Carta(s)

Seismic Thought

Aníbal Quijano

Piero Quijano

Rita Segato

Elisa Fuenzalida

MUSEO NACIONAL CENTRO DE ARTE REINA SOFIA

Published by the Editorial
Activities & Public Activities
Departments, Museo Reina Sofía

Public Activities
and Study Centre Director
Ana Longoni

Head of Editorial Activities
Alicia Pinteño

Editorial Coordination
Teresa Ochoa de Zabalegui

Graphic Design
gráfica futura

Translation
Nuria Rodríguez Riestra

Copyediting
Jonathan Fox

Production Management
Julio López

Plates
La Troupe

Printing and Binding
Espiral

To put ourselves in the present and situate this present within temporariness as politics (taking up Mario Rufer's idea) is inconceivable outside the perspective of the coloniality of power, formulated by Peruvian intellectual Aníbal Quijano (1928–2018). His work transcends the cultural sphere, laying the deep-seated foundations of a political position that questions the colonial epistemology of modernity in the midst of the consolidation of neoliberalism in Latin America. Quijano's thought, with an earthquake's power to shake up and change familiar landscapes, is essential for understanding the movement that is now agitating Eurocentric historicization. It proves that in times like these, of turbulence and shipwreck (this is not a metaphor, but a literal state that devours thousands of lives), there are no single paths.

Rather than limiting the debate to a set of theoretical questions, the Aníbal Quijano Chair, directed by Rita Segato and Elisa Fuenzalida, seeks to open up a path of collective reflection-action, and to incorporate it into the many points of view that are now laying bare colonial modernity, stripped of its original promises. The aim is to share, study, and discuss issues, approaches, and proposals to activate the legacy of a seismic thought that is part of the long process of decoloniality of power that Aníbal Quijano identified as the central historical conflict of our time.

The Aníbal Quijano Chair, based at the Museo Reina Sofía Study Centre, returns to the turning point brought about by the Peruvian sociologist's work and draws attention to its ability to shed light on the pressing issues of our time. To this end, the first edition (2018) revolved around connecting Latin American decolonial theory and the migration crisis in the Mediterranean, the second edition (2019) focused on weaving links between two experiences of communal feminism, that of Kurdish women and Afro-Colombian women, and the third (2021) considered the paradoxical convergence of left-wing ideologies and right-wing epistemologies.

Aníbal Quijano

Of Don Quixote and Windmills in Latin America[1]

What we refer to today as Latin America was constituted together with and as part of the current pattern of power that prevails on a worldwide scale. It is here that "coloniality" and "globality" were configured and established[2] as the basis and constitutive modes for a new pattern of power. Such was the point of departure of the historical process that came to define Latin America's historical and structural dependence and that gave birth, in that same movement, to the constitution of Western Europe as the world center for the control of that power. And it was in this very same movement that the new material and subjective elements at the root of the social existence we now call "modernity" were defined.

Put in other terms, Latin America was both the original space and inaugural time of the historical period and world in which we now live. In this specific sense, it was the first historical entity/identity of the current colonial/modern world-system and of the entire period we refer to as modernity. Nonetheless, this originating place and time of a historical period—this rich source that produced the basal elements of the new world society—was robbed of its centrality, as well as of the attributes and fruits of modernity. Thus, not all of the new historical potential could be fulfilled in Latin America; nor was the historical period and its new social place in the world able to become completely modern. In other words, both were defined at that point and continue to reproduce themselves today as colonial/modern.[3] Why is this so?

1. Of Don Quixote and Windmills in Latin America

Comparing the histories of Europe and Japan, Jun'ichirō Tanizaki[4] tells us that the Europeans were fortunate enough to have their history unfold through stages, each deriving from the internal transformation of the last. Yet with regard to Japan, particularly since World War II, the course of history was altered from without by the military and technological superiority of "the West." This

type of reflection validates a Eurocentric perspective and the characteristic evolutionary gaze that accompanies it. It can thus be seen as providing testimony of the world hegemony of Eurocentrism as a mode of producing and controlling subjectivity and knowledge. Yet in regard to Western Europe itself, this perspective becomes more of an indication of the late intellectual hegemony of its central-northern regions, and thus can be considered alien and contrary to the legacy of Don Quixote. On the occasion of the 400th anniversary of this foundational masterpiece, we recognize that it is time to return to its legacy.

The marvelous scene in Cervantes' masterpiece in which Don Quixote throws himself against a giant and is knocked over by a windmill is, most certainly, the most powerful historical image of the entire period of early modernity. It is the (non)encounter (*des/encuentro*[5]) between, on the one hand, an aristocratic ideology—that which marks Don Quixote's own perception—to which social practice now only corresponds in a very fragmented and inconsistent manner, and, on the other, new social practices—represented by the windmill—which are in the process of generalization, but to which a consistent and legitimating ideology do not yet correspond. And as this familiar image suggests, it is a moment in which the new has not yet been completely ushered in, while the old has not yet truly passed away.

In reality, this (non)encounter shoots through the entire book: the new common sense that emerges with the new pattern of power produced with America, with its mercantile pragmatism and its respect for "the powerful Lord Money" (Quevedo *dixit*), has not yet become hegemonic, nor has it been constituted consistently, although it nonetheless occupies a growing place in the population's mentality. That is to say, it is already engaged in a dispute over hegemony with the old aristocratic sense of social existence. And the latter, although beginning to yield, is still active, in different forms and shapes—depending on whom we are talking about and where they are located. It continues to inhabit people's subjectivity and resists the surrender of its age-old dominance.

What must be noted, in the specific context of what at that time was the future of Spain, is that neither of these perspectives or meanings can exist, nor take shape, separately or in the absence of the other. This intersubjectivity could be none other than a combination—impossible in theory but inevitable in practice—of mercantile pragmatism and chivalrous views.

We are talking about a moment in history in which different times and stories do not come together in any dualistic way or converge on any linear or one-directional evolutionary path, as Eurocentrist doctrines had been preaching since the end of the seventeenth century. Rather, these are complex, contradictory, and discontinuous associations between fragmented and changing structures of relationships, senses, and meanings, of multiple geo-historical origins and simultaneous and intersecting actions—all of which are, nonetheless, part and parcel of one singular new world that was in the process of constituting itself. It is no coincidence that the windmill itself was a technology that had been inherited from Baghdad, integrated through an Islamic and Judaic world in the southern part of the Iberian Peninsula when the former was still a part of Arab hegemony in the Mediterranean; a rich, productive, cultivated, and sophisticatedly developed society, center of the world trade in goods, ideas, and scientific, philosophical, and technological knowledge. "Chivalry," however, was the societal model that the militarily dominant but socially and culturally backward nobility from the northern part of the peninsula still attempted to impose—without complete success—upon the remains of the defeated Islamo-Judaic society, subjugating and colonizing the autonomous communities of the peninsula, albeit not with complete success.

This aristocratic regime, dominated as it was by the Counter-Reformation and its Inquisition, did not take long to decree the expulsion of "Moors" and "Jews" and to impose upon them the infamous "certificate of pure blood"—the first "ethnic cleansing" of the entire colonial/modern period. This same archaic aristocratic and feudal model of social existence was also to induce the Crown to centralize its political domination. More

than seeking to produce a common (that is, national) identity, it was interested in imposing a regime of internal colonialism upon the rest of the region—one that in fact continues to this day. This was how those in power were able to impede the process of nationalization that unfolded later in central northern Europe, following along the same course and movement of societal *embourgeoisement*.

After America, during a time of rapid capitalist expansion when a growing part of the new peninsular society had fallen under the new pattern of power, even this aristocratic regime could no longer avoid placing its own two feet on mercantilist soil. Yet it continued to hold its head in the archaic sky of chivalry, which, in its own imagination, still offered equal riches.

Without this infamous (non)encounter, which converged with all the disastrous effects that expelling Moors and Jews had on material and cultural production, we would not be able to explain how, with the commercial benefits obtained from the precious minerals and vegetables of the Americas through the unpaid labor of servant "Indians" and "Black" slaves, Spain had embarked (despite appearances to the contrary) on a prolonged historical course that would lead it from its position as the center of the greatest imperial power to persisting peripheral backwardness within the new colonial/modern world-system.

The above-described trajectory renders it evident that aristocratic power, the dominant and immediate beneficiary of the first period of colonial power and modernity, was already too archaic to ride this new, young, and spirited horse, guiding it along a route that would benefit its country and the world. Such a power had already demonstrated its inability to turn fully and completely into a bourgeoisie capable of riding the crest of the democratizing wave and the conflicts characteristic of this new pattern of power and of shaping the heterogeneous population into a nation, as its rivals and successors in north and central Europe were able to do. On the contrary, this archaic dominion had been rotting away over the centuries, caught in an ambiguous feudal-mercantile labyrinth, in an unviable attempt to preserve its power on the basis of an

internal colonialism that had been imposed upon the diverse identities of the population, precisely at the outset of world capitalism and in spite of the truly exceptional resources of the coloniality of power.

Where is the difference rooted? The difference, most certainly, is America. The "Crown," that is, the Habsburgs, colonial proprietors of the colossal riches that America produced and of the endless supply of free labor from "Black" slaves and "Indian" serfs, believed that by having control over these riches they would be able to banish "Moors" and "Jews" at no great loss, and in fact, with real gain in terms of control and power. This led the Habsburgs to use violence to de-democratize the social life of independent communities and foist an internal colonialism and aristocratic rule originating in the central European feudal model upon other national identities (Catalans, Basques, Andalusians, Galicians, Navarrese, and Valencians). The well-known result was, on the one hand, the destruction of domestic production and the internal market that it fed, and, on the other, the backward steps taken in relation to secularization and the stagnation of the processes of democratization and enlightenment that colonial modernity had brought—and that, among other things, had given birth to Don Quixote.

What impoverished and enslaved the future Spain, and also turned it into the central seat of political and cultural obscurantism in the West over the next four centuries, was precisely that which permitted the emergent central northern part of Western Europe to become rich and secular, and later favored the development of a pattern of conflict that led to the democratization of the regions and countries that made up the latter. And it was just this, the historic hegemony that this mode made possible, that enabled these countries to elaborate their own version of modernity and rationality, and to appropriate exclusively as their own the historical-cultural identity of the "West," of the Greco-Roman historical heritage that, nonetheless, had previously and over a long period of time been preserved and worked on as part of the Islamo-Judaic Mediterranean.

All of this took place—and the following point must not be neglected, for it is vital for our understanding of history—at a time when the coloniality of power was still exclusively a pattern of power relations in America and between America and the emergent "Western Europe." In other words, at precisely the moment this "Western Europe" was being produced, linked as it was to America. It is absolutely necessary to recognize such historical implications of the establishment of this new pattern of power and the reciprocal historical production of America and Western Europe as, respectively, a nexus of historical-structural dependence and hub of control from which this new power was wielded.

It is true that, today, capitalism has finally been consolidated in Spain, with the resources and support of the new European Community, under the auspices of the new financial capital. But the remnants of the old forms of social order have not yet disappeared. And the current conflicts over autonomy, as well as the terrorism of ETA seeking national independence for the Basque Country, feature the realization that such vestiges remain, notwithstanding the scope of the changes that have taken place. No one has had a clearer perception of this historical (non)encounter than Cervantes—no one, that is, but his very own Cide Hamete Benengeli.

The following represents for us present-day Latin Americans the greatest epistemological and theoretical lesson to be taken from Don Quixote: that the historical-structural heterogeneity, the copresence of historical times and structural fragments of forms of social existence of varying historical and geo-cultural origins, are the primary modes of existence and movement of all society and all history. Not as in the Eurocentric vision, with its radical dualism paradoxically associated with homogeneity, continuity, unilinearity, and one-directional evolution; in a word: "progress." Because it is power—and thereby power struggles and their shifting balances—that articulates the heterogeneous forms of social existence produced at different historical moments and in distant spaces, that brings them together and structures them within one

and the same world, into a concrete society, into historically specific patterns of power.

This is also precisely the issue regarding the specific space/time that today we refer to as Latin America. Due to its historical and structural constitution as dependent on the current pattern of power, it has been constrained all this time as the privileged space where the coloniality of power plays itself out. And since in this pattern of power the hegemonic mode of production and control of knowledge is Eurocentrism, it is a history replete with combinations, contradictions, and (non)encounters that are analogous to those that Cide Hamete Benengeli could identify in his own space/time.

By its very nature, the Eurocentric perspective distorts—when it does not block altogether—perception of our social and historical experience, all the while taking its own time to admit that the latter is real.[6] It operates in today's world, and particularly in Latin America, in the same way that the chivalrous life did in Don Quixote's view of things. As a consequence, our problems cannot be perceived in any other way but through this distorted form, nor can they be confronted and resolved in any way that is not partial or deformed. Thus, the coloniality of power has turned Latin America into a scenario of (non)encounters between our experience, our knowledge, and our historical memory.

Within this context, it is not surprising that our history has been unable to enjoy an autonomous and coherent movement, but has, rather, been configured as a long and tortuous labyrinth where our unsolved problems haunt us like ghosts from our past. And this labyrinth cannot be recognized and understood. In other words, we cannot debate and identify our problems if we are not first able to recognize, summon up, and engage with our ghosts. The ghosts from our past, however—like the creature that inhabits the darkness of Elsinore, or those of which Marx and Engels wrote in 1948—have a dark, heavy, and matted density. And when they walk onto the stage of history, they tend to bring violent turbulence and often irreversible mutations. In Elsinore, the doubt-ridden Hamlet is in the end transformed into an exasperated hero whose

unflinching sword strikes many down, in the most direct attempt to resolve conflicts. In our other example, the furtive ghost that haunted Europe during the mid-nineteenth century later emerges as a central protagonist in the next, with its two world wars, violent revolutions and counterrevolutions, powerful though often dashed hopes, frustrations and defeats, and the lives and deaths of millions, and it has still not left us. Today, it has the world besieged.

Thus, the ghosts of history cannot be convoked without a cost. Those that belong to Latin America have given ample proof of their ability to provoke conflict and violence, precisely because they represent the product of violent crises and seismic historical mutations whose outcomes remain our unresolved problems. These phantoms still inhabit our social existence, keeping their hold on our memory, upsetting each historical project, erupting frequently in our lives, leaving dead, wounded, and beaten in their wake; the historical mutations that could at last put them to rest are still beyond our reach. Nonetheless, it is not only important that we find a way to do so. It is absolutely imperative. For as these patterns of power reach the apex of their development, at the precise moment in which their worst tendencies are exacerbated through their worldwide dominion, Latin America remains not only prisoner of the "coloniality of power" and dependency, but, for this very reason, exposed to the risk of never arriving at the new world the current crisis has prefigured—the deepest and most global crisis of the whole period of colonial modernity.

In order to deal with such ghosts and perhaps find some way to have them shed light on our path before they disappear forever, we must free our historical retina from its Eurocentric blindness and recognize our historical experience. Therefore, it is not only desirable but truly necessary that Don Quixote ride forth again, so that he may aid us in undoing the tangled point of departure of our history: the epistemic trap of Eurocentrism that for the past 500 years has left us in the darkness of the coloniality of power, where we are only able to discern the figure of giants—while those who dominate us are able to maintain control and exclusive use of our windmills.

2. The Historical Production of Latin America and the Destruction and Redefinition of the Past

The historical production of Latin America begins with the destruction of an entire historical world, probably the greatest sociocultural and demographic siege of all known history. This is of course old knowledge to us. Yet it is still rarely taken into account as an active element in the formulation of the perspectives that compete and converge in the Latin American debate on the production of a sense of a history of our own. And I suspect that even today it would be a difficult argument to bring in, were it not for the presence of current "indigenous" movements and the emergence of the new "Afro-Latin" movements.[7] Since on this occasion it would not be pertinent to go further or deeper into this specific issue, let me limit myself to providing the reminder that we are dealing, in the first place, with the disintegration of patterns of power and civilization of some of the most advanced historical experiences of the species. Second, the physical extermination, over little more than three decades (the first three decades of the sixteenth century), of more than half of the population of these societies, which had totaled over 100 million prior to their decimation. In the third place, of the elimination of many of the most important producers, as opposed to simply the "bearers" of these experiences: leaders, intellectuals, engineers, scientists, artists. Fourth, of the centuries-long material and subjective repression of the survivors, who were battered into subjugation as illiterate, accultured, exploited, and dependent peasants. That is, until the disappearance of the last free and autonomous patterns for the objectivation of lingering ideas, images, and symbols: alphabet, writing, and the visual, musical, and audiovisual arts.

One of the richest intellectual and artistic legacies of the human species was not only destroyed, but its most elaborate, developed, and advanced elements were rendered inaccessible to the survivors of this world. From there on in, and until only very recently, the latter were not allowed to produce signs and symbols of their own in any other form than the distortions produced by their clandestine status, or through that peculiar dialectic of imitation and subversion

that is characteristic of cultural conflict, mainly in the Andean, Amazonian, Central, and even North American regions.[8]

3. The Production of a New Pattern of Power: Race and Global Social Domination

The construction of this labyrinth, however, had only just begun. From the ashes of this prodigious but vanquished world, and through its survivors, in one and the same historical movement, a new system of social domination and a new system of social exploitation were produced; and along with these, a new pattern of conflict, ultimately a new and historically specific pattern of power.

The idea of race was a founding element of this new system of social domination. *Race* was the first social category of modernity.[9] Given that it did not exist prior to this historical moment—there is no convincing evidence of its existence—we may then sustain that it did not then (nor does it today) have a basis in the materiality of the known universe. It was, rather, a specific social and mental product of the process in which one historical world was destroyed and a new social order established; a new pattern of power. It emerged as a mode for the naturalization of the new power relations that were imposed on those who had survived such destruction, in service of the idea that the dominated are what they are, not as victims of social power struggles, but because they are materially inferior and thus also less well-endowed for historical and cultural production. This notion of race was so deeply and continuously imposed over the following centuries and over the whole species that for many—unfortunately for way too many—it has become associated not only with the materiality of social relations but with the materiality of people themselves.

The vast and plural history of identities and memories (the most famous names are known to all of us—Maya, Aztec, Inca) of the conquered world was deliberately annihilated and a singular colonial and derogatory racial identity—the "Indians" —was imposed upon all of its peoples. Thus, in addition to the destruction of their previous historical and cultural world, the notion of race and a homogeneous racial identity were also forced on them, as an

emblem of their new place in the world of power. And what is worse, for over 500 years they have been taught to see themselves through the eyes of their colonizer.

In a very different but no less efficient and enduring way, this historical and cultural destruction and the production of racialized identities also created victims of the people of that hijacked and betrayed land we call Africa, first as slaves and later as racialized "Blacks." They were also people who had their origins in complex and sophisticated experiences of power and civilization (Ashantis, Bacongos, Congos, Yorubas, Zulus, etc.), and although the destruction of these societies began much later, and had the same scope and depth as in ("Latin") America, for those who were kidnapped and dragged off to America, the violent and traumatic uprooting, the experience and the violence of racializing and slavery, obviously represented a no less massive and radical destruction of their subjectivity, social experience, power, universe, and networks of primary and societal relationships. And in terms of individuals and specific groups, it is very probable that the experience of uprooting, of racialization, and of slavery could have been perhaps even more atrocious and perverse than it was for the survivors of "indigenous communities."

