysics and epistemology, can lead to relativism or skepticism, rather than to solid, rigorous systems of thought with universal applications. This is something Vaz Ferreira won’t allow. Not just that he refuses to acknowledge them but that he thinks that they don’t exist:

Moral systems have fallen into an error similar to the one people would fall into when they propose to construct a perfect building, incorruptible, and eternal. Departing from that conception, any real

building would be, afterwards, incomplete and flawed. It would not be “*the edifice*.” Well, systems do something similar when they pretend to lay the foundations of morality—of Morality, capitalized, that is—one that would be perfect, that would have no room for conflict, for any objection or any difficulty, one never doubtful, uncertain, or incomplete. And then our architects would say, “The only way our structure can have this perfect character and incorruptibility is by hanging it from the heavens.” True, but it is important to realize that if anyone thought to have seen such a building, it was a mirage.⁴⁶

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Endnotes

1. *Fermentario*, 108. All translations in this essay are mine.
2. *Lógica viva*, 274-76.
3. “Curso expositivo de filosofía,” in *Obras*, 25: 200.
4. See for instance, *Sobre el feminismo and Los problemas de la libertad*.
5. *Fermentario*, 85-85.
6. *Fermentario*, 17.
7. *Moral para intelectuales*, 201; *Lógica viva*, 140-45.
8. *Lógica viva*, 274.
9. *Lógica viva*, 267-68.
10. *Lógica viva*, 182-86.
11. *Fermentario*, 123.
12. *Fermentario*, 81.
13. *Lógica viva*, 290.
14. “Curso expositivo de filosofía,” in *Obras*, 25: 199.
15. *Conocimiento y acción*, 12-13.
16. *Moral para intelectuales*, 157.
17. *Lógica viva*, 204-05.
18. *Lógica viva*, 148.
19. *Lógica viva*, 205.
20. *Lógica viva*, 125.
21. *Lógica viva*, 135-39.
22. *Conocimiento y acción*, 68.
23. *Lógica viva*, 144-55.
24. *Lógica viva*, 275-76.
25. *Lógica viva*, 116-17.
26. *Fermentario*, 87.
27. *Lógica viva*, 17; *Fermentario*, 86-87.
28. *Lógica viva*, 155-68.
29. *Lógica viva*, 15.
30. “Sobre los problemas de la libertad,” *Obras*, 24: 69-70.
31. *Moral para intelectuales*, 109-204.
32. *Moral para intelectuales*, 17, 62.
33. *Moral para intelectuales*, 56-60.
34. *Lógica viva*, 273; *Moral para intelectuales*, 192.
35. *Moral para intelectuales*, 190-91.
36. *Moral para intelectuales*, 190-91.

37. *Fermentario*, 33-46.
38. *Fermentario*, 131.
39. *Moral para intelectuales*, 18, 181-82, 190.
40. *Moral para intelectuales*, 200.
41. *Fermentario*, 131-32.
42. *Fermentario*, 33.
43. *Moral para intelectuales*, 60.
44. *Lógica viva*, 148-49.
45. *Fermentario*, 131.
46. *Moral para intelectuales*, 202. Author italics.

Affirmative Action avant la lettre in the Social Philosophy of Carlos Vaz Ferreira¹

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Carlos Vaz Ferreira (1872-1958) was exceptionally dedicated to public education at all levels. In addition to being Uruguay’s most prominent twentieth-century philosopher, he was arguably the most famous and public professor at the University of Montevideo. Almost all of his published work stemmed from lectures he gave at the university. When the lecture transcriptions were delivered to him, sometimes long after he gave the talks, Vaz Ferreira only occasionally had time to edit them. Most of his works were published as transcribed, which accounts for their conversational or spoken tone. Unfortunately, some of his lectures were not transcribed or the transcriptions were lost along the way, notably a series of talks he gave on Bergson.

Vaz Ferreira, in the context of a progressive political climate in Montevideo, was the first Latin American philosopher to publish a book with “feminism” in its title, *Sobre feminismo* (published in 1933, but first delivered as a series of public lectures between 1914 and 1917). During the two presidencies of José Battle y Ordóñez (1903-1907 and 1911-1915), Uruguay became the first country to legislate the eight-hour workday, the first to guarantee health care to the poor, and the home of a social security system that served as a model for the rest of the continent. Changes in the law also made it easier for women to divorce and gain access to higher education and social services, and in 1932 Uruguay became the second Latin American nation to grant women the vote in national elections (after Ecuador in 1929). Vaz Ferreira’s feminist thought was supported by the progressive political climate established by politicians such as Battle y Ordóñez and Baltasar Brum, but Vaz was himself an agent of change. Concerned with the civil and political rights of women and the social participation of women, Vaz Ferreira, working with many others, had a decisive impact in favor of women in the Uruguayan legislature. Vaz Ferreira proposed a bill that passed into law exactly as he had conceived it: the law of “unilateral divorce,” which gave “women the power to obtain a divorce at will, without giving cause, while men have to show just cause.”² This law is consistent with his theory that the situations of men and women are fundamentally different. When the law passed, “opponents of divorce did not like it because of their need to preserve the family as the basis of society. Proponents of the right to a divorce did not like it either because they framed the question as one of ‘equality.’”³

In confronting the problem of the social situation of women, Vaz Ferreira’s philosophical strategy had two steps: (1) examining questions of fact, the possible questions about the similarities and differences between the two sexes; (2) examining normative problems. Vaz distinguished factual

questions from normative ones in his *Lógica viva* (1910). Factual questions were those of knowledge and verification. Among the questions of fact, of similarities and differences between the sexes, Vaz Ferreira maintained that debatable data and undebatable data existed. The undebatable detail that was most crucial and most radical for his time was: “From the union between a man and a woman, the woman can become pregnant; nothing happens to the man.”⁴ He argued further, “Finding this fact to be satisfactory is to be ‘antifeminist.’”⁵ Normative questions were those of action, preference, and choice. For Vaz Ferreira, the normative issues were most relevant to the condition of women. The normative feminist problems for Vaz Ferreira were: (1) a woman’s political rights; (2) a woman’s activity in society, her access to public office, her access to careers, professions, and education; (3) civil rights; and (4) the relations between the sexes and the organization of the family. He addressed such structural issues often before suffragist feminists did, and made significant contributions to theorizing about women in relation to the family. According to two critics, “Vaz Ferreira’s ideas about the family and the role of women in it constitute, even today, a kind of paradigm in Uruguayan society.”⁶

A central idea in his analysis of these problems was to maintain the difference between feminism of equality and affirmative or corrective feminism. Feminism of equality was based on the idea that “jobs and careers should be open to women as they are to men; that women should have the same civil capacity as men, the same level of education; that, in general, the sexes should be equalized by diminishing the difference between them and by placing women in the same situation as men, making them more like men.”⁷ For Vaz Ferreira, “feminism of equality” did not merit much attention because of the fact that women were biologically mistreated by the likelihood of pregnancy in their unions with men and, therefore, to speak of “equalization” was not pragmatic. The only acceptable feminism, for Vaz Ferreira, was corrective, based on the idea that society must compensate physiological injustice given that it will never be possible to equalize it and that it would be counter-productive to attempt to do so. For Vaz Ferreira, “Antifeminism takes as its guide that fact [women’s biological disadvantage]. Bad feminism does not even take it into account. Good feminism strives to correct it and compensate for it.”⁸

Vaz Ferreira examined a wide range of additional issues affecting women as he formulated theories about what would be necessary to correct their disadvantaged status. Contemporary readers will be made uncomfortable by some of his assertions, which seem antiquated or lodged in Uruguayan social conditions now nearly a century old, but at other moments, his ideas seem contemporary and insightful. The occasional presence in the text of its author being in the patriarchal mode of helping women does not, in the end, taint the surprisingly early advances that men and women together achieved in early twentieth-century Uruguay. Maximizing freedom for women and men was a prominent theme in much of Vaz Ferreira’s work. As John Haddox explains, “His thought was fragmentary and spontaneous and germinal; he opposed systematizing; he sought to open windows, not to build walls; he describes ‘two types of souls: liberal souls and tutorial souls—souls whose instinctive ideal is freedom (for themselves and for others) and souls which have an ideal of tutelage and consequently of authority,’ identifying the former position as his own.”⁹

Consider below an excerpt from *Sobre feminismo* in which Vaz analyzes the effect of marital status on women:

...*Marriage tends to function as a regulator of women’s*

participation in jobs, professions, and activities. In turn, women’s involvement in these activities defines marriage. It is now necessary to make a series of observations that will seem commonplace, perhaps even absurd insofar as they need to be articulated. Nonetheless, this can occur with misformulated problems such as this one.

On the one hand, as stated above, marriage tends to regulate women’s participation in jobs, careers, professions, etc. It is quite clear that women have a tendency, in general, to prefer the married state and the psychology of the home (and most men have a complementary tendency to limit their spouse’s activities outside the home, except in cases where wives are expected to be present or when they are truly needed.)

That marriage tends to govern women’s involvement in employment and careers to this extent is, then, a very natural and human occurrence. This is not a topic for anti-feminist jokes in poor taste, but rather it is a tendency to actualize a generally preferable ideal, a natural manifestation of the feminine psychology of mate and mother.

On the other hand, and this is truly interesting, women’s involvement in professions, jobs, and careers, or more properly speaking, the possibility of such involvement, tends, reciprocally and complementarily, to regulate marriage.

A woman’s capacity to live for herself, which has to do with power, ability, and opportunity, does not depend wholly on marriage, as it seems to in mainstream society, which is one of the saddest and most unpleasant aspects of traditional society.

In traditional, mainstream society, women tend to define themselves exclusively, or to a large extent, by their decision to marry or to remain single. If a woman does not marry (save for unusual cases), she depends upon others. At the same time, she is condemned to limited possibilities for life, activity, and personal pleasure by a repressive or deformed culture.

So in the first instance, she depends upon others. Naturally, sacrifices and consecrations arise from this situation. Society welcomes this: the horrible part is that society counts on this. Society is organized around the principle of making an expiatory being of the woman who does not marry.

In the next instance, few possibilities and skills are conceded to her. In traditional society, a woman tends to be given a kind of vacuous pseudo-education, not so much to enable her to marry as to encourage others to marry her: an absurd life, pseudo-art, a lack of culture, and physical weakness.

Of course, this is essential (and the banalities continue): a woman must not be forced to enter into marriage out of necessity, a bad marriage, a marriage devoid of love, or a marriage to just anyone.

Furthermore, she must retain the right to be able to break off a marriage in the event of extreme injustice or suffering.

Thus, from the very possibilities of a woman's participation in different social roles, from her possibility of a life of independence, of her possibility of not relying on marriage, comes an over-dignifying of love and marriage. This is what anti-feminists do not usually understand.

With regard to feminists, their truth lies in women's unrestricted access to professions and roles: in such roles opening up to women, in their not being denied to women. This truth must be lauded in a spirited state other than the habitual one for feminists, and above all, with other expectations and ideals. This is very important and is precisely what makes the situation preferable to covering up the criticism.

Notice how misformulated the issue is generally; and how feminists, even though they are on the way to defending the better doctrine, really tend to discredit it by misconceiving and misinterpreting it.

First, they begin by believing (or by not realizing that they cannot believe) that woman's engagement in all of man's roles is in fact compatible with her own special role of wife and mother, with her home life.

Second, they envision woman's widespread participation in all social roles, in addition to her own roles, as an ideal for woman and for society.

This is to say that they envision a feminist ideal that is, in truth, an anti-feminist one in the sense that it burdens woman with more responsibilities than man.

It is necessary to add that such feminists tend to base their thoughts and conclusions on the idea of "equality." As long as this is their guiding principle (especially if it is taken in a strict, exclusive sense), it is easy to point out frequent inconsistencies: the most serious of which is to deem ideal an unequal social structure, and later many other structures such as when they base the need to address certain disadvantages experienced by women on the idea of equality, while others continue to be privileges of the gender. Therefore, though what they advocate may be, in and of itself, convenient and desirable, these feminists easily provide ammunition for their opponents.

They also tend to part from the premise that their entire social structure, in all of its aspects, has been organized against women and in favor of men; and it is just as easy to point out that they only perceive a part of the truth, that there are indications that the present social structure has been organized, consciously or not, in favor of women... I reiterate then, that feminists leave themselves open to anti-feminists' criticism.