Although today the ideas of "color" and "race" are virtually interchangeable, the relationship between them is a fairly recent one: it dates back to the eighteenth century, leaving us with the range of material, social, and subjective struggles we have today. Originally, from the initial moments of the Conquest, the idea of *race* was produced in order to provide meaning for the new power relations between "Indians" and Iberians. The original and primordial victims of these relationships and the idea behind them were, quite evidently, Indians. "Blacks"—as the future "Africans" were called—were of a "color" the Europeans had been familiar with for thousands of years, from the days of ancient Rome, yet this had not previously implied any notion of "race." The "Black" slaves would not be included in this idea of race until much later in colonial America, particularly when the civil wars between the *encomenderos* and the forces of the Crown began, around the

middle of the sixteenth century.[10] Yet "color" as an emblematic sign of race would not come to be imposed until well into the eighteenth century, in the British-American colonial sphere, where the idea of "white" was produced and established in response to the main population to be racialized and colonially integrated (read: dominated, discriminated, and exploited) within British-American colonial society: the "Blacks."

However, the "Indians" of the region were not considered to be part of the society and were thus neither racialized nor colonized until much later. As is well known, during the nineteenth century and by way of the massive extermination of their population, the destruction of their societies, and the conquest of their territories, the "Indian" survivors were to be pushed onto "reservations" within this newly independent country, the United States, as a colonized, racialized, and segregated population.[11]

All the previous forms and sites of domination were redefined and reconfigured around this new notion of race. Relations between the sexes were the first of them. Thus, in the vertical, authoritarian, patriarchal model of the social order which was brought by the Iberian conquerors, males were by definition superior to females. But through the imposition and legitimization of the idea of race, any woman of a "superior race" became by definition automatically superior to any male of an "inferior race." This was how the colonial nature of relations between the sexes was reconfigured in connection to the colonial character of race relations. The production of new historical and geo-cultural political identities—"Black," "white," "Indian," and "mixed race"—derived from the new pattern of power was a part of this scheme.

This was how the first system of basic and universal social classification of individuals in human history came to pass. To use current terminology, we would say that this was the first global social classification system. Produced in America, it was imposed on the entire world population, through the expansion of European colonialism throughout the rest of the world. From then on, the idea of race, an original and specific mental product of the conquest and colonization of America, was imposed as the

criterion and as the fundamental social mechanism for the basic social and universal classification of all members of the human species. In effect, throughout the expansion of European colonialism, new historical, social, and geo-cultural identities were to be produced, on these same bases. On the one hand, "yellow" and "olive-skinned" colors would be added to "Indians," "Blacks," whites and "mestizos." On the other, a new geography of power began to emerge, with a new nomenclature: Europe, Western Europe, America, Asia, Africa, and Oceania, or the West, East, Middle East, Far East, and their respective "cultures," "nationalities," and "ethnicities."

Racial classification, given the fact that it was based on a raw mental construct wholly divorced from the material universe, is not imaginable without the violence of colonial domination. Colonialism is a very old experience. Nonetheless, it was only with the conquest and Ibero-Christian colonization of the population of the Americas during the passage from the fifteenth to the sixteenth centuries that the mental construct of "race" appeared. This reveals that is was not just any type of colonialism, but one that was very particular and specific: it took place within the context of the military, political, religious, and cultural victory of the Christians of the Counter-Reformation movement over the Muslims and Jews of southern Europe and Iberia. And it was this context that produced the idea of "race."

In effect, at the same time that America was subjected to conquest and colonization, the Crown of Castile and Aragon, already the nucleus of the central state of the future Spain, imposed a requisite "certificate of pure blood" on the Muslims and Jews of the Iberian Peninsula so that they could be admitted as Christians and authorized to live on the peninsula or to make the journey to America. This "certificate"—in addition to representing the first "ethnic cleansing" of the colonial/modern period—can be considered the most immediate predecessor of the idea of race, since it contains the ideological implication that religious ideas, or, more generally speaking, culture itself, are transmitted by "blood."[12]

The continuously reproduced experience of the new relationships and their premises and meanings, as well as their institutions of control and conflict, necessarily implied an authentic reconstitution of the universe of subjectivity and of intersubjective relations as a fundamental dimension of the new pattern of power, of the new world and of the new world order that was thus taking shape and developing. This was how an entire new system of social domination emerged. Specifically, the control of sexuality, subjectivity, authority, and their respective resources and products, would henceforth not only be associated with racial classification, but become entirely dependent on it as the framework, providing the forum, roles, and conducts of social relations, not to mention the images, stereotypes, and symbols whereby individuals and groups would be categorized in every facet of social life.

4. The New System of Social Exploitation

Closely articulated with this new system of social domination and in step with its constitution, a new system of social exploitation also emerged. More specifically, this refers to forms of control of labor, its resources, and its products: all of the historically known modes for the control of labor or of exploitation—slavery, servitude, independent and small-scale commodity production, reciprocity and capital—were associated, articulated in a single joint system of commodity production for the world market. Due to the dominant role of capital in the basic tendencies of this new system, from its very point of departure the latter took on a capitalist character.

In this new structure for the exploitation of labor and the distribution of its products, each one of the component parts was redefined and reconfigured. As a consequence, sociologically and historically, each of them was new, rather than a mere extension or geographic prolongation of previous forms in other lands. This single system of commodity production for the world market was clearly an unprecedented historical experience, an entirely new system for the control of labor and social exploitation.

These historically unprecedented systems of domination and social exploitation were in mutual need of one another. Neither could have

been consolidated and universally reproduced over such a long period of time without the other. In America, for these very reasons—that is, given the magnitude of the violence against, and the destruction of, the previously established social order—the relations between the new systems of domination and exploitation came to be virtually symmetrical and the social division of labor was for a long time a clear expression of the racial classification of the population. As of the middle of the sixteenth century, this association between the two systems was already clearly structured. It was to be reproduced over the course of nearly 500 years: "Blacks" were by definition slaves; "Indians" by definition servants. Those who were neither Black nor Indian became masters, bosses, administrators or public authorities, owners of commercial establishments, and men of power. And of course, particularly as of the mid-eighteenth century and among those of mixed race, "color" became fundamental, that is, the element that defined each person and each group's place in the social division of labor.

5. Coloniality and Globality in the New Pattern of Power

Given the fact that the category of race became a basic and universal social classification of the population, redefining around its core previous forms of domination—in particular, those regarding sex, "ethnicity," "nationalities," and "cultures"—this system of social classification affected each and every member of the human species. It became the axis for the distribution of roles and the relationships associated with them, in labor, sexual relations, authority, production, and the control of subjectivity. And it was according to these criteria of classification established by those who were in power that all sorts of historical and social identities were ascribed. Ultimately, geo-cultural identities were also established around this axis. This was how the first historically known global system of domination emerged. Nobody, in any part of the globe, could escape it.

Furthermore, given a social division of labor (control over and exploitation of labor) that consisted in bringing together all historically known forms of production under a single system of commodity production for the world market and for the exclusive

benefit of those who were at the helm of power, no one could any longer live outside the system. People could change places within the system but never be totally outside it. Thus the first global system of exploitation—world capitalism—came about.

On the other hand, this new pattern of power that was based on the articulation of new systems of social domination and exploitation of labor was constituted and configured as a central product of the colonial relations that were imposed in America. Without these relations of coloniality and violence, the integration between these new systems would not have been possible; much less their enduring reproduction. Thus coloniality became—and continues to be—a central, inescapable trait of the new pattern of power that was produced in America, the basis of its foundation and its global character.

6. The Euro-Centering of a New Pattern of Power: Capital and Modernity

The colonial domination of America, exercised through physical and subjective violence, enabled the conquerors/colonizers to control the production of precious minerals (gold and silver, in particular) and of valuable produce (in the early days, this meant tobacco, cocoa, and potatoes, primarily) through the unpaid labor of "Black" slaves, "Indian" servants, and respective "mestizos."

It is perhaps not necessary to insist here on the historical process that enabled the dominant groups among the colonizers to produce a monetarized and regionally articulated market that stretched out over the Atlantic basin as a new center of commercial traffic. But, on the other hand, it is likely not entirely worthless to speak of a historical process prior to the so-called Industrial Revolution, in the eighteenth century, since before then these regions of Western Europe did not produce anything of importance for the world market. In consequence, it was exclusively the colonial control of America and the free labor of "Blacks" and "Indians" producing precious vegetables and minerals that enabled dominant groups among the colonizers not only to begin to occupy an important position in the world market but also to hoard colossal commercial

benefits, and consequently centralize the commodification of the local work force within their own countries.

All of this implied the rapid expansion of capitalist accumulation in these regions and went on to allow Europe to take advantage of the technological innovations produced by "Black" slaves in the Antilles to drive the development of the Industrial Revolution in the northern part of what was to become Western Europe.[13] It was only on this basis that the emerging Western Europe could later go on to colonize the rest of the world and dominate the world market. This was how capital as a social relation of production and exploitation could be concentrated in these regions and become their virtually exclusive trademark over a long period of time, while in America, as was later the case in the rest of the colonized world, non-wage relations of exploitation, slavery, servitude, and reciprocity/taxation were patterns maintained by colonial violence. It was impossible not to admit that, contrary to the theoretical precepts of Eurocentrism, capital unfolded in Europe on the back of the most varied forms of labor exploitation and particularly "Black" slavery, used to cultivate the precious vegetables, and "Indian" servitude, employed in the production of precious metals.

In Europe, these processes were associated with the production of a new local power structure, social reclassification of the inhabitants of these regions, power conflicts among the dominant groups over domains, and that included the Church, with conflicts of hegemony between them, religious and cultural struggles, the pall of religious and cultural obscurantism in Iberia, and the secularization of intersubjective relations in central and northern Europe. In these latter regions, they led to the emergence of what since the eighteenth century has been presented to the whole world as modernity and as the exclusive trademark of a new historical entity and identity, Western Europe.

With roots that can be traced back to the fifteenth-century utopias, but above all to the philosophical, theoretical, and social debates of the seventeenth century and in clearer fashion to the eighteenth century, the new entity/identity that is constituted as Western

Europe, now under the increasing predominance of its central and northern zones, assumes and identifies itself as modern, that is, as the newest and most advanced civilization in human history, with its specific rationality for a hallmark.

Without the coloniality of power founded in America, that is, without America, all of this would be inexplicable. Nonetheless, the Eurocentric version of modernity hides or distorts this history. It is through the historical experience that leads to the production of America that in Europe the idea and the experience of change as a normal, necessary, and desirable mode of history takes hold. On the other hand, this also meant relinquishing an imaginary repertoire that cherished the golden age of a mythical past, in favor of one that was based on notions of future and "progress"; and without America, without contact and knowledge of forms of social existence founded on social equality, reciprocity, community, and social solidarity as they prevailed within certain precolonial indigenous societies, particularly in the Andean region, the European utopias of the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries cannot be explained. The latter reimagined these indigenous experiences, magnifying and idealizing them in order to contrast them with feudal inequalities in central northern Europe, and thus founded the mental repertoire of a society based on social equality, individual freedom, and social solidarity as a central project of modernity and as evidence and compendium of its specific rationality.[14]

In other terms, just as was the case regarding the centralization of capitalist development, the central role that Western Europe played in the production of modernity was an expression of the coloniality of power. This is to say, that coloniality and modernity/rationality were from the very beginning two sides of the same coin, as they have continued to be until today: two inseparable dimensions of the same historical process.[15]

For America, and in particular for contemporary Latin America, within the context of the coloniality of power, this process has meant that colonial domination, racialization, and geo-cultural reidentification as well as the exploitation of unpaid labor were

superimposed on the emergence of Western Europe as a center of control of power, as the center of the development of capital and of modernity/rationality, as the very seat of the historical model of advanced civilization. An entire privileged world that imagined itself, as it continues to imagine itself, self-produced and self-designed by beings of the superior *race* par excellence, by definition the only beings that are seen as truly endowed with the ability to reach such heights. Thus, from here on in the historical and structural dependence of Latin America would no longer be considered just a result of the materiality of social relations but, above all, of the new subjective and intersubjective relations of the new entity/identity called Western Europe and of its descendants and bearers, wherever they were to be or go.

7. Latin America's Ghosts

At this point in the debate it should not be difficult to understand why and how the coloniality of power produced this (non)encounter between our historical experience and our main perspective on knowledge, leading to the consequent frustration of attempts to provide effective solutions to our major problems.

The unresolved character of Latin America's fundamental problems has left it shaded by very specific historical ghosts. It is not my goal here to identify or examine all of them, but rather try to make some of them—the densest among them—visible. These specters have their own place in history, and their own history. From independence to the end of the nineteenth century, the most gnarled and enduring of these ghosts were most certainly those of identity and modernity. Since the end of that century, many Latin Americans began to realize that it was not possible to chase these phantoms out of our nondemocratic world—that is, a world configured in the absence of a modern nation-state. And although the separation and prolonged hostility between Latin American countries had almost been put to rest during the nineteenth century, it is only today that the Bolivarian proposal for unity and integration seems to be reappearing with considerable force. First, with the United States' conquest and colonization of the northern half of Mexico, but particularly since the Spanish defeat, as the

United States went on to colonize Cuba, Puerto Rico, the Philippines, and Guam, the imperialist and expansionist policy of that country has again planted the issue of unity and integration in the soil of the Latin American imaginary. Since World War II, the problem of development was added to our long list of unresolved issues. Despite its apparent exit from the site of current debate, the issue of development has not disappeared from our mindset; on the contrary, it haunts the present-day scenario as one of the premises that has provided legitimacy to the neoliberalization of Latin American countries.

Given all the arguments we have developed thus far, we can identify modernity, democracy, unity, and development as the ghosts that haunt the Latin American imaginary today. Along with them, since the end of the last millennium—since our 500th anniversary—a new and perhaps more somber, more frightening specter has appeared: that of the continuity or survival[16] of the very processes of production of a Latin American identity.

As the debate implies, the solution to any one of these problems requires the solution to all. This condition has left these ills invulnerable, until today, to all the attempts that have been made to eradicate them from our daily social existence. In fact, the hegemony of the Eurocentrist perspective on knowledge has led most people to, on the one hand, think of these problems as separate from one another, and, on the other, to attempt to solve them gradually and sequentially. And also, for these very reasons, to perceive of proposals and alternative attempts to solve them as mere "utopias"—in the devalued sense of the term, that is, not as proposals for social transformation or for the production of new historical directions.

For all of these reasons, these ghosts haunt us in ways that are inextricably linked. And they seem to have become permanent. They have become quite familiar to us, as if they were our intimates, and have come to make up a part of our experience and our imagery. Thus, we could say that they are today virtually inherent to the materiality and the imaginary of our historical

experience. In this regard, they make up the specific historical knot of Latin America.[17]

8. Coloniality, Modernity, Identity[18]

It comes as no surprise that America accepted the Eurocentric ideology of modernity as a universal truth, particularly until the early twentieth century, if we take into account that those who gave themselves exclusive rights to thinking of and representing themselves as representatives of this America were precisely those who exercised colonial domination, that is, "Europeans." And since the eighteenth century, they came to be considered "white" and identified with the "West"; that is, with a more extended image of "Europe," as is still the case today—even after new "national" postcolonial identities have been taken up.[19]

In other words, the "coloniality" of power has since implied—continuing, for the most part, to do so today—the sociological invisibility of non-European, "Indian," "Black," and mestizo others, in other words, the overwhelming majority of the population of the Americas and of Latin America in particular, insofar as the production of subjectivity, historical memory, the image constructs, and "rational knowledge" are concerned. In other words, in terms of identity.

And, in effect, how would they have been able to attain visibility, beyond their position as subjugated workers, if non-Europeans, given their ascribed condition of inferior and "culturally" primitive races—archaic, as we say today—were not and could never have been considered—as they are still not today—subjects, much less rational subjects?[20]

With the defeat of the revolution led by Tupac Amaru in the Peruvian Viceroyship in 1790, the isolation, mutilation, and final defeat in 1803 of the initially triumphant Haitian revolution, the non-Europeans of Latin America were mentally and intellectually rendered even more invisible in the world of those who were dominant or were beneficiaries of the "colonialness" of power.[21]

Nonetheless, in the world of power, what is pushed out the door tends to come back through a window. Thus, those who were made invisible were in fact the overwhelming majority of the Latin American population, with their subjective world and ways of relating to the universe, much too dense and active to be simply ignored. And even while the promiscuity and sexual permissiveness of Catholic Christians was incessantly producing and reproducing a growing population of "mestizos"—a very significant portion of which came to join, as of the late eighteenth century, the ranks of the dominant groups—intersubjective (cultural) relationships between dominating and dominated led to the production of a new intersubjective universe that was considered equally "mestizo" and thus ambiguous and indecisive, except, of course, insofar as it were to appear at either extreme on the spectrum of power relations.

It was at this point that Latin American identity became a battlefield that has not ceased to grow wider and rockier, separating the European and the non-European. But even when cast in these terms, we are not dealing with a linear or simple history; rather, with the most enduring elements of the coloniality of power.

In the first place, "racial" relations are enveloped in, or disguised as, "color." This is obviously a relationship of social hierarchy, of "superiority" and "inferiority" between "whites," "Blacks," "Indians," and mixed-race "mestizos," which during the second half of the nineteenth century also came to include "Asians," the "yellow," and the "olive-skinned." Since the eighteenth century, the increase of "mixed-race" people led to a more complex and difficult hierarchy of "colors" and tones, to discrimination among the castes it generated. This social scale remained in place until well into the nineteenth century.[22]

A later increase of "mestizos" has rendered the attempts at social classification founded on "race" even more complex, all the more so because "color" has superimposed itself on the biological and the structural, due primarily to struggles against racism and racial discrimination. Furthermore, this same effect has also accrued from the modern formal ideology of the equality of people of all "colors" in which anti-racist struggles have sought support.

In the second place, we are dealing here with relations between the "European/Western"—and in consequence, with modernity, or more accurately, with the Eurocentric version of modernity—and the non-European. This is a crucial relationship, insofar as this Eurocentric and overwhelmingly hegemonic perspective in Latin America, and not only among those belonging to dominant groups, the place and condition of the original historical and cultural experiences of the precolonial (ergo: pre-"Western and European"), can be classified as "premodern" and therefore "prerational" or "primitive," just like the populations that were kidnapped in Africa and enslaved and racialized as "Blacks" in America. Few would resist admitting that in the dominant discourse—thus, the discourse originating in dominant groups—the proposed modernization has continued to be synonymous with "Westernization," all the intense post-World War II debate notwithstanding.[23]

In the third place, there are the results of the resistance that has been put up by the victims of the coloniality of power and that has been present over the course of these five centuries. During early modernity, under Iberian domination, the first "mestizo" intellectuals initiated the defense of the aboriginal legacy. (In the extensive Peruvian Viceroyship, the larger part of today's South America, almost everyone is familiar with the most famous of them, Garcilaso de la Vega the Inca, Guaman Poma de Ayala, Santa Cruz Pachacuti Yamqui Salcamaygua, Blas Valera). In broad terms, two different currents can be discerned. One originates in the celebrated *Comentarios reales* (Royal Commentaries) by Garcilaso de la Vega, the Inca, a work that insists on the peaceful, civilizing, and solidaric nature of the Inca, and another more critical one that emphasizes power and its implications, originating in the work *El primer nueva corónica y buen gobierno* (The First New Chronicle and Good Government) by Guaman Poma de Ayala. Today, it can be said that both of them converge in their call—against the increasingly predatory nature of contemporary capitalism—for the restoration of a "Tawantinsuyu"[24] society.

In the fourth place, there is the shifting history of the relations between the different versions of the European in these countries.

The most interesting part of this history began early in the nineteenth century, with the political conflict between Hispanophile conservatives and liberal modernists, in light of the hegemony-seeking expansionism of the United States, allied as it was to England. The "white" liberals of these countries were stimulated by France, under Napoleon III, to propose that their European identity not exhaust itself in the Iberian (Spanish and Portuguese), but that it could be traced further back to a much broader cultural kinship: Latin-ness. And toward the end of that same century, in the face of the open colonialist and imperialist expansionism of the United States after its victory over Spain in 1898, an opposition between the Anglo-Saxon materialism and pragmatism of the North Americans and the Latin "spiritualism" of South Americans—codified primarily by the Uruguayan José Enrique Rodó in his book *Ariel*, found wide dissemination and acceptance among "white" and "mestizo" intellectuals.[25] This history has not yet come to an end. Given the fact that US hegemony has been able to expand and assert itself, particularly since World War II, it is no coincidence that the name Latin America has been favored over a series of others that have been proposed at different points, precisely since World War II.

Finally, recent political and cultural movements of the "indigenous" and of "Afro-Latin Americans" have led to the definitive questioning of the European version of modernity/rationality and the proposal of an alternative rationality. They deny the social and theoretical legitimacy of "racial" and "ethnic" classification and have proposed anew the idea of social equality. They deny belonging to, and the legitimacy of, the nation-state founded on the coloniality of power. In essence, although perhaps less clearly and explicitly, they propose the assertion and reproduction of reciprocity and the ethics of social solidarity as an alternative to the predatory tendencies of today's capitalism.

It is worth pointing out that, against this whole historical and social backdrop, the question of Latin American identity is, more than ever before, a historical, open, and heterogeneous project, and not only—or perhaps not so much—loyalty to a memory and a past. This

history has enabled us to see that in reality we are dealing with many different memories and many different pasts, still without a common and shared course. From this perspective and in this sense, the production of a Latin American identity implies, from the outset, a trajectory of unavoidable destruction of the coloniality of power, and a very specific form of decolonization and liberation: the non/coloniality of power.

This text was first published in *Estudos Avançados* (São Paulo) 19 no. 55 (September–December 2005): 9–31. Translated by Meryl Adelman

1. "Os fantasmas da América Latina" (The Ghosts of Latin America) was the original title of this paper but the author has preferred to use the same title under which its first five pages were published in *Libros y Artes. Revista de Cultura de la Biblioteca Nacional del Perú*, no. 10 (April 2005): 14–16. This text has been newly reviewed and lightly edited for this edition.

2 For more on these categories, see Aníbal Quijano, "Colonialidad del poder, eurocentrismo y América Latina," in *La colonialidad del saber, eurocentrismo y ciencias sociales*, ed. Edgardo Lander (Buenos Aires: CLACSO-UNESCO, 2000), 201–46. Also by the same author, see "Colonialidad del poder, globalización y democracia," in *Tendencias básicas de nuestra época* (Caracas: Instituto de Altos Estudios Diplomáticos Pedro Gual, 2000), 21–65; and "Colonialidad y modernidad/racionalidad," *Revista del Instituto Indigenista Peruano* (Lima) 13, no. 29 (1992): 11–20.

3. Immanuel Wallerstein coined the concept of the "modern world-system" in the first volume of his book *The Modern World-System* (New York: Academic Press, 1974, 1980, 1989) as a system of states and regions associated with the expansion of European capitalism. In 1991, Aníbal Quijano introduced the concept of the "coloniality of power" in "Colonialidad y modernidad/racionalidad." Both theoretical proposals finally found a common course in the joint publication of both authors of the text "Americanity as a Concept or the Americas in the Modern World-System," *International Journal of Social Sciences* (Paris: UNESCO-ERES), no. 134 (November 1992): 617–27. Since then there has been growing use of the concept of the "colonial/modern world-system." See, among others, Walter Mignolo, *Local Histories, Global Designs: Coloniality, Subaltern Knowledges and Border Thinking* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000); and Ramón Grosfoguel's *Colonial Subjects* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2003).

4. Jun'ichirō Tanizaki, *In Praise of Shadows*, trans. Thomas J. Harper and Edward G. Seidensticker (New Haven: Leete's Island Books, 1977).

5. *Des/encuentro*, rendered here as "(non)encounter," in the original Spanish carries the meaning of both an "encounter" (*encuentro*) and "disagreement" or "discord" (*desencuentro*).—Ed.

6. This issue is discussed in "Colonialidad del poder, eurocentrismo y América Latina." Also dealt with in "Colonialidad del poder y clasificación social," in special issue "Festschrift for Immanuel Wallerstein," *Journal of World-Systems Research* (Colorado: Institute of Research on World-Systems) 6, no. 2 (Summer/Fall, 2000), ed. Giovanni Arrighi and Walter Goldfrank, Part 1 (document available only as a PDF).

7. I have discussed the implications of the current cultural and political movement of "indigenous" Latin Americans in "O 'movimento indígena' e as questões pendentes na América Latina," *Política Externa* (São Paulo: Instituto de Estudos Econômicos e Internacionais, Universidade de São Paulo) 12, no. 4 (2004): 77–97.

8. This theoretical proposal is articulated in Aníbal Quijano, "Colonialidad del poder, cultura y conocimiento en América Latina," *Anuario Mariateguiano* (Lima) 9, no. 9 (1998): 113–22. Reproduced several times, for example in *Capitalismo y geopolítica del conocimiento*, ed. Walter Mignolo (Buenos Aires: Ediciones del Signo; Duke University, 2001), 117–33.

9. On this issue, see Quijano and Wallerstein, "Americanity as a Concept."

10. During the wars in the Peruvian Viceroyship, many "Black" slaves rose through the ranks to occupy positions of leadership, such as captaincy—a position usually reserved for the *hidalgos*, members of the nobility from peninsular provinces. Furthermore, they were usually emancipated from slavery by the rebel *encomenderos*. When the latter were defeated, the so-called Peacemaker Pedro de la Gasca promulgated the most draconian of colonial legislations against "Blacks," as the definitive racial punishment. (Documents from the Lima Municipal Historical Archives.)

11. On the production of the ideas of "black" and "white" as "racial" nomenclature for the British-American colonial area, see Theodore Allen, *The Invention of the White Race*, 2 vols. (London: Verso, 1994); see also Matthew Frye Jacobson, *Whiteness of a Different Color: European Immigrants and the Alchemy of Race* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998). On the complexities and contradictions of the process of racializing "Blacks" in the British-American colonial world, see Steve Martinot's suggestive study *The Rule of Racialization: Class, Identity, Governance* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2003).

12. On this issue, see Aníbal Quijano, "'Raza', 'etnia' y 'nación' en Mariátegui: cuestiones abiertas," in *José Carlos Mariátegui y Europa. El otro aspecto del descubrimiento*, ed. Roland Forgues (Lima: Editora Amauta, 1992), 166–187.

13. See Dale W. Tomich, *Through the Prism of Slavery: Labor, Capital, and World Economy* (Lanham: Rowman & Littelfield, 2004).

14. On this debate, see Aníbal Quijano, *Modernidad, identidad y utopía en América Latina* (Lima: Ediciones Sociedad y Política, 1988).

15. For more on this issue, see Aníbal Quijano, "Colonialidad y modernidad/racionalidad," in *Los conquistados: 1492 y la población indígena de las Américas*, ed. Heraclio Bonilla (Bogotá: Tercer Mundo Ediciones; Quito: FLACSO, 1992), 437–49.

16. A vigorous debate has finally commenced within Latin America on the meaning of the expansion of US military bases and establishments within Latin American territory, beyond the habitual and long-standing articulations between the armed forces of that country and those of Latin American nations. This debate is linked to the obvious tendencies of re-neocolonization of the world, initiated with the invasions and occupations of Iraq and Afghanistan. Several predictions that I made in this regard, and became reality within an unfortunately short span of time, can be found in a talk that I gave at the University of Gainesville, Florida, in 1992, under the title "Will Latin America Survive?" It was published in Portuguese in 1993 as "Sobrevivera América Latina?," *São Paulo em Perspectiva* (São Paulo: SEADE) 7, no. 2 (1993): 60–67; and *Carta* (Rio de Janeiro), no. 1 (1993). I have returned to this topic in "El laberinto de América Latina: ¿Hay otras salidas?," *Revista Venezolana de Economía y Ciencias Sociales* (Caracas) 6, no. 2 (2004): 73–90. A Portuguese translation can be found in *Globalização. Dimensões e Alternativas*, ed. Theotonio dos Santos (São Paulo: Puc; Edições Loyola; Reggen, 2004), 142–74.

17. The intersection of questions of identity, modernity, and democracy has proven to be an inextricable part of Latin American history. In this regard it has come to be an authentic historical, nuclear, and decisive knot; its solution depends no doubt on future horizons and trajectories. Nonetheless, this knot is, given its nature and origin, completely different from the legendary Gordian knot that was awaiting Alexander's sword to be undone. The historical knot of Latin America cannot be dealt with in any other way besides a continuous, radical, and global democratization of material and intersubjective relations that leads to the production of a society of free and equal beings. And since there is probably no other Latin American for whom this has so intensely meant his very life and death than the Peruvian José María Arguedas, I believe it is pertinent to call it the *Arguedian knot*.

18. On this occasion I will limit myself to discussing the question of identity and its relations to modernity/rationality. My proposals on the issues of democracy and the modern nation-state and on development and integration can be found, respectively, in the following texts: "Colonialité du pouvoir et démocratie en Amérique latine," in *Amérique Latine. Démocratie et exclusion*, Futur antérieur (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1994), 93–101; "Estado-nación, ciudadanía y democracia: cuestiones abiertas," in *Democracia para una nueva sociedad*, ed. Helena González and Heidulf Schmidt (Caracas: Nueva Sociedad, 1997), 139–58; "Colonialidad del poder, globalización y democracia," in *Tendencias básicas de nuestra época* (Caracas: Instituto de Altos Estudios Diplomáticos Pedro Gual, 2000), and there is a Portuguese translation: "Colonialidade, poder, globalização e democracia," *Novos Rumos* (São Paulo) 17, no. 37 (2002): 4–28; "Populismo y fujimorismo," in *El fantasma del populismo*, ed. Felipe Burbano de Lara (Caracas: Nueva Sociedad; Quito: FLACSO, 1998), 171–207; "América Latina en la economía mundial," in *Problemas del desarrollo* (Instituto de Investigaciones Económicas de la UNAM) 24, no. 95 (October–December 1993): 43–59; and "El fantasma del desarrollo en América Latina," *Revista Venezolana de Economía y Ciencias Sociales* (Caracas) 6, no. 2 (2000): 73–90.

19. Not only a part of the intelligentsia, such as the important Argentine writer and intellectual Héctor Murena (1923–1975), well into the twentieth century felt the

despair of being one of the "Europeans exiled in these savage pampas," but many of our most powerful political leaders have not hesitated in asserting themselves as defenders of "Western and Christian civilization," as is the case for the cruel Argentine military dictatorship of the 1970s and the no less cruel Bush dictatorship of the twenty-first century.

20. This way of perceiving non-Europeans is constant and explicit, even in Hegel, whose opinions on the inevitable destruction of primitive societies (*Lessons on the Philosophy of History*) are well known and repeatedly cited (referring specifically to the Aztecs and the Incas). For Hegel, this is a consequence of contact with the Spirit, which is naturally European. Another example is Heidegger, for whom the only viable language for philosophizing is German.

21. Tupac Amaru's revolution was, in the Peruvian Viceroyship, the first attempt to produce a new nation, that is, a new power structure, and perhaps a new nationality, that is, a new identity, based on elements of Hispanic origin and nature that had been historically redefined by and through America, within a pattern of power under "indigenous" hegemony. His defeat gave way to the situation in which the region's future independence would occur under the complete control of the ruling colonial powers, thus permitting the lasting maintenance of the coloniality of power. Similarly, the Haitian revolution was the first major decolonialization movement of the entire colonial/modern period, in which "Blacks" defeated "whites," slaves triumphed over masters, colonized over colonizers, Haitians over French, non-Europeans over Europeans. The entire colonial/modern pattern of power was subverted and destroyed. Both revolutions produced a tremendous commotion and spread panic among the holders of colonial/modern power. Thus, the repression that was unleashed against the Tupac Amaru revolutions was of the cruelest kind, just as the continued colonialist intervention first of the French and later of the United States (or United Statesians, as proposed by José Buscaglia-Salgado in *Undoing Empire: Race and Nation in the Mulatto Caribbean* [Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 2003], 4) has been over the centuries, crushing the revolution and arresting Haiti within a horrific history that they have not allowed to end.

22. In South American colonial archives, more than thirty "castes" can be identified, under names that have not all fallen into disuse. In Peru, for example, there is the term "zambo," which originally referred to the "blackened" "mestizo" offspring of a "Black man" and an "Indian woman," and "sacalagua," used to designate a place on a scale of different "mulatto" positions. Today "moreno" is a term that is used to reduce the effects of "Black" or "zambo," testimony that the cultural production of the idea of "race" has since the beginning been rooted in social hierarchies imposed in Iberia on the dominated "Moors" and their descendants under the domination of the lords of the North. The arrival of "Asiatic" populations since the mid-nineteenth century and of the Chinese in particular has generated new matrixes and new discriminatory terms.

23. During the days that followed the lynching of the mayor of Ilave (Puno, Peru) by a furious population identified basically as Aymara, the Peruvian press and in particular several television programs attributed the episode to the non-"Western" and therefore non-modern, non-rational condition of the Aymara "indigenous" population. On one

television program, an influential journalist did not hesitate to exclaim that the "West" should be forcefully imposed on such populations. It is noteworthy that the lynching was one of several that had occurred during that period in Peru, but in regions and involving populations that were different and distant from one another. But those that had involved "mestizo" populations were not represented in the same racist/ethnicist terms. However, in Ilave the events involved Aymaras and this therefore led directly to their explanation in these terms. What is particularly pathetic about the opinion of journalists from Lima is that they were not even able to imagine that these acts could have anything to do with the "Westernization" of the Aymara: active legal trade and contraband, drug traffic, dispute for control over municipal resources, political relation with urban political parties, with central headquarters in Lima that fight over control of power and resources, etc. All of this, of course, within the context of the serious social, political, and socio-psychic crisis that has characterized life in Peru for over a century.

24. From Lima, Carlos Araníbar has published a version of the *Comentarios reales* in modern Spanish (Lima and Mexico City: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1991), followed by a volume of scholarly notes that are of great use for those interested in mapping the historical course of such a significant book. The same Peruvian historian edited a text by Juan de Santa Cruz Pachacuti Yamqui Salcamaygua, also published by the FCE, Lima and Mexico City, 1995. Franklin Pease, another Peruvian historian, edited the most recent edition of Guaman Poma de Ayala, *Primera nueva crónica y buen gobierno* (Lima and Mexico City: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1993). During the twentieth century, Luís Eduardo Valcárcel was the most influential advocate of the Garcilaso version of Tawantinsuyo. Beginning with *Tempestad en los Andes*, prologue by José Carlos Mariátegui (Lima: Editorial Minerva, 1927), his works include *Historia del Perú antiguo* (Lima: Editorial J. Mejia Baca, 1964) and *Ruta cultural del Perú* (Mexico City: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1945). More recently, Alberto Flores Galindo, in *Buscando un Inca. Identidad y utopía en los Andes* (Lima: Horizonte, 1988), has become an extremely influential writer who represents a variation on the same current of thought.

25. In 1853, the Colombian José María Torres Caicedo published a text containing these proposals in the Parisian *Revue des deux mondes*. Napoleon III's expansionist pretensions were quick to use these proposals to provide support for the invasion of Mexico and the imposition of Maximilian of Habsburg as emperor. As is known, the invaders were defeated and expelled and the emperor was executed under the leadership of the liberal Benito Juárez. *Ariel*, written by the Uruguayan José Enrique Rodó (1872–1917), generated a whole intellectual and political current that came to be known as "Arielist," which seems to have run out of steam during the early decades of the twentieth century, as democratic and nationalist revolts across all the countries south of the Rio Bravo followed in the wake of the Mexican Revolution (1910–27), during the period 1925–35, ending with the defeat of the revolutions and the imposition of bloody dictatorships everywhere except for Uruguay and Chile.

Piero Quijano
Future Past

I made these paintings as a continuation of an earlier series called *Futuro anterior* (Future Past), about public spaces that were no longer accessible to the people of Lima: heavily guarded parks, avenues transformed into highways, footpaths overrun with gloomy vans, privatized beaches, dancing and ball games prohibited by the municipal authorities on streets policed by security firms.

Before the pandemic, eating on the street (or more precisely, between footpath and road), was a break that led to a conscious or unconscious kind of sharing, a stopping together, turning the city into something other than impersonal circulation. With the good and the bad (impossible to avoid some degree of regionalism and indulgent ways of watching people move), eating on the street was a use of public space and a visual experience worth recovering. Hunger (or appetite, depending on the intensity) joined forces with the need to escape isolation. A daily entry in a calendar for survival.

“With one foot outside the Peruvian cuisine boom and the other between the narrow city pavements and the tasty and/or insalubrious road, he creates images of open-air still lifes, under heavy Lima skies. *Anticuchos* in the night of a wall, juices in unendingly mixed markets, emollients and chicken broth smoking striped awnings, communal stews, community canteens, breakfast at the entrance of empty lots,” I wrote in a catalogue describing the possibilities and the images that unfold before one’s eyes. Images linked to desires, as in César Vallejo’s poem: “And when will we join all the others, at the brink of an eternal morning, everybody breakfasted.”