Now, with respect to anti-feminists, that is, the usual anti-feminists, their position is also logically flawed: in my judgment, it is logically far inferior. Moreover, it tends to be morally and emotionally abhorrent and harsh. First, for the sake of those cases that conform to their ideal, they sacrifice all other cases. (Here, the greatest banality, which Guyau had to state: not all women marry).

Second, anti-feminists have a tendency to misformulate and narrowly conceive their desired ideal. They do not perceive monogamous union as superior in

and of itself: they believe it is preferable because of woman's inferior psychology, the psychology of her physiology (notwithstanding how they usually idealize monogamy with simplistic, ad hoc literature).

With respect to natural physiological inequality, anti-feminists certainly take it into account as a fact of life, but they do not consider its painful and cruel qualities.

Without a doubt, the ideal is the monogamous union with certain features of equality, as I have sought to explain it: psychological equality insofar as it is possible (not identity, but equal worth with dignity), equal division of labor, with men tending toward work outside the home (to complement their role within the home) and women tending toward work in the home (with complementary work outside the home, but only when it is complementary).

However, this ideal should not be imposed, either directly or indirectly. In addition, those cases that do not conform to the ideal should not be held captive to it.

A natural consequence of the above, then, is that professions, careers, jobs, etc., should, as a general rule, be open and completely accessible to women. (I say "as a general rule," to be sure, because in certain cases there are special signs of inability for one sex or the other, but the rule should remain.)

Nevertheless, if this is to be the social structure, it is not because the ideal is that all women nor that the vast majority of them engage in professions and careers to the same extent that men do, but because this way, possibilities for women exist and, thus, a freer society is created.

The ideal of monogamous union in effect regulates woman's involvement in jobs and careers. Such involvement is not universal but tends to come about in cases where it is either necessary or desired.

Women's entrance into careers and employment in a full and unrestricted sense tends in turn to regulate relationships with others to dignify them.

Also not to be viewed as expendable are women who are not able to partake in marriage under the circumstances they would like, or those who cannot manage it under those circumstances, or those who subscribe to a different ideal, whatever it may be: dedication to science, art, or a social cause; or a different ideal of gender roles, whatever it may be.

Of course, not marrying has its drawbacks. The primary one is encouragement to deviate from the most desirable ideal.

However all that is free functions this way; all structures based on freedom bring negative elements with them. There is always a price to pay for freedom of any kind, but that price is minimal.

In this case, the price has already been paid perhaps more than once, by the over-dignifying of the very ideal of monogamous union.

On a more profound level, in reality, the true ideal is not one of absolute uniformity, not even in theory:

in kind, such as humanity, in motion—in spiritual kind—the ideal should be, with variation and an intense fermentation, more one of predominance and tendency.

Such is the best concept, and inseparable from it is another I am going to formulate here about women's education....¹⁰

Thus, for Vaz Ferreira, for almost any feature of life affecting women, simply declaring a level playing field, or the opportunity for equality, was not enough and could potentially make matters worse for women. Society would not, in his view, self-correct; therefore, a corrective, compensatory, and preferential affirmative strategy was needed to ensure change, not altogether different from the way affirmative action has been needed during and after the civil rights movement in the United States.

Endnotes

1. This essay is an offshoot of a paper I delivered at the APA Eastern Division Meeting in Boston on December 29, 2010, titled "Pragmatism from North to South: William James and Carlos Vaz Ferreira." A longer version of that paper will be published as "Varieties of Pragmatism: Carlos Vaz Ferreira and the Cash-Value of Feminism," in *Inter-American Journal of Philosophy* 4 (March 2012). The present essay focuses on just one example of Vaz Ferreira's "affirmative thinking" and includes an excerpt of my translation of his *Sobre feminismo* (1933), which will be included in a book I am writing on Vaz Ferreira's thought.
2. Carlos Vaz Ferreira, *Sobre feminismo, Obras: Homenaje de la Cámara de Representantes de la República Oriental del Uruguay* (Montevideo, 1958), Vol. 9, p. 83.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 83.
4. Carlos Vaz Ferreira, *Sobre feminismo*, p. 25.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 25.
6. Rodríguez Villamil and Sapriza, *El voto femenino en el Uruguay*, p. 12.
7. Carlos Vaz Ferreira, *Sobre feminismo*, p. 16.
8. *Ibid.*, p. 38.
9. John H. Haddox, "Carlos Vaz Ferreira: Uruguayan Philosopher," *Journal of Inter-American Studies*, Special Issue: Argentina-Uruguay 8, n. 4 (Oct. 1966): 596.
10. Carlos Vaz Ferreira, *Sobre feminismo*, pp. 67-73.

Toward a Future Andean Technology (From a Tentative Phenomenology of Inka Stonework)

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Amidst the recent centennial of the "scientific" discovery of Machu Picchu, when the famous Inka stone city was praised widely as a symbol of Peruvian¹ and Latin American identity, one could read the banner: "Machu Picchu: 100 years of prostituting Andean culture."² The banner expressed that Peruvians only consider Machu Picchu a tourist attraction, being ultimately "ashamed of fostering Andean culture" (*Ibid.*). In particular, an indigenous activist added, the tourist industry stops communities that continue to inhabit and transmit the native culture of the Andes from having access to Inka stonework at the core of their living culture (*Ibid.*). The banner is part of a movement to regain this access.

The banner reveals a discrepancy between the vacuous promotion of Andean heritage and the lack of support for

Andean culture. Deeming the discovery of Machu Picchu "scientific" also speaks to this issue: a hundred years ago the stonework of Machu Picchu was admired but ultimately submitted to a particularly Western kind of reasoning and to the technological disposition that guides them. This event endorsed the ongoing colonization of Andean culture and its discredit as a way of being in the world, including its approach to understanding and using natural resources as reflected in its stonework, for example. The "scientific" discovery set the stage for the charge of "prostitution" above.

The activist group behind the banner, called "Colectivo el Muro," has the mission of exposing the struggle of native communities in defense of their "resources, of life and of Pachamama [usually translated as 'Mother Earth']."³ Why is re-opening access to the stonework of Machu Picchu for Andean communities beyond the purview of the tourist industry an important part of this struggle? *Specifically, is there a way in which the finest examples of Inka stonework shelter insights that could release the domination by the West, particularly in its technological dimension in the Andes? What kind of relationship with Pachamama is carried out through Inka stonework that could bring about this undoing?* Maybe tackling these questions will counteract the need for the banner.

Part I: An Attempt to Understand Western Technology in the Andes (The Encounter with Inka Stonework and the Education of the European Mind).

The issue is neither how specific technologies fare in the Andes, nor a comparison between technologies of Western origin and of Andean origin. "Technology" is, here, a specific fundamental compartment toward everything that is, including the resources that support human existence. The encounter between Inka stonework and Western technology will be scrutinized at this fundamental level of inquiry through an analysis of Garcilaso de la Vega's reports of the magnificent stones in the fortress of Cuzco.⁴

I. 1. First Moment of the Encounter: Perception, Imagination, Admiration.

Garcilaso de la Vega describes the Inka stonework in the fortress of Cuzco as follows: their main stone building (*la obra mayor*) made manifest (*mostrar*) Inka power and majesty (See De la Vega 64). The point here is one of perception: Inka stonework appeals to our eyes, it makes us see power through "a multitude of stones, so many and so big... (some are huge living rocks [peñas] rather than stones)..." (Garcilaso de la Vega, 65). The power that we "see" in the stones is the raw power that the Inkas exerted on these stones in order to bring them to a particular site and to stack them on top of each other. This raw power is so excessive, that Garcilaso de la Vega moves from perception to imagination in his account. The unwieldy stones make "those who have observed them intently imagine, or even believe, that they have been made through sorcery, and were made by demons rather than men..." (Garcilaso de la Vega, 64-65). In the encounter with Inka stonework, the European mind is captivated by a perception that leads into imagination, verging into the fantastical. *The whole encounter circumvents the understanding: Inka raw power as manifest in the resistance of stone, eludes reason, and ends up provoking a sentiment: admiration (admiración).*

I. 2. Second Moment of the Encounter: from "Raw Power" to "Technological Power."

Later in the text, Garcilaso de la Vega refines his account: through the majesty and immensity of their construction (*su fábrica*), the Inkas made manifest their power (See De la Vega, 66). This second articulation of the encounter is a critical reflection on the first one. Now it is not a matter of the stones, but of how the

buildings were put together or fabricated (*su fábrica*). In the buildings, according to the second articulation, the craft that directs building is made manifest. In this respect, awareness of construction techniques liberates the European mind from its captivation in perception, imagination, and sentiment. On this basis, Garcilaso de la Vega proceeds with an ambivalent account. On the one hand, from this reflective stance, he re-engages the work that appeared to our imagination as the work of demons. This work is now seen as accomplished by humans but through an effort unknown to Europeans:

...how could they [the Inkas] cut the stones from their quarry, when the Indians did not have iron or steel to cut or carve them, ...how could they bring them to the building...when they did not have bulls to pull them nor did they know how to build carts...they dragged them with the strength of their arms...the paths through which they dragged them were not plains but mountain ranges... (Garcilaso de la Vega, 65)

On the other hand (as is evident in the quote), the enormity of the raw power of the Inka appears as such only in relation to their instrumental inferiority. The ambivalent account continues showing this inferiority to be a matter not only of a lack of instruments, but also of a lack of an instrumentalizing comportment: “[the Inkas] did not have a square, they did not even know how to resort to a ruler (*ni supieron valerse siquiera de una regla*)...They did not know how to build cranes, nor pulleys, nor any other invention that would help them raise and bring down stones that are so big that are terrifying” (Garcilaso de la Vega, 65). *The more one admires (admirar) the Inka raw power (as in the first account of the encounter), the more one is made aware of their ignorance of instruments and instrumentalization.* This ambivalence in the encounter with Inka stonework opens the path for an education and liberation of the European mind, which ultimately is an education in the true nature of European power. The impressive raw power of the Inkas, now seen as an immense human effort in the absence of instruments, is inferior to what we could call “technological power.” Here we find an anticipation of the “scientific” discovery of Machu Picchu and its implications laid out above, which are carried over into the charge of “prostitution” of Andean culture.

I. 3. The Pragmatism and Ontology of Instruments: Instrumental Reason, Technological Power, Framing the Inkas, and the Education of the European Mind.

The development from the first to second moments of the encounter with Inka stonework is an education that involves two main movements. First, from a mind captivated in perception, imagination, and sentiment to a liberated mind that steps back, reflects, and, through the use of reason, is able to dispel an irrational captivation. Second, from a sense of power related to quantity and the enormity of effort exerted against unwieldy resistance, power as sheer force, to a recognition of the inferiority of such a power insofar as it ignores instruments and instrumentalization, being something like power without efficiency. These two movements together point to a specific kind of “reason” that is tied to “instruments” and “instrumentalizing.” *In the encounter with Inka stonework the European mind is brought to recognize and assume what has become its definitive nature, that which appears to set it apart from the Inkas: reason as fundamentally instrumental.*

This reasoning is “instrumental” insofar as it seeks the most efficient completion of specific tasks via instruments. It is determined and made possible by a comportment that engages everything as a possible instrument. This comportment, which is the core of Western technology, is not in itself “instrumental,” it is not guided by specific tasks and purposes and it is ultimately

not concerned simply with the efficiency and pragmatism of instruments. *Technology in this sense is, rather, a mode of power that, by instrumentalizing the substance of its world, creates new tasks, new systems of purpose, and structures of meaning—new worlds for instrumental reason to navigate through.* Technology, thus, exceeds the specificity of tasks and goals. Technological power is mainly concerned with the origination of worlds (while the raw power of the Inkas appears to the European mind as defined by the resistance of its world—by unwieldy stones, for example—and is restrained by it).

The relationship between instrumental reason and technological power as its guiding comportment is based on the character of instruments. Instruments have both a pragmatic aspect (linked to efficiency and instrumental reasoning) and an ontological aspect (linked to the constitution of structures of meaning, of new worlds). The latter defines technological power as a dominant comportment. But the relationship between instrumental reasoning and the technology of power is not necessary; it is engrained in the European mind by its education above, which emphasizes instruments as the reason for their superiority. This lack of necessity may provide an opening for the deconstruction of technological power, specifically for the severance of its hold over instrumental reasoning and the pragmatism of instruments (see conclusions below). This account that emphasizes the pragmatism and ontology of instruments as fundamental to understand technology in the Andes departs significantly from Octavio Paz’s parallel inquiry into technology.⁵

Inka stone buildings were made “more to cause wonder rather than for any other end [*más para admirar que no para otro fin*]...” (Garcilaso de la Vega, 66). With this statement, Garcilaso de la Vega seals the education of the European mind and its assessment of the Inkas. The Inkas now appear stuck in perception, imagination, and sentiment, without sophisticated instruments, not enlightened by instrumental reasoning, wielding power as brute force, ignorant of power in its technological dimension, and, for that reason, not engaged with the opening of new worlds—that is, the Inkas are irrational and stuck in their world, without a horizon of development. *This analysis shows that the European encounter with Inka stonework makes possible a kind of reflection through which the Inkas are admired at first but ultimately framed in their inferiority to the Europeans, a reflection that is also constitutive of the European mind in its entrenchment in technological power.* On the basis of the education in technological power, the framing of the Inkas informs violent practices of colonization and oppression, including the current prostitution of Andean culture. There is, however, a different dimension to this violence that complicates our account so far.

I. 4. Inka Stonework Challenges the hold of Technological Power (not only the pragmatism of instruments), and the Ensuing Violence against “Nature” and Andean Culture.

Does this education in technological power exhaust the encounter with Inka stonework? Garcilaso de la Vega’s account continues by referring to a Spanish priest who points out that Inka stonework seems unachievable even with European instruments, hinting that at least an aspect of it could not be subsumed under the purview of the European technological comportment:

[Inka stone buildings] exceed the seven that are called the marvels of the world; because...it is easy to see how these were made. ...But it is not possible to imagine how these Indians without machines, inventions and instruments were able to cut, carve, lift and bring down living rocks so enormous (which are more pieces of mountain ranges than stones for the

construction of buildings), and to put them so tightly together... (Garcilaso de la Vega, 67)

Even a European mind educated in technological power ultimately falls short of grasping Inka stonework. The quote above points to why this is the case. Inka stonework does not minimize the resistance of what Westerners call 'nature,' it does not instrumentalize 'nature' (by seeing it only as "natural resources," for example) but it is not simply raw power either. It, rather, incorporates "nature," allowing it to be without overpowering it.⁶ From a Western perspective, this comportment of Inka stonework is not only inscrutable, but it appears to align Inka ways of being with "nature" itself. The Inkas appear bonded to "nature" rather than instrumentalizing it. This alignment challenges technological power in its comportment to instrumentalize everything as an origination of worlds. *The point extracted from the quote above is fundamental: Inka stonework, in its lack of sophisticated instruments, not only baffles the European emphasis on efficiency and pragmatism, but, above all, through the apparent incorporation of "nature," challenges the very stance of technological power.* In response to this challenge, technology entrenches itself more forcefully as an "origin of worlds," and sets itself up against both "nature" and Inka ways of being, lumping them together. "Nature" is turned into "resources" and Andean culture is seen as in need of a fundamental reconfiguration (it appears backwards, primitive, naturalized) via its submission to different worlds opened up by technological power—hence the link between the careless intensity of the exploitation of natural resources in the Andes and the violence against Andean culture (now, somewhat paradoxically, being both an inferior culture and a challenging culture). López Soria⁷ has already noted this link that our analysis of Inka stonework's challenge to technological power elucidates.

Any serious attempt to understand technology in the Andes must recognize the challenge to technological power manifest in Inka stonework⁸ and the violence that results from it. In relation to López Soria's work, our argument supports and complements his analysis of the Peruvian industrial class. This class, according to him, is caught between the endorsement of foreign technology and the intention to find autochthonous modes of production. Ultimately, it ends up swayed toward the former and engages in technology as a form of domination of both "nature" and native populations. The industrial class "can only preserve itself and grow stronger as a class insofar as it ever more enforces the relations of domination" (López Soria, 31). Our analysis of the encounter with Inka stonework sheds further light on the exploitative tendencies of the Peruvian industrial class by understanding it both in terms of the "education of the European mind" and as responding to the challenge to technological power laid out above.⁹

If we put together the education of the European mind in technological power with the challenge to it, we can see that Inka stonework appears in two ways that the European mind cannot reconcile. On the one hand, it is just a manifestation of raw force that is easily overcome by instrumental reason in its technological comportment. On the other hand, it appears in harmony with nature in a way that challenges the stance of technological power. *This confusion shows that technology in the Andes is violent as dominantly oppressive and challenged at the same time, pointing to a fissure in its very constitution, to an unresolved instability, which fosters more violence in its attempt to secure its authoritative ground as the "origin of worlds." But this securing makes the challenge to it more apparent, making technological power more fissured, and so forth.*

II. Inka Stonework and its Relation to Pachamama.

Our analysis of technological power in the Andes on the basis

of the encounter with Inka stonework has revealed: (a) the framing of Inka culture by the European mind, (b) the challenge to technological power, and (c) the spiraling, violent crisis of technology in the Andes. The following phenomenologically inspired analysis is a "diatopic hermeneutic process"¹⁰ of the relationship between Inka stonework and Pachamama and will allow us to deconstruct these three aspects toward a future technology in the Andes.¹¹ This deconstruction will target the role of instruments in the constitution of the comportment of technological power.

II. 1. Rocks in the Inka World and Inka Stonework.

Phenomenology shows that the difference between form and material is a limiting Western framework.¹² Inka stonework disrupts this distinction because in them the stones are not simply "material," they are not secondary to the "form" of the building. These stones need to be approached in their own terms, in their most basic significance. Garcilaso de la Vega's report on the priest's account above gives us a hint: Do Inka stones have a fundamental relation to mountains? Are they really "pieces of mountain ranges" incorporated into buildings?

Dean writes about mountain ranges in the Inka world:

[the higher lands] were places of "pure" nature dominated by and belonging to the mountain Apu (lords), the powerful and sacred mountains that affect human society by controlling weather, water, and other natural resources. In the past as today, mountains are conceptually beyond human control and order. (Dean, 72)

For the Inkas, mountains are the support of the Inka world, an originary dimension of "natural" forces that cannot be domesticated, instrumentalized, turned into "resources" by a technological comportment. This dimension is manifest as supportive of Inka existence or as destructive of it (as in natural disasters). Out of our control, it is a monstrous dimension. One of the names for this dimension embodied by mountains or Apu is *Mama Huaca*, who "represents the precarious and dangerous relationship between human communities that depend on natural resources for their prosperity and the 'pure' Andean environment that suffers exploitation...and so causes human suffering as a result" (Dean, 73). In this respect, Dean quotes Lamadrid: "In a primal sense the *Mama Huaca* embodies the raw and awesome vitality of the Andes. As a monster, she represents the disjuncture between nature and culture..." (Dean, 73). Another name for this dimension is *Mama Qaqa*, which means, literally, Mother Rock. *For the Inkas rocks embody the originary supportive and destructive force of mountains (forces that cannot be turned into "natural resources"), monstrous forces that subtend the Inka world. An aspect of Inka stonework has to be understood as a way of establishing a relationship with these forces.*

II. 2. Sacred Rocks (rocks with stories attached to them) and Dean's Metonymy beyond the Traditional Aesthetics of Representation.

Dean points to sacred "living," unhewn rocks that are left in their natural settings. These rocks "embodied" or "presented" important Inka stories that allowed Inkas to re-experience—rather than simply remember—localized historical narratives that were definitive for the continuance of the Inka identity and world. She finds in these "presentational" rocks a provocative departure from Western structures of meaning and signification, since in these rocks meaning was conveyed differently than through representation. This is because (a) the stones were raw rather than likenesses of that which they convey and (b) the stones are that which they present, they are "embodiments." Dean effectively dismisses any traditional—

that is, representative—aesthetic approach to Inka rocks¹³ and reveals a particularly Inka sense of memory as continual inhabitation and presence.

Through a version of metonymy, Dean constructs an account of how these stones were “presentational” rather than “representational”:

The Pre-hispanic Inkas show us that presence can also be established by means of material metonymy: a relation of parts, in which one thing that is perceived to be a part of a second thing, substitutes for it...and the “substitution” requires only the recognition that the surface aspects are irrelevant to presence. (Dean, “Metonymy in Inka Art,” 106)¹⁴

In metonymy “substitution” is, according to Dean, a way in which the signifier and signified coincide, insofar as that which substitutes “embodies” what is substituted—thus no representation is involved here. More specifically, metonymy implies that a part substitutes for the whole because the whole is present in the part.¹⁵ But, in our case, how can a rock be an actual part of an actor in a story, for example, in order that the metonymy be effective, in order that the mythical person continue to exist in the rock?¹⁶

II. 3. *Kamay and the Uncertainty of the Inka's World and Historical Identity.*

The key to understand the operation of metonymy through sacred rocks is the Quechua term *kamay*. Dean writes: “Essence [*kamay*] was transubstantial, its significance was independent of form” (Dean, 5). The transubstantiality of *kamay* means that things can inhabit other things, since “form” is irrelevant. Thus sacred unhewn rocks can operate metonymically, can substitute, because they are inhabited by the *kamay* of actors in Inka stories (regardless of “form,” they can be part of them). This inhabitation yields a “presentation” that is outside of representation. Dean’s analysis, however, does not go far enough: to say that *kamay* is transubstantial does not help us understand it. In order to do this we will (a) see in what sense *kamay* is different from “essence” in Western metaphysics and (b) try to think *kamay* from an Inka perspective.

(a) *Kamay* means that something is irrespective of form. This releases *kamay* not only from Western aesthetics (as Dean points out) but also from Western metaphysics. In the West, “essence” originates from visual form or “look.” Platonism is responsible for turning visual form into a paradigm for conceptual stability of meaning (through the *eidei*). Since *kamay* is outside of this history, it cannot be understood as defined by a stable meaning as well. *Kamay is the enactment of what something is that exceeds both visual form and stable structures of meaning—in this sense it recalls Heraclitus¹⁷ rather than Platonism.*¹⁸

(b) This account is supported by Salomon’s interpretation of *kamay* in the *Huarochiri Manuscript*. *Kamay* is the energy that continues to work on a being—in our terms, it is the “enactment” of a being—or the “living force” of a specific being. As such a “living force” it is not trapped in the narrow specificity of a being nor is it an abstract archetype of what this being is. It is the being’s concrete happenings.¹⁹

In our case, rocks can be inhabited by the *kamay* of mythical actors in the sense of the living force motivating these actors in concrete historical events. It is this living force—rather than the person in her particular or general configurations, a way of considering the person that in fact distances us from the event at issue—that the rocks embody. *This understanding of kamay reveals that sacred rocks embody the living forces of persons-in-specific-events that are fundamental to the continuance and identity of the Inka world. Insofar as these historical living forces*

*exceed stable structures of meaning, they are also monstrous, so that the Inka world—now seen in its historical identity—that they support is itself fragile.*²⁰ *The Inkas lived out of an uncertain history as much as they lived out of an uncertain relationship with their natural settings (as explained above).*

II. 4. *Sacred Rocks as “Original Enactments” of the Inka World.*

Departing from Dean’s account in subtle ways,²¹ we can say that in sacred rocks the Inkas did not re-experience specific mythical actors, they, rather, re-lived specific living forces (*kamay*) in their uncertainty that support their world and identity, indeterminate forces that we could call “historical.” Moreover, as we have seen, rocks also garner the uncontrollable “natural” forces that give support to the Inka world. The Inkas also thought of these “natural” forces in terms of *kamay*. *Sacred unhewn rocks, then, are the congruence of the kamay of both “historical” and “natural” supportive forces. Embodying both in their coming together, these rocks can be seen as “original enactments” of the fragile Inka world.*

Even though Dean’s analysis needs to be refined, one of her motivating questions is crucial: What kind of comportment is at the basis of the Inka relationship with these sacred rocks, especially since aesthetics has been discarded (here Dean’s notion of metonymy is important), since we cannot call them “art” in any familiar sense? We will begin to address this issue through a detailed analysis of stonework. Only now the correct way to approach Inka stonework is open to us.

II. 5. *The Erotic Comportment of Inka Stonework (and in what sense it is not an Aesthetic Comportment—the question of Mimesis).*

Unhewn sacred rocks had different kinds of stonework related to them. One of these kinds is “framing,” where a rectilinear frame appears in relation to the unhewn shape of the rock. *The built frame together with the rock double and externalize the congruence of “historical” and “natural” forces enacted by the sacred stone.* Through stonework the Inkas actuate this congruence as determined by tension—the actuated tension between stonework and rock.