Bus y camión chocados (Bus and Truck Collided)
1989
Acrylic on canvas
80 × 100 cm
(p. 33)

Bodega, chino y muerto (Still Life, Chinese Man, and Corpse)
1990
Acrylic on canvas
100 × 160 cm
(p. 35)

Bolero cantinero
2002
Acrylic on canvas
120 × 100 cm
(p. 36)

Comas
2002
Oil on canvas
120 × 160 cm
(p. 37)

Playa Barranquito en día nublado
(Playa Barranquito on a Cloudy Day)
2002
Acrylic on canvas
120 × 160 cm
(p. 39)

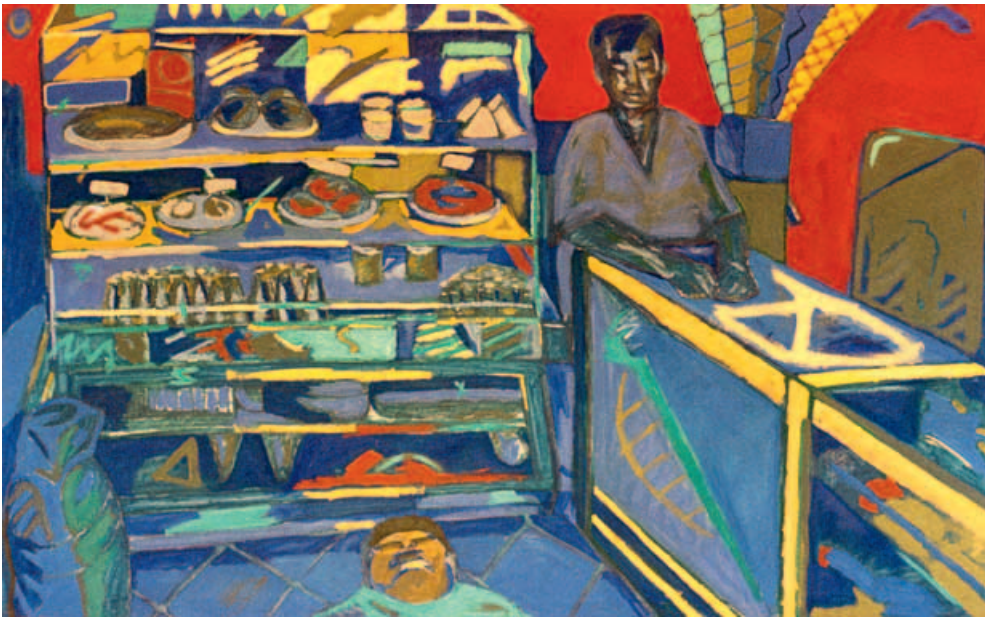
Choclo con queso (Choclo with Cheese)
2017
Acrylic on canvas
120 × 90 cm
(p. 40)

Desayuno (Breakfast)
2017
Acrylic on canvas
120 × 90 cm
(p. 41)

Comedor popular (Communal Kitchen)
2017
Acrylic on canvas
120 × 90 cm
(p. 42)

Kiosko rosado (Pink Food Stand)
2017
Acrylic on canvas
120 × 90 cm
(p. 43)

Kiosko Avenida Panamá (Avenida Panamá Food Stand)
2017
Acrylic on canvas
120 × 90 cm
(p. 44)



Rita Segato

The Legacy of Aníbal Quijano Through Some of His Words and Deeds[1]

Coloniality as the Racialization of the World

The perspective of the coloniality of power and of knowledge (which are closely related) was developed by Aníbal Quijano. Like the pedagogy of the oppressed and liberation theology, it is one of the few frameworks for understanding history and society to have come out of Latin America and crossed the North-South border in the opposite direction. In other words, to have brought theoretical categories from the South to the North, despite being expressed in a language that does not usually have a global influence in the field of ideas.

The influence and impact of the perspective of the coloniality of power is growing now, just as Aníbal Quijano leaves our midst.[2] A bit like the totemic process in Freud's *Totem and Taboo:*[3] the death of the father brings about a paradigmatic shift, which is reflected in the worldwide scholarly interest in understanding its tenets. Aníbal himself never described his model as a "theory," for he shunned the closed, conclusive, concluded, consistent nature of what we call theories. Rather than an especially consistent thinker, I describe him as a thinker whose ideas have a high degree of organicity. I found this word to say that, despite its great consistency, his perspective is more organic than systematic, in the sense that it is alive, dynamic, pulsating, open, and in constant movement as it opens up an incessant proliferation of new meanings and revelations.

Aníbal always referred to his thinking as a perspective, in the sense of it being a particular view of society and history, a way of looking at the world. And so it is. This is why his formulation came to be described as a "turn," to indicate a change or a shift in the way we see reality. An epistemic turn, like the Copernican turn, but in this case decolonial. Because once you understand what the words say, there is no going back. A new episteme takes hold and restructures our way of being in the world.

One of the problems with Quijano's great oeuvre arises from readers engaging with his ideas in a fragmentary manner, reading one or two articles in order to include them in a bibliography or insert them into the content of a seminar, without perceiving the totality of his approach. By doing this they fail to grasp what I call the "organicity" of his thought. Fragmentary quotes from his writings do not do him justice, nor do they capture that turn, the paradigmatic shift that those who know his work attribute to him.

Quijano always shied away from considering his body of thought as stable, that is, complete. He never referred to his formulations as a "theory," using the word "perspective" instead: the perspective of the coloniality of power. He avoided and renounced completeness and even more strongly rejected flow charts. His actions as a thinker set him apart from others who may have achieved greater influence in the short term but, rather than theorists, were reviewers, compilers, exegetes, and organizers of the ideas of the time. His refusal to definitively order his work took him into what he often called a "labyrinth." He often said that he was "lost in his labyrinth," an expression that I am now, slowly, starting to understand. That sense of feeling disoriented in the mass of ideas he calls a labyrinth is due to the fact that it is not easy to organize his concepts, the categories he has created. Because they resist the kind of order we are used to, which is a closed order.

So what makes Quijano's work so remarkably consistent? Many people find the answer to this question surprising or even difficult to accept. The consistency of Quijano's thinking stems from the epicenter of what he calls "coloniality," because race, rather than social class, is at the heart of his theory. And—as I have argued in the course of continuing and opening up Quijano's ideas to explore subjects relating to my activism[4]—the subject of race in the Ibero-American universe is, to this day, very difficult to address. Race became the main criterion for classifying humans as a result of what Quijano calls the "reoriginalization" of time: the world, he argues, was "reoriginalized" when, as a result of the process of conquest and colonization, people became aware of a new taxonomy and a new episteme, with its own notions, categories, and values. In Foucauldian

terms, we could say that this "reoriginalization" was the emergence of a new order of discourse. As we read Quijano, he makes us realize that the whole narrative of this historical event that reoriginalized the world can only be conceived using a vocabulary that did not exist before the event itself. In other words, when we recount it, we mythologize it. We mythologize it, we mystify it, and we recount it in a way in which it did not happen. We say, for example, "Spain discovered the Americas," and Aníbal says, "no." Not just because the lands and people who were "discovered" already existed, but because "Spain" did not exist.

1492

A year and a half ago, the Bilbao-based organization Mugarik Gabe invited a group of feminist thinkers working on the subject of gender violence to analyze twenty-six stories of violence against women in five countries (Columbia, Guatemala, El Salvador, Spain [*sic*], and the Basque Country). I was struck by the similarities between the Spanish and Latin American cases, especially and above all by the Spanish government's indifference to complaints and its failure to deal with them properly. The gender violence in the cases I read and analyzed surprised me and led me to think of Spain as a creole society too: one that is similar to the countries across the ocean, based on a reading of the fate of women in terms of the fate of their bodies, the relationship between women and the state, and the difficulty in filing complaints and requesting protection orders. The inaudibility of women's grievances led me to consider the Spanish state to be as creolized and distant from people's lives as our own. It led me to understand the coloniality of Spanish society.

So studying cases of violence against women and of official indifference led me to look into the reasons for the Spanish state's typically colonial exteriority in relation to what it is supposed to govern, to the administration of life. How did this happen here? For example, you are probably familiar with the case of the woman in Madrid who went to the office that deals with complaints of gender violence every Friday for five years. Every Friday she asked for protection, saying that her husband was violent and that her and her young daughter's lives were in grave danger. In the account I

read, in the woman's statement to the Mugarik Gabe interviewer, she expressed despair at the attitude of the clerk who dealt with her. Her description of this person, an agent of the state, the recipient of her complaint, is particularly affecting: he typed into his keyboard, saying things like, "Just a moment, what word did you use? Please repeat it." It was clear that he was entering her details mechanically, word for word, but he wasn't understanding what she was saying. The urgency and seriousness of her complaint failed to touch him, to penetrate, it was clearly inaudible. The police clerk was definitely not listening. And it came to pass that after these ongoing appeals for help, in the fifth year of her going to the office seeking protection from the state, the husband killed her daughter, a six-year-old girl. And to my surprise, that happened in Madrid, and the woman it happened to was not a migrant. This very revealing story led me to understand that such an event can only happen in a society whose relationship with the state is similar to ours.

So I looked to history, especially colonial history, for answers. And I realized that I had never noticed the importance of a fact that is actually absolutely fundamental. This fact is a date: 1492. When did the territorial conquest of the Iberian Peninsula end? In what year? None other than 1492. And what does this mean? It means that the story of the conquest and of colonization is continuous, it starts here and ends over there, first one and then the other, without interruption. Therefore, as Aníbal Quijano pointed out, Spain and the Americas are entities produced by the same history. They are an inseparable part of one and the same history. And this can be clearly discerned in the position of women in society on both sides of the Atlantic. If we turn to the problem of human trafficking, for example, the evidence is the same. So, on the one hand, Madrid can be considered an imperial center, but, on the other, it is also a space constructed by the colonial order and shaped by the "creoleness" of its practices when observed from the perspective of the testimony I have just discussed.

My understanding of Spain was confounded and changed by this testimony, and by others too, such as the account of the Andalusian women expelled from their land and their communal homes, which

had housed extended families until the twentieth century. Their expulsion, the destruction of communal life, the dismantling of the villages, varies little from Andalusia to Galicia. The year 1492, established and verifiable as a previously unnoticed link in the coloniality of the two worlds, was very enlightening for me. It meant that the conquest-driven, colonial history began on the peninsula, crossed the Atlantic, and continued on the other side without interruption, thus becoming a single story.

Aníbal also said that when we talk about Spain we run into trouble: the narrative of the events that gave rise to Spain as it is today, as a post-American entity, reveals a major problem with historical narrative, because it is impossible to tell the story of the conquest without using a post-conquest vocabulary and categories that emerged from and belong to a conceptual framework that came into existence after the event. The only thing that took place was the journey of a group of small ships, a land-grabbing war in an unknown territory. And then, the coercive pacification or colonization of the annexed, territorialized space. All the terms we use to tell the story were generated after the actual events had occurred and after they had been perceived, understood, and named in a particular way.

There is an extraordinary text by Quijano on this important subject, or rather an interview with Nora Velarde that was published in 1991 in the Peruvian magazine *Revista Illa* (now defunct and very hard to find). Its title was "La modernidad, el capital y América Latina nacen el mismo día" (Modernity, Capital, and Latin America Were Born on the Same Day), although it could just as well have been "America, Spain, Europe, Capitalism, Modernity, Black, White and Indian, Were Born on the Same Day," because Aníbal also said these things. This text is key to understanding his work, and we owe its existence to an unfortunate incident that took place on the streets of Lima during Fujimori's presidency. One night, Quijano, who was critical of Fujimorism, was driving through the city when his car broke down, stranding him in the darkness. He saw another car approach and pull up next to him. When the driver saw that it was Quijano, she said, "I'll only help you if you grant me an interview."

The woman was Nora Velarde, and that incident gave rise to the invaluable interview in which Quijano clearly sets out the perspective that he was starting to formulate. As I have said elsewhere, this perspective only became possible, and Quijano only felt fully entitled to disseminate it, after the fall of the Berlin Wall and the relaxing of loyalties that had made it difficult to think outside of the imposed bipolarity. This is also why the last stage of Quijano's intellectual life began in the second half of the 1980s, when the shackles and surveillance of allegiances broke down. At that point, this sociologist who had been critical without straying from the conventional canons found it possible to think and speak in a different way.

"America" is the Origin of the World as We Know It

Aníbal Quijano began reading the world from the perspective of Latin America, although, as he often said, "I read through the filter of the 'American advent,' but I do not just read Latin America, I read the world." For him, the Americas invented Europe, made Europe possible, for several reasons. On the one hand, he says that there would be no modernity without the Americas. How does he explain this? Well, by reminding us that until the "American advent" (always in quotation marks), every scientific and technological invention in Europe had to be validated, legitimized, authorized, in relation to a sacred or biblical past. Although there were inventions and discoveries, Quijano argues that the age of modernity had not yet begun, because modernity's essential characteristic is that of validation by the future. Novelty, invention, and discovery are futuristic ideas, valid in themselves if (and only if) we are in a time in which value emanates from the future, not from the past. And such a break with the past was only possible after the "American advent."

The "decolonial turn" is the concept that allows us to understand our world—the "New World"—as a profound break that reoriginalized history, and as a condition of possibility for "European modernity." It is a turn, like the Copernican turn, because it affects the way we see the overall picture, adding a final twist. It is a turning point because our cognition is reshaped by the way we subsequently see the world. In an article for a 1992

UNESCO publication commemorating the 500th anniversary, Quijano and his friend Immanuel Wallerstein subscribe to the idea that colonization was a precondition for the emergence of the "modern world-system," which in this text they call the "colonial/modern world-system."[5] In doing so, Wallerstein acknowledged that there had been an aspect missing from his theoretical perspective: the colony was a necessary prerequisite for the "capitalist world-system" to exist.

Race, but Anti-Systemic Race

As I said earlier, race lies at the heart of Quijano's decolonial turn, but his idea of race is certainly not that of multiculturalism. Aníbal continued to be an anti-systemic thinker and a critic of capital. That was precisely the common ground we found at our first meeting in Bogotá in 2008. A year earlier, I had published my book *La Nación y sus Otros* (The Nation and its Others),[6] in which I attempted to frame the idea of race and formulate a critique of racism from a Latin American perspective. Though I lacked the necessary vocabulary, I could already sense the existence of what I would later call "a coloniality within social movements." In other words, a coloniality—an imperial, hegemonic, northern influence—that comes into play when we try to think and act against racism, through frameworks generated by Latin American history, both colonial and republican. Ten years earlier, in a 1998 article reprinted in this 2007 book,[7] I had called that system of racialization, those frameworks of racial classification and othering (which are condensations of specific historical processes), "formations" or "national frameworks of alterity." And I had used the term "historical alterities" to refer to ways of being "other" in each framework, in order to draw a clear distinction between these frameworks and the "political identities" (racial, gender, ethnic, etc.) that became globalized with multiculturalism. As it did not attack the foundations of the historical project of capital, this critique of multiculturalism immediately found common ground and paved the way for a friendship with Aníbal Quijano that continued until his death.

The systemic thinking inherent to the multiculturalist inclusive approach and to the idea of human rights in a multicultural framework does not represent Aníbal Quijano's decolonial perspective. There is a considerable distance between the two. In 2008 I gave Quijano a copy of *La Nación y sus Otros* in Bogotá, and our mutual, visceral distrust of inclusive measures, multiculturalism, and essentialism of global political identities led us to engage in a long conversation that for me continues, by other means, to this day.

In my personal experience, firstly in a case of intersectional discrimination in the Anthropology Department at the Universidade de Brasília where I taught from 1985 to 2010, and later in efforts to implement a quota policy to ensure access of Black students to higher education in Brazil, I must say that I always understood inclusive policies and affirmative action as agitation strategies. For me they were a way to call out racism, to highlight its existence in Brazilian society (which has always denied it) rather than a solution to the major problem of exclusion in a country in which more than half of the population is visibly of African descent. In response to this apparent contradiction, Aníbal said that it is not a choice between "reform or revolution, but both reform and revolution," because "the battle is on all fronts." In other words, on the theoretical-political front of critical analysis and also on the front of concrete actions to improve life.

Quijano's foresight, his vision, was prescient. It is validated now, with the demise of the multiculturalist agenda, which was essentially a transitional buffer from the end of the era of anti-systemic critique (in the 1960s and 1970s) brought on by the fall of the Berlin Wall, to the present, with the emergence of explicitly racist, misogynist, and homophobic policies that are competing for and gaining access to presidential podiums around the world. We need to rethink the ideas of minority and political identity, both of which are subjects and subjectivities of the multicultural framework. Are we willing to accept a political program that assumes the existence of a non-minority universal subject?

Arguedas: The Indian at the Vanguard of the Historical Process Toward a Better World

It is illuminating to follow Quijano's journey from the 1960s, when he speaks about the great socio-historical-literary fresco of Peru (and by extension, Latin America) mapped out by José María Arguedas in his great novel *Todas las sangres* (All the Bloodlines, 1964), to the liberated Quijano who outlined the perspective of the coloniality of power. We can "hear" Quijano in the transcript of the roundtable on *Todas las sangres* held on June 23, 1965.[8] The transcript, published by Guillermo Rochabrún, was also entitled *¿He vivido en vano?* (Have I Lived in Vain?) in reference to a letter written by Arguedas immediately after hearing what the sociologists of the time had to say about his magnificent work. Fatally wounded by their "learned," sociological insensitivity, Arguedas wrote, "I will try to die immediately." In this (somewhat cruel) duel between a writer presenting a monumental work and a group of commentators, we find Quijano at a stage when he had not yet reached his destination with his words, had not yet achieved the lucidity that would come later, unfortunately when friend José María was no longer around to find out.

In *Todas las sangres*, in which the lives and subjectivities of all the New World characters are told from the perspective of their own points of view and interests, Arguedas placed Indians and the perspective of the communal world at the vanguard of history. In the historical-sociological tapestry of the novel, only the Indians have a real notion of sovereignty. Despite having been apparently dispossessed of their lands, only the Indians used their bodies to defend the elements of their landscape. Demetrio Rendón Willka, an extraordinary, lovable, and loving character, who is to me the quintessential hero of Latin American literature, leads the indigenous people's tireless efforts to protect a mine from being bought by a US company, so that the "mother of silver," the precious vein, does not change hands and become alienated from its historical roots and long-established links to the Peruvian colonial process.

In the famous roundtable on *Todas las sangres*, the scholars of the time accused Arguedas of sociological and political naivety for

placing an Indian character in a position of such ideological clarity and political skill. Arguedas was also criticized for talking about Peru as though people were still living in a caste society, that is, still under the colonial order. It seems incredible to "hear" Quijano's words regarding the novel, but it is important to do so because it allows us to witness the "colonial turn," not just as a theoretical shift in critical thought, but also as a change of mindset in the writer's own life. Quijano says that in the novel

> the caste structure is portrayed very simplistically. I am inclined to think that at this point in time we can no longer talk in such explicit terms about a caste situation in this country. However, elements of the caste system have not disappeared altogether. This means that *the notion that would seem most appropriately applicable to this situation is nonexistent, it is a notion that we have not invented in the social sciences.* However, we could also say a few things about the caste/class situation. In other words, about what is revealed through the enormous ambivalence of blood, of conflicts, and of criteria of social value, which emerge from the caste regime on the one hand, and from the class regime that has spread through society on a global scale on the other: although the two also merge, intermingle, and create a transitional structure.[9]

Quijano was saying that he sensed the need for a name or a formulation, a perspective that would make it possible to speak about the ongoing existence of a society in which the caste system has not disappeared despite the republican order, but is still present and forms part of the class society. A "nonexistent" notion, a term that as yet "does not exist," he said in 1965. He then went on to say that the caste situation is both absent and present in Peru, and he wonders, "What is Indianness?"

> the caste situation, insofar as we have admitted it, has been eliminated from Peruvian society. But if we also admit that some elements of the caste system persist, then the notion of "Indianness" needs to be more clearly defined. Unfortunately it seems to me that as yet there is no research being done in the social sciences to rethink our understanding of Indianness, and

> this is something that needs to be done. Indianness can no longer be looked at from a racial point of view, or from a strictly caste point of view. From a strictly cultural point of view, Indianness is no longer by any means pre-Hispanic, I think that is obvious to all of us. But what is Indianness?[10]

Aníbal's position was made even clearer to his contemporaries in his response to the literary critic José M. Oviedo that was included in the same publication along with the transcript of the roundtable:

> Is it not true that the workers as a group are depicted bleakly, insofar as the novelist imagines a strictly indigenous possibility of changing the social situation of the peasantry? . . . [A]nd does the idealization of the Indian world, which is an expression of Arguedas' enduring emotional attachment to his early experience, add vigor or authenticity to the literary construction of the Indians as a group in the novel?[11]

In his personal turning point from the mid-1980s onward, Aníbal gradually found the necessary words that he had been missing in 1965, enabling him to refer to the aspects of historical and social experience he had identified. Caste had not been eradicated with the Republic and replaced by class, as the sociologists who criticized Arguedas in the famous roundtable had argued. What has allowed caste to persist? It is the continuation of a pre-existing order or pattern that structures subjectivity, the economy, society, and politics, and permeates the apparent republican regime.