The other kinds of stonework surrounding sacred stones speak to the character of this tension. In “distancing” the stonework creates a vacancy surrounding the sacred stone. It is a kind of “framing,” but here the relationship between the vacant “frame” and the rock is not conflicted. The rock is, rather, let be. “Countouring” traces the shape of the unhewn rock, hugging it, as Dean puts it (see Dean, 29). The tension is here actuated as gentle touching, adjustment, or positioning, like a caress or snuggle. “Carving” does not reduce the sacred rock into a “material” subjected to “form.” Hence the rock remains mostly unhewn. “Carving” touches or barely molds the rock. The carved figure emerges gently from the rock, like a response to a caress. *As seen in these four cases, Inka stonework actuates the tension between “historical” and “natural” forces in sacred rocks as a loving relationship, manifesting an erotic comportment in its relation to sacred rocks.*

Neither the sacred rocks themselves (as seen above), nor the sacred rocks in relation to their stonework, fit into the predominant representational structure of Western art. It would be difficult to understand the comportment of Inka stonework in usual aesthetic terms, since the stonework does not “represent” the sacred rock. This is clear from the fact that there is no representative operation and distance between stonework and rock. They are, rather, engaged with each other differently—this is what we mean by “actuate.” Inka stonework, though, brings up an interesting issue in this respect. *We could say that, since the stonework/rock relation doubles or externalizes the congruence of forces enacted by the sacred rocks, there*

is a kind of mimesis at the core of the erotic comportment of Inka stonework in this case. But this “actuating” mimesis is still not representative, it has to be thought beyond aesthetics and metaphysics, from an Inka perspective that is beyond the scope of this essay.

II. 6. Erotized Pachamama.

The erotic loving relationship between “historical” and “natural” forces that Inka stonework actuates is prior to either pole of the relationship. The stonework engages the relationship as such. In fact, for the Inkas there is no “culture” and “nature” outside of this relationship (see Estermann, 174), and they did not even have a word for “nature” in its Western determination (see Estermann, 175). Rather, this relationship must be understood in terms of *Pachamama*.

Pacha is the relations that determine everything in an interval of time and a locus of space. Estermann compares *pacha* with the Greek *kosmos* and even translates it as “relationality.” This translation, however, misses the temporality of *pacha* (in fact, *pacha* could even mean “instant” or “at once”). Salomon writes: “*Pacha*, the world as a given arrangement of time, space and matter, is not supratemporal, it clearly admits change, even cataclysm” (Salomon, 15). It goes without saying that *pacha* is deeply connected to *kamay*, it can be thought as the enactment of everything in excess of stable structures of meaning (hence its unpredictability). Thought in this way, we approach the meaning of *Pachamama* (which is usually and misleadingly translated as “Mother Earth” and, even worse, as “Mother Nature”).²²

The cataclysmic instability of *Pachamama* is the source of everything that is, including the Inka world. This primordial instability is, for the Inkas, captured in the relationship between water and earth. Salomon explains this relationship: “The hydraulic embrace of moving water and enduring earth was imagined as sex” (Salomon, 15). The encounter of male water and female earth sustains all the other cosmic relations of *pacha*. When the Inkas found themselves in a disrupted relationship with their environment, when the “historical” and “natural” forces were out of joint, they blamed this—often comically—on erotized *Pachamama*, as an erotized source, rather than on “nature” or on “history.” The Inkas did not see themselves as originators of their world. But, as we will see more clearly below, they were not bonded to nature either.

II. 7. Stonework and Pachamama (erotics beyond the culture/nature frame).

While sacred rocks were “original enactments” of the living forces of the Inka world, the stonework that engages them is directed, rather, toward *Pachamama*, which subtends and is the source of these “original enactments.” Engaged with *Pachamama*, Inka stonework is not a “cultural” activity acting on ‘nature,’ this frame is inoperative in its field of activity. Inka stonework, rather, in its strange mimesis of sacred rocks, actuates the erotic relation that is *Pachamama*. The point here is crucial: as we have seen, this mimesis does not “represent” the forces enacted by sacred rocks; now we learn that it is not even ultimately geared to mimitize the rocks but it is a form of actuating *Pachamama*, an erotic joining of *Pachamama* as a cosmic source. The Inkas thought of themselves as being in an erotic relation with *Pachamama* (see Dean, 66). They joined an already erotically charged *Pachamama* through erotic comportments like the one manifest in their stonework. In this joining, the Inkas seduce *Pachamama* to consent to the preservation of the Inka world in the congruence of “natural” and “historical” forces.

Leaving aside the precise character of the strange mimesis that is operative in this erotic joining, we can note that this

seduction has two indeterminate aspects. (a) It joins rather than resolves the erotic tension of *Pachamama*, which means that there is no assurance of the Inka world (this goes back to the fragility that we saw in our analysis of *kamay*). (b) Activities like stonework do not necessarily elicit a response from *Pachamama*, much like a beloved does not necessarily respond to the lover. Much has been written about the reciprocity (*Ayni*) between the Inkas and *Pachamama* (see Estermann, 131-135). Our analysis emphasizes the fragile character of this reciprocity, not only once it has been established but also in its uncertain incitement. *Focusing on the latter, activities like stonework must show (and this must be their most important function) this prior moment of incitement in which Pachamama allows itself to be seduced, an erotic moment that is, strangely, within and prior to the seduction. The following analysis of architectural stonework emphasizes this erotic liminality as the core of Inka stonework.*

II. 8. Inka Stonework in Stone Buildings.

An analysis of Inka stonework in stone buildings helps us see more clearly the liminality in the erotic comportment to *Pachamama*, the uncertain incitement of it to be supportive of the Inka world.

The paradigm from which to understand Inka stonework is Inka agriculture (see Dean, 68-71). The turning of the soil that prepares the land for agricultural production is liminal in the sense that is both prior and part of the production. The turning of the land for the Inkas has a characteristic form. The males use the *chaquitaklla* to turn the land. The male stands up and thrusts into the land with the *chaquitaklla*, while the woman kneels close to the soil flattening the land. As Dean notes, this practice is not as much an effective productive technique as an enhanced enactment of a sexual relationship. It is hard to think of the *chaquitaklla* as an “instrument.” It is rather an extension of the male body (see Estermann, 175). In the turning of the soil *Pachamama* is seduced, incited to accept the relationship that the Inka intends to have with the land. This incitement is a process that cannot be instrumentalized. We can identify a similar process to this one in Inka stonework, particularly in the case of terraces, the transportation of megaliths, and “nibbling.”

(a) Inka terraces are an extension of agriculture. In these constructions the same dynamic that we saw above in agriculture is repeated, except that here the operation of stonework is essential. In the terraces both the soil and the landscape are engaged in an erotic dynamic that seduces *Pachamama*. In terracing the landscape is not broken, but traced and hugged. Terracing is the same as “contouring” above. In this gentle tension, the Inkas first appeal to *pachamama* to accept both the agricultural production that they intend as well as their built environment.

(b) The key to understand the transportation of megaliths—that, as we have seen, baffled the European mind—in terms of the liminal erotic comportment of stonework is the rocks called “*saycusa*” or “tired rocks.” Dean explains that they are “quarried rocks that were intended for use in Inka building projects but never arrived at their destinations” (Dean, 50). The failure to complete the transportation of the megaliths, which anticipates the construction of buildings as a liminal moment, is the inability of the rock to cooperate with the Inkas. In contrast to the European interpretation of this transportation as a showing of raw power, moving these rocks was, rather, a matter of the willingness of the rock to respond to the incitement of being part of a stone building. Some *saycusa* were sad as well (Guaman Poma reports that one cried tears of blood), as if a loving relationship failed to be fulfilled.²³ For reasons outside of the grasp of the European mind, any attempt to instrumentalize this transportation is out of place.

(c) Let's focus on the way the Inkas incorporated megaliths into buildings, the incorporation noted by the European mind (as incorporating "pieces of mountain ranges," for example) in its encounter with Inka stonework and which led both to the education of the European mind and to the perceived challenge to technological power. The Inkas did this through the painstaking practice of hammering the edges of the stone so that their fitting appeared not as an imposition of form, but as a smooth transition. Dean calls this process of pecking and fitting, pecking and re-fitting, "nibbling" (see Dean, 77). Nibbling is similar to "carving" above. And it is, again, an example of a gentle teasing out of a relationship with *Pachamama*, a teasing out that liminally anticipates the actual putting together of the stone building. This is most evident in outcrops, where nibbling allowed for a smooth transition between the megaliths and the stones surrounding them (recalling "framing" above), giving the impression that raw stone was smoothly incorporated into the building. In Dean's words: "the Inka structures appear to grow from the Earth's stone skeleton...nibbled blocks are snuggled into gaps...purposefully confusing the juncture between outcrop and masonry" (Dean, 82). With respect to the nibbling involved in the incorporation of outcrops, Dean writes: "In such structures, architecture very nearly becomes agriculture, as the grafted edifices grow from foundations of living rock just as plants depend on stable and well grounded roots" (Ibid.). "Nibbling" is the equivalent of turning the soil.

The last three examples of stonework (two of which show the deep connection between stonework surrounding sacred rocks and stonework in Inka architecture) demonstrate the erotic comportment of Inka stonework toward *Pachamama*. We have emphasized the "erotic liminality" in this comportment, in which stonework incites (with no assurance, as the *saycusa* reveal) *Pachamama* to support the Inka world. *This erotic comportment, its liminality in particular, cannot be understood from within the stance of technological power; its activity is outside the purview of instrumentality. At the same time, Inka stonework can only be understood on the basis of it.* We have made explicit, then, the dimension of Inka stonework that technological power takes as a challenge.

III. Conclusion.

III. 1. *The Implications of our Analysis of Inka Stonework: Deconstructing Technological Power (and the Question of Mimesis).*

Let's address the three aspects of technological power in the Andes stated at the beginning of part two:

(a) *The framing of Andean culture by the European mind.* Inka stonework appears to the European mind educated in technological power as appealing to "perception, imagination and sentiment" rather than to "reason," presenting the Inkas as "irrational." Inka stonework is, instead, an erotic comportment that eludes the grasp of the Western faculties as laid out here (these faculties are constituted in the West through the metaphysics of "essence" understood as "form," a conceptual development that does not apply to the Inkas and their notion of *kamay*). A correlate of this misunderstanding of Inka stonework is the conception of Inka power as brute force. Inka stonework reveals, rather, that what Europeans sense as a show of raw power in the dealings with megaliths is in fact a "seduction" of *Pachamama* that manifests its willingness to respond to the Inka incitement. It is not the case, then, that the Inkas were simply ignorant of technological power and its comportment (which may imply that they would endorse it if only they had known it). Rather, the erotic comportment toward *Pachamama* in its unpredictability is essentially different from a comportment to instrumentalize, which seeks to overpower and control, rather

than incite. Neither of these comportments absorbs the other. Does this mean, however, that the Inkas were "stuck in their world" as opposed to "originating worlds"? Weren't they still "less powerful" than the Europeans? Despite its appearance to the European mind, in their engagement with *Pachamama*, the Inkas were also concerned with the "origin" of their world, and they took this origination as monstrous, out of their control (hence the erotics attached to it). The Inka world was unstable, cataclysmic even, both in terms of its "natural" support and of its "historical" identity. In fact, from an Inka perspective, one could note something static about the hold of technology over the origination of worlds, sensing something like what Heidegger called "enframing." *The Inkas did have a modality of power different from brute force, a modality determined by the erotic comportment to Pachamama as source, and by the incitement of it to support the Inka world.* Any attempt to present the Inkas as constrained by their world, closed in themselves, without a horizon of development misses the fragility of the Inka world and their erotic response to it, that is, it is an inaccurate imposition of Western categories.