Aníbal called this order the "coloniality of power." As I mentioned earlier, he identified race at its center of gravity: race specifically defined as a colonial invention intended to anchor the conquered peoples to nature. In other words, to biologize the conquered peoples and trap them in an organic status of otherness. This gave rise to the possibility of racial surplus value extracted from the racialized people, and of racial capital belonging to the "whites." This entrapment also created a permanent barrier to the upward social mobility of nonwhites. We could say that "race" is the concept by which caste contaminated class, which is precisely what Quijano had tried to convey in 1965 without finding the words. And gender—

the patriarchal order, which had previously been a structure of social roles and division of labor that was very rigid but generally not fixed in the body, not physically determined—was also naturalized and biologized through the same mechanism of epistemic reoriginalization. Works by now-classic anthropologists, such as Pierre Clastres in his article "The Bow and the Basket"[12] on the Guayaki Indians of Paraguay (who now call themselves Achés), offer accounts of untroubled gender transitivity in the tribal world. Clastres, for example, recounts the case of Krembegi, who

> was in fact a sodomite. He lived as a woman in the midst of women, as a rule wearing his hair conspicuously longer than the other men, and only doing a woman's work: he knew how to "weave" and from the animal teeth the hunters gave him he made bracelets that demonstrated an artistic taste and aptitude that were much more pronounced in the things made by the women. And finally, he was of course the owner of a basket. . . . Now and then certain hunters would make him their sexual partner . . . But this never resulted in any feeling of scorn for him on their part.

The British social anthropologist Peter Rivière also talked about marriage as taking place between social roles rather than bodies among Amazonian tribal peoples.[13] And Giuseppe Campuzano documented royal colonial charters proclaiming the rules and punishments that made gender binarization obligatory. This speaks of the naturalization or biologization of the framing of race and gender in the new colonial caste hierarchy.

While inquiring into the question of what an "Indian" is, Quijano came up with his brilliant vision of the Indians' relationship to time, which he called the "return of the future." By this he meant opening up cracks or gaps in the fabric of coloniality that, from now on, allow communal worlds to resume the path blocked by the colonial intervention. In this way, he managed to liberate the notion of "Indianness" from its immobilization as a traditional culture that must be recovered. Quijano rejected the idea of a precolonial "origin" in the sense of a stable and localized reality that it is possible to return to. "Decolonizing" is thus not possible. The "Indian" is a subject in a communal order and has never stood still,

never ceased to be in time, or to have a history. But now, like Arguedas' Demetrio Rendón Willka, the Indian can lead the efforts to change the course of events, as the custodian subject of the vitality and inalienability of his own landscape.

Mariátegui, Arguedas, and Quijano: A Lineage

Aníbal had to cover a lot of ground before he found the term he was looking for: the ongoing "coloniality" of power. We could say that the road that took him there derives from the genealogy of José Carlos Mariátegui, and that Quijano's lineage as a critical thinker seeking an anti-capitalist, non-Eurocentric formulation can be traced back to the work of this great Peruvian thinker and ideologue. Quijano put down the first roots with his book *Reencuentro y debate. Una introducción a Mariátegui* (Reencounter and Debate: An Introduction to Mariátegui),[14] and he went on to write a series of forewords and "reencounters" for reeditions of works by Mariátegui, who was the first critic of Marxism's European focus. Examples include Quijano's prologue to the first edition of Mariátegui's *Siete ensayos de interpretación de la realidad peruana* (*Seven Interpretive Essays on Peruvian Reality*) published by Biblioteca Mariscal Ayacucho in 1978, which was commissioned by Ángel Rama, and his second prologue to a new edition of the *Siete ensayos*, "Treinta años después: otro reencuentro (notas para otro debate)" (Thirty Years Later: Another Reencounter [Notes for Another Debate]).[15] There is also his important 1993 essay, "'Raza', 'etnia' y 'nación' en Mariátegui: cuestiones abiertas" ("Race," "Ethnicity," and "Nation" in Mariátegui: Open Questions),[16] in which he leaves no doubt as to Mariátegui's influence on the perspective of the coloniality of power. Personally, I remember being horrified when I realized Aníbal Quijano was telling us that both the capitalist and socialist projects are equally Eurocentric: "world political debate has been prisoner to two major Eurocentric perspectives—liberalism and socialism—each with its own variants," but both dominated by the aims of an instrumental and technocratic Eurocentric modernity.[17]

Arguedas can also be placed within this genealogy. The ideas set out in *Todas las sangres* later appeared and became part of the perspective

of the coloniality of power, which is not utopian but sees history moving toward a future that cannot be held captive in the name of evolutionary utopias with pre-ordained destinies, such as those of Marxism-Leninism. Quijano thus appears to slide from the initial idea of utopia toward imagining an open future in which history is alive and resistant to authoritarian proclamations and appropriations—which is what the "good intentions" of Western avant-gardes have inevitably always been. No graphic or chart or whiteboard can show what the society of the future, the "good society" should look like. On the contrary, Quijano speaks of an open, available future, which is where the concrete experiences of communality that are already here, among us, have been heading all along.[18] As such, instead of the idea of "social movements," he began to speak of "the movement of society," which he came to consider more complete, totally inalienable and indispensable to the advent of a new era—as do I. He was able to formulate this toward the end of his life, because, earlier, he had also been a. . . conventional critical sociologist.

From the decolonial perspective, we do not speak of "decolonizing" territories because, as can be deduced from the above, the past is always on the move. We cannot find it again, there is no point zero of tradition that can be restored. Quijano does not advocate a restoration movement, because it would then undoubtedly turn into some type of fundamentalism, and inevitably become trapped in an authoritarian regime. Aníbal Quijano's decolonial perspective has an affinity with post-structuralism, because it is through insurgency in the gaps and the cracks, by cleaving the hard rock of the system of the order of colonial discourse, that the march of history will change direction. There is no premise of a recoverable origin, there is no fixed, pristine origin, waiting for the future. The origin has always been in the future, always moving toward the horizon.

1. Lecture presented as part of the program "The Aníbal Quijano Chair: Seismic Thought Before the Wreckage of the Present," Museo Reina Sofía, October 10, 2018.—Ed.

2. Aníbal Quijano died in Lima on May 31, 2018.—Ed.

3. Sigmund Freud, *Totem und Tabu. Einige Übereinstimmungen im Seelenleben der Wilden und der Neurotiker* (Vienna: Hugo Heller und Cie., 1913).

4. Rita Segato, "Los cauces profundos de la raza latinoamericana," in *La crítica de la colonialidad en ocho ensayos* (Buenos Aires: Prometeo, 2018).

5. Aníbal Quijano and Immanuel Wallerstein, "Americanity as a Concept or the Americas in the Modern World-System," *International Journal of Social Sciences* (Paris: UNESCO-ERES), no. 134 (November 1992): 617–27.

6. Rita Segato, *La nación y sus otros* (Buenos Aires: Prometeo, 2007).

7. Rita Segato, "Identidades políticas / Alteridades históricas. Uma crítica a lãs certezas del pluralismo global," *Anuário Antropológico* 22, no. 1 (1998): 161–96.

8. *"¿He vivido en vano?" La mesa redonda sobre "Todas las Sangres"* (Lima: Instituto de Estudios Peruanos, 1985).

9. Ibid., 57 (author's italics).

10. Ibid., 58.

11. Ibid., 75–76.

12. Pierre Clastres, "The Bow and the Basket," in *Society Against the State: Essays in Political Anthropology* (Brooklyn, NY: Zone Books, 1987), 101–28, here 108–9; originally published in French as "L'arc et le panier," *L'Homme. Revue française d'anthropologie* 6, no. 2 (April–June 1966), later reproduced in several compilations of Clastres's articles.

13. Peter Rivière, *Marriage Among the Trio: A Principle of Social Organization* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969).

14. Aníbal Quijano, *Reencuentro y debate. Una introducción a Mariátegui* (Lima: Mosca Azul Editores, 1981); reprinted in José Carlos Mariátegui, *Siete ensayos de interpretación de la realidad peruana* (Mexico City: Ediciones Era, 1988).

15. Aníbal Quijano, "José Carlos Mariátegui: reencuentro y debate," in *7 Ensayos de interpretación de la realidad peruana* (Caracas: Fundación Biblioteca Ayacucho, 1979); A. Quijano, "Treinta años después: otro reencuentro (notas para otro debate)," in José Carlos Mariátegui, *7 ensayos de interpretación de la realidad peruana* (Caracas: Fundación Biblioteca Ayacucho, 2007). [The book was first published in English as *Seven Interpretive Essays on Peruvian Reality*, trans. Marjory Urquidi (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1971).—Ed.

16. Aníbal Quijano, "'Raza', 'etnia' y 'nación' en Mariátegui: cuestiones abiertas," in *José Carlos Mariátegui y Europa. El otro aspecto del descubrimiento*, ed. Roland Forgues (Lima: Amauta, 1993).

17. Aníbal Quijano, "Las paradojas de la colonial/modernidad eurocentrada," *Hueso Húmero*, no. 53 (In memory of André Gunder Frank) (April 2009): 30–59.

18. For more on this, see Rita Segato, "Introducción," in *La nación y sus otros* (Buenos Aires, Prometeo, 2007).

Rita Segato

Aníbal Quijano and the Protagonism of Community in History[1]

Introduction: The Second Edition of the Chair and Its Participants

I would like to start by saying a few more words about the Aníbal Quijano Chair, which is a remarkable space in many ways. When Elisa Fuenzalida came to me after joining Ana Longoni's project (both Eliza and Ana have very close links to Peru and to Aníbal) and invited me to be part of the initiative, I was thrilled. This is now our second year working together on this program. In 2018, its first year, we publicly launched the Chair. Now, in 2019, as Quijano would have wanted, we are using the space to connect and create dialogue between communal political experiences that are similar but geographically distant from each other, and would not otherwise have the chance to come together and share thoughts, knowledge, and experiences. The Chair continues, and we are using this new opportunity to bring about an encounter between two libertarian processes based on a communal structure and feminist leadership: the Kurdish process and that of Black communities of Columbia, presented respectively by Besime Konca, former member of the Turkish Parliament for the Peoples' Democratic Party (HDP), and Gülcihan Şimşek, representative of the Free Women's Movement (TJA), for the Kurdish women; and Charo Mina Rojas, member of the Afro-Colombian Solidarity Network, for the Black women of Colombia.

Communal Feminisms

Why communal feminisms? This proposal has to do with the existence of a feminine politicity, which differs from masculine politicity. Why is it different? Not because male and female bodies or even souls are different in essence, but because masculine and feminine histories are different. They have moved through time intertwined, but the men and women who are here today are the

result of two different histories. As we will see later, feminine politicity has to do with women occupying public space (as has happened in Argentina and other countries around the world) in a way that is qualitatively different to the way in which men occupy public space. Based on that premise, we follow the thread and come to two ways of thinking politically that stem from different histories. I have tried to define what I call "feminine politicity" in texts and interviews, and I will get to that later, but I would like to introduce a few aspects now. Not many, however, because the idea is to work on this as a group later, and thus simply as a starting point.

To begin with, feminine politicity is not utopian, it is localized. This means that it is pragmatic rather than principle-based: it deals with the problem of protecting and reproducing life here and now. There is no preconceived future, there are no advance guards scouting the route to a prescribed destination. There is no centralism, no vertical structure misleadingly described as "democratic." Many of the ways in which we thought about insurgency in the past (and yes, I am very pleased to call the 1970s insurgency the past) no longer form part of the way women do politics. Instead, what concerns us now is a present moment free from principles that can limit the protection of life here and now. Another political-being is entering the scene.

This other, feminine way of being and doing politics stems from the communal experience. It has a lot to do with community organization. In order to understand what this means, we have to think about patriarchy from a decolonial perspective. Quijano himself asked me to connect the conceptualization of patriarchy (as set out in the essays in my book *Las estructuras elementales de la violencia* [The Elementary Structures of Violence])[2] with the terms he used in his formulation of the perspective of the coloniality of power. Despite the high quality of the text and its many references to decolonial thought, Quijano was not satisfied with the model proposed by the philosopher María Lugones, which draws heavily on the ideas of Yoruba author Oyèrónkẹ́ Oyěwùmí, who denies the existence of a precolonial patriarchy. As such, in 2008 he asked me to write my own interpretation of how the impact of the conquest

and colonization in the Americas influenced what we understand by man and woman, feminine and masculine, sexualities and gender relations. The aforementioned decolonial writers believed there had not been any such impact, because those entities did not exist and could therefore not be identified in the era before the conquest. In my model, on the other hand, the conquest would not have been possible without the masculine formatting of the men in the defeated societies and their subsequent loyalty and ultimate obedience to the victorious head of the corporate order of the "male brotherhood." Because two loyalties clashed there: loyalty to their families and peoples, and the corporate masculine formatting that programmed them to bow down to the victor.[3]

I set out to complete the mission Quijano had assigned me, gradually developing my own model for understanding the impact of the conquest and colonization process, as well as the advance upon the "village-world" of what I later called the "state-colonial-media-Christian front."[4] I presented the first version of the model I was putting tother at the international symposium organized by the newly created Latin America and the Coloniality of Power Chair, directed by Aníbal.

For the first time, I presented my critique of María Lugones's and Oyèrónkẹ́ Oyěwùmí's theories, explaining that, as an anthropologist who had also studied gender in the Yoruba tradition (in the African religious tradition of Recife, Brazil,[5] which is among the most orthodox and protective of its origins), I was familiar with the subject. I knew that the gender structure was very different to the Western colonial-modern structure, but it seemed untenable to deny the existence of the entities we take as "woman" and "man."[6] Similarly, in the course of advising and participating in workshops with indigenous women from all parts of Brazil since 2002, and having talked with a great many of them at very different stages of the transition from what I called the "village-world" to participation in Brazilian society, I had also come to understand that a change takes place when original communal organization is abandoned, involving the intensification of hierarchy and patriarchal violence. However, it was impossible to deny the

pre-existence of patriarchy. Anthropological literature includes countless ethnographic records of the "men's house" in tribal contexts where there has been very little contact with the "white" world. Similarly, there are many accounts of men's initiation processes and of the greater prestige attributed to their work and activities in village life, as I will explain later.

Although Quijano had published a text on gender and coloniality, he himself, with his remarkable intellectual honesty, believed his grasp of the problem was inadequate because it focused on white men's violence against nonwhite women, and failed to examine the violence suffered by nonwhite women at the hands of nonwhite men.[7] Aníbal was also aware of the extraordinary complexity of gender studies, which, as he knew, now take up the largest share of shelf space in physical and digital libraries. At the same time, he may have sensed that it is precisely during the transition from the communal world to the citizen model that violence is most likely to be produced in gender relations. Coincidentally, it was through the study of situations of extreme gender violence in Spain that I arrived at the notion of "transitional societies" and understood how women are violated as the communal order breaks down. This occurred in Andalusia, for example, with the abandonment of rural life, the nuclearization of families, and the splitting up of communal houses.[8] The creolization process, what I am calling the "transitional" shift, makes the defeated world, modified by colonization, more and more violent inside.

Aníbal had asked me to rethink the two existing analyses: the one that asserts the nonexistence of precolonial patriarchy, and the one that only acknowledges the patriarchy of white men over nonwhite women. My task was to think in between these two lines and find out what the shift from precolonial to colonial gender structure had consisted of, and how it had turned into a much more violent and lethal gender scenario: feminicide and violation of women, not just by the white conqueror but also at the hands of men from their own world. I began to formulate some ideas based on Quijano's categories, to try to understand patriarchy and the position of men and women in a world now dominated by the model of the

coloniality of power. After the symposium I applied my mind to the subject, remaining quite close to Quijano's categories but with total freedom to map out my own theory from there. I often say that Quijano was a great teacher who had an "authorizing"—a word that has the same etymological root as "author" and kinship with "authorship"—effect that allowed me to take flight in "ideas-led writing," forever freeing me from the canon of the technology of conventional academic papers. I will never have enough words to express my gratitude to him.

My research led me to discover the *dual* and *nonbinary* structure of the "village-world," with two spaces, each endowed with its own politicity. These reflections led me to the idea of a feminine politicity that springs from the communal world. It can be fully perceived in the management of the space of the community structure and in the impact of domestic deliberations on decisions affecting the group as a whole. Moreover, community economy is largely based on domestic economy (disparagingly and misleadingly also called "subsistence economy"), which (as Karl Polanyi argued) was lost and eradicated with industrialization and especially with the globalization of production and of trade. Conversely, we have to remember that this domestic economy is in fact nothing other than a productive society for communal, local, and regional self-sustenance, largely controlled by women. As we have learned repeatedly in dialogue with indigenous-peasant feminisms, in a domestic economy, that is, in a community economy, the spouse is an "economic partner," indispensable for the sustenance of the group. Therefore, marriage is a productive partnership that is very difficult to dissolve. Also (and of great importance to the argument being developed here), we should note that this *"other"* form of economic management is also an *other form of politicity or political management*. This is what was eclipsed when the colonial transition to a national state society catapulted men—who, in the village, had embodied just one of two possible forms of politicity and management—to the position of the *universal subject of political discourse* in the symbolic realm.[9]

Curiously and surprisingly, all these things that I have just briefly alluded to here have been clearly and unequivocally confirmed during the meetings of the Chair that end today, as I listened to the dialogue and sharing of experiences between Kurdish women and Black women from Colombia. A dialogue or "reciprocal exegesis"[10] between the theoretical-political ideas of the great Kurdish ideologist Abdullah Öcalan, sentenced to twenty years of solitary confinement in a prison island in the Sea of Marmara, and Aníbal Quijano, host of this Chair and a great Latin American thinker, will best illustrate the affinity of which I speak.

Abdullah Öcalan, Aníbal Quijano, and the Politicity of Women in the Communal Context

I will now draw a parallel between Abdullah Öcalan and Aníbal Quijano: a bridge between the communal political orders of *Amefrica* and Kurdistan. It is an analogy that initially surprised me, because it would never have previously crossed my mind to compare the models of these two thinkers. We could say the following: that what the racist order (to him synonymous with the colonial and Eurocentric order) is to Quijano, patriarchy is to Öcalan. Quijano argues that colonization invented race and the colony marked the start of the process of the racialization of the world. In the past, there were xenophobic tribal wars, wars between peoples and societies, forms of discrimination and exclusion that have existed since antiquity, but not race. The specificity of the difference between race and all other forms of discrimination is key to Quijano's thinking: race attributed an *other* nature to the defeated. First on a naturalistic basis and later in biological terms, so that we can now speak of the biologization of the defeated. This essentialist fixation on the physical body provides two benefits to the victor and the resulting hegemonic social representation. The first is that it traps the vanquished within the outcome of a war—that we must realize has never ended—and makes this position permanent by means of the maneuver of biological essentialism. The defeated is thus anchored in defeat. And the sign of colonial defeat in the body—as well as in the landscape that this body inhabits—is nonwhiteness, that is, race.[11] It is thus much more

difficult to escape from the pigeonhole of race than that of class, because race is fixed, inherent to the physical body, to an *other* nature. It is the bodily mark of a position in history that gave rise to it.[12] The second benefit of attributing otherness to the subject defeated in the battles during this 500-year period is that it makes it more difficult to empathize with the position of the defeated as victims of a long-standing genocide, precisely because their nature is other, alien, and foreign to the "us" of the colonizer's gaze.

Let us turn now to Öcalan. To him, the reoriginalization of time occurred with the establishment of patriarchy after the male victory at the end of the Neolithic period, during which women invented agriculture and had a dominant position in the economy. Then, women were defeated and a patriarchal order was implemented. This allows for a very close comparison with the model I am proposing as a decolonial gender perspective, particularly as regards my reading of the Adamic narrative, which introduced women's moral weakness into the Judeo-Christian origin myth through the story of Eve's temptation. But this mythical structure is not confined to the West, given that numerous peoples scattered across the five continents include different versions of the same story in their origin myths: the transgression, disobedience, and moral weakness of the first women, whose punishment gave rise to the rules that enabled the emergence of human society. Women are lazy, weak, and susceptible to temptation through sexual desire, disobedience, carelessness, self-indulgence, indolence, sloth. Women "eat the apple," neglect the cattle as among the Masai, or leave menstrual blood on the flute as among the Baruya, followed by divine punishment for the feminine transgression, disobedience, or crime, thus giving rise to the origin of a very diverse range of peoples who will thus obey divine law. These are just some of the many founding discourses of patriarchy, examples of its many mythical-religious disguises. The Ona, Piaroa, Masai, Baruya, Xerente, and many other peoples around the world recount their origin through a narrative structure of this kind.[13]

This narrative regarding the feminine position remains in the peoples' psyches to this day, continuously replicating itself. Hence

the need to discipline, moralize, and confine it using the same logic that rapists use. Incidentally, it is important to note that the rapist is not an immoral subject: precisely the opposite, given that his imagination is structured by this origin myth. The rapist is the moral subject par excellence, fulfilling the mandate of moralizing his victim. We are seeing this now in the social protests in Chile, where women have been raped by agents of the state, by police officers—there are even images of the repressors touching the private parts of the female demonstrators. In other words, in this origin myth the dimorphism of gender roles enters the scene as the mechanism of moralization, discipline, and subjection with which a vast diversity of peoples on the earth's surface recount the start of their history.

Öcalan's analysis shows that this narrative—which should solely and exclusively account for the establishment of the patriarchal political order—has furtively made its way into the collective imagination as the narrative of the origin of societies and ground zero of the history of peoples. We can see how the foundational discourses of patriarchy (the story that women are morally and cognitively weak, in its many religious, cosmogonic, and cosmological variants) have been smuggled and infused into the common sense. So we end up with the idea of that narrative being the origin story—the start of all human history—leaving us with no other alternative and concealing the fact that it is only and exclusively a foundational myth of the *patriarchal prehistory of humanity*.[14] Worse still: this myth captures the whole past, the entire temporal depth of the 280,000-year speciation process, into a single, recent (biblical for the Judeo-Christian civilization and cosmogonic for other civilizations), post-Neolithic (according to Öcalan) narrative, which becomes hegemonic and sets up an inseparable correlation between the patriarchal political order and humankind.

I was surprised to find that, in Öcalan's work, patriarchy is basal and primordial. It is a structuring and primitive form of domination. To him, the only way out of the historical cycle of oppression is by destroying the masculine mentality. There is thus a strong affinity

between his thinking and my idea that history will change course toward a world of more well-being for a greater number of people when the mandate of masculinity is dismantled and breaks down.

It is also interesting to understand the structural analogy between gender and race, and thus the analogy between Öcalan and Quijano. My first glimpse of this was at a meeting with Kurdish women in Frankfurt last year, when a participant from Rojava said that when ISIS was invading the region she felt it was telling the women that they were being held hostage in their bodies. In other words, entrapment in the region seized by ISIS imposed another prison: that of women captive in their bodies. In my work, when I speak of rape I say that the rapist is telling the woman that she *is* her body, that she must *stay within* her body, that she must remain enclosed, encapsulated in it. The body is her irredeemable fate: the body as the woman's prison is the enunciation of the rapist's actions. Curiously, it was also the enunciation identified by the young Kurdish woman captured by ISIS.

Gender has a longer history than race. As I said earlier, race is the attribution of a different, "other" nature to the peoples defeated in the process of conquest and colonization, which historically gave rise to the racialization of the world. Gender, on the other hand, stems from the origin myth, the Adamic myth: the supremacy of man legitimized by not being weak in the face of temptation like woman in Genesis. And that is where patriarchy takes hold. Not as a moral or religious order—as our Kurdish colleagues have said several times over the past few days as they passed on Öcalan's teachings—but as a political order. Why? Because this Adamic order is recounted and established under the guise of different stories in various religions with their varying moralities, but it is the same story. The same mythic structure: woman is morally weak, disobedient, transgressive. The message is common and universal, found in societies on all five continents, but it is cloaked in different beliefs, religions, morals, and customs. Underlying them all is the same story leading to the subordination of women under a social moral order that they came to obey. But, take note! Only in part, and with the always apparent traces of an earlier era.

We can venture some hypotheses for understanding this false "transition to humanness," this uncertain speciation process that, captured by a normative narrative, legitimized the hierarchical and patriarchal political order. And now an essential clarification: it is not a biological order, precisely because it needs a narrative. If this were not so, we could talk about the transition from nature to culture as a biological transition. But it needs a story about somebody disobeying and eating an apple, getting bored and neglecting the flock, enjoying sex with her brother-in-law and spending every blessed minute with him, or not paying attention and leaving the flute lying next to her menstrual blood ("then, obviously, God had to intervene," "then, obviously, us men had to intervene"). In this, power, which remains power to this day, found its authorizing myth, its legitimizing story.

This is obviously an extremely long-running story, spanning all of human history from its very foundations. But, as Quijano points out, there was a break or a turning point as a consequence of the conquest and colonization process. It resulted in a new epistemic framework, a paradigm shift, or a "reoriginalization" of time, to use Quijano's terms, that did not just affect the invaded peoples but all who were part of that colonial scene: subjectivities and forms of social classification changed for both victors and vanquished. And this was the final stroke that transfigured precolonial patriarchy into a new, inherently colonial patriarchal order. Four shifts were involved in this process: first, the biologization of race and gender; second, the binarization of hierarchies; then, the seizing of political capacity by the universal subject embodied in the white, literate, property-owning, paterfamilias male; and, finally, the nuclearization and depoliticization of the domestic sphere, and of women with it.

The process of biologization merits a few more words. It perfectly encapsulates the analogy between race and postcolonial gender. In terms of race, the conquest of the Americas trapped the defeated subject in a body marked by the racial signs of the expropriated populations: the defeated subject is their phenotype, and their phenotype betrays a particular place in history. An informed eye

formatted by colonial history is able to read the body and decipher its position in the scene of that confrontation. We ourselves are the perfect example: emanations of a geopolitical landscape originating in colonial history. Like Frantz Fanon in his moving account of his disappointing arrival in Paris, having believed himself French because of his French education and finding he was not, we *Amefricans*, our bodies and our accents, are also read based on the landscape that permeates us. We are particles of that landscape. To the racializing colonial gaze we are all nonwhite, we are all Fanon.

The colonial advent fixed gender and race in the body. Gender and race positions solidified. They became naturalized and essentialized, while classic ethnographic works show that gender transitivity had been "normal" in the tribal world. Pierre Clastres's 1966 essay "The Bow and the Basket,"[15] which I mentioned in my previous lecture,[16] includes a sensitive profile of Krembegi, a Guayaki Indian who we would today consider trans, portrayed inhabiting the feminine position in an unproblematic manner. Similarly, in his classic 1969 work on the Trio people on the border between Brazil and Suriname, the English social anthropologist Peter Rivière affirmed that marriage in the tribal society takes place between roles rather than bodies.[17] Later, the Peruvian researcher Giuseppe Campuzano made an inventory of colonial royal orders and edicts, looking at the sentences and punishments given to Indian men who dressed as women, and to Indian women who dressed as men. In other words, he confirmed gender transitivity in colonial Peru, and also the binarizing and biologizing mandate that fixed gender identity in the body.[18]

Öcalan speaks of destroying the masculine mentality in order to invent a new life and redirect history toward a better, more pluralistic and democratic world. More pluralistic because a democracy that is not based on the fundamental value of the plurality of desires and presences is not a democracy but a dictatorship of the majority. To invent a new life, to make the transition to a new era, Öcalan argues that patriarchy must be destroyed. His lucidity is extraordinary. In my own work, I talk about dismantling the "mandate of masculinity." In my terms, as long as patriarchy remains within, we will not be in a revolutionary

transition. And what is a revolutionary transition? It is a change in the course of history toward a more benign era. As long as patriarchy remains within, the germ of inequality will always be lying in wait, and it will grow and make its way up through the cracks of the process, contaminating good intentions with its patriarchal pedagogy, which is a pedagogy of ownership and cruelty. As for Quijano, he believed that change in the world would entail the disappearance of racial markers and the restoration of the historical path of nonwhites, of the colonized peoples, making the "return of the future"[19] possible for them. Two intellectuals, each thinking in his own terms, but linked by the analogy and affinity between their political projects.

The "Capitalist Instrumental Modernity" of Decolonial Thought and the "Reifying Modernity" of Kurdish Thought

The decolonial turn is Quijano's twist on the reading of history. When he speaks of modernity, he is referring to Anglo-Saxon, capitalist "instrumental modernity" (as distinct from the "historical modernity" of the slogans of the French revolution), which is necessarily preceded by the colonial process, as its precondition. The Kurdish women speak of "positivist modernity," which is also what I refer to when I write about "reifying coloniality-modernity." What is interesting about Quijano's approach is the fact that it requires a prefix. He speaks of colonial modernity to assert that colonization was the necessary precondition for the start of the modernization process, and this is the crux of the decolonial turn. In short, coloniality is a precursor to the possibility of modernization, and modernity is the capture of the world in the reifying capitalist system. At the same time, as Marx already noted, the primitive accumulation that paved the way for capitalism would not have been possible without the mines of the New World.

Quijano put forward the stunning argument that before the colonial process took place, the inventions and scientific discoveries of Europe were not yet part of modernity because they relied on authorization from the biblical past. They had to be legitimized within sacred history. Before the Americas, legitimacy emanated

from the past. It was only the colonization of the Americas—with the ensuing reconfiguration of the world and reoriginalization of history—that established a new episteme. This in turn gave rise to identities that did not exist before, the identities of the Americas, Africa, Spain, and Europe itself, the whiteness and nonwhiteness of the now-racialized colonial spaces (what we are calling "Amefrica" in this seminar, based on the concept coined by the Black Brazilian thinker Lélia Gonzalez). With the American advent, the source of legitimacy, the source from which authority and value emanate, moved into the future. Authorization and prestige shifted from the past to the future, and "futurism" became the quintessence of what we take to be modern. This is why it is so difficult for us to move away from the concept of "discovery." With the emergence of this new entity, which very quickly became part of the epistemic and cognitive system after the conquest, "discovery" became a value in itself. It was no longer captured by a past that imprisoned it, curbed it, or condemned it to burn at the stake or to silence. There was no longer the possibility of condemning the new to silence. In other words, value emanates from the future, it entails moving toward the future. And consequently we can no longer recount the events of that new time without a new vocabulary, which did not exist when they occurred. America, Spain, Europe, Africa, white, Black, and Indian: new entities in a reoriginalized world. A new world is born. Without the idea of "the new" as a value there is no modernity.

The State, Masculinity, and Feminine Politicity

This breeding ground brought forth another subject discussed in the meetings held as part of this second edition of the Chair: What happens in the two histories, the histories of women and of men? It was surprising to learn that for Öcalan, and in the Kurdish world, the state is seen as masculine, a reading that agrees with my own hypotheses based on other paths of observation and research. In my case, going back to the initial question that Quijano asked me to address, the problem was to understand how precolonial-intrusion gender is transformed into colonial gender. As we know from countless ethnographies of tribal societies focusing on gender-related spaces and initiation processes in New Guinea, Africa,

and the Americas, there have always been places such as "men's houses," where pubescent boys are taken and confined in order to masculinize them. Similarly, there are "schools" of womanhood, particularly in African societies, although in this case instead of pain and death, they involve training for life: sexuality and procreation. Öcalan mentions similar processes involved in masculinization when he speaks of training for hunting and the mechanisms of male desensitization. In my own analysis of the mandate of masculinity, the mandate of rape, and the pedagogy of cruelty, desensitization is one of the contemporary and constant forms of masculine initiation. Men undergo a formatting that desensitizes them and renders them less capable of empathy.

As for the similarities concerning the state, the overlap is based on my aforementioned formulation that, in the precolonial world, societies based on a communal structure are dual. They contain two worlds: the world of men and that of women. Öcalan constantly reasserts this when he states that in order for a society to become democratic, depatriarchalization must take place. And for this to happen, and for women to be liberated, they must have their own institutions. In this, Öcalan's perspective is remarkably and astonishingly close to ours.

To answer Quijano's question, I turned my attention to the structural mutation from *dual* society in the village-world, to *binary* society in the colonial-modern citizen society. In other words, I studied the transition from a social organization that is explicitly unequal but made up of two relatively autonomous spheres—the domestic and the public—with their own forms of management or "politicities," that is, a society with two compartments that are organized hierarchically—even though the hierarchy lies more in the different prestige of the bodies, tasks, and activities than in a power differential[20]—to a *binary* social organization, which I define as a society of "the one and its others," its defectives. I must clarify once again that dual and binary structures are not the same. In the dual world of communal organization, the sphere of the men—who carry out the public tasks—is external to the domestic sphere (Afro-descendant

communities of Ecuador vividly called it “casa afuera” [out of house]). Men meet in the agora to talk and reach agreements on issues affecting the collective future. Negotiations and wars with other villages, other peoples, the colonial front, and later, the business-state-colonial front, also take place “casa afuera.”

Man is thus the subject of public space, and, to this end, desensitization tasks are carried out to prepare him to face death and to format masculinity. Women, on the other hand, do the “casa adentro” (in house) tasks, and this is the crux of what we are dealing with here: the politicity of the domestic sphere. This is a sphere that is neither private nor intimate in the modern sense, let alone nuclear. Rather, a multiplicity of presences run through it, and it accommodates deliberations that also affect the collective future of the tribe. To help us understand the problem, I quote something Charo Mina Rojas said during these meetings: “the subjectivity of Afro-descendant women is not recognized as politics.” The thing is that the politicity of the sphere governed by women in the communal world had an impact on collective decisions, but this was lost in the transition to colonial modernity with the nuclearization of family life and the resulting harm to women and their children. In fact, the privatization of the family is an aspect worth questioning today, because within its parameters we become isolated subjects, linked in the collective imagination to a sphere that lacks politicity and collective agency.

And what happened in the history of the masculine position? Men moved toward the state. This gives rise to a theory of bureaucracy that differs from Max Weber’s but converges with Öcalan’s very similar ideas, as we saw in this meeting with Kurdish women. We suggest that this ancient—and ongoing, in some parts of the Americas—“casa afuera” sphere of negotiation in communal life mutated toward the bureaucratic distance of the governing subject, the subject of state enunciation and of the public sphere. This distant and bureaucratic actor of the state scene is a mutation of what had been the activities of the agora in communal public space, which hailed bureaucratic externality as an excellent, fair, and superlative order. The political subject of civic social order.

This idea of separation, of the distance of masculine, official management, has cropped up over the last few days in the discourses of both the Black women and the Kurdish women: a bureaucratic being that moves away from itself and from the communal ways of deliberating justice and the common good.

I will now return to Charo Mina Rojas's comments in relation to the politics of care, because the politicity of the domestic sphere that existed in the dual world is now in decline: it has been expropriated, neglected, and in some cases neutralized. The domestic sphere in communal worlds was a space for women's deliberations, which gave rise to decisions that influenced the discussions of the men in their own space, and from there affected the course of collective history. With the start of the creolization of the men and their subsequent capture by the political structures (and also the sexuality) of the oppressor, the indigenous authority figure became a "cacique" and his position became that of an "in-between" subject, a patriarch of the "transitional society" who bowed down and emasculated himself before the white victor, the lord and colonizer-modernizer, and then restored his masculinity, re-emasculating himself through violence before his own people. This gave rise to societies with extremely high levels of gender violence, victimized by the insecurity of that in-between subject, the patriarch of communal societies that break down and transition to whiteness, modernity, and capitalism.

We need to recover the politicity of the communal domestic sphere. In other words, we need to restore care as politics and the political history of the world of women, which was repressed in the shift to colonial modernity. Why is a philosopher like Öcalan considered a threat? Because this is precisely what he proposes. His imprisonment is based on the same reasoning as the response of Christian groups to feminist slogans today. If we look closely, we will see that since just over ten years ago, Christian fundamentalist groups use the same rhetoric as fundamentalist Islam. To give just one example that speaks for itself, in a sermon that has been circulating recently, the founder of the Universal Church of the Kingdom of God, Bishop Edir Macedo (who is Brazilian but has an

enormous influence in Africa and Latin America), told the world—and his word is gospel—that he did not allow his daughters to study so that they would not be smarter than their future husbands.[21] Until very recently, that was not part of Christian discourse. Why has Christianity introduced a discourse that is explicitly antagonistic and openly oppresses women, bringing it into line with an Islamic discourse that we had been taught to look down on as "politically incorrect," to put it in the terms of the multiculturalism of the 1990s and 2000s? The motive is the same that led to Öcalan's cruel imprisonment, interdiction, and isolation from the world. What is dangerous about a philosopher and political leader who claims that the historical transition toward a better and truly democratic world requires depatriarchalization? We could think that those who wield power in a *world of lords*—based on the simple observation of the stability of the leadership of Islamic sheiks in their societies—have concluded that keeping women in a situation of oppression is an unbeatable strategy for preserving the untouchability of the overall hierarchical order.

This is the foundation that underpins all oppression, and it is what Öcalan showed before being arrested in 1999 in his connection to Nelson Mandela's South Africa, the only country to offer him the asylum that Europe denied him, to be subjected to one of the most severe punishments of isolation and solitary confinement on record. In 1978, he spoke of the need to create a women-only organization. In 1986, he talked about the slavery of women in his own society. From 1996, he began to speak of killing masculinity as a basic premise for socialism, and to propose his theory of the institutional separation of women. In other words, a return to the communal world.

What does the idea of the communal order as a political order threaten? It threatens the possibility of a *world of lords*, it threatens the very *order of lordship* of our time, because the first form of *lordship* is none other than patriarchy. It is inadequate and insufficient to speak of inequality today. The world's wealth is shared among very few owners, and the appropriation of ever larger portions of the planet is happening at a frightening pace. More and

more frequent corporative mergers are increasing the level of concentration of wealth, with no limit in sight.[22] Patriarchy expresses this ideology of appropriation and concentration, and it does so through the possibility of capturing the will of women and objectifying their bodies, so that their bodies become impregnable prisons of their will. As such, we can say that the first pedagogy of concentration, of the structure of *lordship*, is the appropriation of women's bodies. If we take away this mechanism—which was Öcalan's great insight—the edifice of lordship collapses. Restoring the communal order is what reinstates women in their politicity and opens up a path to a world that is democratic and pluralist in the fullest sense.