(b) *The challenge to technological power.* The structure of the challenge to technological power is without basis. This challenge appeared to the stance of technology as the alignment of Inka culture with nature in resistance to the instrumentalizing comportment of technology. But our analysis shows that from an Inka perspective there is no alignment of culture and nature, since these two categories are foreign to them. The Inkas were not in harmony with nature so that they would resist technological projects. Rather, they were in an uncertain relationship with cosmic *Pachamama* (which is not nature). What may appear as an alignment with nature was really the moment of incitement of *Pachamama*, a moment that we have made explicit in the erotics of Inka stonework. Instead of an oppositional conflict, then, we have two modalities of power, one "technological" the other "erotic." At the same time, the Inka erotic comportment to *Pachamama* shelters the possibility of deconstructing technological power, not oppositionally but from within. The moment of the incitement of *Pachamama* makes manifest that prior to the working out of tasks and projects, prior to pragmatics, the support of *Pachamama* must first be elicited. This moment is absent in the stance of technological power. As we have seen, the core of technological power is the double structure of instruments as both pragmatic and ontological. This double structure is fissured when we look at it from the need to incite *Pachamama*. Effectively, now in this proper encounter with Inka stonework, one could release the pragmatics of instrumentality from the comportment to instrumentalize everything, and put this latter into question. In other words, we could retain the efficiency and pragmatics of instruments without being determined by a stance that takes itself to be the origin of worlds. This deconstruction is a viable result of a thoughtful encounter with Inka stonework, but not a necessary one. If we were to start this deconstruction, the issue would be how to precisely understand the erotic incitement of *Pachamama* beyond the purview of technological power. This would take us directly to address the strange mimesis operative in this erotic comportment, and to think this mimesis from an Inka perspective (see II.6, II. 7).

(c) *The spiraling, violent crisis of technology in the Andes.* In the Andes, technology is violent in two ways. First, it endorses the framing of the Andean culture subjecting it to Western ways of being in the world—it is oppressively violent. Second, it takes an oppositional stance toward both "nature" (turning it into "resources") and toward Andean culture (which it wants to forcefully absorb into new worlds). We have shown that the structure of this violence is in need of severe revision. The question is whether this violence could recede without

deconstructing technological power in the way laid out above. Perhaps the deconstruction of technological power is not necessary, but still called for in the particular juncture of the Andes, paving the way to a future Andean technology.

III. 2. A Tentative Phenomenology: A Final Note on Heidegger.

It is evident that our analysis relies on Heidegger's phenomenology, which proves useful to approaching the Inka world. We can note the release from the structure's matter/form and culture/nature, as well as the way in which "comportment" operates in our discussion at a level of "fundamental ontology." More specifically, there are parallels to Heidegger's approach to technology as "enframing" and to art in terms of "earth" and "world" (this is echoed by our account of sacred stones as "original enactments"). Some important questions come up, however, that suggest significant departures from Heidegger. Doesn't our account of technological power in the Andes show a disrupted technology, one that is never simply defined by the stasis of enframing? Putting it succinctly: Isn't Heidegger's account too abstract (detached from how technology grows out of particular settings) and Eurocentric? The temptation may be strongest in drawing parallels between our analysis and Heidegger's "Origin of the World of Art." But, can we simply include Inka unhewn sacred rocks into the list of artworks that Heidegger deals with (like the Greek temple, Van Gogh's *Shoes*, and the C. F. Meyer's poem "Roman Fountain")? Let's remember that Heidegger's discussion is determined by his view of art as poetry, which still emphasizes a kind of image or figure in the artwork (see Heidegger, 189). Our analysis of Inka stonework, engaging *kamay*, is, rather, oriented away from any sense of figure, which problematizes any account of this stonework as "art" even in Heidegger's determination. Which takes us to a broader point: Doesn't *kamay*, in fact, ultimately escape a phenomenological approach in its emphasis on "appearing"? Have we reached a limit of phenomenology? This is where senses of mimesis become crucial. This issue is most pressing since what is yet to be unfolded is what we mean exactly by the "erotic comportment" of Inka stonework, since "eros" in the Western tradition (including Heidegger) is tied to the appearing of the beautiful, and to mimesis.

We stated above that in the Andean juncture the stance of technological power may have to be deconstructed. Perhaps this effort (which is only in its beginnings here) includes a deconstruction of Heidegger's phenomenology as well.

Endnotes

1. The president of Perú, Alan García, stated: "Machu Picchu is the synthesis of being peruvian." ("Alan García: Machu Picchu es la Síntesis de la Peruanidad." *El Comercio* 7 July 2011 [Peru]. Web. 7 July 2011.)
2. "Cusqueños protestaron contra celebración por centenario de Machu Picchu." *El Comercio* 7 July 2011 [Peru]. Web. 7 July 2011. Translations are mine.
3. Colectivo el Muro. Colectivo el Muro, n.d. Web. 7 July 2011. Translation mine.
4. Garcilaso de la Vega, Inka. *Comentarios Reales*. Barcelona: Linkgua Ediciones S. L., 2008. Translations are mine. The text at issue is Chapters XXI-XXII of Part 1).
5. Octavio Paz, in a meditation that is also about the future of technology from a non-European perspective ("The New Analogy: Poetry and Technology"), thinks that technology destroys the "image of the world" and, thus, destroys meaning. Technology would lead, then, to a revival of poetry. He misses the pragmatism and ontology of instruments, particularly technological power as creating worlds—or, in his terms, in its power to create new "images of the world." We emphasize, rather, technology as an "origin." (Paz, Octavio. *Convergences: Essays on Art and Literature*. Orlando: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich Publishers, 1987. Print.)
6. Mariano Iberico describes the incorporation of "nature" in Inka stonework eloquently: "all of the [Inka] constructions... were stones stacked on one another, more or less stylized piles that were not subjected to the violence of an artistic form, which does not press upon the material externally but, rather, configures the material respectfully, in congruence with its natural affinities" (Iberico, Mariano. *Notas Sobre el Paisaje de la Sierra*. Lima: P. L. Villanueva Editor, 1973. 74-74. Print.).
7. See López Soria, José Ignacio. *El Modo de Producción en el Perú*. Lima: Mosca Azul Editores SRL, 1977. 13-59. Print.
8. Inka stonework is not alone here. We could note Inka agriculture, herding, weaving, and counting (in *quipus*).
9. Perhaps the beginning of One Hundred Years of Solitude gives a literary presentation of the argument here. Even though "The world was so recent..." (1), technology was already operative, as if it coincided with the very origin of the world. José Arcadio Buendía is possessed by the technological power that "wakes up the souls of things" and "eliminates distance" (2). José Arcadio's instrumental reason goes beyond the bounds of nature itself (c.f., 2). (García Márquez, Gabriel. *One Hundred Years of Solitude*. New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1970. Print.).
10. This is a term borrowed from Estermann. He explains it as "A critical deconstruction...of Western terminology and its creative re-construction...in Andean rationality..." (Estermann, Josef. *Filosofía Andina*. Quito: Ediciones Abya-Yala, 1998. Print.). We will deconstruct Western terms like "essence" and "nature" and articulate in in English Quechua terms such as *kamay* and *Pachamama*.
11. Our analysis will be in constant dialogue with Carolyn Dean's work (especially: Dean, Carolyn. *A Culture of Stone: Inka Perspectives on Rock*. Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2010. Print.).
12. See, for example, Heidegger's deconstruction of the matter/form schema in "The Origin of the Work of Art." In his analysis of the thingly character of the thing he concludes: "Matter and form are in no case original determinations..." (Heidegger, Martin. *Basic Writings*. New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 1993. 154. Print.).
13. Her critique of aesthetics as an approach to Inka scared rocks, and Inka stonework as a whole, leads Dean to reject "art" as a notion that would still be applicable in these instances. Perhaps her account should be revised through Heidegger's analysis in "The Origin of the Work of Art" where aesthetics is critiqued in a similar fashion, but a robust sense of 'art' emerges through this critique. An interesting question would be: Can we think of Inka stonework in terms of Heidegger's determination of art? Dean finds "art" to be an arbitrary label, influenced by Goodman's work (see Goodman, Nelson. *Ways of Worldmaking*. Indianapolis and Cambridge: Hackett Publishing Company, 1978. 64-68. Print.).
14. In Maniura, Robert, and Shepherd, Rupert. *Presence*. Burlington: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2006. Print.).
15. Dean points to the preservation of the Inka's nails, because the "essence" of the Inka was supposed to inhabit them.
16. Dean brings this issue to the fore: "For the Inka (and other ancient Andean peoples), too, landscape was a memoryscape wherein rocks and other natural and built formations were actors in known narratives" (37).
17. *Kamay* here recalls Heraclitus statement *phusis kryptesthai philei*, which we could translate as "the enactment of what things are loves to remain out of grasp (both through perception and conceptually)."
18. Salomon notes the limits of Platonism in this regard, although he does not give a philosophical articulation of these limits (Salomon, Frank, and Urioste, George. *The Huarochiri Manuscript*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1991.16. Print.).
19. In this sense, *kamay* could be put into dialogue with the meaning of the Ancient Greek word *zoe*, especially in Agamben's interpretation of it: "...*zoe*, which expressed

the simple fact of living common to all living things...” (Agamben, Giorgio. *Homo Sacer, Sovereign Power and Bare Life*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998. 1.Print.).

20. This “historical fragility” needs further discussion. One could see the basis of it in the Inka conception of time as discussed by Estermann. The Inka conception of time was neither cyclical nor linear (both of which support a sense of historical identity). (See Estermann, 179-189).
21. There are at least two aspects to this departure. First, Dean does not engage the fragility of the Inka historical sense, and she seems to narrowly think that sacred rocks simply present stable events (this is probably the result of not engaging all the implications of *kamay*). Second, even though she rejects representation, she seems to retain a function of signification with regard to sacred rocks, which limits her approach to what is in fact “enacted” in these sacred rocks.
22. As Salomon notes, the deep relation between *pacha* and *kamay* comes forth in Pachacamac, an important Inka coastal temple (Salomon, 15).
23. Dean tells us that *saycusa* became sacred rocks, that is, their stories became part of Inka history. This practice shows the deep connection between stonework around sacred rocks and architectural stonework, which we have emphasized here.

Phil 2380: Introduction to Latin American Philosophy

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Preliminary notes on teaching this course: This was an introductory course which required no prerequisites, so I tried to design it at an appropriate level. As you will see, I have often chosen to focus on Mexico, and that is because more than 80% of UT-Pan American’s student body is Mexican American. My goal was to choose readings that would resonate with the students in order to have productive discussions. The students often knew more about popular Mexican culture than I did, so that was helpful in terms of balancing out the power dynamics in the classroom. Perhaps the most interesting thing that happened is that “we” changed over the course of the semester. In the beginning, the students associated themselves with the conquerors. They tended to consider themselves “Americans,” meaning “North Americans,” but as the semester progressed, their language showed that they began to associate with “Americans,” as in “Latin Americans.”

The weaknesses of the course are obvious. Not every country in Latin America was represented; some countries (Uruguay, Mexico) were represented more than once; I did not touch upon Brazil or its relationship to Portugal; Latin American positivism—possibly the largest philosophical movement in Latin America—is not represented; Latino/a philosophy also fails to make an appearance, though we did consider the debate between using the term “Hispanic” (the clear winner here at UTPA) vs. using the term “Latino/a.” The list goes on and on. Unfortunately, the fact that there is not enough time to talk about everything pertaining to Latin American philosophy is hardly conciliatory. As this *APA Newsletter* has shown, Latin American philosophy can be taught fruitfully in many ways. My greatest consolation, for now, is that it is taught at all. It is a particular pleasure to teach this course here, on the U.S.-Mexico border.

Course Description: Is Latin America a geographical place or an intellectual category? Who counts as Latin American? What is Latin American philosophy? The story of Latin America is a story of struggle—interior and exterior—and it involves

invasion, conquest, and resilience. Latin America can be seen as a product of a tug of war between Europe and the U.S., intellectually and physically struggling for an identity (or set of identities) since its “discovery.” Until recently, whether or not there was a genuine “Latin American philosophy” was an open question, though as the years pass it is more widely recognized that philosophy has always been done in Latin America. Concurrent with fighting for and winning independence for the various countries that comprise it, Latin America has gained the legs on which it now stands intellectually. This course takes a historical look at Latin America, exploring themes including: civilization and barbarism, the fetishization of Europe and the U.S., Mexican identity, racism in Latin America, liberation theology, and revolution.

Required Texts

Gracia & Millán-Zaibert, eds. *Latin American Philosophy for the 21st Century*. Amherst, NY: Prometheus, 2004. (LAP 21)

Octavio Paz. *Labyrinth of Solitude*. New York: Grove Press, 2003.

All other readings were posted on Blackboard

Course Requirements

The three areas in which the students were evaluated:

Attendance and Attention (25%): A high Attendance and Attention evaluation is earned by the student who comes to class, participates, and stays attentive throughout the whole class period, staying engaged with the material throughout the whole semester.

Reading Comprehension (25%): A high Reading Comprehension evaluation indicates a student’s ability to read, digest, and remember what a text is about, *before it is discussed in class*.

Writing Competency (50%): A high Writing Competency evaluation shows that a student paid attention during class, took good notes, and has a good understanding of the text. It indicates that a student can write a clear summary of the text, but can *also* go beyond the summary to form a coherent and critical analysis of the ideas in the text. There will be 10 weekly essays that are to reflect an understanding of the readings. Students are to combine their understanding of the readings with their understanding of the class discussions, and write an informed and interesting 2-page essay on the topic of the week. Sometimes I give prompts for these essays, but when I do not, the students must decide on a focal point for the paper.

Schedule of Readings

Week 1: Introduction

Session 1: Introduction

On this first day, I had them write down the names of as many countries in Latin America as they could think of. I then showed them the map of Latin America and we talked about the difficulties of drawing the boundary between what is Latin America and what is not.

Session 2: Julio Cortazar, “Axolotl”

I find it positively disarming to begin a philosophy course with a short story, and I believe that using Cortazar sets the tone of the course. This story is about a boy who stares at Axolotls so often and so deeply that he turns into one. We discussed what it means to study something so profoundly that you actually turn into it (this is most interesting in the story because the boy rejects a textbook approach to learning). It is helpful that the Axolotl is a Mexican creature, because my students could begin to enumerate some different assumptions about Mexicans, which was a theme through the semester. Throughout the course, I would often refer back to “Axolotl” in order to keep two questions open: 1) What is the difference between studying

something using books and studying something by being in its presence? and 2) What distinguishes animals from humans, or the barbarians from the civilized?

Week 2: Colonization

Session 3: Bartolome de las Casas, “In Defense of the Indians” (1542) (LAP21)

I chose to begin with Las Casas because he provides four definitions of the term “barbarian.” This opens the debate between who is barbaric and who is civilized, terms that shift in the history of Latin American thought. While I did not have them read the contrasting position of Juan Ginés de Sepulveda, I told them about it in order to contrast it to Las Casas’. The debate over who is a barbarian was the strongest subtext throughout the course, and it began here. It is also important for the arch of this course that Las Casas was the first Bishop of Chiapas, Mexico, given that Chiapas is the site of the last reading of the course, written by Subcomandante Marcos of the Zapatista movement.

Session 4: Simón Bolívar, “The Jamaica Letter” (1815)

Bolívar serves as the voice of hatred toward Spain. Like Las Casas, Bolívar enumerates the injustices that Spain has inflicted on Latin America, and he memorably states that “it would be easier to have the two continents [Europe and South America] meet than to reconcile the spirits of the two countries.” After doing this reading, I could always refer to this line to remind the students about the level of and reasons for the animosity between Spain and Latin America, especially during week three.

Week 3: On the Europeanization of Argentina

Session 5: Domingo Faustino Sarmiento, “Civilization and Barbarism” (1845)

Sarmiento and Alberdi were both received well by the class. It is understandable, given the history of the terms, that both of these writers would advocate becoming “civilized” (aka European), but their methods were starkly different. During this week, we discussed what it means to be civilized. In the case of Sarmiento, it means living in the city and being educated. My class came to the conclusion that “we” (at least in the U.S.) still hold the idea that Europe is the center of civilization in terms of culture, food, clothing, etc. Additionally, the “gaucho” is a character that the class understood well, and would refer to throughout the semester.

Session 6: Juan Alberdi, “Bases and Starting Points for the Political Organization of Argentina” (1853)

Alberdi adds to the discussion by agreeing that Argentina should become more like Europe, but not by means of education. Commerce is the answer for Alberdi, who argues that the port cities are the channel to civilization. In class we discussed these two competing ideas—education vs. business—and we came to the conclusion that this debate still goes on today in terms of what constitutes the progress of civilization. As part of this debate, we analyzed Obama’s 2011 State of the Union Address, where he uses both the rhetoric of education for its own sake as well as also education for the sake of dominating the global economy. In this document the tension is clear.

Week 4: Cuban Independence

Session 7: José Martí, “Our America” (1892) (LAP21)

Cuba was a very interesting country to talk about because the students have assumptions about its Communism that both help and hurt their understanding of it. In “Our America” Martí advocates educating Cubans about Cuba. His is one of the first voices to celebrate the Indigenous ancestry and condemn those who claim to be strictly European. The students seemed to be in favor of Martí’s call to self-knowledge, on the level of both the individual and the county. Many of the authors echo the idea

that in order to decide what kind of government will work in a particular country you must first learn about the country and its people. Creation instead of imitation is another theme that the students could hold onto and refer back to throughout the semester. In a memorable image, Martí says that even if Cuba’s wine be bad, at least it is Cuban.

Session 8: José Martí, “My Race” (1893) (LAP21)

In this essay, Martí suggests that there is no racism in Cuba; that there are races but everyone is first and foremost a Cuban. It was fun to discuss this idea with the students given their different ideas about how race/ethnicity fits with being an “American.” I am sure that this class discussion would differ from one region to the next.

Week 5: Civilization and Barbarism Revisited

Sessions 9&10: José Enrique Rodó, *Ariel* (1900)

We spent a whole week on Rodó, and this was a good idea. There is so much context in *Ariel* that needs to be explained in order for the message to come through. Up until this point, we had been discussing Latin America’s relationship—love and hate—with Europe, but now we begin to see the U.S. tiptoeing into the equation. We discussed how Martí was worried about the U.S.’s relationship to Cuba the previous week, but here is where the real argument lies: Rodó believes that the U.S. has certain admirable skills and qualities; however, it would be wrong for Latin America to try to imitate it. A line that I referred to repeatedly was the following, which Rodó uses about the *Americans to the North*: “although I do not love them, I admire them.” This provoked a fascinating discussion because we are living in the U.S. (which for many of the students is an accomplishment not to be underestimated), reading a Latin American thinker who is criticizing the U.S., painting her as a robot in contrast to the warm and loving soul of Latin America. I could sense a profound ambivalence in the room, and exploring this ambivalence using *Ariel* over two class sessions turned out to be quite fruitful.

Week 6: Should all Latin Americans be Considered Part of the Same Race?

Sessions 11&12: José Vasconcelos, “The Cosmic Race” (1925) (LAP21)

Reading Vasconcelos was fascinating, because 1) he is Mexican, and 2) for the most part my students and I look like we belong to the cosmic race. There were differing opinions as to whether his proposal for the fifth race was a good one or not, but they seemed to understand it. In the course of our discussion, the students had a chance to relate their own experiences with racism and with prejudices concerning race-mixing.

Week 7: The Indigenous Population and Land Ownership

Sessions 13 & 14: José Carlos Mariátegui, “The Problem of the Indian” (1928) (LAP21)

The seed of Mariátegui’s thought was planted during this week, giving it time to gestate before we returned to it repeatedly beginning in week 13. The essay is a Marxist analysis of the Peruvian economy. He blames the capitalist/feudal system for keeping the Indian in the lowest possible class. He suggests that it will *only* be by revolution and not by education, nor by other legal, administrative, ethnic, moral, or ecclesiastical means that the problem will be solved. These alternative modes of solving problems of socioeconomic disparity come up again and again throughout the semester (especially education, given that we are in a classroom and presume to believe in the power of ideas), with each writer agreeing or disagreeing with Mariátegui about what it will take to eradicate the various injustices in Latin America.

Week 8: Optimism, Ideals, and Adventure

Sessions 15 & 16: Carlos Vaz Ferreira, “What is the Moral Sign of Human Anxiety?” (1938) (LAP21)

Reading Vaz Ferreira provided a nice relief from the previous readings, especially right before Spring Break. In this article, Vaz Ferreira states that moral progress in fact has been made, despite appearances to the contrary. He uses the image of Don Quixote to describe a project that might be worthy regardless of its success or failure. This gave many of the students a ray of hope in the middle of talking about injustice after injustice. At the end of class, many students reported this as their favorite reading.

(Week 9: SPRING BREAK)

Week 10: Is there a Latin American Philosophy?

Session 17 & 18: Leopoldo Zea, “**The Actual Function of Philosophy in Latin America**” (LAP21) Zea was an interesting selection because he is a Mexican philosopher asking about Latin American philosophy and Latin American culture. Like Rodó, Zea believes that knowing one’s history is beneficial for philosophy, and he claims that imitating European philosophy is bound to fail. The class discussed whether philosophy should be thought of as universal or as grounded in historical and existential circumstances, which led to questioning Western philosophy’s supposed detachment from history.

Weeks 11 and 12: Mexico and Mexican Identity

Session 19-22: Octavio Paz, *The Labyrinth of Solitude* (1950), Chapter 2: “Mexican Masks,” Chapter 3: “The Day of the Dead,” Chapter 4: “The Sons of La Malinche,” Chapter 9: “The Dialectic of Solitude”

Though he is often frowned upon, I chose Paz because I wanted the students to be able to relate to a text in a personal way, and this book produced by far the most class participation. We talked about the ways in which Paz seemed to be getting something right, and about the ways in which he seemed to be getting something wrong. Most of the students had something to contribute in terms of Paz’s description of Mexican identity, and I think the class ended up divided in terms of how they felt about the text. This work is very provocative, so it encourages conversation. I tried to move past the question of “is Paz describing Mexican people accurately?” (which we discussed on day 1) to questions concerning what implications talking about Mexican identity has, both for Mexico and also for people who are reading about Mexicans. By the end of the two weeks, we were discussing what effect a book like this has and should have in the world.

Week 13: Liberation Theology

Sessions 22 & 23: Gustavo Gutierrez, “**Toward a Theology of Liberation**” (1968)

In the middle of the semester, some students requested to learn about liberation theology, so I changed the syllabus to accommodate them. This turned out to be fruitful, since we were able to see another Marxian analysis, but this one from a decidedly Christian vantage point. This essay by Gutierrez is fairly easy to read and with it one can lay out the history of liberation theology. Again, the class was divided: many students were skeptical of the religious aspect of this movement, but for some it was a relief. Tying a religious motivation to liberation of the oppressed resonated with many of the students. This week had good discussion because most students come from a Christian background and enjoy talking about it, whether they identify as religious or not.

Weeks 14 and 15: Revolution

Session 24-26 I, Rigoberta Menchú (1983)

Menchú’s descriptions and analyses are also controversial.

She, like Paz, claims to be speaking for an entire people: all Indigenous people in Guatemala. Her story is quite sad, so it moved the students towards a quick identification with her over the Guatemalan Government. We spoke about Mariátegui again, recalling his Marxian distinction between the socioeconomic problems of a country over and against any kind of changes in the superstructure. Just as Mariátegui suggested that real change could not occur without a revolution, Menchú believes that the people have to rise up against the economic forces that keep them from being able to escape poverty. The fundamental problem for both thinkers is land: without the ability to own land, Menchú and Mariátegui believe that the problem will never go away. The students were divided on the issue of the Indigenous community taking up arms, which would later be contrasted to the Zapatistas. This reading also related to the previous week, in terms of liberation theology. The church was, for the most part, on the side of the Indigenous communities, on similar grounds. We also discussed the controversy surrounding the fabrication of some of Menchú’s details. Student reactions were mixed. Some felt utterly betrayed by Menchú and others thought that these fabrications should not discredit her larger mission to overturn the socio-economic system of Guatemala.

Session 27: Watch “A Place Called Chiapas” (1998). This documentary (currently available through Google Videos) was helpful for setting up our discussion of the Zapatista movement in Chiapas.

Session 28: Subcomandante Marcos, “**A Storm and a Prophecy**” (1994)

This reading lays out statistic after statistic concerning the inequalities present in Chiapas, Mexico. Like Mariátegui and Menchú, Marcos argues that the biggest problem for the indigenous community in Chiapas is land distribution. Since Las Casas was the first Bishop of Chiapas, I was able to refer to his argument defending the Indians against the claim of barbarism. We saw how this very same rhetoric is being employed today, 450 years later. We also talked about the current political situation in Mexico, which some students were very happy to do. It is perhaps most interesting that before becoming the leader of the EZLN, Marcos reputed to have been a philosopher from Tamaulipas, the Mexican state just south of our campus’ location in the Rio Grande Valley. It seems that Marcos may have grown up six hours south of UTPA. Many students didn’t know anything about the EZLN but were very interested once they learned about it, and, as I alluded to above, approved of their (mostly) peaceful means of gaining global recognition.