1. Lecture presented as part of the program "Aníbal Quijano Chair: Communal Feminisms," Museo Reina Sofía, October 23, 2019.—Ed.

2. Rita Segato, *Las estructuras elementales de la violencia. Ensayos sobre genero entre la antropología, el psicoanálisis y los derechos humanos* (Buenos Aires: Prometeo, 2003; 2013).

3. Rita Segato, "El sexo y la Norma: frente estatal-empresarial-mediático-cristiano," in *La crítica de la colonialidad en ocho ensayos y una antropología por demanda* (Buenos Aires: Prometeo, 2015).

4. Ibid.

5. Rita Segato, "Inventando a natureza: Família, sexo e gênero no Xangô de Recife, Brasil," *Anuário Antropológico* 10, no. 1 (1986): 11–54.

6. Rita Segato, "Gender, Politics and Hybridism in the Transnationalization of the Yoruba Culture," in *Òrìṣà Devotion as World Religion: The Globalization of Yorùbá Religious Culture*, ed. Jacob Kẹhinde Olupona and Terry Rey (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2008).

7. Aníbal Quijano, "Colonialidad del poder, sexo y sexualidad," in *Poder, ciudadanía, derechos humanos y salud mental en el Perú*, ed. C. Pimentel Sevilla (Lima: CECOSAM, 2008).

8. Rita Segato, "Dimensión cultural," in *Flores en el Asfalto. Causas e impactos de las violencias machistas en las vidas de mujeres víctimas y sobrevivientes* (Bilbao: Mugarik Gabe, 2017).

9. Rita Segato, "Género y colonialidad. Del patriarcado comunitario de baja intensidad al patriarcado colonial moderno de alta intensidad," in *La crítica de la colonialidad*.

10. Rita Segato, *Santos e Daimones* (Brasília: Editora UnB, 1995; 2005).

11. Rita Segato, "Raza es signo," in *La nación y sus otros* (Buenos Aires: Prometeo, 2007).

12. Rita Segato, "Los cauces profundos de la raza latinoamericana," in *La crítica de la colonialidad*.

13. Rita Segato, "Ningún patriarcón hará la revolución," in *¿Cómo se sostiene la vida en américa latina? Feminismos y re-existencias en tiempos de oscuridad*, ed. Karin Gabbert and Miriam Lang (Quito: Fundación Rosa Luxemburg/Ediciones Abya-Yala, 2019).

14. Segato, *Las estructuras elementales*.

15. Pierre Clastres, "The Bow and the Basket," in *Society Against the State: Essays in Political Anthropology* (Brooklyn, NY: Zone Books, 1987), 101–28; originally published in French as "L'arc et le panier," *L'Homme. Revue française d'anthropologie* 6, no. 2 (April–June 1966).

16. See “The Legacy of Aníbal Quijano Through Some of His Words and Deeds” in this volume, pp. 45–60.

17. Peter Rivière, *Marriage Among the Trio: A Principle of Social Organization* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969).

18. Giuseppe Campuzano, “Reclaiming Travesti Histories,” *IDS Bulletin* 37, no. 5 (October 2006): 34–39; and G. Campuzano, “Contemporary Travesti Encounters with Gender and Sexuality in Latin America,” *Development* 52, no. 1 (2009): 75–83.

19. Aníbal Quijano, “El regreso del futuro y las cuestiones del conocimiento,” *Hueso Húmero*, no. 38 (April 2001): 30–59.

20. Sherry B. Ortner and Harriet Whitehead, *Sexual Meanings: The Cultural Construction of Gender and Sexuality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981).

21. “[Se] tivesse um grau de conhecimento elevado e encontrasse um rapaz que tivesse grau de conhecimento baixo, ele não seria o cabeça, ela seria a cabeça. E se ela fosse a cabeça, não serviria à vontade de Deus,” *Jornal Estado de Minas*, September 25, 2019; see also, among many others, *Jornal Correio da Manhã*, September 24, 2019.

22. Rita Segato, “Patriarcado: del borde al centro. Disciplinamiento, territorialidad y crueldad en la fase apocalíptica del capital,” in *La guerra contra las mujeres* (Buenos Aires: Prometeo, 2018).

. . . Without depriving society of its freedom and ensuring that it can be managed like a herd, central civilisation cannot sustain or preserve itself, because of the nature of the system according to which it functions. This is done by creating even more capital and instruments of power, causing ever-increasing poverty and a herd-like mentality. The reason why the issue of freedom is the key question in every age, lies in the nature of the system itself.

The history of the loss of freedom is at the same time the history of how woman lost her position and vanished from history. It is the history of how the dominant male, with all his gods and servants, rulers and subordinates, his economy, science and arts, obtained power. Woman's downfall and loss is thus the downfall and loss of the whole of civilisation, with the sexist society that resulted. The sexist male is so keen on constructing his social dominance over woman that he turns any contact with her into a show of dominance. . .

. . . The disappointment experienced due to the failure of any struggle, be it for freedom or equality, or be it a democratic, moral, political or class struggle, bears the imprint of the archetypal struggle for power in a relationship, the one between woman and man. From this relationship stem all forms of relationships that foster inequality, slavery, despotism, fascism and militarism. If we want to construe the true meaning to terms such as *equality*, *freedom*, *democracy* and *socialism* that we so often use, we need to analyse and shatter the ancient web of relations that has been woven around women. There is no other way of attaining true equality (with due allowance for diversity), freedom, democracy and morality. . . .

Abdullah Öcalan
Liberating Life: Woman's Revolution, 2013

. . . Liberating life is impossible without a radical woman's revolution that would change man's mentality and life. If we are unable to make peace between man and life and life and woman, happiness is but a vain hope. Gender revolution is not just about woman. It is about the 5,000-year-old civilisation of class-based which has left man worse off than woman. Thus, this gender revolution would simultaneously mean man's liberation.

I have often written about "total divorce," i.e. the ability to divorce from the 5,000-year-old culture of male domination. The female and male gender identities that we know today are constructs that were formed much later than the biological female and male. Woman has been exploited for thousands of years according to this constructed identity; never acknowledged for her labour. Man has to overcome always seeing woman as wife, sister or lover–stereotypes forged by tradition and modernity. . . .

. . . the struggle for women's freedom must be waged through the establishment of their own political parties, attaining a popular women's movement, building their own non-governmental organisations and structures of democratic politics. All these must be handled together, simultaneously. The better women are able to escape the grip of male domination and society, the better they will be able to act and live according to their independence initiative. The more women empower themselves, the more they regain their free personality and identity. . . .

Abdullah Öcalan
Liberating Life: Woman's Revolution, 2013

Elisa Fuenzalida

Against the Abyss: A Militant and Sentimental Account of a Journey to and from Kurdistan

> *We have no need of other worlds. We need mirrors. We don't know what to do with other worlds. A single world, our own, suffices us; but we can't accept it for what it is.*
>
> —Stanisław Lem, "The Little Apocrypha," in *Solaris*, 1961

Rijeka

J. says that his only school friend was the son of an alcoholic chicken farmer who everyone called Pariah. He says that human nature makes him feel violent, which is why he prefers to be alone. He says that the way reality is organized as words in his head seems to him obscene and terrible, that he does not want to be human.

The wooden boat we've snuck onto rocks like a cradle and small black explosions create openings of light in the orange sea. In the distance, a crane moves the mountain of junk we saw on the way here, raising a plume of dust that mixes with the smoke from the burnt brushwood on the mountainside. The sun has already set.

Back in the Turnić, where we are staying with M.—an old friend who decided to reconnect with his Balkan roots precisely at the height of the Serbo-Croatian war—we walk alongside the goods train. The wagons belong to Hamburg Süd and some Chinese companies that are currently investing in agribusiness on the Dalmatian coast. When the train has gone that city looks completely different. "I very nearly jumped on," J. says.

I follow him along the path past the station. The white stony ground is crisscrossed with rails and littered with broken glass at the foot of a dingy brick building. A few meters on, near the rail crossing, a hunched homeless man walks past a small group of boys and their dogs, which start barking more and more frantically until one pounces on the old man's thigh. I hear a "Let's get out of here!" closer than his screams. At the same time, another voice dismisses

the whole thing and urges us to continue on our way. That's what we assume from the accompanying gestures, we don't actually understand anything, we just look at his skinny naked torso illuminated by the yellow light of the port, while the homeless man keeps shouting, the dogs bark, and some teenagers use the chaos as an opportunity to throw bottles and stones from the adjacent avenue. Ghostlike, a red wagon goes by down the middle of the tracks and I feel a hole in my stomach, but I don't know whether it is fear or simply reality pushing through the 5G airwaves.

Sofia

I return to the waking world in a dimly lit room decorated in the style of the 1970s. Socialism here means relics piled up in a museum that no one seems to know how to get to, which may or may not exist. I have not yet thought about my aching body, the tension of contorted muscles in the seats of the bus night after night, on the road between Spain and Kurdistan. The bedroom window is rectangular like a CinemaScope screen. J. stands and watches me move slowly under the sheets before drawing the blinds. The light that enters is a shade of mauve that reminds me of the bottom of the Mediterranean, maybe because it changes as you draw nearer, and because you can never reach it. In that sense it is like time that slips away, like the dawn. Everything is imbued with the kind of electricity that marks the boundaries of silence in big cities, and then an airplane goes by, so low that the roar of the turbines rattles the windows.

We arrive in Bulgaria with irritated skin and frayed nerves after several nights crossing borders, our bodies stiff in the nonreclining chairs of buses custom-made for four police checks carried out between three and five in the morning. The Nazi Youth, as we affectionately nicknamed the large group of Hungarian hikers who welcomed us from the back of the bus with loud jeering at our accent and our crumpled clothes, amused themselves by lining up and using the area next to the checkpoint for footraces and sit-ups. Meanwhile, I killed time staring at a structure that made no apparent sense: two hoses attached to a concrete bench from which a useless cable was hanging, a kind of flaccid intestine lying on the

ground. There were other objects—pipes, pseudo-barricades, solid elements carelessly strewn around but untouchable—that made me feel more disheartened than afraid. Noticing my fascination with these objects, the bus driver gestured, ordering me to move away. They were not meaningless debris but part of a landscape designed in line with the aesthetics of neglect: a map of the epilogue of the inhabitable, a warning. There may not be an urban planning conspiracy, but a border is first and foremost an injunction not to cross. The threat of nothingness beyond its boundaries, a story with a moral: once upon a time there was. . . the end of the world.

Urban borders tighten these knots on a different scale. A few days later, walking through the center of Sofia, I approach two men chatting in the doorway of a shop and ask them for directions. They warn me to not go beyond the avenue: "That's where the Roma and Syrians live, I call them 'the brownies,'" one of them says. He is referring to the area where J. and I usually have breakfast, near the bus station, where the sidewalks are indeed in worse condition and the houses aren't renovated, but there is a healthy chaos. The people are friendly, the shops are a mixed medley frequented by old people, teenagers, and cats, and the trees grow taller than the rooftops. There you can see the signs of what is really brewing in Sofia, which the old town tries to conceal. My favorite is a graffiti: the "A" for anarchy that has been crossed out with a swastika, over which someone later painted a feminist symbol. Someone recently told me: "clean walls = mute people."

Istanbul

And yet, we made it across. We passed the wide avenues bathed in fog or lit up with red LEDs wishing us a Merry Christmas right in the middle of the month of the sacrifice of the lamb. Before reaching the guard house, I discarded my notes and scribbles, erased my messages, names of contacts, photos, cookies, and browsing history without being able to shake off my nerves. I, with my original Peruvian passport buried under the hundreds of documents processed during my application for Spanish nationality, say "good morning" to the border guard, who is, after all, a civil servant, an administrator of nothingness. He answers

with a defiant look that leaves no doubt as to the mechanical nature of the activities that take place at his counter. My swollen eye sockets transmit the nothingness of the landscape strewn with large lifeless objects that I described earlier, and that seems to satisfy the officer. Nothingness is what they look for when they compare your photo with your face. Nothingness is what biometric checks impose on your face. Nothing that is not nothingness can cross a state boundary.

J. is like me: a nomad, a landless person looking for somewhere to put down roots in a constantly shifting world. We have traveled so much together, in search of that imagined place, that we have become a kind of roving ecosystem. So it seems inconceivably obscene that the border agent is invested with the authority to separate us. I watch J. walk away from me as I remember some lines from a poem by Mahmoud Darwish: "Where should we go after the last border? Where should birds fly after the last sky? Where should plants sleep after the last breath of air?"

I always thought that nothingness would come as it does in *The Neverending Story*, as a slow tsunami of thick, icy darkness that would leave us floating in the starkness of space. But the nothingness of this century has surprised me. It is more like a mushroom. It springs up anywhere like a solitary alien, or in clusters, but that is only its visible part. Beneath the ground or in space, a vast network connects the tips of those icebergs of concrete and asphalt, of lithium and coltan.

It is summer, and carpets have been hung out on strings that crisscross the streets of Beyoğlu, their shapes and colors airing themselves over the tea shops, tech gadget stores, and illuminated signs. Cats lounge in the shade of intricate nests of satellite dishes and women wash clams in doorways. The water, smelling strongly of the sea, flows down steep passages to the feet of children playing with a ball on street corners. There is no room in these nooks and crannies for the military tanks, which remain in the big avenues with their engines running.

The headquarters of the HDP,[1] where the logistics of our stay in Kurdistan are being organized, is located among damp, poverty-stricken alleys. It is a clean, simple place that reminds me of the self-organized projects I have set up and frequented. Lots of light, recycled furniture with the odd sock, piece of fruit, or toy poking out: politics that embraces everyday life. We put our backpacks down and while our companions work out the details of our departure for Amed, we go and stretch our legs in the rolling hills nearby. As we wander further way, we try to mentally chart the way back, but the scenes around us merge with the images of the outskirts of Istanbul that we saw from the train window, which somehow seem more familiar. And we get lost.

That morning, as the train entered the city, I experienced Istanbul for the first time through a series of misreadings. I thought we had reached the financial district but fifteen minutes later another, larger one appeared, and then another taller one, and yet another. Istanbul brought me up against the arrogance of my vision, accustomed to the practices of digital engagement. My eyes quickly pounced on reality and returned with nothing.

So we were wondering around Beyoğlu, stumbling into the edges of things that were invisible to us until they vibrated in our fingers, when a man stopped us. He was with five or six others sitting down and drinking tea in the doorway of a ramshackle mechanic's shop. A monolithic shadow wrapped around us like a cloak: across the street loomed a huge, colossal fortress, with walls as smooth as the surface of an iPhone and dark reflective windows reminiscent of tiny insect eyes. It had cameras for eaves, and its corners were swarming with big men dressed like Rambo instead of women and children. The flag of the Turkish state was flying on its roof. The sky was blue, the flag red, and when it moved a certain way the moon disappeared into a fold and only a star was visible. It looked like the communist flag.

The men ask us questions, with that mocking smile they adopt when in a group, as if knowing that they are made of the same polished, indestructible material that covers the walls of the official building opposite us, which crushes us by its very presence. They

laugh when we tell them we are going to Diyarbakır/Amed. They say it is dangerous. Plunged into a sea of linguistic confusion after fumbling through three languages in less than a week, I "thank" him for the warning and say goodbye in Arabic, thereby further shocking this spokesman for commemorations of battles and conquests: "I am not an Arab, I am an Ottoman Turk and this is the Ottoman Turkish Empire, do you understand?" I look at him: his own house falling apart, his manhood subject to other manhoods, the blindingly white building that has devoured the street and even steals the sunlight. He looks at me too, up and down, openly: a woman, a woman wearing *shorts*.

In *Saving Beauty*, philosopher Byung-Chul Han reflects on how the work of Jeff Koons seems to be both a hedonistic invitation to tactile pleasure and an annulment of the possibility of depth, of a complexity that can give rise to any kind of conflict. The distance that sight demands, Han says, preserves the possibility of magic, while touch hurls us into the experience of materiality. The administrative buildings of Erdoğan's regime look like colossal Jeff Koons sculptures, except that instead of contemplating a very specific notion of happiness (based on optimization), they express a view of peace that is actually widespread: peace as an enduring white block, like a prison in which nothing changes, nothing happens, and everything is identical to itself. Peace, in this sense, is simply a prelude to pacification, and pacification is necessarily and inevitably violent and destructive. It is above life, which conflict forms part of. Life has nothing to do with this official idea of peace.

The next morning we set off for the capital of Kurdistan, Amed, officially renamed Diyarbakır by the Turkish regime. During the more than twenty-hour trip, I find it hard to look away from the landscape outside the windows and close my eyes. The route reveals the most explicit and obscene urban colonization project I have ever seen. Authentic concrete giants peppered with illuminated advertisements for clothing and shoe outlets, one homogenous tower after another, too tall and too wide to fit into the frame of a phone camera. Blocks in which hundreds or perhaps thousands of people huddle together like bees in a hive sewing,

gluing, and labeling T-shirts, dresses, and leggings. Cotton processing plants that look like interstellar ships surrounded by monoculture wetlands where once there were forests and aquifers, where animal and plant diversity has been eradicated and replaced by prisons. . . up to three per million inhabitants.

Once, while making a glass sing with his fingertips, J. explained to me that if it were possible for us to observe what was happening in slow motion at the microscopic level, we would see that the glass was being destroyed and reconstructed every millisecond. But it was happening so quickly and on such a small scale that our eyes could not register it. Erdoğan's government seems to have adopted an approach to urban planning based on very precise measures of destruction intended to destroy the very heart of the Kurdish historical undertaking, which increasingly revolves around the core principles of ecology, depatriarchalization, and the exploration of multiple forms of autonomy including democratic confederalism. The Turkish state self-destructs and rebuilds itself, on the verge of constant breakdown. The ruins of the Sûr neighborhood attest to this strategy of obliteration of meaning in the land. Its demolition entailed the forced displacement of more than thirty thousand people, the expropriation of their homes, and the destruction of a fundamental part of the area's material historical memory. Not just Kurdish memory, but also Jewish, Muslim, Christian, Persian, Arab, and Armenian.

Of course, the history of this ancient Mesopotamian city started much, much further back, in the fertile silt of the Crescent, but the assassination of Kurdish lawyer Tahir Elçi under the orders of the Erdoğan regime was the drop that recently broke the dam. The bombing of Sûr is a click away, in the hyper-sea of digital noise. A moment captured on YouTube clearly shows the traditions of terror picked up by the Turkish state from the Nazi and Zionist regimes. Hundreds of small houses, private recesses, labyrinthine alleys, and hidden courtyards can be seen collapsing onto socks, pieces of fruit, and toys. The comments on the video read like a teaser for the latest bingeable series: "Excellent!," "Glorious!" "Wow! Exciting!"[2] The pseudonymous TuAAFalcon writes,

"If it wasn't for the PKK, the Turkish defense industry wouldn't be where it is today. We built the T-129[3] with PKK in mind along with all armored vehicles etc. Necessity brings production. Production brings power. . ." Five years on, only part of the district has reopened to traffic, and the ruins of the bombed areas are fenced off. Little is known about plans for the urban infrastructure. Some people are convinced of the proliferation of the "mushrooms": identical blocks of smooth-walled buildings that could only conceivably be surrounded by more blocks. But one thing is beyond doubt. Instead of the labyrinths flanked by connecting gardens that reflect the migratory routes of birds, designed to accompany their journey and provide refreshment and rest in their fountains, there are already plans to build wide, straight avenues on which tanks and riot vehicles can move freely.