Week 16: Conclusion

Session 29: On the last day of class, we took the opportunity to review the entire course, day by day, and thinker by thinker. We tied the themes together and thought about what Latin American philosophy might mean, giving a meaningful sense of continuity to the course.

Overall, this course was a success. The students were engaged and seemed to enjoy thinking about what is essentially their own history. The students wrote short weekly essays, which gave some continuity to the history from week to week, but which did not force them to remember details. I believe this is a good tool to use if improving writing comprehension is the goal. The course was run as a discussion, with some group work interspersed throughout. The only change that I might make for next time is to include some writings from Che Guevara, in order to be able to systematically compare three (very different) sites of Latin American revolution.

PHI 3371 Specters in Latin American Philosophy: Chicana and Latina Feminisms

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The University of Texas – Pan American

Cross-listed with: MAS (Mexican American Studies)

LAS (Latin American Studies) WS (Women's Studies)

Introductory remarks to the reader of the present newsletter:

This syllabus was designed with a particular student population in mind; as a professor of philosophy at UTPA, my students are predominantly Mexican-American and are mostly from the Rio Grande Valley. This means, among other things, that my students are to a large extent bilingual (in varying degrees); have a good understanding of the history of U.S.-Mexico relations; are aware of the nature of generational differences among members of the Mexican-American community (i.e., among the Mexican people who have always resided in Texas and the subsequent arrival of Mexican peoples by crossing the later established border); have the lived experience of the political, cultural, and social dynamics of border life; live in what is perceived as a relatively culturally homogeneous Mexican-American community; have a rather strong identity attachment to the idea of *mestizaje*; and are neither necessarily acquainted with the Chicano movement nor do they identify as Chicanos or Latinos, which can be said also with respect to the Women's Liberation movement (although to a slightly lesser extent) and feminist identity. As a newly arrived member of the faculty, I anticipated some of these facts and discovered many others; as a Argentinean/Latina from the east-coast, the learning dynamics was undoubtedly two-directional pedagogy. With respect to the latter classroom dynamics, there was an increased distribution of authority between the students and I as agents of cultural knowledge. In general for this course, the character of the student body both lead me to emphasize the concrete realities of the local cultural condition and also made it easier to advance through the some of the relevant historical contexts and navigate the cultural idiosyncrasies or symbolic language that weigh heavily throughout PARTS II, III and IV, and V of the assigned readings.

As is to be expected, although an upper division course in philosophy, my students had different disciplinary backgrounds, which posed greater challenges as the material became further removed from philosophical knowledge based on lived experience and immersed into the traditionally conceived Western and Latin American philosophies. In addition to philosophy, the disciplines represented were Criminal Justice, English and Creative Writing, Political Science, and Mexican-American Studies. Only one student had had some exposure to Women's and Gender Studies. One of the ways of mediating this challenge, was to be as flexible as possible with the styles of writing and paper topics for their essays. In addition, since we were a rather small class, I had the opportunity to direct my comments and feedback on their weekly response papers to each of my students' background and needs, which for the non-philosophy majors resided mostly on the ability to articulate the transition from the concrete to the abstract. You will also note that under the listed "recommended readings and background references," the texts and films exhibit different degrees of philosophical difficulty. They were provided for students as guides to technical concepts used in the literature or for those who wanted to explore certain philosophical ideas further. They were conceived mostly as resources for their thinking and writing and not as expected reading assignments. The material

also served to expose the students to the references I would make in presentations regarding the relationships between the Chicana and Latina authors and the historical and philosophical positions within Anglo-European, feminist, and Latin American traditions that these authors were contesting or appropriating. As to the actual selection and distribution of the readings, let me just say the following. My selection of the "Introduction" to Simone de Beauvoir's *Second Sex* as a representative of feminist philosophy may appear odd to you in this context, since she neither identifies as a feminist nor is an Anglo thinker, towards whom most of the critiques of women of color are directed. The criteria for the selection revolved around the fact that the purpose to PART I of the course was to merely introduce students to the problems with which feminism is concerned, and to do so without taking too much time out of the semester. De Beauvoir's "Introduction" is relatively short and exhibits a series of issues that feminists are still engaging today, such as essentialism and performativity; biological sex and nature; embodiment; the particular and the universal; and economic relations of power, among many others. Due in part to her travel in the U.S., de Beauvoir's work is sensitive to the issues of other racial, ethnic, and class identity groups that have undergone systematic types of oppression, while nonetheless clearly remarking what makes the condition of women a singular problem. In this sense, her text already points towards the difficulty women who simultaneously belong to multitude of such groups will confront in elucidating their particular realities. The Self/Other analytical paradigm, dialects, and an ethics of reciprocal recognition that entails the undoing of our own entanglements with subjection as well as our social external relations, are particularly significant as they are echoed throughout the positions of feminist women of color that lay ahead. Finally, her ongoing use of the concept of "woman" in the singular is paradigmatic of the Anglo-feminists own universalist discourse that U.S. women of color are contesting.

Syllabus:

The philosophical perspectives of Chicana and Latina feminist thinkers bring to the fore some of the naturalized concepts that organize the prisms through which the "Americas" is referenced as an object of study and cultural condition. In this course, we will immerse ourselves in the theoretical work of Cherríe Moraga, Gloria Anzaldúa, Norma Alarcón, Linda Alcoff, Chela Sandoval, Paula Moya, María Lugones, and Ofelia Schutte in order to gain a differential lens that concretely disturbs tightly held notions that function as orienting and justifying tools to peoples, nations, and academic traditions. As we do this, we will learn new conceptual resources to revise foundational ideas of subjectivity, belonging, and knowledge as well as ask whether or not, and if so in what ways, these new conceptual resources succeed are well suited to aid us in comprehending our contemporary condition and our particular location therein.

Their philosophical critiques reveal an arbitrariness to the long standing North/South organizing axis of the Americas. As we will see, Chicana and Latina feminist philosophers' perspectives weave into their theories such issues as: U.S. colonialism; the presence of "the south" within the "north" (i.e., demographic, cultural, economic, political, linguistic, racial, gendered, etc.); or the systematic gendered, racial, and sexual marginalization that finds connections across the Americas. The fact that their critiques and thought are taken up by women of color in Latin America and the Caribbean; that there are critical convergences with other Latin American feminists; that some of their seminal concepts appear in contemporary postcolonial thought; and, finally, that from the very start their political imaginaries have included transnational coalitions,

reveals that the invention of the Americas did just not happen in 1492. The Americas continues to be (re)invented to this day.

By opening up to these feminist perspectives and engaging their philosophical thought in a continuous critical dialogue, a different epistemological location is configured. The intellectual and philosophical history of Latin America acquires new specters and, with them, potentially new claims upon the current terms of discussion in what we call “Latin American philosophy”—both in the United States and south of its contested borders.

PART I: Feminism

Readings:

De Beauvoir, Simone. *The Second Sex*. Trans. and ed. H.M. Parshley. Random House Vintage Book Edition, New York, 1952.

“Introduction,” pp. xix-xxxv.

Last two pages, pp. 730-2.

Recommended readings or reference material:

Kolmar, Wendy and Francis Bartkowski, ed. *Feminist Theory: A Reader* (2nd Edition). McGraw Hill, New York, 2003.

“Feminism” by Paula Traichler and Cheris Kramarae, pp. 7-10.

“Lexicon of Debates” by Wendy Kolmar and Francis Bartkowski, pp. 42-60.

Hegel, G. W. F. *The Phenomenology of Spirit*. Trans. A. V. Miller. Oxford University Press, New York, 1979.

B. iv. A. “Independence and Dependence of Self-Consciousness: Lordship and Bondage,” pp. 111-119.

Inwood, Michael J. *A Hegel Dictionary*. Blackwell Publishers, Oxford, 1992.

Entry on: “recognition.”

Butler, Judith. *The Psychic Life of Power: Theories in Subjection*. Stanford University Press, Stanford, 1997.

Selections from “Stubborn Attachment, Bodily Subjection: Re-reading Hegel on the Unhappy Consciousness,” pp. 31-62.

PART II: Chicano Movement

Readings:

García, Alma, ed. *Chicana Feminist Thought: The Basic Historical Writings*. Routledge, New York, 1997.

“Introduction” by Alma García, pp. 1-13.

Corky González, Rodolfo. “I am Joaquín.” <http://www.latinamericanstudies.org/latinos/joaquin.htm>

Corky González, Rodolfo and alurista. “*El Plan Espiritual de Aztlán*.” <http://www.utpa.edu/orgs/mecha/aztlan.html>

Chicano Coordinating Council on Higher Education. “*El Plan de Santa Bárbara*: A Chicano Plan for Higher Education.” http://www.utpa.edu/orgs/mecha/st_barbara.html

Recommended readings or reference material:

Spring, Joel. *The American School: From the Puritans to No Child Left Behind*, 7th ed. McGraw-Hill, New York, 2008.

Sections that address U.S. history of education and the treatment of Mexican, Mexican-American, Puerto Rican, and Latino children and youth within different periods.

Nava, Gregory. Director. *Mi familia/My Family* (1995).

Paz, Octavio. *Labyrinth of Solitude*. Grove Press, New York, 1985.

“The Pachuco and Other Extremes,” pp. 9-29.

Valdez, Victor. Director. *Zoot Suit* (1981)

PART III: Chicana Feminist Movement

Readings:

García, Alma, ed. *Chicana Feminist Thought: The Basic*

Historical Writings. Routledge, New York, 1997.

“New Voice of *La Raza: Chicanas Speak Out*” by Mirta Vidal (1971), pp. 21-24.

“A Chicana’s Message,” Anonymous (1972), pp. 35.

“Our Feminist Heritage” by Marta Cotera (1973), pp. 41-44.

“Chicana Feminism” by Anna NietoGomez (1976), pp. 52-57.

“The New Chicana and *Machismo*” by Rosalie Flores (1975), pp. 95-97.

“Sexism in the Movimiento” by Anna NietoGomez, pp. 97-100.

“The Role of Chicana within the Student Movement” by Sonia A. López, pp. 100-106.

Other recommended readings from the same collection:

“Chicana Feminists and White Feminists: Unresolved Conflicts” by Alma García, pp. 192-3.

“First Hispanic Feminist Conference Meets (1980)” by Chela “Che” Sandoval, pp. 245-6.

“Sexism in Chicano Studies and the Community” by Cynthia Orozco, pp. 265-270.

“The New Chicana Woman and Hispanicity” by Marta Cotera, pp. 136-139.

“Chicanas and *El Movimiento*” by Adaljiza Sosa Riddel, pp. 92-94.

“Feminism As We See It” by Marta Cotera, pp. 202-204.

“Party Platform on Chicanas (1971)” by *Raza Unida* Party of Texas, pp. 167-169.

PART IV: This Bridge Called My Back

Readings:

Moraga, Cherríe and Gloria Anzaldúa. *This Bridge Called My Back: Writings by Radical Women of Color*. Persephone Press, Watertown, 1981.

“Preface” by Cherríe Moraga, pp. xiii-xix.

“Introduction” by Cherríe Moraga and Gloria Anzaldúa, pp. xxi-xxvi.

“La Güera” by Cherríe Moraga; pp-27-34.

“Speaking in Tongues: A Letter to Third World Women Writers” by Gloria Anzaldúa, pp. 165-174.

“Chicana’s Feminist Literature: A Re-Vision Through Malintzin/ or Malintzin: Putting Flesh Back on the Object” by Norma Alarcón, pp. 182-192.

“La Prieta” by Gloria Anzaldúa, pp. 198-209.

Recommended readings or background references:

From the same text:

“The Bridge Poem” by Donna Kate Rushin, pp. xxi-xxii.

“For the Color of my Mother” by Cherríe Moraga, pp. 12-3.

“The Master’s Tools Will Never Dismantle the Master’s House” by Audreya Lorde, pp. 98-101

PART V: Borderlands/La Frontera

Readings:

Anzaldúa, Gloria. *Borderlands/La Frontera*, 3rd ed. Aunt Lute Books, San Francisco, 2007.

“The Homeland, Aztlán,” pp. 23-35

“*Movimientos de rebeldía y las culturas que traicionan*,” pp. 37-45.

“Entering into the Serpent,” pp. 47-61.

“How to Tame a Wild Tongue,” pp. 75-86.

“*La Conciencia de la Mestiza/ Towards a New Consciousness*,” pp. 99-113.

Recommended readings or background references:

Vasconcelos, José. *The Cosmic Race: A Bilingual Edition*. Trans. Didier T. Jaén. Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, 1997.
“Prologue,” pp. 41-6.

Other selections.

Paz, Octavio. *Labyrinth of Solitude*. Grove Press, New York, 1985.
“The Sons of Malinche,” pp. 68-88.

PART VI: Western Notions of Subjectivity

Readings:

Alcoff, Linda. *Invisible Identities: Race, Gender, and the Self*. Oxford University Press, New York, 2006.

“Preface,” pp. vii-xi.

“The Philosophical Critique,” pp. 47

“The Identity Crisis in Feminist Theory,” pp. 133-176

Recommended readings or background references:

Kolmar, Wendy and Francis Bartkowski, ed. *Feminist Theory: A Reader* (2nd Edition). McGraw Hill, New York, 2003.

“From *Gender Trouble*: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity” by Judith Butler, pp. 496-503.

Kemp, Sandra and Judith Squires. *Feminisms*. Oxford University Press, New York, 1998.

“Subjects of Sex, Gender and Desire” by Judith Butler, pp. 278-285.

PART VII: Theoretical Uprisings

Readings:

Sandoval, Chela. *Methodology of the Oppressed*. University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, 2000.

Introduction, pp. -1-11.

“U.S. Third World Feminism: Differential Social Movement I,” pp. 41-63.

“Love in the Postmodern World,” pp. 139-157.

“Revolutionary Force: Connecting Desire to Reality,” pp. 158-184.

Recommended readings or background references:

Jameson, Fredric. “Postmodernism and Consumer Society” in *The Cultural Turn: Selected Writings on the Postmodern 1983-98*. Verso, London, 1998, pp. 1-20.

Foucault, Michel. “*Society Must Be Defended*.” *Lectures at the Collège of France 1975-6*. Trans. David Macey. Picador, New York, 2003.

Lecture Two: 14 January 1976, pp. 23-41.

Haraway, Donna. “A Cyborg Manifesto: Science, Technology, and Socialist-Feminism in the Late Twentieth Century,” in *Simians, Cyborgs and Women: The Reinvention of Nature* (New York: Routledge, 1991), pp.149-181.¹

Wild, Nettie. Director. *A Place Called Chiapas* (2005). Zeitgeist Video.² Available free online at http://www.moviesfoundonline.com/place_called_chiapas.php or <http://freedocumentaries.org/int.php?filmID=311>

PART VII: Epistemology and Identity Politics

Readings:

Moya, Paula. *Learning from Experience: Minority Identities, Multicultural Struggles*. Univ. of California Press, Los Angeles, 2002.

Chapter One: Postmodernism, Realism, and the Politics of Identity, pp. 23-57.

Chapter Two: Chicana Feminism and Postmodernist Theory, pp. 58-99.

Recommended readings or background references:

Haraway, Donna. “Situated Knowledges: The Science Question and the Privilege of Partial Perspective.” In *Feminist Studies* 14, no. 3 (Autumn 1988): 575-99.

PART VIII: Potential Models for Multi-directional crossings Readings (you can pick either one of these essays for class discussion):

Lugones, María and Elizabeth Spelman. “Have We Got a Theory For You! Feminist Theory, Cultural Imperialism and the Demand for ‘The Woman’s Voice’.” In *Hypatia Reborn: Essays in Feminist Philosophy*. Ed. by Al-Hibri, Azizah and Margaret A. Simons, pp. 19-33.

Schutte, Ofelia. “Cultural Alterity: Cross-Cultural Communication and Feminist Theory in North-South Contexts” in *Hypatia* 13, no. 2 (Spring 1998): 53-72.

Endnotes

1. Due to the length and difficulty of Haraway’s manifesto, it is most useful to select relevant sections that generously represent both her general position and her interpretation of Chicana thinkers. Unfortunately, one cannot trust that selections in feminist readers will provide a balanced picture of this for you; to my surprise, I have found selections in which all traces of Haraway’s interpretation of Chicana thinkers and references to Chicana identity have been cut out. One such example is *Feminisms* (1998). For somebody who first discovered Chicana feminist thinkers through Haraway’s work, I found this extremely troubling. The exclusion of the sections not only contributes to the invisibility of women of color within philosophy, but it also erases one of still too few explicit crossovers from Anglo-feminist to Chicana/Latina feminist theory. Moreover, because of the critique Haraway’s work elicited from some Chicana and Latina thinkers, it leaves out a line of investigation, research, and reflection on the particular concerns of women of color as well as on the need and importance of maintaining open dialogues among the diversity of women and men concerned with a project of feminism.
2. The recommendation of this film may seem at odds with the assigned course readings. One of the main purposes of making this available is to make concrete what an effective “postmodern revolution” may be like.

Bibliography

Curiel, Ochy. “La Crítica Postcolonial desde las Prácticas Políticas de Feminismo Antirracista.” In *Colonialidad y Biopolítica en América Latina*. Revista *Nómadas*. No. 26. Instituto Sociales Contemporáneos-Universidad Central. Bogotá. 2007.

De La Campa, Román. “Latin, Latino, American: Split States and Global Imaginaries.” In *Comparative Literature* 53, no. 4 (Fall 2001).

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Pérez, Laura E. “Enrique Dussel’s Etica de la liberación, U.S. Women of Color Decolonizing Practices, and Coalitionary Politics Amidst Difference.” In *Qui-Parle: Critical Humanities and Social Sciences* 18, no. 2 (Spring/Summer 2010): 121-46.

Vuola, Elina. “Thinking *Otherwise*: Dussel, Liberation, Theology, and Feminism.” In *Thinking From the Underside of History*, ed. Alcoff, Linda Martín and Eduardo Mendieta, 179-80. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Boston, 2000.

Lugones, María. “Coloniality of Gender.” http://www.jhfc.duke.edu/wko/dossiers/1.3/documents/LugonesWKO2.2_000.pdf

—. “Heterosexualism and the Colonial/Modern Gender System.” In *Hypatia* 22, no. 1 (Winter 2007): 186-209.

Moraga, Cherríe. “Preface to the 2nd Edition.” In *This Bridge Called My Back*, ed. Moraga, Cherríe and Gloria Anzaldúa. Persephone Press, Watertown, 1984.

BOOK REVIEW

Against War: Views from the Underside of Modernity (Latin America Otherwise)

Nelson Maldonado-Torres (Duke University Press Books, 2008). Kindle Edition, 240 pp.

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Being thus turns impersonal, if not homicidal, as it hides the faces and mutes the voices of people.

As the United States of America faces continual political turmoil regarding its involvement in conflicts abroad, a reminder of our respective philosophical undercurrents becomes increasingly appropriate. Nelson Maldonado-Torres presents us with such theoretical underpinnings in *Against War: Views from the Underside of Modernity*. In this thorough examination of modernity's war ethic, Torres unravels a disturbing connection between *Being* and colonial power relations.

According to Torres, the rise of modernity produced an important development in the understanding of Being. From the ancient Greek conception of Being as rational, a continual disconnect between selves occurred via disproportionate power relations instantiated by colonialism. This increasingly prevented imperial powers from recognizing the Other as a being toward which one has a loving obligation. Those in power began to associate Being with the preservation of an ideal, which was good, but which also made evil those opposed to the violent implementation of this colonial goal. Consequently, the suffering of the oppressed went by and has almost gone unnoticed. A death ethic emerges, justifying imperial power's subjugation and destruction of the oppressed. However, there are sub-altern thinkers whose philosophies are suited to respond to what is referred to in *Against War* as the "cry" of the oppressed. Recognition of this expression comes about from openness to subjective narratives that come from the periphery of the center.

A highlight of *Against War* is Torres' analysis of Nietzsche, Levinas, and Fanon. In examining each thinker, he is able to provide a circumspect critique that also serves as an example of the kind of attitude he explains is crucial to reveal the cry of the oppressed. Torres' ideas remind the reader of Friedrich Nietzsche's *Beyond Good and Evil* and *Genealogy of Morals* in which an exploration of the relationship between slave and master morality shows that the ideal of good can become pernicious to humanity. Torres takes the idea of good further, showing that a colonial mentality that originates in the quest for power turns the concept of good against the cries of the oppressed, devaluing their pleas for assistance, and turning their rebellion into an evil that should be eradicated. Moving toward the elimination of the sufferers, the colonial mind excludes the Other to the status of a de-valued being, placed into a periphery that goes unrecognized. The way out of this lack of recognition is for those on the outskirts of the center to maintain a de-colonial attitude, a philosophically critical attitude that can technically examine the colonial process working between the master and slave.

As an example of this de-colonial attitude, Torres provides a Levinasian critique of Husserl's phenomenology and what it ultimately means for those on the periphery. In Torres' examination of Emmanuel Levinas's *Reflections on the Philosophy of Hitlerism*, he shows how the master (power) and slave (those oppressed by power) split became physically exemplified through Hitler's actions against select European populations in World War II. For Torres, a Husserlian phenomenological approach toward Being favors those already benefitting from modernity. Eurocentrism is examined in light of Husserl's ideas regarding exclusion and inclusion. Levinas critiques this in his *Reflections*, examining how an approach devoted to abstract knowledge will become tolerant, if not complicit, in violence. By attempting to universalize philosophy via phenomenology, Torres shows how Levinas's *Reflections* critiqued Husserl's approach as a method of exclusion.

As with Levinas, Torres draws out a de-colonial attitude from Frantz Fanon and Enrique Dussel. Western modernity has produced a death ethic from which a resolution needs to be found from "the underside of modernity" but understanding this ethic requires a sub-altern view that speaks by way of the de-colonial attitude. This perspective sheds light on a problem regarding the naturalization of war and our resignation to this perceived way of life. We have accepted that some regions of the world live in conflict, but the problem of modernity goes beyond the fighting in remote parts of the world; the difficulty lies with how fighting is used as an instrumental means to establish order and what this naturalization of conflict means.

Enrique Dussel emerges in this work as part of a praxis-solution for Torres's problem of the death ethic and the perversity of being that Western modernity has led us into. Through Dussel's conception of the periphery to what he dubbed as the center of a political space, sub-altern views are able to flourish and serve as an indicator of the trouble of modernity. Yet, it is with Dussel and the conclusion of *Against War* where a reader of Latin American thought may see some notable missing pieces that could otherwise be useful to clarify Torres' point. Carlos Astrada's "Existentialism and the Crisis of Philosophy" reveals a Heideggerian approach to Being which lays a path toward understanding the crisis of the human within philosophy due to what he calls "conceptual transcriptions of being." These transcriptions act as restraints on being while preventing those on the periphery from realizing that they can begin to cry out in the form of intellectual and/or violent rebellion.

Against War is a diagnosis of a problem in philosophy, politics, and societies abroad. It brings to light the necessity of sub-altern views to remedy the imperialist and colonialist tendencies pervading our thoughts on being and the responsibilities we have to the suffering of the periphery. Still needed is a thorough analysis that speaks to the oppressed condition that humans endure and praxis of responsibility that one must have to herself and others in order to overcome oppression. Works by Carlos Astrada, Leopoldo Zea, and Enrique Dussel's most recent *Twenty Theses on Politics* provide an ethical response to the Torres' death ethic. While an external diagnosis of the problem of modernity is useful, an internal examination of the mind of the oppressed becomes more necessary, which gives rise to the need of sub-altern narratives. From Astrada's existentialist analysis of humanity in the crisis of philosophy, Zea's acceptance of the marginalized identity of the Mexican, to Dussel's admiration for liberators who have suffered oppression, life ethics must emerge from the periphery to counter the death ethics of the center.

CONTRIBUTORS

AMY A. OLIVER'S teaching and research on Latin America explore cultural and philosophical topics such as marginality, feminism, *nepantlismo*, and *transfronterismo*. She has written on the Hispanic essay of ideas and Latin American narrative. Her latest book is *Feminist Philosophy in Latin America and Spain*. She is currently working on a book about the feminist philosophy of Carlos Vaz Ferreira. Since 1998, she has been section editor for Latin American thought of various encyclopedias of philosophy published by Routledge. Her professional activities have included membership in the Latin American Studies Association, serving on program advisory committees of the American Philosophical Association (APA), and serving as president of the Society for Iberian and Latin American Thought (SILAT).

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