There is something about Kurdish expressions of autonomy that seems to be an unforgivable challenge to Erdoğan's government, and it has to do with space and language. When Erdoğan uses the word "peace" he is actually referring to a policy of extermination and ethnic cleansing against the Kurds, expressed in the destruction and top-down, extractivist control of the territory. What power means to Kurdish democratic confederalism is not the deployment of weapons in public space, or a nationalist or state-building project, it is the practice of forms of mutual support, solidarity, and the recognition of difference that go beyond the borders of Turkey, Iran, Armenia, Iraq, and Syria. Not the power to take life, but to take better care of it.

Several days have passed since my encounter with the self-proclaimed Ottoman Turk who warned me of the dangers of Amed while scanning my body with his eyes. During this time, the feeling I got from his gaze and his words has stayed with me. It took the shape of an undercover policeman who accosted us at the metro station, of the thousands of pictures of Erdoğan displayed on walls, shops, and lining the avenues like banners, of the many kinds of surveillance devices and infrastructures. Traveling overland through the territory of the Turkish state is overwhelming in various layers of meaning. On the one hand, there is the dismal fate

of a livable world transformed into profit, the clean lines of the obvious converted into consumer architecture, the cities planned around threat. On the other, the conspicuous, ever-widening crack in the fascist and neoliberal scenario that is rising up again globally: that of the Jineologî,[4] male-female co-governments, anti-punitivist ways of imagining justice and self-defense that have not been foreseen by the monumental structures that arrogantly pounce on an egoist idea of posterity. They are finding their way into existing processes and redirecting them toward ecology in the broadest sense: small houses built close together to nurture the new lives of women freed by the YPJ[5] self-defense brigades from sexual slavery and kidnapping by ISIS. This is what we can call taking responsibility for our capacity to dream.

A few metro stations and some hills further north, our contact with the TJA[6] awaited us. With a generosity that would be repeated countless times during our visit to Kurdistan, our hostess had laid out a meal as a form of welcome: bottomless tea, refreshing cucumbers, juicy tomatoes, warm bread, homemade cheese, chili peppers, and, of course, olives from the community garden. Here too, in this cheerful, generous space of sharing, gesticulation, and mime, misunderstandings and mistranslations mixed with laughter, and, of course, more tea, the war made itself felt. First as a vague, irritating, unwanted presence, nothing concrete, almost an anecdote. An awkward word, a sudden crash destroying the happy mood of the group gathered together to eat.

The evening news was followed by the official announcement of Operation Peace Spring, the aims of which included a plan to "correct" the demographics of the Syrian territory by expelling the Kurdish population from Rojava. Turkey had already attacked the region in 2018, bombing more than a hundred targets in the Afrin Canton, a significant part of the territory of the Democratic Federation of Northern Syria. In line with the principles of social ecology developed by Murray Bookchin (who also inspired Kurdish thinker Abdullah Öcalan's concept of libertarian municipalism, which was implemented in Bakur until the Turkish government's intervention), Afrin had been reforested by its inhabitants for

years. With inadvertent truthfulness, that military operation had been called Olive Branch, because apart from the psychosocial effect of its supposed peacemaking aim, the operation involved a scheme to brutally plunder the canton's olive plantations, including the transfer of six hundred tons of olives to Turkey for export and the removal of 80 percent of its trees.

The launch of another attack in the area led us to abandon our existing plans to travel to Sulaymaniyah and cross the Syrian border from Iraq. There is a special romanticism associated with Kobanî that I have not entirely shaken off. It is not just the exoticized—and hypersexualized—image of the women, almost teenagers really, who defeated ISIS on one of its toughest fronts, but also the unprecedented framework of ideas and implementation of theories of social change. And yet, it is not an overstatement to say that it is very difficult to understand Rojava without first understanding Bakur and its relationship to NATO's fourth most powerful army.

The next morning Ô. wakes us with the news that our departure for Amed has been arranged. And that is how we came to cross Turkey from west to east, playing the increasingly implausible role of supposed tourists, with backpacks crammed with books by Marxist art critics and philosophers and notebooks with torn-out pages, without photos of hot air balloon rides in Cappadocia, souvenirs of ceramic watermelons, or amulets to ward off the evil eye.

Amed–Suruç

At one point during the sixty-plus-hour overland journey, I can't say precisely when, I was seeing one landscape through the bus window and a very different one whenever I closed my eyes and dozed. It was a kind of disjointed dream in which the landscape in my mind persisted despite the interruptions of wakefulness: white starfish and lacelike sinuous, quivering seaweed. Opaque water the color of lapis lazuli between two hills glowing golden in the afternoon, with cracks like veins where the rain runs down, a red ocean, another world that flashes on and off like the light in a room where a child is playing with the switch.

I had never seen a horse sleep. They lie on the floor in a way reminiscent of people who have fainted: abruptly, precisely transmitting the force of their weight on the earth. The room where we sleep is above the stable. From there we hear the horses snoring as we look through the window at the nearby lights of Kobanî, just four kilometers away. We will soon celebrate the Feast of the Sacrifice, and brothers, aunts, and godchildren will gather around the matriarch who remains connected to the land that engendered their lineage.

That evening, after eating in a circle on the floor, we talked about the PKK and the YPG a bit less formally for the first time, in emotional terms. The group included E., a former PKK member, twice imprisoned; A., a displaced woman from Afrin; R., the teenage daughter of a farmer; and the two of us, a possible new link in the internationalization of the cause of Kurdish autonomy and the democratic confederalist project. I obviously did not expect a unified position, but I was surprised to recognize ethical, practical, and emotional conflicts almost identical to those that my generation and that of my parents had lived through in Peru during the war in the 1980s and 1990s. The tense balance between dignity and pride, the boredom, frustration, resignation, weariness, and uncertainty, mixing together and becoming a kind of strange detachment. A. is silent and very calm while E. and R. discuss the nuances between violence and self-defense. When they finish, A. tersely states that she is against the PKK because "the war never ends."

I can't get to sleep. I feel that anything could happen tonight and that it would take weeks for our parents to receive news that would tear their lives apart, that we are on the forgotten side of the world. I ask myself what I am doing here, whether I am really motivated by solidarity, or if I have developed some kind of addiction to war. I think of my dear friend M. Weeks earlier, in Zagreb, we drank and said goodbye retelling stories of the Shining Path and of our friends, now dead or gone mad, until we were hoarse from laughing and weeping. M. said he would go back to that time without hesitation and I agreed, euphoric. But the truth is that I wouldn't. I hated the war. For me it was like a prison in which we were all trapped,

crowded together, suffocating each other, regardless of our supposed neutrality or which side we had joined.

In this rural village we number no more than forty, and not a single person talks about anything other than the imminent invasion: how to get food to Kobane in the event of a siege, where to house the refugees, where to take refuge themselves. The sky is a closed canopy through which Internet barely gets through. We look up and the stars frighten us.

In the mornings, the first thing to do is put the horses in the stable. At this time of year they are taken out to run at night, because the sun is like a furnace. E. grows peppers, cucumbers, tomatoes, and melons that he swaps for figs and grapes from the neighbor. The cotton will be ready for harvest in two months. The livelihoods of the Kurds who live in and around Rojava, like those of the people who live in the Peruvian Amazon and Andes, are heavily dependent on water, whether from the sky or beneath the ground: they are horticulturists. This is why the Turkish government's war mentality has turned water into a weapon. Turkey is implementing the state-corporate water privatization plan that we can see in South America on such a large scale that it chillingly reveals the ethnic dimension which seems invisible in much of the rhetoric that still prevails in environmentalist protests, debates, and agendas. The question of whether or not it can be said that militarized water resource management is part of current ethnic cleansing processes only comes up in the spheres in which the pertinence of talking about feminicide or global warming is still debated. A concrete example of one of these private-public pacts is the participation of the Spanish bank BBVA as an investor in the third phase of the Ilısu Dam. This reservoir, one of the largest in the world, will eventually hold 50 percent of the flow of the Tigris River, which provides water to Rojava and Iraqi Kurdistan. The project is bound to have a catastrophic impact on the region's ecosystem and on Iraq's water supply (which has to deal with serious water scarcity problems), and it also violates all existing treaties on transborder rivers. This dam will allow Erdoğan to further intensify the tremendous pressure on the already hard-hit territories of Iraq and Syria.

It is clearly an attack on the politicization of rural areas inhabited by ethnic Kurds through floods, droughts, and deliberately lit fires.

But are these the water wars that some academics, some media outlets, and some scientists repeatedly warned us about? I would be tempted to quickly say yes, but experience shows that knee-jerk answers rarely lead to liberating paths. We must think about how we are thinking. Are we thinking in terms of the canon of the linear time of progress, which only moves forward, like the discourse of modernity? Or are we connecting and mixing more of the world, more embodied experience, drawing on historical memory? We must ask whether we are using the right words to name the present. Whether our words originate in a mindset that generates links and recognizes the non-centric complexity of our position. Perhaps we should be wary of the word "war" and endeavor to come up with a different rhetoric to talk about the way in which the people of Kobanî and Afrin look at the stars, alone and in the depth of silence, peering up to make sure they really are stars and not missiles, and then going to sleep because very early in the morning the cows have to be fed and hoses placed between the peppers and cucumbers.

Nor do I feel comfortable using the word "conflict" to describe what happened in Bagua, or what is happening now in Islay, Peru, or in Wallmapu in Chile and Argentina. I don't know what words to use to talk about what is happening there, but I know that water and blood have a memory and they speak to us of attacks, poison, abuse, and extinction. The soil of the farms that grow the leeks and zucchinis that fill the baskets of food cooperatives and self-consumption collectives in Spain also has a memory. Every time we sink our hands into that soil it speaks to us of thaws and birds, but also of nameless graves and unexhumed bodies.

We go for a walk, but before we get very far the neighbors stop us to invite us to sit with them on their porch. The layout is different from A.'s house, with two one-story structures facing each other. The mother, who must be under forty, cheerfully and cheekily asks us something that we foolishly take to mean whether we are a couple or if we are married. We give different answers that confuse and disappoint them. When the nervous laughter has been replaced by

silence, I stand up and start imitating some majestic turkeys that have been approaching. Everyone laughs. The older woman starts naming the animals that are around the house, one by one—chickens, pigeons, cows, dogs, ducks—either by pointing at them or identifying them with a sound. When she gets to the turkeys, she says "luj, luj, luj" to imitate them, and I copy her, pointing to us to suggest that we sound alike, and the woman bursts out laughing.

During the time we spent in Amed, on the other hand, we were fortunate to have an exceptional translator. Language has roots that reach down into the heart, and when one person translates another, if she is good at her job, their hearts start beating in unison. The work is part psychoanalysis and part poetry: it is a matter of choosing one of all the many possible connotations of a word or sentence, and adding it to the ones that were chosen before it, like threads on a loom. The warping guide is the invisible link between the two languages, a bridge that gets stronger with every crossing. That is why, before leaving Amed, we compiled an English-Kurdish dictionary by crossing an English-Turkish one with a Kurdish-Turkish one. It was impossible to find a dictionary in print linking Kurdish to any language other than the official one, Turkish. As if the Kurdish language were confined in a kind of lexical prison in which words only refer to the interior of a world of militarized borders that cannot be reached or spoken to.

Madrid

Two months of intensity and a great deal of thinking later, I find myself back in Madrid. I am helping to coordinate the final details of the visit of Besime Konca and Gülcihan Şimşek[7] to the Museo Reina Sofía as part of the "Communal Feminisms" program organized by the Aníbal Quijano Chair, which was established at the museum in 2018, shortly after the Peruvian intellectual's death. At this time, with Rojava under virulent attack, the passports of Kurdish people in Turkey were so strictly controlled that on several occasions it seems that the meeting will not take place.

J. has left for California to work as a farm laborer and save enough money to be able to make our home somewhere in the world.

I write to him that our godchildren, A.'s children, have been evacuated to a camp. "If we manage to make this dream come true," he says, "I would like it to be for them too."

As Turkish troops enter Ras al-Ayn, a disproportionate police deployment in Barcelona moves in to repress the thousands of people flooding the streets after the ruling on Catalan independence. The heat of the social upheavals in Ecuador and Chile has not cooled. That same afternoon, N., who is Catalan, and me, a Peruvian, find ourselves on a street where I count thirteen Spanish flags. We don't talk about ourselves, but about her brother. About the kids who are eighteen or nineteen and have grown up among threats and beatings, about their great rage. It scares us, worries us, leaves us at a loss for words. I tell her that the first thing they asked me at the Turkish border, at the border of Erdoğan's Turkey, was what I thought about Catalonia. I had never thought about it. "I don't have an opinion on Catalonia, I don't know what it is," I told them. I could have said something about a group of men who had looked at me with disgust one day in Girona, as I sat on the sidewalk eating a slice of pizza. Or better still, I could have described the coral reefs of Sant Feliu de Guixols, where J. taught me to lose my fear of diving, and which look like underwater skyscrapers. Or I could have told them about the wild parties at La Bata de Boatiné, although not, of course, the story of a tree in a rural commune where we made a pilgrimage to honor a young man who had taken his own life after fighting against ISIS on one of the fronts in Rojava.

Berlin

This month marked one year since our visit to Kurdistan and ten months since the start of Operation Peace Spring and the social uprising in Chile. The end of 2019 hurtled into 2020 amidst the human and terrestrial uproar of riots, shipwrecks, fires, and demolitions, among pictures of a tangle of laser pointers in Hong Kong, the Mapuche flag flying over Plaza Italia, and a bible replacing the Wiphala in Bolivia. Then, suddenly, the intermittent silence of an artificial respirator.

In March, a state of alarm was declared in Madrid due to the pandemic. Finding work in Spain, always difficult for J., quickly became completely unviable for him. Panic, hypervigilance, unemployment, and collapse were added to all the other circumstances that had long been interfering with the life plans of those with the audacity to dedicate themselves to art and experimentation, as he does. In August we decided to return to Berlin, leaving behind future projects cultivated for years. The abyss is nothing new to either of us.

Few people are wearing masks on the streets of Britz and Neukölln. Life does not appear to have veered very far from the "old normal" in Germany, except that German laboratories are waiting in line for the countries that will experiment with vaccines, such as Brazil and Peru. There are underground parties and concerts, apolitical hedonists pocketing public money intended for unemployed artists, artists stocking shelves at Amazon warehouses, and migrants working up to three jobs a day. The generation that drives the cultural industries in Berlin has money and free time, but it is suffering from some severe spiritual pain that is diluted between sexual compulsion and social phobia. However, the graffiti on the walls speaks of other dramas: "Erdoğan Morderer, Rojava Azadi, Kurdistan Resist."[8] The Kurdish diaspora awkwardly disrupts the puzzle of Turkish-German coexistence with the creative class. They are worlds in which destruction is more of a memory than a threat, where catastrophe is an ongoing situation in which people live, sometimes in despair, but always with the possibility of finding dignity and affection.

Many of us have already lived through a state of alarm, in the 1980s, 1990s, in the form of a curfew or an armed strike. For better or for worse, the blackouts, shortages, anxiety, and uncertainty that are part of the recent history of the global South have shaped us. In Chernobyl the world ended. In Syrian Kurdistan, in the Puna, and in the Amazon the sky fell in. And within its confines we continue to live, love, and imagine.

As such, for many of us there was an aura of déjà vu in the first days of lockdown. We navigated through those early moments of anxiety

by comparing then and now: many heads and voices, reliving traumas and vicissitudes. In one of those conversations someone mentioned Heddy Honigmann's documentary *Metal and Melancholy* (1994), an absolutely brilliant record of how the Peruvian middle class was shattered by the crash in the 1980s, the armed conflict, and the economic shock of the 1990s, and was reborn in the informal economy and "pirate" transport. In the film, Lima looks like a recently bombed city in which the survivors grit their teeth and get on with it, hard as metal, but affectionate, sentimental, sappy.

That is how our parents raised us, driving taxis or selling chicken sandwiches from a cart, dodging rubble and motionless bodies covered in newspaper to take us to school. In those days of bewilderment when it seemed like nothing ever happened and suddenly the world shattered into a thousand shards, we discovered that time does not always move forward and that language suffocates within the boundaries set by the Royal Spanish Academy when you have to make yourself heard above a thousand overlapping noises of explosions, custard apple and kebab sellers, car horns, gunshots, laughter, and cumbia.

"How can a person live through history and write about it at the same time? You can't grab just any old bit of life or existential 'dirt' by the collar and drag it into a book. Into history. You have to transcend the time and 'seize the spirit,'"[9] says Svetlana Alexievich, who ceased to think of herself as a journalist after confronting the abyss of Chernobyl and now calls herself a "historian of the soul." That is what this text attempts to do, to walk backward in order to move forward. As Charo Mina Rojas said in the second edition of the Aníbal Quijano Chair, which was dedicated to communal feminisms: to put down the roots of our political imagination in memory. To go south, not geographically but affectively. And from there, to rise up from a thousand and one crashes, subverting the mandate of silence and individualism, to accompany each other, and, above all, to bring kindness into self-management, humor into self-defense, and desire into disobedience. And for this to move the very core of the reason of aseptic political activism.

1. The Turkish Halkların Demokratik Partisi, or People's Democratic Party, is an antinationalist party that brings together diverse left-wing movements and groups with a program in defense of the rights of women, the LGTB+ community, and the environment.

2. "Turkey: PKK fighters clash with Turkish forces in Sur district of Diyarbakir," Ruptly, December 22, 2015, YouTube, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sKGjJR8vCds.

3. The T129 is an attack helicopter designed by Turkish Aerospace Industries (TAI). In 2018, the Turkish government sold thirty of these instruments of war to Pakistan, and it is currently negotiating with various countries in the Asia-Pacific region. The Turkish army is ranked the ninth most powerful army in NATO.

4. Single-sex educational centers for women.

5. The Yekîneyên Parastina Jin (Women's Protection Units) are armed Kurdish self-defense brigades formed entirely of women.

6. Tevgera Jinên Azad (Free Women's Movement).

7. Gülcihan was arrested and jailed in June 2020 for allegedly collaborating with a terrorist organization. The charges against her include her involvement in preparing the March 8 commemoration in Turkey.

8. "Erdoğan Murderer, Free Azadi, Kurdistan Resist."

9. Svetlana Alexievich, 2016–17 Henry E. and Nancy Horton Bartels World Affairs Fellowship Lecture, September 12, 2016, Cornell University, published as *In Search of the Free Individual: The History of the Russian-Soviet Soul*, trans. Jamey Gambrell (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2018), 11.

ISBN: 978-84-8026-626-0
NIPO: 828-21-006-5
D.L.: M-8445-2021

General catalogue of official
publications
https://cpage.mpr.gob.es

Distribution and retail
http://sede.educacion.gob.es/
publiventa/

Previous issues
Exile/Refuge
Pop versus the Popular
Libidinal Economy of the Spanish
Transition
Thinking Is Three-Dimensional
Unfinished Timelines

Carta(s)
Seismic Thought

MUSEO NACIONAL CENTRO DE ARTE REINA SOFIA
GOBIERNO DE ESPAÑA
MINISTERIO DE CULTURA Y DEPORTE